

Kirklees Directorate for Children and Young People**THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHGATE SCHOOL**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held at 5.30 pm at the school on Wednesday, 8 May 2024.

PRESENT

Mr R Baines (Chair), Ms R Cranmer (Interim Head Teacher), Mrs L Drye, Mr M Holland, Mr M Cleve, Ms L Jackson (Associate Governor), Mrs W May, Mrs S Norman, Mrs J Wittrick

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs S Dunn (Minute Clerk)
Ms K Emptage (Interim Deputy Head Teacher)
Ms N Fan (Assistant Head Teacher)
Ms J Hallas (School Business Manager)

The meeting started at 5:33 pm

	Item	Minutes	Action
Procedural			
76.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	<p>Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs J Berrett, Ms C Gray, Mr C McCombe Ms A Morris (all with consent).</p> <p>ACTION: Mr Baines would speak to Mrs Berrett about her intention to resign from the Governing Body.</p> <p>A declaration of interest was received from Mr Holland who would be employed by the school as an invigilator for the summer exams.</p>	Mr Baines
77.	NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE	The following matters would be raised under Any Other Business:	

	BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To set a date for a presentation from the University of Manchester - Creativity Week/Comic Arts Week 	
78.	REPRESENTATION	<p>The following matters of representation were noted:</p> <p>78.1 <u>Parent Governor Vacancy</u></p> <p>Mr Baines welcomed Mr Cleve and Ms Jackson to the meeting and those present introduced themselves. Mr Cleve would become a Parent Governor following an election of parents. Mr Baines had sought advice from Kirklees Council and it had been proposed that Ms Jackson would become an Associate Governor until a vacancy arose. Governors noted that the election had had a good response and had been well received by parents.</p>	
79.	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 MARCH 2024	<p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2024 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting subject to the following amendments:</p> <p><u>Minute 68</u></p> <p>The second bullet point be amended to “A PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) TLR had been awarded to a member of staff”</p> <p><u>Minute 69</u></p> <p>The last paragraph to have an addition at the end of the text: “The Governing Body fully supported and endorsed the school to seek the accreditation. Mrs Wittrick would be the Governor involved and supporting the process”.</p>	
80.	MATTERS ARISING	<p>(a) <u>Governor Vacancies (Minute 59.1) refers</u></p> <p>Kirklees Governor Service had been contacted about the election for a new Parent Governor and the election had been held.</p>	

		<p>(b) <u>Complete/Approve SFVS (Minute 62 refers)</u></p> <p>Mr Baines had signed off the SFVS and it had been submitted to Kirklees Council.</p> <p>(c) <u>Draft Risk Register (Minute 64 (b) refers)</u></p> <p>Mrs May confirmed she had prepared a template which had been issued to Governors this week.</p> <p>(d) <u>School Social Worker (Minute 67 refers)</u></p> <p>This was not discussed at the meeting. Governors agreed to revisit this item at a future meeting.</p> <p>(e) <u>A Relational Approach to Behaviour Policy (Minute 71 (b) refers)</u></p> <p>Governors had provided feedback on the policy.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the A Relational Approach to Behaviour Policy be approved.</p> <p>(f) <u>Child Looked After Visit (Minute 72 (b) refers)</u></p> <p>Mrs Wittrick provided feedback to the meeting. There would be a combined Safeguarding and Children Looked After (including post-looked after children) meeting next week.</p>	
81.	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & MONITORING	<p>Ms Hallas reported that she had met with Governors on 7 May 2024 and presented a verbal report which included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The budget for 2023/24 had been closed down with a carry forward of £137,512 representing an unused contingency and a small underspend of approx. £20k • The budget for 2024/25 was £4,891,380, based on 174 pupils • The carry forward from 2023/24 would be a contingency against, for example, potential funding model changes and changes in services normally provided by Kirklees Council 	

- It was expected that pupil numbers would increase to 185 in September and this would be reflected in the budget later in the year and in the October 2024 census
- At the meeting on 7 May, Governors had supported proposals to:
 - procure a counselling service from Northorpe Hall
 - procure services which were no longer provided by Kirklees Council, such as careers advice (via C&K Careers), school nurse, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy
- The budget included a provision for potential pay increases for all staff of 6% as recommended by Kirklees Council
- A balanced budget would be set and the school acknowledged that it was in a fortunate position compared to many schools who were having to set a deficit budget. Close monitoring of the budget would continue to be undertaken

Q: What services would be provided by Northorpe Hall?

