
School:	Woodthorpe Infant School
Meeting title:	Autumn term meeting of the governing body
Date and time:	Tuesday 8th October 2024 at 6:00pm
Location:	School

'A' denotes absence

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

In attendance

Jenny Kirkwood (Clerk to the governors)
 Nina Turner (Clerk to the governors)
 Andy Lau – Associate Member

GB/45/24

Apologies for absence

Action

Dr Haessly welcomed all governors to the meeting. A special welcome was given to Mrs Mitchell, Deputy Head and newly elected staff governor.

Apologies for absence were **received** and **accepted** from Mrs Everitt.

GB/46/24

Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

Confirmation of completion of governor annual declarations (updates to school website and GIAS)

Mrs Bowler **confirmed** that this was up to date.

Actions for governors

- **Review and sign 2024/2025 Register of Business Interest**

Mrs Bowler thanked the governors for completing their registrations of business interests and asked those who hadn't as yet, to action asap.

All Govs

- **Review and sign 2024/2025 Declaration of Eligibility**

Mrs Bowler confirmed that these had all been completed.

- **Review and sign 2024 Governor Code of Conduct**

Mrs Bowler confirmed that these were shared on Governorhub and urged governors to complete asap.

All Govs

GB/47/24

Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months

The clerk informed governors that the following terms of office end next year:

- Mrs Kay – Co-opted Governor 1st March 2025.

The Clerk reported that Mr Lau's term of office had come to an end. He had expressed a desire to continue to serve as a Governor. The clerk reported that there are no co-opted vacancies at the moment, but the governing body could re constitute by completing an Instrument of Governance and request to reduce the number of parent governors from 3 to 2 and increase the number of co-opted governors from 4 to 5. In the meantime, the recommendation was to appoint Mr Lau as an Associate Member.

Governors **agreed** to this proposal and Mr Lau was welcomed back in his new role of Associate Member.

Governors **agreed** that as soon as the constitution was accepted, Mr Lau would become a Co-opted Governor.

The Clerk **agreed** to notify governor services of Mr Lau's appointment and submit the Instrument of Governance.

Clerk

Mrs Bowler informed governors that there was still a parent governor vacancy. Governors agreed to start the recruitment process for this position.

HT

GB/48/24

Election of Vice Chair

Mrs Kay indicated that she would be prepared to stand for the position of vice-chair. It was proposed and seconded that Mrs Kay be elected vice-chair and, there being no further nominations, it was:

Resolved

that Mrs Kay be elected vice-chair for a period of office expiring at the date of the 2025 Autumn term meeting.

GB/49/24

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

The minutes of the summer term meeting held on **Wednesday 5th June 2024**, having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

Review of actions

GB/09/24 - Dr Haessly reported that she had not yet circulated the audit, as she was waiting for the new governors to be in position. *It was agreed that this action be deferred until the new parent governor has been elected.*

Spring
FGB

GB/10/24 - Mrs Kay and Mrs Bowler met to undertake the Safeguarding Audit.

An action identified within the audit was for all governors to undertake the Prevent Training. *Mrs Bowler reported that there are still some governors to complete this training and asked that they do so asap.*

All Govs

GB/17/24 - It was agreed that Mr Lau would visit to undertake a SEND visit. *Mr Lau confirmed that a SEND visit was undertaken in the summer term.*

GB/30/24 - 12th July 24 is a school inset day. An ex-Head Teacher, who is a current Ofsted Inspector is coming in between 9.00am – 10.30am. She is happy to meet governors either at this time, or on a separate occasion. *Mrs Bowler confirmed that this meeting took place on the 27th of September 24.*

GB/50/24 Confirmation of completion of annual planning documents - policy check list and annual planner

Mrs Bowler confirmed that the Policy Checklist and Annual Planner had been completed.

Approval of 2024/2025 scheme of delegation
Governors **approved** the scheme of delegation.

GB/51/24 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

Minutes of Curriculum and Pupils Committee Meeting which was held on **16th July 2024** were available to view on Governor hub.
There were no matters arising.

Approval of policies

Governors **approved** the following policies:

- Approval of Child Protection Policy
- Approval of NCC HR model policies

GB/52/24 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training audit and training requirements for 2024/2025

- **Governor skills audit update and gap analysis**

It was agreed that the completion of the skills audit would be deferred until the new parent governor had been elected.

