



Archbishop of York's CE Junior School & Bishopthorpe Infant School Cluster
Minutes of the Local Governing committee meeting
held on 28th September 2023 at 6pm at Archbishop of York's Junior School/Bishopthorpe
Infant School

Present: Fiona Phillips
 Tim Andrew (Chair)
 Simon Sykes
 Emma Daker
 Carly Ray

In Attendance: Kerry Davies, Executive Headteacher
 Steve Lewis (CEO SYMAT) *left 18:48pm*
 Antonio Gargiulo (Assistant Headteacher – AYJS)
 Jenny Ingram (Assistant Headteacher – BIS)
 Tracey Richards (Assistant Headteacher – AYJS)
 Caroline Rigden (Governance Support Officer, Clerk)

		ACTION
1.	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Apologies were received, with consent, from Nicola Childs, Jane Flint, Rachel Mullen, Derek Angood, and Rev. Simon Bray. Ian Dolben, SYMAT Link Trustee also sent his apologies.</p> <p>Due to the number of absences, it was noted that the meeting was not quorate for the election of a Chair/Vice Chair.</p> <p>Fiona Philips would not be present for the whole meeting so it was agreed Tim Andrew would chair the meeting.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Election of Chair and Vice Chair</u></p> <p>It was noted that the meeting was not quorate so the election would be completed at the next LGC meeting.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Discussion with SYMAT CEO, Steve Lewis</u></p>	

The Chair thanked Steve Lewis for attending the meeting for a discussion around the understanding and options regarding future arrangements for the two schools within the AYJS-BIS cluster.

Steve Lewis talked about how, when Bishopthorpe Infant School joined the South York Multi Academy Trust, a holistic view had been taken on the education provision within the village of Bishopthorpe. There had been concerns about the drop in pupil numbers, finances, and having separate schools for infants and juniors. It had made sense to employ an Executive Headteacher to oversee the two distinct schools, while maintaining their own identities, with the merger of the governing committees to oversee both schools and single headteacher as a Cluster Local Governing Committee. The next step would be to merge the schools into a single entity without harming the ethos and community of either. Potential complications around the buildings, land, and the designation of a unified school, had been identified and would need to be fully investigated before the final step of a single school could be taken. The Trust did not want to rush into this but understood that as the process of merging the governance of the schools had already started that the community would expect the next steps to come soon after. Both York Diocese and the Local Authority, as well as the local community would be included in discussions going forward.

Steve Lewis also briefly touched on the plans for SYMAT, with the change in role of CEO, an additional Primary School Improvement Lead, and the plans for expanding the MAT. This would be covered in greater depth at a 'Town Hall' for governors across the Trust, to be held later in the academic year.

Steve Lewis then opened the discussion to the floor.

A governor asked if there had been any thought given to the phases in which a merger of the two schools could take place.

Steve Lewis replied that the school could become a single school over two sites, with plans to later move onto one site. The Regional School's Commissioner would need to be contacted to approve the change, but this could be actioned relatively soon.

A governor asked if there was the possibility of a nursery being added to the schools offer.

The Headteacher explained that this could complicate matters due to funding and staffing but it could be looked at.

Steve Lewis agreed that this was something that could be investigated.

A governor commented that the schools were very different and distinctly separate currently, so a name change could have a positive impact on the community's view of the changes.

The Headteacher agreed but made the point that it would be important to share the steps being taken with the local community, as well as parents, pupils, and staff.

A governor asked if the assumption that there was no rush was accurate, given the forecast deficits in both budgets and the overheads arising from running two sites.

There followed a discussion about the current budget needs and whether a timely merger of the sites would impact the budget in a positive way.

Steve Lewis noted that there was a desire to move the merger forward, but he was mindful of the cultural changes that that would bring, with the Junior School as a church school while the Infant School was a community school. He suggested that the Local Governing Committee set up a Working Party that he would also join to look at possible options and be pro-active in the process.

