



**Minutes of the Oswald Road Primary School's
FGB Meeting
held on Monday 16th September 2024 at 6.15pm via Zoom**

Present

Peter Martin (PM)	Co-opted Governor (Chair of Governors)
Martha Courtauld (MC)	Co-opted Governor
James Flanagan (JF)	Co-opted Governor
Stephen Haddock (SH)*	LA Governor
Ernst ter Horst (EtH) **	Co-opted Governor
Deborah Howard (DH)	Headteacher (ex-officio)
Nic McAllister (NM)	Parent Governor
Helen Savage (HS)***	Staff Governor
Jennie Wiggins (JW) ****	Co-opted Governor
Victoria Wilshaw (VW)	Parent Governor

In Attendance

Kim Spooner Clerk

* present from Item 13 onwards
** present from Item 6 onwards
*** present for Items 1-22 only
**** present from Item 5 onwards.

The meeting met its quorum (7/7) and commenced at 6.21pm.

1. Welcome/Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first FGB meeting of the year.

Apologies had been received from SB.

Resolved: That the apologies of the above-named governor were accepted.

JW and EtH had given advance notice of late arrival to the meeting.

2. Appointment of Clerk for 2024-25 (Statutory)

Resolved: That Second2None were appointed as the clerking service for the 2024-25 academic year (named Clerk: Kim Spooner).

3. Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair for 2024-25 (Statutory)

Resolved: That Peter Martin was appointed as Chair of Governors for the 2024-25 academic year.

The Chair stated that he was in his sixth year as a governor and fourth year as Chair and highlighted the importance of succession planning. He encouraged governors to consider volunteering for the position of Chair and to discuss this with him over the course of the year.

[Part of this agenda item was taken out of order later in the meeting when EtH had arrived.]

4. Annual Declarations

a) Governors were reminded to read and complete the following declarations in relation to:

- Declaration of personal, business & educational interests
- Code of conduct
- Confirmation of eligibility
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).

ACTION: Governors to complete declarations.

ACTION: PM to follow-up with individual governors if declarations are still outstanding after 30.09.24.

b) Get Information About Schools (GIAS)

Governors were reminded to inform the Clerk if their postcode had changed since September 2023, so their GIAS record can be updated.

[JW joined the meeting.]

5. Governor Attendance 2023-24

Governors received and noted the attendance log for 2023-24 to be published on the school website.

ACTION: Clerk.

The Chair commented that the attendance was good and thanked governors for their efforts to join meetings.

6. Governing Body Membership

a) To consider re-appointment of Associate Member

Resolved: That Thomas Sumner was appointed as an Associate Member for the 2024-25 academic year.

The Chair undertook to contact TS to ascertain his circumstances/willingness to continue in the role.

ACTION: PM.

[EtH joined the meeting.]

b) Governors noted that Jennifer Clift (JC) had resigned from the governing body. ***The Chair recorded formal thanks to JC for her contribution.***

The Chair reported that the main source for governor recruitment ('Inspiring Governance') was soon to close and he had been in contact with three candidates for the co-opted vacancy. He proposed that they were appointed as x1 Co-opted governor and x2 Associate Members. Governors AGREED in principle.

ACTION: PM to circulate details of prospective governors/associate members.

7. Approval of Senior School Quality Assurance Officer (SSQA) / External Advisor

The Headteacher recommended that Adrian Guy was re-appointed as the school's SSQA.

Resolved: That Adrian Guy was agreed as the SSQA/External Advisor for the 2024-25 academic year.

[Part of agenda Item 3 was taken out of order here.]

3. Appointment of Vice Chair for 2024-25 (Statutory)

Resolved: That Nic McAllister was appointed as Vice Chair of Governors for the 2024-25 academic year.

8. Committee Structure & Membership

The following committee structure and membership were agreed for the 2024-25 academic year as:

a) Resources Committee – SH, EtH, NM, PM, JW, TS (Associate), DH

Resolved: That Stephen Haddock was appointed as Chair of the Resources Committee for the 2024-25 academic year.

b) Teaching & Learning Committee – SB, MC, JF, PM, HS, VW, DH

Resolved: That James Flanagan was appointed as Chair of the Teaching & Learning Committee for the 2024-25 academic year.

c) Pay Committee – EtH, PM, JW

Resolved: That Jennie Wiggins was appointed as Chair of the Pay Committee for the 2024-25 academic year.

d) HT Performance Management panel (*Chair of Governors, one other governor, external advisor*) – SH, PM, (JF & EtH as reserves).

e) Health & Safety panel – PM, HS, JW, TS (Associate)

Resolved: That Helen Savage was appointed as Chair of the Health & Safety panel for the 2024-25 academic year.

f) Other Panels (eg: Pupil Discipline & Exclusion / Staff Discipline & Dismissal / Complaints / Appeals)

Resolved: That membership of other panels would be decided at point of need.

