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<b>School:</b>	<b>Woodthorpe Infant School</b>
<b>Meeting title:</b>	<b>Spring term meeting of the governing body</b>
<b>Date and time:</b>	<b>Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February at 5:00pm</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>School</b>

'A' denotes absence

	Mrs S M Jacques
	Mrs E Bowler (Headteacher)
	Dr. K Haessly (Chair)
A	Miss K Collins
	Mrs L Kay
	Mrs K Bradley
	Mrs T Mitchell
A	Mr A Lau
	Mr Shepherd
	Mrs Green

**In attendance** Jenny Kirkwood (Clerk to the governors)

**GB/01/25 Apologies for absence** **Action**  
Dr Haessly welcomed all governors to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were **received** and **accepted** from Miss Collins and Mr Lau.

**GB/02/25 Declaration of interest** **CS& LG**

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.  
Mrs Bowler confirmed Mrs Green and Mr Shepherd were to complete their Declaration of Interests, Governor Code of Conduct and Declaration of Eligibility and return to the school office.

**GB/03/25 Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months** **Clerk**

The clerk informed the governors that the following term of office would end next year:  
Mrs Kay – Co-opted Governor: Term ends on 1st March 2025.  
Mrs Kay confirmed her desire to continue in her role as a Co-opted Governor. The governors agreed to her reappointment, and the clerk was tasked with notifying Governor Services.

Additionally, governors welcomed Mr Shepherd to the meeting. Mr Shepherd expressed an interest in becoming a Co-opted Governor. With 13 years of experience as a governor, including SEND and Safeguarding, he has held various roles in the past. Governors had received his expression of interest prior to the meeting, and after discussion, all agreed to appoint Mr Shepherd as a Co-opted Governor, effective immediately. **Clerk**  
The clerk **agreed** to notify Governor Services.

**New Instrument of Government and Governor Changes**

Mrs Bowler reported that the new Instrument of Government had been agreed upon by Nottinghamshire County Council and was subsequently **approved** by the Governors. The clerk noted that, following the reconstitution, there was now a co-opted vacancy that Mr Lau could move into.

Governors **agreed** to this proposal, and Mr Lau was welcomed back in his new role as Co-opted Governor. The clerk agreed to notify Governor Services.

Clerk

**Resignation of Dr Haessly**

Dr Haessly informed the board that she would be resigning following the summer term meeting. Having served as a governor for six years, Dr Haessly has seen the school through a change of Headteacher and an Ofsted inspection. She reflected on the positive progress the school has made over the years but expressed that stepping down had been a difficult decision.

Mrs Bowler acknowledged Dr Haessly's significant contributions, mentioning that she had worked with her for 18 months and that she had been a huge support and a voice of reason. Her departure would be a big loss to the school. Governors expressed their thanks and appreciation for Dr Haessly's dedication and service.

All governors were asked to consider taking on the position of Chair following the summer term meeting.

It was decided that the clerk would ensure the Election of Chair and Vice Chair is included on the agenda for the summer term meeting.

Clerk

GB/04/25

**Approval of minutes of Autumn term meeting and any additional special governing body meetings**

The minutes of the Autumn term meeting held on **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024**, having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

**Review of actions****GB/53/25 – Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) 2024/2025**

Dr Haessly and Mrs Everitt **agreed** to complete the SFVS which is due for submission on **31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**. *Dr Haessly informed governors that this had been completed and Mrs Bowler confirmed that this would be submitted.*

HT

*Mrs Bowler confirmed that all other actions had been completed.*

GB/05/25

**Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties**

Minutes of Curriculum and Pupils Committee Meeting which was held on **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025** and the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting which took place on **18<sup>th</sup> November 2024** were available to view on Governor hub.

There were no matters arising.

**Approval of policies**

Governors **ratified** the following policies which had already been approved at committee meeting:

- **NCC Pay Policy - Approved** at the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November 24.
- **Finance Policy – Approved** at Curriculum and Pupils Committee meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February 25.

**GB/06/25 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training audit and training requirements for 2025/2026**

**Skills audit**

Dr Haessly agreed to circulate the skills audit to all governors to complete which would identify any gaps on the governing body.

