



NORTH KIDLINGTON SCHOOL

Head Teacher: Ms Emilie Fidler

Chair of Governors: Ms Christabel Ashby

Nurturing potential, growing success

MINUTES

Full Governing Board (FGB) meeting held on Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 7pm at school

Present

Christabel Ashby – Chair
Carol Carter
Keri Dallimore-Gray
Emilie Fidler
Alastair Hosier
James Philpott
Rebecca Pyrah
Alex Reip – Vice-chair
Charlotte Screnock
Brenda Williams

Co-Opted
Co-Opted
Co-Opted
Head Teacher
Co-Opted
Parent
Parent
Parent
Co-Opted
Local Authority (LA)

In attendance: Bryony Thomas, clerk

Apologies: Kapil Divecha (Parent), Jo Hunt (Staff)

Confirmation of quorum: quorum was met

No.	ITEM
1	Welcome and apologies for absence Christabel welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Kapil Divecha and Jo Hunt.
2	Declarations of interest There were no new declarations of interest.
3	Notification of any urgent business None was raised.
4	Approval and signing of the minutes from the previous meeting (held 23rd January 2024)* The minutes were approved, with no amendments, and signed as a true record of the meeting.
5	Matters arising from the minutes not arising elsewhere AP1 – Alex has completed the proposal for a new Apple classroom and submitted it to the county council. They are checking to see whether there is sufficient money to provide the new building. If there is, there is a possibility that the Cedar/Chestnut classroom could be replaced at the same time. Governors expressed their huge thanks to Alex for all his hard work on this project to date.

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	AP2 – Alex is still investigating possible funding for development of the playground from several external sources. AP1 AP3 – Bryony circulated the delegation planner with the minutes of the January FGB meeting for committees to then check at their next meetings. AP4 – The working group on academisation has been formed and has a good range across the school’s stakeholders. AP5 – The teachers’ pay policy has been amended by hand and then scanned for uploading onto the website. AP6 – Alex has emailed the governor vacancy details originally published on LinkedIn to all governors. The vacancies have also been advertised in the parent newsletter. AP7 – Emilie, Nina, Alex and Kapil met with the solar panel provider SNRG and have agreed to go ahead with the project. Solar panels will be fitted to all school roofs and batteries and electric car charging points installed. There will be no cost to the school, which will then purchase electricity at a heavily discounted rate. There is a guarantee that the cost will not rise and if prices go down, the cost to the school will be adjusted accordingly. After 25 years, the school will own the panels. If the school has two new classrooms, as hoped, these will have their own system. The county council still needs to sign the contract to lease the roof space and were reminded again today to do so. Governors questioned whether the gas boiler could be replaced with a heat pump. SNRG does not install these, but Alex will look into whether there would be enough energy generated to run one, for future information. AP2 AP8 – Governors are still unable to access the school’s network. The problem seems to be with the need to download certificates to then allow access. Emilie will contact 123ICT again about the issues getting online that the governors are facing. If this does not work, James will liaise with them directly. AP3
6	Discuss head’s written report, including progress on the school improvement plan (SIP)* The report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors asked about the discussions on competition in boys. It has been traditionally thought that boys like competition and that it can therefore be used to stimulate engagement at school. However, this has been found to be the case only in some high-achieving boys, and in fact competition can result in boys giving up. Research has also shown that streaming for maths can have a neutral or negative effect and that classes work best when mixed. The challenge for North Kidlington school is that it has a 1.5 class entry and the question is therefore who to put in the mixed class. Years 5 and 6 have been modelling a different approach to maths teaching, where Year 6 is taught together, with additional adult support in the classroom, and Year 5 is taught as two smaller classes. The approach has worked and will now be rolled out to Years 1/2 and 3/4, with the older class being taught as a whole and the younger class as two smaller groups, where they can receive more targeted support. Governors also questioned whether the school has to purchase an epi pen. Parents provide epi pens for their child if needed, but the school also has a generic one. Unfortunately, the pen goes out of date quite quickly and is expensive to replace.

