



Governor Meeting

Reason for Meeting FGB Meeting	Start: 19/01/2023 16:15:00	End: 19/01/2023 18:15:00
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Governing Body: Sean Pond, Sarah Edwards (Headteacher), Shelagh Morris, Andrew Palmer, Andrew Sudron, Caroline Smale, Edward Lyons (TEAMS), James Mottram, Si McInerney, Emma Gibson

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

- **Springwater is open to all children and young adults whose special educational needs require our support**
- **All pupils achieve their maximum potential**
- **Pupils are prepared for adulthood**
- **We Invest in the career development, skills, and wellbeing of our staff**

Agenda

Item	Description	ACTION
	PROCEDURAL	
FGB.46.23	Welcome LE welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
FGB.47.23	To receive apologies and record the acceptance of apologies Andrew Sudron was delivering training so could not attend. Apologies accepted.	
FGB.48.23	To remind Governors to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests None declared.	
FGB.49.23	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. 1 Policy was confidential.	

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FGB.50.23	<p>To declare the notification of any other business to be discussed later in the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strike Action and impact on Springwater. • Update on Building project. 	
FGB.51.23	<p>To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th November 2022 (inc. Confidential Minutes) CS clarified that in item 32, only 10% over the contracted numbers was allowed.</p> <p>The minutes were approved and signed.</p>	
FGB.52.23	<p>To discuss any matters arising from the minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGB.31.22: SIP – SE to circulate SIP once new objectives have been approved by the SEA: SE & SMO had an Autumn planning meeting with the SEA, where the revised SIP was tabled. SE will circulate to governors following the strategic planning meeting being held on 20th January. • FGB.32.22: Strategic Objectives – Governors to send CS/SE comments by 24th November. Complete. SMO will circulate document for comments after meeting on 20th January. • FGB.33.22: Pupil Progress and Assessment – C/F to February FGB. • FGB.35.22: Academisation – working group to be set up once SMO reviewed work plan and responsibilities (to be discussed after Amanda Newbold’s visit) On agenda. • FGB.36.22: Pay Policy – SE querying points with HR: SE & AP met with HR. There are some items governors need to make a decision and some still some outstanding items with HR. SE will follow these up and bring to the F&R Committee in February. • FGB.36.22: Complaints Policy – PHS to send SE comments on this and will be reviewed at next FGB. On agenda. • FGB.36.22: Communications Policy – EG & CS to review and bring back to FGB. On agenda. EG & SE to draft a caveat to the policy for Texts/What App messages. On agenda. • FGB.36.22: Recruitment Policy – SE to seek HR advice on candidates who post on social media (e.g., extreme political views) before the point of shortlisting: SE has spoken to HR who have recommended a search engine. Any material is then reported to the Chair of the recruitment panel to seek further information if required. Complete • FGB.38.22: Safeguarding – Governor to send questions on the report to AS by the end of term. Complete. • FGB.39.22: Website – SE to put SMC in touch with Angie Neal to review the website: SMC has carried out the audit and has sent suggestions to Angie Neal. Complete. 	<p style="text-align: right;">Head</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SMo</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Clerk</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SE/Clerk</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FGB.41.22: Governor Roles – SMO to review the workplan and governor link roles. On agenda. 	
	<p>BUSINESS</p>	
<p>FGB.53.23</p>	<p>Headteachers Report SE provided a verbal report, highlighting the following:</p> <p><u>Behaviour:</u> There has been an increase in all types in behaviour incidents that are recorded, which SE was previously concerned about. It was noted that there has also been an increase in pupil numbers in Primary and Secondary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19/20 Autumn term – 10 incidents (5 Major*) 22/23 Autumn term – 14 incidents (5 Major*) Secondary & Sixth Form: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19/20 Autumn term – 34 incidents (21 Major*) 22/23 Autumn term – 47 incidents (12 Major*) <p>*Major = Physical</p> <p><u>Attendance:</u> There is improved attendance in Pre-Formal and Primary (compared to the same period in 2019/20):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Formal: 73 % increased to 89% Primary: 89% increased to 91% Secondary: this remains at 87% Sixth Form: this is 91% (down by 1%) <p>However, we are above other Special Schools in the area, so SE is not concerned by these figures.</p> <p><u>Governor question:</u> Are any of these students a concern? No – children with this level of need require school and families are generally good at getting the children in. There is only one child with persistent absences and SE is monitoring closely.</p> <p><u>Exclusions:</u> There was one Fixed Term Exclusion in December. The student did not return as expected but this was all followed up and the student is now back in school.</p> <p><u>Governor question:</u> How long are Fixed Term Exclusions for? It depends on the incident/child. It can be for the rest of the day or it could take a couple of days to allow for plans/mitigations to be put in place.</p> <p>SMO advised that she had circulated the amendments she has made to the website.</p> <p><u>Governor question:</u> Is there any merit in aligning our values to those of a MAT?</p>	

