



Governor Meeting

Reason for Meeting FGB Meeting	Start: 17/11/2022 16:15:00	End: 17/11/2022 18:15:00
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Governing Body: Sean Pond, Sarah Edwards (Headteacher), Shelagh Morris, Andrew Palmer (TEAMS), Andrew Sudron, Caroline Smale, Edward Lyons, James Mottram, Si McInerney, Peter Hawthorn-Smith, 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**

MINUTES

Item	Description	ACTION
	PROCEDURAL	
FGB.24.22	Welcome SMo welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially the new governors – Emma Gibson (Staff) and Peter Hawthorn Smith (Parent). Governors also noted thanks to Caitlin Hughes for her contribution to the governing board.	
FGB.25.22	To receive apologies and record the acceptance of apologies None.	
FGB.26.22	To remind Governors to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests None declared.	
FGB.27.22	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.	



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FGB.28.22	<p>To declare the notification of any other business to be discussed later in the meeting Photocopier – under item 37.</p>	
FGB.29.22	<p>To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 29th September 2022 (inc. Confidential Minutes) The minutes were approved and signed.</p>	
FGB.30.22	<p>To discuss any matters arising from the minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGB.03.22: LE to chase outstanding Business Interest Forms. Complete • FGB.06.22: LE to make amendments to Standing Orders to state Governor DBS checks would be re-done when a term of office is renewed. Complete • FGB.11.22: KPI's - CS & SE will look at KPI's: ongoing as it is hoped the new strategic objectives will generate the KPI's. Complete (for this item). • FGB.11.22: Clear document for 12-step process for appeals - SMO will progress with AP to check it matches to the HR policies: SMO has reviewed several policies and it is likely there is already a process in place. <i>(Discussed under item 36).</i> Complete. • FGB.15.22: Overview of attendance and behaviour - On agenda. • FGB.16.22: Pay Policy – On agenda. • FGB.16.22: Safeguarding Policy - AS to check with NYSCP about register remaining open at the start of the school day: AS has contacted NYSCP and is waiting to hear back. C/F • FGB.16.22: Assessment Policy - On Agenda. • FGB.18.22: Safeguarding – AS to bring report to next FGB. On Agenda. • FGB.18.22: Safeguarding - AS to send the training link from 'The Key' to governors. Complete. • FGB.19.22: Website Audit – On Agenda. • FGB.20.22: Governor Vacancies – SE to seek parent and staff governor. Complete. • FGB.20.22: Review/Appoint key roles following strategy meeting – on Agenda. • FGB.22.22: Governor Visits – JM to arrange a Learning Walk with AS: this didn't happen due to the change in governor roles/responsibilities. Complete. • FGB.22.22: Governor visits - SE to circulate the calendar of dates to governors, including dates of staff meetings: SE circulated the dates and governors are to let SE know if they would like to attend events. Complete. Staff meetings – SE circulated the remaining dates for this term. One member of staff is leaving and SMO will attend this meeting to present a gift and acknowledge their 26 years of employment with Springwater. Complete. 	Dep HT

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BUSINESS		
FGB.31.22	<p>School Improvement Plan AS & SE are working on two additional objectives for the SIP – the SEA will review these. Once approved these will be added to the SIP. SE will circulate when they have been reviewed by the SEA.</p>	HT
FGB.32.22	<p>Discussion on strategic objectives (following the working morning in Sept 22) The document was produced following the October working morning that governors attended. The document requires further governor review and input so all governors to send CS & SE any comments by 24th November. SE advised that the work CS has done on this document will hold the SLT to account. It was noted that milestones and a timeframe also need adding to the document.</p> <p style="color: red;">Governor question: with regards to the first objective, what is meant by “we will offer a vacant placement to a SEND Child etc”? We originally discussed Springwater having an open-door policy to any child. We need to consider where the vacancies are in each cohort and consider if we can meet a child’s needs [if they apply for a place]. We need to ensure that we are in control of pupil numbers, and not just directed to take a child. Our long-term goal is to have an ‘open-door’ policy, but in the current climate, that is not realistic.</p> <p>CS highlighted that during her research on academisation, it was apparent that some schools are over 10% capacity, which must have an impact on the quality of provision.</p>	ALL
FGB.33.22	<p>Pupil Progress and Assessment This was circulated prior to the meeting. The illustrations show the percentage of pupils who achieved the short-term outcomes set in their EHCPs and was broken down into overall achievement. The data informs the curriculum and school improvement. The document highlighted that there was a weakness in ‘Sensory and Physical’ so this can now be addressed, and we are exploring sensory training with staff.</p> <p>This was the first term this data has been collected and it will now be done on a termly basis. LE to put on agenda termly.</p>	Clerk
FGB.34.22	<p>To receive an overview of attendance and behaviour This was circulated prior to the meeting. The number of behaviour incidents has fallen again which is very positive.</p> <p>Attendance: the figures appear low compared to the Spring term, which is a concern, however our attendance is higher than other Special Schools in the area. The reasons for the absences include term time holidays, and appointments for hospital/procedures. There is a still a lasting impact from Covid.</p>	