- **Review of governor training requirements (including safeguarding) for 2024/2025**

Dr Haessly reported that she had received an email from the Local Authority detailing training courses, governors were asked to notify her should they like to attend any.

A discussion was held around training for Ofsted.

Mrs Bowler agreed to share the National College training.

Governors **confirmed** that they had completed Safeguarding Training.

GB/53/24 Financial reporting

- **Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) 2024/2025**

Dr Haessly and Mrs Everitt **agreed** to complete the SFVS which is due for submission on **31st March 2025**.

- **Year-end re-forecast**

Mrs Bowler reported that the Year -end re-forecast was due to take place on **12th November 2024**.

- **Governors' Year End Financial Statement for 2023/2024 (including the Committed Balances Return 2023/2024) for information.**

Mrs Bowler confirmed that this was submitted and discussed at the Summer F&P Committee.

FGB

All Govs

HT

RE&KH

GB/54/24

Holding executive leaders to account: Summary of Headteacher's report and governors' questions and challenge.

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

- Pupil progress – EYFS, Phonics and Year 2 data were all above national.
- Attendance continues to be a strength of the school 96.3% compared to the national figure of 95.4%.
- Personal development and well-being continue to be a strength of the school.
- Behaviour – Staff have undertaken a pupil questionnaire, the results of which will be shared on governorhub. Results from all classes were collated and all were very positive. Bullying was identified as an area of concern, so follow up work has taken place to clarify with the pupils what their experiences and thoughts were. Where there were issues, they were one off incidents.
- Cover arrangements – A conscious effort continues to be made to not use supply staff to support the budget.

Q: There appears to be a significant absence with playworkers, why is this?

A: This data is for the whole year, and there have been a number of absences due to bereavement and other issues.

- Quality of teaching – all subject leads are doing lesson 'drop ins' to encourage them to have ownership of subject areas. Two Quality Assurance visits took place, both of which expressed how impressed they were with the improvements made in F2. Mrs Bowler expressed her gratitude to the Foundation team who have significantly refined the curriculum and transformed the provision.

Governors agreed, with one commenting that they had seen the staff working at the weekend which shows their commitment and dedication to the school.

Governors commended the 4 staff members working so hard in the Foundation unit.

- Carolyn Brearley (EIA) worked with the Head Teacher, Deputy Head, F2 lead and Science Lead in July. All 'Intent and Implementation' documents now have an 'Impact' section and also make reference to the EYFS curriculum.
- Budget – The year finished with a surplus of **£2700**. Thanks were expressed to Sara Hunt, who had worked hard on the budget.

Q: What are the 'getting to know me' forms?

A: These are forms used in school to support with SEND and referrals to Paediatrician. This is a long process, so the school commits to the process knowing that the referral will probably come through after the child has left but knowing that this will support the pupil in their next provision.

Governors expressed their thanks to Mrs Bowler for the detailed report.

GB/55/24

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

- **Confirm external adviser for meeting in Autumn term.**
Mrs Bowler confirmed that her appraisal took place yesterday and new targets were set. Simon Thompson is undertaking the role of External Advisor.
- **Confirm/appoint appraisal governors – confirm appraisers have completed training.**
Dr Haessly and Mrs Kay were appointed as Appraisal Governors.

Staff appraisals will be completed next half term.

Mrs Bowler added that she completed the staff appraisals July, in order to start a fresh cycle in the new academic year.

- **Confirmation of the Quality Assurance Governor arrangements**

Miss Collins confirmed that she would undertake the Quality Assurance role.

Q: Governors asked how the SLT were?

A: Mrs Mitchell stated that it had been a busy start to the term, but she was thoroughly enjoying the role. Governors commented that she had become Deputy Head, had a new year group and taken on Opal and yet approaches everything with a positive manner. She agreed and expressed the importance of setting an example for staff and encouraging staff morale wherever possible.

Mrs Bowler and Mrs Mitchell check in with staff regularly and provide additional support where necessary.

Mrs Bradley added that the staff seemed really happy when you chat to them. Mrs Jacques agreed and commented that the school is well organised and appears to be a happy place. She added that there had been a huge change in F2 with a great atmosphere, free flow working well and children positively interacting.

