

**THE GOVERNING BODY OF BIRKBY INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at 6.30 pm by videoconference on Monday, 24 May 2021.

**PRESENT**

Dr A Williams (Chair), Mrs A Deering, Mrs L Devlin, Mrs S Haji-Lary, Mrs J Hinchliffe, Mrs P Holderness, Mrs S Khan (joined the meeting at 7.20pm approximately), Ms C Moscardini, Mr S Saeed (joined the meeting at 6.59pm), Mrs P Smith, Dr M Whalley (joined the meeting at 7.05pm), Mrs DZ Wilson.

Some members of the Governing Body experienced technical difficulties in accessing the meeting which caused them to be delayed.

**In Attendance**

Ms C Stephen (Minute Clerk)

**72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

**73. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Confidential staffing issue, to be dealt with after the close of business in the absence of staff governors, excluding Mrs Wilson.

**74. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 March 2021**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2021 be approved and signed by the Chair at a later date as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

**Name of Kirklees Learning Partner**

The name "Mike Whitefield" to be replaced with the correct spelling "Whitfield" throughout the minutes.

**75. MATTERS ARISING**

The following points were noted under Matters Arising:

- (a) **Governing Body Self Evaluation, Governor Visits and Development – (Minute 70 refers)**

Dr Williams had sourced the Skills' Audit document and would send this to governors to complete.

**Action:           Governors to complete the Skills' Audit questionnaire and return it to Dr Williams so that he can collate the information in time for the next meeting of the full Governing Body.**

The Action “Dr Williams to collate training undertaken by governors” remained outstanding.

- (b) Governing Body Self Evaluation, Governor Visits and Development – (Minute 70 refers)

Mrs Deering felt that several others who had attempted to access the final session of the Governor Induction Training had not been able to do so as it had not been made clear that the same link was to be used as for the previous session. There had been no one to contact at the time regarding any technical difficulties which meant that people had wasted time trying to access the training and ringing what proved to be a number which had no one there to answer it.

All agreed that technical support should be available for the courses provided by the LA.

**Action: Mrs Wilson to feed this back to the relevant department.**

- (c) Any Other Business – Kirklees Learning Partner’s Report – (Minute 71 (a.) refers)

Governors felt that school needed to know where Mr Whitfield had obtained the attendance figures referred to in the report.

**Action: Mrs Wilson to ask about the source of the attendance figures on Mr Whitfield’s next visit to the school.**

Governors had been consulted with regards to resuming face to face meetings. There had been a mixed response.

RESOLVED: That the next round of meetings be held by videoconferencing and that this decision be reviewed in a timely manner.

## 76. HEADTEACHER’S REPORT AND GOVERNORS’ QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher’s Report had been shared with governors prior to the meeting. Mrs Wilson drew attention to the following points:

- There were currently the equivalent of 503 pupils on roll, with part-time Nursery pupils being added together to give the full-time equivalent.
- The numbers of pupils leaving and joining the school remained high, despite the restrictions of Covid 19. The constant shifting of the school population had an impact on standards as it was difficult to ensure a child reached “Expected” when they had only recently arrived in school, often with little or no English.

**Q. Why did Year 2 have significantly more children leaving than joining?**

A. Several pupils who had returned to Eastern Europe post-Brexit had been in Year 2.

**Action: Mrs Wilson to bring detailed information about movement in Year 2 to the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.**

**Q. The numbers of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals seemed low. Could these numbers not be increased by encouraging more parents to apply?**

A. No. When a child joined the school, parents gave the school their National Insurance numbers and the school made the application for Free School Meals on their behalf. The census was taken in October but more children joined the Nursery at the January intake.

**Q. Did all Birkby Infant and Nursery School pupils go on to attend Birkby Junior School or did some parents deliberately take them out of school in order to have access to a junior school which fed into Salendine Nook rather than North Huddersfield Trust?**

A. The majority of pupils moved up to Birkby Juniors, though two had chosen to attend Brambles Academy instead, possibly for that reason.

