

THE GOVERNING BOARD OF SOUTHGATE SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Board held at 5.30 pm at the school on Wednesday 5 February 2025.

PRESENT

Mr R Baines (Chair) - remotely, Ms R Cranmer (Head Teacher), Mr C McCombe - remotely, Mr M Cleve, Mrs L Drye, Mr M Holland (Vice-Chair), Ms L Jackson (Associate Governor), Ms A Morris

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs S Dunn (Minute Clerk)
Ms K Emptage (Interim Deputy Head Teacher)
Ms J Hallas (School Business Manager) – part

The meeting opened at 5:40 pm

It was agreed that Mr Holland would chair the meeting.

	Item	Minutes	Action
44.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs W May, Mrs S Norman and Mrs J Wittrick (with consent). There were no declarations of interest.	
45.	NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS	The following matter would be raised under Any Other Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comic Arts Week It was agreed that this item would be discussed under Minute 46 (e).	

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46.	<p>REPRESENTATION</p> <p>(a) <u>Representation</u></p> <p><u>End of Term of Office</u></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 261 1077 300"><u>Name</u></td> <td data-bbox="1077 261 1464 300"><u>Category</u></td> <td data-bbox="1464 261 1917 300"><u>With Effect From</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 320 1077 359">Matthew Holland</td> <td data-bbox="1077 320 1464 359">Co-opted</td> <td data-bbox="1464 320 1917 359">24.5.25</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>Resignation</u></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 421 1077 459"><u>Name</u></td> <td data-bbox="1077 421 1464 459"><u>Category</u></td> <td data-bbox="1464 421 1917 459"><u>With Effect From</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 480 1077 518">Cheryl Gray</td> <td data-bbox="1077 480 1464 518">Co-opted</td> <td data-bbox="1464 480 1917 518">13.1.25</td> </tr> </table> <p>RESOLVED: That Mr Holland be invited to serve as a Co-opted Governor for a further period of office of one year.</p> <p>Governors thanked Ms Grey for her service as a Governor. Ms Hallas would arrange for a gift to be sent to Ms Grey.</p> <p>(b) <u>Appointment of Co-opted Governors</u></p> <p>Governors discussed the two co-opted governor vacancies. A governor skills audit would be completed to identify any skill gaps before initiating a recruitment exercise. Ms Cranmer mentioned the Governors For Schools charity which might be able to assist. Mr McCombe reported that Huddersfield University was keen for its staff to become Governors and would support them. The Standards and Effectiveness Committee would discuss the skills gap and set out requirements for new Governors.</p>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>	Matthew Holland	Co-opted	24.5.25	<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>	Cheryl Gray	Co-opted	13.1.25	<p>Ms Hallas</p>
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47.	<p>TO CONFIRM AND ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE INQUORATE MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2024</p>	<p>This item was discussed at the meeting on 11 December 2024 (Minute 28 refers).</p>												
48.	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p>	<p>This item was discussed at the meeting on 11 December 2024 (Minute 29 refers).</p>												

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		<p>(g) <u>Calming Rooms (Minute 41 refers)</u></p> <p>Q: Has anyone raised this issue since the last meeting? A: No.</p> <p>Mr Cleve confirmed he would like to visit the school to see the school's systems and processes for calming rooms.</p>	Mr Cleve
51.	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & MONITORING	<p>Ms Hallas reported that there had been a discussion on the school's finances on 23 January 2025. The discussion had covered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's expenditure to Period 9 had been reviewed • There was still some income to be paid to the school and invoices were being issued • The school predicted a balanced budget at the end of the year • Errors in banding for some pupils had been resolved with Kirklees Council and the school was awaiting the monies <p>Q: Why had there been an error in the banding and can you get an answer from the council on this? A: The reason for the error is unknown, however the SENDACT Manager is aware of the difficulties and is trying to make improvements. There has been a lot of staff turnover in the SENDACT team as well as new systems and processes introduced. There have always been issues but the situation has worsened.</p> <p>Governors expressed their concerns about the problems and the impact on school resources to address these. Governors requested that the council be asked to confirm how it would improve matters.</p> <p>Q: Are all schools affected by the banding errors? A: Yes. The funding review is also underway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pressure on future budgets was a concern as less services were provided by the council, and the funding model would be changing • The next Finance and Resources Committee meeting would be on 26 March and would review Period 10 financial information • Kirklees Council would shortly be issuing budget information for 2025/26 	Ms Cranmer