	<p>A governor asked if any estimated costs were known for the works required to bring the Junior School site to the necessary standard to support EYFS/KS1 provision.</p> <p>Steve Lewis and the Headteacher both replied that estimates for these costs were not known at the current time.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the staff governors and attendees had any questions or concerns that should be raised.</p> <p>Staff commented that they were aware of the budget constraints but that if a clear timeline was planned, staff could prepare themselves, pupils, and parents for any upcoming changes.</p> <p>A governor asked if there were limits on one of the sites being rented out for business purposes.</p> <p>Steve Lewis confirmed that the site indicated belonged to the Local Authority and had to be used for education purposes. He went on to explain possible options for the site in detail.</p> <p><i>Fiona Philips left at 18:25pm</i></p> <p>A governor asked whether the next steps would be taken by the Trust or by governors.</p> <p>Steve Lewis said that this would be a partnership and that as his role would change in January, that a working party that he was involved with would be the next step.</p> <p>The Chair commented that staff wanted to know what was being planned, and that giving them as much notice as possible for significant choices they would need to make for themselves needed to be a priority. Governors would rather decisions for the schools were taken based on options enabled by informed and timely planning rather than budget constraints left unaddressed.</p> <p>The Headteacher added that the budget and forecasts were clear about the need for staff reduction while keeping full classes and the right teacher to pupil ratios.</p> <p>A governor asked if, long term, was one of the sites adequate to house a whole school, as there were already some access and parking concerns, as well as whether the current building would provide enough facilities, particularly toilets.</p> <p>The Headteacher replied that building work would be inevitable, as there would need to be additional toilets, outdoor space, and other changes to adjust to a wider age range of pupils.</p> <p>Steve Lewis added that there would be budget issues with this, as there was no money available currently for this type of work within the Trust. The schools and SYMAT were responsible to the local community for the education of pupils and would investigate possible funding for work of this kind once it was agreed.</p> <p>Steve Lewis explained that it was important that governors and the schools were involved in every step of the planning. It was not going to be something the Trust decided would happen. Governors would be supported to ensure that changes happened at the right time, with the right space, and that they looked at all the opportunities that this process could bring to the future education of pupils and for the local community.</p> <p><i>Steve Lewis left the meeting and Kerry Davies stepped out at 18:48.</i></p>	
5.	<p><u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th June 2023</u></p> <p><i>Previously distributed</i></p> <p>Governors agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2023 were a true and accurate</p>	

record of the meeting and were duly approved.

5.1 Action Plan:

	Action	Update
1.	Clerk to make sure Carole Pearce added as an organiser for next year to enable uploading of documents	Complete

5.2 Matters Arising not elsewhere on the agenda:

It was noted that the following response was received from the Trust board about the change in PAN (Published Admission Numbers).

'Reply Received from Trust Board

12.3 Archbishop of York Junior School and Bishopthorpe Infant School

Correspondence received and was shared prior to meeting.

(i) Proposal for PAN reduction at BIS/ AYJS

The joint governing body partnership at BIS and AYJS agreed to commence a consultation on reducing the PAN at BIS to 30 from Sept 2025 and AYJS to 45 from Sept 2025.

The CEO explained that this decision required agreement from the Trustees in order to commence the consultation in September 2023 and hit the September 2025 intake.

Resolved: Trustees agreed to the reduction of the PAN at BIS/ AYJS.'

Kerry Davies and Fiona Philips returned at 18:50

6. **Headteacher's Report**

Previously distributed: SOAP for AYJS, SOAP for BIS

The Chair explained that, going forward, the Headteacher would provide a written report to governors once a term, to help reduce workload.

The Headteacher gave a verbal update to governors.

The training day at the start of term had been successful, covering safeguarding and ensuring that all staff had completed their training. The new class structures were in place and working well. The changes to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had settled into place. Staff had risen to the challenges of the new term but there was a concern about their wellbeing with the financial challenges ahead. The parental body had been supportive of the changes to class structures.

Pastoral needs were currently calm, with effective work to support pupils and work with external agencies continuing where needed. Early Help was being accessed to support some families, with Stephanie Keenan-Logue attendance lead at City of York Council, being particularly helpful. Alternative Provision was being explored for pupils who needed it

Attendance was good with 97% at AYJS and 98% at BIS.