- The number of “Child in Need” pupils had risen to two.
- Research in Belgium had shown that children missing 100 days of education were six months behind with their learning. Many pupils were in this position because of Covid 19.
- The Covid measures in place in the school were felt to have worked well and would remain in place for the foreseeable future in order to minimise the impact on children should cases occur in the school population.
- Some changes had been made to the way pupils entered the school in order to alleviate parking problems and congestion. The Highways Department was to do a site visit and advise on parking in the area.
- Having parents drop pupils off at the school gate had made for a more efficient start to the day and would be continued next year.
- Transition to the Junior School was to go ahead with one Year 2 class visiting at a time. No lunch time meal would be available. New starters in Reception would be able to meet their new class teachers in July.
- Sir Kevan Collins had been appointed as Commissioner for Education Recovery and was consulting Headteachers nationwide for their views on the best way forward to help those most affected by lockdown-the disadvantaged.

**Q. What was Kevan Collins’ role?**

A. It was an advisory role and he was currently gaining information on which to base his advice by visiting the regions and gaining feedback from head teachers on a number of set questions. There was some concern that a “one size fits all” strategy would be enforced.

**Q. Had a timeline for action been set out?**

A. No. The feedback was to be collated for September as research was still being carried out.

At an LA Skype session concern was expressed that the focus had changed from discussion about the basic needs of schools following Covid 19 to more policy-orientated questions; it seemed that Sir Kevan was doing this sort of research on a wider scale and that Covid could be used as an excuse for making widespread policy changes, such as altering the length of the school day.

**Q. Was the 6.5 hours referred to actual teaching time?**

A. No, it was the length of the school day but did not include lunch time. Union involvement and consultation was expected over this measure. School was considering reducing lunchtime to an hour now that there were fewer pupils to feed through the system and introducing an afternoon play time. Some measures were being discussed at LA level as they needed to be workable in the context of real schools.

- The Nursery boiler needed to be replaced as it had not worked properly for the past 18 months. A contribution of £17.5k from the school’s DFC would be required by the council. This would leave £10k approximately for any other works that needed to be funded by the school.

RESOLVED: That a contribution of £17.5k from the school's Devolved Formula Capital be made towards the cost of replacing the boiler in Nursery.

Governors thanked Mrs Wilson for her detailed and informative report. They commented that there were many positives to celebrate.

#### 77. ATTENDANCE REPORT

The detailed attendance figures, including breakdown by gender, ethnicity and whether a child was in receipt of Pupil Premium had been shared with governors prior to the meeting.

It was felt that it would be appropriate to combine Attendance and Safeguarding in one report in future meetings.

RESOLVED: That Attendance and Safeguarding be used as a heading on future agenda.

Questions and comments were invited from governors.

**Q. Could Mrs Wilson provide the numbers of pupils that made up the percentages for attendance in the various breakdowns? If there was, for example, only one Irish child achieving 86% attendance, it would be of less significance than if there were thirty.**

**A.** Yes, this would be done in future so that governors would be able to see what was truly significant in the Attendance Report.

**Action: Mrs Wilson to include numbers of pupils for each given group on the Attendance Report.**

Overall, attendance was just below 95%. This was quite high and had been achieved by bringing as many as possible into school over the lockdowns.

#### 78. SAFEGUARDING

There were no further safeguarding concerns to report.

#### 79. BUDGET UPDATE

All documents pertaining to the financial running of the school had been made available on the Governors' secure webpage prior to the meeting.

Governors agreed that the post of Chair of the Finance Committee should be offered to Mrs Pam Smith who accepted.

RESOLVED: That Mrs Pam Smith be appointed as Chair of the Finance Committee.

Dr Williams explained that the final budget for last year was much as discussed at the last meeting of the full Governing Body. There was a carry-forward of approximately £78k.

