

THE GOVERNING BODY OF MILL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at the school at 4.00pm on Thursday, 25 April 2024.

PRESENT

Mrs H Rawat, Miss C Barlow (Head Teacher), Mrs G Goalby, Ms C Prendergast, Mrs R Raja, Miss C Winnett.

In Attendance

Mr P Keeley (Minute Clerk)
Mrs B Ottewell (School Business Manager) – part

88. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT & DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs A Iltaf (Chair) (consent), and Ms K Waugh (Designate Governor, Vice Chair nominee) (consent).

There were no declarations of interest.

RESOLVED: That the Governing Body agree that Mrs Rawat act as Chair for this meeting.

89. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items to be brought up under any other business.

90. REPRESENTATION**(a) Appointment**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Kirstie Waugh	Designate (Co-opted)	Pending DBS

The Acting Chair welcomed Ms Waugh to the Governing Body.

It was confirmed that the Governor term of Ms Prendergast was coming to an end. Alison Wilby (Deputy Head Teacher) had put herself forward to take over as Staff Governor.

RESOLVED: That Alison Wilby be proposed as Staff Governor at the next full Governing Body meeting.

Authority Note: A Staff Governor Election will need to take place in order for somebody to take over Ms Prendergast's seat.

(b) Appointment of Co-opted Governors

The Head Teacher confirmed that she was to meet a prospective new Governor shortly. The person concerned was not a parent at the school.

Q: What is his working background?

A: He works in the health sector.

Q: Does he have any financial background?

A: We will not know until we meet with him, and decide if he is a good fit for the school and the Governing Body.

(c) Parent Governor Vacancies

RESOLVED: That this item was to be deferred to the next full Governing Body meeting.

91. POSITION OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED: That Kirstie Waugh was to be elected to the position of Vice Chair, as noted in Minute 72 in the minutes of the previous meeting.

The agenda was taken out of order at this point.

92. REPORT FROM COMBINED COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2024

Q: Why have some Governors not been able to access the minutes?

A: This will be because at the time, some of the information relating to staff would have been sensitive and/or confidential. As it is no longer confidential and out in the public domain, Staff Governors can now access the minutes.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chair.

The Head Teacher requested that the agenda of the next Governing Body meeting be changed as follows:

- Formalities
- Finance and benchmarking from the Resources Committee agenda
- Curriculum, pupil performance and SEN from the Standards and Effectiveness Committee agenda
- The rest of the Governing Body agenda starting with the Head Teacher's report

ACTION: Minute Clerk to discuss with Governor Clerking team.

93. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

The Business Manager confirmed that the school had a positive carry-forward of £32,679 from the financial year 2023-24.

There had been a significant increase in occupation costs in 2023-24; energy costs had doubled over the past two years. The Business Manager highlighted that a 20% reduction in energy costs was expected in the current year.

The Head Teacher explained that the budget document B3 had been drafted. There were two possible scenarios and therefore the document had not been finalised to be presented to governors for approval.

The school were to reduce the number of teachers by 1.0FTE. This could be achieved either by one teacher leaving to work elsewhere: or by the voluntary redundancy of a member of staff. As the school would need to fund any voluntary redundancy the decision would have a direct bearing on the budget.

The Head Teacher invited questions from Governors.

Q: Has the atmosphere in school improved?

A: Most of our staff now know that their positions are safe, so that has helped with any uncertainty.

Q: Will the restructure impact on Key Stage 1?

A: Yes, it will have an impact on the structure. Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 will become two classes. The Early Years curriculum will change, but we do not expect any impact on the quality of the teaching.

There were no further questions from Governors.

The agenda reverted to the set order at this point.

94. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2024

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chair.

95. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Circulate the safeguarding link to Governors (Minute 74 refers)

It was confirmed that this action had been completed, and therefore, this item could be closed.

(b) Circulate version 14 of the School Support Plan (Minute 80 refers)

It was confirmed by the Head Teacher that this document had been circulated, and therefore, this item could be closed.

(c) Circulate Governors experience (Minute 81 refers)

It was confirmed by the Head Teacher that this information had been circulated and therefore, this item could be closed.

(d) Provide new Governor checklist to Ms Waugh (Minute 81 refers)

It was not known if this item had been completed and therefore, this item was to be carried forward to the next meeting.

(e) Meet to discuss phonics improvement (Minute 82 refers)

It was confirmed that this meeting had taken place and therefore, this item could be closed.

(f) Undertake Governor visit during the Summer term (Minute 82 refers)

It was confirmed that Ms Waugh and the Head Teacher had not agreed a specific focus area for the visit, therefore this item was carried forward to the next meeting.

