

THE FEDERATED GOVERNING BODY OF SAVILE TOWN CE (VC) INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND THORNHILL LEES CE (VC) INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at Thornhill Lees CE (VC) Infant and Nursery School at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, 28th March 2023.

PRESENT

Miss K Allen (Chair), K Asquith-Dolan, Mr C Bull, Mrs D Douglas (Head Teacher), Mrs F Lee, Mrs A Nyhan, Rev A Pollard.

In Attendance

Mrs J Lord (School Business Manager)
Mrs T Maguire (Minute Clerk)
Miss I Whitfield

The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting.

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Booth, Mrs Iqbal, Mrs Sharif, Mr Bismillah and Mrs Patel (all with consent).

There were no declarations of interest.

72. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP IN ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items to be brought up under any other business.

73. REPRESENTATION

Vacancies

There was currently one Co-opted Governor seat vacant.

Governors noted that this position would be filled by Miss I Whitfield, who was in attendance this evening.

74. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 7TH FEBRUARY 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2023 be approved as a correct record by the Chair.

75. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Health & Safety Audit Report

The Head Teacher presented the results of the Health & Safety Audit, which was carried out annually in both schools.

Each area was inspected to highlight any issues from which remedial action required was itemised, the date the work was carried out on and by whom was also listed. Tasks were planned into the Caretakers book as appropriate or outsourced.

The document would be updated each term, where notes are made highlighting any action which had been taken.

The DFC conditions data report also covered all areas in school, highlighting priority areas with photographic evidence. Checks on completed works were reviewed after 5 years.

Rev Pollard receives a copy of the report in her capacity as governor with specific duties relating to Health and Safety.

Q: We spoke about the problem with the radiators, does that feature in the Audit?

A: Yes it does, Mrs Lord emailed asset management asking for an update. The officer is out of the office until the end of this week so we have not received a response as yet.

ACTION: Head Teacher to send report to Rev Pollard.

(b) Staffing (Minute 58 refers)

Mrs Hayman had returned from Maternity Leave and was working Monday – Thursday in Y1.

Mrs Abid returns to school this week and had attended KIT days last week.

Two Teachers on Maternity Leave have both had baby girls and are doing well.

76. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher had prepared a written report which was circulated prior to the meeting. The following updates were provided:

(a) In School

Governors noted the following:

- Children brought in their favourite book and shared a special story time with their friends. Some parents were unhappy that the School did not ask the children to dress up, but this was due to the School not wanting to put further financial pressure on households.
- Reception Health Checks had taken place at ST with several workshop sessions offered in both schools, unfortunately, not all workshops were well attended.
- Parent Evenings had taken place in both schools and these were well attended and positive.
- There was a Mother's day afternoon which was enjoyed in both schools and the children have been talking about this.
- Pupil voice groups continue.

- Stay and play at ST was increasingly well attended with lots of parents attending both sessions. It would be nice if the School could extend this to TL also.

(b) Local and National Updates

(i) National

The phasing in of 30 hours childcare for children aged 9 months plus would take a gradual approach with more information to follow. It was envisaged that schools would be asked what provision could be accommodated.

(ii) Council Budget

The full report could be found on the Council website. There would be challenging decisions to make. The Head Teacher added that last year vouchers went out to parents every holiday, nothing had been sent to parents for Easter.

At a recent meeting of the Education Learning Partnership Board (ELP) there was discussion around the cost to the LA of Academy Conversions. Schools that choose to academise received a grant from the Government to support their legal costs, but the legal support required by the LA was approx. £5,000 and this had not been passed on to schools so far. This had put additional pressure on council budgets, which had an impact then on maintained schools. Going forward this cost would now be charged to the schools.

(iii) Academisation meeting with the LA

The LA held a meeting which was attended by 40 maintained schools to discuss the possibility of setting up a LA led MAT. Around the same time the Government announced that LA led MAT's could no longer go ahead.

(iv) Equality and Social Equity

Professor Paul Miller came to the ELPB to share his work based on research about equality and social equity. He was looking to see if any schools would be interested in working with him in future. The briefing was interesting and was worth looking at the research papers and opportunities for further development.

(v) Education Improvement Committee

This committee sits under the Learning Partnership Board. There was discussion around the limited funding for networking and school improvement and how it would work in future. Concerns were shared around Recruitment and Retention, the impact of reduced funding, SEND, parental pressures and capacity of leadership who were having to take on extra work to support reduced staffing. Another meeting was planned in April.

