



Minutes of Thirsk Community Primary School Governing Board on Monday 15th May 2023 at 6:15pm

Present: Lucy Minican – Vice Chair (LAM), Richard Chandler – head (RC), Jenny Buck (JB), Sally Burton (SB), Lisa Garthwaite (LG), Jane Grainger (JG), Kelly Wood (KW).

Apologies: Stuart Mountford – chair

In attendance: Ruth Gregory – clerk (RG) Caroline Buck – NYC finance (CB)
R Kaufman (RK), S Kirkman (SK), Gemma Wall (GW), - SLT Team

Governing Body functions:

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school

Holding the Headteachers to account for the educational performance of the schools and their pupils

Ensuring the sound, proper and efficient use of the school's financial resources

GC: Governor Challenge **A:** Answer

No 22/23	Item	Action
PART 'A' – Governance		
8.1	Welcome The Vice-Chair opened the meeting at 6:15pm. A reminder was issued of the importance of confidentiality. She welcomed the senior leadership team who would be giving data reports to the governors.	
8.2	Apologies and determine whether absences should be consented to Stuart Mountford.	
8.3	Declaration of business interests JG worked for a virtual school.	
8.9	Data Reports This was brought forward on the agenda to allow staff to leave the meeting when the reports had been delivered. RK explained that the figures showed figures with and without SEND pupils as the figures for PPG are affected greatly when these are included. At present the reports do not take into consideration age of the pupils. The three steps progress is on track for year 3. Reading: RK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading remains quite strong throughout the school. • Reading in year 1 is below the national average, however only 1 PPG pupil in this year is not SEND and obtained 100% non-PPG less SEND achieved 56% which is close to the national average. • Reading remains quite strong across the whole school, SEND pupils are given a lot of support with phonics. 	

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- Reading everyday with PPG pupils is showing a definite improvement especially with PPG pupils, the school will continue to read daily with both PPG and SEND as this is beneficial for all pupils. If pupils cannot read then they cannot write. Year 2 results are very good but year 4 is below average.

Comment: The reading results are very encouraging.

GC: Do other schools have the same problems with reading?

A: Yes, covid has had an adverse effect on reading and continues to do so.

Writing: GW

- Writing in school is the largest area of weakness with less children on track than in the autumn.
- The school's approach to writing is not the best and substantial changes need to be made. Before the half-term then SLT will make a decision on changes required. As this will involve changes in the timetable staff need to be made aware before summer in order for the changes to be implemented in September.
- The school has been following the McKie system for 3 years and during staff meetings the gaps in writing have been discussed and the staff feel that writing should be made more enjoyable and relevant in order to engage the children's imagination.
- A long-term plan is required going through to 2023/4 with more class than group sessions allowing for more teacher support and activities to forge deeper understandings.
- Years 3 and 4 are a particular cause for concern, year 2 is good and being moderated. Year 5 requires a catch up for PPG pupils.

GQ: Will the SLT decision definitely be made before the half term, is it a realistic time schedule?

A: Yes, it will be made for the summer.

GQ: The curriculum had two previous proposals has it been decided which?

A: Research is ongoing, and a quick decision will be made.

GQ: Year 2 group has good results – how will changes in the curriculum affect this?

A: It is a tricky balance, but the use of grammar has to be considered as part of the changes introduced.

Writing should be more purposeful and linked to current issues, the context needs to be more personal.

Maths: SK

- Maths continues to improve with PPG - SEND in years 1-3 attaining 100% and the majority of pupils are reaching ARE.
- The progress in year 2 is outstanding and year 6 figures for PPG – SEND are good. White Rose is used which is pictorial led.
- Year 1 group are not targeted, teachers work with the most needy set of pupils outside the year group.
- Year 3 is 91% on track for maths. The White Rose is a strong tool kit and a support for ECTs.
- Year 4 is a key group working with ECTs concentrating on multiplication checks and the use of Rock Star at home, however the development of PPG and non PPG needs improvement.

