

**THE GOVERNING BODY OF MILL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Minutes of the annual meeting of the Governing Body held at 5:00pm at the school on Thursday, 14 September 2023.

The meeting started at 5:00pm

**PRESENT**

Mrs L Kilroy (Chair), Miss C Barlow (Headteacher), Mrs G Goalby, Mrs A Iltaf, Mr P Jones (Vice-Chair), Ms C Prendergast, Mrs H Rawat.

**In Attendance**

Mrs Z Poulter (Meeting Clerk)

Mrs A Wilby (Deputy Headteacher)

Ms Kathryn Wilkinson (National Leader of Governance, Forrest Governance)

Ms Wilkinson and governors exchanged introductions. Ms Wilkinson explained that she had been asked to complete an independent review of school governance by Kirklees as part of the School Support Plan. She requested to speak with governors on an individual basis in due course; initial email contact would be facilitated by the clerk.

**ACTION 1:** To forward governor email addresses to Ms Wilkinson (completed).

It was confirmed that Ms Wilkinson would attend the 9 November 2023 meeting to present her feedback on her findings to that point. A report would be provided to the Headteacher and Chair in order to be checked for accuracy.

Ms Wilkinson highlighted that the report would contain a suggested Governor Action Plan. She also emphasised the importance of governors being committed and feeling a sense of ownership of the plan.

The Chair thanked Ms Wilkinson.

The Chair's term off office had not yet expired and her request that the agenda be taken out of order at this point was permissible. The Chair felt it important to complete apologies for absence before proceeding.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No apologies had been received from Mrs N Mirza (without consent), or Mrs R Raja (without consent).

The Chair raised the importance of the required commitment to attend meetings by all governors.

The meeting agenda reverted to the agreed order.

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

The minute clerk took the chair. No nominations had been received in advance of the meeting.

Before requesting nominations, the following was agreed:

- (i) That the term of office of the new chair would be 1 year.
- (ii) That in the event of a tie this would be resolved by coin toss.

Nominations were sought and Mrs L Kilroy was the only nominee. Mrs Kilroy left the meeting to allow governors to vote.

**RESOLVED:** That Mrs L Kilroy be elected Chair for a period of 1 year.

Mrs Kilroy rejoined the meeting and governors expressed their gratitude for her having agreed to take on the role of chair to support the board for a further year. Governors discussed the need to carefully consider succession planning moving forward.

## 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 2 continued:

### 2.1 Approve the Governors' Code of Conduct

Governors confirmed they had read the Governors' Code of Conduct 2023 that had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair highlighted the three differences to the code in comparison to last year's document; it was noted that much of the content remained unchanged.

**RESOLVED:** That the Governing Body agrees to adopt the NGA'S revised Governors' Code of Conduct and the governors present agree to adhere to the contents.

### 2.2 Declaration of Business Interest information

Governors were aware that as part of the LA's Financial Audit, all governors and those members of staff involved in the procurement of goods, were required to complete the register of business interests form and to publish governors Declaration of Business information on the school website, in order to be compliant.

Completed forms would be retained and made available for inspection by Kirklees Audit as part of their audit process.

Governors who had not completed the register of business interest form were reminded to do so. The Clerk would send a reminder to those governors not present at the meeting as required.

**RESOLVED:** That once the remaining Registers have been received the school will publish the Declaration of Business Interest information on the school website as required by the DfE

No declarations of business interests in today's meeting items were made.

### 2.3 Get Information about Schools

**Q: Is GIAS the responsibility of the Headteacher?**

**A:** (HT) It appears that it is now a joint responsibility with the board. I will forward the next GIAS automated email reminder to governors.

**Q: Are there any requirements for individual logins?**

**A:** (HT) No. Feel free to flag anything that you see on GIAS.

**RESOLVED:** That governors note the requirement to provide all governance information to the DfE and that this will be a joint responsibility of the school and the board.

