

# The Governing Body Sefton Park School

## Infants and Juniors

Chair of Governors: Corrie Bell

Headteacher: Dan Simson

Clerk to Governors: Jessica Wewer

### Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes

**Date: Wednesday 25 March 2025**

Sefton Park



Infant and Junior Schools

**Sefton Park School**  
Ashley Down Road  
Bristol  
BS7 9BJ

ITEM	AGENDA ITEM AND NOTES		PAPERS CONSIDER ED
1.0	Welcome and apologies		
	<p><i>Present: Corrie Bell, Sally Dore, Dan Simson, Emily Shuker, Helen Martin, Rachel Wills, Carrie Spittlehouse, Jane Wheelock, Ben Crowley,</i></p> <p><i>Apologies: Claire Kearney, Ben Seal, Andy Lillie, Amy Campbell, Amy Lewis,</i></p> <p><i>Absent: None</i></p> <p><i>Attending: Jessica Wewer, Alex Powell</i></p> <p>Meeting commenced at 9:15</p>		
	<i>Present: 9</i>	<i>Quorum met (7): Yes</i>	
2.0	Previous minutes/matters arising		
	<p>Chair welcomed the board to the special FGB, which is the last meeting for the current Headteacher.</p> <p>It was mentioned that one Governor will be taking a sabbatical next term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The previous minutes were approved as an accurate representation of the meeting</li></ul> <p>Next year’s meetings - daytime to start at 9:15. Check the best day. ACTION CLERK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No matters arising.</li><li>Clerk to remind Governors to send bio and photo. ACTION CLERK</li></ul>		<a href="#">Previous minutes</a>
3.0	Governing Body		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Vacancies / Recruitment</li></ul> <p>Chair showed a document showing the constitution. There is room for more Governors. Including a parent governor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Skills Audit - this will likely be done using the effectiveness tool on GovHub</li></ul>		<a href="#">Constitution</a>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor Visits - some visits are happening today. A plan to be considered for next year.</li> <li>• Arrangements for checking Website Compliance - The website has been audited by Juniper who have bought out Primary Site, the schools website provider. It has been re-designed. Governor responsibility to audit the content. ACTION AL</li> <li>• Chairing Arrangements for 2025/26 The Governing Body should consider succession over the next year. A Governor could take on a Vice Chair Role next year to shadow the current chair. A joint chair-ship model could be considered. <b>Governors should prepare to comment on succession arrangements next term ACTION ALL.</b></li> </ul> <p>A Chair may step down from the chairing role but remain on the board which has proved useful in the past. One of the current Vice Chairs was previously chair and Governors it was noted that she has been Governor at the school for 25 Years.</p>	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Voice of the Children</b>	
	<p>Children visited the meeting to introduce themselves and describe how they have represented the school in the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chess,</li> <li>• Girls football,</li> <li>• Indoor athletics,</li> <li>• Basketball,</li> <li>• Kinball,</li> <li>• Cross country,</li> <li>• Swim gala</li> </ul> <p>Governors commented that alongside the often celebrated drama and music within the school, a lot of school sports happen. Governors asked the children questions.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Did you feel more nervous representing the school than when you do your sport normally?</p> <p><b>A:</b> When visiting City Academy I noticed other pupils who were better than me, and that made me more nervous.</p> <p><b>A:</b> With chess, it's usually friendly games and during a match I was up against really good competitors and I sweated, but I won 2 and lost 2.</p> <p><b>A:</b> In a match I run for purpose not just for fun, it feels scary but you have to push forward and do your best.</p> <p><b>A:</b> The swim gala was against private schools with their own swimming pools so it made us nervous</p> <p><b>A:</b> Cross country, I didn't know how fast everyone else would run so I just ran as fast as I could.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> What is kinball?</p> <p><b>A:</b> A teamwork sport, a ball sport. Try to catch the ball without it touching the floor. It's a huge ball. Children described and demonstrated the game. It's one of the newest sports in the UK which the school has been trying. Quidditch is also being tried.</p>	

