



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 14th November 2023 at 7pm at school

Present

Christabel Ashby – Chair
 Carol Carter
 Keri Dallimore-Gray, from 7.15pm
 Kapil Divecha
 Emilie Fidler
 Jo Hunt
 James Philpott
 Rebecca Pyrah
 Alex Reip – Vice-chair
 Brenda Williams

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

In attendance: Zoë Claxton, Deputy Head, until 7.20pm
 Sarah Müldür, SENCo, until 7.30pm
 Bryony Thomas, clerk

Apologies: Charlotte Screnock (Co-Opted)

Absent: Alastair Hosier (Co-Opted)

Confirmation of quorum: quorum was met

No.	ITEM
1	Welcome and apologies for absence Christabel welcomed everyone to the meeting, with particular gratitude to Zoë and Sarah, attending the start of the meeting to brief governors on attendance and safeguarding, respectively. Apologies were received and accepted from Charlotte Screnock.
2	Declarations of interest There were no new declarations of interest.
3	Notification of any urgent business None was raised.
4	Attendance management update Zoë had met with Charlotte, attendance governor, last week and her report was circulated via GovernorHub. The current attendance figure for the term is 96.31% across the school, which is

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	very good compared with national figures, but not yet back to pre-Covid levels. There are no significant differences between year groups, though attendance is marginally lower in pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and in white British girls. However, at this point in the year, any days off sick are amplified. As a result, persistent absence (attendance below 90%) or even severe absence (attendance below 50%) can be flagged up when the child has simply been unwell. The school is aware of all pupils with poor attendance and their circumstances, and monitors each pupil closely. A 95-page document has been issued by the Department for Education entitled working together to improve school attendance. This document continues to be tweaked and is still not statutory, though is being treated as such by the school. The school planned to adopt the new attendance policy issued by the LA, but found it is not good enough. The previous school attendance policy, written with great care a few years ago, has therefore been updated using the policy checklist from The Key. This checklist, together with the updated policy, were tabled. The documents will be added to GovernorHub for comments within 1 week and approval by email. Carol will proofread the policy. AP1 The school uses a range of approaches to tackle poor attendance, recognising that all families have their own struggles. Governors questioned whether there are pupils still choosing to stay at home following the pandemic. Some naturally introverted pupils found they preferred studying at home, and there are pupils at the school with emotionally-based school avoidance (EBSA) in Years 1 through to 6, requiring a nuanced approach. The effects of the pandemic are still being felt, with all pupils having missed key stages of socialisation. Keri joined the meeting at this point. Attendance is a challenging area, and any ideas for further promotion of good attendance were welcomed. Governors thanked Zoë for all her hard work in this area, really appreciating the individualised approach to poor attendance. However, they also expressed concern at the time spent on attendance and felt that with the excellent attendance figures already achieved, no additional approaches are needed. Zoë was thanked for her time. She left the meeting at this point.
5	Safeguarding
5.1	Keeping Children Safe in Education review – Sarah Müldür Keeping Children Safe in Education is updated every August, with the requirement that all those in contact with children should read the appropriate sections each year. Sarah has already presented a summary of the updates to teachers and teaching assistants and ancillary staff. Sarah and Carol have also had further training with Lynsey Jones, the school's IT lead, as the main focus this year has been on safeguarding in computing. Filtering and monitoring are discussed throughout the document. This focus has arisen because of the death of a secondary school pupil who accessed information on suicide in school time on a school computer. There are four main points.