Dr Haessly added that she had popped in earlier in the term and was pleased to see the children engaged in learning and very settled.

GB/56/24

Receive and scrutinise headteacher's annual report on whole school appraisal process. (Pending updated of policy as a result of recent statutory changes)

This includes:

- **Review appraisal policy in line with recommended changes from HR Provider, when received.**

It was agreed that this be deferred to November.

F&P

- **Ensure effective appraisal arrangements for all teaching staff are in place.**

It was agreed that this be deferred to November.

F&P

- **Ensure appraisers are trained and that a timetable is in place for termly review.**

It was agreed that this be deferred to November.

F&P

- **Confirm arrangements to consider/ratify headteacher pay recommendations for all staff in line with the scheme of delegation and the pay policy.**

It was agreed that this be deferred to November.

F&P

- **Confirm arrangements to receive the appraisal governors pay recommendations effective from 1.9.24 for the Headteacher in line with the scheme of delegation and the pay policy.**

It was agreed that this be deferred to November.

F&P

GB/57/24

Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, set by governors.

Review and embed the vision, ethos and strategy of the school reflected in the school improvement plan.

Approve (or confirm arrangements to approve) the School Improvement Plan, as detailed in the scheme of delegation.

The new School Improvement Plan was shared with Governors. Mrs Bowler highlighted the 4 priority areas for 24-25.:

- **Priority 1** - English – Although the provision is good, there is a new English lead, so this was carried over to ensure that the high standards are maintained.
- **Priority 2** - Curriculum – To include: Refining curriculum, enhancing long term planning, developing assessments and enhancing provision.
- **Priority 3** - Opal – Enhancing outdoor provision to improve outcomes for children and to develop structured playtime.
- **Priority 4** - EYFS – Improve the quality of provision. High quality Teaching and Learning and a focus on interactions with the staff.

Link Governors

The following link Governors were agreed:

- Priority 1 - English – Mrs Jacques
- Priority 2 - Curriculum – Miss Collins
- Priority 3 - Opal – Mrs Bradley
- Priority 4 - EYFS – Dr Haessly

GB/58/24

14. Information from the Corporate Directors for consideration and action

Exclusions and Suspensions: Kathryn Ramsay and Julie Jones (Team Managers, Education Partnership Team)

The Department for Education have issued revised guidance on suspensions and exclusions, which place significant responsibilities on governors to fulfil their role within the process.

During the academic year 2022-2023, there were 13,813 suspensions and 126 permanent exclusions across Nottinghamshire. This means Nottinghamshire's suspension rate was 10.82, placing the county slightly higher than the national rate of 9.33, and the permanent exclusion rate was 0.10, placing the county very slightly below the national rate of 0.11.

In the previous academic year, 2021-2022, Nottinghamshire suspensions were 9478 with permanent exclusions at 59. In summary, suspensions grew by nearly 4500 and permanent exclusions more than doubled.

The Timpson Report of May 2019 found just 7% of children that are permanently excluded go on to achieve good passes in English and maths GCSEs; they are more likely to go on to be out of education, employment, and training in those critical years after the compulsory schooling age and 23% of young offenders with sentences of less than 12 months have been excluded previously. While exclusion is not necessarily the cause of these worse outcomes, it does, at the very least, identify a group of young people that have high levels of need for support.

Action for governors

1. Ensure that there are clear processes in place to comply with your school's legal duty to arrange suitable full-time provision for pupils of compulsory school age from the sixth consecutive school day of a suspension.
2. Ensure that the governing board understands the requirements to consider the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded pupil.
3. Ensure that there are clear processes in place to keep a placement of off-site direction under review.
4. Consider all governors attend panel training webinar (NGA) and, if an exclusion panel is required, revisit this as a refresh prior to the meeting.

Working Together to Improve School Attendance: Denis A McCarthy Service Manager (Family Service)

The Department for Education have issued revised statutory guidance for schools, academy trusts and local authorities entitled, [Working together to improve school attendance](#). The principle duties and expectations are set out in a [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#).

Local authorities are expected to adopt a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services. As a result, there will be a new strategy for improving school attendance in Nottinghamshire.

There is a statutory requirement for schools to share their daily attendance data. The Department for Education. There are a number of new attendance register codes in the 2024 regulations and guidance.