Q: What is meant by parental pressure?

A: This refers to parents who need a lot of support, the way they approach schools is much more demanding and some who may be facing difficult situations.

(c) Staffing

Miss Ahmed would be returning to TL as Classroom ETA for 15 hours a week. Staffing would be realigned to fill the gap for SEN support in Nursery. The reading that Miss Ahmed was going to do had also been realigned.

(d) CPD

Governors noted the following:

- Staff have been attending DLP Network meetings for writing, Science and Computing. Head Teacher training day on 17th March for DLP Head Teachers on 'Leading with Presence'
- Staff attended a Little Wandle training session on updates to the phonics programme in March.

(e) Monitoring (for both schools)

- Different pupil voice groups had been sharing their ideas about different subjects in school.
- Performance management teacher review meetings had been taking place in March.

Q: Is that the annual review?

A: Mid Term.

(f) Pupil Numbers

	Savile Town	Thornhill Lees
2 Year olds	8	17
Nursery	24	65
Reception	27	75
Year 1	28	86
Year 2	23	70
Total	110	313

(g) Attendance

Attendance to 14th March 2023:

	Savile Town	Thornhill Lees
Reception	86%	81.59%
Year 1	91%	89.5%
Year 2	90%	90.7%
Total	90%	87.4%

The Head Teacher confirmed that any child with attendance below 80% would receive a reminder letter. The School had moved to a three week model in an effort to reduce absence. The PA children had 1-1 meetings with parents and were one stage short of having a contract in place.

Q: Is it as simple as parents not seeing the importance of attendance?

A: It can be a number of reasons including extended leave, illness, children with additional needs to the higher level, and not all parents have a realisation of the importance of coming to school. Late arrivals also have an impact.

Q: Do late arrivals go down as absence?

A: This depends on which code is input. For those who are consistently late they will be marked as 'U' code and this does affect attendance percentages.

Q: Parents taking extended leave, are the levels increasing?

A: Yes, some have exceptional circumstances and there are some with special needs who's travel arrangements need to be more organised.

(h) Buildings and Premises

DFC Plans

Governors noted the following:

- Some funds for TL had been allocated towards toilet refurbishment, new railings which were identified as a H&S hazard and repairs to the staff carpark. This work would be carried out at Easter.
- The School were expecting the new boilers to be fitted during February Half-Term and then at Easter, however, the School have not heard anything, so it was unlikely that this would be going ahead.
- Negotiation on who was paying for the leaking roof at ST was ongoing.
- An asbestos check would probably take place during the summer holiday.
- Canopy had been postponed due to financial reasons.
- Tree surgeon had cut trees down at a cost of £600 + VAT.

(i) School Development Plan

This had been distributed with detailed SDP targets and review for information.

(j) Special Educational Needs

The School were still waiting for EHCP Plans, with more to be submitted. Speech and language therapy continues for the children who need this support.

Occupational Health, Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired support had been into school providing support for children on an EHCP, and to advise staff members.

All services are oversubscribed, this issue was not only in Kirklees.

Q: Regarding the EHCP plans, previously you confirmed these could be backdated up to 20 weeks, but whilst some are taking up to 60 weeks, do school have to employ 1-1 to fill the gap?

A: Yes, all staff in school are investing here and this puts a strain on them.

Q: How does this impact on staff wellbeing and morale?

A: Staff are doing well but when we discuss the budget, you will be more aware of the implications.

Governors discussed the possibility of some SENDIF (Early Years Inclusion) funding, there was talk of a new model for September with the hope that funding would extend into reception.

The Head Teacher had concerns around all the children in 'decision to assess'. Once the agreement was in place, this determines when funding would be backdated to. There is a question mark over financial years whether they would be able to give funding to schools. This was creating a deficit in school budgets as they are having to fund these children. Yesterday's announcement regarding teacher pay as consultation begins, confirming that funding from the Government would not cover the increase with school budget expected to cover the shortfall.

	Savile Town	Thornhill Lees
SEN register	26	45 (18K, 24K+)
Medical	21	70
EHCP	1	6
MSP	7 (3 decision to assess)	21 (9 decision to assess + 2 due in this half term)
FSM	EYPP = 8 FSM = 19 (+3)	EYPP = 21 FSM = 44

(k) Safeguarding

Meetings with social workers and attending core groups continue as required.