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	Possibly, once we have reviewed some MATS – we need to keep reviewing our strategic objectives as we progress. We will also need to review the SIP in line with the strategic objectives.	
FGB.36.22: Pay Policy	<p>Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay Policy: this will be carried forward to the February FGB. • Communication Policy: SE to revert on the issue regarding texts/Whats App messages and will carry forward to the February FGB. CS & EG have not yet met so this is pending. • Recruitment Policy: this will be carried forward to the February FGB. 	<p>HT/Clerk</p> <p>HT/Clerk CS/EG</p> <p>HT/Clerk</p>
FGB.55.23	<p>Resources</p> <p><u>Update from Resources committee held 13th December:</u> Minutes of the meeting had been circulated and the following was also noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Pay for teachers and support staff without any extra funding, along with increasing energy bills are the main source of concern. • SE has received figures regarding the uplift in bandings. There will be a 4.4% increase from April. NYCC are receiving £7m in High Needs Funding and this will be added as a separate budget line as a grant. • We are also receiving a 3.6% uplift in the budget, following the meeting with NYCC. <p><i>(EG joined the meeting @ 16.55hrs)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern that any pay future rises for staff will offset these increases, but school do not have any control over this. <p style="color: green;">Governor question: Will we have the revised figures for the F&R meeting on 8th February? SE will check with Yvonne and the Bursar to see if this is possible.</p> <p style="color: green;">Governor question: Who is the SRMA (School Resource Management Advisor)? We haven't been allocated one yet but we have requested someone with experience of a Special School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have been without a H&S Advisor since the return to school in September. The SEA has challenged this and we have now been allocated one. • School Fund: the committee are meeting and deciding on how they would like to spend the money. • Caretaker: the second Caretaker has now left the post so we are back to one caretaker. The post is not being re-advertised yet. 	<p>HT/JM</p>

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	<p>Approval of RRR Policy and associated Panels: <i>*See confidential minutes*</i></p> <p><i>17.05hrs: Amanda Newbold (Assistant Director – Education & Skills) joined the meeting present to Governors on Academisation. This is minuted under item 62.</i></p>	
FGB.56.23	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>SE circulated the recent SEA visit report and invited questions at the next FGB. SE advised that Olivia Kelly (SEA) had been in school for the whole day and spoke with pupils, staff and SMO.</p> <p>There is a training session next week to elaborate on 'Low level of concerns for Staff' where staff will be briefed on systems and expectations.</p> <p>We are using the existing management information system for recording safeguarding incidents, behaviour, and attendance. We are starting to use this more effectively and we are moving towards an electronic system.</p> <p>Andrew Sudron is in the process of completing the bi-annual Safeguarding Audit. This will come to governors for approval to the next FGB as it needs submitting by the end of March.</p>	Dep HT /Clerk
FGB.57.23	<p>Careers & Work Placements</p> <p>SE had circulated an overview prior to the meeting. SE was pleased with the improving diversity of placements which now includes shops, hairdressers, cafes, hotels, dog groomers and the local MP's office. Some youngsters are able to attend their placements unsupervised which is amazing for their independence. All the youngsters on placements are thriving and doing well.</p> <p>There is also a group of children engaged in community work experience project, who were asked to do this by a local café.</p> <p>Governors recognised that Andy Mullane and the job coach have done a great job on improving the opportunities for the youngsters.</p>	
FGB.58.23	<p>Behaviour Report</p> <p>Covered in item 53.</p>	
FGB.59.23	<p>Governor Housekeeping</p> <p><u>Work Plan:</u> SMO is progressing this. SMO advised that the meetings will remain on Thursdays at 4.15pm as this time suits everyone. It was noted this was the best time for staff to attend governor meetings, as they can tag it to the end of the school day.</p>	

