

**Minutes of a virtual meeting of the Full Governing Board (FGB) of
Richmond Methodist Primary School
held on Monday 12th July 2021 at 5.30pm**

Present:

Jan Linsley (Chair), Sharon Stevenson (Headteacher), Scott Woodhead (SW),
Rev Kathleen Wood (KW), Nicola Scrafton (NS) and Julie Swinbank (JS).

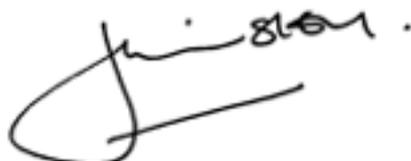
In attendance:

Caroline Dawson (Foundation Governor designate (from 17.30 to 18.35)
Laura Hudson (SBL)
Pat Gale (NYCC Clerk to Governors)

Minute No.	Action
PART A – PROCEDURAL	
GB 50/21	<p><u>Welcome, introductions and an Opening Prayer:</u></p> <p>The Chair invited the Rev. Kathleen Wood to give her thought for the day and opening prayer. Governors were informed of the Methodist ‘Watch Night ‘hymns day, which reflected the transition of an end of year and moving forward, in this case the ending of an academic year and planning for a new year ahead, the focus of the meeting. Governors joined in prayer to reflect on a very trying year for everyone, and the need to continue ‘doing all the good we can’.</p> <p>The Chair thanked KW for such an appropriate opening to the meeting, she then introduced the newly appointed Foundation Governor, Caroline Dawson, to the meeting, explaining her term of office would commence from the 1st September 2021. Governors introduced themselves and welcomed Caroline to the FGB. Caroline thanked Governors for their welcome and gave a brief summary of her background as Methodist Church member with some experience of governance She willingly accepted the nomination, in the hope of doing the best she could give to the school.</p>
GB 51/21	<p><u>Apologies for Absence :</u></p> <p>Apologies had been received and consented to from Nickey Hebb, Lucinda Kirk, Kathleen Bradley and John Armitage.</p>
GB 52/21	<p><u>Declarations of business and personal interests, pecuniary or non-pecuniary:</u></p> <p>Governors were reminded that they needed to complete and sign the annual declarations for 2021/22 if they had not already done so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disqualification Register • Hospitality Register • Business and Personal Interests Register <p>Thanks given for those Governors who had made their returns already.</p> <p>Action:</p>
	All/

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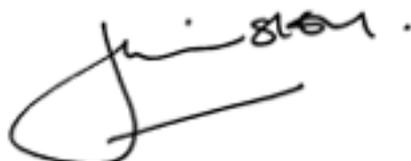


	Governors were asked if they could send scanned or photographed copies of the forms to the Clerk as soon as possible and before the end of term, or at the first meeting of the next academic year.	Clerk
GB 53/21	<u>Confidentiality issues:</u> None declared.	
GB 54/21	<u>Notification of urgent other business:</u> The Rev Kathleen Wood informed Governors that Barbara Easton had been appointed as Vice President of the Methodist Conference 2021/22, reflecting the commitment and respect she has given to MAST. She proposed that it would be useful to send a letter of congratulations from the Governing Body. The Chair reported that she and the Headteacher had already sent a letter of congratulations and good wishes to Barbara, but a FGB letter would also be supportive. Action: That a letter of congratulations be sent to Barbara Easton on behalf of the RMS Governing Body.	Chair
GB 55/21	<u>To approve the minutes of the last virtual FGB meeting held on the 24th May 2021:</u> Governors agreed they were an accurate record of the meeting and should be approved. <u>Resolved:</u> The minutes of the FGB meeting held on the 24th May 2021 should be approved, signed and dated by the Chair.	All
GB 56/21	<u>Matters Arising:</u> GB 42/21-Governor involvement in half termly MSA meetings would be discussed with Debbie Kipling. Action: a) To identify a Governor to brief MSAs on the role of the Governing Body. GB 46/21 g) - The Children with Health Needs Policy had been revised and is on the agenda item 9. GB 48/21 – a small working group was nominated to develop a RMS Induction pack for new Governors. Resources had been collated from NGA and NYCC to create the pack. Action: b) NH, NS and KW would work on developing the induction pack for the autumn term.	HT NH/NS/ KW
GB 57/21	<u>To confirm the dates of the future meetings for 2021/22:</u>	

