

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING OF MONKSDOWN
PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD ON THURSDAY 25th MAY 2023 AT 9.30M AT THE SCHOOL**

PRESENT

Martin Reynolds - Chair
Jacquie Price – Headteacher
Josh Cliff
Katie Lawrence
Gill Stewart
Maya Sayaf

Also Present

George Allen – Clerk

23/FG01 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

Apologies were accepted from Mattie Douglas, Michelle McKeown, and Joanne Needham.

23/FG02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

22/FG03 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th September 2022 had been shared in advance of the meeting.

- a) Accuracy. It was agreed that the minutes were a true and accurate record.
- b) Matters Arising. There no matters arising from the minutes of 29th September 2022.

23/FG04 FINANCIAL SUMMARY AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

The Financial Summary and Budget Narrative were presented by the Headteacher. Arising:

- i. The budget is stable but there are expected funding pressures in future years.
- ii. All items of expenditure are being closely monitored and scrutinised.
- iii. The Agency Supply budget is slightly overspent and highlights the demands in this area.
- iv. Planned building works and painting jobs will take place over the next period.
- v. The Devolved Capital Fund has not been spent for the past three years and it can be utilised for planned building works and other developments.
- vi. Retention of staff. Two temporary staff are coming to the end of their contracts. The contracts will not be renewed.

Governors discussed the staffing levels and costs within the context of the school budget. The Chair stated that in consideration of future needs a staffing review may be required.

Governors agreed that a staff review would take place.

Governors approved the budget.

HT

23/FG04 HEADTEACHERS REPORT

The Headteacher's Summer Term Report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. It was presented by the Headteacher. Arising:

The Report is an extensive document that covers all aspects of school practice and activity. Governors were requested to read the Report and to respond with any comments or queries. It reflects that the school is performing very well. The Headteacher is proud of the work and the achievements at the school which are strongly articulated within the Report.

All

Data and practice in various areas were contained in the Report. This ranged from SEND, Safeguarding and Attendance to Staffing, EAL, CPD and Curriculum. It also included:

- I. Pupil Premium. A range of Pupil Premium activities were outlined. Designated activities are effective and are designed to narrow the gap between PP and non-PP children. High proportions of children are in receipt of Pupil Premium and free school meals.
- II. Photos of the new Sensory Garden indicate ongoing and positive pastoral work.
- III. SEND/Safeguarding data for summer term 2023 was contained in the Report.
- IV. PSHE. Many cultural and celebrations of religious festivals have ensued in 2022/23. They were delivered as part of the bespoke curriculum.
- V. Eid Celebrations were successful, and photos highlighted the enjoyment at the events. Maya Sayaf reiterated that parents had really enjoyed the celebratory activities.

Governors thanked the Headteacher for her comprehensive Report.

23/FG05 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2022/23

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) was circulated to governors prior to the meeting. The Headteacher presented the School Improvement Plan. Arising:

- The SIP contains information and detail relating to improvement aims and actions.
- Planned improvements in areas such as curriculum, attainment, attendance and SEND were outlined in the SIP.
- It is a key and working document that is overseen and assessed by governors.

Governors noted the School Improvement Plan.

23/FG06 SELF EVALUATION FORM

A user-friendly version of the SEF was distributed to governors prior to the meeting. The SEF has been previously discussed in detail with the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors.

The SEF contains a range of aspects such as contextual information, school development priorities, summary of progress and an overview of attainment across all Key Stages.

The school was evaluated as 'good' in relation to each of the four Ofsted grading criteria. This highlights that standards are of good calibre and are planned to improve.

Governor Question: Explain more about attendance rates that are referenced in the SEF?

Response: Gill Stewart stated that attendance is improving. Current rates for the school are: Attendance 94.2% and Persistent Absence 15.4%. The PA rates are particularly good and the overall figures compare favourably with National and city-wide averages.