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	<p><u>Committees:</u> SMO has drafted a list of committees and allocated governors to them. It was advised that Governors should not be involved in fundraising (organising events etc) so SMO has changed this committee to 'Parent Engagement.' It was agreed that seeking grants would pass to the F&R committee.</p>	
<p>FGB.60.23</p>	<p>Governor Training update</p> <p><u>Feedback from training undertaken since the last meeting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM – Safeguarding & Data training. • CS – Cyber training • SMO – Cyber and S/G training. <p>LE will establish a training log so all training is kept centrally.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Clerk</p>
<p>FGB.61.23</p>	<p>Governor visits update</p> <p><u>Verbal Report from CS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CS had circulated reports after meeting with the Head's of Departments. CS will meet with subject leaders this term. <p><u>Feedback from visits undertaken since the last meeting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM attended an Admissions Panel and reported that NYCC had not been fully prepared for the meeting. • SP had met with SE to review her objectives as part of the HTPM monitoring. SP advised governors to look at assessment criteria when monitoring. 	
<p>FGB.62.23</p>	<p>Academisation Update</p> <p>Governors introduced themselves to Amanda Newbold (AN). SMO explained the reason for the invitation was to give governors more information on the potential Local Authority (LA) MAT, following a briefing SP & SE had attended in July. SMO explained that governors were open to exploring the idea of academisation further and wanted to review options, following a very positive Ofsted Inspection in June. Governors have already explored several MATs but wanted more information on the potential LA MAT.</p> <p>AN explained that the direction of travel in education was for all schools to 'level up' and the White Paper published in the summer was for all schools to be part of MAT by 2030. This White Paper has since been revoked and academisation is no longer compulsory (unless instructed to do so following an inadequate Ofsted).</p> <p>AN offered the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37% of schools in England have academised. • 51% of children in England attend an academy. • More secondary schools are academies than primary schools. 	

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- There is a mix with Special Schools.
- There are 38 MATs operating in NYCC.
- There are 232 Local Authority Schools.

Initially following the White Paper, NYCC had the proposal that the LA could establish a MAT which would be all encompassing for all schools – NYCC didn't want any school to be isolated if schools around them where all joining MATs.

However, as the White Paper has been revoked, the process for establishing an LA MAT has now been pulled and AN is unsure if or when it will happen. The LA MAT is therefore no longer an option, but AN is happy to take any questions on academisation.

Governor question: Why was there such an appetite for an LA established MAT?

Many schools are not attractive to MATs due to size, old buildings etc. NYCC didn't want to see a group of locality schools in a MAT with a lone school in the middle on its own. We didn't want situations where there wasn't any local support for a school. So NYCC thought we could become part of the MAT system. NYCC are aware of some schools in the county that are at risk of closure if they receive an inadequate Ofsted and an existing MAT didn't want to take on the school.

AN advised that she hasn't seen an influx of schools wanting to convert and the schools that are doing so now were already thinking about it or had started the process. There is a lot of work involved in converting a school to an academy and NYCC can convert around 3 or 4 schools per month.