The new Teaching Assistants had settled in well but had support provided to ensure they could fulfil all aspect of their roles. David Lightfoot, HR at SYMAT, had talked to support staff about their contracts and moving across both schools. With some staff already working across both schools, this was understood and well received that they may be deployed at either school.

	<p>Staff meetings had been planned out and staff were aware of what was happening and when. CPD (Continuing Professional Development) opportunities had been offered of adaptive teaching courses. There were also two NPQ (national Professional Qualification) courses being undertaken.</p> <p>There was a meeting planned with Celia Wilson, Diocese Adviser, about being prepared for SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools), and the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) will be looked at in detail.</p> <p>IT work at AYJS was supposed to have happened to support the move from the current provider to Fulford. This had been delayed.</p> <p>The request for the change in PAN had been sent to the Local Authority after having been agreed by SYMAT.</p> <p>There had been issues with the boundary at BIS during the summer holidays, with a hedge being removed by a resident. There had also been emails received about trees and ivy.</p> <p>Caroline Hancy, PSIL (Primary School Improvement Lead) had visited to talk about curriculum, results and the SIP (School Improvement Plan). Discussion was had about sharing good practice within the Trust, the importance of resilience, and Zones of Regulation. Zones of Regulation will be rolled out at both schools to ensure consistency and training will be with staff from both schools.</p> <p>The Chair explained that the SOAP for each school had been provided for governor's information before they were shared with the MAT.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>National Test Results 2022-3</u> <i>Previously distributed: Data Summary</i></p> <p>The Headteacher gave an overview of the results data.</p> <p>There was a positive picture from the results. These had been colour-coded to show if the results had been in line or above the previous year's results. There had been significant development in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), with the strong cohort now in a mixed split with the incoming EYFS cohort. It was interesting to watch the dynamics of mixed classes. It had been split for the right levels for Phonics, which were assessed at the end of Y1. Little Wandle Phonics Scheme was working well, with parental engagement. There had also been some interventions for pupils in Y3 using Little Wandle</p> <p><i>A governor commented that the results were excellent and should be celebrated.</i></p> <p><i>A governor asked for clarification of the results in writing, which were lower than reading and maths.</i> The Headteacher replied that writing had been kept on the School Improvement Plan as covid continued to have an impact. Stamina had been lost and some pupils had forgotten basic skills. KS1 and KS2 both performed well, however BIS had produced more evidence to support the assessments. Emma Daker, staff governor, added that spelling and early language development had also been a concern post covid. Pupils would use words they could spell rather than extended vocabulary they already used in speech. A new scheme had been purchased to help support pupils learn investigative skills looking at root words and how the rules would embed. It would help to build foundation blocks and make pupils aware of what would be coming next.</p> <p><i>A governor asked whether the drop in pupils achieving greater depth at KS1 was a concern.</i> Antonino Gargiulo, Assistant Headteacher, explained that as well as the impact from covid, where some pupils had been further behind than expected, the cohort had had a higher level of needs within it, which had meant more time and work had happened to support them. The current Y6 cohort was a stronger one.</p>	