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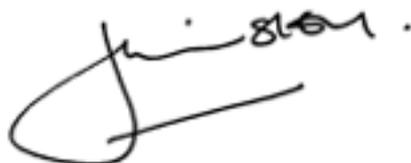
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	<p>Dates had been circulated and were agreed. A final schedule with proposed content and policies would be distributed at the first meeting of the autumn term, when it is hoped that meetings will take place in school rather than virtually.</p> <p>Date of the next meeting: Monday 20th September 2021 at 5.pm for networking, with the business meeting from 5.30pm.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>PART 'B'-HOLDING THE HEADTEACHER TO ACCOUNT</p>		
<p>GB 58/21</p>	<p>To approve the following policies: Link Governors had been asked to review their relevant policies located on SharePoint, with a view to recommending or not to the FGB for adoption.</p> <p>a)Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school: For clarification NS had asked if the policy was a North Yorkshire Policy or not, the Headteacher confirmed that it was a school policy and changes proposed by NS at the previous meeting had been taken into account.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school should be approved and adopted.</p> <p>b) Recruitment, Redeployment and Redundancy (RRR) Policy: The Chair explained there had been no changes since 2018 and recommended it should be adopted.</p> <p>Resolved: That the RRR Policy be approved and adopted.</p> <p>c) Early Retirement Policy: SW explained that there were three different ways of taking early retirement, which had been HR generated and endorsed by the Unions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary early retirement-could be allowed if a member of staff is over 55, and as long as they had worked in school for at least two years, and had approval from the school, it could be allowed. Although it could lead to a reduction in pension entitlement, for the member of staff concerned. • Business Efficiency-there would be no pension reduction, but if it exceeded £20k, permission would be required from the Chief Executive of the Council. • Voluntary flexible retirement-could be redeployment of a member of staff, and would depend on the applicant's needs, no stipulation about length of duty. <p>Resolved:</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p>

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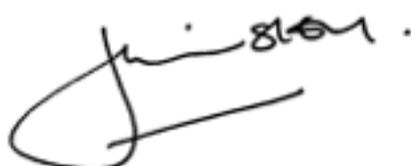
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	<p>That the Early Retirement Policy should be approved and adopted.</p> <p>d) Code of Conduct: The Chair had reviewed the NYCC Code of Conduct and believed it covered everything that was required including, financial probity, the Nolan Principles and whistleblowing, and felt it also reflected Part 2 of the Teaching Standards. Governors would be required to sign a register to say they would abide to the Code. Resolved: That the Code of Conduct be approved and adopted.</p> <p>Action: At the first meeting of the FGB to be held in September, Governors would be asked to sign the register.</p> <p>e) Resolving Issues at Work: The Chair had reviewed the NYCC HR Policy, which covered staff grievances if not covered by other policies, including Relationships, Discrimination, Health and Safety and the Working Environment. It involved a three stage process and Appeals, and as it was a NYCC generated Policy it was recommended for approval. Resolved: That the Resolving Issues at Work Policy should be approved and adopted.</p> <p>f) Combined Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy: The Headteacher explained that the policy gave parents and others information on charges the school makes, for example charging for WAC, we would like parents to use Parent Pay, as it is more flexible and could encourage wider take-up and usage of the WAC. Currently we require parents to pay in advance, but we are proposing they should pay one month in arrears on receipt of Parent Pay invoices. <i>Q: Do we charge if children do not attend?</i> <i>A: Yes, unless cancelled 4 days or more in advance, so we are proposing more flexibility for parents.</i> (Post meeting clarification: Parents have not been charged for WAC when 'bubbles' have closed. Parents will not be charged in September if the school moves to an outbreak management plan and any bubbles have to close.) <i>Q: Can parents book sessions directly online?</i> <i>A: Yes through Parent Pay.</i> <i>Q: Is there a maximum number of sessions that can be cancelled?</i> <i>A: Generally, parents use the WAC service for work reasons, so it hasn't posed a problem.</i> Action: A report on the WAC service will be presented at the November meeting.</p> <p>Resolved: Governors agreed to the combined policy changes and it was approved for adoption.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>HT/ SBL</p> <p>All</p>
<p>GB 59/21</p>	<p><u>Review of the Single Central Record (SCR):</u></p> <p>NH the Link Governor for Safeguarding had undertaken a review of the SCR, and had prepared a useful summary of her findings which had been circulated to</p>	

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Governors, as she was unable to attend the meeting due to work commitments, the Chair gave an overview of the report on her behalf.

