



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD  
OF WESTMINSTER NURSERY SCHOOL, CREWE  
ON MONDAY 27<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

**Governors Present:**

|                 |      |             |
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| Emma Connor     | (EC) | Headteacher |
| Donna Reed      | (DR) | Chair       |
| Liz Austin      | (LA) |             |
| Neil Smith      | (NS) |             |
| Leanne Jennings | (LJ) |             |
| Steve Hogben    | (SH) |             |
| Graham Chadwick | (GC) |             |

**Others in attendance:**

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| Hilary Cummings | Clerk to the Governors |
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**PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

The meeting commenced at 4pm, and Graham Chadwick was welcomed to the meeting.

| ITEM |   |
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|      | <p>Prior to the meeting, governors received a presentation from NS on Finance, looking at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) and how the board meets the requirements of the governance section. It was noted that the latest submission was graded 'Good'.</li> <li>• The 3-Year Plan as a snapshot of overall financial health.</li> <li>• Earmarked reserves – how and why they are used.</li> <li>• Devolved Formula Capital – how it can be used.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governor question:</b> In the 3-year plan, projected income for 2024/25 is 25% lower than this year. Why is that?<br/>Response: Income forecasts are always extremely cautious, based on minimum pupil numbers, because we do not want to make spending decisions based on income we can not be certain of. It is very likely that income will actually be higher, and the predicted in-year deficit of £75K will not occur.</p> <p><b>Governor question:</b> What happens if you make an earmarked reserve for a particular project, but then priorities change?<br/>Response: We can apply to change the use of the EMR.</p> <p>Governors discussed the unpredictability of pupil numbers and thanked NS for a very useful presentation.</p> |
| 1.   | <p><b>APOLOGIES AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) ITEMS</b><br/>Apologies were received and accepted from Linda Buchanan and Nathan Tice.</p> <p>There were two items of business to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas events</li> <li>• School photographer</li> </ul>   |

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| <p><b>2.</b></p> | <p><b>CONFLICT OF INTEREST</b><br/> Governors made the following declarations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR is a governor at Beechwood Primary School.</li> </ul> <p>There were no conflicts declared with the business of the meeting.</p> <p>The clerk noted that declarations of interest were up to date on GovernorHub, apart from 3 governors. NS would ensure that declarations were published on the school website.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to remind governors to complete declarations of interest on GovernorHub.</b></p>  |
| <p><b>3.</b></p> | <p><b>ELECTION OF CHAIR</b><br/> DR was elected for a further term of 1 year but noted that it would be important to look at succession planning for the future.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to add election of Chair &amp; Vice Chair to summer term agenda.</b></p>   |
| <p><b>4.</b></p> | <p><b>ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR</b><br/> LA was elected as Vice Chair for a term of 1 year.</p>  |
| <p><b>5.</b></p> | <p><b>MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>a) Governors noted the following changes to the membership of the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dawn Clark had resigned on 9/10/23. Messages of thanks had been sent and GovernorHub updated.</li> <li>• Linda Buchanan had been approved as a LA governor and was duly appointed by the board wef 27/11/23.</li> <li>• No Nominations had been received for the role of Parent Governor, so NT was appointed as a parent governor wef 20/11/23 (Expiry of term as a Co-opted governor).</li> <li>• Graham Chadwick was appointed as a Co-opted governor and welcomed to the board.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to update GovernorHub.</b></p> <p>b) The following vacancies were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Co-opted governors</li> </ul> <p>c) There were no terms of office due to expire before the next meeting.</p> <p>d) Governors confirmed that NS would update GIAS with recent changes.</p> <p><b>ACTION: NS to add GC to GovernorHub and update GIAS.</b></p> |
| <p><b>6.</b></p> | <p><b>PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>a) Governors <b>approved</b> the part one minutes of the summer term board of governors meeting, held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023, as a true and accurate record of proceedings. A copy of the minutes was signed by the Chair and retained by the school.</p>   |

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|     | <p>b) The action list from the last FGB meeting was reviewed and the following noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the resignation of DC, DR and LA were following-up community links in search of potential co-opted governors.</li> </ul> <p>All other actions had been completed.</p>  |
| 7.  | <p><b>CHAIR'S ACTION AND CORRESPONDENCE</b></p> <p>No decisions had been taken on behalf of the board, but DR noted involvement in recent interviews and the Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>Governors congratulated EC and all staff on the outcome of the inspection, which they felt was a true reflection of the school. The inspection had been very rigorous, but staff and parent feedback to Ofsted had been entirely positive, and Westminster had been found to be a very inclusive school.</p>   |
| 8.  | <p><b>COMMITTEES AND NOMINATED GOVERNORS</b></p> <p>Functions were delegated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND Governor – LB</li> <li>• Safeguarding Governor – DR</li> <li>• E-safety Governor – NT</li> </ul> <p>Membership of the following committees was agreed in line with the list shared on GovernorHub. It was agreed that GC would consider the work of each committee over the next term before deciding which to join.</p> <p>The terms of reference had all been reviewed in committee meetings and were <b>approved by the FGB</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Premises</li> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Chairs (Personnel)</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Headteacher's Performance Management panel</li> </ul> <p>The following committees would be constituted as required and the terms of reference had been reviewed on Governorhub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay Committee</li> <li>• Hearings Committee</li> <li>• Staff Grievance Committee</li> <li>• Staff Disciplinary/Dismissal Committee</li> </ul> |
| 9.  | <p><b>GOVERNORS' CODE OF CONDUCT</b></p> <p>Governors approved the NGA Code of Conduct reviewed on GovernorHub.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to set up confirmation and remind governors to confirm acceptance.</b></p>  |
| 10. | <p><b>PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p>a) Governors acknowledged the receipt of all autumn term committee minutes which had been circulated via Governor Hub prior to the meeting. A verbal update was given on all committees:</p>   |

