



Governor Meeting

Reason for Meeting FGB Meeting	Start: 16/11/2023 16:15:00	End: 16/11/2023 18:40:00
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Governing Body

Sarah Edwards	Headteacher
Shelagh Morris	Co-opted Governor (Chair)
Caroline Smale	Co-opted Governor (Vice Chair)
Sean Pond	Local Authority Governor
Andrew Palmer	Co-opted Governor
James Mottram	Co-opted Governor
Andrew Sudron	Associate Member
Si McInerney	Parent Governor
Peter Hawthorn-Smith	Parent Governor
Emma Gibson	Staff Governor
Lynn Lewendon	Co-opted Governor

Core Functions of the Governing Body:

- **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**
- **Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils**
- **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent**

Strategic Objectives

At Springwater School...

- We will offer a vacant placement to a SEND child and/or young person whose special educational needs are life long, severe and complex and support them and their family during their learning journey.
- Pupils will achieve their potential, developing their engagement with their world and their voice as they prepare for adulthood.
- We will continue to value the skills and well-being of our staff and invest in their career development.
- We will plan and develop a sustainable future.

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
	PROCEDURAL	
FGB.23.23	Welcome SMo welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Kim Ayrton (Head of Primary) who was attending on behalf of staff due to governor absences.	



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FGB.24.23	To receive apologies and record the acceptance of apologies Andrew Sudron & Emma Gibson – apologies accepted.	
FGB.25.23	To remind Governors to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests None.	
FGB.26.23	To remind Governors of the need for confidentiality and to determine if any part of the minutes needs to be a confidential item and excluded from the minutes to be made available for public inspection The clerk reminded Governors of the need for confidentiality.	
FGB.27.23	To declare the notification of any other business to be discussed later in the meeting None.	
FGB.28.23	To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2023 (inc. Confidential Minutes) The minutes were approved and signed by SMO.	
FGB.29.23	To discuss any matters arising from the minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGB.06.23: Review Terms & Reference and Governing Body Remit. On agenda. • FGB.15.23: Speak with Andy Mullane regarding links with Harrogate College – SE has spoken with Andy Mullane. SE reported that development at Harrogate College is rapid and appropriately pitched for our youngsters. SMO offered to contact the Chair of Governors at College to maintain relations, but SE is unsure if the college has a board of governors. SE will contact the college to find out. Overall, progress is being made and there are opportunities for our youngsters who want to attend the college, including taster days. • FGB.16.23: Communications Policy to carry forward to next FGB. On agenda. • FGB.16.23: Child Protection Policy to carry forward to next FGB. On agenda. • FGB.17.23: Dates for safeguarding training to be sent to governors – KA advised a date for safeguarding refresher training is 23rd November and invited governors to attend. Complete. • FGB.20.23: North Yorkshire training dates to be sent to all governors. Completed. • FGB.22.23: Dates for strategy review to be circulated. Completed. 	SE
	BUSINESS	
FGB.30.23	Chairs Update	

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	<p>SMo gave an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMo spoke to the MP Andrew Jones' Constituency Office today. SMo reported there may be an opportunity for the Schools Minister to visit Springwater if his diary allows. • Academisation: There has been several meetings of the Academisation Committee; various visits to MATs. Further update later in the meeting. • Expansion: on agenda. • Governor School Improvement Meeting (GSIM): SMo attended on 25th October and will circulate the slides when they are available. • Visits: SMo has conducted several visits to school, and she will write up her reports. SMo met with some of the new pupils to school and the feedback she was given is that they have settled in very well. SMo visited the bakery last Friday and met with some parents of ex-pupils, who reported that they were very pleased with everything the school had done to aid with their children's transitions. It was suggested that a short promotional film be created for the website to help parents who are unable to visit the school. • Website: SMo noted that there are 2 versions of the local offer on the website, and this needs amending. • SMo has weekly meetings with SE, either via phone or face to face. SE reported that this contact was highly valued. <p>See Confidential minutes.</p>	SE
FGB.31.23	<p>Headteachers Report</p> <p>SE apologised for not submitting a written report, provided a verbal update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SE attended a session on benchmarking – Springwater comes out well and are above the national average. • One exclusion this week and one incident of homophobic bullying. Both matters have been addressed as per the appropriate policy/procedure. SE does not anticipate any repeat incidents and is optimistic the pupils have learnt from these experiences. <p>See Confidential minutes.</p>	
FGB.32.23	<p>School Improvement Plan & Feedback on Strategic Planning morning</p> <p>The strategic planning morning took place on 11th November, all governors were in attendance. SMo has used the SIP as a basis for appointing the link roles.</p> <p>The SIP was circulated prior to the meeting and SE invited questions/comments:</p>	