NH explained that the SCR is the central record of the safeguarding checks that have been carried out on all staff and other relevant people, such as contractors and volunteers such as Governors. The role of the Governing Body is to make sure the SCR is being strategically monitored and senior leaders are checking the SCR to ensure that it is up to date and that procedures are complied with; the process is included in the safeguarding audit. Schools must record evidence of identity, the right to work in the UK, satisfactory enhanced DBS and barred list check. NH had spent some time with Laura and Zoe, who is responsible for maintaining the SCR, through a Teams meeting and witnessed them carrying out an update to the SCR. She commented that she hoped the next review could be undertaken in the school rather than virtually.

NH had produced a list of questions that would, if required, support an Ofsted query or inspection; including:

Q: How frequently is the SCR checked?

A: It is a live document, checked at least half-termly with Laura and annually by the HT and SIA.

Q: Have you checked the information recorded on the SCR for errors?

A: Yes, every time a record is updated.

Q: Are changes to staff information being captured, such as moving house or name changes?

A: Yes, and this is monitored at the annual review as well.

Q: What process does the school have for checking identity when staff or volunteers first attend?

A: Yes, a passport and DBS check takes place.

Q: How and where do we store the SCR and is it secure?

A: It is securely stored electronically and on SharePoint.

Q: What process takes place for DBS checks?

A: A 10% random check takes place every year, for both staff and governors, Zoe carries out this role.

The Chair commented that the SCR is the first document Ofsted will look at, therefore very important that the information is up to date and compliant with requirements.

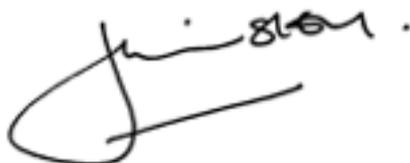
It was recommended that all Governors should read the very useful summary that NH had circulated on Safeguarding from NYCC, dated the 8th July, which covered the FGB statutory responsibilities and duties in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).

The Chair and Governors thanked NH for her very informative reports.

