



Governor Meeting

Reason for Meeting FGB Meeting	Start: 18/05/2023 16:15:00	End: 18/05/2023 18:15:00
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Governing Body

Sarah Edwards	Headteacher
Shelagh Morris	Co-opted Governor (Chair)
Caroline Smale	Co-opted Governor (Vice Chair)
Sean Pond	Co-opted Governor
Andrew Palmer	Co-opted Governor
James Mottram	Co-opted Governor (<i>Via Teams – part</i>)
Andrew Sudron	Associate Member
Edward Lyons	Local Authority Governor (<i>Via Teams</i>)
Peter Hawthorn-Smith	Parent Governor
Yvonne Heys	School Business Manager - <i>part</i>

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.

Agenda

Item	Description	ACTION
	PROCEDURAL	
FGB.82.23	Welcome SMo welcomed everyone to the meeting. YH was in attendance to present on the Start Budget.	
FGB.83.23	To receive apologies and record the acceptance of apologies	

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	Emma Gibson – illness. These were accepted. Si McInerney was not present but had problems accessing the building.	
FGB.84.23	To remind Governors to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests None declared.	
FGB.85.23	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.86.23	To declare the notification of any other business to be discussed later in the meeting None.	
FGB.89.23	<p>Resources (<i>item moved to start of the meeting as JM was only present for 30 minutes</i>)</p> <p><u>Start Budget:</u> The F&R committee were unable to meet earlier in the month due to the Bursar having Covid, which meant the budget was not ready in time for the F&R meeting on 4th May. School have also had the SRMA visit on 15th May so it was agreed that the Start Budget would be finalised following this visit. It was noted that the Start Budget had to be submitted by 20th May, hence the reason it was on the FGB agenda. The budget had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Prior to this meeting, JM had emailed YH a list of questions regarding the budget, which YH had answered. As Chair of the F&R Committee, JM advised he was not happy approving and submitting the budget as it stands as there is a significant deficit (circa. £400k) and we need to further understand the reasons behind this. SE has spoken with NYC regarding this, and they have insisted that the budget must be submitted by 20th May. SE advised this was a matter for governors to decide, the options being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit the budget as it is with a cover note acknowledging the deficit and there is work to be done on addressing this. This would result in us applying for a deficit licence and submitting a plan on how this will be rectified. The timing of which is likely to coincide with the report from the SRMA. OR; • Do not submit and wait for a response from NYC, which is likely to be directed to SE and SMO. In the meantime, further work will be done on the budget to understand the reasons causing the deficit. <p>SE gave an update on the SRMA visit. The advisor was commissioned by the DfE, and she was a specialist in Special Educational settings. The advisor spent the whole day in school, and information had been</p>	