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	<p>SE has reviewed the children with below 90% attendance (9) and they are either unauthorised absence, or medical appointments. There is only one who is a concern for SE, and she is picking this up with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Assistant who is positive this attendance will improve.</p> <p>Governor question: Does NYCC have any idea of how many special needs children have fallen off the radar? NYCC are paying close attention to attendance. There is a huge pressure on schools to return attendance data, so SE is confident NYCC are aware.</p>	
FGB.35.22	<p>Academisation Update</p> <p>Governors have researched several MATS and reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galaxy MAT: CS/SMo/CS had a TEAMS call with this MAT based in Kent. • Ascent MAT: CS/SMo visited this MAT, based in Sunderland (currently 4 schools). CS reported that schools keep their own identities; finance are kept within the schools; SLT's work across all schools; lots of support for Ofsted inspections; standards are very high; children are very engaged; access grants and maintenance of schools. • SE has written to NYCC regarding the 'Local Authority MAT' and will also raise at the planning meeting with the SEA. • Wellspring MAT: this is a Special School MAT and SE has spoken to some of the Heads. SE liked this MAT and thinks it would be a good fit for Springwater. <p>It was agreed that there needs to be a working group to look at this further and once SMO has reviewed the work plan and link responsibilities, this will be set up. There will also need to be some parental support and involvement.</p>	SMo
FGB.36.22	<p>Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay Policy: this will come to the next FGB as SE is querying some points with HR. • Assessment Policy: AS advised that there is a focus on assessment in the SIP and he has already added in timelines but needs to ensure the assessment system works for the school. The new policy will be ready in the summer and AS is visiting other schools to garner information to help write the policy. <p>Governor question: Is it worth having a working party for this? Yes, but not at this moment in time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix to Complaints Policy: SMO advised there wasn't anything that dealt with frequent/vexatious complaints, so this was produced. PHS suggested that from a parent's perspective there are a number of issues and we don't want to discourage 	Clerk

