

NEVILL ROAD JUNIOR SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

AUTUMN TERM 2016

Date: 19th January 2017
Time: 7 pm
Venue: The School

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Mr R Reece (Chairperson), Mrs N Jordan (Acting Headteacher), Mrs M Ridd, Mr M Bush, Ms J Bell, Mrs G Simm, Mr G Madeley, Mrs H Walters, Miss C Wilson, Mrs R Hesford, Mr N Kokkinis

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs C Davies

Governor Support Officer

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Governors were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Ms E Owen, Mrs S Kreitzman and Cllr L Weekes-Holt (given in advance when the meeting date was set).

2. **ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

It was noted that Mr R Reece had declared an interest in the position of Chairperson prior to the meeting. Additional nominations or expressions of interest were invited; there were no further candidates.

It was proposed by Mrs H Walters, seconded by Mr M Bush and unanimously RESOLVED that Mr R Reece be elected Chairperson for the agreed term.

Mr R Reece in the Chair.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

It was noted that Mr M Bush had declared an interest in the position of Vice-Chairperson prior to the meeting. Additional nominations or expressions of interest were invited; there were no further candidates.

It was proposed by Mr R Reece, seconded by Mr G Madeley and unanimously RESOLVED that Mr M Bush be elected Vice-Chairperson for the agreed term.

CONSIDERATION OF VACANCIES

Governors noted and discussed the individual merits of Mrs R Hesford and Mr N Kokkinis, prospective candidates for co-option to the two vacancies on the governing board.

A vote was taken and it was duly RESOLVED that Mrs R Hesford and Mr N Kokkinis be appointed to the governing board for a four year term of office with effect from 19th January 2017.

3. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

a) **Declaration of Interests in Any Agenda Items**

Governors were asked to declare any personal, business or financial interest in any agenda items; no declarations were made.

Governors were reminded that they should declare any interest which arose during the meeting.

b) Signing of Business Interest Form

Governors were requested to complete and sign the previously circulated declaration forms and return them to the Headteacher for retention in school.

c) DBS Checks

The Headteacher confirmed that DBS checks were in place for all previously-appointed governors. The two newly-appointed governors were directed to contact the school office as soon as possible to complete their applications. **ACTION**

4. FUTURE MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE OF THE SCHOOL

The Chairperson explained that a change of headteacher had occurred in the autumn term following the departure of Ms Harrison and the appointment of Mrs Jordan as acting headteacher until September. The position regarding the future of the school was the same as discussed at the emergency meeting concerning amalgamation—the school could either (1) continue on its own, advertising for a new headteacher to be appointed around Easter and to start in September, or (2) consider the amalgamation of the school with Nevill Road Infants School (“NRI”). The Chairperson stated that he wished to obtain formal instructions from governors before any further discussions were held with NRI on the subject of amalgamation. He confirmed that he was proposing only the holding of talks with NRI and no greater commitment: further input was awaited from the LA and advice would be sought from another school which had gone through the amalgamation process.

A governor asked what feedback had been received from the governors of NRI to the Chair’s letter sent last term inviting them to discuss the possibility of amalgamation.

The Chairperson replied that the response had been non-committal, simply saying that NRI’s board was open to the idea of having discussions and asking to be kept informed of developments.

A governor asked if amalgamation of the two schools had been considered previously. The Chairperson confirmed that it had been around five years’ ago when the headteachers of both schools were due to leave their posts at the same time. A full discussion process had been completed, after which both the headteacher of NRI (who was not Mrs Marshall, it was noted), its governors and many of its parents opposed the idea. **A governor asked what the main reasons were for this opposition.** Governors replied that the reasons were numerous but the personalities of both head teachers had been a factor which raised tension between the two schools. Since then, there had been changes of headteacher, staff and parents at both schools and a governor commented that schools were actively encouraged these days to cooperate.

A governor asked what the LA’s stance was on the possibility of amalgamation. The Chairperson replied that its official stance was one of neutrality and it would require confirmation that the governing boards of both schools were in agreement before the matter was taken any further.

