

**Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Board (FGB) of Richmond Methodist Primary School held at the school on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022 at 5.30 pm.**

**Present:**

Jan Linsley (Chair), Sharon Stevenson (Headteacher), Rev. Kathleen Wood (KW), Nicola Hebb (NH), Nicola Scrafton (NS), John Armitage (JA), Caroline Dawson (CD) and Julie Swinbank (JS).

**In attendance:**

Katrina Coxon (NYCC FMS Bursar) (from 6.10 to 6.50pm)  
Zoe Pick (School Business Leader) (from 6.10 to 6.50pm)  
Pat Gale (NYCC Clerk to Governors)

Minute No.	PART 'A'-PROCEDURAL	Action
GB 93/22	<p><b><u>Welcome and introductions to the RoundTable Discussion with subject leaders:</u></b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone and invited the subject leaders to introduce themselves to governors, each governor had been given one or two monitoring questions (see below) to gain feedback from each of the subject leaders over a 5 minute period of discussion, the emphasis being on how their subject was being delivered and monitored for impact across the school, not just in their own classroom.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <b>Governors were then requested to identify three key learning points they had gained from the process and send by email to the Chair for collation into a summary report.</b></p> <p><a href="#">Governor monitoring questions 21.11.22 (1).docx</a></p> <p>At 6.10 pm the Chair thanked all subject leads for their time and governors were invited to join the main business of the FGB.</p>	All/ Chair
GB 94/22	<p><b><u>To receive a revised budget update:</u></b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Katrina Coxon (KC), NYCC FMS Bursar and Zoe Pick (ZP) the School Business Leader (SBL) to the meeting and invited them to give an overview of the key headlines from previously circulated reports.</p> <p><b>a) Budget Summary Report for month ending the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022- KC</b> informed governors that the budget report was a lot healthier than many similar schools, with a carry forward budget of £220,349 by the end of March 2023, supported by £155,005 surplus from the previous year, a variance of minus £65,344. The variance being largely due to all support and teaching staff costs now including pay awards and increments; worst case scenario energy costs based on before the energy price cap was announced, and we are still waiting for final clarification on what this will mean for the school. We will also review UIFSM income estimates after both the October and January census.</p> <p><i>Q: Has the nursery development impacted negatively on the budget?</i> <i>A: The successful development has actually increased the income and helped sustain the carry forward budget.</i></p>	

Sign:

Date:

23/01/23

	<p><i>Q: Are there any more grants available that we could apply for?</i>  <i>A: There are SALEX grants available but the money has to be repaid.</i></p>	
	<p>JA mentioned that schools that were part of a MAT could access small grants for building improvement, such as introducing solar panels, but he wasn't sure if this applied to non-MAT schools. The HT noted that the school needed to consider opportunities for income generation in order to sustain a healthy budget.</p> <p><b>b) The revenue financial forecast for 2022/23 to 2024/25-</b> KC highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Premises costs reflect an increase in energy costs and are NYCC estimates at this stage.</li> <li>• Staffing costs reflect the pay awards, whereas the supply staff costs should start to reduce next financial year due to the appointment of an extra member of teaching staff, which has resulted in a year on year increase.</li> <li>• The extended school income for the WAC shows a healthy growth, assuming demand continues to grow.</li> <li>• The in year summary position shows negative amounts, but is offset by balances brought forward.</li> <li>• The 2022/23 year is based on the soft implementation of the National Funding Formula (NFF), the following years have been calculated on the same basis, but would be subject to change if the DfE was to move to the full implementation of the NFF.</li> <li>• Pay increases for support staff have been included assuming a 3% increase.</li> <li>• Pay increases for teaching staff reflect the September Pay Award of 5%; from September 2023 a 3% increase has been added each year.</li> <li>• The National Insurance contributions have been reversed to 13.80% from November 2022.</li> </ul> <p><i>Q: Are we locked into the utilities contracts and service SLAs?</i>  <i>A: They are renewed annually, so yes, but if a SLA couldn't fulfil due to staffing shortages, then you could assume that would happen, but I can't say definitely, and most SLAs are increasing in price.</i>  <i>Q: If we had an in year deficit what would we need to do?</i>  <i>A: We would need to prepare a recovery plan, but at the moment our reserves are strong.</i>  <i>Q: In terms of recruitment and retention are we using a fixed term strategy?</i>  <i>A: No it is flexible, so we don't envisage a redundancy situation occurring. We have worked hard to achieve a positive position. Almost at bare bones in terms of class sizes, but it is a national issue.</i>  <i>Q: What about nursery income?</i>  <i>A: We have funding from funded places and from families, and can assume numbers will continue to grow, we have capacity for a few more two year olds from January 2023, and we are near capacity for three year olds. For October 2023 we have planned on the basis of 45 in reception, but we actually have 49.</i></p> <p><b>Potential Action:</b></p>	