**KT**  
**All gov's**

**GB/07/25 Holding executive leaders to account:**

Mrs. Bowler shared her Headteacher's report prior to the meeting, which is available to view on Governorhub. The following key points were highlighted:

- **Reduction in pupil numbers:** There had been a decrease in pupil numbers due to families moving out of the area.
- **Q: Are there children on the waiting list?**  
**A:** Yes, but it is a lengthy process as it must go through the admissions process at NCC.
- **F2:** 56 children enrolled, with 1st place out of 60 places. This is slightly lower than last year's figures.
- **Pupil progress:** Detailed discussions took place at the Curriculum and Pupils meeting.
- **Attendance:** Rigorous procedures were noted in the recent Ofsted report.
- **Attendance rewards system:** A new system for rewarding attendance is being trailed.
- **Personal development:** The school's personal development program is a strength, nearing outstanding in the Ofsted inspection.
- **Behaviour:** Incidents of behaviour have been reduced.
- **Bullying:** No reports of bullying.
- **Staff appraisals:** All staff appraisals are in place, including the Headteacher's appraisal.
- **Teaching Assistant (TA) appraisals:** Mrs Mitchell, Mrs Sheppard and Mrs Hardy have completed the TA appraisals. Mrs Mitchell will take on some teacher appraisals next year.
- **Staffing changes:** Noted in the Headteacher's report.
- **School Improvement Plan (SIP):** Reviewed in December and included in the report.
- **Education Improvement Advisors:** Five advisors visited the school last term, providing support with subject leaders taking ownership for monitoring areas such as book looks, pupil voice, etc., with SLT conducting observations.

**Q: How is everyone adapting to these changes?**

**A:** It will take time for everyone to adjust, although staff are very positive. People have gained a better understanding of their subjects. It's particularly challenging for existing staff due to the change.

**Q: How are the subject leads managing the additional work?**

**A:** Subject leaders have designated time for this role, but they are encouraged to request additional time if needed.

**Q: What is the impact of them being out of the classroom?**

**A:** Teaching Assistants (TAs) cover for them during this time.

**Q: Are the TAs happy to take on this responsibility?**

**A:** Yes, as the budget doesn't allow for additional teaching time or supply staff.

Governors acknowledged that, given the small size of the school, subject leaders have to cover multiple subjects, but the school only has two-year groups. The school has been fortunate that there have been no long-term absences among teaching staff, as TAs couldn't cover classes indefinitely.

- **Curriculum Intent and Implementation:** Clear on the school website.
- **Little Wandle:** Continues to be a strong aspect of the school.
- **Talk for Writing:** Mrs Mitchell is supporting its implementation.
- **Drawing Club:** Going well, with positive effects on students.

- **Thanks to Friends of Woodthorpe Infant School:** For raising money to support school activities.
- **Clubs and Parental Feedback:** Positive feedback on clubs, with good involvement from children eligible for Pupil Premium and SEND support.

**Q: How are the pupils responding to the rewards system?**

A: Class ambassadors have been consulted for feedback. One parent raised a concern that if a child gets 100% but the class as a whole doesn't, where is the intrinsic motivation? Adjustments are being made, and feedback from parents and students will be gathered. Governors appreciated that staff are listening to the pupil ambassadors.

**Q: Are SEND and Pupil Premium children represented among the ambassadors?**

A: Yes, representation has been ensured.

**Q: Do the children volunteer for these roles?**

A: Yes, the children put themselves forward and are voted in each year.

**Q: How do the children feel about having a one-year term? A year can feel like a long time for a child.**

A: Sports Ambassadors receive training as part of their role, which helps with the year-long commitment. This could be reviewed, with a potential focus on allowing a greater number of children to take part.

**Q: How can the school be in surplus now but face a deficit in two years?**

A: The budget programme accounts for this. Staff wages are expected to rise, and some staff will move to UPS scales. The forecast for 2026-27 shows a deficit, and decisions will need to be made to address this. These decisions are difficult but necessary to start planning for early. Last year, the school explored different contracts to save money, and where subscriptions weren't being used, they were cut. The school has already stripped back as much as possible. Mrs Bowler expressed concern about the next steps, particularly as there are no longer classroom-based Tas, these staff are now being used exclusively for interventions.

GB/08/25

**Overseeing Financial Performance – Financial reporting**

**Approval of Key Items:**

- **School Budget:** Approval scheduled for **6th March 2025**.
- **Scheme of Delegation:** To be included as an agenda item for the **summer term 2025** meeting for the 2025/2026 academic year.
- **Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS):** For 2024/2025 – **submitted**.
- **Year-End Re-Forecast:** Approval scheduled for **6th March 2025**.
- **Services for Schools:** Discussion on the **Buy Back of NCC Services**. A table prepared by Mrs Hunt highlighted price increases, which were shared with governors.

Additionally, there is an ongoing issue with water logging at the bottom of the site. The school is struggling to get a response from Property Services regarding this matter.

GB/09/25

**Update on appraisal process for Headteacher and staff including an update on the wellbeing of the Headteacher and staff.**

Included within the Head teachers report.

**Staff Wellbeing and Leadership Updates**

A **Wellbeing Staff Meeting** is held every term to address any concerns and attempt to resolve them. Following the recent Ofsted inspection, staff were given permission to take a break from monitoring for a couple of weeks due to fatigue. This break has helped staff to recharge, and governors noted that the staff are now in a much more positive position.

