

**Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Board of Gillamoor School  
held at the school on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 6:30pm.**

<b>Present:</b>	
Christopher Vowles (CV)	(Chair) Parent Governor
Tamsin Eley (HT)	Headteacher
Lorraine Hugill (LH)	Staff Governor
Stuart Patterson (SP)	Co-opted Governor
Aniko Sheppard (AS)	Foundation Governor
Paul Normandale (PN)	Co-opted Governor
<b>In attendance:</b>	
Clerk – Lydia Waites (LW)	NYC Clerk
<b>Apologies:</b>	
Lindsey Roberts (LR)	Parent Governor
Claire Haynes (CH)	Foundation Governor
<b>Vacancies:</b>	1 x Co-opted, 1 x LA

**Colour coding Key – Highlighting Governor Core Functions**

Red – Strategy Challenge/question

Blue – Approval/Decision taken

Green – Performance Challenge/Question

Purple – Financial Challenge/Question

No.	Item	Lead
1.1223	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> CV welcomed governors and opened the meeting.	
2.1223	<b>Apologies (with and without acceptance)</b> Apologies from LR (accepted). CH was also absent (with no apologies).	
3.1223	<b>Consideration of which items should be confidential</b> Any confidential items will be minuted as such as they arise.	
4.1223	<b>Approval of minutes from the last meeting</b> Minutes of 03.10.23 FGB. <b>Governors approved the minutes.</b>	
5.1223	<b>Matters arising from the previous meeting/update on action points</b> CV addressed the status of the actions arising which have been or are in the process of being actioned. The below actions are to be carried over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.0723 - CV to follow up.</li> <li>10.0723 - Ethos Group to circulate minutes following future meetings.</li> </ul>	
6.1223	<b>Any other urgent business</b> No other urgent business.	
7.1223	<b>Report from the Headteacher</b> HT addressed the questions received from governors about her report:  <p>AS – Q: what is the current state of the Parent Pay debt as indicated in the school's newsletter? Are parents trying to pay off what they owe having been alerted to the size of the debt?</p> <p>A: as a whole, it's not particularly lower. We have said that from January, people who have not paid for the previous term's clubs ... . For families struggling financially, we are going to ask them to pay what they can.</p> <p>AS – Q: did you find that putting it in the newsletter was effective?</p>	

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LR – A: yes.

AS – Q: looking at the numbers in each class and knowing the fluctuations that can take place with admissions each year, would you, as a school, consider adjusting which year groups are in which class depending on numbers?

A: [HT gave an overview of current classroom numbers]. At the moment, this doesn't work due to classroom capacities. That imbalance will always be there – but classroom numbers will be addressed further on in the agenda.

CV – Q: what is meant by a 'Phillip Webb approach' to teaching reading? What have you seen this deliver?

A: when I arrived, teachers had done training around pw who teaches strategies [HT showed governors a printout with examples of strategies and gave an example of how these strategies work]. We won't be using the Phillip Webb teaching method going forwards but will use elements of it.

CV – Q: what are your expectations for working walls, reading areas and phonics displays and how might these serve to raise pupils' reading competence?

A: we are looking at creating a reading area. Staff were taken on a learning walk recently which focused on ...

SP – Q: how did the staff react to that?

A: I think they knew we were walking to that conclusion. We discussed interactive whiteboards and classroom layout. One of the big things in our school vision at the moment is making sure that the school has a culture of reading and children are excited to read.

CV – Q: any significant pupil outcomes?

A: we have done digital assessments this time. These don't feel accurate – we feel they have led to quite skewed results given that children have different levels of familiarity with computer usage. We had a staff conversation regarding whether we will continue using them.

AS – Q: are SATs done digitally?

A: no.

CV – Q: in terms of the SIP Ofsted actions, how did the visit with the Education Advisor go?

A: we were focusing on the foundation curriculum during the visit. We looked at what was in place and what can be improved. Michelle was in agreement that the external curriculum we were looking at was a good curriculum. She recommended that we don't wait until Easter to implement it, so we will be using it from January.

AS – Q: what is Cornerstones?

A: another curriculum we looked at [HT gave a brief overview of this].

No update on pupil premium. However, we have too many interventions in place. We have decided not to renew some of the things we have in place. No update on sports premium.

CV – Q: are you moving swimming venues?

A: yes.

CV – A: why?

A: we heard a rumour that we would have to move, and on looking at another venue we realised that the times were more suitable.

CV – Q: how will you use that extra time in the classroom?

A: working on the new curriculum and more PE time, for example.

Attendance was above national average but has dropped again due to seasonal illness. Meetings have been arranged for parents of children with persistent absences. The main focus of these meetings is looking at developing poor attendance habits and at the long-term effects of poor attendance. LH explained how attendance is monitored and addressed in the school.

