



**Bishopthorpe Infant School Minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting  
held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 5.15pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Kerry Davies, Executive Headteacher Rachel Mullen (Chair) Carley Ray	Les Holmes
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Ros Branton (Office Manager, Bishopthorpe Infant School) Ian Dolben (Link Trustee) Lesley Dolben (for Item 3) Claire Cutler-Casey (Clerk) Nino Gargiulo (AHT)	

<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</u></b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received, with consent, from Nicola Childs and Tim Andrews.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b><u>LGB Partnership</u></b></p> <p>Lesley Dolben, Chair of Governors of Fulford School, presented information regarding merging Governing Bodies the points of note were:</p> <p>It was important to understand the practicalities of Cluster governance because the Trust role changes. Governors become an ‘advisory committee’ and powers were centrally retained by SYMAT, with governors working like a sub-committee. Within a Trust there was more freedom for cross school working.</p> <p>There was no change to the unique character and ethos of separate schools.</p> <p>One leadership model provided clarity for student progression and strategic insights into the educational journey.</p> <p>It would be important to consider how to report into the governing body, as governors would be for both schools, e.g. how reporting is streamlined to hold leaders to account for strategy (SIP).</p> <p>Ofsted would still visit both schools separately and questions would be asked of governors about each site separately.</p> <p>The four main roles of Governors continue to be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hold leaders to account for strategy</li> </ol>

2. Visions and ethos for school
3. Finances - pupil premium funding, SEND funding, sports premium, covid catch up - to be aware how funds are spent across both schools.
4. Advocacy for children - pastoral care, policy development, etc - standard policies will come from the Trust and some others would be developed in-house from the Headteacher for the governors to ratify.

Mrs Dolben advised that partnership working provided opportunities to streamline.

It was reported that the fact that one school was a church school should not create concerns or barriers; they would need to be accountable to their SIAMS inspection. It was worth considering forming a sub-committee of foundation governors to address any church matters. It was important to ensure parent governors and staff from both schools were represented on the LGB.

Both schools would retain their unique characteristics. This was a merger of governing bodies not schools, creating a single leadership across two separate schools.

Reporting needed to be clear to define both schools and both schools must be separately identifiable in minuted meetings.

Mrs Dolben advised that consideration would need to be given to how to communicate the idea to parents by explaining the value of a cohesive, joined-up, future focussed view with more community involvement in the children's learning. The difference between a partnership and a merger would be explained, and how this partnership working would provide more support for children and families.

Families needed reassurance that they were still represented by governors. Governors must consider the additional responsibilities of being a governor for the cluster. Currently the governors and leadership have no influence on transitions, cluster working would create opportunities to influence that.

There was an opportunity to take a more strategic view of the curriculum offer as this becomes seamless across the cluster. The Headteacher confirmed that she was already working on this and leadership at all levels.

Other practicalities included the requirement for SEND Link governors - it was worth considering pairing up, the same could be useful for safeguarding governors. Practicalities of the Chair position would need to be resolved and alternative arrangements such as having a Chair and a co-Chair or Vice chair could help to spread the load.

It was advisable to meet to decide if this was a desired way of working, to define what the end point structure would look like. Approximately 12 governors was desirable, there was no legal requirement on numbers, the Trust will define this within their articles and terms of reference. Foundation governors would be the biggest single group because one of the schools was a church school.

The Archbishop will have to be consulted but is not involved day to day.

The Junior School had already agreed they would have SIAMS as sub-committee.

The cluster would need to be described as partnership/joint governing body.

Mrs Dolben said that experience confirmed partnership working was a preferable option, however the change may feel harder than it is.

Top tips included establishing a meeting pattern over the year with some meetings being held on each site; moving the meetings to different areas of the school; and taking learning walks to help all governors understand each school.

It could be expected that there would be a lot of repetition in reports and formats etc. The reports should become more streamlined - the thinking behind it being that the documents read like the two schools were one primary school. Any details that were only pertinent to one school in particular would be made clear in the documents.

The way forward was to decide when to start, colleagues on both sites were enthusiastic. Practically two meetings would run concurrently. The meetings would be minuted. Each individual LGB would be dissolved and then all would meet together straight after the close of those meetings to formulate as a formal partnership governing body for the cluster sites.