### 3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE RAISED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

*The following matters would be raised under Any Other Business:*

- (a) 2022-23 End of Year Data.
- (b) Single Central Record (SCR) Report.

### 4. REPRESENTATION

The following matters of representation were noted:

4.1 <u>Appointments</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
	Hawa Rawat	Co-opted	26.6.23
	Rehana Raja	Co-opted	24.7.23

The Clerk confirmed the term of office for the above governors was 4 years.

### 5. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Before requesting nominations, it was agreed that the term of office of the vice-chair would be 1 year.

No nominations had been received in advance of the meeting. Governors agreed that the National Governance Association's recommended term of 1 year for the role of chair and vice-chair was recognised good practice.

Ms Wilkinson enquired if governors could access a role descriptor for the position of vice-chair. It was confirmed that this would have been contained within the governor induction pack. It was noted that there were no formal arrangements in place that determined the automatic succession of vice-chair to chair. It was acknowledged that governors may feel more confident to put themselves forward for the roles if they were clearly defined. The Chair reflected that the current induction pack was large and new governors may feel overwhelmed by the volume of information.

Governors were clear that they wished succession planning to form an integral part of the governors' action plan and this matter would be reviewed following the receipt of Ms Wilkinson's Report.

**RESOLVED:** That be Mr P Jones be elected Vice-chair for the period of 1 year.

The Chair raised that the board had struggled with filling governor vacancies and that Ms Wilkinson had referred to Inspiring Governance and Governors for Schools. The board had

struggled to fill governor vacancies. Governors enquired about support from the GCS in finding suitable governors.

**ACTION 2:** The Clerk to refer request for support to GCS (completed).

The Chair felt that the burden of work on the board was shared thinly, and this was only added to when governors did not attend meetings.

**Q: (KW) Do you complete induction training?**

**A:** Yes, we have input from Kirklees on roles and responsibility training. We find if governors are not from an education background it is harder to access.

Ms Wilkinson reflected that it was useful to match the interests and strengths of governors to their role on the board.

**RESOLVED:** That governors agree to defer discussions of the role of the chair and vice-chair until the meeting in November 2023.

## 6. REVIEW OF COMMITTEES.

### 6.1 Membership of Committees

Governors considered and discussed the previous committee structure and membership.

**RESOLVED:** That governors agree to temporarily combine the Resources and Standards & Effectiveness Committees.

### 6.2 Membership of Ad hoc Panels

Staff Discipline, Appeals, Complaints and Pupil Discipline Panels would be selected from the governors in office at the time on an ad hoc basis, as appropriate based on eligibility, impartiality, and availability.

### 6.3 Terms of Reference of Committees

The Chair reminded governors that they need to be aware of possible conflicts of interest if they sit on panels outside of the governing board.

All governors confirmed they had read the Terms of Reference of Committees (TOR).

The Chair recognised that her chairing the board and both committees was not good practice and stated the need to review this. Governors also acknowledged that a perceived lack of transparency could result from the number of staff on the Resources Committee in reference to financial decisions made where non-staff governors were absent from meetings.

**Q: Do you feel that we have enough governors to successfully operate two Sub-committees?**

**A:** If the two governors that are absent were in attendance I would say yes confidently, however, without them it is difficult.

Governors discussed the benefits and disadvantages of the circle model of governance. They agreed that they would prefer to keep a sub-committee

structure. Governors decided to combine the Resources and Standards & Effectiveness Committees into one combined sub-committee. This would be a temporary measure and reviewed once additional governor recruitment had taken place or in February 2023.

**RESOLVED:** (i) That governors voted Mr Jones be Chair of the combined committee and that meetings would start at 4:00pm.

(ii) That the membership of the combined committee would be as follows:

Mr P Jones (Chair)  
Mrs G Goalby  
Mrs H Rawat  
Mrs L Kilroy  
Ms C Prendergast  
Miss C Barlow

**ACTION 3:** GCS to attach TOR to minutes when circulated.

**RESOLVED:** That governors agree to accept the Kirklees Model Terms of Reference for Resources Committees and Standards & Effectiveness Committees that together will form the terms of reference for the combined Resources and Standards & Effectiveness Committee.

