

# MINUTES OF MEETING



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**School:** Gotham Primary School  
**Meeting title:** Spring term meeting of the governing body  
**Date and time:** Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 6.30pm  
**Location:** Virtual meeting via Teams

**Being the best, we can be together!**

**Membership**  
'A' denotes absence

Miss N Danylevych  
Ms Gill Aldridge  
Mrs Linda Dale  
Mr Allan Kerr  
Mrs Emma Ault  
Mr Andrew Howard  
Mrs Clare Payne  
Mrs Sarah Riley  
Mrs Jennifer Walker (Chair)  
Miss Janette Allen (Headteacher)

**In attendance**

Mrs Susan Beasley (clerk to the governors)  
Ms Marta Kenny

**GB/01/21      Apologies for absence      Action**

There were no apologies for absence.

**GB/02/21      Declaration of interest**

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

**GB/03/21      Review of membership**

The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body:

x2 Co-opted governors  
x1 Local Authority governor

**Governors discussed** the opportunity to appoint Ms Kenny as a co-opted governor. The chair explained that this had been previously discussed. The clerk asked if any concerns had been raised regarding this appointment. The chair said not.

**Governors agreed** to the appointment of Ms Kenny to the governing body as a co-opted governor.

Ms Kenny was formally introduced to the governing body.

The chair discussed the further vacancies on the board.  
The chair informed governors that eligibility criteria could be submitted to the LA, this would be used to match eligible LA governors as they became available.  
The chair agreed to devise an eligibility criteria to include desired skills. **Chair**  
**Governors suggested** Finance, HR and equality and diversity knowledge would be beneficial.

The chair reported that she had contacted Teach First regarding governor recruitment and was awaiting a reply.  
The clerk advised that Inspiring Governance was a free service that could match governors with schools carrying vacancies. The chair said she would investigate. **Chair**

The clerk brought to the attention of governors the following end of term of office:

Mr Howard's and Mrs Walker's terms of office as Parent governors will end on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

The headteacher agreed to organise a parent election before this date. **HT**

## **GB/04/21 Approval of minutes of Autumn term meeting**

The minutes of the Autumn term meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020 having been previously circulated and subject to the following corrections being made were confirmed and signed by the chair.

GB/47/20 to include Governors approved the Appraisal Policy.

GB/51/20 to include Governors approved the Child protection Policy.

### *Review of actions*

P1. The headteacher had not yet distributed declaration of interest forms.

P1. Governors had confirmed they had read the Governor's Code of Conduct.

P3. The headteacher had issued a statement on Parentmail regarding work related email responses.

P3. Mrs Payne and Mrs Ault had not completed their governor induction training.

P4. The SFVS and Budget re-forecast had been added to the agenda of the Finance Committee.

P6. The headteacher and chair had contacted the LA for further information on the potential impact of the housing development and school build between Gotham and Clifton. The headteacher had shared the feedback and suggested that the position was not clear but there would be no impact on Gotham in the next year.

P7. The governing body had delegated membership of committees at the SDP committee meeting.

P9. Mrs Dale and Mr Howard had completed the Safeguarding Audit for submission to the LA in December.

P9. All governors had confirmed reading the relevant sections of the KCSiE document,

P9. All governors had completed the Educare Child Protection Refresher Level 2 training.

### Matters arising

The headteacher would distribute declaration of interest forms for governor to sign and return to the school office **HT**

The clerk agreed to share a report from GovernorHub to check if all declarations had been made. **Clerk**

Mrs Ault and Mrs Payne agreed to book onto governor induction training. **EA&CP**

The headteacher would consult with the office manager regarding Educare log in for some governors and chase those governors who had not provided course completion certificates. **HT**

## **GB/05/21 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties**

### **Finance, General Purposes and Personnel Committee**

The minutes of the FGPP Autumn term meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020 having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true representation of the meeting.

Approval of NCC Pay Policy

The pay policy was approved at the FGPP meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

Approval of Finance Policy

The policy was updated then reviewed and approved by governors in October 2020. The policy would be reviewed again in October 2021.

The FGPP committee would meet on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 the SFVS, Services for schools, 2020-21 year-end forecast and 2021-22 budget setting would be reviewed at this meeting.

Decisions made by the FGPP committee would be ratified by the FGB at the Summer term meeting.

**Agenda**

### **Strategic, Development and Pupils Committee**

The minutes of the SDP Committee meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 having been previously circulated was confirmed as a true representation of the meeting.

All actions were either completed or to be completed by the next SDP meeting.