Mrs Dolben said she could supply model agenda and other documents to support the transition.

**ACTION: HT to obtain documents from Lesley Dolben. This refers to future documents once finalised. The initial formation of Governor Partnership will be shared by Lesley Dolben to Rachel Mullen.**

4. **Minutes of the FGB meetings held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022** - Previously distributed.  
The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record.

5. **Action Plan and Matters Arising not on the agenda**  
With reference to the Action Plan from the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022:

	Action	Update
1	Clerk to contact governors about outstanding Business Interest Forms.	C/F
2	Headteacher to update LGB on progress with LGR letting agreement	See minutes below
3	Headteacher to circulate Safeguarding Policy and review Behaviour Policy	On agenda. Behaviour policy under review with support from staff to ensure consistency across sites C/F to next appropriate meeting. This was dependent on return of AHT following his operation as he had taken the lead on this. Les Holmes has attended exclusions course.

4	<i>Headteacher to arrange for Zita Ferencz Clark to attend future LGB to discuss SEND</i>	Completed date to be confirmed
5	<i>Headteacher/Office Manager to circulate Link Governor feedback form</i>	Completed
6	<i>Tim Andrew/the Chair to circulate a link to online Link Governor Training</i>	C/F to next meeting

There were no other matters arising.

6.	<p><b><u>Executive Headteacher's Report</u></b> - Previously distributed.</p> <p>The Headteacher gave an overview and advised that the Performance management reviews were complete. The Assistant Headteacher was implementing mastery approach into planning and observations, staff were able to try out in lessons and feedback which enabled them to focus on what the team wanted to achieve. The process appeared fair, and all were happy with process.</p> <p>The Headteacher responded to a question from the governors advising that the Mastery approach enabled learning and progression at the pupils' own pace and embedded reasoning within the learning process. The basic level depended on needs of the class. This focus then addressed potential gaps.</p> <p>The Pupil voice would be undertaken, and the Parent consultation had been done with positive responses. The Headteacher's Performance Management targets three outcomes across both schools rather than three for each; targets including improving writing, curriculum entitlement and Leadership at all levels.</p> <p>The Headteacher advised that there was no change in pupil numbers.</p> <p>In response to a governors question the Headteacher advised that the school was undertaking various marketing activities including the school welcome open afternoon on Saturday, an advert had been placed on various websites and 11 families had expressed an interest to attend and would be offered an opportunity to visit the Junior school too. Six and Seven families came to similar previous events. Carley Ray offered to add the event to the school's social media. Les Holmes offered help with sales and marketing. The Headteacher advised it was positive that parents were coming to open day events from out of the catchment area and confirmed that the admissions deadline was January 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 and this was being promoted.</p> <p>No changes to report on SEND. There has been a challenging behaviour issue with an autistic child in Yr 1 and the Headteacher was trying to get as many external organisations involved as possible, to determine if mainstream provision was suitable for this child. Information was given about a particular incident; the SENCO was making relevant external organisations aware. A Staff member employed to support is coming after Christmas.</p> <p>Pastoral update from Carley Ray Yr 2 TA and ELSA. Currently working with Yr 2 pupils and the wellbeing worker was supporting two others. Two pupils were working on friendships and language associated with friendships, one was working on how to talk to adults and classroom behaviour, one had anxiety around being at school and working to time, one had anxiety about rushing work and having to re-do due to</p>
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	<p>errors, which created frustration. Work was being done on zones regulation to support in class work. Check ins were being undertaken on children who left the provision in September to ensure they continue to be supported.</p> <p>Staffing update – There had been some staff changes and there was a need to focus on CPD, with an emphasis on Autism. It was suggested that courses on <b>Mylo</b> were worth looking at especially the ‘working with challenging children’ course. Some but not all were free courses. A staff member had given notice to leave - the Headteacher will be looking to appoint someone for two terms.</p> <p>Crossing patrol colleague Mel Haynes, would be leaving at the end of term. Recruitment advertisements were going out to parents and social media, it was also suggested to place them in the local link and parish council newsletters.</p> <p>The Headteacher had identified a training need for Autism related CPD following performance management reviews and investing in HLTA for a TA who is a valuable asset to the school.</p> <p>Carley Ray advised that she would be interested in supporting the school with Safeguarding needs with relevant training provided.</p> <p>Policies update. Parents communications – the newsletter is going fortnightly with ‘need to know’ information to keep families in the loop without overloading them with information. The website was being updated to contain more information. <b>The Attendance Policy was agreed and confirmed.</b></p> <p>Extra curricular update - more activities had been added including arts &amp; crafts and health &amp; wellbeing.</p> <p>Wraparound update - The Headteacher was struggling to get hold of Vanessa Warne LGR manager, chasing review of letting agreement. No lettings agreements have been signed and the increase in cost of living is impacting the cost to the school.</p> <p><b>ACTION: The Chair of Governors to write a letter in support of urgent meeting.</b></p> <p>Friends of Bishopthorpe had raised funds to redecorate some of the classrooms, it had been agreed that these funds would be used towards the roof repairs to address small leaks. Discussions around other possible options to raise extra funds including Co-op and TESCO schemes.</p> <p><b>ACTION Office Manager to approach Co-op and TESCO to ascertain if school can be a charity cause.</b></p> <p>Invitations had been sent to governors inviting them to the Christmas Performances, and they were requested to advise the Office Manager which performance they would like to attend.</p>
7.	<p><b><u>Safeguarding, Exclusions, Behaviour and Attendance</u></b> - Previously distributed.</p> <p>Office Manager highlighted various points regarding attendance policy. It was explained that fines will be introduced. The meeting pack included the process for holiday requests and explanation of policies if attendance rating was ok and not requested too much it will not be subject to warning or fine. The standard letters were also included in the pack. Whilst the school received many requests, the price of</p>