Sign:



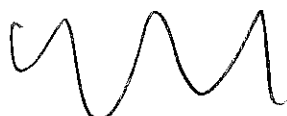
Date:

23/01/23



	<p><b>The Chair proposed that the school may need to consider setting up a working group to look at income generation.</b></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b>  <b>Governors agreed to approve the Revenue Financial Forecast for 2022/23 to 2024/25 for submission to NYCC.</b></p> <p><b>c) FMS Benchmarking Report Autumn 2022-</b> KC referred governors to consider the benchmarking summary as a means of helping the school make the most of the resources they have. <b>Appendix 1</b> summarised the school average values for 2021/22 in comparison to similar medium sized schools and all primary schools in North Yorkshire.</p> <p>Key headlines being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spend on staffing lower than other schools, but admin and clerical staff 1% higher. Senior leaders as a % of teachers 25% compared with 21% in other schools.</li> <li>• Catering costs higher than other medium schools, but premises costs lower than other schools.</li> <li>• Pupil to teacher and education support staff ratios higher than other schools.</li> <li>• Learning Resources per pupil lower than other schools, possibly as a result of Covid, so will probably increase this year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Appendix 2 showed the DfE Self-Assessment Dashboard</b> based on 2021/22 submitted data and the revised 2022/23 budget.</p> <p>Key headlines being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The in year balance and revenue reserve are low risk but 2023/24 shows as a medium risk.</li> <li>• Spend on teaching staff is in the lowest 10% of similar schools. The average teacher cost is in the lowest 20% of similar schools.</li> <li>• Spend on supply staff is in the highest 20% of similar schools.</li> <li>• Spend on energy is in the highest 10% of similar schools, and may increase year on year.</li> </ul> <p>KC concluded that nothing caused concern at this stage.          The Chair thanked KC for a very helpful report which was much more focused than previous benchmarking reports and was therefore more helpful for planning purposes.          (ZP and KC left the meeting at 6.50pm)</p> <p>(To note: updates on the School Fund, Pupil Premium and PE and Sports Fund will be considered at the next meeting)</p>	<p><b>Chair/ HT</b></p> <p><b>All</b></p>
<b>PART A-PROCEDURAL</b>		
<p><b>GB 95/22</b></p>	<p><b><u>Opening Thought and Prayer:</u></b></p> <p>The Chair invited the Rev Kathleen Wood to give an opening thought and prayer, which focused on recent developments in Methodist churches, it was reported that a Prayer Manual is being produced with contributions welcome</p>	

Sign:



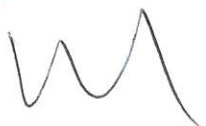
Date:

23/01/23

	from schools, if RMS wished to submit a prayer for including in the manual, the timeframe for this contribution would be by Friday the 27 <sup>th</sup> January. She also explained that the Richmond Methodist Chapel provided a 'Free Warm Space' on Mondays and Wednesdays for people who were facing financial difficulties or worries, and believed that the school and governors would know who the service might be able to help. The prayer focused on 'may service be my way of life' and the 'cosmic force that keeps all things together'.	
<b>GB 96/22</b>	<p><b><u>Brief feedback on the discussions with subject leaders:</u></b></p> <p>The Chair requested brief headlines from the discussions with subject leaders, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was much more clarity of purpose than experienced in the previous meeting, demonstrating greater confidence and understanding of what an Ofsted inspection would expect from subject leaders.</li> <li>• I thought staff were a lot more focused, more consistent in their responses and more able to answer the question 'how do you know?' and 'how do you report impact?'</li> <li>• At the next meeting perhaps we need to include a question around 'why have you chosen to deliver this scheme and why now?' -for example why choose the White Rose scheme in Maths?</li> <li>• Mastery might be a useful question to ask about next time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b>  <b>The Chair thanked governors for their engagement with staff and requested that all governors should submit to her a short paragraph about the responses to the questions they had asked, and if possible by the end of the week (25<sup>th</sup> November).</b>          (Note: Also see GB 93/22)</p>	<b>All</b>
<b>GB 97/22</b>	<p><b><u>Apologies for absence:</u></b></p> <p>Apologies and reasons for absence had been received from Kate Pepperrell, Scott Woodhead and Kathleen Bradley and were consented to.</p>	<b>All</b>
<b>GB 98/22</b>	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest:</u></b></p> <p>None declared.</p>	
<b>GB 99/22</b>	<p><b><u>Confidentiality Issues:</u></b></p> <p>None declared.</p>	
<b>GB 100/22</b>	<p><b><u>Notification of urgent other business:</u></b></p> <p>None declared.</p>	
<b>GB 101/22</b>	<p><b><u>To approve as a correct record the minutes of the FGB meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b>  <b>The minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting.</b></p>	<b>All</b>

GB 102/22	<p><b><u>Matters Arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda:</u></b></p> <p>It was confirmed that all actions (Appendix 2) had been completed apart from GB 76/22-the appointment of an LA Governor which was an ongoing action.</p>	
GB 103/22	<p><b><u>Confirmation of the date of the next meeting:</u></b></p> <p>The Chair explained that she would be unable to attend the planned meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023, and unless governors wished to change the date, it was proposed that the Co Vice Chairs could chair the meeting.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> <b>That NH and KB would co-chair the meeting.</b></p>	NH/KB
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PART B-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE</b> (See GB 94/22-for budget update given by Katrina Coxon and Zoe Pick)</p>		
GB 104/22	<p><b><u>Headteachers Update:</u></b></p> <p>The HT had previously circulated her report which covered:</p> <p><b>a) Health and Safety-</b> the HT informed governors that a new NYCC HandS adviser had been appointed to support the school, Lauren Grant, a visit has not yet taken place although a NYCC adviser will carry out the termly visit on the 8<sup>th</sup> December. All NYCC H&amp;S policies had been updated by Zoe Pick the SBL, and will be shared with all staff after the HandS visit. All staff had completed Manual Handling, Fire Safety and Working at Heights training on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020, but will need to be refreshed by November 2023. Unfortunately the school caretaker is currently on long term absence, which has meant that the SBL is working in collaboration with NYCC to ensure health and safety checks take place, such as asbestos, legionella and fire alarm, together with opening and closing the school. Governors wished to thank the SBL for carrying out these additional duties.</p> <p><b>b) Premises Update-</b> the Forest School Shed was installed on the 9<sup>th</sup> November, plans for developing the outdoor space further are underway to launch OPAL, which will include another shed, welly racks, a large sandpit, digging area and mud kitchen. The HT expressed her delight that so many parents had offered voluntary support and resources to ensure the exciting development would take place. It was reported that a meeting had taken place on the 14<sup>th</sup> November with NYCC and Align Property Services to discuss the development of a hygiene room to meet the needs of a child in nursery with significant SEND. It might mean that some space from the outdoor EYFS outdoor classroom, but the need for the facility is a priority and good inclusion practice.</p> <p><i>Q: Are you currently managing the situation well?</i>  <i>A: Yes, but may become more difficult as the child grows older, without this facility, the capital will come from the SEND access fund, and the work is envisaged to take place in the summer holidays.</i>  <i>Governor comment:</i>  <i>I think it is certainly good practice and could well attract more families who might need this level of support for their children.</i>  <i>Q: Has anything been agreed about the request for replacing the temporary classrooms yet?</i>  <i>A: We haven't been successful with our bid for 2022-23, but will submit a request for 2023-24 for the classroom replacements and Key Stage 2 toilets.</i>  <i>Q: Why is NYCC refusing this request?</i></p>	