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SFVS audit was being updated and would be reviewed at the Finance and Resources Committee meeting on 26 March • The Charity Commissioners return for the Friends of Southgate (FOS) had been completed by the school and countersigned by Mr Baines. The school would be reaching out to parents to take over running FOS as it played a vital role at the school • The staff absence insurance scheme would be reviewed in May 2025 to establish if it provided good value for money. The school was developing a detailed understanding of the policy terms and conditions and would produce some options for renewal <p>Q: Are staff taking up the extra support offered by the scheme? A: Yes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed report on the proposed lifecycle works was expected on 28 February • Works to the fences would ensure that the gap at the bottom was closed whilst maintaining a height of 2.1m <p>Mr McCombe reported that there were worrying concerns about the future of adoption support funding.</p> <p>Governors thanked Ms Hallas for the information.</p> <p><i>Ms Hallas left the meeting at this point</i></p>	
52.	REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES	<p>(a) <u>Standard and Effectiveness Committee – 23 January 2025</u></p> <p>Minutes of the meeting would be produced. Mr Holland provided a verbal report and the items discussed had included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors’ Skills Matrix • Recruitment across the school, asking staff why they stayed at the school • Staff absences, retention and pay • Implementing Governor learning walks • Horizon scanning – pupil attendance, the Children’s Schools and Wellbeing Bill • School Development Plan (SDP) – B1 and B2 updates • Music and physio therapies • Pupil behaviour • Leavers’ transitions 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision at Northorpe Hall • Shared provision <p>Pupil attendance and links to behaviour and safeguarding would be reviewed at a meeting with the school in six weeks' time.</p> <p>(b) <u>Finance and Resources Committee – 11 December 2024</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting on 11 December 2024 be noted.</p>	
53.	HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS	<p>(a) <u>Pupil Progress Summary Report – Autumn 2024-25</u></p> <p>Governors had been given a copy of the report in advance of the meeting. Mrs Drye had prepared the report and presented key points which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic Progress – Individual Learning Plans - autumn 2024-25 showed 64% of pupils had made expected progress or above, compared to 69% in the previous autumn term. This was an area for development and improved results were expected in the spring and summer terms • Progress in Curriculum Assessments – Core Curriculum - autumn 2024-25 showed 74% of pupils had made expected progress or above which demonstrated the positive impact of CPD on teaching and learning • Priority Pupils were identified after each assessment cycle and had personalised targets set for them. The range of interventions included academic, attendance and anxiety and were a key part of the school's Pupil Premium funding • 37.5% of Priority Pupils had attendance of less than 90% and were given either a class-led or bespoke intervention package • Whole school data for anxiety was 21%, with 32% in the Woodland Pathway and 26% in the Forest Pathway which was linked to pupils' primary needs of SEMH and Communication and Interaction respectively • Staff were being trained in Personalised Curriculum Assessments and data would be available in the spring term • Engagement Curriculum Assessment results showed that teachers needed to set challenging yet achievable outcomes 	

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	<p>Q: What tool is used to measure anxiety? A: There is daily reflection in class at the end of the day.</p> <p>Governors were impressed by the quality of the report and data and thanked Mrs Drye for producing it.</p> <p>(b) <u>Stress and Behaviour Analysis Report – Autumn Term 2024-25</u></p> <p>Governors had been given a copy of the report ahead of the meeting. Naomi Fan had prepared the report. Ms Cranmer presented the key points which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall good and outstanding behaviour was increasing with Stage 1 and 2 behaviours decreasing, compared to the same period last year • Over the past four years the number of outstanding days had steadily increased whilst the number of good days had steadily decreased • Stress and anxiety Stage 1 and 2 have both decreased over a four-year period with autumn 2024-25 lower than autumn 2023-24 • Stage 3 incidents had increased over a two-year period but the number of physical interventions (PIs) had reduced demonstrating strategies were effective as pupils were not reaching a level of crisis resulting in a PI • The behaviour of a few pupils could affect the data dramatically and examples were provided to Governors • Data was analysed each week and so support was put in place quickly • Data analysed by pathways showed the fewest incidents in the Orchard Pathway and the highest in the Woodland Pathway and all were accounted for by Priority Pupils • There had been no pupils excluded or off roll in the autumn term • Referrals to an Educational Psychologist were only available for Looked After Children <p>Q: Is this due to a shortage of Educational Psychologists? A: Yes, it is believed that is the underlying reason but it is a change across the whole service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 1 2024-25 had seen a dramatic increase in racist behaviours which may have been linked to the riots which took place in the summer; however, 	