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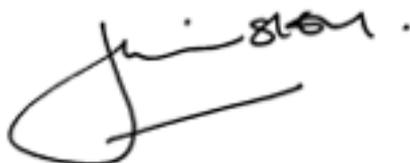
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<p>GB 60/21</p>	<p><u>Review of the year and what we have achieved-for inclusion in the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21:</u></p> <p>Governors had been circulated with the previous year's Annual Statement and asked for additional achievements and highlights from a very challenging year for the school.</p> <p>In particular Governors noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The professional and efficient leadership of the HT and SLT in managing the operational impact of Covid. • The imaginative and effective introduction and implementation of remote learning for pupils, parents and staff. • The impact of developments through the use of Catch Up Funding. • The very positive extension of the nursery service. • The launch and official opening of the Mile Track by Chancellor Rishi Sunak, bringing a new dimension to outdoor learning, health and well-being. • Robust budget management supporting an improved IT infrastructure and equipment, investment in new school improvements and CCTV. • A secure financial position for the next three years. • A change in leadership structure from September 2021. • Stronger links and engagement with MAST through seminars for staff and governors. • Continued to work on improving links between staff and governors and the wider community. • Teachers and support staff have maintained quality and have undertaken a superb job in very difficult often unpredictable situations. <p>Action: The proposed changes would be included in a revised Annual Statement for 2020/21 for approval at the September FGB meeting.</p> <p>(To note: Caroline Dawson left the meeting at 18.36, stating how much she had appreciated joining the meeting and looked forward to arranging a school visit in the future).</p> <p>Staffing Update: The HT then gave Governors a brief update on staffing changes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appointment of Miss Kent an ECT for Years 1 and 2, whose induction would be overseen by Miss Collinson (ECT Mentor) and Miss Wood (ECT Lead). Governors wished to welcome and congratulate Miss Kent on gaining her appointment to the school. • A new MSA and TA had been appointed. <p>Governors commented that the staffing structure seemed quite stable, which boded well for the new academic year.</p> <p><i>Q: What will happen when Lucy Coates return from maternity leave?</i> <i>A: She will provide class commitment for years 3 and 4 and return to the SENCO role for one and a half days a week in December 2021.</i></p>	<p>Chair/ HT</p>
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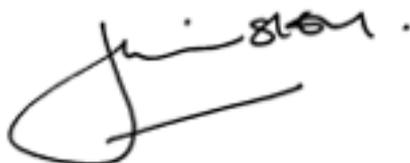
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<p>GB 61/21</p>	<p><u>Big Plans for 2021-22 the Year Ahead:</u></p> <p>The HT then shared a PowerPoint presentation on the potential future direction for the year ahead.</p> <p>1. Maintained schools and the academisation agenda- the HT explained that the Government's vision is for every school to be part of a family of schools in a strong multi academy trust (MAT) by 2025. The education secretary has said the government is 'actively looking at how we can make that happen', valuing the importance of collaboration and strong leadership and a culture of good pupil behaviour. The HT believed RMS already demonstrated these values and had strong collaborative arrangements with YCAT, Bedale School, other schools in Richmond and the Dales Academies Trust; she explained that school Governing Bodies were being encouraged to discuss the potential. Recently the government had introduced Trust Partnerships, a 'try before you buy' approach, a time-limited arrangement between a school and academy trust, allowing both parties to explore how a permanent arrangement might work at a cost of £10k for one year if a 'good school'.</p> <p>To date we have worked with the following Trusts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yorkshire Collaborative Academy Trust-(YCAT)-we have mainly worked with the Hart Academy, the member schools are all primary.• Arete Learning Trust-mainly secondary schools, Richmond, Northallerton and Stokesley, but they are wishing to form a partnership with a primary school.• Epworth Education Trust-primarily Methodist schools in the middle and south of the area, and supported strongly by MAST.• Elevate Multi-Academy Trust- schools tend to be in the south, and to date we haven't really worked closely with them, due to geographical reasons, for example Thirsk is probably the nearest. <p>The Chair then asked if anyone had any questions or need for clarification:</p> <p><i>Q:The feedback from a recent Swaledale Alliance meeting I attended was quite scathing, with the overwhelming view that how could the 'try before you buy' approach be of any benefit, that it was quite impractical and would be time consuming and would probably not support a decision making process.</i></p> <p><i>A: From my HT experience of joining a MAT in another school, it does require a lot of work and consultation.</i></p> <p><i>A:I have had experience of working with Elevate, involving small schools such as Meadowside,Knaresborough and some schools in Leeds, and agree it is time-consuming, but we need to hold discussions, in case we have no option but to join a MAT, so we need to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages to the school and our pupils.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Do we know the values of being in a MAT, could we start our own?</i></p> <p><i>A: Unless the guidance has changed, we can't be a single stand-alone school, we would need to join an existing Trust.</i></p> <p>The Chair proposed that in terms of next steps, the school should continue to work with the Trusts that hold similar values to ours, look at how we could collaborate and benefit by working together with CEOs informally, as we do now. We might need to identify others and it feels like we are a long way away from taking decisions. We are part of an effective local authority and benefit from their effective school improvement service, I don't believe there is any pressure at the moment.</p>	
