

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body of Richmond Methodist Primary School held at the school on Monday the 25th November 2019 at 5.30pm.

Present:

Jan Linsley (JL) – Chair of Governors, Sharon Stevenson (Headteacher), Kathleen Bradley (KB), Nicola Hebb (NH), Nicola Scrafton (NS), Les Cutter (LC).

In attendance:

John Armitage (JA)-newly elected Parent Governor
 Claire Pollard –SBM
 Katrina Coxon –NYCC Bursar
 Lucy Coates - SENCo
 Pat Gale - (NYCC Clerk to Governors)

Minute No.		Action
PART A – PROCEDURAL		
GB 131/19	<p><u>Welcome and opening prayer:</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Les Cutter to give an opening prayer. The Chair then welcomed the newly elected parent Governor John Armitage, and introductions were made.</p>	
GB 132/19	<p><u>Apologies for Absence :</u></p> <p>Apologies had been received and consented to from Rev Les Nevin (LN), Rebecca Simpson (RS), Stephen Rawson (SR), Julie Swinbank (JS), and Lucinda Kirk (LK).</p>	
GB 133/19	<p><u>Declarations of interest:</u></p> <p>None declared.</p>	
GB 134/19	<p><u>Confidentiality:</u></p> <p>None declared at this point of the meeting apart from the consideration and approval of Confidential Minute GB 130/19 which would be taken at the end of the meeting.</p>	
GB 135/19	<p><u>Urgent Other Business:</u></p> <p>The Clerk noted that the Financial Benchmarking Report had not been included on the agenda, and would be considered under Part B item 11.</p>	
PART B- RESOURCES		
GB 136/19	<p><u>To receive a Budget Update:</u></p> <p>The Chair invited the SBM and Katrina Coxon to give a financial update, noting that this was Claire Pollard’s last meeting as she had successfully been appointed as Finance Manager at Polam School; a new SBM Laura Hudson had been appointed and it was hoped that she would start as soon as possible, to ensure continuity of the important role for the school. Governors had been circulated with the October 2019 budget monitoring reports and KC and the SBM pointed out that the school was now in a much better financial position, with an expected outturn of £35,399 as of October, compared with the previous month of £23,828, a variance of £11,571.</p>	