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	<p>There has been one behaviour issue with a student that is ongoing. We have made a funding request for additional help but have not received any acknowledgement from despite repeated contact. We have increased a teaching assistant's hours in order to provide additional support for the pupil.</p> <p>SP – Q: are the parents aware of the issue?  A: they are aware of the challenges and need for additional support. The pupil has ongoing low attendance.</p> <p>SP – Q: so, receiving that funding is important?  A: yes. We are seeking support while also compiling the evidence needed to submit a EHCP request.</p> <p>HT added that they are also focusing on addressing low-level behavioural concerns which lead to larger issues.</p> <p>HT gave a subject lead presentation about English, beginning with the assessment data and progress during 2023. One strength in writing was the Phillip Webb approach which as class teachers trained in during the previous 2 years. However, there were issues with this. It was challenging for teachers to find the right texts and read them deeply in advance for planning, and there was no suggested text mapping which meant it was challenging to ensure progression of skills without a full overview of the year. Teachers were drawing on good strategies for learning, though.</p> <p>The goal and vision going forward is to become a school where a reading culture is evident throughout, with children who are inspired to read and value the time and opportunity to do so. We want children to be exposed to other cultures and viewpoints through a diverse reading curriculum.</p> <p>Coupled with this, we have been doing a lot of work on the culture of reading in our classrooms and on inclusive teaching for all learners, with high expectations for all learners, including those with SEND.</p> <p>HT explained the school's new key teaching and learning principles and the steps to success which have been identified and applied.</p> <p>We have moved towards a model called the 'Literacy Tree' planning. We trialled this from October half term for reading in all classes, to positive results. The conversation now is about how we can adapt these strategies for SEND learners. A schedule of learning walks and pupil book looks has been agreed. There has been a lot of change, but the teachers are excited and on-board.</p> <p>SP – Q: how are parents responding to this?  A: parent workshop uptake has been low. I need to be more pro-active with sharing news with parents via Facebook.</p> <p>SP – Q: do parents still come in and listen to reading?  A: one grandparent comes in to read. I did a pitch to parents for volunteers during the nativity today.</p> <p>SP volunteered to visit the school and read – to arrange a date with LH.</p>	SP
8.1223	<p><b>Health and safety and premises update</b></p> <p>HT shared that there is a problem with the classroom capacity upstairs which will be over capacity with next year's pupil admissions. The Diocese Building Advisor and an NYC representative visited recently to offer solutions. They had initially put in a bid for renovations upstairs which was too aspirational. After visiting, they sent a builder who has suggested some more realistic and achievable renovations. We have opted for 'plan B' which involves opening up the sides of the classroom. This will increase the classroom capacity from 15 to 22 children. We have had a</p>	

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	<p>donation from a charity which will go towards these works, and NYC agreed to fund the remaining cost. Friends of the school have also donated towards the renovations. This will mean we can have more shelving and make a reading corner. There will be more spaces for children to work in. Governors discussed the positive impact this will have in the school and on children. The work should be completed over the Easter holidays.</p> <p>HT added that the paint on the railings outside still needs stripping. We have had a visit from Health and Safety which LH passed with flying colours.</p>	
9.1223	<p><b>Governing Board Update</b></p> <p>Vacancies: 1 x Co-opted, 1 x LA Governor.</p>	
10.1223	<p><b>Governor Training and development</b></p> <p>CV shared hard copies of a governor action plan and a governor vision and values statement with governors for them to read and approve/offer comments on.</p> <p>PN – Q: regarding the 'rural, community focus' referred to in the vision and values statement, we mustn't forget that there is a world outside the school. Could this be emphasised or covered somewhere?</p> <p>CV/HT – A: this could be included somewhere in the vision, yes.</p> <p>Governors discussed where in the vision and values statement this outward focus could be included.</p> <p>AS – Q: do we need to mention NYC if the Diocese are mentioned?</p> <p>CV – A: yes, I'll do that.</p> <p>Governors addressed the notion, in the governor vision and values statement, that 'teachers' performance is managed robustly and is part of an ongoing assessment process, used as a basis for salary progression.'</p> <p>HT has contacted NYC for guidance on this matter and shared that staff will have targets which are tied to the school development plan. There ought to be a minimum of two targets for staff (and meetings regarding their progress) each year. The whole area of performance management needs a review.</p> <p>CV noted that there is no formal process, in writing, that indicates that we as governors are doing this part of the job. The section quoted above is taken, as an example to work from, from another school's value statement.</p> <p>CV to redraft the governor vision and values statement and present this at the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>Governors addressed the governor training and development strategy for 2023-2024 and discussed their availability for the training dates.</p> <p>AS – Q: should we all undertake the safeguarding training every year?</p> <p>CV – A: it needs reviewing every 2 years, but yes, that would be good practice.</p> <p>LH advised that all governors undertake Ofsted training.</p>	<p>CV</p> <p>GB</p>
11.1223	<p><b>Policy Review</b></p> <p>No policies are currently ready for review.</p>	
12.1223	<p><b>SFVS and revised budget</b></p> <p>Governors agreed to ratify the updated SFVS circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>LH summarised the revised budget for governors. There is an over-spend of 27k. This is due to a deficit carried over from the year before as well as premises. The biggest thing to increase out budget is pupil admissions. We need to keep out numbers as buoyant as they are. We have budgeted to spend more than we have received, but we know the reasons why. We will need to be extra careful next year (e.g. saving on subscriptions). We aim for best value with every purchase –</p>	

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	everything is carefully analysed and considered beforehand. In good news, the electricity charges have gone down slightly. HT added that the school also has not used as much supply as the start budget accounted for. <a href="#">Governors agreed to ratify the revised budget.</a>	
13.1223	<b>Any other business</b> No other business. HT invited governors to attend the second school nativity performance on the following day.	
14.1223	<b>How has this meeting impacted on the welfare and progress of our pupils?</b> The new curriculum has had a big positive impact on pupils. We have started to formalise how governance can be developed in preparation for outside visits.	
15.1223	<b>Date of next meeting/s</b> FGB 06.02.24, at 6.30pm.	

*Meeting closed 8.30pm.*

**Actions of the FGB meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Item	Action	Lead
<i>Carried over actions</i>	• 6.0723 - CV to follow up.	CV
	• 10.0723 - Ethos Group to circulate minutes following future meetings.	HT
7.1223	SP volunteered to visit the school and read – to arrange a date with LH.	SP / LH
10.1223	• CV to redraft the governor vision and values statement and present this at the next FGB meeting.	CV
	• LH advised that all governors undertake Ofsted training.	GB

**Minutes produced by Lydia Waites – Clerk**  
Signed ..... (Chair) Date .....