5.0	SLT Report	
	<p>Governors had read the SLT report, written by the Headteacher.</p> <p><b>Update on Send Resource Base (SRB)</b></p> <p>[AP] A lead practitioner has been recruited. 10 of the 12 children who will attend have been identified. The intake will be 4 lots of 3. Next term a trial week will take place, then the first group will start in T6. In September another 3 children will start - this will not require another staff member. The final groups will begin in T2 and T3 of the next academic year (2025-26).</p> <p><b>Q:</b> The first 3 - are they coming from this school?</p> <p><b>A:</b> 1 is, and potentially 1 other in a later group.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> What's the plan for the staffing model?</p> <p><b>A:</b> 1 lead practitioner, 1 HLTA (High level Teaching Assistant)</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Is there any news on the SLA?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Not signed but money received</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Do you have any thoughts regarding the benefit of the SRB on the rest of school?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The actual cost of the SRB remains to be seen and in a year's time the financial benefit to the school will be reviewed. There will be lots of CPD available from the practitioner recruited. The candidate who was not successful is going to deliver training on engagement learning.</p> <p><b>Staff Wellbeing</b></p> <p><b>Q:</b> Are there any new issues?</p> <p><b>A:</b> 2 incidences have happened this term where staff have prioritised their wellbeing over the wellbeing of the children. The decisions made have not been in the interests of the children. A focus on staff wellbeing can, at a point, come to the detriment of the children. The focus on wellbeing is new in recent years and so is this potential impact. For Headteachers and the SLT it is a challenge to balance prioritising staff wellbeing and the wellbeing of the children.</p> <p>It was recognised that the school offers the following in terms of wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high level of professional autonomy in the school, which attracts those who like this</li> <li>• Understanding of staffs' family lives.</li> <li>• Workload is not excessive compared to other schools.</li> </ul> <p>It's difficult to support staff when reasons for low wellbeing are not clear. The societal context is that the way people view themselves has changed and there is a greater focus on the self.</p> <p>The suggestion was made that low staff turnover doesn't necessarily mean high wellbeing, however IDSR (staff turnover) is a measure reviewed by Ofsted, and a measure prospective parents are interested in.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that decisions are constantly being made about what is best for staff and children, and it is not always the same things. The wellbeing of the Headteacher is affected by making these decisions. Especially around absence which has knock on effects on multiple staff. There is a wider context to consider - funding cuts have affected the number of adults available in the school and the requirements of the curriculum and needs of the children have increased.</p>	

	<p>It was suggested that the staff wellbeing survey could be done in T5. Despite speaking to staff regularly it is hard to gauge general morale and what the results of the survey will be.</p> <p>Governors agreed that there is a more individualistic view and a move away from appreciating people who work in public service. It was noted that issues of wellbeing came up at DfE when there were cuts which signified an emphasis on wellbeing to substitute funding.</p> <p>The Staff Governor reported their experience that the school is a supportive place to work. There is a shared understanding between staff and a willingness to show emotion and share concerns.</p> <p>Governors expressed sadness that some of SLT feel they cannot use the staffroom based on responses in the survey (re: needing a space to express emotion), however it was thought this is not unusual in schools.</p> <p>In conclusion, the question has been raised as to whether there is too much energy put onto wellbeing and an assertion made that the school is here to serve the children. Individual responsibility for self wellbeing should be considered. It was agreed the Wellbeing Governor (not present) should read minutes from this discussion for consideration going forward.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> - Clerk to highlight to Wellbeing Governor</p>	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>F&amp;R Committee</b>	
	<p>Governors were encouraged to read the useful summary report produced by the schools business manager. The Chair of the Committee gave a summary of the most recent meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Forecast for the end of year is £24K in deficit. This is better than expected but only because of £30K SRB funding. There is a £93K carry forward - £25K of this is allocated to SRB staffing.</li> <li>● The ongoing Risks include high % spent on staff costs. There has been £70K spent on supply costs this year (equivalent to 350 days). This needs to be monitored.</li> <li>● The budget is coming out, there will be quite a few pressures on it. All funding sources are in one pot, which means overall there is not more money per pupil. The National insurance is being calculated on the number of pupils rather than number of staff which is detrimental as it means the increase in national insurance is only partially funded.</li> <li>● The after school provider has requested a reduction in rent and the committee agreed for the business manager to make a decision on this.</li> <li>● There was a Premises update which is reflected in the SLT report.</li> </ul> <p>All of the following policies have been reviewed by F&amp;R and are recommended for approval by FGB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Capability Procedure</li> <li>● Charging and remissions policy</li> <li>● Code of Conduct for Staff</li> <li>● Whistleblowing Procedure</li> <li>● SFVS - has been reviewed by the chair of F&amp;R and the incoming head.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governors approved 4 policies above and the SFVS.</b></p>	<i>Policies Folder</i>