	Savile Town	Thornhill Lees
Child Protection(CP)	1	0
Child in Need (CIN)	0	1
Team around the Family (TAF)	1	2
Looked after Children	0	3(2 family)

Governors thanked The Head Teacher for her report.

77. BUDGETS

Deletion (See Minute 85)

78. SAFEGUARDING INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY – UPDATES

This item was covered under the Head Teacher report. (Minute 76 refers)

79. SCHOOL WEBSITES/GOVERNOR PROFILES FOR THE WEBSITE

As not all governors had the opportunity to send a profile, Miss Allen agreed to redistribute the information.

ACTION: Miss Allen to redistribute the information.

80. DEDICATED HEADSHIP TIME

The Head Teacher had planned to take some time which was scheduled when school had to close due to snow. She confirmed that some time had been taken.

81. OUR SCHOOLS AS CHURCH SCHOOLS

There had been a visit from Helen Lever from the Diocese, who was the new school liaison. The Head Teacher took her around both schools and discussed what was happening in school and agreed next steps.

She went into all the classes and was very astute, picking up on quite a few things. Moving forward, the School would look at collective worship, and developing Y2 as collective worship readers. She would be working with this group.

Governors discussed collective worship at ST, how communities come together and about sharing a common ground. The children had developed a prayer to share with governors.

The children demonstrated a good knowledge sharing each others religions, making comparison between Lent and Ramadan, this also links into other areas within the curriculum.

Miss Allen suggested that a prayer to share with governors should be introduced as a standing item at the beginning of every meeting.

ACTION: SGS to add 'to introduce a prayer' as a standing item.

SIAMS Training Update

The Head Teacher explained the whole premise of this inspection was based on values, which was an area that the School do really well with. The school values were reinforced throughout school, and the children can explain what they were, although some do just repeat the words. The Head Teacher confirmed she would be looking at this evaluation next term.

82. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

Mr Bull had visited both schools and shared an overview with governors.

The purpose of the visit was for a greater understanding on how schools operate. The first thing that struck him was the excellent use of limited resources using different ideas which felt logical and clever. All classrooms were nicely laid out with colourful displays which were regularly changed. The outside areas looked fantastic, they were well laid out and had been well thought through. Nursery setting at ST was amazing, particularly how the space was used. All the staff were friendly, engaging and professional, despite how this could have been a little awkward with him turning up. There were a lot of long serving staff who had an obvious pride in school and what they were achieving. It was apparent that teachers and support staff were working as a team with a common set of objectives, supporting each other. Children were engaged and attentive, with one child congratulating him for sitting nicely. Mr Bull found the experience very worthwhile as a governor and recommended spending a few hours in school to see how everything was brought alive.

Miss Allen and Mr Bismillah attended the Governors Briefing. The main discussion was around finance and Head Teachers.

Mr Bull had attended a quarterly briefing delivered online generally. Topical subjects were discussed, currently the budget situation, in reference more to the LA as opposed to school budget. In summary there was a big gap in funding which would run for the foreseeable future. All fees would be subject to a reasonable uplift, and this would impact all.

The Head Teacher Support Service talked about this service for existing Head Teachers, in particular newly appointed and Acting Heads.

This was delivered by two ex Head Teachers who spoke about their own experience of wellbeing and what felt like best practise.

Head Teacher Appraisal - Fiona Denham (KLP) and Sharon Crane (HR) spoke about the appraisal process, in particular Head Teacher appraisal and the role that governors play. Miss Allen confirmed how the committee was made up of 3 governors, supported by an Ofsted inspector and KLP to ensure protocols are met. All dialogue and information were documented but only shared amongst those on the panel. Feedback was given in line with the School Development Plan, which in turn filters down to staff.

Miss Allen confirmed a visit to be arranged sometime after May.

83. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was nothing to discuss under any other business.

84. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLVED: That following dates of future meetings of the Full Governing Body.

Tuesday 16th May – Savile Town
Tuesday 27th June – Savile Town

Resources Committee – TBC - dependent on when budgets are discussed.

85. AGENDA MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That minute 77 be excluded from the school inspection copy to be made available at the School, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and to be excluded as confidential under Regulation 15 (3) School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 from the copy to be made available to the staff governors and observers.