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	<p>provided before her visit. SE advised that the advisor had found that there is nothing else that we could be doing to improve the situation – there aren't any lines within the budget that we are overspending on or have made any mistakes with. The advisor had complemented YH on her very comprehensive understanding of the budget. The advisor asked SE about support from the Local Authority to which the response was nothing – there is no solution to this without further support. The main constraints are the buildings and the lack of funding. SE was reassured by the findings.</p> <p>Governor question: Does the conclusion carry any weight? It is not clear as she is an advisor, but the Local Authority need a financially viable school for SEN.</p> <p>Governor question: What is the latest on the new building and the financing of this? We have made it clear that everything would need funding, including fixtures, fittings, furniture etc.</p> <p>SP advised that in his opinion, the budget should be submitted as it stands, because it demonstrates the lack of funding. We are not alone being in deficit, and it will be interesting to see what ideas come out of the Local Authority following submission and the SRMA report.</p> <p>It was noted that the main area of spending that has increased is Support Staff, but this has not increased in headcount for next year – it will remain on 71. In reality, in order to deal with the deficit, the school would have to undergo a huge restructure, either at SLT level, or approximately 20 support staff, but neither of these options are sustainable for the children in the school. The costs of redundancy would also increase the deficit, unless the Local Authority fund these, but we would take a hit on pensions. YH advised that if a school is in deficit, the Local Authority can step in to pay for redundancy costs.</p> <p>Governor question: Would it be a significant piece of work to have the pension figures to make the point? Employment Support Services (ESS) would need to do this. If we were to pursue a restructure which resulted in redundancies, we have to offer voluntary redundancy first. This is more appealing to older staff, which means pensions costs would be incurred. But if the school were to expand, and people have been made redundant, we then have to recruit to support the expansion.</p> <p>AP suggested that the DfE may look at our budget and conclude that our recruitment is out of control. The costs of GTA's has increased by 40% so we need to understand the reasons behind this – we need to demonstrate it is not the recruitment that is out of control, but we have a unique profile of students who need varying levels of support. AP's view is to not submit this budget.</p>	
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	<p>YH advised that the figures are based on a full year's costs, whereas when the previous draft was only based on part year. Also, staff have received pay awards.</p> <p>CS – not to submit the budget, there needs to be further scrutiny and time to answer the questions raised.</p> <p>EL – not to submit the budget and advise there is further work to be done – we do not know enough at this point.</p> <p>JM – not to submit, there are too many significant factors out of our control.</p> <p>SE – there are benefits in submitting the budget tomorrow, as outlined by SP, but SE is worried about the messaging because governors are not approving this budget. SE agreed not to submit the budget.</p> <p>Governors agreed not to submit this budget until further work can be done on the issues mentioned above. The action will be no submission, but SE will inform FMS that we are not submitting.</p> <p>JM, SE, SMO & YH will meet on Monday 22nd May to review the budget and look at what further work needs to be done, how significant this is and how governors can support this. We will hopefully have the SRMA report in soon which will support our decision.</p> <p><i>(YH & JM left the meeting @ 5pm)</i></p>	
FGB.87.23	<p>To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2023 (inc. Confidential Minutes)</p> <p>Minutes were approved.</p>	
FGB.88.23	<p>To discuss any matters arising from the minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FGB.31.22: SE to circulate SIP following the strategic planning meeting being held on 20th January: this was completed today so SMO can finish the work. Carry forward. FGB.32.22: Strategic Objectives - Objective 1, paragraph c: wording to be altered to reflect that the expansion is not a foregone conclusion, and that the objective reflects the wide views amongst the governing board: SMO to check if this has been done and if not, SE will amend. FGB.32.22: Strategic Objectives - Objective 3: more clarity on dates/timeframe for the Staff Engagement Group: information sent. Complete FGB.71.23: Headteacher Report – SE to circulate dates for parents' evenings. Complete 	<p>SE</p> <p>SMO/SE</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FGB.71.23: Headteacher Report - SE to RAG rate staffing issues each term so governors can see where the pressure points are. SE to include this in the HT report. Complete FGB.72.23: SIP – all to send comments to SE and LE to put on May FGB agenda. On agenda. FGB.74.23: Communication Policy - On agenda. FGB.75.23: SFVS – comments to be send to JM for submission by 31st March. Complete. FGB.76.23: Safeguarding – AS to circulate Safeguarding report and Governors to send any questions by 3rd March. Complete FGB.76.23: SEA Visit Report: Governors to send any questions to AS which will be collated and added to the minutes. Complete FGB.78.23: Skills Audit – LE to check when the last one was carried out: Full audit was in November 2021 with additions as new governors joined. The audit will be re-sent in Autumn 2023. Complete. FGB.81.23: Chairs report to be put on agenda for first meeting of each term. On agenda. 	
	BUSINESS	
FGB.90.23	<p>Chairs Update</p> <p>SMo gave a verbal update, covering the following:</p> <p><u>Expansion</u>: contact from NYC has slowed and there are indications of a delay. There haven't been any discussions on bringing the use of Meadowbank forward, which would enable us to provide for additional pupils and provide a well needed staff room.</p> <p>Governor question: is there still further debate or is it a foregone conclusion?</p> <p>The project has been agreed but we haven't seen the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) yet. We haven't had any update on whether there will be additional funding for furniture etc. and there are still some issues to finalised e.g., parking.</p> <p>Governors were concerned that this project was not being fully thought through and we are unable to take on additional students if we are not fully equipped. SMO, SP & SE are meeting with Janet Crawford (Assistant Director) on 25th May so this matter will be raised.</p> <p><i>(AS joined the meeting @ 5.10pm)</i></p> <p><u>Academisation</u>: SMO thanked SP and the Academisation committee for the work that has been done, and SE for co-ordinating visits. SMO & SE met with the Chair and Headteacher of Mowbray Special School on 28th April, as they are in a similar position to us, and they are considering the same 3 MAT's. There is an EGM on 20th July where it is hoped we can make a decision on academisation. LE advised she is unable to clerk this meeting but will ask for another clerk to cover.</p>	LE