The permissible number of missed meetings by governors was raised. Registers of attendance would continue to be populated by the GCS and governors were reminded that disqualifications could result from lack of attendance. The Chair referenced the minutes of the previous meeting in which she had asked governors to consider their personal commitment to the board and the school. No governors had contacted the Chair during the summer break to discuss this.

Governors considered the addition of an attendance addendum to the NGA Governors' Code of Conduct.

**RESOLVED:** That the board agrees that any governor who misses 4 full governors' meetings without consent will be disqualified.

Ms Wilkinson had referred the Chair and Headteacher to Inspiring Governance and Governors for Schools. The Clerk would investigate the support that could be Provided by the GCS in finding suitable governors.

**ACTION 4:** School to provide the GCS with a blurb about the school to provide to prospective governors and a profile of ideal candidates.

#### 6.4 Head Teacher Appraisal Panel

**RESOLVED:** That the membership of the Head Teacher Appraisal Panel will be as follows:

Mr P Jones  
Mrs A Itaf  
Mrs L Kilroy (if available)

*Mrs Monika Debb, Senior KLP, had offered to complete the Head Teacher's appraisal;*

*governors were pleased with this arrangement and agreed that Mrs Debb provided excellent guidance. The Head Teacher informed governors that the LA cost of the appraisal had increased since last year.*

**ACTION 5:** Chair to email her availability to the Head Teacher.

*Mrs Rawat offered to sit on the panel if necessary, should Mrs Kilroy be unable to attend.*

**RESOLVED:** That the governing body agrees to adapt and adopt the Kirklees Model Teacher Appraisal Policy.

## 7. TO APPOINT GOVERNORS WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Given the challenge faced by the school in relation to pupil attendance, governors decided to appoint to the optional role of Attendance Governor. Attendance had not been an area of concern previously and the school were keen to see figures align with national averages again. Additionally, a governor would also be appointed to the option role of Website Compliance to ensure the school continue to be fully compliant with the requirements of online publishing.

**ACTION:6** (i) GCS to check to see if attendance document includes the governors' term Details (completed).

ii) GCS to forward completed governor RBI log when all outstanding responses are received (completed).

**RESOLVED:** That the following specific responsibilities be agreed:

- SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disability) Governor – Ms C Prendergast.
- Governor Training Contact – Mrs G Goalby.
- Governor for Children Looked After – Mrs L Kilroy and Mr P Jones.
- Child Protection Governor - Mrs L Kilroy and Mr P Jones.
- EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage)- Mrs A Iltaf.
- Safeguarding Governor - Mrs L Kilroy and Mr P Jones.
- Wellbeing Governor - Mrs L Kilroy and Mr P Jones.
- Attendance Governor – Mrs H Rawat.
- Website Compliance Governor – Mrs A Iltaf.

Ms Wilkinson would share a role descriptor of Attendance Governor and Mrs Rawat explained that she had experience of school attendance in a professional capacity.

## 8. DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL POWERS TO THE HEAD TEACHER.

Governors confirmed that they had read the delegation of financial powers documentation prior to the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Governing Body delegates to the Head Teacher the power to carry out on its behalf the following delegated duties:

(i) Planning and conducting the affairs of the school to remain solvent.

- (ii) Establishing proper financial management arrangements and accounting procedures, which comply with the Local Authority's financial regulations and standing orders and maintaining a sound system of internal controls.
- (iii) Ensuring that funding from the LA and any other sources is used only in accordance with the conditions attached to that funding.
- (iv) Providing such information as the LA may reasonably require to satisfy the LA that the financial management and organisation of the Governing Body are such as to enable it to fulfil the obligations specified for it.
- (v) Following LA advice, the HT's authorisation expenditure limit for day-to-day financial management of the school be as set in the terms of reference for the resources committee and be agreed at **£5,000K agreed**.
- (vi) The virement between budget headings be agreed at **£10,000K agreed**. Practice and transparency Christine brings these to the meeting.

9. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2023

**RESOLVED:** *That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 be approved by the Chair as a correct record.*

10. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Matters Arising (Minute 77( refers).

Actions would be included in an action table at the end of minutes moving forward.

(b) Matters Arising (Minute 77(b) refers).

As new Governor Training and Visits link Mrs Goalby would be responsible for updating the board and maintaining records.

(c) Matters Arising (Minute 77(e) refers)

The Clerk had omitted to include School Support Plan on the agenda. A note had been added to the school's standing items requests.

(d) Matters Arising (Minute 90 refers)

The Clerk had omitted to include Governor allowance on the AGM agenda.

All other actions had been completed.

11. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT/DATA REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher provided a verbal report.

(a) Attendance

Persistent Absence (PA) stood at 33%. It was explained that there was a discrepancy between internal figures and Fischer Family Trust data. The Head Teacher had contacted Emma Brayford to ask how the LA calculated PA. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance had been better than non-disadvantaged pupils. Several key children's attendance was low at below 50%.

The Head Teacher had sent all families relevant information pertaining to their child's attendance including a letter to those under 90%. Families of children with the poorest attendance had been invited into school to discuss. Mrs Wilby had discovered that all children using the Learning Den were persistent absentees.

The Head Teacher highlighted that she monitors registers everyday and complies with the LA First Call system which targets parents who have not provided a valid reason for absence. A chronology and record of any interactions with parents was kept.

Current attendance stood at 95.84%. Remarkably only one child had been absent from school today and the Head Teacher had sent a text message to parents to express her delight.

Five children had not returned to school in the first week of term, of those children:

- One had been taken off roll
- 1 had returned to school last Tuesday
- Two had returned last Monday but were absent yesterday
- One was still absent and had been referred to Children Missing in Education (CME)

*Ms Wilkinson left the meeting at 6:06pm.*

It had been found that generic attendance information had much less impact on raising attendance levels than targeted, personal information. Plans had been made to meet with a fellow Head Teacher at a school experiencing poor attendance.

**Q: Do you go into the community to find and bring absent children to school if necessary?**

**A:** Yes, when appropriate.

The Head Teacher planned to generate a report that encompassed all reasons for absence that were provided by parents.

The Head Teacher believed that the children wanted to be at the school. She explained that the attendance rewards system did not penalise children where they needed to attend medical appointments. The class of the child referred to CME still received the £1 reward when all pupils were in attendance.

(b) Safeguarding

The Head Teacher highlighted the following:

- Two children who had been allocated places hadn't attended school on the first day of



term. One child was at another local school, and one was still in another authority as their family had not yet relocated.

- Early help had been requested for one family.
- One family were at the Team Around the Family (TAF) stage.

(c) Staffing was described as stable.

(d) Finance

Period 3 figures had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Period 4 and 5 figures had been submitted; there had been very little activity due to the summer break.

Period 6 would be completed and circulated in mid-October in readiness for the governors' meeting in November.

Finances were roughly in-line with budget predictions apart from an approximate £9k that had been spent on unbudgeted Learning Den costs.

Sport Premium funding had been fully spent.

Approximately £70k was due in SEN funding.

Very low numbers in lower school were negatively impacting school finances. There were 40 pupils in KS1 and just 16 in Reception. Low birth rates appeared to be an LA wide issue.

The newly re-designed Curriculum had now been fully published on the school's website.

The Learning Den had now been established in the former school library. The Head Teacher thanked Mrs Wilby for her hard work in setting the resource up. The Den catered for 7 children with high needs. The ARP would cost approximately 5% of school income to run in the region of £70-80k. It was explained, however, that the lives of those 7 children had been drastically and positively transformed. A phenomenal positive impact had also been observed on classes across school as a result.