A governor asked the Acting Headteacher for her view and that of the staff on the prospect of amalgamation. She replied that the best interests of the children would be the paramount concern and there were clear pros and cons in having two separate schools on two sites. **A governor asked the Acting Headteacher to outline some of these factors.**

She replied that the size of an amalgamated school would be a major factor and would become the largest primary school in Stockport. However, the junior school often felt at a disadvantage by not having taught its pupils from Reception and that assessing pupils' progress accurately was difficult when they moved across two schools.

She advised governors that overall staff morale at the moment was high but there was an element of uncertainty due to the temporary nature of her current role. Governors noted the need to move quickly in any discussions and to keep staff informed at all stages. While it was agreed that balancing the best interests of the children currently in the school with those who would attend it in the future was not straightforward and that amalgamation would present a number of significant management issues, governors felt that it would be remiss of them to not have a discussion with NRI on the possibility.

Accordingly, the Chairperson proposed and governors unanimously AGREED for the Chairperson to contact the Chairperson of NRI's governing board to arrange a formal meeting to explore the possibility of amalgamation, to be followed (if appropriate) by discussions with the LA, a recommendation by both governing boards if in agreement and finally a vote on the matter by parents at both schools. **ACTION**

5. BUSINESS

a) Discussion and Review of Committee Membership, Appointment of Linked Governors, Remits

Governors discussed and reviewed committee membership and linked governors as per Appendix 1.

Governors discussed the role of Community Engagement Governor and agreed it was in the interests of the school to make an appointment to this position. The Acting Headteacher reported that a member of staff had expressed an interest in the role and agreed to follow-up with this person. **ACTION**

The Chairperson of the Monitoring committee outlined the purpose of this committee and summarised the discussions at its last meeting. The overlap between the remit of this and the Pupil Progress committee was noted and after a discussion governors agreed to discontinue the Monitoring committee.

b) Election of Committee Chairpersons

Governors unanimously **RESOLVED** that Mr M Bush be elected Chairperson of the Resources committee for the agreed term.

Governors unanimously **RESOLVED** that Mrs J Bell be elected Chairperson of the Pupil Progress committee for the agreed term.

c) Review of Policies

The Governing Board agreed that a review of their existing policy portfolio would take place throughout the academic year as required at the relevant committee.

d) Review of Open Government

Governors resolved that they would continue to adopt the Open Government policy; Governing Board meetings would be open to the public, subject to the exclusion of observers for confidential items.

e) Review of Governing Board Code of Conduct

Governors were referred to the previously circulated document and it was AGREED that the new Governing Board Code of Conduct 2016 would be adopted.

f) Approval/Ratification of Safeguarding Policy

Due to the events in the autumn term, the LA's model policy had not yet been considered by the Acting Headteacher and personalised for the school. She agreed to review the model policy and circulate the draft to governors and/or the relevant committee for consideration prior to approval at the next full governing board meeting. **ACTION**

g) Approval/Ratification of the Pay Policy

The Pay Policy was due to be discussed at the upcoming meeting of the Pay committee but the policy had not been circulated to governors prior to this meeting. The Acting Headteacher therefore agreed to circulate the proposed Pay Policy for consideration prior to approval at the next full governing board meeting. **ACTION**

h) Virtual Attendance Policy

The new virtual attendance policy, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, was duly APPROVED by the governing board.

i) Health and Safety Policy

The school's current Health and Safety policy was APPROVED by the governing board.

j) Governor Visits to School Policy

The Acting Headteacher reported that this had been discussed at a staff meeting, where some staff appeared resistant to the idea. However, it was hoped that the circulation of a draft policy to the staff which clearly showed the purpose and format of such visits would allay any fears. The Acting Headteacher agreed to circulate a draft policy to governors once staff had reviewed and commented upon the document. **ACTION**

k) Previous Governing Board Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 7th July, copies circulated previously, be approved and signed by the Chairperson and authorised for publication.

l) Matters Arising from Previous Governing Board Minutes

The Chairperson agreed to raise the matter of poor car parking near the school when he met with the Chairperson of NRI's governing board. **ACTION**

There were no further matters arising.