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	<p><i>Q: Why the variance?</i> <i>A: Largely due to changes in admin., the nursery development and an increase in Teachers pay grant.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Why is there an estimated reduction in WAC income?</i> <i>A: We asked parents to reserve places in advance, and we think we have underestimated demand, so the prediction is for less income, it might balance out. Governors had also confirmed that they did not want to increase charges for the service.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Didn't we increase capacity?</i> <i>A: It's about getting the right balance between flexibility of the staffing and ensuring our staff/pupil ratios are accurate.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Are there opportunities for more children to join?</i> <i>A: Yes, especially on certain days when we do have vacancies.</i></p> <p>KC invited Governors to consider the Revised Budget for three years, explaining it was a worst case scenario to reflect the changes in Formula Funding, which had still to be finalised for NYCC. It was reported that a consultation was underway and Headteachers had been given six options to choose from. The option with the most votes would then be the model for all schools across the County.</p> <p><i>Q: When will the consultation end?</i> <i>A: Probably before Christmas, we will then have a better picture of what the budget will look like.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Are we allowed to set an in year deficit?</i> <i>A: Yes, as long as by Year 3 a deficit is not showing; another option is that the school would need to submit an action plan to demonstrate how it aims to manage the budget shortfall, but hopefully that will not be necessary.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Are pupil numbers realistic?</i> <i>A: Probably, all three primary schools in Richmond have suffered from a drop in numbers, but parents are applying for this school as their first choice, which is very promising.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Do you know what places are required for the nursery?</i> <i>A: It is difficult to predict at this stage, although we have received applications for January and April.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Does the school apply for CIF as academies do?</i> <i>A: No, but there is more capital available in North Yorkshire.</i></p> <p>Action: a) The Chair agreed to establish what schools in the area were doing about CIF.</p> <p>The Headteacher informed Governors that a capital grant for the nursery had been submitted to NYCC, and a decision would hopefully be known by April.</p> <p>KC noted that the variance for 2019/20 was too low at £8k and hoped it could be uplifted to £12k.</p> <p><i>Q: Does the budget include staff performance upgrades?</i> <i>A: No not yet, but we can build into forecasts.</i></p> <p>The Chair thanked KC and the SBM for their hard work in moving the budget into a stronger position.</p>	<p>Chair</p>
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	<p>Governors were then circulated with the Financial Benchmarking Report for 2019/20.</p> <p>The SBM explained that the data report for the school provided a comparator with three other similar schools in the County.(Applegarth School, Selby Abbey C of E Primary school and St Roberts Catholic Primary School in Harrogate) The data is collated from the 2019/20 Start Budget, October 2018 school census, January 2019 PLASC return, Payroll data from July 2019 financial planning software system and sickness absence data from 2018/19.Because some of the data is historic before the restructure, the results would possibly not show an accurate picture. The following highlights were shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of teaching staff the school has the lowest proportion of staff on the leadership scale, but the highest number of teachers with an allowance (interim leadership team);the school also has the second lowest teaching salary £36,200 compared with an average of £37,715. • HLTA and ATA hours are well below the group average, whereas GTA hours are slightly above the average. • LA funding per pupil is below average for the group, £3,667 per pupil whereas the group average is £3,996 per pupil. <p><i>Q: Why are we lower?</i> <i>A: We have lower Pupil Premium funding and it could decrease further. SEN funding is slightly above the group average.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Where is our other income generated from?</i> <i>A: Mainly from the WAC and bungalow income last year and shows we have the highest rate of £104 per pupil.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of expenditure costs per pupil for admin and ICT resources this is above average, but for both supply costs and learning resources we are the lowest in the group. <p><i>Q: Why do we spend so little on non ICT Learning resources?</i> <i>A: We have tended not to invest in paper resources, but it is not really good VFM, when we have a new curriculum to cater for.</i></p> <p>Action:</p> <p>b) Recommendation to review further expenditure on non ICT resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premises costs show we are the lowest in the group and spend below average on our buildings and improvements, although we do purchase the service and repair section of the MASS service. We are above average on grounds maintenance as we buy into a traded service. <p><i>Q: What improvements still need to be made?</i> <i>A: Some of the work, especially on the external staircase is still not up to standard, Health and Safety have been involved and we have complained about the quality of the work, County is dealing with the errors in construction.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Are we putting our school at risk without a caretaker?</i> <i>A: Much of the work has been carried out by the SBM and through the NYCC Building Services contract, boilers have been checked.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Does the school have a landlord and county insurance scheme?</i> <i>A: Yes they survey the building and maintenance.</i></p> <p>Action:</p> <p>c) Invite the Landlord to come in and assess the risks.</p> <p><i>Q: Do we have a security issue without a caretaker?</i> <i>A: Staff are being very flexible and we have advertised for caretaker but it is difficult to appoint due to antisocial working hours, early mornings and late evenings, some schools appoint a team rather than one person or share the service with another school or organisation.</i></p>	<p>HT/ SBM</p> <p>HT/ SBM</p>
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<p>GB137/19</p>	<p><u>To ratify the revised Budget Management Policy:</u></p> <p>Governors had been circulated with the updated Budget Management Policy, and agreed that having been reviewed and amended by Brian Park, it should be ratified.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Budget Management Policy be approved, signed and dated by the Chair.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>GB138/19</p>	<p><u>To approve the Pay Policy for 2019/20:</u></p> <p>Governors had received the Pay Policy and LC (co-link Governor for Resources) had reviewed in detail, he recommended adoption, but felt it was far too long and would benefit from a summary. However, as it was a NYCC recommended Policy it was agreed to adopt.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Pay Policy for 2019/20 be adopted, signed and dated by the Chair.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>GB 139/19</p>	<p><u>To receive an update on Performance Management and Pay Decisions:</u></p> <p>The Chair reported that the Performance Management Committee (NH, KB and the Chair) had met on the 18th October 2019 to sign off the Deputy Headteachers Performance Management review, set and agree targets for the Headteacher for the year ahead.</p> <p>Nicola S, Les C, the Chair and Headteacher also reviewed the new staff appraisal process, the Headteacher had led training in leadership of the more robust appraisal process and had briefed the staff.</p> <p>Resolved: That the recommended changes to pay scales, due to school-wide responsibilities, be built into the budget.</p> <p>The Chair, on behalf of all Governors then thanked KC for her work on the budget and the SBM, Claire Pollard, for all her hard work and commitment to the school over the years and wished her well in her new role.</p> <p>(KC and the SBM left the meeting at 6.20pm)</p>	<p>SBM/ KC</p>
<p>GB 140/19</p>	<p><u>To receive an update on the SEND Policy:</u> (Item 21)</p> <p>Lucy Coates joined the meeting at 6.20pm to present the SEND Policy and Information Report that Governors had previously received. KB the SEND Link Governor noted that she had enjoyed reading the Policy as it would make it much easier for her to monitor in going forward as new Link Governor. However, she did feel that some of the language in the Information Report could do with making easier to understand for parents and external readers, suggesting this was work in progress, and could be reviewed when she and the SENCO met.</p> <p><i>Q: How often do you intend to meet?</i> <i>A: Termly would be useful.</i></p> <p>Action: The SENCO and Link Governor to meet on a termly basis.</p>	<p>LC/KB</p>