(g) Set up working party to respond to the Forrest report (Minute 83 refers)

It was confirmed that this group had not been set up, therefore the item was to be carried forward to the next meeting.

ACTION: Chair to urgently set up the working group and implement necessary recommendations from the report.

(h) Forward copy of the Forrest report to Ms Waugh and add her to Governor emails lists (Minute 83 refers)

It was confirmed that this action had been completed, and therefore, this item could be closed.

96. REVIEW OF POLICIES

There were no policies to be reviewed.

The Head Teacher confirmed that some policies were to be reviewed over the Summer term, and would be brought to Governors at the September meeting.

97. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVERNOR QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher gave a short verbal report to Governors at the meeting. Questions were invited from Governors at any point.

The Head Teacher confirmed that the number of pupils on roll for 2024-25 academic year was 168 including 16 in Nursery. The October census, which the budget would be based on, only had 148 children. The school predicted no more than 146 children on the census at next October.

Q: Are we able to stop children from leaving?

A: No, whether they leave or not was down to parental choice and we have no control over that.

Q: Do some parents wait for places in certain schools?

A: It is possible in some cases that they could have their name on a waiting list at one school, then attend another until a place comes free.

Flyers would be placed in local nurseries, and an open day would be held around the time when parents make their final choices. The school looked to hold the open day following the anticipated Ofsted inspection. Year 6 were the 8th highest ranked year group in Kirklees which would be publicised to attract new admissions.

Attendance during the Spring term in which Eid had fallen had been 94.35%, however, this had since improved and was closer to 94.5%.

Persistent absence was currently running at 15-16%. There were a group of children with high absence, however, not high enough to be judged as persistent.

The school were clamping down on punctuality. On Monday, 17 children had been late, this had reduced to 6 on Wednesday and 4 on Thursday. Persistent lateness had a marked impact on children's performance, as an example, the school had one child who had missed 57 out of 135 phonics lessons this year.

There were two significant safeguarding issues. There were also some lower-level issues that were being logged as they occurred.

An incident had occurred where a child had climbed the vehicle gate. This had now resolved itself as the child had left the school, to prevent future occurrences extra staff had been stationed in the area at break times.

The school had become aware of an incident outside school, where a child had been contacted on social media and persuaded to engage in inappropriate acts. A strong assembly had taken place with Years 5 and 6, warning the children of the dangers of social media. Children had been instructed not to appear on social media showing both their face and school clothing.

The school had 10 EHCPs and a further application had been rejected.

SEN funding was changing from September, funding would be directed into groups of schools called clusters. Kirklees Council was arranging meetings with each cluster before the Summer break, to discuss and explain the new arrangements.

It was confirmed that one pupil had been excluded for a total of 6.5 days, this child had now transferred to the SEMH specialist unit.

Q: Do we adjust attendance figures to allow for Eid?

A: No, if you are not in school you are absent.

Q: Are any of the safeguarding issues you are experiencing, having any impact with individual children?

A: We have been in touch with a small number of parents when their children have demonstrated behaviours that gave us concern.

Q: Is any of the SEND money likely to be clawed back by the Council?

A: We have been told that is not possible.

Q: Do we expect the new SEND funding process to be more challenging?

A: Possibly. However, we have been told that two independent Council employees will moderate the process.

Q: Did you think exclusion was the appropriate sanction?

A: The child had become a physical threat to other children.

Q: Had the behaviour escalated?

A: Yes, it had deteriorated in recent weeks and was not helped by the child knowing that he was going to go to another school soon.

Q: Was the Learning Den an option?

A: Not in this case, because of significant communication issues, SEMH issues, and Learning difficulties.

Q: Were the parents supportive?

A: Yes, if anything, they felt that the relocation should have happened sooner.

Q: What other action did we take regarding the inappropriate content?

A: It turned out that the perpetrator was a family member. We wrote to all parents except the family involved, reinforcing what we had covered in assembly, and warned them of the dangers for their children. We also reported the incident to the police who are now handling the matter.

It was confirmed that CPD completed had been minimal. Where training had been sanctioned, the learning was brought back and shared with the other staff.

It was reported that parental involvement had reduced due to a natural end at the school in some instances. Generally, parents did get involved in school activities. A chocolate tombola was being planned to take place during the Summer term.

Q: Have you considered setting up another PTA?

A: It is difficult because a small number of people were willing to get involved, but we could take another look after the Summer break and the Ofsted.

Q: Could we have open afternoons and/or reward assemblies?