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	<p>Governor question: Do you know the financial position of Mowbray? No, only the historical position which has been positive. We are aware of our own 'appeal' with such a big deficit, and the buildings do not work in our favour.</p> <p>SE has met with the DfE and has been advised that they wouldn't match a financially challenged school to a financially challenged MAT. We have advised the DfE that we are exploring this avenue and there is we are following their set process. We are meeting the Mowbray Academisation committee on 7th July.</p> <p>Governor question: Are we in competition with Mowbray? Not necessarily – it could be in a MAT's interest to take on 2 North Yorkshire Special schools.</p> <p>Governor question: Have staff been informed of the potential academisation? Staff will want to be involved in the process and there will be a mix of views on this matter. Some staff are quite anxious for a potentially huge change. SMo & SP are meeting with staff to update them on the process and understand their perspectives. Staff engagement is very important, but we are only at the very early stages of the process. We want to minimise any strain on staff and there will be a considered approach. If we decide to go ahead with academisation, there will be a formal consultation process with all parties involved. SP & SMO will feedback at the next FGB.</p> <p>Governor question: With regards to the consultation, do staff get a say in the decision? Ultimately it will be the Boards decision, but we will consider the views of all stakeholders.</p> <p>Governor question: how much do staff already know about this? Staff were briefed yesterday and given two weeks' notice of SP & SMO coming into school.</p> <p>Governor question: is there a script for governors if they get asked about academisation during visits? SP will draft something and will circulate.</p> <p><u>Communications:</u> SMO & SE have a weekly telephone catch up and have started the termly meetings with the Clerk. SMO & JM were hoping to meet with the local MP at his surgery but SMO has been advised that our issues warrant longer than the allocated 20-minute time slots given so SMO has been advised there is an option for him to visit the school. SMO has emailed about this but hasn't had a response so will chase.</p>	<p>SP</p> <p>SMo</p>
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	<p>Parents evenings were held in March and some governors attended. There wasn't much uptake in parents attending so it would be useful to understand the reasons why. It was noted that school does have a big catchment area, so it is not always easy for parents to travel to the school. Some of the parent meetings did happen on TEAMS.</p> <p><u>Interviews:</u> CS has attended interviews for a teacher and SMO is attending for further interviews.</p> <p><u>Work Plan:</u> This is not yet complete but SMO will circulate once it is.</p>	
FGB.91.23	<p>Headteachers Report</p> <p>Circulated prior to the meeting, SE highlighted parts and invited questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Sixth Former left early to transition to their future placement. This was a well-funded pupil so has had an impact on the budget. This was the right move for the student and family. • Consultations: we are saying no to more than we are saying yes to, except in Sixth Form. Numbers in Secondary are very flat, and we don't have any places to offer. • Staffing: RAG rated report provided as requested. • Behaviour: some challenging behaviour in Primary which is being monitored. Behaviours incidents appear to be increasing. • Attendance: This is good and rising overall. We know from the benchmarking in the Autumn we do not have an issue with attendance. <p>Governor question: What does the staff RAG rating mean? What is the baseline?</p> <p>This was requested by governors and produced by Heather Newton (HR Manager) to demonstrate where the issues are in staffing where supply cover is needed. The RAG ratings highlight which classes have been impacted most. This is the first time it has been produced and may need further tweaking. The information gives governors insight to staffing issues and the impact on the budget.</p> <p>EL suggested a baseline be added so governors can understand what the colours mean. SE will ask for this to be included.</p> <p>Governor question: Is staff absence increasing or decreasing, and what is the effect on wellbeing?</p> <p>Further analysis would need to be done to be able to answer this, but we can also look at how many staff are being monitored through the staff absence procedures, and this figure can be added to the table. SE informed governors that this is the worst it has ever been.</p> <p>It was noted that 'Squirrels' class has been missed off the table, but it may have been that they were under the heading 'Primary Department.'</p>	<p>SE</p> <p>SE</p>

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FGB.92.23	School Improvement Plan (SIP) Carry forward to July FGB.	LE
FGB.93.23	<p>Pupil Progress</p> <p>AS circulated information prior to the meeting. The document showed the short-term outcomes as a measure of pupil progress. We currently have 1 years' worth of data which is a percentage of short-term outcomes achieved at the time of EHCP reviews.</p> <p>AS reported that he would like to have seen a higher percentage of achieved outcomes which currently stands at 45%. AS made the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This reflects the current assessment system – Assess SEND Statements and ASDAN Outcomes (Sixth form). These systems work well for many students but are very broad and it takes time for students to achieve their next steps. 2. The current assessment system does not directly assess students against their EHCP's and does not allow teachers to record completed/achieved EHCP outcomes. <p>AS advised that we need to review our assessment systems – we are currently trialling 'Evidence for Learning' which gives a clear focus on EHCP outcomes. The trial ends on 20th May and the SLT will review next week. AS is hopeful that if we can adopt the system, we can introduce it after May half term and be fully live for September. It will go a long way in measuring EHCP outcomes. SE is confident in the system AS is looking at and thinks it will also help with staff workload.</p> <p>Governor question: Is there a cost to this system? Yes, but unsure what it is. YH has this information and SE will ensure it goes to the meeting next week to be included in the budget but is something that is needed to improve the quality of education.</p> <p>Governor question: Will future data go through the Quality of Education Committee? Yes – AS and CS need to review the Terms of Reference ready for September.</p> <p>Governor question: The 55% 'not achieved' is this a failure or is the SEN journey over a couple of years and targets are ongoing, rather than achieved? For some students, SEN statements are more relevant as long-term outcomes, so we break down objectives into smaller, achievable steps, which also makes it easier for the teachers. EHCP's have long and short-term outcomes, and the data is currently not showing these shorter-term milestones that are being achieved. If these can be shown, it will improve the pupil progress data. The other area to develop is engaging and working with staff and breaking down the SEN outcomes.</p>	

