

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting
Friday 6th December 2024 at 7.45am
In-person meeting

Governors present: Reem Al Rasheed, Anne Canning, Mark Chapman (*Chair*), Jo Davey (*Co-headteacher*), Tessa Hauswedell, Zoe Judge (*Co-headteacher*), Ian Macaulay, Antonia Shortall,

Staff present: Darrel Barsby, Lauren Common, Nofer Fari, Florence Herrero, Kirsty Holder, Louise Prodromou, Ewan Scott, Kirsten Sullivan

Also present: Sam Murray (*Clerk*)

1. Apologies were received and accepted from Rachel Howarth, Helen da Silva, Lorraine Hudson

2. Declaration of interests

There were no meeting specific declarations of interest made by anyone present. Governors were reminded to ensure their entry in the register of business interests is kept up to date.

3. Director of Operations report (LP)

Governors had received a written report on operational matters. LP highlighted the following points:

The **finance update** for Quarter 2 shows a forecasted year-end deficit of £79K against a breakeven budget. This includes confirmed pay awards for teachers and support staff.

A governor inquired about potential savings for the next quarter. LP stated that measures such as limiting spending on curriculum resources have been implemented. LP noted that due to statutory duties related to staffing and special educational needs, achieving these savings will be challenging.

The school has worked with a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) through the local authority. SRMAs assist schools in optimising resources by reviewing financial data, key metrics, and the school's approach to resource management. Some governors attended the SRMA feedback session and heard the main points and recommendations from the school's report. The final report will be shared and reviewed with link finance governors.

Governors reviewed three-year budget figures that modelled the proposed changes to teacher contact time and class size, as well as the impact on the projected budget deficit.

An update on **site and buildings compliance** was shared including:

The scheduled summer works did not proceed as planned due to complications with the contractor. Subsequent inspections have revealed the need for additional unplanned works. At present, the local authority intends to complete all the works in summer 2025. Emergency works will occur prior to that time, although a final date has yet to be determined.

In response to a governor question on risk management, LP said she regularly meets with the LA team to discuss and mitigate risks. She also outlined measures to address electrical failure concerns in NW due to delayed works.

The LA Fire Assessor has limited North Wing Hall's capacity to 60 people until a further fire door is installed. The LA will cover the cost of this door. The next fire risk assessment is in February 2025.

Fire evacuation procedures have been updated and rehearsed with students and staff.

The Emergency plan is currently being updated to ensure that all relevant points are covered, and personnel changes have been included.

Pending works include emergency lighting repairs for which quotes have been obtained.

The school continues to work with the DfE on a series of surveys for the **School Rebuilding Project (SRP)**. Slides from a recent stakeholder meeting were shared with governors for information. The school expects to hear soon on the final scope of the SRP and what will be included.

Governors noted the **HR/staffing update** in the report and internal and external recruitment activity. Governors were pleased to note that the school is fully staffed for January.

3.1 Audited Voluntary Funds 2023-24

Governors had received a copy of the final audited accounts for the voluntary fund including the independent examiner's report. The documents have been reviewed by finance link governors who recommend approval by the full governing board. Governors **approved the accounts**.

3.2 Operations Policies and Procedures

Governors noted and approved the following policies that have been reviewed and updated:

- Teacher Pay policy (LBH model policy)
- Flexible working policy (LBH model policy)
- Health and Safety policy

4. Careers Information Advice & Guidance update (DB/ES)

Governors received a written report on current CIAG provision linking areas to the different Gatsby benchmarks. The school is part of a London careers hub.

Careers education is provided through the PHSE curriculum in Years 7-11 giving students year group appropriate guidance. Tutor time is also used to support CIAG through the use of specific key stage workbooks and resources.

The Careers Adviser (Ms Andreou) works closely with students in Year 9 and Year 11 to offer individual tailored support and guidance on options and pathways.

A Careers Lead (Mr Renner) works with SLT on providing a link between careers and the curriculum and encounters with employers and further/higher education. The report sets out in detail what is available to students.

Areas for development are also outlined including creating a careers calendar to map out all career-related events, activities, and deadlines, ensuring smooth implementation and coordination across the school year. It will serve as a centralised resource to enhance planning and communication among staff, students, and parents.

Link governors had met with DB to discuss CIAG and the report in detail and had found it really useful in helping to understand how the school is meeting the benchmarks and requirements.

A governor asked about offering workplace experience. DB explained that providing in-person work experience is too costly, while online experience is a more practical and affordable alternative. ES added that the school is exploring how to integrate work experience into existing curriculum activities like school trips.

Governors thanked DB and ES for the informative and detailed report. DB suggested making the annual report an early autumn term agenda item.

