

Meadowside Community Primary School - Full Governing Board

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 2.12.2021

Present: Phil Calrow (Chair), Stuart Wright, Adrian Burrows, Jenny Gill, Gareth Harris, Jo Makin, Judith Murray

Apologies: Kerry Woods

In Attendance: Donna Lowe, Dr. Carsten Kressel (Minutes)

Welcome and Apologies

Apologies had been received from Mrs. Woods.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of personal or pecuniary interest in the matters to be discussed were made.

Governing Board

Scheme of Delegation

Governors noted the scheme of delegation, which remained unchanged.

Terms of Reference

Governors noted the terms of reference, which remained unchanged.

Membership / Structure

Mrs. Makin will resign from her position as a co-opted governor at the end of the year, when she takes up a new position as headteacher at a primary school in Halton.

The governing body has four vacancies. The trust will set out new guidance for recruitment and structure of governors. It was not felt that the full number of 12 governors was required.

Code of Conduct

Governors noted the code of conduct and **agreed** to abide by it.

Documentation

Governors were requested to complete, sign and return the following documents: -

- Skills Audit
- Annual Declaration of Interest
- GDPR Form

Action 1: *Governors to complete, sign and return the skills audit, annual declaration of interest and the GDPR form.*

Link Roles

A list of link roles had been placed on the Governor Hub. Governors **agreed** the following allocation of link roles: -

Quality of Education - Adrian Burrows and Gareth Harris
Safeguarding, Behaviour and Welfare - Phil Calrow
Finance and Personnel - Jenny Gill
Personal Development - Judith Murray
Health & Safety - Kerry Woods
Training - Kerry Woods

Governor Action Plan

Documentation to support and inform the drafting process for a governor action plan had been identified and will be emailed out. Priorities will be decided in accordance with the findings of the skills audit.

Action 2: *Email out documentation to support and inform the drafting process for a governor action plan.*

Governor Training

No update was available.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14.10.2021 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising / Action Log

Governors noted that work on the governor action plan had commenced.

Vision and Values Statement

The vision and values statement is contained within the headteacher's welcome on the website.

Governors read the statement and **asked** if and how it permeates day-to-day life in the school.

Mr. Wright answered that the values are lived and delivered throughout the school on a daily basis.

Governors **endorsed** the vision and values contained in the headteacher's welcome on the website.

Assessment

Mr. Wright reported the following matters: -

- The baseline assessment in Reception was completed.
- KS 1 SATS will take place in May.
- The phonics check is scheduled for 6.6.2022.
- Year 4 times tables test will be conducted.
- KS2 SATS will take place during the week commencing on 9.5.2021.
- Accurate target setting and assessment are challenging. FFT 50 targets were used as a starting point for every year group.
- Targets in Year 6 are:
- Reading - FFT: 68%; most recent assessment: 76%; agreed target: 76%

- Writing - FFT: 73%; most recent assessment: 52%; agreed target: 62%
- Maths - FFT 79%; most recent assessment: 69%; agreed target: 69%
- Year 5 - Aspirational targets were set. It is unclear if they can be achieved.
- Years 3 and 4 - FFT targets are unrealistic. Challenging but more realistic targets were set instead.
- Year 2 - The class has been affected significantly by the pandemic, with 35% ARE in reading, 38% in writing and 14% in maths in the most recent assessment.
- Year 1 - It is hoped that the year group will get close to the FFT target.
- Reception - 41% GLD was set as the target. Despite being low, these targets are very challenging, as 0% were at ARE in reading, comprehension and writing during the baseline assessment, with 22% at ARE in number.

Governors asked the following questions: -

- What is done to improve the situation in Reception and other year groups? - Answer: There is a comprehensive plan for use of Recovery Premium that will be discussed in detail later in the meeting.
- What are the specific issues? - Answer: Speech and language have been affected very significantly. This has an impact on the children's ability to learn and to access other subjects.
- Is it entirely due to the pandemic? - Answer: The pandemic appears to be a cause. Other conclusions in respect of SEND would be premature at this point.
- Is there an impact of Talk for Writing? - Answer: There is a clear positive impact, but it has been reduced by other issues.

