



Park Lane Special School

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL BOARD OF GOVERNORS IN SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 29TH FEBRUARY 2024

HELD

Governors present:	Tandy Palmes (TP)	Co-Chair
	Chris Milnes (CM)	Co-Chair
	Lorraine Warmer (LW)	Headteacher
	Nick Banner (NB)	
	Richard Davies (RD)	(via MS Teams)
	Marcus Hayes (MH)	
	Charlotte Hughes (CH)	(via MS Teams)
	John McPherson (JM)	
	Katy Wadsworth (KW)	
Also in attendance:	Diane Murdoch (Clerk)	Clerk to Governors

PART ONE MINUTES

The meeting opened at 3:34pm.

1. APOLOGIES AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) ITEMS

- Apologies were received from Emma Shaw (ES) and accepted by governors.
- There were no items of additional business.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest with the business of the meeting.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- There were no changes to the membership.
- Governors noted that there were two vacancies for Co-opted Governors. An advertisement had been placed on Inspiring Governance and one expression of interest received. It was proposed that CM could move to Co-opted Governor, leaving a vacancy for a Parent Governor. Governors **agreed** to update the skills audit to identify skillsets required on the governing board.

Action: TP to follow up on response to Inspiring Governance advert and to advertise for a Parent Governor. KW to ask non-teaching staff if they would be interested in joining the governing board. All governors to complete a skills audit (TP to circulate).

4. CO-CHAIRS' ACTION

There were no items to report.

5. PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- The part one minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 2nd November 2023 were **confirmed** as a correct record and signed by the Chair for retention by the school.
- The action log was reviewed:
Item 15 – Safeguarding Training: Governors were reminded to complete annual safeguarding training – a course was available on Modern Governor and could be accessed via GovernorHub.

Item 8 – Prevent Training: The link to updated Prevent training had been circulated via GovernorHub.

Item 8 – Careers Monitoring Report: JM to upload report to GovernorHub.

Item 8 – Link Visits: Governors were reminded to contact staff to arrange link visits this term and to complete reports and upload them to GovernorHub.

All other actions were **agreed** as completed or were on the agenda.

6. PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

a) The following reports were received:

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

This would be covered under Part 2. Governors were advised that the Local Authority (LA) Health & Safety inspection had taken place. No concerns were raised.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION (RD)

The committee had not yet met this term, however had held a meeting during the autumn term (after the last FGB meeting). At this meeting governors had reviewed pupil progress data and noted there was an increase in progress levels. Governors had questioned whether the level of pupil challenge had increased. The School Development Plan (SDP) was reviewed. Governors had received an update on the use of 'Insight' which was a new way of collating/using data and provided detailed analysis for staff. It had been a large undertaking to set up this system for staff and training had been required.

Action: RD to schedule a spring term Quality of Education committee meeting.

BEHAVIOUR & ATTITUDES

This would be covered with the Headteacher's report.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (KW)

The committee had reviewed mental health and noted that the school had followed up on applying for the Silver Award for My Happy Mind, created a mental health steering group and were increasing the mental health team. Animal Therapy was proving to be very successful, and the school would like to make this a weekly provision. The school had a second Compass review which monitored the careers offer. The only item lacking was the provision of advice/interviews with a qualified careers advisor, and this was being addressed. Once this provision was in place the school would meet all the Gatsby benchmarks.

Pupils continued to enjoy class trips and the school had held two creativity workshops. A Para-Olympian had visited and run activities with all classes. SALT (Speech and Language Therapy) had been a focus of the recent INSET day. The SIP (School Improvement Partner) had visited and completed deep dives into English and PE. An alumni project was in progress to seek engagement and visits from ex-pupils.

b) There were no link reports to receive.

7. FINANCIAL/COMPLIANCE MATTERS

a) The 2024/25 budget had been set with a predicted carry forward of £53K. There would be a 3.4% increase in LA top up funding to £12,762 per pupil. This was on top of place funding. There would be a slight increase in pupils for 2024/25 to 136 which would mean the school was at capacity.

Q: Does this capacity include the Sixth Form?

A: The Sixth Form has the smallest classes and could accept more pupils. The school does not receive many requests for Sixth Form places. All our students progress to Sixth Form and the funding remains the same flat rate per pupil.

b) From September 2024 there would be 14 classes and a new teacher had been included in the budget.

- c) The current year carry forward was forecast at £270K which was higher than predicted due to the teacher pay grant received, the £10K Outreach grant from the LA and numerous staffing changes. The school was owed £46K from the LA this year due to an underpayment for the number of pupils on roll.

Q: Is this top up funding?

A: Yes, we are not being paid for the full number of pupils on roll. It has been like this for a number of years now. Part of the issue is that the LA do not update their systems when pupils move placements. We are owed £20K for historic pupils.

Q: Have you taken legal advice on this?

A: Not yet but it would be good to know if something could be done.

Q: Is there an agreement in place with the LA on funding by pupil numbers?

A: Yes there is a formula in place but there is a big disparity on how schools are funded in the LA. We have suggested to the LA that a budget is ring-fenced for specialist equipment. We do receive a small increase to the top up funding every couple of years.

Q: Are there more able pupils in schools who could sit exams?

A: This would not be the right setting for them as there is not the peer groups or expertise amongst the teachers. We do have one pupil who is very talented in Art and attends college to study this subject. If pupils are meeting the age expectations then this is not the right school for them.

- d) This was covered above.
e) The office staff were working on the SFVS ready for submission by 31st March 2024.
f) **Action: LW to place the MIFP, Business Continuity Plan, Asset Register and Scheme of Financial Delegation on GovernorHub for review.**
g) Governors **approved** the reappointment of the current clerk for 2024/25.