[Agenda Item 11 was taken out of order here.]

11. Governor Subject Links & Lead Governors 2024-25

Lead Governors were confirmed for the 2024-25 academic year as follows:

a) Safeguarding (*statutory*) (*including Prevent and DfE's digital and technology standards*)

Resolved: That James Flanagan was appointed as the Safeguarding Lead Governor for the 2024-25 academic year.

b) SEND & Equality (*statutory*)

To be agreed at next meeting (as SB was not present to agree his re-appointment).

c) Health & Safety

Resolved: That Helen Savage was appointed as the Health & Safety Lead Governor for the 2024-25 academic year.

d) Curriculum

Resolved: That Ernst ter Horst was appointed as the Curriculum Link Governor for the 2024-25 academic year.

e) Governor Training

Resolved: That Peter Martin was appointed as the Governor Training Link Governor for the 2024-25 academic year.

f) Wellbeing (including Food Standards)

Resolved: That Jennie Wiggins was appointed as the Wellbeing Link Governor for the 2024-25 academic year.

g) Governor Mentor

Resolved: That James Flanagan was appointed as the Governor Mentor for the 2024-25 academic year.

The Headteacher reminded governors that they were always welcome to visit the school and she would compile and circulate a formal visit schedule, as per last year. **ACTION: DH.**

9. Terms of Reference 2024-25

Governors reviewed the Terms of Reference for the:

- a) FGB (*NB: new final bullet point as per action from the additional FGB meeting held on 01.07.24*)
- b) Teaching & Learning Committee
- c) Resources Committee (*NB: new point 16 as per action from the additional FGB meeting held on 01.07.24*)
- d) Pay Committee
- e) Headteacher's Performance Management Review Panel.

Resolved: That the Terms of Reference were approved for the 2024-25 academic year (subject to the membership updates noted earlier in the meeting).

ACTION: Clerk to update the memberships listed in the Terms of Reference, as agreed under agenda item 11.

10. Collaboration Agreements

Governors to consider renewal of the collaboration agreement between Oswald Road Primary School and:

- Alma Park Primary
- St Agnes CE Primary.

The agreement permits governors to sit on HR and complaints panels of other schools, in accordance with the School Governance (Collaboration) Regulations 2003. The agreement must be renewed annually; it was last approved by the FGB in March 2024, but was re-presented here to align the approval date with the start of the academic year.

Resolved: That the Collaboration Agreement was agreed for the 2024-25 academic year.

ACTION: Clerk to confirm renewal with the Clerks of Alma and St Agnes (and with the MCC governance team).

12. Governor Training / Induction

Governors were reminded that the skills audit was required to be completed upon joining the governing body and then every three years.

Governors reviewed the declarations tracker which logs completion of the skills audit and Level 1 safeguarding training (and the SFVS skills matrix for the Resources Committee). Governors not marked as 'green' were asked to take the time to complete the required actions (and to forward copies of their safeguarding training certificates to Amanda Clifton). **ACTION: Governors** (as applicable). NM and HS commented that they had completed the skills audit but they were not marked as green. The Chair undertook to confirm this and update the tracker as appropriate. **ACTION: PM.**

[SH joined the meeting.]

13. Policies/Procedures for review and approval

Governors had added comments/tracked changes to the circulated policies in advance of the meeting. The Headteacher gave responses either before or during the meeting. Questions/answers raised in the meeting are recorded below.

a) Acceptable Use

Q. Does the process of pupils handing in their phones upon arrival to school, work?

A. Yes.

The Chair observed some overlap between the Acceptable Use policy and Online Safety policy (duplication of the phones/electronic devices sections) and recommended one combined policy.

RESOLVED: That the Acceptable Use policy was AGREED.

b) Appraisal (Support Staff)

RESOLVED: That the Appraisal (Support Staff) policy was AGREED.

c) Appraisal (Teacher)

RESOLVED: That the Appraisal (Teacher) policy was AGREED.

