



NORTH KIDLINGTON SCHOOL

Head Teacher: Ms Emilie Fidler

Chair of Governors: Ms Christabel Ashby

***North Kidlington School inspires and develops every individual to enjoy,
achieve and succeed***

MINUTES

Full Governing Board (FGB) meeting held on Tuesday 28th June 2022 at 7pm at school

Present

Christabel Ashby – Chair
Carol Carter
Amanda Darley
Kapil Divecha, until 7.55pm
Emilie Fidler
Jackie Garlick – Vice-chair
Alastair Hosier
Jo Hunt
James Philpott
Rebecca Pyrah
Alex Reip
Charlotte Screnock

Co-Opted
Co-Opted
Co-Opted
Parent
Head Teacher
Co-Opted
Co-Opted
Staff
Parent
Parent
Parent
Co-Opted

In attendance – Bryony Thomas, clerk

Apologies – Keri Dallimore-Gray (Co-Opted), Stephen Herring (Co-Opted), Brenda Williams (LA)

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 Keri, Stephen and Brenda. Stephen is stepping down from his position as co-opted governor.
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 26th April 2022)* The minutes were approved, with no amendments, and signed as a true record of the meeting.
5	Matters arising AP1 – Christabel had visited Early Years with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance in May to see the classes in action and assess whether there is a case for arguing that the area is not fit for purpose. The weather was good and children were making the most of all of the

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play area. However, the inside space was still noisy, proving very distracting to pupils working with teachers and teaching assistants (TAs). There was no quiet space to work. A significant part of the area was taken up with storage and coats and bags, etc. Pupils have to be prevented from playing in this area at times.

From September, the new reading framework requires Reception pupils to write at tables. There are not, currently, sufficient tables for this to be possible, even using the small group model, and no space to add any. On the day of Christabel's visit, there were two teachers and a large number of TAs – eight generally work in the unit, two classroom TAs and six working one to one. Colleagues struggled to pass each other and it was not a comfortable area to work.

One of the two designated 'carpet' areas was better than the other, with less storage on the walls. The smaller area does not have sufficient space for pupils to sit on the carpet when in a circle. The route to the toilets and sandpit is blocked when pupils are on the carpet so sessions can be disrupted if the other class finish their session first. This places pupils in Red Apples class at a potential academic disadvantage compared with pupils in Green Apples class.

The health and safety audit raised concerns over the storage area as pupils could try to climb the boxes. There is also the possibility that an external fire survey would fail the area, with a secondary fire exit being partially blocked. Furthermore, there are not enough sockets so an extension lead has to be used for the class teacher to use her laptop.

Governors agreed that the Early Years area is not adequate. Christabel will work on a draft request to the council for an additional classroom, raising all the concerns outlined here, ready for the FGB meeting in September. Emilie will forward the health and safety report as soon as it is received. All governors who have any additional concerns about the area to contact Christabel. **AP1**

Governors questioned what we need if the council agree that the space is insufficient. Best practice would be two classrooms with free flow space between them and a designated zone for coat storage, toilets, etc. which leads off the free flow area. Alex will try to source alternative funds for the classroom in the likelihood that the council will refuse the school's request. **AP2**

Governors wished to emphasise the good work being achieved in Reception despite the limitations of the building. The area has also been improved as best possible with a large clear-out of displays and non-essential items. The canopy will be installed over the summer as planned, as it is considered essential for pupils to be able to fully use the external space. An increase in pupil numbers is not expected as there is a population drop at present in Kidlington, and the school is pleased that it has 39 (of a possible 45) pupils entering Reception in September.

AP2 – Stephen has completed a health and safety site walk with the caretaker, as a fresh pair of eyes, and Christabel will ask for his feedback before he finishes. **AP3**

AP3 – Amanda and Alex have not had time to take the possibility of solar panels forward, and there is no rush as the school roof needs replacing first. There has been a company in to quote for replacing the roof so there may be progress with this. The possibility of solar panels will be carried forward on the finance and premises agenda.