A: We have tried some of these before. Interest in the first event is high, but if you then try to repeat the event, interest is much lower. Therefore, we look at different things to keep the interest up. One of the consistent issues though, is that we only seem to get interest from non-working parents.

Q: Does that mean we should focus on activities between 3.20 and 4.00 pm?

A: We can look at this. However, we have limited numbers who can be in the Assembly Hall at any one time for safety reasons. I am conscious our level of engagement within the local community is weak compared to some other local schools, who are much more embedded within their communities. We could also do more on social media than we do.

ACTION: Head Teacher to arrange for an Instagram page to be set up, to include parental agreement facilities for the content where children are in pictures used.

98. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SUPPORT PLAN

The school Development Plan had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

Questions were invited from Governors.

Q: The Plan mentions substantive and disciplinary, what is the difference?

A: Substantive in this context, means the gathering of necessary knowledge, then the understanding of it to make decisions based on the knowledge gained. So, knowing the strengths and weaknesses of a material would be substantive.

Whereas disciplinary would be the practical application of the knowledge in the real world.

Q: Is the application of this the same in all subjects?

A: No, it applies in different ways in different subjects. It is not that simple. We are working with Dalton School in several areas, at present they are working on the History curriculum. I (Head Teacher) am currently working on the Geography. When Ofsted come in, we will offer them the chance to deep dive into Mathematics, PE, and Geography. We do not need to do anything with Religious Education yet as we are using the Kirklees Council agreed syllabus and it is changing.

Q: Are we using the same as Dalton School in any subjects?

A: No, we have our own curriculum designed by us, based on the National Curriculum. We are doing things by design, not by chance.

There were no other questions from Governors.

99. BATLEY AND BIRSTALL HUB

There was nothing to be reported under this item.

100. PREVENT

There was nothing to be reported under this item.

101. PUPIL PERFORMANCE AND ASSOCIATED DATA

The following was noted:

- The Head Teacher had circulated the report to Governors prior to the meeting.
- The Head Teacher commented that the data in large part reflected the movement of pupils into and out of Mill Lane School.
- Year 6 outcomes were likely to be lower than for the previous year, impacted by the addition of two new pupils, who had joined the school without any spoken English.
- Year 3 SPAG results were expected to drop below age-related target, however, these were expected to recover to meet age-related expectations by Year 6.
- The Head Teacher stated that current writing was not good enough, and this was an area that was difficult to catch up in. There was a direct correlation between poor oracy and poor writing. Ofsted had commented in their last visit that lower years had not been given enough time to embed the correct skills.
- Year 1 were now working on compiling 'perfect sentences' that started with a capital letter and ended with a full stop. This was then to be followed up in later years to ensure it was embedded. Pupils were being asked to write two perfect short paragraphs, and were not being moved on until the basic skills had been embedded.

Questions were invited from Governors.

Q: Are we embedding this approach through other years?

A: Yes, we are, although we expect Key Stage 2 to take longer to improve, as they as a group, have ingrained bad habits.

Q: Will the change of approach lead to extra workload for teachers?

A: No, because the same marking was being done but with a different focus. We are looking at quality, not quantity during marking.

Q: When will the change of approach start?

A: It has already started.

Q: What are the likely outcomes for achieving expected level?

A: We are estimating 72% will achieve expected level in writing, 64% in Mathematics, and 64% in Spelling and Grammar. The overall results will be affected by two pupils who have no English, and two others who have significant learning delay and/or social issues that affect their learning.

Q: Do we have any teachers struggling?

A: No, we expect certain standards of behaviour and pupils who misbehave are sent out of class. We cannot have the learning of the majority disrupted or inhibited by a few.

Q: When does the school begin SATS tests?

A: 13 May, we will have three sittings for each class. The Head Teacher offered to go through the statistics in more depth and Governors that wished to do so should contact the Head Teacher.

102. CURRICULUM UPDATE

After a short discussion, it was agreed that there were no further matters to discuss, other than those discussed and recorded earlier in the meeting.

103. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND SELF-EVALUATION

The Head Teacher confirmed that the self-evaluation report had been completed in the Spring term and was uploaded on the school website.

It was noted that the urgent action agreed at the last meeting to set up a working party to consider the Forrest report, had not happened yet.

104. STAFFING UPDATES

Other than the comments recorded previously in the meeting, there was nothing else to report.

105. PREMISES UPDATES AND PROGRAMME OF SUMMER WORKS

There was nothing to be reported under this item.

106. CHANGES TO PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS (PAN) FOR 2026-27

A short discussion took place regarding the possibility of changing the school PAN.