Sign:



Date:

23/1/23



	<p><i>A: NYCC has no capital funding available at the moment.</i></p> <p><b>c)Performance Management Update</b> –the HT informed governors that SLT had undertaken all performance appraisals during October, all eligible staff were awarded their incremental pay awards ,there were no requests submitted for moving onto the Upper Pay Scale. The HT reminded governors that all performance appraisal targets were linked to the School Improvement Plan, the Chair also informed governors that the HT had her performance reviewed by herself, KB and Don Parker as external adviser from the Dales Academy Trust. It was agreed that the HTs new targets should be aligned to the School Development Plan, and the recommendation to increase the salary of the HT by one leadership point, would require ratification from the FGB.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b>  <b>The FGB unanimously agreed to this decision and congratulated the HT on a very successful year.</b></p> <p><b>d) Staffing Update-</b> the HT explained that due to a late resignation at the end of May 2022, a supply teacher is providing support for years 3 and 4 (Nidderdale), and this will be continued until the end of the academic year to give the school staff continuity and financial flexibility until two members of staff return from maternity leave.</p> <p><i>Q: Are you paying supply teacher pay rates?</i>  <i>A: Yes, but we don't pay holidays and on costs.</i></p> <p>It was reported that the numbers of 3 and 4 year olds in Ribblesdale will be increasing from 16 to 24 in January 2023, so we are recruiting another member of staff on a fixed term contract to cover two terms. As our two year old provision grows the school is employing a relief Early Years GTA to cover the sessions that have between 8 and 12 children. The HT wished to inform governors that she had received requests from two highly skilled staff to be considered for flexible working, and we have supported them in the best way possible by placing adverts for these posts, and if we are able to recruit we will be able to agree to these requests.</p> <p><i>Q: What flexible working have they requested?</i>  <i>A: Reduced hours so not Full Time permanent contracts.</i></p>	All
GB 105/22	<p><b><u>To approve the NYCC/Veritau resource-related policies and recommended for adoption by the Headteacher:</u></b></p> <p><b>a) Budget Management Policy-</b> the model policy had been updated by NYCC in September and only minor changes raised, it was noted that the scheme of delegation had been approved at the last meeting.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That the Budget Management Policy be approved and adopted.</b></p> <p><b>b) Health and Safety Policy-</b>it was noted that it had been updated, but governors agreed that it should be considered at the next FGB after a visit had been undertaken with the new HandS adviser.</p> <p><b>Action a):</b>  <b>The Health and Safety Policy would be considered at the next FGB meeting.</b></p> <p><b>c) Model NYCC Pay Policy for 2022-23-</b>it was noted that support staff would not be able to access performance management increases if they had had 7-10 days absence.</p> <p><i>Q: What if the absence was due to child illness?</i></p>	All

Sign:



Date:

23/01/23

	<p><i>A: The ruling comes from the unions and HT discretion is not allowed. So they would only receive one day's pay.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Can we not raise our concern about this to NYCC?</i></p> <p><i>A: If we did we wouldn't receive HR support if we do not adopt the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Action b):</b>  <b>The Chair said she would make a representation to NYCC outlining concerns raised by governors about the policy, especially in the light of cost of living increases. Approval of the policy would be put on hold.</b></p> <p><b>d) Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure-</b> it was agreed to personalise to the school.  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That the recruitment and selection policy would be personalised to the school, approved and adopted.</b></p> <p><b>e) Accessibility Plan-</b> it was noted that the plan had changed a good deal from previous years, providing schools with clear guidance on what was needed to improve and how to personalise to the school.  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That the Accessibility Plan be approved for adoption.</b></p> <p><b>f) Staff Discipline Policy-</b> no changes were recommended, although there was a spelling error that needed to be changed in paragraph 17.  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That the Staff Discipline Policy be approved for adoption.</b></p> <p><b>g) Hearing and Appeals Policy-</b> recommended for adoption by NYCC, and the HT agreed to this.  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That the Hearing and Appeals Policy be approved for adoption.</b></p> <p><b>h) Behaviour Policy-</b> the HT explained that new guidance on what was required had been released and that the school policy fulfilled all the criteria, so the school had not needed to change too much apart from including prohibited items, reflecting DfE documentation, such as monitoring pornography, phone usage, which were more procedural than policy. It was noted that suspensions were now reported as fixed term and exclusions would still remain the same as now.  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That the Behaviour Policy be approved for adoption.</b></p>	<p><b>Chair</b></p> <p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>All</b></p>
<b>PART C- EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE</b>		
<b>GB 106/22</b>	<p><b><u>Headteachers Report previously circulated (cont.):</u></b></p> <p><b>a) Safeguarding Update-</b> the HT reported that all staff had undertaken safeguarding training on the 5<sup>th</sup> September, including updates to KCSiE 2022. All governors have read and understood KCSiE webinar with Carousel Education. There are currently nine open safeguarding cases that school have made referrals for, 3 Children In Need all having been de-escalated from Child Protection, one Looked After Child and five Early Help. Staff have made four further referrals to the DSL/DDSL that have been resolved through parents working with the DSL and the Early Help team.</p>	

Sign:



Date:

23/01/23

7



*Q: Have we many refugee children?  
A: We currently have nine in school.*

**b) Update on academisation:**

The Headteachers Report summarised a recent visit (on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022) to the school from Julie-Ann Hewitt, the CEO of the Epworth Trust to provide an update on the MASTs (Methodist Academies and Schools Trust) academies agenda. It has been agreed by MAST that all Methodist Schools **must** join a Methodist MAT. Regional Directors who work on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education in making decisions on the creation and growth of MATS (Multi Academy Trusts), have decided that there will be two Methodist Mats, one in the north and one in the south of the country. Epworth Trust will be the MAT in the north, it currently has six schools, although it is envisaged that each MAT will eventually have between 40-60 schools, composed of Methodist and community schools. The CEO and Barbara Easton made it clear that they would want all three Methodist schools in the north (RMS, Gunnerside and Melsonby) to convert at the same time. Each school would have to give a topslice of 6% which would include minimal central support services, which would mean that RMS would need to buy in a significant number of services, such as payroll, Finance, HR, Health and Safety. The majority of Epworths schools are in the north west, which geographically would make it difficult for RMS to access much of the Trusts educational strategy and CPD. The CEO had explained that the three North Yorkshire schools would work closely together as a hub, but nothing specific had been proposed. Governors had been circulated with a copy of the Epworth Trust Education Strategy, 'Enabling all to flourish by doing 'all you can'.

*Q: Has there got to be minimum numbers of pupils?*

*A: It is all about a growth strategy, we would have 460 children across the three schools; although the Regional Directors propose a minimum of 10 schools, with approximately 8,000 children, in trying to grow mega-MATs or SATs.*

*Q: What is a SAT?*

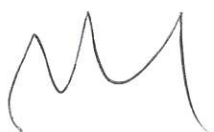
*A: A Single Academy Trust, but to add schools cannot convert independently anymore. We have been given a clear direction from MAST, and a strategy meeting is being held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December, and we would like to have your questions and comments for that meeting please.*

*Q: MAST and the Epworth Trust are a considerable distance from the 3 northern schools, and there is also a significant distance for RMS from Melsonby and Gunnerside. Will the Trust be willing to come up here to provide support?*

*Q: What will we get for the 6% topslice? YCAT was going to charge 5.5%*

*A: This will need to be discussed, although we know that independent schools, such as Ashfield College, pay between 5 and 8%.*

Sign:




Date:

23/01/23



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'.

Sign:



Date:

23/01/23