



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD  
OF WESTMINSTER NURSERY SCHOOL, CREWE  
ON MONDAY 17<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023**

**Governors Present:**

Emma Connor	(EC)	Headteacher
Donna Reed	(DR)	Chair
Liz Austin	(LA)	
Linda Buchanan	(LB)	
Neil Smith	(NS)	
Dawn Clark	(DC)	
Nathan Tice	(NT)	
Leanne Jennings	(LJ)	
Steve Hogben	(SH)	

**Others in attendance:**

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

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The meeting commenced at 4pm

ITEM	
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) ITEMS</b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Connor Naismith. No apologies had been received from Letitia Woolley.</p> <p>There were no other items of business to consider.</p>
2.	<p><b>CONFLICT OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>Governors made the following declarations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DC is Chair of Governors at Pebble Brook Primary School, a member of Crewe Town Council, and a Cheshire East Councillor.</li><li>• DR is a governor at Beechwood Primary School.</li><li>• LB is a Cheshire East Councillor</li></ul> <p>There were no conflicts declared with the business of the meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION: All governors to check that Declarations of interest are up to date on GovernorHub.</b></p>
3.	<p><b>MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>a) Governors noted the resignation of Connor Naismith, received earlier that day, along with his apologies for the meeting.</p> <p>Attempts by the clerk, the Chair and the Head Teacher to contact Letitia Woolley, had proved unsuccessful. Given her lack of attendance over the previous year, it was therefore agreed to remove LW from the Board.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to update GovernorHub and write to LW.</b></p>

	<p>b) The following vacancies were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 LA Governor</li> <li>• 1 Parent Governor.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: EC and NS to arrange a parent governor election in the autumn term.</b>  <b>ACTION: Clerk to send LA governor form to LB.</b></p> <p>c) Governors noted that NT's term of office was due to expire on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023. It was agreed that if no nominations were received for the parent governor role, then NT would be appointed as a parent governor. If this was not the case, then NT would be re-appointed as a co-opted governor.</p> <p>d) Governors confirmed that NS would update GIAS with recent changes.</p> <p><b>ACTION: NS to update GIAS.</b></p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>a) Governors <b>approved</b> the part one minutes of the spring term board of governors meeting, held on 22<sup>nd</sup> march 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> <p>b) The action list from the last FGB meeting was reviewed and the following items were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most governors had now completed the Safeguarding and Prevent training. Governors were reminded to inform LB of the specific training they had completed and the date.</li> </ul> <p>All other actions had been completed.</p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>CHAIR'S ACTION AND CORRESPONDENCE</b></p> <p>DR reported that she had written a paragraph for the end-of-year newsletter, and had also sent a card and gift on behalf of governors to Mrs Bell who was retiring.</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p>a) Governors acknowledged the receipt of all summer term committee minutes which had been circulated via Governor Hub prior to the meeting. A verbal update was given on all committees:</p> <p><u>Premises Committee (9/5/23)</u>  LA provided the following updates to the minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 5-year fixed wiring check had been completed and quotations sought for the remedial work identified.</li> <li>• Thanks were noted to John Pass Jewellers whose staff had assisted with work to improve the outside areas of the nursery.</li> <li>• A recent spate of vandalism had been reported to the police, and the matter raised by DC at a council meeting. The police had added the nursery to their regular patrol route and neighbours had agreed to keep an eye on the premises and report anything untoward. The school had increased the height of the chalkboard on the fence to make it more difficult to access and leave the site, and EC would be writing to the Police and Crime Commissioner to see if funding was available to upgrade the CCTV. Governors thanked DC for bringing the matter to the attention of the council.</li> </ul>

### Curriculum Committee (26/4/23 and 10/7/23)

The committee had looked at the new curriculum format and had reviewed data for 2 cohorts, alongside the context of each group including SEND and EAL children. The data was felt to be particularly strong for the 3yr olds, given that 87% of the cohort had English as an Additional Language. Governors had noted that only 10 children were in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.

### Finance Committee (3/7/23)

The committee had reviewed nursery funding, including DFC and other grants, and had discussed and approved the budget for 2023/24.

### Chairs' Committee

Minutes of the Chairs' Committee were not circulated due to confidentiality, but it had been agreed that Nicola Clark would begin training in September to take over the SENCo role. She would work alongside EC for the autumn term, and funds had been allocated to cover training costs and additional hours that may be required.

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

Governors had reviewed 3 heating/air conditioning quotations circulated on GovernorHub. The **quotation from Atmostherm was approved**, at a cost of £24,507, which would come from the Energy Efficiency grant and DFC.

### **c) Monitoring Reports**

#### SEND

LB had visited the school on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and the visit report was available on GovernorHub. Key points included:

- The new banding system for EHCPs instead of specified hours of support. The system had been piloted in 10 schools in Cheshire East and was already in place in several areas of the country. Feedback was generally very positive as it made no difference to the provision for children but increased flexibility for schools.
- The importance of the transition process from the nursery to primary schools. Governors heard that the level of engagement varied greatly between schools.
- The change to online consultations in setting targets for children with SEND. EC did not feel the new system was as effective as when visits were made to observe children and given this feedback. There was particular concern around cases involving very complex needs.

Governors thanked LB for the comprehensive and detailed report.

#### Safeguarding

DR provided a verbal report, noting that she received a weekly Safeguarding update from EC. The current case numbers were as follows:

- Child in Care – 1 child
- Child Protection – 1 child
- Child in Need – 2 children
- Early Help – 4 children

In addition to these, a number of children were on the vulnerable register for various reasons, including Alerts from Operation Encompass.