	Governors viewed the continuous professional development (CPD) programme as good, and asked about the provision of training for the teaching assistants (TAs), as discussed following the staff survey. Training has been provided on using saws in design and technology classes and was well-received. The school cannot pay the support staff for the additional hours when training, but it is recognised that good CPD can have a better impact on wellbeing than pay and conditions. The nursery Small Steps is taking on the former Magpies site, but is still waiting for the county council to sign the contract. The younger children will remain at their Exeter Hall site, with preschool children moving to the North Kidlington school site. With regard to the staffing situation, the school is managing without the absent TA. With regard to attendance, two pupils are to be home-schooled. There are four pupils with very poor attendance but, overall, attendance is good.
7	Update on academisation including set up of the working group The working group on academisation has been formed and has a good range across the school's stakeholders. Alex to circulate a list of the group's members. AP4
8	Discuss budget and staffing priorities for coming year Nina Manning, the school bursar, will be working on the budget this week. There are concerns that the long-term absence of several staff members will have consequences for the new budget, as any insurance payout will not cover all of the costs incurred and premiums are likely to be increased. However, Apple class numbers look reasonable for next year. Emilie is to join the schools' forum. Governors asked whether more TAs would be needed going forward in support of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The school is in a relatively good position compared with other schools but may need to be creative in its use of support staff. As the babies born during Covid reach school age, there are likely to be increasing problems arising from a lack of socialisation and other skills learnt by mixing with other young children.
9	Approve committee reports
9.1	Curriculum – 27th February 2024* Information from the meeting had been circulated with the minutes. Governors who had recently attended the Oxfordshire Governors' Association (OGA) meeting on governors' role in bringing learning to life felt that North Kidlington provides an excellent well-rounded curriculum. It was agreed that the meeting dates for both the Curriculum and Resources committees need to be better considered for the coming academic year, and the dates of the FGB meetings will be adjusted accordingly. AP5
10	Safeguarding update There is nothing major to report. Carol has been in to see Sarah Müldür, the school SENCo. Her report outlines the pressures on Emilie, covering for absent colleagues in Apple class. The plan works well but is not sustainable in the long-term, despite being a positive experience for Emilie.
11	Health and safety update, including staff welfare

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	The state of the national health service, with extremely long waiting lists, is having a very negative impact on the functioning of schools and businesses country-wide. Long-term staff absence has an impact on the well-being of both the absent staff and those in school and, in addition, it is a challenging time of year. The school is still waiting for its Ofsted inspection, which is imminent.
12	Governance updates
12.1	Governor appointments One potential new governor is interested in discussing the role further and governors were happy for him to be invited to the next meeting. Charlotte will write about the role of the governor and Rebecca is happy to be interviewed about her role for the school website. AP6
12.2	Governor visits There have been several governor visits over the last half-term. Carol has also been in to act as a scribe for the practice SATS and was impressed by the calm and non-stressful atmosphere provided for the children.
12.3	Governor training completed Brenda and Rebecca attended the OGA meeting, as outlined in item 9.1.
12.4	Confirmation that website is compliant and GIAS (Get Information about Schools) is up to date GIAS is up to date. All items on the website checklist have been actioned so the website is compliant.
13	Any other business Governors commented positively on the world book days run by the school. They also commented that the newsletter should be kept separate from the flyers. The camps run at school should be included in the letting's information on the head's report.
	Meeting closed at: 8.05pm.
ACTION POINTS AP1 – Alex to continue to investigate possible funding for development of the playground from several external sources. AP2 – Alex to look into whether there would be enough energy generated by the solar panels to run a heat pump for future information. AP3 – Emilie to contact 123ICT again about the issues getting online that the governors are facing. If this does not work, a governor will contact them directly. James has offered to be a liaison. AP4 – Alex to circulate a list of the members of the working group on academisation. AP5 – The Curriculum and Resources committees to plan their dates for the coming academic year, so that the dates of the FGB meetings can be adjusted accordingly. AP6 – Charlotte to write about the role of the governor and Rebecca to be interviewed about her role for the school website.	

*Indicates paperwork circulated for this item

NB: All policies must be reviewed with reference to the approved equality duty statement

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