	AP4 – Emilie has provided an update on the finances of The Burrow for the current meeting, to be discussed in item 7. AP5 – Governors had shared comments via email on the four policies deferred to the current meeting. AP6 – Christabel is compiling a list of reasons to visit the school that governors can use, which is still to be finalised. The purpose of the list is to ensure visits are useful and focused, and Christabel will email it to governors ready for the new term. AP4 It was agreed that more comprehensive forms will be used to record governor visits, and then uploaded on GovernorHub. Blank forms will be available on GovernorHub and at Reception. The electronic sign-in system will also record governor visits as further evidence of their time spent at school. Visits to work on the wild garden or to accompany students from elsewhere should be recorded on the detailed forms. Governors who visit school regularly to help with reading, for example, should complete one form each term giving an outline of their visits.
6	Discuss head's written report, including progress on and impact of the school improvement plan (SIP)* The report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The term has been a busy one, with lots of school trips taking place. The school is very conscious of the cost of living crisis, however, and next year trips will be planned that take this into account. The Reception classes have been able to use money provided by the Friends of North Kidlington School (FONKS) to fund their trips, but this may not be available next year. Three children from Ukraine have joined the school and have integrated well. Governors questioned how they were allocated places. Families followed the usual in-year application process and were allocated spaces if they were available. Ukrainian pupils automatically qualify for free school meals and transport to school. Governors questioned what was to be done with the Oxford Reading Tree books that do not align with the new phonics scheme which is very strict on what children can read at what time. Some of the books will work with the new scheme but some will have to be used for wider reading or given to families. Governors also questioned whether money had been provided for the new phonics scheme, but this was not the case. Sadly, the firm providing the original phonics scheme used by the school had been too small to apply to be a recommended provider. The new scheme is from Twinkl and will cost more than £2000.
7	Receive detailed update on breakfast and after-school clubs, including their financial position* A financial report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Numbers attending the breakfast and after-school clubs have been steadily rising and are almost breaking even. A new member of staff will be required for the breakfast club. Governors disagreed with the proposal that the clubs should be made cheaper. Two pupils qualifying for pupil premium are able to attend breakfast club for free. Unfortunately, there is no easy way of identifying families that may need a discount. The clubs are going very well, with positive feedback from staff, parents and pupils. From September, older children will use the community room, where there is a sofa, and a large pool table is to be purchased to help create more of a youth group feel. The improvement in facilities will be advertised in the school newsletter ahead of September.

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	Governors questioned whether free visits could be offered, and the possibility of applying for a free visit on the quieter days will be explored. From September, now that numbers are reaching capacity, parents will need to give 24 hours notice when booking their children in. It was agreed that it would be too complicated to offer discounts if pupils are booked in for a set number of days, but the school will highlight that it is not putting up prices despite rising costs, though quality of provision will remain the same. Governors were happy for the clubs to continue next year, and a governor visit will be added to the list being drawn up by Christabel (discussed above under AP6). Kapil left the meeting at this point.
8	Review future priorities Emilie will prepare the updated SIP for next year over the summer for presentation next term. The SIP is a 3-year plan but priorities for the coming year will include: • Continue to develop the wild garden and new library • Encourage music with the provision of recorder lessons • Further develop subject leadership. This year the school has focused on the implementation and impact of the curriculum. Next year there will be more of a focus on how the subjects are developing in the classroom • Continue to focus on reading and writing • Continue with the development of Early Years • Improve the playground in whatever ways are possible, with more effective use of the space • Governors to visit the school, looking at books and talking to the children • Continued professional development of the staff, particularly in the curriculum and assessment • Pay and personnel committee to complete a stress audit of the staff using a tailored questionnaire suitable for the school environment. AP5 The audit has been delayed by Covid; there are some school survey templates to work from online and a survey will be actioned for the coming year. It is possible that the school will receive an Ofsted inspection next year. An inspection is due from November. Governors should be aware of the action points from the previous inspection, and the last report will be discussed at the next meeting, together with the updated SIP and self-evaluation form (SEF). AP6
9	Approve committee reports
9.1	Strategy – 22nd March 2022* The report was approved.
10	Vision and culture – results from parent survey* The results of the survey had taken the school by surprise. There was a huge response, with most school families taking part, and the results were very positive. Governors discussed briefly the results for some of the questions. Motivation can be challenging, with some schemes ending up being demotivating. Finding the balance is a challenge, and the school encourages peer to peer praise as a healthy alternative. Governors highlighted the exceptionally positive responses to questions 11 and 12 on the approachability of teachers and the senior leadership team, and offered their congratulations to the staff.

	Parents want to be more involved and there will be a volunteer day next term. Behaviour management came out well. Governors asked if there could be more support for those who asked for it. The school plans to have guest speakers in to help parents in this area and hopes to have someone in to talk about anxiety in children. There are also plans for an online safety talk for parents. The meeting then looked at the results for question 4, with quite a few pupils occasionally or sometimes struggling to come into school. The curriculum has been widened to try to help with engagement, but separation anxiety can be hard to manage and has not been helped by the pandemic. In the comments section, two parents had commented on plimsolls (required for indoor wear), which can deteriorate quite quickly to give poor support for children's feet. However, the school grounds can be very muddy and the school is still keen on having inside shoes to avoid carpets being spoilt and children having to sit on muddy carpets. The inside shoes do not have to be plimsolls and this will be emphasised. Emilie will also ask other headteachers what their schools do. AP7 Kindness has been added to the word cloud and enlarged. The word cloud will next be converted to a statement for further review by governors. It is planned to have a document outlining the North Kidlington ethos and the vision will be included within this. The behaviour policy will then follow the vision. A new strapline will also be developed and brought to the next FGB meeting.
11	Academisation Academisation was discussed a few years ago but because of other commitments and then Covid, it was dropped. There could be benefits to the school in joining the right trust, and research is needed as to what these could be for the various options open to the school. The Government white paper is requiring all schools to be part of a trust by 2030. Governors agreed that the strategy committee will start to explore the options open to the school, asking schools that are already academies the advantages and disadvantages of joining their particular trust. The strategy committee will feedback to the FGB, ready for a full governor discussion halfway through next year. There is an NGA Guide to Academisation.
12	Ratification of policies
12.1	GDPR and biometric information policy* On the first page, 'expected provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018' should be amended as the act has now been passed. Subject to the agreed amendment, the policy was ratified.
12.2	Exclusions policy* This policy was a county council policy and cannot be changed. Alex to edit the pdf to include the school's name and the date the policy was adopted. AP8 Governors to complete exclusions training. AP9 Subject to the agreed amendments, the policy was ratified.
12.3	Attendance policy*

