

# Meadowside Primary School

Headteacher :Mrs J Garnham  
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## Full Governing Body Minutes

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 6pm (remotely via Zoom)

Governors	Role	Present ✓
Josie Garnham (JGm)	Headteacher (Ex-Officio)	✓
Angela Pratt (AP)	Chair of Governors & Co-opted Governor	✓
Janet Goodliffe (JGe)	Vice-Chair of Governors & Co-opted Governor	✓
Ashley Clarkson (AC)	Co-opted Governor	✓
Chris Smith-Haynes (CSH)	Co-opted Governor	✓
Kirsty Blake (KB)	Parent Governor	✓
Kim Mount (KM)	Parent Governor	✓
Sarah Hammond (SH)	Staff Governor	✓
Mia Lewis (ML)	Associate Member	✓
Non-governors in attendance	Role	
Linda O'Sullivan (LO)	Clerk (Syzygy Clerking Services)	✓

The meeting was quorate

### 1. Welcome and Apologies for absence:

**Welcome:** Angela P welcomed governors to the meeting. They were reminded that any items discussed during the meeting were to remain confidential until the draft minutes had been approved by the Governing Body. Issues which need to be kept confidential will not be included in the public minutes but will be recorded separately.

**Apologies:** The following apologies were given and accepted: None.

**Our values: - Respect Responsibility Reflection Resilience**



## 2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests (this meeting):

Governors were invited to declare any pecuniary, non-pecuniary, personal, or prejudicial interest they may have in any items on the agenda for this meeting. None were made.

## 3. Minutes from previous Full Governing Body meeting (16<sup>th</sup> November 2020)

The Minutes, of the previous meeting had been circulated in advance. Governors reviewed the Minutes, page by page and they were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. A copy will be signed by Angela P for the file.

## 4. Matters arising and Action Log update:

The Action Log was discussed and actions the were updated.

## 5. Chair's Report:

Angela P continues to regularly meet with Josie G and Mia L, often Janet G attends these meetings too. The last few weeks have been particularly challenging for schools. At the beginning of the spring term the government announced that once again schools would be closing for all pupils, with the exception of critical worker children and vulnerable children.

It was agreed that the school would close for two days on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of January in order to update the Covid-19 risk assessment; make arrangements for pupils who are entitled to a school place and make sure staff were well-prepared to move to remote learning for other pupils at home from Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January.

The school is now offering high-quality on-site learning and remote learning, including live lessons to pupils during this third lockdown. This is a testament to the excellent work completed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and staff who should be admired for their dedication and teamwork which has allowed the school to continue to operate under very challenging circumstances. It is uncertain how long schools will remain closed, this could be until February half-term, or possibly Easter.

## 6. Headteacher's Update

A number of documents discussed under this item will be shared on GovernorHub after the meeting.

### School Closure:

Josie G advised that schools were given very little notice of the current closure; the announcement was made at 8pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January. This was a training day at Meadowside which was fortunate, had this not been the case pupils would already have returned. The Covid-19 risk assessment was updated and shared with staff; it is of the utmost importance that staff have a full overview of this document and know that their safety and wellbeing is the school's top priority.

### Training Day:

The 4<sup>th</sup> of January was the third training day of the year and was focused on supporting staff wellbeing. The school is also focused on improving the profile of the school in the wider community to increase pupil numbers; the website is ready to update, there will be a promotional video, and this will be an excellent 'first window' to the school for any prospective parents. In the afternoon staff worked in teams to look at the curriculum milestones via MS Teams.

### Number of pupils on roll:

The current number of pupils on roll is 351 and a further 25 children attend the Buttercups Nursery on site.

### **Critical Worker Children & Vulnerable Children:**

The school is closely monitoring the number of pupils attending school each day. Last week there were around 32.5% of pupils in school; this has risen to 38% this week. The increase is linked to vulnerable children. This is much higher than in the previous lockdown, and a concern for staff health and well-being.

On Wednesday Josie G sent a letter to all critical worker parents asking them to think about how their children could remain at home, this letter made it clear that every parent was required to respond. The responses have been reviewed and only 8 pupil places could have been challenged for a place. The school has decided to not challenge these 8 places; it likely would have impacted the relationship between school and home. Josie G is satisfied that the letter was a strong message to parents when considering if they need a school place, in the future. The school is assuming that more the number of vulnerable pupils who need a school place is likely to continue to rise.