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	<p style="color: red;">Governor Comment: it is a very clear document, but a governor struggled to get a clear picture on the milestones, and it is not easy to see progress. SE noted that some progress dates need to change and be updated from last year. This will help with KPI's against objectives.</p> <p>It was also suggested that a record is kept of previous milestones reached and what we have achieved.</p>	
FGB.33.23	<p>Update from F&R Committee</p> <p><u>SRMA Report:</u> This was circulated prior to the meeting, and JM highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the report was written, the budget has been superseded. • There are some inaccuracies within the report. • The Budget Management Policy is reviewed annually, and this is evidenced in the minutes. • Risk Register – AP is reviewing with Yvonne Heys (SBM). • There is a meeting on 18th December with the Local Authority to discuss the deficit budget and the recovery plan. • KPI's & Metrics: allocating the best use of resources will need to be put onto the Quality of Education Committee agenda. • We have looked at income and banding challenges and this has reduced the deficit to £179k. • Yvonne has reviewed every pupil and there are 5 pupils who we are not reeving basic funding for, which equates to a £50k shortfall in our income, one of these goes back to March 2023. • We have 10 Band 10 challenges pending, which if all are approved, will equate to circa. £70k income. • The funding shortfalls will be raised at the meeting on the 18th December with the LA. • We have looked at underspend in the budget, and we expect there to be some again this year. <p style="color: green;">Governor question: Is the area where we make savings the same every year? It is usually in the maintenance areas – we always put in a provision but don't always use it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report noted 95% of our expenditure is on staffing, and this is high compared to other schools, which are around the 80% mark. However, we have done some work on staffing since the SRMA visit, and due to not renewing some FTC's, natural wastage etc, we are now down to 91.7%. However, if we received all of the money that we are expecting from the funding oversights, this should reduce the staffing down to 88%. 	