Curriculum & Standards Reports

Senior Leaders gave the following reports:

Early Years - Amy Clarke

Amy Clarke highlighted the following points: -

- The focus is on the Early Years curriculum. It was worked through with the team for every area of learning and is based on the Development Matters document and the Meadowside Mindset.
- Assessment is a focus to ensure accuracy of assessment.
- The first-ever open day was successful and helped to increase the number of children in the nursery.
- PACT training has started.
- WellComm work continues. Results are included in the report.
- 9 children in Reception class were referred for SALT.
- Some children are supported with speech and language in class.
- Little Wandle was chosen as the synthetic phonics scheme for the school and is being implemented. Children are also supported with pronunciation. The impact of the scheme is positive. A full set of resources was ordered.
- Training and observation took place with Lauren Perks.

- Assessment and curriculum continue to be worked on.
- Promotion of the nursery continues.
- Early identification and support is worked through with Mr. Clay.

Amy Clarke left the meeting.

Mr. Harris left the meeting.

Standards Years 1-6 - Alan Manuel

Mr. Manuel gave the following overview: -

- A mini maths deep dive found that the subject is strong, with good pedagogy.
- Writing is also considered a strength now.
- Vocabulary is a strength.
- Book scrutiny was positive. Year 1 needs more work in books.
- Classroom environments are monitored every week and look good.
- He had met with Amy Clarke to understand the changes in EYFS.
- Teacher appraisal focuses on CPD. Staff work at a higher level than previously.
- Vocabulary is strong.
- Children know where they are going with their learning.

Areas for further development are: -

- Years 2 and 5 need support.
- Talk for Reading is still in its infancy but already shows positive signs.
- The quantity of work in Year 1, especially in maths, was deemed to be low.
- Teacher talk, use of words and vocabulary
- The use of visualisers

Governors asked the following questions:-

- What is the issue with the quantity of work in books in Year 1?- Answer: Some children had low amounts of work in their books; the matter has been raised and is being addressed.
- What is a manipulative? - Answer: Physical resources in maths that are manipulated by hand, for all children. They are used together with pictorial resources and the abstract to explain and practice concepts.
- How do we increase the use of visualisers and reduce the amount of teacher talk? - Answer: Talk by teachers needs to be sharp and focused, with quick feedback and praise. The visualisers can be a good additional resource to work through examples of work.

Mr. Manuel left the meeting.

Reading and Phonics

Lauren Perks was off work with Covid. Governors noted her report. It highlights the following areas that are most in need of development and resources: -

- Little Wandle, including resources
- Talk for Reading

Writing and Spelling - Helen Pritty

Helen Pritty introduced her report on writing and spelling and highlighted the following points: -

- Talk for Writing was embedded over the past two years, but spelling still needs attention. Various approaches have been tried over the years to teach rules and learn spellings at home, none with the desired impact.
- A new approach to teach spelling, based on phonics was identified and trialled, using phonemes and graphemes. 15 minutes per day are reserved to teach one phoneme per week together with the corresponding graphemes, and no work is set at home. The impact is good, and the scheme was rolled out across school in September. Improvements are seen every week. Impact on writing is being monitored. All classes are taught with a consistent approach.
- Word Warrior continues to be used, with good impact on the use of vocabulary in writing.
- Writing moderation will be based on collective judgement across the school. It will then be fed into and validated in the TCAT hub, which is expected to restart in due course. Work with other schools in TCAT gives a good comparison across a range of contexts.
- Reading and writing go together. High quality texts will be placed in reading corners and will also be used by teachers.
- Access to poetry will be increased. Work is in progress, and the children have responded well.
- Work to achieve writing targets will take place based on moderation

Governors asked the following questions: -

Could spaced retrieval be used? - Answer: A retrieval week is built into every cycle. The aim is to have planned retrieval after a set period of time in order to aid retrieval and long-term retention and use of words. Staff are trained in cognitive science to help them understand and implement the latest concepts.

Is spelling a reason for the lower results in writing? - Answer: Yes, it has an impact but is not the only reason. Other important factors are low levels of reading and lack of actual experiences.

Mrs. Pritty left the meeting.

Pupil Premium Plan

Mrs. Makin presented the Pupil Premium Plan, highlighting the following points: -

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is 62.5%; significantly higher in some cohorts.
- Attendance was a significant issue.
- A third of pupils have a combination of SEND and eligibility for Pupil Premium.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 last year were affected by Covid and the constraints, which had an adverse impact on their results.
- The Pupil Premium strategy will focus on the following priorities: -

- Early language, through WellComm. An additional member of staff in place and high ratio of staff.
- Talk for Reading, led by Lauren Perks
- Phonics - Little Wandle, plus other interventions

Governors asked the following questions: -

- How can we demonstrate the impact of the funding? - Answer: An impact statement is in place, also for Recovery Premium
- Do families take up Early Help? - Answer: Yes, we seek to reach out, and they appear to respond well.

