



---

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF  
MONKSDOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD AT 4.00PM ON  
THURSDAY 03 APRIL 2025**

**PRESENT**

Martin Reynolds- Chair  
Jacquie Price- Headteacher  
Gill Stewart – Deputy Headteacher  
Josh Cliff  
Joanne Needham  
Mia Diab

**ALSO PRESENT**

C Russell – Assistant Headteacher  
Fabienne Spalvieri – Year 2 Teacher  
L Campbell – Maths Lead  
Terry Brown – Clerk

**24/29 WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting.

**24/30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSCENCE**

There were no apologies for absence

**24/31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest relevant to items on the agenda.

**24/32 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 26 FEBRUARY 2025**

The minutes of the meeting 26 February were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

**24/33 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**24/34 HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

A comprehensive report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Arising



from the report:

- i. The school was hosting the Global School Alliance. This was a very prestigious event involving schools and children from around the world. The event would be held virtually, with an estimated that 22K children participating.
- ii. The numbers on roll remained stable, this was despite numbers dropping in other schools in the area. This was due to Monksdown's growing positive reputation.

## **24/35 SCHOOL IMOPROEVMENT PLAN - MATHS**

Governors were provided with a detailed report. L Cambell highlighted the following points:

- i. A School bank had been set up with the support of the local credit union. Year 6 pupils had been trained as cashiers. Year 5 pupils were being trained for the next year. Governors were invited to visit the school to view the bank in action.
- ii. The school used the White Rose Maths programme.
- iii. Teachers were creating their own resources.
- iv. Every Year group had improved since October, some significantly so.
- v. An additional short 10-minute session focussed on building fluency skills. Pupil scores had improved since the introduction of this session.
- vi. Year 6 data showed that 42 pupils were at the expected standard, this was double the figure for the previous autumn.
- vii. A new scheme, Mastery Numbers, had been introduced. This focussed on basic skills and was particularly helpful for the Year 4 multiplication check.
- viii. Overall, there had been significant improvements since the autumn term. 25% of pupils were now above the national average.
- ix. Teachers were sharing good practice to ensure consistency in delivering the curriculum.
- x. An after-school club had started for Year 3 to assist them in the multiplication check in Year 4.
- xi. Parent workshops were held for Reception and Key Stage 1 parents.
- xii. Overall Maths was strong at the school, particularly arithmetic. Once the Maths strategies were fully embedded leaders would focus on English / literacy.

### **Governor Challenge**

Governors asked the following questions:



- i. Was the gap with national results closing?
- ii. Did pupils understand how credit unions work?
- iii. Was there a focus on pupils who were on the grade boundaries?

L Campbell responded as follows:

- i. The gap was closing.
- ii. Representatives from the Credit Union had explained how the union works at an assembly.
- iii. Each pupil was considered at pupil progress meetings, and appropriate targeted interventions were put in place tailored to the individual pupil's needs.

J Cliff offered to facilitate connections with people in the wealth management industry, who could possibly support the school.

## **24/36 FEEDBACK FROM REGIO EMILA VISIT**

Governors were provided with a report on the Regio Emilia visit. F Spalvieri and C Russell highlighted the following points:

- i. The visit was very positive and F Spalvieri and C Russel had learnt a lot.
- ii. The approach at Regio Emilia fed into Monksdown's aspirations and fitted into the school's approach to learning.
- iii. F Spalvieri and C Russell outlined the guiding principles to learning at Regio Emilia.
- iv. Regio Emilia had an expansive definition of community.
- v. F Spalvieri and C Russell explained how what they had learnt had been applied in lessons on the Titanic and the Big Bang.
- vi. The key approach was to understand how children learn in order to develop critical thinking skills, through enquiry-based learning.

### **Governor Challenge**

Governors asked the following questions:

- i. Did children learn more through activity-based learning?
- ii. What was the implementation plan?
- iii. Where staff onboard with this approach?



F Spalvieri and C Russell responded as follows:

- i. The key factor was that the setting guided the learning.
- ii. Implementation had begun before the visit, with work with subject leads. Training sessions were planned for the summer term, initially focussed on History and Geography.
- iii. Staff were onboard. The implementation would be carried out in a measured way which would include sharing and modelling good practice.

Governors thanked F Spalvieri and C Russell for their reports.