### Premises Committee (9/10/23)

LA provided the following updates to the minutes:

- The installation of the new heating system had now been completed.
- NS had contacted the original contractor regarding the gap identified between the soft surface and hard tarmac in the playground. They would be looking at whether repair was possible, or whether a short-term fix needed to be found, to remove the trip hazard, until the surface could be replaced.

### Curriculum Committee (18/10/23)

The committee had looked at attainment and progress, together with the contextual information for both Caterpillars (2YO) and Butterflies (3&4YO). The following key points were noted:

- Physical skills were a strength in the Caterpillars group, while communication & language, and personal social development were clear areas of need.
- 90% of children in Butterflies had English as an additional language (EAL) and this was reflected in low baseline data for communication and language.
- Curriculum goals had been set to reflect the needs of the cohort.

The committee had also reviewed:

- The School development Plan (SDP)
- SEND
- Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)
- Feedback from a visit by Danielle Holdcroft – Head of Early Years for Cheshire East.

### Finance Committee (6/11/23)

See item 11 below.

### Chairs' Committee (18/10/23)

Minutes of the Chairs' Committee were not circulated due to confidentiality, but DR noted that the committee had considered the following areas:

- Staffing update
- Governor vacancies
- Staff appraisal and pay recommendations.
- School Improvement Partner
- Governor Development Plan
- Ofsted visit
- Trip to the Blue Planet Aquarium

#### **b) Recommendations requiring approval**

There were no recommendations from committees requiring Full Board approval.

#### **c) Monitoring Reports**

##### SEND

LB had visited the school on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and the visit report was available on GovernorHub. Key points included:

- 11 children now had SEND plans in place, up from 5 in September.
- EC had applied for additional inclusion funding.
- EC had visited Springfield Special School to look at the use of sensory circuits

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|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nicola Clark had started her SENDCo training</li> <li>• Danielle Holdcroft had expressed an interest in using the sensory room for outreach.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governor question:</b> Will outreach generate any income for the nursery?<br/> Response: It's not clear. We are waiting for more information, but it seems reasonable to expect payment for use of a facility that has cost the school money to build.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u><br/> DR had visited in September, October and November to look at safeguarding and noted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SCR had been checked and it had been agreed that DR would look at it in screen, then sign a separate document to confirm.</li> <li>• EC provided a safeguarding update every week. There were 11 children currently on the register, and many were concerns around domestic violence.</li> <li>• Mrs Smith had now received the training as the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)</li> <li>• NT had taken on the role of e-safety governor.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governor question:</b> Do you ever see children mirroring violent behaviour they may have seen at home?<br/> Response: No</p> <p><b>Governor question:</b> Are there any links/concerns around County lines?<br/> Response: There was an issue with a family member of a pupil, but nothing else as far as we know.</p> |
| 11. | <p><b>FINANCIAL/COMPLIANCE MATTERS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Governors received the audit certificate for the unofficial School Fund for 2022/23.</b></li> <li><b>Governors approved the appointment of Pat Le Grice as auditor for the 2023/24 accounts.</b></li> <li>The latest budget vs actuals report was available on GovernorHub and had been reviewed in detail by the Finance Committee.</li> <li>Governors had received an update on the 3-year budget plan as part of the Finance presentation at the start of the meeting. It was noted that promises had been made to increase the hourly rate for Early Years funding, but no changes had been announced as yet.</li> <li>DR would work with NS to complete the SFVS for submission by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.</li> <li>The asset register was currently being updated and would be brought to the spring term FGB meeting for approval.</li> <li><b>Governors approved the Manual of Internal Financial Procedures (MIFP),</b> which had been circulated on GovernorHub ahead of the meeting.</li> </ol> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to add asset register to spring term FGB agenda</b></p>  |
| 12. | <b>PART ONE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING</b>   |