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	<p>parents with genuine problems from complaining. PHS will send SE his comments and the policy will come back to the next FGB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Policy: this came out of the Wellbeing group and covers issues like acceptable practice; parental expectations; support for staff etc. It was noted that a lot of work had gone into this policy, but it didn't read very well. EG & CS will review the policy, and governors to send comments to them, and come back to the next FGB. <p>Governor question: Do staff communicate outside of emails e.g., texts/Whats App?</p> <p>Yes, but this is outside of the policy. There was a discussion on whether this kind of communication was subject to the policy so SE & EG will review and draft a caveat for it.</p> <p>17: 20hrs: Martin Surtees & Chris Reynolds (NYCC) joined the meeting via TEAMS to update Governors on the building project. This is minuted under item 44.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Policy: Governor question: If something is found on social media about an applicant, that doesn't relate to children, is there anything we can do e.g., extreme political views? SE has been briefed on how to search for such issues, but this only takes place at the point of shortlisting. SE will ask HR. • Appeals & Hearings procedures: SMO suggested this be adopted as it was a standard NYCC policy. SE will adapt it to the school as it incorporates the 12-step process for all hearings/appeals which is referred to in the following policies which we have already adopted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability Policy and Procedure for Schools (Feb 22) • Attendance Management Guidance • Staff Disciplinary Policy (March 22) 	<p>PHS/HT Clerk</p> <p>ALL CS/EG Clerk</p> <p>HT/EG</p> <p>HT</p>
FGB.37.22	<p>Resources</p> <p><u>Update from Resources committee held 20th October:</u> JM summarised the outcomes from the F&R meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised budget is forecasting a £200k deficit. JM, SE, Yvonne Heys & the Bursar are meeting with NYCC on 7th December to discuss the deficit. • There is a £100k increase in staffing costs due to pay awards which wasn't budgeted for, and schools are not receiving any extra funding to cover this. • Energy costs are also increasing, and Yvonne is looking at energy grants. • Thanks is noted to Yvonne for her hard work on the revised budget. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fire Inspection was passed. • The hiring of the new caretaker has helped reduce overall maintenance costs. <p><u>Pay Committee:</u> 2 teachers were awarded the next point on the UPS after successful applications. This has been budgeted for.</p> <p><u>Data Protection policies:</u> these are being queried with Veritau.</p> <p><i>*See confidential minutes.*</i></p> <p><u>Photocopier:</u> YH needs to renew the photocopier contract. The new contract is an overall saving of £3.5k. As this is above the limit SE can sign off this has to come to governors for approval. Governors approved this.</p> <p>CS noted that she has reviewed Springwater staffing costs – 91% of our expenditure is on staffing, compared to 70% in mainstream schools and 85% in special schools.</p>	
FGB.38.22	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>A reported from AS was circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed that a trial for using CPOMS would be useful, and it would also aid with reporting to governors. Governors to send any questions on the report to AS by the end of term.</p>	ALL
FGB.39.22	<p>Website Audit</p> <p>SMc advised that there are some areas that are out of date and SE will put him in touch with Angie Neal who looks after the website.</p> <p>LE advised the Governor pages were now up to date.</p> <p><i>SMc left the meeting @ 6.15pm</i></p>	HT/SMc
FGB.40.22	<p>Parent Survey Results</p> <p>This was circulated prior to the meeting. The survey was to gather views about transition and preparation for next settings Post 19. SE advised it was a poor return, but overall parents thought there was good support from school, but not as good from the Local Authority.</p> <p><i>Governor question: Do you have any actions for next year? SE is hoping to contact the officers who support these children and give them feedback.</i></p> <p><i>Governor question: Could we support parents earlier in the school year? Yes, this is something we could look at doing.</i></p>	
FGB.41.22	<p>Governor Housekeeping</p>	

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	<p><u>Review/Appoint key roles:</u> SMO advised that there needs to be more working groups to focus on different areas (Curriculum; Fundraising; Academisation etc). SMO will review the work plan alongside the strategic objectives and will reassign roles.</p>	SMo
FGB.42.22	<p>Governor Training update PHS & EL are doing their online Safeguarding training.</p>	
FGB.43.22	<p>Governor visits update</p> <p><u>Feedback from visits undertaken since the last meeting:</u> CS has completed 2 visits on the curriculum and will circulate reports once she has visited the Sixth Form.</p> <p>SP was on the interview panel for TA's. SP raised the issue of what support school can give TA's who have no school experience.</p>	
FGB.44.22	<p>Capacity & Buildings Project Chris Reynolds & Martin Surtees (NYCC) joined the meeting to update Governors on the building project. MS summarised the project to date and invited questions from Governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim is to expand the school and create a 'campus'. • This would create significant additional capacity. • Project must be value for money. • There are limited capital resources within NYCC and there needs to be an additional 350 specialist places created over the next 5 years. • £8.5m has been allocated to NYCC for 2023/24. Schools must apply for this funding. • NYCC is the has been awarded the lowest allocation per pupil across the whole of the country (in comparison, Kensington has been awarded £15m). • There is an 'in principle' decision to allocate £2.1m to this project and there will be a decision by the end of January. • The scheme is robust, and CR & MS are confident with it. <p>CR shared the proposed floor plan of the project and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings close to the school have been looked at in order to create the campus. • The majority of work would be at 68A. • The plan is to ensure space is appropriate and useful and addresses a range of needs in order to get to an increased capacity to justify the spend. • It is forecast it would create an additional 45 spaces. • The project is seen as viable, but it is contingent on another service in one of the allocated buildings, moving elsewhere. • The vast majority of the investment would be at 68A. 	