	<p><i>Q: Do staff in the office know about the Information Report and does it go to Parents?</i> <i>A: The whole school should know and we direct parents to the website, where the new Policy will now be located.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Who owns the school website?</i> <i>A: The school buys into a service called Cirrus and they will update the content when we ask, but we are looking at a serious redesign of the site, as it looks a bit dated, and the new SBM has expertise in this kind of work, which will be so helpful.</i></p> <p>Resolved: That the SEND Policy and Information Report be approved for locating on the school website.</p> <p>The Chair, on behalf of all Governors thanked the SENCO for her input in developing the Policy and Report. (To note: The SENCO left the meeting at 6.30pm)</p>	<p>HT</p>
<p>PART A continued- PROCEDURAL</p>		
<p>GB 141/19</p>	<p><u>Update on Governance:</u></p> <p>a)Governor Vacancies: The Chair reported that there had been a fantastic response from parents for the Parent Governor nominations and election. There had been 4 candidates and John Armitage had been elected, all candidates demonstrated different skill-sets and the Chair had approached one of the candidates to see if he would feel able to stand as co-opted Governor, as he had the business/marketing/fundraising skills that had been identified as a gap in the recent Governor skills audit. Resolved: That the Chair and Headteacher should approach the potential Co-opted Governor to see if he still wished to join the Governing Body.</p> <p>Action: a) The Clerk to send the Chair and Headteacher a sample reference request form to send to the candidate.</p> <p>b)Update from the Swaledale Alliance meeting for Chairs of Governors: On the 16th October 2019 Co-Vice Chair, Nicola Scrafton had attended a Swaledale Alliance Chair of Governors forum on the new Ofsted Inspection Framework, and had found it to be a very positive and useful experience. The emphasis had been on the need for Governors to know the curriculum intent and intended impact with the emphasis on internal data not as strong in the past, apart from supporting the case for ‘Deep Dives’ into subject areas not just Maths and English. Strong focus on how books are marked, talking to children-do they understand what they are learning?-a strong emphasis on the quality of education and training. Other highlights raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to safeguarding-apart from mention of ‘County Lines’. • Need for evidence of staff, pupil and community engagement. • Do Governors really know about our vision/ethos? 	<p>All</p> <p>Clerk</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor engagement can be informal, talk to the pupils and look at their books. Subject leaders to be invited to meetings-practice for Ofsted conversations. <p>Action: b) Governors to set up a Task and Finish Group to ensure readiness for the new Inspection Process. Dates to be sent from HT in January 2020.(Note: NS mon/wed day,KB flexible during the day)</p>	HT/JA/ NS/ KB/ JS
GB 142/19	<p><u>To receive and approve the DfE recommended Complaints Policy for 2019-20:</u> The Chair noted that the new DfE recommended complaints Policy and Procedure had been reduced to a two stage rather than three stage process, and that all staff and Governors should understand the new approach.</p> <p>Resolved: That the DfE Complaints Policy and Procedures be adopted and located on the website.</p>	All
GB 143/19	<p><u>To approve the minutes of the FGB meeting held on the 23rd September 2019:</u></p> <p>Resolved: Governors considered the minutes and agreed they were a correct record, signed and dated by the Chair.</p>	All
GB 144/19	<p><u>Matters Arising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GB 116/19-The Peer Review and Behaviour Review to be considered at the 27th January 2020 FGB meeting. GB 118/19- JA volunteered to be the Link Governor for Curriculum. GB 120/19-some discussion over the frequency of Learning Walks-should it be termly? It was agreed that the new Task and Finish Group would include this in their discussions. 	Clerk/ HT JA Task and Finish Group
GB 145/19	<p><u>To confirm the date of the next FGB meeting:</u></p> <p>Resolved: The next meeting of the Governing Body will take place on Monday the 27th January 2020 at 5.30pm (5pm for refreshments)</p>	All
PART B Continued - RESOURCES		
GB 146/19	<p><u>Staffing Update:</u></p> <p>The Headteacher reported that the restructuring process had now been completed and a number of staff changes had been made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Full Time ATA has been appointed. A HLTA has been appointed five afternoons a week. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DHT is working in Class 8 two days a week to provide continuity due to the recent resignation of the class teacher. • The SENCo is now working 4 days a week on delivery with Class 8 as well as the SEND role. • The Class 9 teacher, Miss Docherty is resigning from the end of December 2019 due to personal reasons, she will be sadly missed. Fortunately the school has been able to appoint Mr Jagger to teach in the class for the spring and summer terms, which will provide continuity for pupils. <p><i>Q: Is the new structure working well-do staff see the reason for the restructure?</i> <i>A: Yes, there is a positive feeling amongst staff, and there is more support available for the most vulnerable pupils.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A SBM has been appointed who can start almost immediately with a handover process in place for her and Claire to manage the transition. • An administrator has also been appointed from 8.30 to 12.30 Monday to Thursday, which will help the office cover. <p><i>Q: Parents are very emotive about the lack of a crossing patrol being in place, what can we do about that?</i> <i>A: The caretaker post is being advertised, and in every newsletter I have explained that traffic control is the responsibility of NYCC, not the school, and there are also two crossings not very far from either side of the school entrance.</i></p>	
<p>GB 147/19</p>	<p><u>Health and Safety Update:</u></p> <p>Governors raised their concern about security of the school site during bad weather, hopefully the recruitment of a caretaker will resolve this concern. Action: The Health and Safety Policy will be considered at the next FGB meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>GB 148/19</p>	<p><u>Premises Update:</u></p> <p>There was nothing to report in addition to comments made in GB 136/19. The Headteacher wished to thank the SBM for all her very good work in ensuring the premises were safe and in good condition.</p>	
<p>GB 149/19</p>	<p><u>Update on the Nursery Development:</u></p> <p>The Headteacher reported that plans were in place to take seven children in January 2020 and a further two children in April 2020. Zoe would take the administrative role on funding and reporting for the EYFS, and arrangements were being made for briefings and mentoring from St Marys Primary School staff.</p> <p>A business case and proposal for £15-£20k had been made through the NYCC Strategic Lead for buildings to convert the bungalow to be fit for purpose. The HandS adviser had carried out a health and safety check of the current FS1 arrangements and the bungalow, and all agreed.</p> <p><i>Q: Are we ok to operate from January?</i> <i>A: Yes the environment is excellent, the Foundation Stage 1 area can take the children as there are currently only three 'Rising 4 year olds', and ratios are fine.</i></p> <p><i>Q: What is the potential capacity of the bungalow?</i> <i>A: 26 children can be accommodated once the modifications have completed.</i></p>	