A questionnaire has been sent to all parents today focused on remote learning and what is working well. Parents understand that the school, like all schools, is on a journey with its remote learning offer and this will evolve and improve.

### **Access to remote learning at home:**

The school has been allocated 30 Chromebooks by the Department for Education (DfE), these have not arrived yet. The school is chasing this allocation and has applied for further Chromebooks. The school Chromebooks cannot be lent out to pupils because they are leased.

### **Staffing:**

An up-to-date overview of the current staffing structure was circulated in advance of the meeting. The long-term supply teacher in Year 6 has settled in really well and the school is very pleased with this appointment. They are being mentored by Josie G. They have completed their safeguarding training today and are contracted until Easter, although this may be extended to the summer term. A substantive appointment for the Year 6 teaching post will commence when lockdown ends. The school has a newly qualified teacher who is continuing their induction.

### **Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Pupils:**

Sarah H gave a brief overview of the additional support in place for pupils with SEND, during the lockdown. The school has sent out Well-being Booklets. Teachers have been asked to provide an overview of engagement with remote learning for pupils who are in the following cohorts: Pupil Premium (PP); Free-School Meals (FSMs); SEND; English as an Additional Language (EAL) and those identified as vulnerable for other reasons. The school will use this data to ensure pupils are accessing remote learning and contact families where this is not the case to see if they need additional support or devices. A small number of pupils are being provided with paper-based learning packs.

Support from external agencies is continuing. For example, Speech & Language support is being completed remotely via MS Teams, and the school has had some very positive feedback from parents. Virtual meetings are going ahead with professionals, and social services, these meetings are all online. The Inclusion Team in school meet every week.

Teaching Assistants (TAs) have been extremely supportive and are also delivering some live lessons, this is something that many teachers can find daunting. They have also put together activities that can be

## **3**

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completed by pupils at home, and these are being sent out. TAs are sourcing specific work that is differentiated to the needs of specific pupils to ensure their learning is accessible.

The school has a list of pupils who it has identified as vulnerable and staff are contacting families to ensure they are safe, offer technical help with devices, or support with learning and ensure remote learning is accessible to them. Staff are also creating a list of pupils with limited technology at home, and the information from the questionnaire sent out today will be used to add to this list. Staff are providing step by step guidance to parents to support their children. The school has now set up a dedicated email address for parents to use if they have technical issues with devices or their internet connection at home.

The school has reviewed the SEND page on the school website and has updated the SEND Statement with the new Covid-19 Addendum. Pupils with additional vulnerabilities and who are supported by Social Services through a Child in Need (CIN) plan, a Child Protection (CP) plan or an Early Help Assessment (EHA), or who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) have all been offered school places.

There will be regular weekly check-ins for pupils at home. Sarah H and Special Educational Needs & Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) have recently completed a training course on self-harm and TAs are completing a range of other courses linked to SEND and other issues that may arise or affect pupils during the pandemic and beyond; staff are being upskilled in key areas to ensure pupils are well-supported.

Two pupils use Makaton which is a unique language programme that uses symbols, signs, and speech to enable people to communicate. The school is creating folders of useful everyday things linked to this programme.

#### **Monitoring:**

Monitoring was limited in the autumn term; the school was focused on wellbeing. The SLT has continued to complete book monitoring. The school arranged an opportunity for StJohn the school's independent School Improvement Partner (SIP), to meet with Subject Leaders in the autumn term. They discussed deep dives and what these would entail, and what evidence should be available. They also discussed PHSE, PE and RE and this was an excellent opportunity for staff to get information from StJohn. There was not an opportunity to visit lessons, but the visit was useful. Janet G attended the feedback sessions with the SIP, and this was very positive, he was very complimentary about staff and their strengths.

#### **Parent / Teacher Association (PTA):**

The Chair of the PTA has had some challenges with Covid-19, and it has now been agreed that PTA meetings will be suspended until after the lockdown. The school will continue to publish its Meadowside Matters newsletter regularly, this is an excellent way to link the school community.

