



# Minutes of Thirsk Community Primary School Governing Board on Monday 12 December 2022 at 6:15pm

**Present:** Stuart Mountford – chair (SM), Richard Chandler – head (RC), Jane Grainger (JG), Jenny Buck (JB), Lesley Miller (LM)

**Apologies:** Lucy Minican (LAM), Charlotte Pearson (CP), Gemma Wall (GW)

**In attendance:** Jane Jackson – clerk (JJ), Caroline Buck – North Yorkshire finance.

No 22/23	Item	Action
<b>PART 'A' – Governance</b>		
	<b>Welcome</b> The chair opened the meeting at 6:20pm.	
3.1	<b>Apologies and determine whether absences should be consented to</b> Apologies had been received from GW, LAM and CP and were consented to.	
3.2	<b>Declaration of business interests</b> JG worked for a virtual school.	
3.3	<b>Approve minutes of meeting on 14 November 2022</b> The minutes of the Full Governing Board (FGB) meeting held on 14 November 2022 were circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. <b>Approval</b> - the minutes were deemed as a true record.	
3.4	<b>Matters arising:</b> 2.13 – the governor visit proforma had been updated by RC who welcomed feedback from governors. The SIP had been updated with what governors should be looking for. GW would be stepping down as staff governor. Kate Wimpory would take up the role of staff governor from January as no other candidates had come forward. <b>KCSIE</b> – remaining governors to sign to say they have read the document. <b>Appeals committee</b> – LM agreed to sit on the appeals committee and there remained one vacancy, which could be filled depending upon availability.	
3.5	<b>Correspondence</b> A teaching assistant would be retiring at then end of term after over 20 years at the school and would be greatly missed. <b>GQ – Had a replacement been found?</b> A – there would be five lunchtimes and five afternoons to cover. Cover had been arranged for all the afternoons, shared between two existing staff until July. Lunchtimes would also be covered by a range of existing staff. No new appointment had been made due to the budget and previous difficulties in appointing 1:1 support staff.	
3.6	<b>Skills audit review and Governor vacancy</b> The results of the skills audit had been shared with governors prior to the meeting. There were no obvious gaps in the skill-set of the current governors. After discussion it was agreed to appoint Sally Burton to fill the current vacancy as co-opted governor	

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	<p>as her skills and experience would be an asset to the FGB. It was felt that the other person who had expressed an interest would be happy to wait until and upcoming vacancy arose.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously agreed to appoint Sally Burton as co-opted governor.</b></p>	
3.7	<p><b>Governor training</b></p> <p>LM had completed cyber awareness training.</p>	
<b>PART 'B' - School Improvement</b>		
3.8	<p><b>Revised budget</b></p> <p>The revised budget and benchmarking document had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. The bursar picked out key points from the budget and answered questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 was based on 180 pupils with reducing numbers for years 2 and 3. The nursery was maintaining good numbers, which was having a positive impact on funding.</li> <li>• SEND funding was ever-changing with children with educational health care plans (EHCPs) arriving at the school, leaving the school, or EHCPs being granted.</li> <li>• Pupil Premium (PP) was based on current PP however this was an estimate for future years as it was hard to predict numbers of PP children joining the school.</li> <li>• Other grants included the YEAT income to release a teacher to work on this, funding for a student placement, and a feed in tariff.</li> <li>• Catering income: the school meal prices would be increasing by 9% in January and were likely to increase again in September. This was a recent announcement and had not been reflected in the current budget. It was commented that this would widen the gap between the actual cost of meals and the free school meal (FSM) funding, and that school would have to make up the short-fall.</li> <li>• After-school club numbers had reduced from the start budget. This was possibly due to post-pandemic changes in work patterns and child care arrangements. Breakfast club numbers remained viable. It would need to be considered whether after-school club could continue. It was suggested that parents be consulted regarding their choices for childcare after school. <b>Action: a questionnaire be sent out to gauge interest and reasons for the decline in uptake for after-school club.</b></li> <li>• School-led tutoring funding and the recovery premium were difficult to manage and read on the budget as they worked across two financial years and some amounts would be paid back.</li> <li>• Staffing costs included built-in increments and inflationary pay rises including an estimated national pay rise of around 3%.</li> <li>• Supply costs had been higher due to agency staff covering a TA vacancy. This would now be ending as the position had now been filled.</li> <li>• Cleaning – this was showing a large increase due to inflationary pay rises and the area being labour intensive.</li> <li>• Gas and electric – extra costs had been built in but it was hoped this would be a worst-case scenario.</li> </ul> <p><b>GQ – What was the reason for the overspend in the maths budget?</b></p>	Head