Mrs. Makin left the meeting.

Recovery Premium and School-led Tuition Premium

A detailed report on Recovery Premium and school-led tutoring will be drafted in the new year. Mr. Wright explained that Recovery Premium is quite flexible and can be used for a variety of activities, whereas school-led tutoring funding needs to be spent within very tightly defined parameters. Any money deemed not to have been spent within those parameters will be subject to clawback. In total, the school receives £21,440 of Recovery Premium, and some £16k of school-led tutoring funding. The money will be used for the following main purposes: -

- 95% of the academic mentor salary is carried by the government. Janet Lever is in post, costing the school only £1,245.
- A tutor from Yipiyap will be recruited; a young professional, who has been trained specifically. The tutor will be deployed in Year 2, with clear focus on maths.
- In Reception, Tracy will be paid to work every afternoon to deliver phonics and speech and language.
- Two teachers will be employed to provide backfill for the assistant headteachers in the morning and to tutor their classes in the afternoon. One has already been recruited, another is due to visit the school on 3.12.2021.
- A tutor for Year 6 will be recruited from Randstad, at a cost of £5k.
- Overall, all year groups will be covered with tutor support.
- £5k will be spent on an overhaul of resources for phonics and reading.
- £2k will be invested in a shared sensory garden in the DP area. This investment will support delivery for SEND children.
- Mr. McClafferty will get a temporary TLR to oversee the recovery programme.

Governors asked if the Little Wandle scheme was competitively priced. Mr. Wright answered that it was and that it was accompanied by good support and training for staff.

External Education Reports

Three reviews took place in October, each with excellent results: -

TCAT Review

Clear strengths were identified, as well as actions to take the school further forward. Writing was seen as a strength, as a result of embedding Talk for Writing.

DPs Review

The local authority reviewed the DPs; their report was very positive. David Clay's positive work and contributed was recognised and commended. Documentation and processes he has introduced will be used as a model for other DPs in Warrington. School leaders are very proud of him and the impact he has made in a short period.

Inclusion Flagship School Award (IQM)

Mr. Wright informed governors that the award had been retained.

Governor Safeguarding Training

Mr. Harris and Mr. Calrow have completed Safeguarding training. The remaining governors will be invited to complete the Heys online Safeguarding training, subject to approval by the trust.

Staffing and HR

Mr. Wright reported the following matters: -

- The DPs are closed at the moment, due to reopen on 8.12.2021 and 9.12.2021 respectively, because of outbreaks of Covid among children or staff. All children's cases in the school were linked directly or indirectly to the DPs. The decision to close was made with advice from the local authority and public health. Generally, cases across the school are increasing but are deemed to be within the normal range.
- Mrs. Makin will leave the school to take up a position as a headteacher at Oakfield Primary School in Halton. Governors congratulated her and thanked her for her excellent work at Meadowside.
- For the remainder of the school year, Alan Manuel and David Clay will be appointed to the position of temporary assistant headteachers. The positions were advertised internally with advice from HR, and theirs were the only applications. They will be paid on the leadership scale of L3-L7. Backfill teachers will be recruited. Governors **approved** this arrangements.

Policy Review

Governors **adopted** the following policies: -

- Health & Safety Policy - Written by the trust consultant
- Charging & Remissions Policy - Minor changes
- Lettings Policy - Minor changes. The lettings programme is successful with the Polish school
- Administration of Medication Policy - No major changes
- Exclusions & Appeals Policy - No changes
- Anti-Bullying Policy - Minor changes
- E-Safety Policy - The policy has been strengthened significantly in respect of online safety.

Governors also noted the Pay Policy, as adopted by the trust board.

Dates of the Next Meetings

17.2.2022, 4 pm, Education

7.4.2022, 4 pm, Business - Zoom

19.5.2022, 4 pm, Education

14.7.2022, 4 pm, Business - Zoom

Any Other Business

None.

Action Log - December 2021

No.	Description	Responsible
1	<i>Governors to complete, sign and return the skills audit, annual declaration of interest and the GDPR form.</i>	Governors
2	<i>Email out documentation to support and inform the drafting process for a governor action plan.</i>	Mr. Calrow