5. Safeguarding report (KS)

Governors had received a written termly safeguarding report prepared by the Designated Safeguarding Lead including an update on:

- **Training** for all staff and governors and specialist training.
- **Safeguarding related policies** have been reviewed and updated to reflect the new KCSIE guidance.
- **Safeguarding governor** (MC) had carried out a termly monitoring visit and reviewed the Single Central Record no concerns were identified.
- **Data for concerns and referrals** since September were considered. Governors noted that safeguarding concerns related to SEMH were the highest category logged on the school's MyConcern system. The link governor had explored this area with the DSL during the monitoring visit.
- **Filtering and monitoring data** was noted, with most alerts originating from school-based work. KS examines these alerts to determine how to address them with students and staff. KS provided an example where media studies work on James Bond triggered the monitoring system due to search terms like bomb or guns. This creates substantial work for the DSL, transforming what might seem like an IT administrative function into a role that necessitates safeguarding knowledge and experience.
- **Attendance rate** is 94% - 258 students have attendance below 90% (persistently absent) and 7 students have attendance below 50% (severely absent). The school works closely with the LA EWS to address concerns including penalty notice warning letters.
- Data on **off-rolling, part-time timetables and alternative provision** referrals were also noted.
- Suspension data shows a reduction from last year. Governors discussed what has helped achieve this and requested a deeper look at this in link governor meetings this year.

Action: Link governor meeting to explore reasons for the reduction in suspensions
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Governors thanked KS for the detailed report and suggested that the same report is updated through the year to end with one final report that covers all three terms.

Action: KS to update the same report termly
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6. Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2026 entry

Governors considered a copy of the proposed Admissions policy for Sept 2026 which includes a proposed change to the sixth form entry requirements for the A level pathway. No changes are proposed to the BTEC entry requirements.

Governors considered the statutory consultation papers setting out the rationale for the change and the process for responding to the proposal. **Governors agreed the consultation documents.** The consultation will close on 31 January 2025 and governors will meet after this to consider the consultation feedback. A final policy must be determined by 28 February 2025.

7. School Improvement Plan

SIP 2023-24: Final review

Governors received a summary document RAG rating progress against the main SIP targets. Most areas are green and completed with some amber areas almost completed that will be seen through to completion this year. Areas such as communication and parental engagement will always be areas where there is more that can be done and will continue to be a focus.

CoHeads highlighted the areas rated as red which are not fully completed. This included: Work on the IT strategy in relation to curriculum delivery; Strengthening mechanisms for capturing the student voice; CPD for teachers on the upper pay scale 3 level; Including AI on a 3-year IT road map.

A governor asked about the use of AI at school. CoHeads advised that staff are exploring this and a working group is being set up. TH offered to engage with this work as it is being widely discussed in higher education.

The CoHeads and governors are positive about the progress made.

SIP 2024-25

Governors received a copy of the SIP 2024-25 and a commentary document setting out the key priorities linked to the full SIP. The CoHeads highlighted improvement priorities in the following key areas:

Standards

- Implementation of the T&L framework to maintain cohesion with a focus on student engagement and improving assessment practices including marking and homework.
- Increased progress for target groups and improvements to SEND support through achieving the SEND award and effective use of Linc staff.
- Implementation of the Sixth Form Rapid Improvement Plan.

Pastoral

- Behaviour systems to be consistently applied and repeat suspensions reduced.
- Character education to promote the 'Fortismere Four' and a sense of belonging.
- The student voice to be heard and students playing an active role in decision making.
- Attendance and punctuality to be an ongoing focus
- Promoting good mental health by achieving the Wellbeing Award

Community cohesion

- Communication including the website continue to be areas for development.
- Staff wellbeing is a focus with additional guidance from the DfE.
- Achieve the Green Flag Award to support sustainability and our Climate Action Plan.
- Continuing to promote equality, diversity and inclusion across the school community.

Governors thanked the CoHeads for the detailed overview of the improvement priorities and will monitor progress through the work of link governors, sub-committees and full board meetings. Governors approved the SIP 2024-25.

8. Minutes of the last meeting

Governors agreed the minutes of the last meeting held on 14 Oct 2024 as an accurate record of the meeting.

There were no outstanding matters arising from the meeting.

9. Governance matter

The Chair proposed that a formal Resources Committee is re-established. Link governors are working well but there are some key financial and operational issues that will need to be clearly monitored and this will be best achieved through formal committee work. The SMRA report also recommended this as an action. **Governors discussed the proposal and agreed to set up a Resources Committee.** Formal terms of reference will be presented to the next FGB.

Action: Set up a formal Resources Committee
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10. Any other business

NF informed governors that further to the CoHeadteachers' reference to the SEND Improvement Award in the School Improvement Plan, a folder has been created on GovernorHub with further information about the SENDIA Award. Information and updates for governors will be filed here. The SEND link governor has met with NF to discuss the award and the accreditation process.

Part one meeting closed