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	<p>Governor question: Does Mick Little (CFO at Ascent MAT) expect a school like ours to have a cost/funding per class analysis, to help us focus in on each class and how money is spent? SE is doing some provision mapping and looking at the curriculum to understand the cost for each child. The complexity of pupils' needs is much greater than it was a few years ago.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations in the report to look at ICFP (Integrated Curriculum and Financial Planning) metrics, but having explored this, it was noted this was more for mainstream schools. • Verbal feedback from the SRMA Advisor and what is written in the report are very different, and some of the comments in the report are not appropriate. • It is unclear if this is the final report. • There are some key points to takeaway and some actions that can be done. YH, JM, SE & SMO have met to discuss and are carrying out actions that can be easily achieved. The rest will be discussed on 18th December with the LA. <p>A governor asked for KA's view was on the impact of reduced staffing. KA reported that staff are finding work very difficult at the moment. There are between 8-10 members of staff off work with stress/mental health issues. KA is concerned that any further staff cuts will have a detrimental effect on the remaining staff. Jack Murphy King (Wellbeing lead) is reporting that staff are feeling overwhelmed due to the shortage in staffing, and the resulting increasing workload. KA worries about the long-term effects of the current situation, both on ill health and the potential for staff to seek alternative employment. Staff are fully aware that some of the bandings allocated to pupils are not appropriate, and it is frustrating that there is no staff presence at EHCP banding reviews.</p> <p>PHS noted his thanks to the F&R committee and School Business Manager for the work done in this area.</p> <p>Governor question: Have any of the MAT's flagged up the matter of the Risk Register? It hasn't been raised but SP is aware that they have them and have committees to review them. AP & YH are working on this.</p> <p>Governor comment: There is a lack of inclusion on the expansion of the school. The report recommends cutting the number of staff, but with the expansion, we will surely need more staff, so it seems wrong to lose experienced staff, only to need to recruit again. We do not want to incur redundancy costs if we need staff further down the line. There are also costs in recruiting so this would be a false economy. We have made changes to new support staff contracts e.g., they are on 31.5hrs per week instead of 34hrs, but this does have an impact on teachers and the support they receive.</p>	
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	<p><u>Memorandum of Understanding:</u> This had been circulated prior to the meeting. JM explained that this had been received the night before the last F&R Committee meeting. It was a very sparse document and the F&R had added comments to it [highlighted in yellow on the version sent to the FGB]. SE reported that she had met with Chris Reynolds on 10th November and whilst she hasn't had any official response on the suggested changes, she is positive that most of the points will be accepted, the main sticking point being point 1 regarding our proposal to stagger the approach to increasing capacity. This was being proposed due to the amount of work it takes to take on new pupils, and the pace at which this can be achieved. Once we have received a formal response from Chris Reynolds, the MOU will go to the F&R committee for further review.</p> <p>JM asked for any comments on the MOU to be sent to him by 25th November.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>FGB.34.23</p>	<p>Update on Building Works</p> <p><u>Press release provided for time scale information:</u> There had been an article in the Stray Ferret on 1st October, giving details on timeframes for the expansion. SE had spoken to Janet Crawford (Assistant Director) regarding the article and to express her irritation that we have not been included in the communication loop. SE reported that this article stems from the document of planned works that was released to the public, and the Stray Ferret have picked up on this, stating inaccurate timeframes. It is not a formal press release. SE has also spoken with Chris Reynolds who has assured SE that when the time is right, there will be a joint press release from Springwater and the Local Authority.</p> <p>It was noted that the earliest point of occupation in the new building would be September 2025, with a 6-9 month build programme.</p> <p>Governor question: How much will it cost to furnish the new buildings? We are estimating circa. £6k per class but given an interactive whiteboard costs circa. £5k this doesn't leave much money for anything else. There will need to be some fundraising/grants applied for to help with this. PHS has sent SE a link to a potential source for some funding.</p> <p>It was noted that there is a central pot of money for new schools, and we are arguing the case that whilst we are not a new school, the buildings we will be occupying will be new to the school, and therefore need repurposing.</p>	
<p>FGB.35.23</p>	<p>Safeguarding No formal report this month due to AS sickness. Safeguarding issues noted in the HT report.</p>	

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FGB.36.23	<p>Annual report from Designated Teacher for LAC</p> <p>This had been circulated prior to the meeting. KA highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report was based on 2022/23. There were 2 LAC, both under 18; 1 is NYC and 1 comes under another Authority. • Currently have 2 Active LAC reviews. These reviews take place every 6 months and either KA or AS attends. • We receive pupil premium for one of the LAC, but the other is over 16 so we don't receive any pupil premium for them. • KA did the designated teacher training in June 2023. • It is a manageable case load as there are only 2 LAC in school. KS communicates with the teachers and staff involve with the children, as well as the parents/carers. • Both children have 100% attendance. <p>Governors thanked KA for her report.</p>	
FGB.37.23	<p>Academisation Update</p> <p>SP gave an update on the work done so far by the Academisation Committee. It was noted that whilst there is now no government directive to ensure all schools have converted to academies by 2030, governors at Springwater want to explore the option. 39% of all schools in North Yorkshire are now academies. Initially, Springwater were looking at Horizon, Ascent and Wellspring MAT's; but have now discounted Wellspring due to their size, and they are mainly mainstream schools. The Academisation Committee created some criteria to compare the Trusts, and SP gave a presentation covering the following:</p> <p><u>Cultural Fit:</u> Both Horizon and Ascent have similar ethos and values to Springwater.</p> <p><u>Pupil Profile & Trust Size:</u> Ascent has 6 schools, each of which has very similar profiles to Springwater. Horizon has 7 schools, and they are mainly focused on SEMH needs. Their cohorts are very different to Springwater. Both are focused on SEND.</p> <p><u>Curriculum:</u> Springwater's matches more closely to Ascent.</p> <p><u>Ofsted:</u> Both MAT's have demonstrated their ability to upgrade judgment for schools within their Trust. Each school within both Trusts is graded good or above, except for one.</p> <p><u>Trust Board and Central Services:</u> SP was impressed with Ascent and has attended meetings with them. SP & AP have spoken to their CFO's who have been very helpful. All schools in both MAT's are equal and there is a conscious effort to ensure equality amongst the schools. All schools retain their own identities. Both MAT's have reasonably sized central services e.g., HR, Finance, IT, Governance, and the amount of help these services can provide is transformative.</p>	