A: CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) had been provided in the past; however following changes to provision by Kirklees Council, Northorpe Hall had developed a separate offer for schools using a parent and community worker model. There would be different levels of mental health practitioner available which was important as it was difficult to provide counselling services for children with SEND. The potential cost of £10k would allow for three pupils to receive the service for a block of up to 10 weeks. The school would prioritise children to receive the service. It would be expected that staff would learn from the practitioners and that the service would take some pressure off teaching staff and improve absence rates. The offer would be flexible and could be reviewed if it was felt not to be working.

Q: How would the school know if the service had been successful?

A: Improved absence levels and pupil behaviour would be measured. Feedback from pupils and families/carers would be sought. Personalised interventions are measured by the school. It was acknowledged that counselling might not suit all pupils however it was important to find ways to help a child.

- Insurance schemes and services provided by Kirklees Council were frequently changing as the local authority addressed its financial pressures. The school would be meeting with a potential new broadband provider next week

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The B3 had been written and needed to be finalised <p>Governors noted the importance of having regular finance meetings to monitor and support the school.</p> <p>Ms Cranmer reported she had met with head teachers of other special schools to discuss Kirklees Council's report on funding for special schools and a meeting with Joanne Sanders (Kirklees Service Director for Learning and Early Support) would be taking place. Funding was a national issue, not just within Kirklees.</p> <p>Governors thanked Ms Hallas for her report.</p> <p>Ms Hallas left the meeting at this point.</p>	
82.	REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES	<p>(a) <u>Finance Meeting</u></p> <p>Mr Holland provided a verbal report of the meeting held on 7 May 2024 which included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rolling recruitment programme for ETAs was working well and was proving to be cost effective. A number of good applicants had applied across a range of jobs • The school was conscious about staff costs and reviewed staffing needs before filling a vacant post • Outreach service provision was a challenge financially. The school needed to be clear about what it could offer within its resources however recognised that the service helped children who would be joining the school <p>Q: Would a formal SLA (Service Level Agreement) be needed?</p> <p>A: The service is funded year on year by Kirklees Council. Currently the school received £10k per pupil p.a. which had to cover all costs. Other special schools have different informal agreements with Kirklees Council. The school needed to have further discussions with Kirklees Council regarding its Outreach Offer for 2024-25 as it could be part of the offer to SEND children across the borough and also helping schools improve their SEND provision.</p>	

Q: Is the Outreach service provided due to lack of capacity?

A: Yes, demand for places in special schools was very high. Southgate have offered Outreach to pupils who have a place for the following academic year to support them in their mainstream setting in the meantime.

Mr Cleve provided some personal experience of the Outreach service and Governors noted that the service aimed to be flexible and personalised due to the different ways schools managed SEND.

- The school's charge under the PPP contract was £440k for the year and service provision would continue to be monitored
- Kirklees Council had clawed back monies from schools who had purchased the staff absence insurance scheme to cover the scheme's shortfall. The future of the scheme was unclear and many schools had left. The school would be looking at alternative providers and would stay with the scheme for a further year at a cost of £70k. Other providers had different terms and conditions and the school would compare the year's claims against other providers to assist with decision making

Q: Does the current insurance pay for the cost of cover staff rather than the absent staff members salary?

A: Yes.

Q: Does the current insurance pay for the cover for maternity leave?

A: This would need to be checked.

Q: Does the cost of the insurance balance with the claim proceeds received?

A: This was being assessed; however the point of insurance was to protect the school from the risk of significant absences.

Q: Would it be possible to track the cost of the insurance and claims proceeds over a period of five years?

A: This would be hard to do. Levels of sickness could be compared; however the school's approach to absence management and HR was different now, e.g. bereavement. Looking at past performance might not inform the future.