Governor question: If the project had gone forward, would it have been a pilot scheme?

NYCC would have done it and then the DfE would have taken it to other authorities.

Governor question: How can you persuade a school to federate with a 'lower standard school'?

There are lots of benefits to federating and it can lead to improvements in all schools within the federation. Federating is about a change of governance and senior leadership, not a staffing/operational change. Budgets remain separate but there is an option of merging them further down the line.

Governor question: In a MAT do budgets remain ringfenced?

Yes – there is a percentage of top slice for the central fund but schools have their own budgets.

AN advised that NYCC can give support to schools who are looking to convert, by suggesting questions to ask, but governors have to

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	<p>undertake the due diligence work. This can be done by inviting MATs into school; going out to MATs; seeking advice from the DfE as to which MATs are looking to expand etc.</p> <p>Governor question: Is there an example of what a MAT should look like? MAT's need to be viable – they can't carry debt and they have to invest money into the children. Some MATS have fewer than 10 schools in so they do need to expand.</p> <p>Governor question: What are Special Schools generally doing? There are 3 MATs in NYCC that have Special Schools. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venn: mainstream but have an interest in Special Schools • Wellspring: mainly Special Schools. • Horizon: mixed. <p>Some of the schools have converted by choice, others by order. It isn't ideal to have all schools in the same area in the same MAT. There are other MAT's that will work with Special Schools, and some MAT's who particularly want a Special School.</p> <p>Governor question: Are you able to direct us to which avenues to explore? No – Governors know the school best and the fit is all about what you want for the school. We can help in the process, but we cannot direct you to a certain MAT.</p> <p>Governor question: is Federation still popular? Yes - if the White Paper hadn't had been pulled, probably not as much.</p> <p>Governor question: We use Red Kite for training, is there anything similar we can look at for other MATs? AN will circulate the slides from the presentation in the Summer.</p> <p>Governor question: We go beyond Year 13 – is there help/support for going into Further Education? Some MAT's support this, but colleges are not part of MAT's.</p> <p>With there being no further questions governors thanked AN for attending the meeting. AN advised that there is a lot of support available from NYCC.</p> <p><i>AN left the meeting @ 17.55hrs</i></p> <p>There followed a short discission covering the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have to eliminate the idea of joining an LA MAT because this is not progressing. • There needs to be further discission and exploration as there is a sense of optimism around this matter. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All MATs are different – some let schools keep their individual identity, some prefer uniformity. • If we were to join a Special School MAT the hope would be that teacher training would be adapted. Currently all teacher training is aimed at mainstream schools, so special schools have to adapt it. If we were part of a Special School MAT this could be done at source. • The concept of 'stronger together' is exciting for the school. • Ideally decide if we would like to pursue academisation before the end of the school year. • It was agreed that further discussion would happen at the FGB in February to assess initial thoughts. • If it was agreed to pursue the work would pass to a committee who could report back to the FGB. • AP will draw up criteria/questions for discussion at the next meeting. • SMc to share information from previous experience of academisation. • Need to agree the process of how we would meet with MATs but all governors would need to be involved. • Need to agree the benefits of academisation and think about stakeholders. 	<p>AP SMc</p>
<p>FGB.63.23</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p><u>Industrial Action:</u> SE is engaging with the NEU representative in school who will inform SE of the members intentions (it was noted that teachers do not need to advise school if they are intending to strike). The DfE are urging schools to remain open, especially for vulnerable children. SE will take a pragmatic view on whether to keep the school open, but also noted there will be a knock on effect for staff whose own children may be affected by school closures.</p> <p>Governor question: When will you advise parents? SE will write to parents tomorrow but will provide more information on Monday.</p>	
	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources: Wednesday 8th February 2023 @ 4.15pm • FGB: Thursday 23rd February 2023 @ 4.15pm 	

Meeting closed at: 18.40hrs



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Signed:

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Name
Governor