#### **Future Short-term Developments:**

The school has agreed that when restrictions in schools are lifted they will continue to ask pupils to attend school in their PE kit, on PE days. This has been really successful during lockdown and has reduced changing time that can be better used for physical activities and sport. The school will agree a more formal PE kit so that pupils all look smart and recognisable as Meadowside pupils. This is being updated now ready for September 2021. It will include a black hoodie which are very accessible. The school is still working on the Library refurbishments, including the Reading Zones and the School Garden. Josie G thanked governors for their continuing support, the SLT appreciate being able to talk to governors when needed.

*Q – Is there any indication of any pupils who are not accessing remote learning.*

A – Staff can see which pupils are, or are not, joining the morning Meet & Greet sessions and are compiling an overview of engagement by reviewing the work being submitted. Staff will be phoning every pupil this week to check on wellbeing, but this will also be an opportunity to discuss remote learning in terms of access and engagement. Any on-going issues around a lack of engagement will be passed on to senior staff as required. The school will support parents with technical issues etc. Staff feel engagement is much higher than in the first lockdown. Remote learning has improved, it now includes live lessons, and this has increased engagement.

The school has had some fantastic feedback from parents about class teachers; at the beginning of term teachers were really stressed about a small number of parents who were being very negative on social media, about the remote learning being offered at the school. Staff have gone above and beyond in their lesson planning and delivery; parents are recognising the effort staff are putting in.

Staff are not offering live lessons all day, this is simply is not feasible, and would not reflect usual practice. Other headteachers, including those in outstanding schools, have a very similar remote learning offer to Meadowside. Parents have agreed there is more variety to learning this time, and this is better and more engaging. Governors agreed staff should be commended, they are doing an excellent job. Parent governors agreed that the remote learning now is much improved from the first lockdown, and staff are addressing technical issues very quickly. There is a fine balance to getting the remote learning offer right for Meadowside pupils, two live lessons a day are providing a good balance for primary aged pupils, more than this would put too much pressure on parents. Governors thanked the school for sending out the survey, the questions were really good, and the data will be interesting and useful.

*Q – The school has updated its Covid-19 Risk Assessment but has this been externally validated.*

A – Yes, the risk assessment was reviewed and agreed as fit for purpose by the school's Health & Safety advisors in the autumn term. It will be submitted to them again. The Local Authority (LA) have not requested a copy of the updated document.

*Action Point – Send the updated Covid-19 risk assessment to the LA for their review and validation.*

There was a full staffing meeting on Thursday, with the agenda focused on remote learning. This meeting was an opportunity for all staff to voice and share any concerns. Staff talked about their experiences during the week; everyone agreed that the start of the week was extremely challenging, but issues have started to settle down as everyone becomes more familiar with the technology, the systems, and the processes. Staff are very positive and are working collaboratively as a team, they all know this is something that the school has to do to support pupils. This cohesive response from staff, to something so challenging is something the school may not have had a couple of years ago. Staff know their wellbeing is the school's priority.

## **7. Safeguarding**

Governors all completed in-house safeguarding training this evening prior to the meeting. (Please see training slides for further details).

Staff are completing lots of inclusion work to safeguard children. The safeguarding policy now includes the new Covid-19 addendum from the LA and the school is reporting any positive Covid-19 cases.

## 8. Recovery Plan

The school's Recovery Plan was discussed in detail at the Quality of Education Committee meeting last week. Questions were invited. Governors agreed the plan is comprehensive, but this work is now on hold while the school is in lockdown again. Staff cannot manage remote learning, learning in school and catch-up work at the same time. Remote learning must take priority. Catch-up work will begin again when schools reopen. The focus will be on the same identified cohort, to fill the gaps already identified. This will be completed through face-to-face tutoring after school, the plans for this work are all in place.

## 9. Covid-19 & Lockdown Update

Covid-19 & the current lockdown was discussed under Item 6 this evening. One small amendment on page 5 of the Remote Education Offer document will be made, this was noted by Josie G. This document will be published on the school website by the 25<sup>th</sup> of January deadline. Governors were asked to review the document and pose any further questions directly to Josie G via email.

## 10. Governance

### Reports from Committees:

#### Quality of Education Committee:

The Quality of Education committee met last week. The Minutes are available on GovernorHub. Governors discussed the progress data. Donna Astley attended the meeting and answered a number of questions that provided a detailed analysis of this data. This is recorded on the Minutes. It is very difficult to produce data in the current circumstances, and every school is in the same position. Governors reviewed staffing and ratified a number of policies.