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|     | <p>The Headteacher’s report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting and the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ofsted inspection had highlighted 2 areas to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Curriculum development was already included in the SDP and specific actions were detailed in the Post-Ofsted action plan.</li> <li>b) Staff consistency – The plan identified actions around training, mentoring and monitoring.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• EC hoped to arrange a visit to an ‘Outstanding’ rated nursery, to see what the next steps might look like for Westminster.</li> <li>• Staff wellbeing was very good.</li> <li>• Pupil numbers were consistently up, and the nursery had a very good reputation in the local community.</li> <li>• 75% of pupils had English as an additional language, and there were 17 different languages.</li> <li>• Attendance was down slightly in Butterflies, but this was due to the usual colds and bugs, including Chicken Pox.</li> <li>• Parental engagement was going well. Staff worked hard to ensure they were accessible and approachable and the stay and play session in October was well-attended. The lending library was well-used and had been praised by Ofsted.</li> <li>• Engagement activities listed in the report included a trip to the Blue Planet Aquarium.</li> <li>• Two children were in receipt of the Early Years Pupil Premium, which provided an extra 62p per hour for those children.</li> </ul> <p><u>SDP</u><br/>A RAG-rated copy of the SDP had been circulated on GovernorHub, and Governors noted that some actions had already been completed.</p> |
| 13. | <p><b>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER</b><br/><b>Governors approved the appointment of Tim Nelson</b> as the external adviser for the Headteacher’s Performance Management.</p>   |
| 14. | <p><b>DIRECTOR’S REPORT</b><br/>The autumn term Director’s Report had been circulated at the start of the term and relevant items discussed in committees as appropriate.</p>  |
| 15. | <p><b>GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT &amp; TRAINING</b></p> <p>a) The Governance Development plan for 2023/24 was approved and reviewed, and the following updates noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Priority 1</b> – Finance training had been held prior to this meeting and the Finance committee had reviewed the budget in the context of the SDP. Overall rating <b>Amber</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Priority 2</b> – All actions in progress. Overall rating <b>Amber</b></li> </ul> <p>b) <u>Training</u><br/>DR had agreed to cover the training link governor role temporarily, and the training log had been shared on GovernorHub. Most governors had completed Safeguarding and Prevent training, so further governor-specific training would be identified for the spring and summer terms, using the skills audits completed last term.</p>  |

**ACTION: SH to arrange time with NS in January to develop understanding of schools' finance.**

c) Governor Visits

DR circulated a revised pro-forma for governor visit reports, along with some suggested questions, which could be adapted and used as appropriate.

DR had visited on 2<sup>nd</sup> November to look at EAL and the use of repetition. The group used photos from the Blue Planet trip, and DR observed a very inclusive session where all children were engaged.

LA had visited on 23<sup>rd</sup> November to look at communication and language, and the quality of interactions. Some closed questions were observed, but it was recognised that this was sometimes necessary where children did not have sufficient vocabulary to respond to open questions. It was noted that the children were very communicative and co-operated well with each other, despite language differences.

SH had visited on 23<sup>rd</sup> November to look at the outdoor environment; how different areas were used, whether they were suitable, and how popular they were. In terms of further development, a popular request was for a large sand pit.

Reports for each of the visits above were available on GovernorHub.

It was agreed that GC's focus would be Personal, Social and Emotional Development, but governors would change their area of focus each year.

**16. SCHOOL POLICIES**  
The following policies had been reviewed in committees and were listed for information:

- Staff Wellbeing
- Uncollected Child
- Adult Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Use
- Appraisal
- Arrival and Departure Routines
- British Values
- Radicalisation
- E-Safety
- Managing Continence
- Missing Child

The following **statutory** policies had been reviewed in committees and were **approved** by the FGB:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Admissions
- Complaints
- Capability
- Travel Health & Safety
- General Health & Safety





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|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality</li> </ul>   |
| 17. | <p><b>INSET DATES FOR 2024/25</b><br/>         Term dates had been approved at the previous meeting, in line with those for Cheshire East. Inset days were agreed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024</li> <li>• Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025</li> <li>• Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025</li> <li>• Four twilight sessions – dates to be agreed.</li> </ul>  |
| 18. | <p><b>MEETINGS</b><br/>         The dates of the remaining Full Board meetings for 2023/24 were confirmed as follows</p> <p>Spring - Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024<br/>         Summer - Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024</p> <p>All meetings would begin at 4pm.</p>  |
| 19. | <p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p><u>School events</u><br/>         EC circulated a list of upcoming events to be held at the nursery and governors were encouraged to attend where possible in line with priority 2 on the Governance Development Plan.</p> <p><u>Photographer</u><br/>         The school photographer would be in school on 6<sup>th</sup> December, so governors were invited in around 11.30am – 12pm to have a photo taken for a school lanyard. Governors unable to attend were asked to provide a photo.</p> <p><b>Governor question:</b> Will governors still need to sign in once we have lanyards?<br/>         Response: Yes, in the same way that staff do, so we know who is on-site.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Governors to attend for photo or send alternative to NS.</b></p> |

The meeting moved to Part Two.

The meeting closed at 6.10pm.

.....Chair

.....Date