### **Strategy Committee**

The minutes of the Strategy Committee meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 having been previously circulated was confirmed as a true representation of the meeting.

All actions were either completed or to be completed by the next Strategy meeting.

## **GB/06/21 Headteacher's report**

The headteacher had circulated the headteacher's report in advance of the meeting.

Pupil numbers and groupings

The headteacher highlighted the similarity in numbers of Pupil Premium children and those receiving free School Meals. The headteacher noted that this had shown the financial impact of Covid in the school community.

Staffing

The headteacher informed governors that recruitment for maternity cover had been successful and the successful candidate had already started in school to ensure continuity for the class they were covering.

**Governors questioned** how this teacher was being supported. The headteacher confirmed that she had completed her induction and that she would be working alongside Ms Danylevych once the children were settled back into school to deliver some F2/Yr1 combined work.

The headteacher explained that due to shielding requirements and illness supply cover was being used. The headteacher confirmed that they had secured 2 good supply teachers.

**Governors queried** if there was any indication of how long supply covered would be necessary. The headteacher stated that she would not know yet.

**Governors asked** if the supply staff had indicated that they could stay with the school as long as they were needed. The headteacher had not heard anything to the contrary.

**Governors questioned** how the workload of the absent staff was being distributed. The headteacher stated that it had not be formalised yet, but she would address this. The staff not in school had left a good level of preparatory work for other staff members to pick up. The headteacher would share out the duties as necessary.

The headteacher explained that new arrangements had been made for the covering caretaking and cleaning responsibilities. The team were working extremely hard and productively and staff commented how well they were doing. Recruitment for permanent cover of the posts is underway.

**Governors asked** if the caretaker was doing the necessary checks. The headteacher confirmed that he was and that he had raised some further items that would be checked and added to the list of responsibilities.

**Governors queried** how staff were. The headteacher replied that there was a level of exhaustion that was being managed. She also hoped that staffing levels would improve soon, and workload pressures would ease.

#### Pupil Attendance

The headteacher shared the Autumn term attendance data with governors, she explained how the government had removed all covid related absence from the data. This showed good all round attendance but the headteacher warned governors to be mindful that this data did not reflect the missed learning amongst the pupils.

**Governors queried** if all pupils had returned to school this week.

The headteacher stated that 3 remained at home. The school were contacting families and assessing anxieties to enable support.

**Governors noted** the Autumn attendance and were encouraged that families felt confidence in the school's procedures. They understood the need to assess the lost learning not reflected in the data.

The headteacher was again wary that persistent absence figures would rise when holidays were available.

**Governors noted** that the attendance procedures that were implemented before Covid would resume and absence would remain a focus.

**Governors suggested** a pre-emptive item in the school newsletter.

#### Safeguarding

The headteacher updated governors on referrals and monitoring of the confidential files and the single central register.

#### LAC

The headteacher gave a brief update on the provision and progress of LAC children in school.

#### Catch-up funding

**Governors questioned** if the funding is being used to address the areas of most concern. The headteacher informed governors that the funding was targeted on the gap analysis made by staff, however this was a fluid process and if other children were identified interventions would be transferred to cover those that needed further support. The headteacher highlighted the need for catch up in Years 1&2. She explained that the loss of foundation work last year had impacted their social skills, interaction skills, readiness to learn and independence.

**Governors asked** how progress would be evidenced. The headteacher agreed it was difficult to evidence the impact of catch-up for these pupils as they were producing very little work. The headteacher explained that the staff would assess soon to create a baseline with which they could compare future assessments. Focus would remain on getting them ready to learn and work independently for the time being as constant assessment would not show any purposeful data.

**Governors questioned** if there would be a focus on phonics for these pupils. The headteacher said that there would, and the maternity cover teacher was a confident phonics practitioner and was already organising engaging activities for the children.

**Governors queried** how self-isolation would impact pupil's catch-up provision. The headteacher confirmed that remote learning could be accessed for children who could not attend school and they could attend virtually.

School improvement Plan

**Governors discussed** the priorities and their order of importance.

The headteacher explained that limiting the effect of Covid (priority 1) would in turn enable to progression of all other priorities. She added that the children need to feel safe, happy and well before they could focus on learning and raising attainment.

**Governors asked** if the order of priorities would change and if covid related priorities would be removed. The headteacher noted that the effects of Covid could be long lasting and far reaching so they would remain until they were no longer relevant. The headteacher stated that all priorities were linked in some way.