But parents taking term-time holidays are detrimentally affecting attendance levels. Whilst the issue concerns a small number of parents it does impact upon data and has adversely impacts upon pupil attainment. Penalty Notices are issued for unauthorised absence.

Governor Question: How are excluded pupils supported on their return to school.

Response: Effective and planned support is provided to children after returning to school.

Governors noted the SEF.

22/FG09 CURRICULUM – PHONICS AND EARLY READING

Stacy Rawlings provided a presentation concerning Phonics and Early Reading. Arising:

The Governing Board were thanked for their funding support which has enabled greater phonics and early years reading activities to take place in 2022/23.

- A document containing actions and development in each term of this school year was circulated to governors. It listed all actions that been addressed and completed.
- All staff have completed the CPD modules for the delivery of Little Wandle.
- Keep Up and Catch Up has been implemented in EY, KS1 and KS2.
- Monksdown School is part of the Liverpool Phonics Project which involves a cluster of schools. It involves observations of teaching and discussions with teachers and pupils. Phonics provision at Monksdown is very highly rated within the cluster.
- Monksdown use Little Wandle (rather than RWI) and it is delivering strong results.
- The methods of Little Wandle practice and resource usage was explained to governors.
- Fidelity is a key part of phonics delivery. Fidelity involves consistency and regularity in phonics practice and in the planning and teaching of the subject.
- In Reception children crucially begin to learn letters and sounds in the alphabet.
- Focused activity starts in Reception and Year 1 with a planned tailing off in Year 2. The aim at the school is to reduce the level of phonics support needs by Year 2.
- Comprehension, vocabulary, and decodable books are essential in phonics practice.
- Every session is important and good attendance is critical to passing the screen checks.

At this point the Headteacher stated that the importance of each phonics session is one of the reasons why some parents are continuously reminded of the necessity of attendance.

Governors asked the following questions:

- What are decodable books?
- How are EAL children performing in phonics?
- What support is provided for other vulnerable groups of children?

Stacey Rawlings responded as follows:

- The concept of decodable books was explained to governors.
- EAL children are performing very well in phonics and produce good results.
- Intensive support is provided for vulnerable groups including SEN and PP.

Stacey Rawlings concluded by stating Reception and Year 1 pupils now have weekly phonics Homework and that a productive project has been completed. The teaching staff are now more confident in their delivery of phonics and early reading. The effect of these approaches will be determined after receipt of the pupils' results at the end of this term.

The Headteacher explained that CBeebies TV had requested to film the phonics for a period during Autumn term 2023. The school is prepared to allow filming of the phonics classes and further discussions with CBeebies will be ensuing.

HT

Governors thanked Stacey Rawlings for her presentation and for improving the standards of phonics teaching and practice at Monksdown Primary School

23/FG07 CURRICULUM – HISTORY

Paula Joynson provided the History presentation. Arising:

Paula was joined at the presentation by two class history subject leaders. Paddy is a Year 6 pupil and Francis is in Year 5. Paddy and Francis both described their roles as class subject leaders and specific interests in history. Governors asked Paddy and Francis some brief questions that were met with effective responses. Paula Joynson explained that:

- a) The subject leaders are excellent examples of pupil progression and meaningful Pupil Voice activity.
- b) An up-to-date History Report for 2022/23 and the History Curriculum Overview were shared with governors. The Report detailed actions, developments, and outcomes. The Overview described themes and the length and breadth of the curriculum.
- c) Pupils in all years are engaged in the history curriculum and enjoy its lessons.
- d) The curriculum has been developed to ensure that it is of high quality.
- e) Historical themes and studies for all years were outlined and they included Ancient Greece, Roman Britain, early Islamic Civilizations, local history and the Beatles.
- f) Children are demonstrating a strong interest history that should assist their attainment results and future prospects.

Governors asked the following questions:

- How do you assess learning in history?
- In what ways do the children retain the historical information they receive?
- Do you include key dates in the teaching of history within the school?