The Headteacher explained that a revised policy would be presented at the Resources Committee, addressing two matters:

- de-coupling pay from appraisal (as per the DfE recommendation, but needs to be agreed by governors)
- removing mid-term reviews for teachers (this would align with TAs and office staff). The Headteacher assured that any performance issues would be picked up through the existing practice/progress meetings.

Q. Why has the DfE recommended that pay is de-coupled from appraisal?

A. There is no evidence that it makes any difference to performance.

Q. How would you assess teacher pay progression if not through appraisal?

A. It would work the same way: anyone who is performing well would be unaffected and anyone not falling in-line with career stage expectations would be placed on a support plan and then move to capability, if necessary.

Governors shared their support of the principle and were in agreement that de-coupling allows appraisal to become a better tool for professional development and an opportunity to learn and work on school improvement targets.

d) i) Low Level Concerns & ii) Low Level Concern reporting form

Q. What is the process of identifying if there have been a number of, or escalation of, low level concerns?

A. The new process for low level concerns mirrors what we have for LADO referrals. Everything is filed in one place with an overview/mapping sheet so we can see at a glance if there are any trends. The process is much clearer and we have done the same with our 'Management Notices of Guidance', so it all ties together and we can look at it as one.

Q. How are new policies introduced/briefed to staff?

A. Certain policies are on 'SAMPeople' and staff have to sign to say they have received and read them. The Low Level Concerns policy will go to SLT and we will follow it line-by-line when we need to use it.

Q. Does that mean the rest of the staff will not see this policy?

A. It is on the intranet but we do not ask staff to sign to say they have read it.

A governor challenged that the policy includes useful examples of what constitutes a low level concern that would serve as a useful reminder for staff. The Headteacher assured that all of the 'inappropriate behaviour' examples are included within the Staff Code of Conduct but agreed that the policy should be highlighted to staff. **ACTION: DH** to ask EL to send staff a link to the policy.

A governor challenged that the reporting form requires a signature, but section 8 of the policy states that reports can be made anonymously. The Headteacher undertook to ask EL to amend the wording on the form to make it clear that the signature is optional. **ACTION: DH**

RESOLVED: That the Low Level Concerns policy and reporting form were **AGREED** (subject to the noted amendment on the reporting form).

e) Early Years Intimate Care

The Headteacher proposed that this policy wording was transferred to the Intimate Care Policy. Governors **AGREED**.

RESOLVED: That the Early Years Intimate Care policy was **AGREED**.

f) Intimate Care

RESOLVED: That the Intimate Care policy was **AGREED**.

g) Online Safety

A governor challenged whether the 'acceptable use agreement' section of the document was a policy or a personal declaration, querying whether parents/pupils were required to sign it. The Headteacher confirmed that it was the school's policy and undertook to amend the wording to remove the signature sections. **ACTION: DH**.

RESOLVED: That the Online Safety policy was **AGREED**, subject to the noted amendment.

h) SEND

Q. How do you decide who goes on the SEN Register?

A. There is either obvious need or we go through a monitoring process and look at adaptations in the classroom. We discuss with parents before a decision is made to add a child to the register. Sometimes the opinions of the school and parents are not the same.

The Headteacher explained that she would be meeting with the SENDCO to look at the practical detail of this policy, due to capacity issues in school and the need to ensure equality of access for all families.

Governors appreciated the difficulties associated with fair distribution of time and agreed that stronger/clearer wording around the school's limitations should be included in the policy. A governor suggested that the school consults with other schools to see how they deal with the same issue.

RESOLVED: That the SEND policy was AGREED.

i) SEND Information Report

RESOLVED: That the SEND Information Report was AGREED.

j) Health & Safety

Q. Do staff receive training in Risk Assessments?

A. No – staff receive updates and operational advice, rather than training.

Q. Would there be any value in that?

A. The School Business Manager works with the Early Years staff who are responsible for the daily walkaround risk assessments. We have a company called 'Compliance' who now look at and review all of our risk assessments. ***The Chair encouraged the school to consider staff training in this area and commented that some of the documents he had seen would benefit from more structure.***

Q. Do you talk through all the Risk Assessments with staff?

A. Perhaps not enough, especially for premises-related ones. The School Business Manager is looking at creating one-pager/key points to share with staff. This was completed for the playground risk assessment and shared with staff. Staff receive relevant risk assessments, but more could be done with talking them through.