- Year 5 at the end of year 1 was at 28%\$ but is now at 68% and on track for a good progress report. Teacher judgement is used in conjunction with White Rose assessments.
- The STATS completed by year 6 were hard especially in the reading and writing elements. Examples were given by the SLT which the Governors agreed were tough for the children. They also considered that it must have been deflating for the pupils.

The vice-chair thanked the SLT for their time in preparing and delivering their reports. and their continual hard work at the school.

The SK and GW left the meeting at 6.42pm

8.8

Agree Start Budget:

CB updated the governors on the outturn for 22/23 which was better than anticipated with extra monies received from additional nursery and SEN funding. Savings in expenditure from energy costs as budgeted figures set prior to government aid scheme.

Comment: Energy costs in the new budget should be considered.

Figures for the start budget were circulated at the meeting.

Pupil numbers is key to LEA funding, anticipated numbers in year 1 are 148 and rises in year 2. Nursery numbers are difficult to estimate in advance. Nursery figures used are estimated for a low entry. SEN funding reduces as pupil numbers reduce over the next three years. PP is up slightly as is the figure for FSMs. The school meal price rises in September to £3.45, there is a danger of losing £1.00 per FSM.

Income from after school club has reduced.

Savings have been made in expenses where possible, the main expenditure is on staffing and on-going costs, insurance and pension contributions, inflation has been built in.

GQ: Have future pay awards been considered?

A: A percentage has been built in based on staff moving up a pay grade.

GQ: Has headteacher recruitment costs been built into the budget?

A: Yes, this is covered in the budget.

Expenses are largely based on NY estimates as the majority of services are provided by NY contractors as the school is not big enough to go out to other suppliers as academies can. The purchase contribution for new computers is shown in the budget.

Unfortunately, the figures show a deficit going forwards, but these can improve if pupil numbers rise.

GQ: Has the deficit taken into account any staff restructuring?

A: No, but some contingencies have been built into the plan.

Year 3 has historically shown poor figures, however things often change over the period of time. The figures are not self-adjusting hence restructuring must be considered.

GQ: The main expenses are on staffing, are there any changes or trimmings that can be made to other costs? What about school trips?

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	<p>A: Not really savings have been made wherever possible. Parents [apay for trips apart from PP children and an allowance is in the budget for this.</p> <p>Energy costs forecast show the worst case scenario and are therefore a significant input to the figures.</p> <p>Staffing has been cut as fine as possible hence a TA has not been replaced. Any teachers pay increase has further costs with pension contributions and insurance cost increases.</p> <p>GQ: Has a change of food providers been considered?</p> <p>A: NY charges vary – this could be sdue to some schools subsidising the costs.</p> <p>The Governors were asked if they were happy to approve the budget for submitting to North Yorkshire.</p> <p>They agreed to the budget but wanted the minutes to show their concern at the deficit.</p> <p>CB left at 7.15pm</p>	
8.4	<p>Approve minutes of meeting on 17th April 2023</p> <p>The minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting held on 17 April 2023 were circulated to all governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>There were two amendments to the minutes which would be corrected and brought to the next meeting for signing.</p> <p>Approval – the confidential minutes were deemed as a true record and signed by the vice-chair.</p>	Clerk
8.5	<p>Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8.5 Further premises costs information requested – on going • 8.5 Governor vacancies – RC had contacted Thirsk School to see if any staff would be interested in becoming a governor but there had been no Interest either from the school or the newsletter sent out to parents. The school would continue to try and recruit a parent governor • 8.8 Start budget to be added to May Agenda see Item 8.8 	Clerk RC
8.6	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p>A quote and a report from the SBM about IT equipment had been circulated to the governors. As the computers in the ICT suite are over 10 years old it is proposed that 15 of the computers be replaced this year and the remaining 15 in year 24/25. There is money in the capital balance for part of this and the remainder has been budgeted for in the start budget.</p> <p>Q: Presumably this will have to be continually review/ed. Will the teachers lap-tops need budgeting for replacements?</p> <p>A: ICT equipment is being replaced yearly and included in budget figures for ICT.</p>	
8.7	<p>Governor training:</p> <p>JG had completed some Governor Training on the 10th May.</p>	