#### **GB/07/21 Governor monitoring visits**

The clerk reminded governors that this is a key function of the governing body and details of remote/virtual visits should be recorded.

Mrs Riley reported that she had met with school staff to monitor SEND provision in September 2020 and February 2021, review quality assurance documents for history and geography, liaise with year 5 pupils, completed a health and safety check on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 for the return to school and had undertaken headteacher appraisal on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Governor monitoring reports were available on GovernorHub.

Mrs Ault confirmed that she had emailed monitoring questions about English curriculum which led to a very informative meeting. That meeting was followed up with further information from the deputy headteacher on quality assurance, action plans and the Fischer Family Trust.

Mrs Aldridge reported that she had monitored via email to ask how music can be delivered with covid restrictions, to investigate the school's commitment to internet safety and to monitor maths progress through the school.

Mr Howard had virtually met with the year 6 teacher and would write a report from his meeting notes.

Mrs Walker had met with the headteacher to discuss wellbeing. She had been involved in the recruitment of the Reception teacher and had joined the staff meeting last week to enquire how staff preferred governors to monitor. The feedback she received was that staff preferred pre planned monitoring to align with information reporting cycles in school. Staff were happy for governors to arrange to meet virtually and via email.

Mrs Payne agreed to arrange a meeting with Mrs Kenny to review RSHE.

Mrs Payne and the chair would look at the foundation classroom set up.

**CP  
CP&Chair**

#### **GB/08/21 Update on appraisal process for Headteacher and staff**

Appraisal governors, external advisors and quality assurance governors were confirmed and minuted at the Autumn term FGB meeting.

The headteacher explained that her mid-term review was arranged for the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021.

The headteacher confirmed that the staff appraisal review would be completed on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. The headteacher reported that she had also completed Appraisal Training.

The headteacher informed governors that TA appraisals would be completed by the deputy headteacher and other SLT members. These would be conducted through the latter part of the Spring term and the Summer term.

**GB/09/21 Confirm arrangements to review Child Protection and Safeguarding recording and reporting systems**

The clerk asked governors to refer to the newsletter item by Cheryl Stollery. The confidential file audit is not a statutory requirement but identified as a piece of 'good practice'. The file audit is to check processes are in place and ensure that any safeguarding and child protection is recorded robustly and comprehensively.

Mrs Dale and Mr Howard agreed undertake the file audit during the remainder of the Spring Term. The clerk reminded governors that the file audit toolkit is on the NSCP website, School Portal and provided in the termly papers on GovernorHub.

**GB/10/21 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action.**

**Blended Learning**

The Educational Improvement Service have produced a report on blended learning. The clerk reminded governors that this report had been devised in December and there had been national developments since.

Blended learning combines classroom learning with remote learning (which is any learning which takes place off the school site).

**The DfE requires that from January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021** all schools have a remote learning strategy in place and published on the School Website. The DfE have also set out requirements for remote learning when planning your remote learning curriculum and teaching remotely

**There are two main strands to blended learning.**

- **Continuous learning**, which draws on a range of technologies and platforms to provide the children with online resources and supports feedback and communication between adults and children;
- **The establishment of a virtual classroom** bringing all resources and communication together through one platform – (usually google classroom or Microsoft 365). There is funding and support for digital platforms from the Department for Education.

Governors were asked to review the Actions for Governor's section.

**Considering Everyone's Wellbeing in Schools: An Update**

**The Wellbeing for Education Return (W4ER)** project is a grant funded joint initiative by the Department for Education and the Department of Health & Social Care. There are different elements to the project.

- a training package delivered to the Mental Health Leads in all state-funded schools through two webinars

- the development of a *Wellbeing Local Offer* website
- the establishment and further development of networks of support for the Mental Health Leads in schools

Resources are available on NCC's Wellbeing for Education Return Project website.

Considerations should be made that the unique role of the headteacher is such that their wellbeing is particularly vulnerable given the responsibilities they carry. Resources are available from the Educational Psychology Service, Schools Portal and wellbeing webinars presented by Sally Rundell and Dr Orlaith Green.

Governors were asked to review the Actions for Governor's section.

### **Children Missing Education Strategy**

Children and young people not accessing their full educational entitlement could be as a result of:

- failing to secure a school place,
- facing permanent exclusion from school,
- refusing or being prevented from attending their school place,
- on a school roll but accessing less than their full educational entitlement,
- those unable to access full time education due to their mental or physical health needs, those who are in unsuitable elective home education,
- as well as any child or young person known to other Local Authority services without a school place or refusing to attend school.

