

LYDGATE JUNIOR SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD  
HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2018

Present: Maureen Neill (Chair of Governors); Stuart Jones (Headteacher); Rosemary Fletcher; Jeremy Bannister; Chris Batchelor; Julie Farrell; John Hague; Simon Hamilton; Jacqui Hoole; Carina Kemp; Dan Kirkland; Ann Parker.

Associates:

In Attendance: John Evans Clerk to governors

Governors' core responsibilities:

1. ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school
2. holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
3. overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

**1. To accept or receive apologies for absence**

No apologies were received. Governors noted that Mark Alexander's term of office has ended but that he is keen to continue as a governor.

**Resolved: that Mark Alexander be appointed as a co-opted governor**

**2. Declaration of any pecuniary interest relevant to this agenda.**

None were declared.

**3. Appointment of Chairperson and Vice- Chairperson and term of office.**

3.1 Appointment of Chairperson

**Resolved: that Maureen Neill be appointed Chairperson for one year.**

3.2 Appointment of Vice-Chairperson

**ACTION**

**Resolved: that Rosemary Fletcher be appointed Vice-Chairperson for one year.**

**4. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting and report on matters arising from the minutes.**

Minute reference:

4.3 The Headteacher reports a significant increase in late arrivals. There is no obvious reason for this. Arriving late for school is possibly in some instances a safeguarding issue; for example, the child being a young carer.

7. Reference to the Annual Report is included as an item on the current agenda.

**Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2018 be approved and signed.**

**5. Headteacher's report**

The Headteacher presented his report and expanded on particular items, responding to governors' questions.

**5.1 Costs**

The Headteacher reports that the school is functioning well within its budget, but will be using its surplus during the current year. He has concerns about the impact of staff absence on pupils' progress, particularly that of vulnerable pupils and those with SEN(D). The Headteacher reminded governors of the spending decisions taken at the beginning of this financial year, particularly those regarding cover for absence. Responding to a governors' question about the impact on pupils' progress, the Headteacher explained that there has been no obvious effect, but progress data are currently being collected.

**5.2 National Funding Formula**

The Headteacher outlined the impact of the introduction of the National Funding Formula. While Sheffield will see an increase in overall funding, there is a shift of resource from primary towards secondary schools.

Governors suggested that more creative approaches might be considered in planning budget spending and whether fund-raising should be considered. The Headteacher agreed to bring this to the governing body at a future meeting.

Headteacher

A governor asked about the provision of a breakfast club. The lack of a breakfast club poses a big problem for some parents and is a matter of significant concern according to the governor. The Headteacher has reservations about providing one, mainly because of logistical difficulties and its possible impact on other aspects of the school's work.

**5.3 Peer reviews**

Peer reviews are a positive approach to school- and research-led developments, with school visiting being of particular value. Nevertheless, there is a lack of take-up on aspects of the offer and a governor agreed to look further into this.

Chris  
Batchelor

**5.4 Premises**

The Headteacher's report explains some of the shortcomings in the premises, for example, lighting in the hall and the leaking of heat through windows. A Site Condition survey is due this term. Improvements will be made in line with any Health and Safety issues.

**5.5 Communications Policy**

Governors have concerns about the way email contacts are made between parents and the school. They noted that this had been discussed previously but it seemed apparent that little progress has been made. Many questions arose during the discussion:

- The use of generic email addresses
- The views staff might have about the level of contact
- Response times and the reasonableness of what might be expected of staff
- Whether parents' expectations about response times are reasonable and realistic; individual staff are likely to respond differently
- Bringing closure to messages and how such closures could be made clear
- A revisiting of a staff survey
- A review of the Home/School Agreement with a view to the possible inclusion of a Communications Policy

The meeting recognised that action is needed to address some of these points and understood parents' frustrations about the present arrangements.

**Agreed: governors would look further into ways of improving communications, with an initial look at a ticketing system for receipt of email coming into the school.**

**ACTION**  
Dan  
Kirkland

### **5.6 Homework**

Parents have questioned the consistency in provision of homework. The school is looking into ways of tackling variation in frequency and expectation. Governors consider that homework is a good strategy for learning and would welcome any further clarity that could be given to the current policy. Further discussions are to be held on this point.

Headteacher

Governors agree that some parents might lack some capability in supporting their children doing homework, while the children themselves like flexibility and greater chances for open-ended ways of tackling it.

Following a question from a parent governor, the meeting held a discussion on the 'cake-reward' system and how it operates. The Headteacher allows staff to approach rewarding homework completion in their own way.

### **5.7 Progress in reading**

The 2018 performance data show that there is a drop in progress scores. The school continues to perform well but the overall trend in both progress and attainment in reading is downward and represents a concern. This trend is not evident in other subjects; therefore reading has become an important focus for the school. Governors discussed how different children respond to different teaching strategies and questioned whether or not the focus on reading might affect standards in other subjects.

### **5.8 Safeguarding report**

The Headteacher explained the process involved in completing the Annual Safeguarding Report, the audit arrangements and any emerging action points for the school. The report has been submitted to the Safeguarding Children's Board and, because there has been no feedback, the school's assumption is that all is well. The school is aware of the issues to be addressed and the Headteacher has provided governors with copies of the action plan showing who is responsible and completion dates.

### **5.9 Complaints**

The Headteacher provided governors with information about two

complaints and how they had been tackled. He stressed that an allegation does not constitute evidence to support a complaint.

**6. Committee minutes and reports from governors with curriculum links**

No reports were discussed at this meeting.

**7. Review of:**

- **Committee structure and membership**
- **Committee terms of reference and delegated powers**

The existing system is to be continued.

**8. To adopt or confirm the Governing Body Code of Conduct – NGA revised edition 2018**

**Resolved: that the Code of Conduct be adopted**

The Headteacher agreed to arrange for governors to have sight of the Code.

Headteacher

**9. Annual Report on Safeguarding**

This item was discussed during the Headteacher's report.

**10. School admissions 2020/2021 – to approve the indicated admission number**

Governors approve the indicative admission number of 120.

**11. Review of the meeting – how has the governing body fulfilled the three core functions for which it is responsible?**

The Chair of Governors is confident that the meeting has addressed its core responsibilities. They include:

- Agreement to investigate further the quality and processes of communications with parents.
- Consideration of best practice in homework.
- Acquiring detailed understanding of the school's concern about attainment and progress in reading.
- Receiving updated information on the current spending plan and questioning the impact of cuts particularly on pupils with SEN(D).

**12. Review of the Learn Sheffield Governor Training Options**

**ACTION**

**2018/2019 including confirmation of or appointment of a training co-ordinator**

The Headteacher explained the offer and the school access to it.

**13. Any other urgent business**

The playground equipment has been repaired.

Charges for the use of school facilities have been implemented. Despite a few complaints from leaders, there has been no reduction in clubs or take-up.

There have been no additional responses from parents on Parent View since the Inspection. Governors agreed that each parents of year group should be asked for feedback every year. An update is needed before Christmas and parents should receive a follow-up response. Existing entries expire in March.

Headteacher  
Dan Kirkland

**Date and time of the next meeting**

**The next meeting will be held at 7.00 pm. on 14 March 2019**

**The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.**