<b>7.0</b>	<b>CCS Committee</b>	
	<p>The Chair of the committee had sent the following summary of the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We had a fascinating update from the Learning Lead on the work he is doing with year 1 and 2 teachers on planning and pedagogy including incorporating more play, circle time, learning flow and helping children evaluate their own learning and see where they are on their learning journey</li> <li>• We had an update from the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) on all the things the school is doing to improve reading and create more of a reading culture eg World Book Day, improving library spaces, encouraging storytelling, reading at home, using technology</li> <li>• DSL shared the latest safeguarding report which showed minimal safeguarding incidents/ concerns and we discussed why that was</li> <li>• Finally we had a discussion on how we know the school is inclusive. The Headteacher shared that all the work the school has done on belonging is about inclusivity e.g. representative pupils for pupil voice, inclusive extra curricular activities. Also the school is a magnet for SEND children, the curriculum is inclusive, behaviour policy is trauma informed, teachers encourage students to share their interests at home in school.</li> </ul>	
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Parental Feedback</b>	
	<p>The Chair explained that a Parent Survey will be sent out in Term 5 - ACTION - Governors to meet to discuss (HM, CB)</p> <p>A parent has written to the board regarding a Food &amp; Healthy eating policy - The school does not currently have a policy and this will be added to the agenda for the CCS committee. A Governor has been to a healthy eating training and remembered that the gold star level has very heavy administrative demands. However it was clarified that this is an award standard, the suggestion is only for the school to have a policy.</p> <p>The Headteacher had included within the Leadership report that overall parents of the school are very supportive and over 5 years of Headship.</p>	
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Update on Headteacher transition</b>	
	<p>The following activities were reported to have taken place to support the Headteacher transition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily chats and emails between outgoing and incoming Headteachers.</li> <li>• Current Headteacher has been generous with time and happy to answer any question.</li> <li>• New Headteacher has met with the SBM several times to discuss the budget</li> <li>• Attendance at PHAB conference and Governors meetings.</li> <li>• There has been an away day with lots of food for thought including members of the SLT</li> <li>• Mentoring/coaching with Laurence. Next meeting in T5.</li> <li>• ISO - Mock Ofsted. ISO has 2 other coaches to offer support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q:</b> How are you feeling?  <b>A:</b> (AP) Excited. Due to being on parental leave I'm keen to start doing rather than just thinking.  <b>Q:</b> It's also a transition for staff</p>	

	<p><b>A:</b> There will be an Inset day after Easter - the first part is to talk about vision and values and how the new Headteacher will approach the next 2 terms. There are staffing and structural changes to make in September, these will be discussed in T5. In T6 staff will be released for double PPA time to plan for T1 (September).</p>	
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Writing update</b>	
	<p>Governors welcomed a Year 3 teacher and a Year 4 teacher to the meeting to give an update on the focus on writing within their classes.</p> <p>The methods they described are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breaking down sentences to understand the structure of them.</li> <li>• Visuals to help with noun phrases - the 'who' the 'doing' the 'what' and a descriptor. Governors were shown how this has been made visual with a colour coded structure which helps to show what has been missed.</li> <li>• Widgets (a tool the school has signed up for which can generate an image for any word) - for some children who find it difficult to read, the pictures can help with writing. Pictures to give clues to words. The pictures are a resource for the adults so that if there are high levels of SEND - it's a scaffolding. Children can use the widgets independently to help with their writing</li> <li>• Word maths.</li> <li>• Use of voice recorders - these devices are useful for children with dyslexia or ADHD, although they are available to everyone. They help a child to remember their sentences while they are preparing to write. Some children recognise this helps them to learn.</li> <li>• Slowing down sequences.</li> <li>• Focusing on using a core text, to inspire the children. A range a diverse books eg. zizi and the blue bird. Linking back to core text throughout the year.</li> <li>• Focus on story openings and story endings. Only recently are Y4 ready to do stories with beginning, middle and end, before that the focus has been on sentence structure.</li> <li>• Using example sentences from the text, rather than a random online list. Some of this takes more time, ie. 5 hours on top of PPA time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q:</b> Are you noticing a difference in the writing as a result of this focus?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> There are a few more standardised documents to present planning on - do you think if the texts are consistent year to year, will the load lighten?</p> <p><b>A:</b> It will be less. The sequencing will change each year but there will be a basic framework which is still there. The pace and focus will depend on the needs and will need to be adapted based on assessment. There's a lot of revisiting to make sure an element is embedded before moving on to the next.</p> <p>Governors thanked the teachers for their informative update.</p>	
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Introduction Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS)</b>	
	<p>The Headteacher explained to Governors that the school signed up for this programme this year. A national programme but the school is included in the funding stream for Banes and Bristol. Bespoke CPD relevant to the school and the needs of the school, using a budget of £3750, was provided.</p> <p>Initially there was a school audit. Needs were evaluated and banded.</p>	