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	<p>A – this was due to a programme called CLIC which had two-year license. The cost would be adjusted at the end of the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cluster school money – RC was awaiting a response from other head teachers regarding the spending of these funds which were carried forward from a historic cluster group.</li> <li>School Improvement de-delegation expenditure was doubling. This was a flat rate for any school regardless of the amount of support being received and equated to approximately £600 per day for the five days' support being received in school over the year.</li> <li>The in-year revenue balances were forecast as -£658.44 in year one, -£129,681 in year two, and -£144,380 in year three.</li> </ul> <p><b>GQ – What were the options for addressing this deficit?</b></p> <p>A – The most significant results would be through increasing pupil numbers and reducing staffing, however this was very difficult whilst building and growth continues on the other side of the town near the new school. Time would be spent examining staffing in January, including the leadership structure.</p> <p>A governor commented that another impact on staffing costs was the need to meet additional needs of pupils who were unable to find places at specialist schools, as these were all full. There was some funding available through EHCPs and this could be looked at again to ensure school were receiving the highest bands possible, There were increased additional needs generally post-pandemic, which was also impacting on staffing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The start budget in March/April would be set at a deficit which would mean the LA would be expecting a plan and monthly monitoring would need to be submitted.</li> </ul> <p>Finance governors would meet to look at the start budget in more detail before submitting to governors. The most likely solution would be mixed classes including looking closely at the sunshine room, although the current set-up worked extremely well.</p> <p><b>The revised budget was agreed by governors.</b></p> <p>Governors then looked at the Benchmarking document which showed high premises costs. It was pointed out that the square-footage of the school had reduced slightly.  <b>Action – premises costs to be investigated to check this is accurate, including caretaking and cleaning costs.</b></p>	Head
<b>7:28pm Caroline Buck left the meeting.</b>		
3.9	<p><b>Plan for sports premium spend and agree outcomes</b></p> <p>The sports premium plan had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Governors had no questions regarding the plan.</p> <p><b>The planned sports premium spend and outcomes were agreed by governors.</b></p>	
3.10	<p><b>Plan for pupil premium spend and agree outcomes</b></p> <p>The pupil premium plan would be discussed at the next meeting.</p>	

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	<b>Action – add to January agenda</b>	Clerk
3.11	<p><b>Headteacher's report</b></p> <p>A written report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Governors discussed work on the curriculum and how it was being shaped to reflect the needs of the pupils and the school. School values were to be reflected in the curriculum and progression documents for each subject would be finalised in January.</p> <p>The multi-use games arena plan was progressing and planning was being looked at.</p> <p>There was a discussion about behaviour and attitudes which were largely very good and governors were informed of one specific challenge during the second half of the term.</p> <p><b>GQ – Had the comment about misogyny in relation to football on a recent report been addressed?</b></p> <p>A – Yes, this had been addressed in assembly and rules had been clarified. Football was more inclusive on the playground and other sports were also being played, as well as football-free days. The writer of the report had been looking at this in other schools as well – there was a lot of unconscious bias.</p> <p>Attendance was 93.2% compared to the national average of 94.5%. Absence was mostly disadvantaged pupils which would be focused on. Class rewards for attendance continued as well as follow-up with persistent absentees.</p>	
3.12	<p><b>Link governor reports</b></p> <p>There were no reports.</p>	Head
3.13	<p><b>External reports</b></p> <p>A safeguarding report and a report from the yearly planning meeting had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. An Early Years visit had taken place with the report yet to be submitted.</p>	
<b>PART 'C' – Other</b>		
3.14	<p><b>Policies for review</b></p> <p>The following policies had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom of Information policy</li> <li>• Guidance managing allegations against staff – this mentioned a “deputy designated senior manager” – it was agreed with the chair that he would take the role of deputy.</li> <li>• Online policy</li> <li>• Uniform policy – it should be made clear that there was an expectation for pupils to wear school uniform on a daily basis.</li> <li>• Use of images – safeguarding and child protection would be added as well as health and safety reasons for use of images.</li> </ul> <p><b>With the above changes, the policies were agreed by governors.</b></p>	

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3.15	<b>Safeguarding and Child Protection</b> This had been covered in the Headteacher's report.	
3.16	<b>How has this meeting impacted on the welfare and progress of our pupils?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The budget had been discussed and the future finances considered.</li> <li>• A new governor had been appointed.</li> <li>• Safeguarding had been added to the use of images policy.</li> </ul>	
3.17	<b>AOB</b> The clerk would contact governors regarding timings and preferred days for future meetings in order to accommodate a new clerk in April.	Clerk
3.18	<b>Confidential staffing/school updates</b> There were no confidential updates.	
3.19	<b>Date of the next meeting</b> Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> January 6:15pm	
Please note: The colour coding above links to the three key roles of governance questioning; <b>RED</b> for 'setting strategic direction', <b>BLUE</b> for 'holding Headteacher to account for educational performance' <b>GREEN</b> for 'ensuring financial health, probity and value for money'.		

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 8:15pm.

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