The Head Teacher advised that if the reduction in pupil numbers continued there might be some benefit in reducing the PAN accordingly. However, given the imminent large-scale housing developments taking place within the catchment area of the school, considering this now would be premature.

Q: If we were to reduce our PAN would this affect income?

A: Yes, reduction in pupils means reduction in income.

Q: How many children have joined us mid-year?

A: In total we have had five extra pupils, but we have also lost some as well. One has now gone to a SEMH specialist unit, and their two siblings will also leave. Two others have also left us for geographic reasons.

RESOLVED: That the school PAN was to be reviewed in 12-24 months, once the longer-term position on pupil numbers was clearer.

107. ANNUAL EVALUATION OF GOVERNING BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

A short discussion took place on the evaluation process, with particular emphasis on the current composition of the Governing Board including several new/recent additions to the team.

RESOLVED: That a meeting shall be held in the Autumn term to follow this up.

108. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

The Head Teacher raised concern that the Forrest report on Governance (as referred to in Minute 95 and Minute 103) had not been acted upon. It was now imperative that an urgent governor meeting took place to discuss the report and agree actions to take from the recommendations.

RESOLVED: That appropriate first action had been agreed in the Meeting under an item above.

ACTION: During the Governor meeting Governors need to agree who was to complete cyber security training, who would complete safer recruitment training, and who would complete SEND training.

109. REPORTS ON LINK/GOVERNOR VISITS

It was confirmed that no Governor visits had taken place since the last Governing Body meeting. A schedule of Governor visits had been compiled by the Chair and circulated previously.

ACTION: Governors were to arrange and complete their respective visits as soon as possible and in any case, prior to the end of the Summer term.

110. REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS

Governors briefly discussed the Register of Business Interests.

RESOLVED: That the register covering all Governors shall be completed prior to the September meeting.

ACTION: Governors to complete Declaration of Business Interest forms before the end of July.

111. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items for discussion under this item.

112. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS FOR 2023/24 ACADEMIC YEAR

RESOLVED: That the next Full Governing Body meeting be held at the school on Thursday 13 June 2024 at 4:00 pm

Apologies in advance were noted for Mrs Rawat from the June 13th meeting.

RESOLVED: That the full calendar of meeting dates for the 2024-25 school year be agreed at the next full Governing Body meeting.

113. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

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

The meeting closed at 5.55 pm.

Action Table

Minute no.	Action	Action by	Status
92	<u>Agenda running order and content</u> Discuss agenda running order and content with Governor Clerking	Minute Clerk	New item
95 (g)	<u>Ms Waugh Governor visit</u> Undertake a Governor visit on a specific subject during the Summer term, discuss the area to be covered with the Head Teacher (previously Minute 82)	Ms Waugh	Carried forward
95 (g)	<u>Forrest report on Governance</u> Urgently set up working party to respond to the Forrest report on Governance (previously Minute 83)	Chair	Carried forward
97	<u>Instagram page</u> Arrange for an Instagram page to be set up, to include parental agreement facilities for the content where children are in pictures used	Head Teacher	New item

108	<u>Governor training</u> During the Governor meeting Governors need to agree who was to complete cyber security training, who would complete safer recruitment training, and who would complete SEND training	Governors	New item
109	<u>Governor visits</u> Governors were to arrange and complete their respective visits as soon as possible, but in any case, prior to the end of the Summer term	Governors	New item
110	<u>Declaration of Business Interest Forms</u> Complete Declaration of Business Interest forms before the end of July and return to the Head teacher	Governors	New item

GOVERNOR ATTENDANCE: September 2023 – July 2024							
Governing Body Meetings	14.09.2023	09/11/2023	18/01/2024	14/03/2024	25/04/2024	13/06/2024	Total
Christine Barlow	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		/6
Gayna Goalby	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		/6
Anisa Iltaf	✓	✓	✓	✓	X (consent)		/6
Rehana Raja	X (no consent)	✓	✓	✓	✓		/6
Hawa Rawat	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		/6
Cecilia Winnett	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓		/6
Kirstie Waugh (Designate Governor)	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	✓		/4
Co-opted Vacancy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Co-opted Vacancy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Parent - Vacancy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Parent - Vacancy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Former Governors							
Nasrin Mirza	X (no consent)	X (no consent)	X (no consent)	N/A	N/A	N/A	0/3
Paul Jones	✓	X (consent)	X (consent)	N/A	N/A	N/A	1/3
Linda Kilroy	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2/2
Claire Prendergast	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	ETO	5/6