**Q: How is the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) doing?**

A: The SLT is doing well. They support each other and prioritise the wellbeing of the staff.

They work well together, love their roles, and can clearly see the positive impact they are having on the children.

Governors commended the strong leadership team for their dedication and the positive environment they have fostered.

GB/10/25

**Confirm arrangements to review Child Protection and Safeguarding recording and reporting systems (CP confidential file audit)**

**Safeguarding Update**

Safeguarding is effective across the school. A **file audit** was conducted, and the results have been **submitted**. Mrs Kay visits the school every term, and there have been **no concerns** raised during her visits.

GB/11/25

**14. Information from the Corporate Directors for consideration and action**

**Headteacher Wellbeing Support Package – Report for information for school governors Spring Term 2025**

The Headteacher Wellbeing Support Package by Nottinghamshire County Council aims to support the mental health and wellbeing of headteachers. Developed through a co-production approach involving various teams, it provides practical support and advice, ensuring headteachers can easily access necessary services and information.

The package includes links to support services and guidance documents for specific issues. It highlights two key support areas:

1. Critical Incident Support for schools facing sudden deaths within their community.
2. Ofsted Inspection Support for maintained schools, with multi-academy trust schools advised to seek support from their networks.

Governors play a crucial role in this initiative. They are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the toolkit and guide headteachers to the support available, especially during challenging times like Ofsted inspections or critical incidents. Governing Bodies are responsible for ensuring measures are in place to support the wellbeing of all school staff, including headteachers. They should monitor the wellbeing of headteachers and seek specialist support when needed.

The Education Improvement Service, Educational Psychology Service, Governor Services, HR Service, and Health and Safety Services are integral to this support framework, collectively working to enhance headteacher wellbeing across Nottinghamshire schools.

**Action for governors**

Governors should make themselves aware of the toolkit and signpost headteachers to the support when needed, particularly if a headteacher is struggling with their own mental health, in the case of an Ofsted school inspection or a critical incident.

**Small Schools Sustainability Strategy – Report for information for school governors Spring Term 2025**

The Nottinghamshire Plan 2021 – 2031 aims to support communities and families, build skills for good jobs, and ensure adequate school places for children and young people. Small and rural primary schools are essential to this vision. The plan values and supports small schools for their unique environments and community roles, with over 700 first-choice applications in 2024.

The strategy recognizes the crucial role of school leaders and governors in planning for their schools' futures. It encourages proactive approaches to sustainability, considering challenges and opportunities, and suggests partnerships and academisation as options. Schools are urged to work with Nottinghamshire County Council for guidance and support.

Developed with input from small school headteachers and consultations with Strategic Partnership Boards, the strategy aims to help small schools improve sustainability, secure

leadership and governance, maintain financial stability, and provide high-quality education. The council is committed to working with all small schools and academy trusts on these issues.

### **Actions for governors**

- Governors should ask informed questions about pupil numbers, SEND and finance to ensure that they are aware of the school's position.
- Governors should consider the strength of their governing board, focusing on recruitment and retention to ensure that the governing board remains functional and able to support and challenge the leadership of the school.
- Governors could also consider whether collaboration or federation with local schools might be appropriate.

GB/12/25

### **Communication received and updates**

#### **Chair's Report**

No updates to report.

#### **Headteacher's Report**

Please refer to confidential items.

#### **Clerk's Report**

#### **Spring 1 Governor Newsletter**

**HR Updates - URGENT ACTION** - Pay committees need to carefully consider the HR advice below regarding recent changes in the updated HR model policies and how the changes to School Pay and Appraisal impact their roles and responsibilities. See further details [GovernorHub](#)

**Admissions Updates** - Community and voluntary controlled schools will receive notification in the spring term confirming that NCC has determined the admission arrangements for 2026-2027 and governors must ensure this is noted and the school website updated. Own admission authority schools must determine their admission arrangements by 28 February 2025 – See article for further details.

**Safeguarding Children in Education Updates** - Spring term NCC & NSCP Child Protection and Confidential File Audit Toolkit for 2024-2025. The next Safeguarding Governor Focus Group meeting has been arranged for Monday 3rd of March 2025 3.45pm to 5.15pm

**Finance Update** - The School Finance team issued an updated LA Scheme for Financing Schools and Finance Policy at the end of the Autumn term. Maintained schools (apart from those with an academy order) are required to complete the SFVS. by 31st March 2025.

**Nottinghamshire Governor Conference** - Fearlessly and Intentionally Courageous Leadership 21st March 2025 at The Holiday Inn, South Normanton. See article from the East Midlands Education Support (EMED) Service of how to book a place.