		<p>(b) <u>Standard and Effectiveness Committee</u></p> <p>Mr Holland provided a verbal report from the meeting on 15 March 2024. The meeting had discussed the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirklees College and issues with post-16 provision • The school's budget • Recruitment • Challenges faced by Kirklees Council and changes in the Council's senior leadership • The Ofsted inspection – plans had been developed for addressing the two action points and the committee would be monitoring progress • Parts of the SDP (School Development Plan) with a red RAG rating • The SEF (Self Evaluation Form) • Horizon scanning <p>Governors noted there was a new ward councillor following the local elections held on 2 May 2024.</p> <p>ACTION: The school would invite the new councillor to visit the school and meet the Governors</p>	Ms Cranmer
83.	HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVENORS QUESTIONS	<p>Ms Cranmer had issued a written report to Governors ahead of the meeting and Ms Cranmer and Ms Fan presented the report at the meeting. Matters discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive vandalism in the Forest School in April. Governors noted and were appreciative of the work done by staff to re-open the Forest School within a day. The police had put on additional patrols after the incident. The school would be re-evaluating items stored on the site • There were a number of events being held in school between 21 May and 27 June and Governors were invited to attend these • <u>Attendance</u> – the school's performance of 90.88% for 2023-24 compared favourably to 88.07% across Kirklees, 87.08% across Yorkshire/Humber and 92.98% nationally. Attendance levels were continuing to rise and the school was managing attendance on a personal basis • <u>Exclusions</u> - there had been no pupil exclusions 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Safeguarding</u> – in April there had been three pupils on a Child Protection Order, seven pupils on a Child in Need Plan and nine pupils with a TAF (Team Around the Family) Plan. Three pupils were having Early Help Assessments undertaken <p>Numbers were continually fluctuating and the school struggled to get support for some pupils; however staff were tenacious and would not give up. Governors noted the excellent work to refine the work of the safeguarding team carried out by Ms Fan. Links with professional networks were being built and the police had a very positive view of the school</p> <p>ACTION: Governors would meet the safeguarding team to show their appreciation and offer support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Quality of Teaching and Learning</u> - learning walks would be carried out and assessment data would be analysed. There would be investment in CPD at both core and enhanced levels. The KLP (Kirklees Learning Partner) would be returning to assess the school. There would not be any ECTs (Early Career Teachers) in school next year. The skill sets of staff across the school showed a lot of experience • <u>Attainment and progress data over the year</u> – information had been provided to Governors in a separate report ahead of the meeting. Attainment and progress were generally moving forward. Governors were offered the opportunity to meet staff in the Therapy and Pastoral Teams to see how these were performing and view case studies. Procedures put in place for physical interventions were assisting staff and the number of physical interventions had fallen <p>Q: There were a significant number of pupils assessed as being Above Expected Progress. How does the school ensure that the curriculum would be sufficiently challenging for pupils?</p> <p>A: A new system, EFL (Evidence for Learning), had been introduced two years ago and input would be moderated. EHCP outcomes are set for pupils individually, rather than based on the curriculum and therefore progress could be harder to assess. EFL would be refined as it becomes embedded and the school understood the difficulty in balancing the ECHP with providing challenge for pupils capable of doing more.</p>	<p>Ms Cranmer</p>
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		<p>Governors congratulated the school on becoming a licensed DofE centre.</p> <p>Governors thanked Ms Cranmer and Mrs Fan for the report and presentation.</p> <p>Mrs Fan left the meeting at this point.</p>	
84.	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP) & SELF-EVALUATION FORM	The SEF had been updated in April 2024 and had been issued to Governors ahead of the meeting. Ms Cranmer reported that it had been helpful to update the SEF to familiarise herself in her new role. The SEF reflected a positive picture of the school and the progress that had been made.	
85.	STAFFING UPDATES	<p>Ms Cranmer provided an update which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two new teachers had started after the Easter holidays and were doing well. One teacher had provided positive feedback to the school which had been included in the Head Teacher's Report • Mr McCombe had assisted with the recruitment of two teachers who would be starting in September. One teacher would be working at the satellite school in the second class. There had been a strong pool of candidates; however no ECTs had applied • The rolling recruitment programme for ECTs had been positive with most vacancies filled; however retaining staff remained an issue due to pay levels • Recruitment of a Cover Supervisor was proving challenging • A vacancy in the Business Support team had been filled <p>Q: Why would recruiting a Cover Supervisor be challenging? A: From the first advertisement the school had not received any applications. From the second advertisement applications had been received from people who lacked the right skills. Internal applicants have been encouraged in the past; however not on this occasion as the school needed to fill the ETA vacancies as a priority.</p> <p>Q: Is the Cover Supervisor post needed? A: Yes. It provided flexibility to cover absences and support to other roles e.g. giving teaching staff time to prepare ECHPs.</p>	