	<p>taking a holiday out of time was not an acceptable reason for requesting. The timelines for registration and deadlines for late attendance were explained including the completion of appendix 4 which tracks late attendance and reasons per pupil. This was used effectively previously, pre covid, and prompts a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss reasons. The policy would go on the website, and it was the same as the Junior school were using.</p> <p><b>Governors received the SYMAT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2022-23; and SYMAT Safeguarding Statement 2022-23. It was noted this was subject to approval by the Board of Trustees on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022.</b></p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b><u>Finance and Resources</u></b> - Previously distributed.</p> <p><i>The Headteacher left the meeting.</i></p> <p>Office manager provided an update advising that the paperwork exercise for lockdown drill was complete, the practical would be in January to identify safe areas etc.</p> <p>HANS inspection report was circulated – some minor changes to working were required to tighten up. A Fire audit was scheduled for 27/02/2023.</p> <p>The new fence had been erected.</p> <p>Chains had been removed from blinds as they presented a choking hazard, all blinds are now pulldown type.</p> <p>Redecoration item had now changed to roof repairs.</p> <p>The Office Manager was showing contractors around for grounds maintenance contract to get better cost/service, it is noted that MITIE are the current providers, and they know school well and provide valuable service.</p> <p>NY County Caters have taken over, it had been a smooth transition, the Office manager praised the exceptional kitchen staff and advised they achieved a 99% five-star rating at their last H&amp;S inspection.</p> <p>An extract of EVERY H&amp;S process was shared to provide a sample of what is coming up - EVERY will be used for HR going forward SCR will migrate into EVERY by September 2023. The platform also contained free/low-cost staff training modules which were consistent across MAT.</p> <p>LGR already discussed, no progress in past 6 weeks.</p> <p>SS Systems monitoring may need to invest in a system upgrade due to consistent battery failures costing £100 each.</p> <p>The mechanism on the art cupboard door will be changed as there is potential for staff to be locked in and no fire alarm in the cupboard.</p> <p>The first aid risk assessment had been updated, there are no changes to report.</p> <p>One data breach was reported involving sharing of confidential data to the Chair of Friends - it was spotted immediately and returned to school. All dealt with and a double-checking process was now utilized for any documents handed over. Refresher training was also being undertaken.</p>