PART C– HOLDING THE HEADTEACHER TO ACCOUNT		
GB 150/19	<p><u>To receive an Update on the Vision:</u></p> <p>The Headteacher reported that work on the Vision had taken place with staff as well as Governors, and an action plan was in place to take the work forward, with a target of approval by Governors in summer 2020 in readiness for a big launch from September 2020. It was noted that the vision had to be grounded in a real pride for Methodism, a recent MAST event for Headteachers had been very helpful in taking this forward.</p> <p>It is also very important that we can include the ‘Voice of Parents’ in terms of their expectations and aspirations for their children. Governors agreed that the school needed a short strapline for the 2020 Vision. James Royal of MAST had offered to support the school with the development.</p>	
GB 151/19	<p><u>Curriculum Update:</u></p> <p>The Headteacher reported that by the end of the year a two year curriculum would be in place, with frontloaded time for teams to work together to develop this led by subject leaders, more training would be provided for subject leadership.</p> <p>At the moment, the curriculum intent is too generic and needs to focus on meeting and reducing gaps.</p> <p><i>Q: Are you aware of where you want us, as Governors, to be in terms of being informed by the curriculum intent?</i></p> <p><i>A: We need to ensure staff are all engaged, but it would be good to have this item on the next agenda.</i></p> <p>Action: To have an item on curriculum intent on the next FGB agenda.</p>	Clerk/ HT
GB 152/19	<p><u>Policies for Approval:</u></p> <p>Governors had been previously circulated with the Behaviour Policy, Governors and staff had received a training day on the 4th November on behaviour issues and management, which had been well received. The Policy was clear in terms of describing Purpose, Aims and scripted interventions, recognising that children are at the centre of the school, and that hopefully staff will be energised into coping with the small percentage of children who cause concern.</p> <p><i>Q: Has the Policy been shared with children yet?</i></p> <p><i>A: We are intending to do this from January.</i></p> <p><i>Q: For some pupils with attachment disorders or on the autism spectrum the principle of ‘feelings’ could be an issue, could the wording be replaced by ‘think’?</i></p> <p><i>A: The language can be changed if thought appropriate, we will review.</i></p> <p>Action: a) To survey staff on how effective the training and the Policy had been in supporting them with behaviour management.</p>	HT