The revised guidance strongly emphasises the importance of a Support First approach before legal interventions are considered to address persistent and unauthorised absence.

The Department for Education have introduced a National Framework for Legal Intervention. The national framework for legal intervention has established a national threshold for Penalty Notices of 5 days/10 sessions over 10 weeks.

Fines have increased in value from £120 to £160. For the first fine issued to a parent for an individual child, the amount will reduce to £80 if paid within 21 days. However, in accordance with the new national Framework, this option will only apply to the first fine a parent is issued for an individual child within a three-year rolling period.

The national framework limits the number of fines a parent can be issued for a child over a 3-year rolling period to two fines before it is escalated for prosecution through the Magistrates Court under s441 of the Education Act 1996.

The DfE guidance also sets an expectation that when a school becomes aware that the national threshold has been met, they **must** consider whether a penalty notice can and should be issued or not.

The County Council have updated the Improving School Attendance Toolkit available on the school's portal.

Action for governors

1. Ensure the school's attendance policy reflects the changes outlined in the new Statutory Guidance.
2. Ensure the school have communicated to parents any changes to the school attendance policy to meet the expectations of the new National Framework for legal intervention.
3. Ensure your school is familiar with the revised guidance and new attendance codes.

A lengthy discussion was held around fining and whether the introduction of fining would act as a deterrent for family holidays during term time.

It was suggested that it be clear within the policy that fining was discretionary, but caution was expressed that this could lead to problems if one family is fined, and another is not.

Q: What are we doing to support attendance?

A: Attendance data is included in the Newsletter, attendance rewards are being presented to the best class, so a focus is on rewarding good attendance rather than penalising poor attendance.

Governors agreed that focusing on the rewards for a school which is above the national average is a sensible decision. Mrs Bowler expressed her thanks to Mrs Kay, for supporting

with the wording in the Policy.

Q: Is attendance having a significant impact due to multiple holidays?

A: Some are having more than one holiday per year. Every week meet Mrs Bowler meets with Mrs Hunt to look at attendance and monitor it closely. They keep a closer eye on pupils whose attendance is below 96%. For those pupils, parent meetings are held. Letters were sent out to families to communicate attendance data for their child at the end of the summer term.

A discussion was held around the tone of the letters and how they might be received when many of the absences are due to legitimate illnesses.

Governors agreed to monitor the holidays but ensure that the school is in line with the Junior School.

GB/59/24

Safeguarding information for consideration and action:

- **Assurance of statutory safeguarding arrangements in Nottinghamshire Schools, colleges, and independent providers**

Mrs Kay and Mrs Bowler to meet on **Friday 18th October 2024.**

HT&LK

- **Safeguarding Children in Education: self-audit tool 2024/2025**

Mrs Bowler **confirmed** that this will be actioned.

HT

- **Confirmation that all governors have read all of KCSiE 2024**

Governors were urged to complete the forms asap.

All Govs

Reminder that the autumn term Safeguarding Governor Focus Group meeting is **18th November 2024.**

- **Safeguarding update**

Mrs Kay and Mrs Bowler to meet next week to carry out their termly Safeguarding checks which will include checking CPOMs and the Single Central Record.

HT & LK

GB/60/24

General Data Protection Regulations - Receive report from Data Protection Officer and Information Governance governor including:

- **Data Protection Officer**

Mrs Mitchell agreed to undertake the role of DPO. The Clerk agreed to identify training and share with Mrs Bowler.

Clerk

- **FOI requests and data protection breaches – actions and recommendations.**

Mrs Bowler reported that there had been no freedom of information requests or data protection breaches.

• **Audit/risk register updates: (Data protection and Cyber Security arrangements etc.**
Mrs Bowler confirmed that the Audit/Risk register was updated in May 24.

- **Training undertaken (staff and governors)**

All staff have been asked to undertake National College GDPR training by **October 18th 2024.**

GB/61/24

Communication received and updates

- **From Chair** – None to report
- **From Headteacher**

Governorhub – Mrs Bowler reported that she was preparing a folder in readiness for the Ofsted visit.

Opal – The official launch will take place the first week back after half term. The programme is in its early stages with the action plan written.