A relatively small number of parents choosing to electively home educate (EHE) their children.

**Nottinghamshire County Council has processes in place** to identify and address cases where children and young people may be described as:

- children and young people known to be missing from education (CME)
- children and young people who are on roll but are believed to be inappropriately prevented from accessing their full entitlement to education, identified by Ofsted (November 2013) as 'pupils missing from education' (PME).

Governors should be aware of the need to ensure that children do not become children missing from education and ensure that appropriate action is taken to safeguard against this.

Governors were asked to review the Actions for Governor's section.

## **GB/11/21 Communication**

*From chair*

There was no communication from the chair.

*From Headteacher*

There was no communication from the headteacher.

*From clerk –*

The clerks shared items of interest and pertinent to the school from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Spring term Governor Newsletters including;

- School Governance updates
  - Update from NAGs- feedback on profile of NAGs
  - Safeguarding update, Confidential file audit, Prevent Programme relaunch and NSPCC online safety resources
  - Information from the Tackling Emerging Threats to Children Team, RSHE reminder and OFSTED guidance to teaching of protected characteristics, Mental health and wellbeing resources, ensuring schools are using quality assured resources.
  - Governors responsibility to scrutinise the Covid Catch-up spending and school's responsibility to publish spending.
  - Information of the new Headteacher Standards, this being a transitional year and no there is no expectation to review the 2020 performance management process but to adopt the new standards at the most appropriate time in the year.
  - HR updates- staffing reductions and the Living Wage Foundation Rate.
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- Heads and Chairs briefing is now recorded and available online, the link is on GovernorHub.
  - NGA news on self-evaluation, ethical leadership. Resources are freely available.
  - NAGS update, the Governor conference has been booked for 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
  - Article on a virtual OFSTED visit at a Nottinghamshire school from a governor's perspective.
  - Guidance on monitoring remote education from the National Confederation of Governor Services.

**GB/12/21 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training requirements for 2021**

The training schedule for the Spring Term is available on GovernorHub for schools that have purchased Governor Training and Development.

Mrs Aldridge explained that the Summer term programme for training was being finalised and would be available soon. She added that all training remained remote for the time being.

**Governors noted** that the OFSTED training was not readily available as it was fully booked up.

**GB/13/21 General Data Protection Regulations**

The SIRO was confirmed as Ms Allen.

The DPO was confirmed as Miss N Danylevych.

Mr Howard was confirmed as the Information governance governor.

Mr Howard had contacted the DPO and office manager for a GDPR report.

The report confirmed that there had been no data breaches, subject access requests or freedom of information requests in this period

**GB/14/21 AOB**

## Lettings Policy

The headteacher sought approval for updates to the Lettings Policy. The headteacher had been approached by a holiday club provider to use the school building. The headteacher informed governors that the updates included:

- Cleaning products and protocols – the school would provide appropriate cleaning materials with COSHH advice and cleaning expectations
- The school would have the discretion to accept or decline bookings – to ensure classrooms were available for deep cleans and teacher display creation.
- Pricing – the school would charge £60 per day for designated areas of school (hall, 2 classrooms and the field) for up to 30 children.

**Governors approved** the policy subject to the updates discussed at the meeting.

## Business Manager role

The headteacher proposed to formalise the office managers role as business manager. The office manager had been fulfilling the duties of a business manager and the headteacher felt this should be formally recognised. The headteacher wished to compile a role description to clarify her position.

Mr Kerr offered to assist with this process and a meeting was arranged to complete this.

**AK&HT**

## **GB/15/21 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account**

- In the committee and full governing body meetings organised and attended.
- In the training organised and completed.
- In the questioning of the school's leaders.
- In the monitoring visits and reports completed.
- In the questioning regarding spending of catch up funding and the review and impact of catch up plan in place.
- In the questioning around the priorities of the SIP.
- In creating focus around wellbeing and workload.
- In discussions around staffing and recruitment.
- In challenge of maintaining good attendance and evaluating the impact of procedures and pre-empting possible causes of future absences.

## **GB/16/21 Confirmation of dates for 2021-2022**

The governing body

**agreed**

Summer term 2021 – Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 6.15pm

Autumn term 2021 – Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 6.15pm

## **GB/17/21 Determination of confidentiality of business**

It was

**Resolved**

that all papers and reports be made available as necessary.

**The meeting closed at 8.30pm.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Walker', written in a cursive style.

Signed

(chair) Date 20<sup>th</sup> June 2021