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	<p>Governor question: What sort of areas will they provide advice in? There is a lot of collaborative working; experts within the Executive team on SEN; expertise on the Trust boards; provision of high-quality financial expertise and advice; Bandings are all taken care of by one central team who are successful in obtaining outstanding funding.</p> <p>Governor question: Is there central support for EHCP's, and someone to provide challenge? SP will find out.</p> <p>It was also noted that unlike a Local Authority school, MAT's cannot be forced to take on additional pupils.</p> <p><u>Governance Model:</u> Both have similar structures – A Trust Board; Executive Teams; School Councils/Local Governing Boards.</p> <p><u>Financial Management:</u> AP has done some detailed work on the MAT's. Horizon is marginally stronger financially, but their data is now a year old. However, they were forecasting a decent surplus, whereas Ascent was forecasting a small deficit. Both have strong staffing control and have staffing expenditure at 84% of the budget.</p> <p>Governor question: What would be the timescale to bring Springwater in line with the 84% target, given our current situation? This would have to be negotiated.</p> <p>We also need to consider the 'top slicing' of the budget – Ascent is 6.5% and Horizon is 6%. This is a percentage of income from pupils. It was suggested that if MAT's grow in size, there could be potential for this to reduce.</p> <p><u>Staff Pay and Conditions:</u> both adhere to the national pay scales for teachers. For Support Staff, Ascent would level up the rates across the Trust so there would be a piece of work to do to see how this impacts our staff. Staff would TUPE across to the MAT, and pensions wouldn't be affected.</p> <p>Governor question: Impact on Career Development and Opportunities - what is meant by this? Ascent have an interesting model for staff development and they also run a leadership programme. Ascent will ask individuals what they want to achieve and will try and put things in place to facilitate this. Both Trusts focus on staff retention.</p> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both MAT's to visit Springwater. • Further discussions with the Department for Education. SMO reported that our deficit may be an issue – normally a deficit of 3% is allowed. However, they may consider a larger deficit but 	<p>SP</p>
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	<p>would want to see a recovery plan. There could be some funding for the school to help us with the legal/due diligence phase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are speaking with Mowbray on a regular basis, as we are both looking at the same MATs. • The Academisation committee needs to formally decide and bring this to the next FGB. There is an EGM scheduled for 13th December for this. • If the decision is made to proceed, the MAT has to approve us. • We would then apply to the Department for Education by the end of the Autumn term, so the application can be considered at the February Regional Board meeting. <p style="color: red;">Governor question: Is there only certain times when we can apply? We can apply whenever we want, but we have to get the MAT on side before we apply to the Department for Education, and the regional Board meetings only happens at certain points in the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would need to be a communication strategy for staff and parents. • Statutory consultation would ideally happen in January. <p style="color: red;">Governor question: Have we done enough research, and do we actually want to join a MAT? SP thinks we have done enough research, but there is still more to do. Both MAT's have demonstrated the benefits of joining a MAT and if we are going to go down this route, if we do this now, we have our choice of MAT instead of possibly being forced into one that doesn't suit us, further in the future. We also need to consider if it's better to go into a MAT or stick with NYC. Whatever we decide, it won't impact on the expansion plans. The major advantage for joining a MAT is that it is best for pupils and staff in the long term. The decision is irreversible so if we join, then we cannot leave.</p> <p>KA requested that if/when this is taken to staff, governors be as explicit as possible highlighting all of the benefits of joining a MAT. Some staff are influenced by reports in the media, so there is still a lot of negativity surrounding MATs's. It would also be useful to have a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to be able to give to staff.</p> <p style="background-color: yellow;">See confidential minutes.</p> <p>Governors thanked SP for the presentation and the Academisation committee for the work they have done so far.</p> <p><i>(KA left the meeting @ 6.15pm)</i></p>	
FGB.38.23	Ex Sixth Form Parent Survey results	