- Mrs Bradley is involved as governor representative along with an F2 parent.
- The shed has been ordered along with other materials.
- Weekly Assembly will take place where the children look at different equipment and assess both the risks and the benefits.
- Not all equipment and resources will be out at once.
- Dates have been booked in for training.
- Possibly changing the format of the dinner time in attempt to speed this up and allow more time for children to play. Mrs Mitchell has visited a school which operates a different approach and stated that the session ran smoothly.

Class Dojo was launched yesterday with QR codes shared with parents.

A discussion was held around Dojo including the number of functions it has; communicating directly with the teacher, awarding points, whole school communication etc.

Governors felt that taking the time to introduce different elements of the programme was a good idea. Mrs Bowler agreed and added that when different parts are rolled out, clear guidelines will be set for use when messages are enabled.

- **From Clerk - Governor Newsletter**

Autumn term 2024 (1) newsletter – summary of key information for governors

- Introduction – reminder of autumn term **Actions for Governors** including confirmations required.
- School admissions – key dates and required statutory consultation (
- Safeguarding – KCSiE 2024 – **Action for governors** confirmation required that governors have read the whole document and governor safeguarding training is up to date with requirements. A CP policy and audit tool has been provided by Cheryl Stollery.
- Working together to improve attendance
- Nottinghamshire Local area partnership SEND strategy 2024-2027
- New Government's Legislative Agenda for schools laid out in the King's speech.
- Children's Society's 2023 annual report on the wellbeing of children in the UK.
- Transforming Public Procurement (TPP) - changes for schools and MATs in October 2024
- What governors need to know – HT reports, information and data
- Governing Body Responsibilities – School visits.
- Associate Member on board of governors – compliance check.
- Governor Services – accessing your board's professional governance advice and guidance.
- Clerking of governors meetings by school administration staff
- Message from the Chair of the Nottinghamshire Association of Governors – Sue Beasley

GB/62/24 Review of all recent governor monitoring visit reports (Safeguarding, SEND, PP and link governors - linked to School Improvement Priorities)

- **Feedback of key points/areas of learning**

The following governor monitoring visits have been carried out and reports available to view on Governorhub:

- Miss Collins – SIP Priority 2 and EYFS
- Mr Lau - SEND
Governors noted that until the new constitution is agreed, another SEND link governor would need to be appointed to work alongside Mr Lau.
Dr Haessly **agreed** to undertake this role.
- Mrs Jacques - Little Wandle
- Mrs Kay - Safeguarding and H&S

- **Actions identified for governing body and school.**

Mrs Bowler added that there were a number of actions following the Health and Safety visit, which have been actioned. These included; light on driveway, CPOMS alerts (now alerts go to SLT and key staff, not all) finger guards and yellow lines.

GB/63/24 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement

- SEND – Mr Lau visit, held SENCO to account.
- EYFS and Curriculum visit
- Mrs Bradley Opal support as governor representative.
- Curriculum evening – Mrs Bradley and Mrs Jacques attended.

GB/64/24 Review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account.

- Questions on the HT report.
- Dojo discussion
- Absences and Attendance including the new Policy.
- Appraisal cycle
- Challenge during the meeting.
- Well-being questioning
- Improvements in F2

GB/65/24 What have the governing body been up to?

- Attending Curriculum evening
- HR related matters supported.
- Ofsted discussion – should the governors have a working party to ensure that they are prepared. Mrs Bowler responded that she was creating Ofsted cards which will include bullet points stating how the school meets the Ofsted headings. She showed an example to governors and agreed to share these after the meeting.

Q: Do you want to have Ofsted on the agenda for a Curriculum and Pupils Meeting?

HT

A: Yes, governors agreed that if the cards are shared and then discussed at the meeting, they would find that helpful.

- Mrs Mitchell shared Class 5's Learning Journey folder which is used to capture learning and the pupils revisit to enable them to learn more and remember more.

GB/66/24 Confirmation of dates for 2024/25

Spring – Tuesday 25th February 2025 6.00pm
Summer – Tuesday 3rd June 2025 6.00pm

GB/67/24 Determination of confidentiality of business

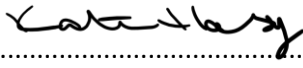
Governors

Resolved

that the staff absence discussion be confidential

All other papers will be available on request.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm

Signed  (chair) Date25.2.25.....

School Display