m) Action Points from Previous Governing Board Minutes

The actions raised at the summer term meeting were duly reviewed as follows:

MINUTE POINT	ACTION REQUIRED	ACTION FOR	UPDATE
3c	Circulate NGA's List of Twenty Questions for Governing Boards	JB	Completed
3c	Joint letter to parents re: parking	Chairs of Governors	Completed
3e	Circulate minutes of Monitoring committee meeting on 12 th July	HT	Completed

3e	Minor amendment to Pupil Progress committee meeting minutes	PP committee	Completed
3g	Personalise the model Confidential Reporting policy with school's name & logo	HT	ACTION
3h	Personalise the model Dignity at Work policy with the school's name & logo	HT	ACTION
3i	Review the school's Health and Safety policy	GB	Completed
4a	Contact HR re: pay for office staff	HT	Completed
4a	Liaise with Chair of Infants school re: pay for office staff	Chair	Completed
7a	Source potential governors with interest in community engagement	Chair	Completed
7a	Circulate Roles & Responsibilities document	Clerk	Completed
10a	Produce list of actions as response to results of parent survey	HT & NJ	Completed
10b	Send water & sewerage letter on behalf of GB	Chair	Completed
10d	Send pen portrait to GM for website (if not already done so)	Governors	ACTION
10e	Convene working party on Governor Visits	GS	Ongoing—see 5 (j) above

n) Committee Minutes

It was resolved that the minutes of the following meetings:

- Resources on 1st November
- Pupil Progress on 21st July
- Pupil Progress on 15th November (subject to the correction of a minor error noted below)

copies circulated previously, be approved and signed by the Chairperson and authorised for publication.

o) Matters Arising from Previous Committee Meetings

Resources on 1st November

See below under Resources.

Pupil Progress on 21st July

The committee Chairperson explained that this meeting had mainly discussed the school's SATs results.

Pupil Progress on 15th November

Governors were informed that this meeting had taken place after the departure of the previous headteacher and had been concerned mainly with reviewing RAISE Online data. The meeting had reviewed in detail what had gone well and where there was room for improvement. The number and effectiveness of interventions had been discussed. The need to better understand the spending of the Pupil Premium grant was discussed, along with the need to be ready for an OFSTED inspection.

A typographical error on p2 was noted—at paragraph 6, the first subject in the bulleted list should read “Maths” not “Writing”.

There were no further matters arising.

p) Action Points from Committee Meetings

The actions raised at the committee meetings were not reviewed.

6. RESOURCES

a) Budget Update

Governors were referred to the Budget Summary and Budget Report prepared by the School Bursar and circulated prior to the meeting. The current budget position was summarised by the committee Chairperson as tight. A small surplus would be carried forward this year and the cumulative surplus would increase to approximately £31,000. However, an in-year deficit of around £50,000 was currently predicted for 2017-2018.

Governors were informed that the Acting Headteacher and School Bursar were meeting the LA’s finance team in March to discuss the proposed deficit budget. It was further explained that the Deputy Headteacher had hoped to explore restructuring the staff numbers but had been advised by the LA’s HR department to refrain from doing so until the position on the possible school amalgamation was known.

The meeting noted that the predicted deficit for 2017-18 was caused not by an increase in cots but by a decrease in pupil numbers and the consequential loss of income. **A governor asked for further details of the Acting Headteacher’s planned restructuring of staff, stating that a number of classes had small numbers of pupils.** The Acting Headteacher informed governors that the school was overstaffed with teachers and not TAs (who were already working at full capacity). The drop in the general birth rate and the number of parents in the school’s catchment but choosing another school were also cited as factors for the drop in pupil numbers.

A governor asked where the school sports premium was shown as income on the budget. The committee Chairperson replied that he was unsure and would ask the School Bursar to explain. **ACTION**

b) Approval of School Fund Audit/Audit Arrangements

Governors were informed that the arrangements for the audit were the same as in previous years but the School Bursar would be asked to provide an update. **ACTION**

7. HEADTEACHER’S TERMLY REPORT

a) Questions and Discussion

The Headteacher’s Report had been circulated to the governors prior to the meeting and questions were invited.