	• All staff must be aware of the systems used in filtering and monitoring. They must be visibly monitoring online activity, reporting and removing any inappropriate access. All staff are aware of this need, including lunchtime supervisors, and know to remove access and report any breaches to Lynsey and Sarah. • The updated practices have been incorporated into the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, ensuring that filtering and monitoring systems are on all school devices and highlighting awareness. All phones belonging to pupils are handed to class teachers for the school day. • Sarah has to understand the filtering and monitoring process, which she does with the help of Lynsey. • The governing board needs to know and ensure that effective filtering and monitoring systems are in place. Additional changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education include the following. • In cases of systematic absences, children are absent from education rather than missing (children missing from education are those pupils not on roll). There is evidence for a strong link between attendance and progress and mental health. • Homeschooling is now referred to as elective home education. If pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHCP), an annual review is required even when electively educated at home, providing a safety net in situations with safeguarding concerns. • There is recognition that pupils with SEND do not always have the language to articulate difficulties at home and at school, requiring extra vigilance. • Forced marriages are defined as any behaviour where a child is coerced to marry before the age of 18. Sarah was thanked for all her hard work and left the meeting at this point.
5.2	Approval of the Annual Safeguarding Report* Governors questioned what the Resolve policy is, as required on page 18 of the audit. This had not been possible to locate, and governors were asked to send a copy to Emilie if they should come across it. The report was approved.
6	Approval and signing of the minutes from the previous meeting (held 26th September 2023)* The minutes were approved, with no amendments, and signed as a true record of the meeting.
7	Matters arising from the minutes not arising elsewhere AP1, 4, 9 – All governors, bar one, had completed all required declarations and confirmations on GovernorHub. AP2 – Alex and Christabel continue to work on the proposal for a new Apple classroom. No additional quotes have been received. AP2 AP3 – The action point to add academisation to the strategy committee's terms of reference has moved on since the last FGB meeting. After discussion, it has been agreed to stop regular meetings of the strategy committee and the committee will now meet on an ad hoc basis when needed. Academisation will be addressed by a separate working group, and will be further discussed at the next FGB meeting. Alex will circulate his report detailing his research to date. AP3 There is

	concern that in some multi-academy trusts (MATS) the funding is not reaching pupils but is being creamed off as profit. AP5 – Emilie has contacted a couple of firms about a ballpark figure for the money required to develop the playground, but has not heard back. She has just contacted another firm from a recent recommendation. Once a quote has been received, Alex will contact possible sources of external funding. AP4 AP6 – The data showing the difference in writing ability between boys and girls is discussed below. AP7 – Governors have reviewed the draft equality objectives document and sent all comments to Emilie via email. The final document is on tonight’s agenda for final approval. AP8 – The model delegation planner is on tonight’s agenda for approval. AP10 – The briefing note to all governors on the new Prevent guidance coming into force at the end of the year has been circulated with this meeting’s paperwork. AP11 – Governors continue to look for possible members of the community who would like to become governors at the school. AP5 Governors suggested the vacancies are advertised in the school newsletter. AP12 – Governors need to complete their personal profiles on GovernorHub by the end of Tuesday 28th November. Bryony will then run a diversity report to send to Emilie. AP6 AP13 – Governors had attended a workshop at school on preparing for Ofsted on 9th October. They were reminded of the Governor Services training session on preparing for Ofsted running on 15th November. No other matters were raised.
8	Note and discuss amended school improvement plan (SIP), and review the circulated data on writing ability in boys and girls* The amendments to the SIP are a work in progress. In the meantime, the approved SIP is still functional. The data circulated on writing ability in boys and girls shows the stark difference between the genders, with this year’s autumn data showing a similar pattern. Governors questioned whether it is handwriting, spelling or grammar, but in fact boys tend to be weaker in all aspects of writing. Teachers are still reading the book ‘<i>Boys don’t try?</i>’ as part of their staff meeting, and the school is reaching out to other schools as part of their groundwork into why boys struggle in this area.
9	Discuss headteacher’s written report* The report had been circulated with the meeting paperwork. Governors found it a useful summary and did not require any further information. They were pleased to see the continuous professional development (CPD) listed. The school’s initiative to develop a detailed plan for CPD was confirmed as an important piece of work at a recent session Emilie attended for her national postgraduate qualification in executive leadership (NPQEL). This highlighted the importance of CPD in staff wellbeing and retention.
10	Approve committee reports
10.1	Personnel and pay – 18th October 2023* Minutes had been circulated. The possibility of combining personnel and pay with finance and premises was further discussed, as there is much crossover between the two committees. Carol and