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Governor question: if we are given the green light, we still have to overcome issues with the Planning department for issues such as parking. Has there been any feedback from the Planners?
MS has spoken to the Highways Agency, and they are reasonably confident it will be approved.

Governor question: if the project is approved, what is the likely timeline?

A decision will be made at the end of January, and it is a 24-month programme. September 2024 is optimistic so it is likely it would be after this. It would be reasonable to presume that it could be a phased release once the incumbent services have moved out.

Governor question: does the £2.1m cover fixtures and fittings?

No – the £2.1m is for the building works and ensuring they are at a usable standard. Fixtures and fittings are not included in this allocation.

There followed a discussion on where school would be able to get the funding for the IT/fixtures/fittings etc. It was suggested there could be various funding streams/grants that could be applied for, school fundraising etc.

Governor question: How is the figure of 45 new places come about and what are the mitigating factors for the additional parking?

The demand around the school, as well as floor space and discussions with SE have determined the figure. It works out at circa. £50k per child which is affordable. There have been challenges in accommodating the school in the past and it is hoped that this build will address some of these challenges. MS will send the transport mitigation plan to SE for circulation to governors.

Governor question: Has an external planner been appointed?

No, not at this stage.

Governor question: when looking at the plan, have you looked at the Government Area Guidelines for SEN provision?

CR advised there are limited options for Springwater as we are unable to build a new school as this would cost circa. £10m, and NYCC have only been allocated £8.5m. There is no scope for expansion of the current buildings so this is the only option. The guidelines will be consulted for reference points.

Governor question: what happens if the January date over runs, the devolution of the new council comes into effect? Is there a contingency and could there be potential of getting a bigger budget?

We are not anticipating it will have any impact on the SEN funding allocation.

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	<p>Governor question: would we absorb the 45 children in one go or would this be phased? This would be phased across the 2 years.</p> <p>Governor question: with the extra space the project will deliver, how far short are we on the BB104 guidelines? Will the 45 extra students make it worse? The 3 additional classrooms will meet the regulations but the ancillary areas won't. The project will improve facilities for Springwater.</p> <p>Governor question: Is it only economical if we take in another 45 children? This is the value for money estimate and it is a very sound case.</p> <p>Governor question: Does the £2.1m include covering the costs for other services to relocate? Other Services have their own projected costs and these are separate.</p> <p>Governor question: what happens if the tender comes back with higher costs than anticipated? If we got to that point we would need to review the position.</p> <p>Governor question: Are there numerous proposals going to the board for a decision or is it on a 'first come first served' basis? There are a number of proposals going to the Executive Board, but we are unable to disclose what they are. SEMH provision is a big issue for NYCC, and Springwater is a priority, which is why we are sat here today.</p> <p>Governors thanked CR & MS for their presentation. Governors appreciate they have been mindful of capacity issues and there will be further discussion.</p> <p><i>CR & MS left the meeting @ 6pm.</i></p> <p>Governors discussed the matter further and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to consider if we go higher than 45 extra children. • We need to consider what happens if we Academise. • We are fortunate to have a chance of improving the school and receiving £2.1m funding. • There is a major issue around extra funding for fixtures and fittings etc. • SMC advised there are lots of routes to explore regarding fundraising and grants. <p>It was agreed that the FGB in January would be focussed on this project, prior to the Executive Board meeting. There needs to be detailed discussion on whether we proceed with the project or spend money on updating our current buildings. The overall intention is to</p>	
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	improve Pre-Formal Provision for the PMLD children, and this project would result in 3 brand new classrooms for these children.	
FGB.45.22	AOB Photocopier – discussed under item 37.	
	Date of next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resources: Tuesday 13th December 2022 @ 4.15pm• FGB: Thursday 19th January 2023 @ 4.15pm	

Meeting closed at 6.35pm

Signed:

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Name
Governor