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8.10	Link Governor Reports LAM and JG had visited the school during the Stats tests which they found had been carried out professionally and the children found the teachers' guides and instructions easy to follow. Two staff were present at all times to ensure that the security and conditions were upheld at all times.	
8.11	External reports None	
8.12	Resources: Staffing/Premises Staffing is discussed under item 8.20 KW reported that a plastic tunnel had been donated by the NY Highways department for the Forest School. The tunnel will need approval from the Governors before it can be situated – it is approximately 600m by 2 metres in length and it is anticipated that it will be partly buried along the length to secure it. There is no risk of collapse as it is strong corrugated piping as used by the highways. The cost to buy would be between £500 and £600. GQ: Has there been a risk assessment carried out? A: Yes, this will be required – the tunnels are used in a number of forest schools. RC will contact the schools H & S advisor. GQ: Are you satisfied that it can be supervised satisfactorily? A: The risk assessment will consider any blind spots and there will always be adult supervision. The tunnel will only be used at Forest school times and not in play time. GQ: Could it be cut to make more than 1 tunnel? A: Yes it could but then it would be more unstable. The Governors approved the installation of the tunnel pending a risk assessment. The school was trying to get soil donated to help with the siting. It is hoped to plant a willow dome for the children. The school has applied to the Coop for funding.	RC
8.13	To consider performance management No figures were available for the meeting.	
	PART 'C' – Other	
8.14	Policies for Review 23 North Yorkshire H & S policies were approved – there was a typing error on the events policy and the business continuity plan which would be corrected. See below The old leave and new leave policies were also approved.	

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	North Yorkshire Policies: Allergens Policy Bomb Threat Policy Business Continuity Plan DSE Procedure Emergency Out of Hours Procedure Events Procedure Fire Safety Procedure First Aid Procedure Health & Safety Policy Homeworking Policy Intimate Care Procedure Laptop and Tablet Procedure Lettings Procedure Lone Worker Procedure Midday Supervision Procedure Missing Child Procedure Nappy Changing Procedure NYCC'S MES Procedures for supporting children with medical conditions August 2021 School Medical Policy Snow and Ice Clearing Procedure Use of Chemicals at Work Procedure Use of Sunscreens Procedure Working at Height Procedure	
8.15	Safeguarding/Child Protection Two children had been referred to children's social care, 2 pupils are in LAC and one further pupil is considered to be a child in need.	
8.16	Attendance Arbor is working well and more information is now available. Attendance is at 93% and rising. Some children have difficulty coming into school when it is busy and allowance is made for a later start. No holidays have been authorised during the school term although there have been requests to travel to visit family members. If the school reports absences it is the LA's responsibility to collect fines. Travellers' families are allowed to travel if dictated by occupational or cultural heritage but they must maintain contact by phone on a weekly basis – at the moment there are 4 children this applies to. Comment: It could be a safeguarding issue if this contact is not maintained. GQ: Should they not attend another school ? A: Yes, but there is no social worker for these children to follow this up.	
8.17	SEND The lowest class number for SEND children is at 14% which is above the national average of 12%. Any SEND leavers are replaced very quickly by new pupils, the school is forced to take children who are in LAC/EHCP as directed by the LA. GQ: Are academies directed to take SEND children? A: No, they have their own admission procedures, schools can appeal but only on the grounds of they do not have the resources to meet the needs required.	

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8.18	How has this meeting impacted on the welfare and progress of our pupils? Data reports by the SLT explained to the governors. Discussed plans re improving writing going forwards. Start budget agreed. Forest School new equipment and risk assessments needed.	
8.19	AOB None	
	RK and KW left the meeting at 8.10pm	
8.20	Discussed in Confidential Minutes	
8.21	Date of Next Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday 12th June @ 6.15pm The meeting previously arranged for 10 th July has been changed to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday 17th July @ 6.15pm in order that Sats results due on 11th July can be reported on. 	

There being no other business the Vice Chair closed the meeting at 9.10pm

Actions Arising	
RC	Contacting the school's H & S advisor re Tunnel for Forest School
	Forest School Risk Assessments

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