Despite the clear benefits of the ARP the Head Teacher explained that unfortunately the staff and financial resources required to run it were unsustainable. Mrs Wilby had been working from 7:30am, assisting in the dinner hall and the Head Teacher had also been required to provide break time cover. The Head Teacher expressed her concern at the real possibility of staff burnout as although the school were fully staffed with adequate coverage there was no additional capacity.

The Head Teacher stated that in the next financial period some SEN may be available to employ TA support.

**Q: Could you utilise supply staff?**

**A:** There are no funds for supply cover. Staff timetabling is extremely tight to the extent that we struggle to attend partnership sporting events. Staff logistics are a challenge, however, staff are positive and the school atmosphere is calm. We are in a different position to this time last year in that respect, however, such restrictive

staff timetabling means we have struggled to attend sporting events as part of the partnership.

Governors raised the possibility of enlisting help from volunteer parents, however, the Head Teacher felt that previous attempts to recruit parents had been time consuming and had yielded only one recruit.

Jane Ryan had commented positively on the Learning Den provision, the positive impact on pupils and how quickly the school had made it a reality.

The Head Teacher had contacted Emma Brayford again and reiterated that the school were down by £140k and although finances were stable the position was not feasible over the long-term.

**Q: Is there a crossing guard still on duty?**

**A:** I'm not sure, their presence is sporadic. They are out of the school remit. We are aware of the road, parking and safety. Parents are causing issues by not parking considerately or safely.

12. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

This had been discussed under the Head Teacher's Report (See minute 11).

13. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PRIORITIES 2023/24

The Chair remarked that eight objectives was a high number to monitor and assess. The Head Teacher explained that the eight areas would be completed regardless and therefore it was logical to include them in the SDP.

**Q: In reference to objective 3, Oracy, do you make use of the Oracy network?**

**A:** Yes, two members of staff are working actively on this.

Governors held a brief discussion about language and Oracy.

The Chair thanked the Head Teacher for the well written and highly detailed plan.

14. PREVENT

All governors were invited to attend twilight refresher Prevent training once booked.

15. POLICIES FOR REVIEW BY FULL GOVERNING BODY

Governors were aware of their responsibility for monitoring school policies to ensure that they were fit for purpose in addition to being implemented properly. The board were also aware that policies should be added to the school website where appropriate.

The following model Kirklees polices had been shared with governors with a recommendation for governing bodies to adopt.

**RESOLVED:** That the Governing Body approve and agree to adapt and adopt the following policies:

- Kirklees Teacher Appraisal Model Policy 2023
- Kirklees Model Complaints Policy 2023
- Whistleblowing Policy

16. BATLEY AND BIRSTALL HUB

There were no updates at this time. The Head Teacher planned to continue to gain information from the Hub meetings to use to support the school as appropriate.

17. GOVERNING BODY DEVELOPMENT: ACTIONS AND PRIORITIES 2023/24.

The Head Teacher and Chair had spent an hour with Ms Wilkinson from Forrest Governance prior to the meeting. They remarked that Ms Wilkinson had been incisive and they felt that the review would be a supportive process.

**ACTION 7:** GCS to add this item to the agenda of the next meeting.

18. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

Mrs Goalby would be provided with a template to record and track governor training and governor visits in her new link role.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS(a) 2022-23 End of Year Data

Key Stage 2, Year 6 data 2022-2023 which had been shared on the school's website was tabled and the Head Teacher asked governors if they would like to see any additional data or different format. Governors were satisfied that the data enabled them to scrutinise attainment. The Head Teacher expressed that the data represented an excellent outcome for children last year.

**Q: When will we have an indication of the impact of the new curriculum?**

**A:** We will be assessing the foundation subjects at the end of each unit. Assessment will be anecdotal at that stage and not data driven. We will provide a summary in March.

The impact on other classes in school of the additional resource provision had been positive thus far. A review of performance and assessment data in the context of the impact on the children in the unit and also across the rest of the school was suggested. The Head Teacher explained that despite each class receiving fewer hours of support the support provided was highly targeted.