	<p>Resolved: That the Behaviour Policy was adopted subject to regular review.</p> <p>The Child Protection Policy had been reviewed by Governors and as it was a NYCC recommended policy it was approved for adoption, pending some name changes regarding the Link Governor to Nicola Hebb.</p> <p>Resolved: The Child Protection Policy was approved for adoption, subject to name changes.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p>
GB 153/19	<p><u>Plans to develop a Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy:</u></p> <p>The Headteacher reported that from September 2020 schools had a mandatory requirement to have a RSE Policy in place.</p> <p>Action: A draft discussion document would be on the agenda of the next FGB meeting, with a view to approve at the FGB of the 22nd June 2020.</p>	<p>HT/ Link Governors</p>
GB 154/19	<p><u>Confidential Minute:</u> Confidential minute GB 30/19 was considered by Governors and approved for signing and dating by the Chair for storing in the school safe.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>No further business was declared so the Chair thanked Governors for their input and closed the meeting at 7.45 pm. The date of the next FGB meeting will be held on Monday the 27th January 2019 at 5pm for a 5.30pm start.</p> <p>Please send apologies to the Clerk Pat Gale: Pat.gale@northyorks.gov.uk;</p> <p>Or 07793 846 441</p>		
<p>Please note: The colour coding above links to the three key roles of governance questioning; RED for 'setting strategic direction', BLUE for 'holding Headteacher to account for educational performance' GREEN for 'ensuring financial health, probity and value for money'.</p>		