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	<p>these had significantly reduced in Autumn 2 following interventions put in place. Staff monitored use of racist language as an indicator of pupil anxiety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils in the Woodland Pathway had created a statement on racism which was shared with Governors <p>Q: When pupils are checked for anxiety is this done individually or as a group? A: Data is collected based on staff perception of a pupil. Staff monitor pupils throughout the day and then the team reflect on these observations at the end of the day. Pupils are encouraged to note for themselves how they are feeling and work out what to do about it</p> <p>Governors were impressed by the improving trends in the data and the amount of family liaison work that the school was involved with. Governors thanked Ms Fan for the report.</p> <p>Ms Cranmer provided a further verbal report which included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the recent period of severe weather the school was closed to pupils to ensure safety and wellbeing • The school would be looking into Vocational Profiling with older pupils as a new personal development initiative • Transition arrangements were being discussed with Kirklees College and Ravenshall for post 16 provision • The school was holding a Careers Day on 3 April and Governors were invited to attend. Suggestions from Governors for potential guests were welcomed • Pupils had been on trips to a farm and to the David Hockney exhibition in Manchester • Staff CPD carried out included Contextual Safeguarding, Maths and careers/personal development. One staff member had passed Level 2 in an Attention Autism qualification and would hopefully be progressing to become an advanced practitioner • The school's caretaker had been nominated for the Safety Employee of the Year award • The KLP had visited the school on 31 January and conducted a learning walk with Ms Cranmer and Ms Emptage on the quality of education. Peer coaching and peer observation would be introduced • The KLP had been impressed with the school's attendance management 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mid-year review of action plans was underway and then the SEF would be updated • A new two-page template for pupil school reports was shared with Governors and parents would be asked for feedback • The school had commenced a review of the website and would be retaining the statutory requirements • A medical system was being rolled out to record medical conditions and treatments provided. The information would be available to parents • There had been several audits conducted around the school with actions recorded and followed up. Governors would review the audits later in the year • Staff vacancies included Deputy Head Teacher, further ETA and personal care staff and the school was looking into the School Centered Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programme <p>Q: Has there been any feedback from parents regarding the closure due to the snow?</p> <p>A: There have been positive and negative comments, but parents have generally been supportive. Communications to parents had tried to address concerns. The decision to close had been made following a discussion with leaders from the other special schools.</p> <p>Governors thanked Ms Cranmer for the report.</p>	
54.	SAFEGUARDING	<p>Ms Emptage provided a verbal report which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance was 90.64% and was higher than at the other special schools. In the autumn term attendance had been 90.21% which was above Kirklees, regional and national averages • There were four pupils with CPOs, four pupils with CIN, four pupils with CIN Respite Packages, four pupils with TAF and four pupils with EHAPs • DSLs had attended three strategic meetings • There were nine Looked After Children and 12 post Looked After Children • Seven duty and advice calls had been made • One Encompass call had been received and the school had raised concerns about lack of calls, having been made aware of an incident through another channel 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextual Safeguarding training had been carried out on 21 January and bite-sized pieces of information were issued to staff and understanding was checked DSL coverage in school remained strong Cases were discussed at pupil focus meetings <p>Governors thanked Ms Emptage for her report.</p>	
55.	MONITOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP)	The Standards and Effectiveness Committee had reviewed sections A, B and C of the SDP.	
56.	POLICIES FOR REVIEW/APPROVAL	<p><u>Teacher Appraisal Policy</u></p> <p>The Standards and Effectiveness Committee had reviewed the policy.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Governors approve the Teacher Appraisal Policy.</p> <p>Ms Cranmer reported that the school was reviewing other policies such as the Absconding Policy and the Relational Approach to Behaviour Policy. Mr Holland reported that the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance would include a major update.</p> <p>Ms Cranmer would check all Governors could access the Civica system to view policy documents.</p>	Ms Cranmer
57.	GOVERNOR TRAINING & GOVERNOR VISITS	<p>The following Governor visits were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Holland and Mr McCombe – Attendance meeting 19 January 2025: Mr Holland reported that it had been a useful meeting and several topics had been discussed such as monitoring, letters to parents, family contact, relationship building, short breaks, persistent absences Mr Holland and Mrs Wittrick – Safeguarding and Looked After Children meeting: Governors noted the challenges for the school due to the lack of resources and the need to keep pushing back and challenge other agencies. The next meeting would be held on 18 March Mr Baines had supported Ms Cranmer in communicating closure of the school due to the snow and had been supporting her in her new role 	

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58.	SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION 2024/25	Ms Cranmer had chased Kirklees Council for a copy of the risk assessment document.	
59.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<p><u>New Ofsted Framework</u></p> <p>Mr Baines reminded Governors that the new framework was out for consultation. It was agreed that it would be reviewed at the next Standards and Effectiveness Committee meeting.</p>	
60.	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS	<p>RESOLVED: That the full Governors' meetings be held at the school at 5.30 pm on:</p> <p>Wednesday 26 March 2025 Wednesday 21 May 2025 Wednesday 2 July 2025</p>	
61.	AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY	<p>RESOLVED: That no part of these minutes, agenda or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the school, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.</p>	

Meeting closed at 7:20 pm.