	<p>The Headteacher added that the results for KS1 had been good. There were several new schemes being used that would make a difference and improve future results.</p> <p>A governor asked if the percentage change was as significant as it looked due to it being a smaller cohort.</p> <p>The Headteacher agreed that although that could make a difference there had been issues with a lack of evidence to show progression so ensuring more evidence was gathered was a change that would help resolve this issue.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>School Improvement Plan: Update on progress in 2022/23 and target 2023/24 objectives</u> <i>Previously distributed: Curriculum Development, School Priorities 2023-24</i></p> <p>The Headteacher explained that the School Priorities Summary had set the scene for the future and linked with both governor link roles and the School Improvement Plan. Quality of Education would continue to focus on developing the curriculum and improving writing outcomes, with further work planned to raise achievement. Behaviour would focus on the attendance rate and look at the narrative behind the figures while carefully monitoring absence rates. Personal Development would look at resilience with the introduction of Zones of Regulation. Parents would be offered a workshop to share the vocabulary was shared to ensure consistency between school and home. Leadership and Management would have several areas to focus on but wellbeing for staff was key, encouraging thought around directed time and ensuring it was considered when planning for the future of the schools.</p> <p>A governor asked if SIAMS had been included in the priorities, why had Ofsted not been.</p> <p>The Headteacher replied that Ofsted was always part of the planning so did not form a priority. Instead, it was important to look at how well the schools delivered for pupils.</p> <p>A governor asked if there was a way that governors could be prepared for an Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>The Headteacher explained that effective regular communication between SLT and governors was key, as were link governor roles and visits.</p> <p>Antonino Gargiulo, Assistant Headteacher, shared key points from the report from Rob Pye, School Improvement Partner, following his visit in July. There had been discussion around the role the Assistant Headteacher had taken on and what were the expected aims of the curriculum development. An introduction to the planned work had been shared with staff on the Training Day at the start of term looking at the progression of skills year to year, with a holistic overview that covered skill, knowledge, and vocabulary, using small chunks, recall, and what comes next.</p> <p>This was a large undertaking, to cover two schools who had had very separate and distinct curriculums, bringing them together so that staff from each school would be able to understand where their teaching sat within a child’s educational journey.</p> <p>Staff from both schools were working in teams to develop a subject’s curriculum under a subject leader. This structure would enable individual staff members to work on several different subjects, using their experiences and knowledge to help share how skills developed and continued through both key stages as well as developing a working relationship with other staff working with a different age group. It encouraged the teams to think about resources they used and if these could be of benefit to others.</p> <p>Recent staff meetings had had time dedicated to this work and staff had been working collaboratively, developing a professional relationship as well as shaping the curriculum. Staff had been encouraged to think about the schools’ ethos and how they fit together, the village and community around the</p>	

	<p>schools, as well as the wealth of experiences that could be found nearby in York.</p> <p>The next steps would be to complete progression documents for four subjects, which would then be shared with all staff for them to incorporate into their teaching. Monitoring would occur during the implementation of the new curriculum, using pupil voice and learning walks to assess how it was working and the impact seen. Then the process would be repeated for more subjects later in the year.</p> <p><i>A governor commented that the visit report had been very detailed and asked how long the curriculum review was expected to take and how future phases were to be organised.</i></p> <p>Antonino Gargiulo replied that there were four subjects in phase one, DT and Art, Geography and History, Computing, and Literacy.</p> <p>Tracey Richards, Assistant Headteacher, added that it was good to see the big picture and develop a progressive model so pupils could make links and create a bank of resources they could draw on year on year.</p> <p>The Headteacher shared that the new History curriculum had been rolled out across KS2 and was working well. Staff were taking ownership of the curriculum and had been excited by the achievements so far.</p> <p><i>A governor asked how the changes to a curriculum would affect the quality of education for pupils.</i></p> <p>The Headteacher reminded governors that the previous year had had disjointed curriculums, which while they were fit for purpose had not necessarily been joined up across the two schools. An improvement had already been seen, but they were aware that the changes were not yet embedded. Outcomes were already good but having a curriculum that spanned both schools would help track progress and help pupils to build on previous work.</p> <p>Carly Ray, staff governor, added that the previous curriculum had not been poor, just different and now staff were looking at how the expectations for pupils went all the way up the school. Staff now knew what happened in KS1 and how it linked into KS2.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Antonino Gargiulo for his update and commented that it was good to see staff working closely together over both schools.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Link Governor allocations and approach for the year</u></p> <p><i>Previously distributed: Proposed link governor, Proposed link governor Assignment</i></p> <p>The Chair shared that a request had been sent out to governors before the meeting to help gather the information to assign roles to governors to cover link roles. Tim Andrew would be Safeguarding/ LAC (Looked After Children) link governor, with Rachel Mullen continuing as SEND link and Simon Sykes covering on Health and Safety. There had been new roles added to cover Schools Improvement Plan and Christian Distinctiveness, which would be covered by groups of governors. This would be a good way to help induct new governors joining the CGC of what was happening in the school and provide support for them engaging in initial link governor activity.</p> <p><i>A governor asked if the working party for the schools' merger should be included in this.</i></p> <p>The Chair agreed that this would be a good idea.</p> <p>There had been discussion over how often governors should be visiting the settings and when these should be, which resulted in the suggestion that termly visits would be most appropriate, and they were to be arranged with the relevant Staff Link. Training was available for some link roles from City of York Council (CYC) and through the NGA Learning Link.</p>	