	<p>The school was put in touch with 4 different providers and then was responsible for arranging times for CPD with the chosen provider. CPD has taken place between Jan and March (now). 3 of the 4 providers have worked with the school to date. The 4th is unwell but will deliver the training in future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on Speech and language therapy (online training)</li> <li>● Group coaching session - 7 weeks of 1 hour - supporting understanding emotional regulation of neurodivergent children.</li> <li>● A provider called <i>Hamish and Milo</i> delivered 10 interventions; a bespoke program of support to work with children and their parents.</li> <li>● An LSA was funded to do a neurodiversity qualification (5 days).</li> </ul> <p>Alongside this PINS held meetings with parent and a SEND coffee morning. In the last meeting the Headteacher attended so parents could ask strategic questions. The PINS representative said the school has embraced the PINS programme and managed to deliver the interventions within the deadline. Parents could see that the school does take SEN seriously. This is part of the values of the school. Despite the benefits of the programme there were administrative barriers. The schools have been responsible for organising all of the meetings and training with providers. 4 members of staff are available to talk about the programme in the planned visits (see below)</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Is there any tie in with the SEND Resource Base? How will it benefit the school?  <b>A:</b> It's not connected. The SEN resource base is really specific - Autistic children with speech and language. The teachers and LSAs are dealing with a massive spectrum of needs. Some of the training included how to manage themselves and their own emotional regulation as professionals.</p>	
<b>12.0</b>	<b>Preparation for post break activities</b>	
	<p><b>Classroom visits –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Focus on writing</b></li> <li>● <b>Zones of regulation</b></li> <li>● <b>Talking to LSAs about PINS</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Reflections to the Group:</b></p> <p><b>PINS:</b>  Governors heard that there was a focus on how teachers and LSAs can regulate themselves when facing challenging behaviour. There were different perspectives on how useful the interventions were. Some were not clear on objectives of PINS and didn't really know the context meanwhile some found it really beneficial. Staff and Governors were keen to ensure that what had been learnt is implemented and shared with colleagues. It was suggested space could be made for this in inset days.  It was noted that LSAs would find attending online staff meetings and training easier.</p> <p><b>Writing:</b>  Governors noticed that the pupils were enthusiastic and chose what they wanted to show. Examples included stories about animals, the rainforest, and linked with a recent trip. Governors had an explanation from children about how they use the colourful semantics. The children could see the progress of needing colourful semantics less and less. The children could show the structure of planning, writing and editing that they do. A range of age groups had been spoken to and observed and it was evident how confident they were, how proud of their work and how meaningful the work is and what it relates to.</p>	

	<p><b>Zones of regulation:</b> Governors observed it was an incredibly useful tool. It's used on a regular basis in classrooms. Pupils were able to articulate what they are feeling and knew how to bring themselves back into regulation. Children showed Governors an example of using a nest space when they are dysregulated.</p> <p>It was noticeable that the younger children who have been using this concept from the beginning of their time at primary school seemed more enthusiastic about it.</p> <p>Staff Governors commented that all children are encouraged to understand how to recognise what zone they are in and articulate if they are in the red zone. Higher up the school there is a need to focus more on noticing negative self talk. Governors were impressed that language like 'overwhelmed' was used by Year 2 children. The children were able to talk about why they need help and what methods help. Governors observed that in reception classes, the children move their names between zones on a visual display.</p>	
<b>15.0</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	<p>None.</p> <p>The FGB meeting was followed by a lunch in which the Chair thanked the Headteacher for his leadership through a challenging Headship (due to Covid and taking over from a long term Headteacher) and for his dedication to inclusivity and play based learning.</p>	
Meeting closed:	12:35	

Actions Agreed at Meeting		
2.0	Check the best time for a daytime meeting next year and start it at 9:15	Clerk
2.0	Remind Governors to send Bio and Photo	Clerk
3.0	Audit school website against <a href="#">checklist</a>	AL
4.0	<b>Governors should prepare to comment on succession arrangements next term</b>	All
5.0	Highlight minutes from SLT report section to Wellbeing Governor	Clerk

Summary of Documents and Policies Agreed/ Ratified/ Adopted or if sub-committee – to be recommended for adoption by FGB

Agenda Item	Policy/Document	Action
6.0	Capability Procedure	Approved
6.0	Charging and remissions policy	Approved
6.0	Code of Conduct for Staff	Approved
6.0	Whistleblowing Procedure	Approved