The Acting Headteacher informed governors that the staffing arrangements for her own Y5 class were under review and would be communicated to parents shortly.

Full details of how the Pupil Premium grant is spent would be available for the next Resources meeting. **ACTION**

Interviews would shortly take place for the role of Acting Deputy Headteacher, which would last until the end of summer term; two internal candidates had applied. The Acting Headteacher outlined the support the LA had put in place to assist her with management of the school.

The Acting Headteacher was thanked for her report and there not being any further questions it was RESOLVED that the Headteacher's report be received.

8. STANDING ITEMS

a) School Improvement Plan (SIP)/ School Development Plan (SDP) Update

The latest version of the SDP was circulated to governors which has been shared with staff also. **A governor asked who participated in the pupil progress meetings.** The Acting Headteacher explained these were meetings between herself and the class teacher. **A governor asked how the outcomes were reported to pupils.** It was explained that the targets set were noted in the children's books. **A governor asked how often the targets were reviewed.** The meeting was told that the targets were reviewed with every marked piece of work completed. **A governor asked if parents were aware of the targets.** The Acting Headteacher explained that the targets were shown at the front of the pupil's book, but that how they were communicated to parents was an issue under consideration.

The Chairperson thanked the Acting Headteacher and the Monitoring committee for their work on the SDP.

Governors were then referred to the relevant sections within the Headteacher's report and noted that the school was working towards meeting the objectives set.

b) Appraisal and Pay Update

Governors were advised that a meeting to set the Acting Headteacher's performance targets would be arranged this term with the School Improvement Partner, having been delayed by last term's events.

AND

Governors were referred to the relevant section of the Headteacher's report relating to the staff appraisal process.

c) Report on Racist, Bullying or Homophobic Incidents

The Acting Headteacher reported that there had not been any racist incidents in school during the summer term.

The Clerk provided a nil return form, which was completed and signed by the Acting Headteacher and Chairperson; the Clerk then undertook to return the form to the appropriate section within Services to People.

ALSO

The Acting Headteacher reported that there had not been any incidents of bullying or homophobic behaviour during the summer term.

d) Report on Physical Incidents

The Acting Headteacher reported that there had been several incidents during the summer

term where the use of physical intervention procedures had been necessary; these had been reported to Services to People using the approved recording methods.

e) Young Carers Update

There was nothing to report for this item.

f) Stage on the L.A. School Protocol and School Improvement Adviser's Annual Report

It was noted that this report had been circulated to the Monitoring committee.

g) Academisation

Governors agreed this would form part of the overall discussions regarding amalgamation.

9. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

a) Governing Body Development Plan

The upcoming Development Governor workshop was highlighted along with the New Governor training. Governors discussed the Safer Recruitment training and how many of them had completed this, which was believed to be three.

b) Induction Plan and Process

c) Succession Planning

d) Training Feedback

Governors were made aware that training courses should now be booked via the GovernorHub website. The website would retain records of training sessions attended by individual governors and provide a comprehensive view of training undertaken by the governing board.

10. BRIEFING PAPERS FROM STOCKPORT LOCAL AUTHORITY

a) Schools' Finance Update

- The second stage of consultation for Schools and Higher Needs funding is expected to be released before the end of the autumn term.

b) Changes to School and College Accountability Measures

c) SEND Area Inspections

d) The Apprenticeship Levy

- The guidance was noted along with the implementation date of 1st April 2017.

e) Safeguarding

- The governing board must ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the L.A. as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. **ACTION**

- The governing board and Acting Headteacher noted the requirement to ensure that school staff have read and understood Part One of the document Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Acting Headteacher confirmed that staff had completed this.

f) Early Years Update – Extended Entitlement to Childcare

g) Early Years Update – Paediatric First Aid

- The guidance was noted.

h) Advisory Group on Governance (AGOG) – Reducing Teacher Workload

- Recommendations for the governing board regarding Marking, Planning & Resources and Data Management from the Department for Education’s AGOG Group were highlighted.

i) Governance – Confidentiality

- Governors were reminded that all documents must be redacted before being uploaded to GovernorHub.