#### **ARTICLES FOR GOVERNORS' INFORMATION:**

- Improving School Attendance Strategy
- Restrictive Practice: changes to the NCC training model and service offer
- Suspension and exclusions - support for governors

- National Updates
- Effective Governance - annual reviews
- The first Ofsted annual report from Sir Martyn Oliver, His Majesty's Chief Inspector
- NEW – DfE Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence - RISE
- Change of leadership at Nottinghamshire County Council
- Schools can now visit the new Sherwood Observatory in Sutton in Ashfield
- Governors for schools – supporting boards with vacancies.
- Governor Termly Briefing – please access this termly support at a time of suit you
- Celebrating Governance - Public Service – 10+ long service award for school governance
- Message from the Chair of the Nottinghamshire Association of Governors – Sue Beasley
- East Midlands Education Support (EMED) Service – Governor Training Updates.

### **Spring 2 Governor Newsletter**

- Governor Services Charges: Increase in charges due to rising costs of GovernorHub, with a restructured offer including GovernorHub Knowledge.
- HR Updates: Support for schools needing to make staffing reductions, with guidance from HR Business Partners.
- Updated DfE Guidance: New guidelines for governing boards on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Nottinghamshire Governors Conference: Scheduled for March 21, 2025, with the theme "Fearlessly and Intentionally Courageous Leadership." Keynote speaker: Diana Osagie.
- Various Updates: Information on admissions, safeguarding, finance, national updates, AI in education, GDPR, and more.

### **Actions for Governors:**

- Plan for Budget and Staffing: Contact your HR Business Partner early if your school is considering redundancies before August 31, 2025.
- Review DfE Guidance: Familiarize yourself with the updated SEND guidelines.
- Stay Informed: Keep up with updates on HR, admissions, safeguarding, finance, and other key areas. Governor Termly Briefings are now available to view on the NCC YouTube site as per below:
  - View the corporate director's reports: [https://youtu.be/kwnVRZ9Ts\\_g](https://youtu.be/kwnVRZ9Ts_g)
  - View the spring 2025 agenda briefing: <https://youtu.be/toXJTq115uU>
- Utilise GovernorHub: Make use of the GovernorHub Knowledge included in the restructured offer.
- Attend the Conference: Participate in the Nottinghamshire Governors Conference on March 21, 2025

**GB/13/25**

### **General Data Protection Regulations**

### **Review and Confirmation of the Appointment of Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Senior Information and Risk Owner (SIRO)**

Mrs Bowler reported that Mrs Mitchell holds the position of Data Protection Officer (DPO), while Mrs Bowler herself is the Senior Information and Risk Owner (SIRO).

#### **Report from the DPO and Information Governance Governor**

Mrs. Bowler provided the following updates:

- No breaches or Subject Access Requests (SARs) have occurred.
- One Freedom of Information request has been received.
- All staff completed GDPR training in September 2024

**GB/14/25**

#### **Review of all recent governor monitoring visit reports (Safeguarding, SEND, PP and link governors - linked to School Improvement Priorities)**

- **Mrs Jacques and Mrs Bradley** – Both attended the curriculum evening on **23rd September 2024**, which was a successful event.
- **Mrs Bradley** – Attended a meeting regarding the Opal project on **15th October 2024**, where she highlighted the children's excitement about it. Mrs Bowler expressed her gratitude to Mrs Mitchell and Mrs Henson for their efforts in making the Opal project a success. Equipment for the project has been donated by parents, and the children are capturing photos of the play sessions.
- **Mr. Kay** – The Health & Safety and Safeguarding monitoring visit took place on **18th October 2024**.
- **Dr Haessly** – Completed an EYFS visit, commenting that the provision has been transformed. She expressed her sincere thanks to Mrs Hardy and the team for their hard work and dedication.
- **Mrs Jacques** – An English visit will be scheduled soon. It was postponed due to Ofsted, with the decision made to revisit after the half-term to allow staff some time to rest.

**GB/15/25**

#### **Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement**

- Governor monitoring visits.
- Whole governor presence at Ofsted Inspection.
- EYFS and Curriculum visits.
- Mrs Bradley Opal support as governor representative.
- Curriculum evening – Mrs Bradley and Mrs Jacques attended.

#### **Review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account.**

- Questions on the HT report.
- Attendance reward discussion held.
- Absences and Attendance including the new Policy.
- Appraisal cycle discussed.
- Challenge during the meeting.
- Well-being questioning
- Significant improvements in F2

#### **What have the governing body been up to?**

- Ofsted visit – all governors attended which was commended.
- Monitoring visits

- Safeguarding training.

**GB/16/25 Confirmation of dates for 2024/25**

**Summer** – Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 6.00pm

**GB/17/25 Determination of confidentiality of business**

Governors

**Resolved**

that the part of **GB/07/25** and the Headteacher’s correspondence discussion be confidential

All other papers will be available on request.

**The meeting closed at 7.20pm**

Signed Kate Harty (chair) Date 3.6.25

School Display