		<p>Q: Could the post be given a different job title to attract applicants?</p> <p>A: No. As the school was a maintained school there are set job titles, descriptions and pay.</p>	
86.	PREMISES UPDATES & PROGRAMME OF SUMMER WORKS	<p>There are no planned premises works for the summer.</p> <p>The school had started setting up a second class at the satellite school which would formally open in September. Pupils moving across would start to transition over the last three weeks of summer term.</p> <p>Mrs Norman reported the excessive amount of mud around the gateway to the Forest School which made the space dangerous to access. The caretaker was aware of the problem; however the cause had not been investigated.</p> <p>ACTION: Ms Cranmer would raise the issue at the next property meeting</p>	Ms Cranmer
87.	CHANGES TO PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS (PAN) FOR THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR	Governors noted that there was no reference to special schools in the guidance document.	
88.	REVIEW OF POLICIES	<p>(a) <u>SMSC (Spiritual Moral Social Cultural) Policy</u></p> <p>Ms Emptage reported that the school would apply for a Quality Mark for SMSC. As part of its evidence, the school needed to have a SMSC Policy. A draft policy had been shared with Governors for approval. Ms Emptage invited Governors to join a working party to collate evidence and support the assessment.</p> <p>Q: Why doesn't the draft policy refer to protected characteristics?</p> <p>A: This would be looked into and proposed text would be welcome.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Governors approve for the school to apply for the SMSC Quality Mark.</p> <p>Q: Does the school have the capacity to progress this application?</p>	

		<p>A: Yes.</p> <p>Governors noted that other school policies were being reviewed and would be shared with Governors for approval in September.</p>	
89.	GOVERNOR TRAINING/ DEVELOPMENT	<p>(a) <u>Governor Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Cyber Security Training</u> <p>ACTION: Mr Baines would carry out the online training and share the link with other Governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Governor Induction</u> <p>ACTION: Mr Baines would share information on the training available from Kirklees Council with the two new Governors</p> <p>ACTION: Ms Cranmer to arrange for Mr Cleve's DBS check to be done.</p> <p>Ms Cranmer invited the two new Governors into school to have a look around.</p> <p>Mrs Wittrick had attended a course at the school on Basic Awareness of Neglect and Abuse</p> <p>(b) <u>Governor Succession Planning</u></p> <p>Eight responses to the Governor's Questionnaire had been received. A skills analysis form produced by Kirklees Council was shared at the meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors to complete and return the Kirklees skills analysis form.</p> <p>Mr Baines reported that the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair would be up for election at the AGM in September and encouraged Governors to consider standing.</p>	<p>Mr Baines</p> <p>Mr Baines</p> <p>Ms Cranmer</p> <p>All Governors</p>

90.	REPORTS ON LINK/GOVERNOR VISITS	<p>The following Governor visits were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Baines had attended school on Mr Evans' last day and had made a farewell speech on behalf of Governors • Mr Holland had met with Ms Lee regarding Comic Arts Week (see Minute 92 (a) below) • A Health and Safety Visit was due <p>ACTION: Ms Grey and Mrs May to arrange for the visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr McCombe had supported the recent recruitment for two new teachers <p>Mrs Wittrick left the meeting at this point.</p>	Ms Gray/Mrs May
91.	REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTEREST	Governors were reminded to complete their annual declarations via the online link.	
92.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<p>(a) <u>Comic Arts Week/Creativity Weeks</u></p> <p>Mr Holland outlined proposals to hold a series of workshops at the school covering a wide range of artistic endeavours. He had received research information from the Comic Arts Festival lead on improving literacy in special schools through arts. He had approached two artists about coming into school and if the budget permitted these would happen in the autumn term and for World Book Day. It was also proposed that a piece of art be produced that could be displayed in the school.</p> <p>(b) <u>University of Manchester visit</u></p> <p>The University would be coming to school to present their research into personalised learning. It was agreed that Governors would be invited to the staff presentation.</p> <p>ACTION: Ms Cranmer would inform Governors of the date for the presentation</p> <p>(c) <u>Governor Documents</u></p>	Ms Cranmer

		<p>Mrs May asked if Governors could receive documents from a single source rather than via the school and Kirklees Council.</p> <p>ACTION: Ms Cranmer would look into how this could be done</p>	Ms Cranmer
93.	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS	<p>RESOLVED: That the next meetings of the FGB and Committees be held at the school on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 July 2024 – Finance Committee – 5.00pm • 3 July 2024 – Full Governors Board – 5.30pm 	
94.	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 finished at 8.10 pm.