11. DATES

a) Full Governing Board

Tuesday 21st March at 7pm

b) Committee Meetings (all at 6pm)

Resources: 7th March

Steering: 31st January

Pay committee: 24th January

Pupil progress: 16th March

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Sharing Email Addresses - GOVAS

The Clerk explained that the annual request to share their email information was made to ensure that GOVAS had up to date records; this information would not be used or shared outside GOVAS.

Governors duly **AGREED** the request to pass email information to GOVAS.

b) Sharing Email Addresses – NGA

The Clerk explained that as part of the Local Authority’s standard membership package with the NGA, all governors were entitled to receive weekly e-newsletters; three nominated governors would also receive the bi-monthly Governing Matters magazine by post. It was confirmed that personal information would not be used or shared outside the NGA.

Governors duly **AGREED** the request to pass contact details to the NGA.

c) Sharing Contact Details – GovernorHub

Governors AGREED to their contact details being uploaded to the GovernorHub site, visible only to other members of the governing board. It was noted that no personal contact details would be uploaded for staff members on the governing board.

d) End of Terms of Office

It was noted that no terms of office had ended by 31st December.

e) Approval of INSET days

The Acting Headteacher sought approval for proposed INSET days and governors AGREED the same.

f) Car Park use on Duck Race

The Acting Headteacher informed governors that the school had been approached by the Rotary Club and asked if the school could be used for car parking during the Duck Race at Bramhall Park in the summer. She was not inclined to agree to the request given the damage this would likely cause to the already-damaged playground surface. Governors agreed with her view but suggested the Rotary Club be asked if they would pay for repairs after the even if the school agreed to allow the use for parking. The Acting Headteacher agreed to make this proposal.

ACTION

g) Holiday Requests from Parents

The Acting Headteacher asked governors for confirmation they agreed with the school's adherence to the LA's policy on this matter which prohibited authorisation for holidays during term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Governors confirmed their agreement with the policy. It was noted that the LA's model attendance policy may be subject to amendment in the near future which would lead to the school to amend its own policy. **A governor asked for the school's current overall attendance figure.** The Acting Headteacher confirmed that it was 95% until the recent flu outbreak; however, the target was 97% and parents would be reminded of this via the school newsletter.

h) Production dates

Governors were informed of the dates and times of upcoming school productions this term, to which they were all invited.

With no further business to discuss, the Chairperson thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

NEVILL ROAD JUNIOR SCHOOL**AUTUMN TERM 2016 GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES****MEETING ACTION POINTS**

MINUTE POINT	ACTION REQUIRED	ACTION FOR	DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
3 (c)	Contact school office to complete DBS applications	New governors	ASAP
4	Contact Chairperson of NRI's governing board to arrange a meeting to discuss amalgamation	Chairperson	Post-meeting
5 (a)	Discuss the role of Community Engagement governor with interested staff members	Acting HT	Post-meeting
5 (f)	Circulate draft Safeguarding policy to governors	Acting HT	Post-meeting
5 (g)	Circulate draft Pay policy to governors	Acting HT	Post-meeting
5 (j)	Circulate draft Governor Visits policy	Acting HT	Post-meeting
5 (l)	Raise issue of car parking in discussion with NRI's Chairperson of governors	Chairperson	Post-meeting
5 (m)	Personalise the model Confidential Reporting policy with school's name & logo	Acting HT	Post-meeting
5 (m)	Personalise the model Dignity at Work policy with the school's name & logo	Acting HT	Post-meeting
5 (m)	Send pen portrait to GM for website (if not already done so)	Governors	Post-meeting
6 (a)	Explain where school sports premium shown on income	School Bursar	Post-meeting
6 (b)	Confirm the arrangements for the school audit	School Bursar	Post-meeting
7 (a)	Provide full details of the Pupil Premium grant spending	Acting HT	Post-meeting
10 (e)	Ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the L.A	Acting HT and Chairperson	Post-meeting
11 (f)	Propose that Rotary Club funds repairs to the school playground in return for its use at the Duck Race	Acting HT	Post-meeting