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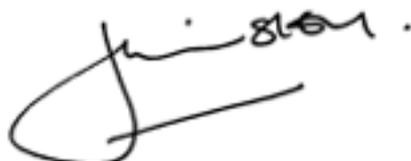
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	<p>Resolved: As a Governing Body we do need to keep academisation on the agenda, and continue to build on our positive collaborative approaches.</p> <p>2. CYPS Schools’ Capital Programme and RMS capital 2021-22-the HT noted that a capital planning meeting had recently taken place, to discuss the capital priorities until September 2022. The main priorities being:</p> <p>2.1-The Nursery-the HT reminded Governors that two years ago a lot of consultation, time and investment had been incurred in planning for this major development for the school and community. In January there were 4 children, but now the facility was full and additional staff had been employed, approval had been given for the refurbishment of the caretaker’s bungalow and plans were well underway in providing a much needed service and a strong early start in learning for children.</p> <p>2.2-The Sensory Room- a programme of work would commence so the resource, next to the library, would be available from September; plans were underway to ensure the best possible use of the facility.</p> <p>2.3-KS2 classroom refurbishments- exciting plans were in place for the completion of the work during the summer.</p> <p>3. School Improvement Priorities- the HT shared a summary of possible objectives for 2021-22, following an in depth analysis of June 2021 data. The main overarching aim being to resolve achievement gap issues particularly in writing and maths. Objective 1-Quality of Education-to embed our two year sequential curriculum, looking at PUMA and PIRA data to deepen the recall of knowledge. Objective 2-Quality of Education-to ensure there are more opportunities for active and outdoor learning embedded across the curriculum, to support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff. Objective 3-Quality of Education-to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in maths, identifying and addressing underachievement, particularly for those pupils who have experienced barriers to engaging in remote learning and those in Years 5 and 6. Objective 4 – Quality of Education-to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in writing to improve pupil outcomes and support the improvement of high prior attainers. Objective 5 – Behaviour and Attitudes-to embed our consistently high expectations through our vision of ‘Ready, Mutually Respectful and Safe’, and the five pillars of Pivotal Practice to ensure behaviour and attitudes are exceptional. Objective 6-Leadership and Management-to further improve the impact of leadership at all levels by further developing subject leadership, by developing senior leaders through coaching of the newly appointed DHT and engagement in NPQ support. To further improve the impact of pupil leadership and provide effective preparation for inspection. Objective 7-Quality of Early Years Education-to embed the Early Years Framework and further refine planning and assessment to enable the youngest children to feel part of the wider school by knowing more, learning more and remembering more.</p>	<p>All</p>
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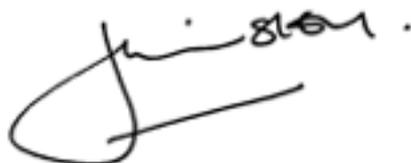
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	<p>The Chair and HT asked Governors if anyone had a specific interest in linking with one of the objectives in the SIP or other school developments outlined in the presentation. SW expressed an interest in capital, property, IT and the nursery developments but others felt happy for the Chair and HT to identify appropriate responsibilities.</p> <p>Action: Chair and HT to allocate Link Governor responsibilities when they met on the 16th July to plan for Governance in 2021/22.</p> <p>4. Preparation for Inspection- the HT had circulated a brief summary for Governors, which explained that routine inspections of schools were suspended during the Covid-19 pandemic, but should be resuming from the 2021 summer term, with a full programme of graded inspections resuming from September 2021. There would be a planned programme of training and support from Ofsted Inspectors for Governors in the 2021 autumn term and 2022 spring term. Governors were asked what training would help them, responses included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to provide more effective monitoring. • To ensure Governors understand their respective roles in the inspection process. • The logistics and timeline of an Ofsted inspection. • How do inspectors make their judgements? • How do we flag up how we are carrying out our three governance priorities? • How do we embed what we do really well? <p>The Chair thanked the HT for a very succinct overview, commenting that it promised to be a really exciting year ahead.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>PART C– OTHER BUSINESS</p>		
<p>GB 62/21</p>	<p><u>Other Business:</u> None declared.</p>	
<p>GB 63/21</p>	<p><u>The Chair asked those Governors present :</u></p> <p><i>What impact have Governors made on the learning experience of pupils in the school as a result of this meeting?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring strategic direction which will benefit all children. • Positive vision on academisation and Ofsted. • Policies approved and clarified for staff. • Clarity of working practice. • Ensuring safeguarding for the school through the review of the SCR. • Looking back at on what has been achieved over the year. <p>There being no further business, the Chair thanked the Governors, HT and all staff for their contributions and commitment to the school, and wished them all a good summer break, closing the meeting at 19.30.</p>	

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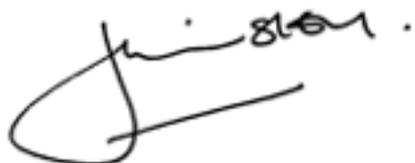


<p>The date of the next FGB meeting will be held on Monday the 20th September 2021 at 5pm for a 5.30pm start.</p> <p>Please send apologies to the Clerk Pat Gale: Pat.gale@northyorks.gov.uk;</p> <p>Or 07793 846 441</p>		
<p>Please note: The colour coding above links to the three key roles of governance 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>		

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Date: 20.9.21

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