Paula Joynson responded as follows:

- Evaluation, marking and the monitoring of learning goals are examples of assessment.
- 'Sticky' learning, retrieval practice and revising learning are examples of how children are supported to retain historical information. Pupils are taught to learn and retain knowledge and repetitive learning are part of this approach.
- Chronological dates are a key part of the history curriculum at Monksdown School.

A Stone Age box consisting of various artefacts was shown to governors as examples of class studies. The stone age contents of the box were circulated to governors to highlight how physical historical resources can improve knowledge and retention.

Governors warmly welcomed the presentations from Paddy and Francis and were impressed by their levels of knowledge and the answers to question.

Governors thanked Paula Joynson for her excellent presentation and for ensuring evident and commendable progress in standards in the subject of history.

22/FG10 POLICIES

Various policies were shared with governors prior to the meeting. They were presented by the Headteacher and included:

- a) Flexible Working Policy and Procedure for School Based Staff
- b) Looked After Children Policy
- c) Whistleblowing Policy
- d) Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Each of the proposed policies were unanimously approved by governors.

- e) The Behaviour and Relationship Policy will be launched at INSET Day on 31st August by the Headteacher and Anne-Marie Ferrigan. It was also stated that:
 - The school is focusing upon why some pupils behave the way they do. An emphasis upon staff sensitivity and empathy is important in responding to pupil behaviour issues.
 - Consideration is being given to the work undertaken at Hope (SEMH) School and how it is developing attachment and trauma practice.
 - The policy has been distributed to governors who advised to read the document and respond to the school with any suggestions or comments.

All

Governors agreed to consider the Behaviour and Relationship Policy and feedback to the Headteacher with any comments. It will be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

23/FG10 PUPIL VOICE

Ann-Marie Ferrigan introduced separate and small groups of pupils to the Governing Board who each described the wide range of activities and programmes within which they were engaged.

- 1) House Captains – Aiden and Freya.

The Year 5 House Captains provided information regarding how they assist other children in the school, help with events and welcome parents who are visiting the school.

Freya and Aiden explained how they support teachers and offer advice regarding classroom activities. They assist in the organisation of activities such as sports, quizzes and competitions.

In response to a governor's question about whether they enjoyed their House Captain roles Freya explained that the role is enjoyable and allows her to help other children and teachers.

Governors acknowledged the work of the House Captains. Freya and Aiden were thanked for their presentations and it was noted the House Captains contribute to making the school a welcoming environment.

- 2) School Bank Managers -

Three pupils explained their roles as School Bank Managers. The work includes logging the money put into accounts and keeping records. It allows the Bank Managers to speak with those who are members of the bank and offer support and advice.

In response to a governor's question, the bank managers said that they have learned more about Maths, organising information, speaking to other children and in keeping records

The school bank helps children and families with improved ways to manage their money. The money placed is banked at the local Credit Union. Banking day is each Tuesday.

3) Subject Leaders - Daniel and Carolina.

Daniel and Carolina explained their work as subject leaders in English and Reading. They assist other pupils with enquiries and speak to teachers about matters raised with them.

Governors asked whether there is a particularly strong year group and what subject they both personally enjoyed. Carolina and Daniel both stated that she most enjoyed reading and love writing. They felt that Year 4 is a particularly strong year group.

Carolina talked about how she likes to assist other children with their reading.

Both pupils said that they help to provide a voice for pupils and that there is good trust between them and other children in the school.

4) Shepherds Huts

A pupil provided a presentation regarding that has been taking place in relation to the recreational and learning activities in the Shepherds Huts.

The pupil stated that the sheds are a calming place for the children and allow various play activities. Many facilities such as football table, pool table and little lights have been installed after requests from the pupils. All the children are benefitting from the facilities.

The children speak to the teachers about what are the best ways for the huts to be used.

5) School Council – Anastasia, Alfie, and Lily.

The members of the School Council reported that they had developed ideas and a plan.