Governors remarked that they were happy with the results.

The Head Teacher raised that Ofsted, according to their handbook, should revisit the school within 18 months of the last visit. This would mean a visit was likely before November 2024

(b) Single Central Record (SCR) Report

Miss Prendergast and Mrs Golaby had visited the office to speak with staff and review the SCR. They reported that the SCR takes several areas into consideration and that there were some anomalies to investigate. Office staff were due to complete training tomorrow and planned to address updating the system and reviewing information that had in place for a number of years. Data retention time limits would be considered in addition to the review of whether the details of one-off visitors needed to be recorded.

The school had decided that all DBS certificates would be renewed on a 5-year rolling Programme. DBS certificates would be prioritised in date order, starting with those held the longest.

Miss Prendergast and Mrs Goalby planned to review the SCR again and feedback at the next meeting.

The Head Teacher informed governors that letters of assurance had been reviewed and that any allegations against any company renting the school building were now to be referred to the LADO.

(c) Information Items

Governors noted the LA's information items.

There were no proposed changes to the school's admission arrangements. Numbers of Reception pupils would be particularly low.

**Q: What is the intake into Reception this year?**

**A:** 15, it should be 25.

**Q: Do we need to do more work around advertising Reception places?**

**A:** There are low birth rates across Kirklees.

Teachers pay conditions would be reviewed in due course.

20. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

**RESOLVED:** *That future meetings of the full Governing Body starting at 05:00pm, preceded by the Combined Resources and S&E Committee starting at 04:00pm, at the school be as follows:*

*Thursday, 9 November 2023*

*Thursday, 18 January 2024*

*Thursday, 7 March 2024*

*Thursday, 25 April 2024*

*Thursday, 13 June 2024*

*The Chair advised that she would be unable to attend the meeting on 13 June 2024.*

21. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

**RESOLVED:** That no part of these minutes, agenda or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available to the school, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

*The meeting closed at 6:30pm.*

**ACTION LOG:**

Number	Action	By Whom
1	To forward governor email addresses to Ms Wilkinson.	Clerk (completed)
2	To refer request for support in governor recruitment to GCS.	Clerk (completed)
3	To attach TOR to minutes when circulated.	Clerk (completed)
4	To provide the GCS with a blurb about the school to provide to prospective governors and a profile of ideal candidates.	Head Teacher/ Chair
5	Chair to email her availability RE: Appraisal to the Head Teacher	Chair
6	(i) GCS to check to see if attendance document includes the governors' term Details. (ii) GCS to forward completed governor RBI log when all outstanding responses are received.	Clerk
7	To add Governing Body Development: actions and priorities 2023/24 to the next agenda.	Clerk

**ATTENDANCE AT FULL GOVERNORS' MEETINGS: September 2023 – July 2024**

Governing Body Meetings	14.09.2023	09/11/2023	18/01/2024	07/03/2024	25/04/2024	13/06/2024	Total
Christine Barlow	✓						/6
Gayna Goalby	✓						/6
Anisa Iltaf	✓						/6
Paul Jones	✓						/6
Linda Kilroy	✓						/6
Nasrin Mirza	X (no consent)						/6
Claire Prendergast	✓						/6
Rehana Raja	X (no consent)						/6
Hawa Rawat	✓						/6
LA – Vacancy	N/A						/6
Parent - Vacancy	N/A						/6
Parent - Vacancy	N/A						/6

**ATTENDANCE AT COMBINED COMMITTEE MEETINGS: September 2023 – July 2024**

Resources and Standards & Effectiveness Combined Committee Meetings	09/11/2023	18/01/2024	07/03/2024	25/04/2024	13/06/2024	Total
Christine Barlow	✓					/5
Gayna Goalby	✓					/5
Paul Jones (Chair)	✓					/5
Linda Kilroy	✓					/5
Claire Prendergast	✓					/5