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FGB.94.23	<p>Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Policy: carry forward to FGB meeting in July. <p>AS has identified some safeguarding policies that need reviewing. It was agreed that these need to be included in the policy schedule and they will be delegated to one governor to review unless the policy needs full FGB approval.</p> <p>SMo informed governors they will be asked to individually review policies going forward. The FGB will be informed of policies that have been approved.</p>	LE
FGB.96.23	<p>Academisation Update</p> <p>SP had circulated a report prior to the meeting detailing the work that the Academisation Committee have done. Plan is to meet with 3 MAT's before the end of June: Ascent, Horizon and Wellspring.</p> <p>Provisional EGM on 20th July to review, the meeting will be dependent on the success of visits and the meeting with Mowbray.</p> <p><i>(Already discussed under Chair report).</i></p> <p><i>(SP left the meeting at 6.15pm)</i></p>	
FGB.95.23	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Report from AS was circulated prior to the meeting, key points being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing face to face training with new staff. Need some governors to complete the Safer Recruitment training – there are modules on the NGA and Modern Governor. Governors were advised that if this had been done more than a year ago, it needs re-doing following changes to KCSIE. Several policies need updating. 45 referrals/concerns logged in the Spring term, which is higher than normal. <p>Governor question: Has there been an uptick in significant issues? More cases are going to strategy meetings to be put on a Child Protection Plan or for further support. There have been 3 significant incidents over the last few months. There are lots of contributing factors – cost of living crisis, parent pressures, food poverty etc – they all reflect the current society in which we live.</p> <p>Governor question: Is there anything the school could be doing to intervene earlier? Some signposting? Yes possibly. AS can do a brief analysis of issues and then we can look at the materials available to support.</p> <p>Governor question: What is the response of Child Services in North Yorkshire?</p>	AS

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	It is adequate – we also have broad support of Compass Phoenix, which is funded by the NHS. We are recording issues on Bromcom but it is not the best system.	
FGB.97.23	Governor Housekeeping No updates.	
FGB.98.23	Governor Training update <u>Feedback from training undertaken since the last meeting:</u> None. <u>Future training:</u> the Governor School Improvement Network meeting is on 4 th July- there is no charge to attend, and it is virtual. SE encouraged all governors to attend and ask Angie Neal to book a place. SMo has had issues with booking training via North Yorkshire.	
FGB.99.23	Governor visits update <u>Feedback from visits undertaken since the last meeting:</u> CS submitted 3 reports from visits. CS is concerned over staff wellbeing regarding what they are being asked to do and what they are getting paid. Staff are looking for progression opportunities within school, but they are not there. <u>Future visits:</u> SMO advised that there needs to be a greater governor presence within school on visits that are not 'link related.' SMO is proposing a calendar of visits, so one governor visits each month, and SE will provide a focus for each visit. The visits will enable governors to get a better understanding of school and how it operates. SMO will send a list of dates out and governors to all respond with a preferred month. (EL left the meeting @ 6.40pm)	SMo/All
FGB.100.23	AOB Governor question: looking back at the recent strikes, is there anything you would do differently in the future? SE would keep it simple, and if a teacher was not going to be in, they would close the class. SE acknowledges this is not ideal for parents, but there are more staff moving across to the NEU, so staffing for future strikes could get very tricky. Other unions are also balloting in the Autumn, and there is some possible action for July. PHS stated that having a class open for half a day is very disruptive for some children, to the point where it may be easier to close the class for the whole day. SE acknowledged this and said they will continue to offer places to children on strike days, where possible, even if it is half a day, but if children do not attend, they will be marked as absent.	



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	Date of next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">Resources: Thursday 25th May 2023 @ 4.15pm <i>Postponed to 6th June @ 4.30pm</i>Resources: Thursday 22nd June 2023 @ 4.15pmFGB: Thursday 13th July 2023 @ 4.15pm	
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Meeting closed @ 6.45pm

Signed:

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Name
Governor