## **24/37 FINANCE UPDATE**

J Needham gave a report. The key points were as follows:

- i. A school audit had been carried out by the local authority in March. The audit was very thorough. There were no significant concerns highlighted in the audit.
- ii. The School Financial Value Standard documentation was approved, and signed off by the Chair, for submission to the local authority.
- iii. The meeting with the local authority finance officer had been delayed due to illnesses. J Cliff offered his assistance if needed.
- iv. Supply costs were £ K over the original estimate. Staff absence insurance covered some of this cost. However, some claims had been refused and the insurance only covered teachers. Leaders were looking at absence insurance for support staff.
- v. Building and Maintenance costs and increased by £ K due to unforeseen repairs / maintenance. However, the appointment of the new site manager would help reduce costs going forward as he was able to carry out basic repairs and maintenance.
- vi. Catering cost had increased slightly due to inflation, but the provider had issued a K refund.
- vii. The balance was with reserves £ K would be carried forward.

### **Governor Challenge**

Governors asked the following questions:

- i. Was the carry forward within the required limit?
- ii. Why was there an overspend for water?



iii. How was the new catering provider working out?

J Needham responded as follows:

- i. The carry forward balance was within the required limit.
- ii. This was due to inflation.
- iii. The new provider was working well. There were more menu choices, and the quality of meals was improved.

## **24/38 STAFFING**

J Price reported that a staffing review had been carried out with School Improvement Liverpool Human Resources. The review revealed that due to legacy issues some support staff had been placed on the wrong contracts. New contracts had been issued. Most staff had signed the new contracts; one member of staff had resigned. The new contracts meant that more staff were available for Breakfast Club and after school clubs.

M Reynolds thanked J Price and G Stewart for their handling of this sensitive matter.

## **24/39 SAFEGUARDING**

M Reynolds reported that he had reviewed and signed off the 175 Safeguarding audit, there were no major actions arising from the audit.

M Reynolds was to carry out a safeguarding learning walk after this meeting.

### **Governor Challenge**

Governors asked the following question:

- i. How many children were homeschooled?

J Price responded as follows:

- i. There were about 4-5 children who were homeschooled, usually for SEND, mental health reasons. If the child was on a child protection



plan, then permission to homeschool was not granted. Where there were any safeguarding concerns the child was kept on roll.

## **24/40 POLICIES**

Governors reviewed and approved the following policy:

- i. Behaviour and Relationships

## **24/41 SEND UPDATE**

J Price and M Reynolds had written to the local authority regarding the school's concerns over the placement procedures for children with Education Health Care plans.

## **24/42 NURSERY UPDATE**

A questionnaire had been circulated to parents regarding the possibility of 30 hours provision. The response was initially positive. However, the positive response had declined recently. The matter would be raised with the new intake in September.

## **24/43 GOVERNOR TRAINING**

M Reynolds had attended Safer Recruitment and Exclusion training. J Cliff had attended Attendance training.

## **24/44 CHAIR'S ACTIONS**

M Reynold's reported that there had been an incident involving a child that required police involvement. Following discussions with the parents and relevant agencies it was agreed to place the child in specialist behavioural external provision up until May half-term. The cost of the provision was £10K.

## **24/45 PUPIL VOICE**

Governors received a Pupil Voice report. The key points were as follows:

- i. The school had participated in the NOW festival and had won a trophy.



- The play had been uploaded to the website.
- ii. There had been a successful bid for a science grant, the funds had been spent on Lego coding.
  - iii. Plans were in place for VE day.
  - iv. There had been a visit by an author on World Book Day.
  - v. There had been a very successful visit from the British Consulate in Shanghai.
  - vi. Children had visited a stately home. The behaviour of the children was commented on positively by staff at the home and members of the public.
  - vii. The Eco Club was very active, being involved in the Global School Alliance, as well as working on wildlife, eco-travel, and power consumption. It was hoped to get some attention from the press, specifically Good Morning Britain.
  - viii. Leaders had met with representatives of the Palm House with a view to creating a curriculum for the Palm House.
  - ix. The links with Kingsley Primary continue to develop. The Year 4 pen pals had met their counterparts in person on Friday 28 March; the meeting was very successful. Monksdown would be hosting Kingsley at the Palm House.
  - x. Parent workshops on transition and cookery were scheduled.
  - xi. Year 6 had taken part in a world record poetry day, which was the world's largest ever poetry lesson.

## **24/46 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Governors were advised that leaders were considering moving from SEEDLINGS to Beautiful Beginnings for mental health support

## **24/26 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 15 May 9.15am

**The meeting ended at 11.30 am**