	The Section 175 Safeguarding audit had been reviewed and submitted.
7.	<p><b>FINANCIAL/COMPLIANCE MATTERS</b></p> <p>a) Governors <b>ratified</b> the 2023/24 budget as approved by the Finance Committee. An in-year surplus of £18.5K was forecast for 2023/24, but it was noted that this included the drawdown of Earmarked reserves to maintain staffing.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> What provision has been made for staff salary increases?  <b>Response:</b> We have allowed 5% for teaching staff, but hope to get an update on this at a meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> July. The payments to support staff are also included in the budget.</p> <p>Governors congratulated NS and EC on their management of the budget that meant the nursery was in a healthy financial position.</p> <p>b) The latest budget vs actuals report was available on GovernorHub.</p> <p>c) The list of annual contracts and ChESS purchases had been reviewed and approved by the Finance committee.</p> <p>d) The Section 175 Safeguarding audit had been submitted as required.</p> <p>e) The staffing structure for 2023/24 was included in the Headteacher’s report and approved by the FGB.</p>
8.	<p><b>PART ONE HEADTEACHER’S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <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>• Pupil numbers for September looked very healthy.</li> <li>• Staff wellbeing remained a priority and informal feedback from staff was very positive.</li> <li>• EC had joined the Family Hubs Collaborative and the ‘Early Years task and finish’ working party.</li> <li>• 28 responses had been received to the Parents’ survey and were overwhelmingly positive. Comments around time to speak to keyworkers had been investigated further and the issue addressed.</li> <li>• 7 families had attended a drop-in session with a speech &amp; language therapist.</li> </ul> <p><u>SDP</u></p> <p>A RAG-rated copy of the SDP had been circulated on GovernorHub, and Governors noted that most actions had been completed, with the remaining few areas in progress.</p> <p>EC explained that the ‘next steps’ identified in the SEF, along with the curriculum reflections, would provide the basis for the School Development Plan for 2023/24.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Have we found a new School Improvement Partner?  <b>Response:</b> No, we are still looking for someone who will not cost too much.</p>
9.	<p><b>DIRECTOR’S REPORT</b></p> <p>The summer term Director’s Report had been circulated at the start of the term and relevant items discussed in committees as appropriate.</p>

	<p>The clerk highlighted the guidance on publishing diversity data for governing boards, noting that it may not be appropriate for smaller boards. However, a board that was representative of the local community was still desirable, and governors discussed how this could be achieved. It was agreed that DC would contact a local community leader to enquire whether anybody from the local mosque might be interested in a co-opted governor role.</p> <p><b>ACTION: DC to contact local community leader.</b></p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT &amp; TRAINING</b></p> <p>a) The Governance Development plan was reviewed, and it was agreed that all objectives had been met.</p> <p>b) LB presented the findings of the recent skills audit, which would be reviewed in detail by LB and DR. However, Finance was clearly identified as an area for further training, so it was agreed that there would be finance training before the autumn term FGB meeting. Governors thanked LB for her work in collating the information.</p> <p>c) <u>Training</u> DR had completed GDPR training</p> <p>d) <u>Governor Visits</u> LA had visited on 14<sup>th</sup> July to review progress with the Word Aware Programme, and see how activities were developed to give the children opportunities to use the given words. It was felt that the children were confident in their use of the words and the programme was having a real impact on the children’s vocabulary.</p> <p>DC had spoken with Louise Barlow and noted the positive atmosphere among staff.</p> <p>NT had visited to look at the sensory room.</p> <p>DR had visited to look at Phonics.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>COMMITTEE STRUCTURE FOR 2023/24</b></p> <p>Governors discussed a proposal to move to a governance model with 6 FGB meetings per year and no committees. An example was shared of how business could be spread over the 6 meetings, and arguments for and against were identified:</p> <p><b>For:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer meetings for governors who currently attend more than 1 committee.</li> <li>• All governors see all aspects of governance and have a greater breadth of knowledge.</li> </ul> <p><b>Against:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional clerking cost of £720 per year.</li> <li>• Longer FGB meetings.</li> <li>• Possible loss of detail and depth of understanding.</li> </ul> <p>All governors were asked for their views and a vote taken. It was agreed to remain with the existing model for the time being but noted that the alternative model could be considered in future if circumstances changed.</p>



12.	<p><b>SCHOOL POLICIES</b>  The following policies had been reviewed in committees and were listed for information:</p> <p><b>Chairs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional Resilience, Wellbeing &amp; Mental Health</li> <li>• Pensions Discretion</li> </ul> <p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bad Debt</li> <li>• Charging</li> <li>• Best Value Statement</li> </ul> <p><b>Premises</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gritting</li> <li>• Lone Working</li> </ul> <p>The following <b>statutory</b> policies had been reviewed in committees and were <b>approved</b> by the FGB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disciplinary</li> <li>• Equality &amp; Diversity</li> <li>• Grievance</li> <li>• SEND</li> <li>• Accessibility Plans</li> </ul>
13.	<p><b>CONFIRM TERM DATES FOR 2024/25</b>  Term dates were agreed in line with the dates for Cheshire East, and Inset days would be confirmed at the next meeting.</p>
14.	<p><b>MEETINGS</b>  The dates of the Full Board meetings for 2023/24 were confirmed as follows</p> <p>Autumn - Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023  Spring - Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024  Summer - Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024</p> <p>All meetings would begin at 4pm.</p>
15.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>  There was no further business</p>

The meeting moved to Part Two.

The meeting closed at 5.45pm.

.....Chair

.....Date