#### Finance & Resources Committee

The Finance & Resources Committee last met on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2020. They reviewed the budget and the estimated carry-forward. The school has many have additional costs linked to Covid-19 but is in a better financial position.

The Buttercups Nursery is operating well, and numbers are increasing. Governors discussed marketing; pupil numbers have a massive impact on school finance. The School Business Manager (SBM) provided an analysis of pupils in the nursery, who then transfer to the school. This on-site nursery provision is massively important for future school numbers, the majority of children do transfer to Meadowside.

The school needs to continue to build its profile in the community, and it was agreed the governing body should maintain a keen focus on marketing throughout the year. The next F&R committee meeting is on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February at 5pm.

#### Governor Skills Audit:

Governors recently completed the National Governance Association (NGA) Governor Skills Audit. The overview of scores, including an average score for each question, was shared in advance of the meeting and is available on GovernorHub. Generally, the data is good and shows the governing body has a good level of skills across most key areas. Financial efficiency is perhaps an area that governors feel less confident about and this is something that can be considered when new governors are recruited. Governors have a wide range of skills, experience, and knowledge. They all agreed this will be a useful tool to reference for future appointments, the governing body needs to strengthen its knowledge of school finance and H&S.

Angela P advised the governing body does now have two prospective governors. She gave a brief overview of these candidates and the experience they would bring. Janet G has also posted the current governor vacancies with Governors for Schools.

One candidate has experience in H&S which is an area the governing body needs to strengthen. Angela P has spoken to them and they have indicated they would be willing to take on the H&S monitoring role and join the F&R committee. Angela P has invited them to attend the next FGB meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March as an observer.

The second candidate is an ex-headteacher, they are very keen and enthusiastic. They have retired and so would have time to dedicate to the role. Their experience as a headteacher would bring valuable knowledge and skills to the governing body. Josie G will invite them to the next FGB meeting as an observer too.

Governors agreed they should be mindful that the governing body should represent the same diversity in the school and the community, this is something that needs to be borne in mind for future appointments.

Janet G advised the governing body is still looking for a number of new governors. She has been thinking about how staff might help identify any prospective candidates from the parent body, or further afield in the community. They may have a wider network of contacts. She has penned a draft letter, and this was shared at the Q of E meeting last week. It outlines what skills, experience, interests, and knowledge would be useful in any prospective governor.

*Action Point – Send the letter about governor vacancies to all staff.*

#### **Governor Vacancies and terms of office ending soon:**

Yassine Elhasbaoui has resigned from the governing body, he has an increased workload in his new job role and can no longer contribute to the governing body in the way that he would wish. He has been a long-serving member of the governing body at this school and this should be recognised. A card and token of appreciation will be sent.

Governors agreed to make an annual £10 contribution to Angela P. This fund can then be used in the future for cards and gifts, should anyone else resign while the current restrictions are in place, and governors continue to meet remotely.

### **11. Policies for ratification**

#### **Behaviour Policy:**

The Behaviour Policy has been updated to include pupil behaviour outside of the school, while they are still uniform. ***Governors unanimously approved this policy.***

#### **Admissions Policy:**

This is a LA policy. ***Governors unanimously approved this policy.***

#### **Reading & Therapy Dog Policy:**

The review date at the bottom will be changed from 'reviewed' to 'review' ***Governors unanimously approved this policy.***

**Intimate Care & Toileting Policy:**

**Governors unanimously approved this policy.**

**Restrictive Intervention & Positive Handling Policy:**

**Governors unanimously approved this policy.**

**Remote Education Offer document January 2021.**

This document was discussed and reviewed earlier in the meeting this evening. **Governors unanimously approved this document.**

**Safeguarding Policy:**

A number of comments from governors prior to the meeting will be actioned. Any further comments should be made directly to Josie G via email. The policy now includes version 2 of the Covid-19 addendum. Governors agreed the policy needs to make really clear to all stakeholders how any positive cases should be reported. **Governors unanimously approved this policy.**

*Action Point - Review the safeguarding policy and make the agreed changes. Ensure that the policy make really clear to all stakeholders how any positive cases should be reported.*

**Remote Learning & 'Video' Teaching Acceptable Use Policy for Parents/Carers and Pupils:**

Governors asked that the wording between guidance and policy is stabilised, the policy currently refers both. It was agreed the wording should be changed to 'policy'.