8. PART ONE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING

There were 129 pupils on roll with 6 leaving at the end of the academic year as they would have completed their education. Annual review meetings were in progress with most being held face to face, although the option to hold the meetings online was still available for parents. A well-attended parents evening was held in November 2023, and it had been good to meet parents face to face.

A range of extra-curricular activities was on offer at lunchtimes. University students were coming into school to complete work placements. One student from Manchester University had provided some excellent feedback about their experience at the school. ES was part of the interview panel for Initial Teacher Training at Chester University and some students from there were in school on placements.

There was a focus upon the development of subject leadership with lesson observations being held across the school in preparation for Ofsted. Governors noted that 90% of lessons were of a high standard. Strategies to improve lessons had been identified and were followed up with learning walks and further observations.

KW advised that Pupil Progress meetings were held with a focus on ensuring teachers were up to date with assessment. All teachers were more confident in this now. Teaching Assistants (TAs) were using iPads to capture pupil progress and all pupils had individual trackers so that targets/progress could be monitored.

Q: What is the situation with Mulberry class?

A: There has been a change of teachers. One teacher was on long term sick leave, and another went on maternity leave. A plan was in place to address this, and parents were kept informed. The Granelli class teacher was covering this class at the moment. Assessments had been put in place to monitor pupil progress in the class.

KS3, 4 and 5 pupils were on track with ASDAN. The Sixth Form would move to EFL for ASDAN as this would ease the workload and be more efficient. Preparing for Adult was threaded through the curriculum

from Early Years to Sixth Form to encourage independence. This included items such as crossing roads, using community facilities, putting cups and plates away etc.

The school offered a desensitisation programme for haircutting and at the request of parents, intended to extend this to cover nail cutting and teeth brushing. Hairdressers and beauticians came into school to provide these sessions, and this would restart next week. A medical version of desensitisation was already offered in Early Years with nurses bringing medical equipment into classes.

Careers information had been circulated via GovernorHub. KW had today completed training to be able to internally moderate ASDAN.

Q: Have you spoken with Fallibroome regarding careers provision?

A: No, we are hoping to find someone with more SEND experience. We have spoken with Greenbank as they are a specialist secondary school, and they would provide the careers education for a fee.

The school continued to undertake outreach work with the LA and other special schools to provide support and advice. Ten referrals had been received from primary schools and staff would go in to provide support with EHCP pupils and support their engagement with lessons. £10K in funding had been received from the LA to support this scheme. It was hoped that this would reduce the numbers leaving mainstream to go to special provision.

Q: Has there been any progress with the nursery?

A: No. The LA have been concentrating on other budgetary matters.

No residential visits were planned.

Governors noted that behaviour had started high and then had dipped towards the end of the autumn term. The highest spike was due to a pupil who had now moved to a different setting which was more appropriate for their needs. Weekly behaviour meetings were held in each class to monitor the Behaviour Plans in place. Every class had a Behaviour Rep' and a Communications Rep'. Zones of Regulation training was delivered at the INSET day. Starting in the summer, this will be a school-wide, year-round initiative to support pupils to cope with and manage their emotions. Resources were being bought in and made to support the programme.

The updated SDP and SEF were available on GovernorHub. The Pupil Premium statement had been published on the school website.

Attendance was currently at 88.82%. Two pupils in Barnaby class were on reduced timetables due to health needs.

9. SAFEGUARDING

The Safeguarding Policy was revised to reflect changes in online safety provision. All pupils were taught about online and internet safety and the police had visited to run a session with KS3, KS4 and the Sixth Form.

CH (Safeguarding Link) provided an update. All policies were up to date and on the school website. Staff had all read Keeping Children Safe in Education and completed refresher training in September 2023. New staff all attended Level 1 Safeguarding training. Governors were to ensure that they completed Safeguarding and Prevent training. Staff had updated their Prevent training at the February 2024 INSET Day. The SCR had been reviewed and the school would start to look at renewing some of the older DBS checks.

There had been an increase in the level and severity of safeguarding concerns. CH and LW had discussed how DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads) were supported emotionally. The increase in referrals impacted school resources. There had been no further issues reported following the incident last year involving a staff member and some Macclesfield College students.

Q: The students concerned were expelled but were going to appeal this decision. Do we know the outcome?

A: We do not know but can try to find out.

Governor Comment: It may be beneficial for the office staff to receive some safeguarding refresher training, especially around the signing in and out of visitors, to ensure that procedures are followed correctly.

Action: LW to arrange safeguarding refresher training for office staff.

10. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER (SIP)

SIP visits continued on a regular basis and the latest report was awaited.

11. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The spring 2024 Director's Report had been circulated via Governor Hub and **received** by governors. Governors noted the updated training offer and Ofsted guidance.

12. SCHOOL POLICIES

The following policies had been circulated via Governor Hub for review prior to the meeting:

- Health & Safety Policy 2024
- Lone Working Policy

All the above were **approved** by governors.

Governors noted that the Safeguarding Policy referred generally to job titles and the SLT, and it was proposed to change these references to names instead of job titles.

13. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Governors were reminded to complete safeguarding training and to log any training completed on their GovernorHub profile.

14. TERM DATES 2024/25

Term dates had been set in line with the LA term dates for 2024/25.

Action: LW to confirm the **INSET** days and circulate via GovernorHub.

15. NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday 27th June 2024 at 3:30pm at the school.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no additional items of business.

The meeting moved to Part 2 at 4:50pm.

Randy Palmer

27.6.24