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	AM is collating the findings, and monitoring reports have been received.	
FGB.39.23	<p>Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection – Governor Approval: circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted in emails prior to the meeting, that these policies had been to the FGB last year and were not approved as they were deemed too confusing, so they were going to be reduced to a couple of more user-friendly policies. SE reported that this suite of policies had been produced by Veritau who act as our Data Protection Officer, and they are the same for every school. We currently don't have approved data protection policies. After discussion, it was agreed that these policies would be approved now, and PHS would work with SE & LL to amalgamate them to be more user friendly. SE noted that staff also need training on this area so this will ideally happen in January after the new versions have been approved. LE to put on the January agenda. Approved. • Pupil Attendance – Approved. • Communications Policy – delegated to the Head Teacher. SE had updated in response to some recent issues. • Child Protection Policy (AS)- Governor Approval: Carried forward to next FGB as AS not present. • Pay Policy – Governor Approval: SE reported there were no major changes to this policy from last year. It is a standard NYC policy. SE will ensure the language in the appendix matches that of the policy, but subject to this, it was approved. Approved. 	<p>PHS/SE/ LL</p> <p>LE</p> <p>LE</p>
FGB.40.23	<p>Governor Housekeeping</p> <p><u>Agree Terms of Reference for Committees:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F&R: SE reformatting with new template. • Quality of Education: completed. • Parent Engagement: PHS has drafted. <p>SMo will send chairs of committees the NYC template for them all to be in the same format. Those not approved to come to the next FGB.</p>	<p>SMo</p> <p>LE</p>
FGB.41.23	<p>Governor Training update</p> <p>JM has completed training on SFVS via Modern Governor. JM reported it was very informative and encouraged governors to access Modern Governor.</p> <p>SMo attended the GSIM on 25th October.</p> <p>LL is booked into introduction to Governors on 21st November.</p>	
FGB.42.23	<p>Governor visits update</p>	

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	<p><u>Monthly Visits:</u> SMC met with children with complex needs. SMC reported he was very impressed with the staff despite the lack of space/resources they have.</p> <p>CS has visited and circulated reports prior to the meeting.</p> <p><u>Future Visits:</u> PHS is visiting in January (focus TBC), and LL will visit in February. SE will contact to make arrangements. SMO & SP are meeting with the Head of School Improvement on 22nd November.</p> <p><u>Christmas events:</u> SE will circulate dates of events to governors.</p>	SE
FGB.43.23	<p>AOB</p> <p>Revised Budget – this will go to the F&R committee in December. The FGB are happy for the F&R committee to approve this.</p> <p>EGM for Academisation: 13th December – LE to find a clerk to cover.</p>	LE
	<p>Dates of next meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7th December 2023 – Finance & Resources • 18th January 2024 – FGB 	

ACTION TABLE		
Item	Action	Who?
FGB.29.23	Find out if there is a Chair of Governors at Harrogate College	SE
FGB.30.23	Ensure only one copy of the Local Offer is on the website.	SE
FGB.33.23	Comments to JM on the MoU by 25 th November.	ALL
FGB.37.23	Find out if there is central support for EHCP's and challenges.	SP
FGB.39.23	Revised Data Protection Policies to go to January FGB.	PHS/SE/LL LE
FGB.39.23	Child Protection Policy to carry forward to January FGB.	LE
FGB.40.23	Circulate NYC template for terms of reference and put on January FGB agenda.	SMO LE
FGB.42.23	Circulate dates of Christmas events to governors.	SE
FGB.43.23	LE to find Clerk Cover for EGM on 13 th December.	LE



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Signed:

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Name
Governor