*Q - The expectation is that children will all attend remote learning through Googles Classrooms, but the school is not enforcing this at the moment, should this be tweaked, and are pupils able to log on, or register via an alternative means, on in a different way, and not just Google Meets. For example, a parent could call in, or email to say their child cannot attend.*

*A – Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) are saying that there is an obligation for children to attend remote learning, Chris S-H advised this guidance is currently being updated and schools should receive further information very soon. The school will need to check the national and LA guidance against the policy to ensure it is compliant. **Governors unanimously approved this policy, with the agreed amendments.***

*Action Point – Cross-reference the Remote Learning & 'Video' Teaching Acceptable Use Policy for Parents/Carers and Pupils to ensure it is in line with national and local advice and guidance.*

**12. Identification of Confidential Items:**

None to be reported this evening.

**13. A.O.B:**

**Parental feedback opportunities to the FGB:**

Kirsty B advised there was a discussion at the recent Quality of Education committee meeting about building stronger links between the governing body and parents. At the beginning of term there were some negative comments on social media, and the discussion was around how the governing body could give parents a more formal platform to air any views and hopefully reduce these types of comments.

The school is developing a school Facebook Page, but any social media needs to be regularly monitored. The page would have to be locked so that the school is the only person who can post. The school could

agree to review and approve comments but not allow posts. There is a concern that parents would have an unrealistic expectation that comments should be immediately responded to, and this is not possible. Other schools have a range of social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, etc.

Governors agreed engagement is being improved through the year group emails. Parental engagement needs to be part of the school's marketing strategy.

Josie G will be relaunching coffee mornings with specific topics after the current restrictions are lifted and governors can be invited to attend; hopefully, people may want to be more social after lockdown. Governors can also attend parent evenings to increase their links with parents when these return to face-to-face meetings. This would be an opportunity to be more visible and to engage directly with parents. Governors agreed this had been a useful discussion, communication between parents and the school is now better through the new email addresses, and there are a range of opportunities for governors to engage with parents after the current lockdown is lifted. This will be discussed further in future F&R committee meetings under Parental Engagement and Marketing.

**Risk Management Plan / Risk Register:**

Ashley C advised the governing body should consider creating a Risk Register; this is a document that would track any identified risks that might prevent the business of the school. This could be used to challenge the SLT on these key risks.

Ashley C suggested a number of possible risks, and there was a general discussion on a number of other possible risks. These included, Covid-19, Pupil Numbers, Succession Planning for the SLT, Changing Government Policy, Teacher Recruitment and Retention, Wellbeing, Social Media, Ofsted Grading, Financial Performance, and Quality of Teaching and Outcomes. These could all be picked up by committees and reported back at FGB meetings.

This type of document would ensure the governing body is testing risks, it is a document that is normally developed by the SLT alongside the strategic plan. Angela P and Josie G have discussed this idea today and agree it is a good idea, the governing body and school will need to develop the key risks and share a proposed list.

*Action Point – Add Risk Register to the next FGB agenda for further discussion.*

**14. Meeting Dates for 2020-2021**

**2020-2021 meeting dates:**

- Finance & Resources – Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2021 at 5pm
- Quality of Education – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2021 at 6pm
- Full Governing Body – Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 6pm
- Quality of Education – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 6pm
- Full Governing Body – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 6pm
- Finance & Resources – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 5pm
- Quality of Education – Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 6pm
- Full Governing Body – Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 6pm

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting by the Chair of Governors.

Sign .....Date .....

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## Meadowside Primary School: Attendance at Full Governing Body Meetings

<b><u>Governor</u></b>	<b><u>20/01/20</u></b>	<b><u>09/03/20</u></b>	<b><u>11/05/20</u></b>	<b><u>15/07/20</u></b>	<b><u>21/09/20</u></b>	<b><u>16/11/20</u></b>	<b><u>18/01/21</u></b>
Kirsty Blake	<b>x</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Janet Goodliffe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Yassine Elhasbaoui **	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A
Mark Chapman **	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Chris Smith-Haynes	✓	<b>x</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ashley Clarkson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
David Tredrea**	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Angela Pratt	✓	✓	<b>x</b>	✓	<b>x</b>	✓	✓
Josie Garnham	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kim Mount	<b>x</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>x</b>	✓
Sarah Hammond	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

\*\* (no longer a governor)