	Kapil will look at trying to combine the next meetings for the two committees, planning an agenda so that Jo as staff governor can attend most, if not all, of the meeting. AP7 It is likely that there will need to be a separate meeting of the personnel and pay committee once a year.
10.2	Confirmation of pay report from Personnel and pay committee The committee was happy to approve all pay recommendations.
10.3	Finance and premises – 1 st November 2023 The draft minutes will be circulated, with formal approval at the next FGB meeting. AP8
10.4	Curriculum – 7 th November 2023 The draft minutes will be circulated, with formal approval at the next FGB meeting. AP8
10.5	Discuss role of strategy committee/potential disbandment of committee Already discussed under item 7.
11	Ratification of policies and reports
11.1	Approve attendance policy* The policy had been tabled. All comments must be sent to Emilie within 1 week. AP1
11.2	Approve school uniform policy* A couple of minor corrections had been sent in by Charlotte. The policy was approved, subject to the minor corrections. North Oxfordshire School Sport Partnership (NOSSP) really likes the policy and is telling other schools about the benefits. Teachers have also noticed an increase in activity levels, as hoped for.
11.3	Approve children with health needs who cannot attend school* Approved.
11.4	Approve GDPR & data protection* Approved.
11.5	Approve supporting pupils with medical conditions* Approved.
11.6	Approve early career teacher (ECT) policy* Approved.
11.7	Approve relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) policy* Approved.
11.8	Approve final equality objectives* Approved.
11.9	Note briefing report on prevent duty guidance update* Noted.
11.10	Confirm all required information is published on the school website Confirmed.
11.11	Review and approve delegation planner* Approved. Each committee will check the relevant sections. AP9
12	Health and safety update, including staff welfare Staff are tired from the parents' evenings held this week, but there are no other matters to report.
13	Governance updates
13.1	Governor visits Several governors have been into school and their reports can be found on GovernorHub.
13.2	Governor training completed

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	Brenda has completed Prevent training and also attended the recent Oxfordshire Governors' Association (OGA) autumn open meeting on inclusive schools: how can we support reality rather than the myth? The guest speaker was Margaret Mulholland, who was excellent. She will add the slides to GovernorHub. AP10 The next OGA meeting is on 2 nd March 2024.
13.3	Update on governor vacancies Previously discussed under item 7.
13.4	Update on collection and publication of governor diversity data Previously discussed under item 7.
14	Any other business None was raised.
	Meeting closed at: 8.20pm

ACTION POINTS

AP1 – The attendance policy (along with the checklist from The Key), will be added to GovernorHub, for comments within 1 week and approval by email. Carol will proofread the policy.

AP2 – Alex and Christabel to continue to work on the proposal for a new Apple classroom.

AP3 – Academisation to be further discussed at the next FGB meeting. Alex to circulate his report detailing his research to date.

AP4 – Emilie to continue to seek a ballpark figure for the money required to develop the playground and Alex to then contact possible sources of external funding.

AP5 – Governors to continue to look for possible members of the community who would like to become governors at the school.

AP6 – Governors to complete their personal profiles on GovernorHub by the end of Tuesday 28th November. Bryony will then run a diversity report to send to Emilie.

AP7 – Carol and Kapil to look at combining the next meetings for personnel and pay and finance and premises.

AP8 – The draft minutes for both finance and premises and curriculum will be circulated, with formal approval at the next FGB meeting.

AP9 – Committees to check the relevant sections of the approved delegation planner.

AP10 – Brenda to add the slides to GovernorHub of the recent OGA meeting on inclusive schools.

*Indicates paperwork circulated for this item

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

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