- The plan was designed to assist children at the school and develop new activities.
- Work with EAL pupils has resulted in the creation of a Welcome for Refugees award.
- Ideas included better ways to communicate with teachers and children at the school.
- Support for families is provide at the school pantry. Many families benefit from the pantry and, if required, clothing are also provided.
- Visits to Norris Green Park are planned to take place next year.
- A summer festival is also being organised via the School Council.
- Book Swaps take place very Friday morning.

Ann-Marie Ferrigan said that the five presentations demonstrate how the school ensures the involvement of pupils in planned activities is an integral part of the life of the school.

Governors thanked all the pupils for their confident, fascinating, and informative presentations. They reflect the strong and effective Pupil Voice activities at the school.

22/FG11 SAFEGUARDING TRAINING FOR GOVERNORS

Gill Stewart provided the Safeguarding Training for Governors. The training comprised the full, recognised, and approved course that is required for all school governors. The training covered all aspects of safeguarding standards and legislation.

a) Key points included:

- I. Employer and school responsibilities were explained.
- II. Governor responsibilities were outlined.
- III. At least Part of the KCSIE document needs to be read and understood by governors.
- IV. KCSIE contains five sections, and all were read out. KCSIE is revised each year.
- V. Questions to be asked by governors were listed. They include that governors' should know the names of the DSL's and the Safeguarding Lead.
- VI. Effective Governance. The six areas were described.
- VII. All governors are expected to read and understand the Governors Handbook.
- VIII. Prevent Duty. All responsibilities were highlighted. Th school provides Prevent training.
- IX. A record of all safeguarding policies and issues is kept at the school.
- X. Governors and challenge. The role of governors is to support and challenge school leaders and staff. Governors must seek to ensure that the school is safe and secure.
- XI. Governors can challenge staff at relevant stages and report safeguarding issues.
- XII. The Smoothwall system prevents inappropriate on-line activity in school.
- XIII. All school safeguarding policies and procedures were listed and explained.
- XIV. The designated Link Governor is Martin Reynolds.

b) The school should be able to produce up to date evidence such as that:

- Recruitment processes are consistent with policies and with Ofsted guidance.
- Appropriate pre-employment checks have been carried out for all staff.
- Safer Recruitment has been undertaken for all.
- That the curriculum includes safeguarding training and teaching.
- The SCR managed by Jo Needham is up to date and is signed by Martin Reynolds.
- Signing in system is effective. All DBS information must be uploaded and up to date.
- Attendance and absence reporting is fully reported, and systems are maintained.
- Effective records are kept for Alternative Education pupils and for any missing children.

c) Other areas covered included that:

- Gill Stewart has lead responsibility for attendance.
- Robust systems are in place and are included in the SIP which is available to governors.
- CPD takes place for all staff, and this includes kitchen staff.
- Multi-Agency work is a key part of safeguarding work at the school. Partners range from the Police, Social Workers to LCC, SIL and various support organisations.

d) The Headteacher should ensure that:

- Termly safeguarding reports are provided to the Governing Board.
- Relevant and related policies and procedures are presented to the Governing Board.
- The Section 175 Audit is annually completed. The Section 175 Audit for 2022/23 has been completed and all associated details and actions are shared with governors.
- Named DSLs are identified across the school and in all Key Stages.
- All reported issues raised by school staff are placed in the CPOMS.

e) What the school expects from governors:

- Challenge and support leaders and staff in relation to safeguarding.
- Look for trends, inconsistencies, anomalies, and the maintenance of high standards.
- Read and understand all documents, policies, and related government guidance.
- Ensure the Section 175 Audit actions are effectively implemented.

Governors and staff are advised listen to what the pupils are saying, understand their perceptions and respond in kind. The school aims to promote positive behaviour and good peer relationships. The Pupil Voice is also an element in effective school safeguarding plans.

If governors are unsure of policies and procedures, they should contact a member of the SLT.

Gill Stewart was thanked for her presentation.

22/FG12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of Any Other Business

22/FG13 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place in September 2023 and that the date and time for the meeting will be communicated to all governors.

HT

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 12.10pm