	<p>A governor commented that the allocation did not seem to be confirmed for all governors.</p> <p>The Chair replied that some governors had not been able to respond in time for the meeting, and their nominal allocation would need to be confirmed with them. The hope was all governors would be involved with link governor activity, whether in groups or single, named person roles. Action plans from the SIP could provide points of focus and use the link work to triangulate the outcomes and to ensure it is working as expected and monitored.</p> <p>ACTION: Tim Andrew to contact governors about the next steps for link visits.</p>	TA
10.	<p><u>Child protection/Safeguarding</u></p> <p>The Headteacher gave a verbal update that there were no new incidents but there was an ongoing case.</p> <p>Tim Andrew had shared his link visit with regard to safeguarding, for governor’s information. As part of their role governors should have read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023. A presentation from The Key had been shared for governors to look and the NGA Learning Link training on safeguarding was recommended for governors to complete.</p> <p>ACTION: Headteacher to email a form for governors to complete and return to Ros Branton to confirm they had completed the reading of KCSIE 2023.</p>	HT/ALL GOVS
11.	<p><u>Governor Matters</u></p> <p>The Chair explained the structure for the Pay and Appeals Committees. He proposed that four governors be identified for each committee, excluding staff governors, so that the minimum of three governors would be met with a spare person available if required. This would be agreed offline due to governor absence at the meeting.</p> <p>The Headteacher informed governors that SYMAT had given the same increment increase for support staff’s pay.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that it might be useful to complete a self-evaluation around the new format of the cluster governing committee. A previous evaluation had been completed, developed by the MAT, but governors were unsure if anything had come from it.</p> <p>The Headteacher added that a staff survey from SYMAT would be taking place on 2nd October.</p> <p>Membership: There was one foundation vacancy, with two people’s terms ending during the year. Derek Angood would be asked if he was going to continue as a governor (Trust appointed). Rachel Mullen’s term would be ending in March (Trust appointed), but she hoped to extend this to the end of the academic year before stepping down. Fiona Phillips also said that she would be standing down from the governing committee at the end of the year (Parent governor). A brief discussion followed about timings and whether the parent governor vacancy had to be filled with a parent from a specific school. This would be discussed again later in the year along with the size of the committee considering the vacancies that there were currently.</p> <p>Training: The Chair reminded governors that training was available from CYC and through NGA Learning Link.</p>	

<p>12.</p>	<p><u>Matters delegated from the Board of Trustees</u> <i>Previously distributed: Scheme of delegation</i></p> <p>There was a brief chat around the discussion that had been held earlier with Steve Lewis. It was agreed that an invitation could be extended to Trustees around the vision for the merger once the working party was formed. Governors wanted to be proactive in the approach to the merger planning.</p>	
<p>13.</p>	<p><u>Matters to report to the Board of Trustees</u></p> <p>The committee would like to invite Ian Dolben and Ian Warmen to their next committee meeting on 23rd November to discuss the new Scheme of Delegation, the vision for LGC/CGCs and what effective two-way communication between the schools and MAT looks like.</p>	
<p>14.</p>	<p><u>Dates of next meetings</u></p> <p>Pay Committee: 19th October 2023, time to be confirmed with attendees.</p> <p>23rd November 2023 to be held at Bishopthorpe Infant School. 18th January 2024 29th February 2024 25th April 2024 20th June 2024</p>	
<p>15.</p>	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>A standing invitation to join an online weekly prayer group on Monday mornings had been extended from Romy Dunn to all governors. Tracey Richards would send out the link to governors.</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>	

Meeting closed 20:16pm

Action plan from meeting held on 28th September 2023

	Action	Item	Person	Date
1.	Tim Andrew to contact governors about the next steps for link visits.	9	Tim Andrew	By next meeting
2.	Headteacher to email a form for governors to complete and return to Ros Branton to confirm they had completed the reading of KCSIE 2023.	10	Headteacher/All Governors	ASAP

Items for future agenda