The proposed budget for next year had been significantly affected by a drop in pupil numbers and this had resulted in the staffing changes, also discussed at the last meeting. This, along with the use of the carry-forward, had resulted in the school being able to present a balanced budget to the local authority.

There was, however, concern regarding the future financial position of the school and ways of managing future problems needed to be considered.

The Three-Year Budget Forecast template provided by the LA had not proved useful as there was no mechanism provided to inform the school of likely pupil numbers over that period, and, as the budget was based on a per-capita formula, the school's projected income could not be worked out.

It was felt that the financial situation could only increase pressure on staff as it would mean that fewer resources, both in terms of people and commodities, would be available.

Additional changes had been made which would result in a further future shortfall.

RESOLVED: That the proposed budget, detailed in the B3 document be signed off and submitted to the Local Authority.

Discussion took place regarding the minutes of the Finance Meeting with regards to the B3.

## 80. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

### (a) Report from the Standards and Effectiveness Committee Meeting held on 24 May 2021.

Dr Whalley reported on the meeting of the Standards and Effectiveness Committee, mentioning the following points:

- The committee has looked at the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2021-22. This built on this year's targets and how the school would return to delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, detailed under three headings. Targets for outcomes were given for July 2021. Dr Whalley stated how much work had been put into the SIP thus far and how good it was to see such a positive document.
- The changes in the Early Years Curriculum were looked at via a document produced by Mrs Moscardini who had worked very hard in this area. The contextualized details, making the curriculum relevant to the school population was particularly impressive. There were lots of challenges in implementing the new curriculum but school had made a very positive response to address these.
- The committee had learned that Phonics courses now needed to be accredited by the DfE and that school had to choose one of these to use. Mrs Moscardini had attended training where the options had been looked at.

### **Q. Had any decision been made as to which accredited course would be used to teach Phonics?**

A. Not yet. School was working with the LA's expert, Karen Pickles, and had someone from the DfE coming to speak on the issue. It was hoped that resources would be in place by September.

- The work already done by Mrs Moscardini on Launchpad to Literacy fitted very well with the new EYFS curriculum and Dr Whalley thanked her for her efforts in this area.

Dr Whalley thanked the members of the Standards and Effectiveness Committee for their expert contributions during the meetings.

## 81. RSHE UPDATE

Mrs Hinchliffe informed governors that she had responded to any comments or queries made by parents on receipt of the draft RSHE Policy and had been able to address their concerns by providing further examples of what was to be taught. No further feedback from parents had been received and so it was assumed that they were happy with the policy.

RESOLVED: That the RSHE Policy be adopted by the full Governing Body, following consultation with parents.

A written report was provided.

Governors thanked Mrs Hinchliffe for her input into this process.

## 82. SCHOOL WEBSITE

An audit of the school website was due to ensure that it was fully compliant with statutory requirements.

**Action: Dr Williams to undertake a website audit in the summer term.**

It was anticipated that some changes would need to be made in September.

## 83. GOVERNING BODY SELF EVALUATION, GOVERNOR VISITS AND DEVELOPMENT

Dr Whalley had discussed the current status and the changes in EYFS with Mrs Moscardini.

Dr Williams pointed out that governor visits to school were allowed following a negative lateral flow test but that they were only to take place where the business could not be conducted remotely.

Dr Williams had attended a virtual Preparing for Ofsted training session.

***The following item was taken out of agenda order.***

## 84. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Governing Body be held at 6.30 pm by videoconference on Monday, 5 July 2021.

**Action: Dr Williams to share the proposed dates for next year's meetings before the next meeting of the full Governing Body so that they could be discussed at that meeting.**

## 85. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

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.

At this point of the meeting, Mrs Hinchliffe asked what procedure the school followed to conduct its staffing structure review and requested a copy of the Governors' Staffing Review Policy be sent to her by post.

***Staff governors, excepting Mrs Wilson, left the meeting at this point.***

***Agenda order was resumed.***

## 86. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Deleted for the purpose of staff members**