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	It was agreed that the line ‘celebrate good and improved attendance in class and as a whole school’ will be removed as this has not been done since Covid and is not appropriate. Year 4 will be added to the list of years undergoing statutory tests in the summer term. A line that the school follows NHS guidelines will also be added. Subject to the agreed amendments, the policy was ratified.
12.4	Accessibility policy* It was agreed that provision for parents with regard to accessing documents will be added, along with accessibility arrangements for staff. Subject to the agreed amendments, the policy was ratified.
13	Safeguarding update The updated Keeping Children Safe in Education for September 2022 has been pre-released. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is reviewing the changes to inform staff in September.
14	Health and safety update, including staff welfare The playground and field are in poor condition and the field had to be temporarily repaired for sports day. Several staff have Covid in Apple class and parents have been notified.
15	Governance updates
15.1	Approve meeting schedule for next year* It was agreed to move committee meetings to a later time in the day, and there is now more flexibility on what day committees can meet. • Finance and premises will meet on Wednesdays at 5.45pm. • Pay and personnel will meet on Tuesdays at 5.45pm. • Strategy will meet on Mondays at 6pm. • Brenda will be consulted before curriculum day and time are set. • The default position will be for committee meetings to take place on Teams, unless it is deemed more appropriate to meet in person for that particular meeting. • New governors will be assigned to committees in September, so should inform Christabel of their particular interests. AP10 Curriculum is in particular need of new governors to cover the different subject areas. • Strategy is made up of the chairs of the different committees. It was agreed that an additional governor should join the committee, as academisation governor, to collate information and feedback to governors. Alex will take on this role. • The schedule of FGB meetings was approved.
15.2	Governor appointments – introductions With Stephen’s resignation, there is now one vacancy for a co-opted governor. Christabel is to write an end of year letter to parents, and will include news of the vacancy and the desire to widen the diversity of the FGB, encouraging parents to ask about the role of governors. AP11 There will also be a stand at parents’ evenings in the autumn to highlight the role of the FGB. Governors then took time to introduce themselves, what their daytime role is and one interesting fact about themselves.
15.3	Appoint governors for head’s appraisal in the autumn Brenda, Christabel and Jackie will continue to carry out Emilie’s appraisal.

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15.4	Governor visits Amanda has been into school to look at phonics, Christabel visited Early Years as discussed, and Carol and Charlotte continue to come into school to read with pupils.
15.5	Governor training completed Carol has done training on governor monitoring and Rebecca on safer recruitment.
16	Any other business The draft new strapline is: kind and creative learning. Governors were thanked for all their hard work this year, and for supporting Christabel in her first year as chair.
	Meeting closed at: 9.15pm
ACTION POINTS AP1 – Christabel will work on a draft request to the council for an additional classroom in Early Years, raising all the concerns outlined here, ready for the FGB meeting in September. Emilie will forward the health and safety report as soon as it is received. All governors who have any additional concerns about the area to contact Christabel. AP2 – Alex to try to source alternative funds for the new Early Years classroom in the likelihood that the council will refuse the school’s request. AP3 – Christabel to ask Stephen for his feedback from his health and safety site walk before he finishes as a governor. AP4 – Christabel to email the list of reasons to visit the school currently being finalised to governors ready for the new term. AP5 – Pay and personnel committee to complete a stress audit of the staff using a tailored questionnaire suitable for the school environment. AP6 – The previous Ofsted inspection to be discussed at the next FGB meeting. AP7 – Emilie to ask other headteachers what their schools do about indoor shoes and how they avoid bringing mud into the classrooms. AP8 – Alex to edit the pdf of the exclusions policy to include the school’s name and the date the policy was adopted. AP9 – Governors to complete exclusions training. AP10 – New governors to inform Christabel of their particular interests with regard to the committees. AP11 – Christabel to write an end of year letter to parents, including news of the vacancy and the desire to widen the diversity of the FGB, and encouraging parents to ask about the role of governors.	

*Indicates paperwork circulated for this item;

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

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