	<p>Finance as at end of August 2022 – The Forecast was shared with governors. There had been a delay to some income from mini budget leading to overestimate of £20k. GAG funding had been delayed and the Office Manager (OM) was unsure how this will come through. Some money to be transferred across from school fund for some small expenses.</p> <p><b><i>The Headteacher returned to the meeting.</i></b></p> <p>Npower billed at high rate back to March 2022 and the school had received an electricity bill in excess of £12k for charges back to March 2022. The OM was in discussion with Head of Finance at York City Council who has referred to Gary Christie to advise. It was believed that the change of name to academy means the school has lost a fixed rate deal and the delay is a result of delays on the part of Npower. Sam Bradford (SYMAT CFO) was involved. The YPO discount had been lost including other items.</p> <p>The Headteacher thanked the OM and commended her for her persistence with this frustrating situation.</p> <p>The OM confirmed that the budget is held with the Trust and government funding comes via trust and is out of schools control, figures reported by school into trust. Sam Bradford helped with adjustments required.</p> <p><b>Resolved: Approved the Final Accounts 2021-22.</b></p>
9.	<p><b><u>School Improvement</u></b></p> <p>There was nothing further reported under this item.</p>
10.	<p><b><u>Link Governor Visits / Governor Monitoring</u></b></p> <p>Governors were requested to email the office manager to advise when governors were intending to visit, stating where they would like to go and when and the OM would organize. Monday mornings were good for visits with Zita.</p> <p>The Chair had undertaken a walk around last week, and pupil comments were positive, lovely chats with girls in year 2.</p> <p>Please let OM know preferred dates for attendance at Christmas plays.</p>
11.	<p><b><u>Local Governor Matters</u></b> - Previously distributed.</p> <p>Governors received the LGB Training Record. The Headteacher advised this could be used for skill set audit going forward.</p>
12.	<p><b><u>Policies</u></b></p> <p>Attendance policy approved. South York MAT safeguarding policy adopted.</p>

13.	<p><b><u>Matters to report to the Board of Trustees</u></b></p> <p>The LGB was considering the possibility of merging the LGBs of Bishopthorpe Infant School and Archbishop of York Junior School.</p> <p>It was reported that the Headteacher had spoken with Ian Dolben, Chair of Trustees, to arrange for a Calendar of events to be supplied so that notice was given in good time.</p>
14.	<p><b><u>Matters delegated or reported from the Board of Trustees</u></b></p> <p>As part of a MAT-wide survey, LGBs had been invited to share their views on food standards and whether they were content with their school's offer. NY County Caters had taken over, it had been a smooth transition, the Office Manager praised the exceptional kitchen staff and advised they achieved a 99% five-star rating at their last H&amp;S inspection. The OM added special diets had been accommodated well and staff have been TUPEd across. It is felt to be an outstanding service.</p> <p>The free school meals census day had been done, only seven or eight pupils had not had the school meal. The school now has 12 free school meal children. Governors were advised that the benefit lasts for 6 years even if the parents no longer require them.</p> <p><b>Governors received the Local Governor Code of Conduct as approved by SYMAT board on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 for information.</b> The Chair reminded all to read to update annually.</p> <p>It was reported that the Board of Trustees were revising the Scheme of Delegation. A meeting of Chairs, via Zoom was being organised for January 2023. Ofsted visits in other Trust schools had gone well and the schools had been impressed with the support received from the MAT.</p> <p>The Trust were actively looking for further Trust schools to come aboard. The number of schools in a Trust was between 5 and 20, this trust has six and would welcome more additions if they were considered suitable.</p>
15.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
16.	<p><b><u>Date and of next and future LGB meetings</u></b></p> <p>7pm on 17th January 2023</p>

The meeting ended at 7 pm.

**These minutes were approved by the joint AYJS/BIS LGC at the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023**



**ACTION PLAN FROM THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY  
HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2022**

	Action	Item	Person	Date
1	<b>Obtain documents to support partnership transition from Lesley Dolben. <i>This refers to future documents once finalised. The initial formation of Governor Partnership will be shared by Lesley Dolben to Rachel Mullen.</i></b>	3	HT	ASAP
2	<b>The Chair of Governors to write a letter in support of urgent meeting.</b>	6	HT	ASAP
3	Approach Co-op and TESCO to ascertain if school can be a charity cause	6	Office Manager	ASAP

**Items for next Agenda**

1. Clerk to contact governors about outstanding Business Interest Forms.
2. Behaviour policy under review with support from staff to ensure consistency across sites.  
This was dependent on the return of AG (AHT) to school following his operation.
3. Tim Andrew/the Chair to circulate a link to online Link Governor Training.