A governor challenged that health & safety is everyone's responsibility and stated that in their own company they are required to take staff through all risk assessments as a condition of their insurance policy. They questioned whether the same requirement was necessary in a school setting. The Headteacher confirmed that leaders have to make sure that all staff are aware of what is in the risk assessments but agreed that the process would benefit from clearer structures.

RESOLVED: That the Health & Safety Policy was AGREED.

k) Information Sharing On Transition

RESOLVED: That the Information Sharing On Transition Policy was AGREED.

l) Gifts, Hospitality & Anti-Bribery

RESOLVED: That the Gifts, Hospitality & Anti-Bribery Policy was AGREED.

m) Safeguarding & Child Protection

RESOLVED: That the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy was AGREED.

Policy Extensions

The Headteacher proposed that three policies were 'renewed' while new versions were being written.

RESOLVED: That the Grievance, Bullying & Harassment Policy; Maternity Policy & Procedure (Support Staff) and Maternity Policy & Procedure (Teachers) were AGREED.

The revised Grievance, Bullying & Harassment Policy would be presented for approval by the Resources Committee. The maternity policies would be amalgamated into one 'Family Leave' policy. The School Business Manager is currently working through the changes and will discuss it with the Cluster before the policy is presented for governors' approval.

14. Minutes of the additional (policies) meeting held on 01 July 2024

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 01 July 2024 were formally approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

15. Actions/Matters Arising

a) Actions

Previous actions were noted as complete.

Re: action 3a, the Headteacher updated that HR had advised that the Code of Conduct does *not* form part of an employee's contract of employment.

16. Part I Minutes of the meeting held 24 June 2024

Resolved: That the Part I minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 June 2024 were formally approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

17. Actions/Matters Arising

a) Actions

Previous actions were noted as complete, superseded or no longer applicable.

Re: action 5ac/f (JF to complete safeguarding visit) – JF confirmed that the action was complete and he would double-check if he had added it to the visits record (and update the record, if necessary). **ACTION: JF.**

Re: action 10 (induction training) – The Chair asked MC to share feedback re: the Governors For Schools induction training at the next meeting (to identify whether the new training was effective). **ACTION: MC.**

Re: action 16b (academisation questions) – Governors were invited to add their thoughts, comments and questions to the academisation questions document to be uploaded on GoogleDrive. **ACTION: PM/Governors.** The document would be reviewed at a future meeting.

A governor shared an update that there was likely to be less of a push from the new government towards the 2030 deadline for schools to academise. Another governor asked if Liz Clarke from

MCC could be invited to a future FGB meeting to provide an update. The Chair suggested that a few months is allowed to pass first, to see what official news comes through.

b) Matters Arising

i) EHCP under-funding update

JW was still investigating the matter. She reported that there was still ambiguity and she was seeking written evidence (from the School Business Manager) that the LA had said they were willing to back-date the payment. JW would discuss the matter further with the Headteacher next week.

18. Committee Reports

a) Teaching & Learning Committee – 16 July 2024

Governors noted the Committee meeting minutes and received a verbal update from the Chair of the Committee that the key discussion in the meeting had been around the initial assessment data. **The Chair congratulated the Headteacher on the impressive results.** The Headteacher explained that she would bring the full data set to the next Teaching & Learning Committee meeting.

19. Chair's Action (if any)

There was none.

20. Headteacher's Verbal Update

School Improvement Plan (SIP) Priority Overview 2024-25

The overview had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. It covered the key areas previously shared and discussed with governors:

- Writing
- Assessment throughout the curriculum (Ofsted area of improvement from September 2023)
- Implementation of in-house wraparound care.

The Headteacher added that, alongside the full SIP (that would be written from the overview), there would be a strategic plan on future-proofing pupil numbers and work with staff on vision and values and a consistent approach to behaviour.

Exit Questionnaire Summer 2024

A summary of the results from the Year 6 leavers' questionnaire were shared with governors in advance of the meeting. The Headteacher highlighted some of the comments, including one pupil's view that the biggest strength of the school is: *"Everyone being different and that's okay"*.

Q. How do the responses compare to previous years?

A. They are similar. There is usually a positive trend around diversity, inclusion, respect and care.

Governors agreed how lovely the comments were. A governor suggested that some of the comments should be published on the school website (for existing and prospective parents). Another governor suggested that the comments were also shared with staff. ACTION: DH.

21. AOB

a) 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'

Governors noted the statutory guidance that came into effect on 19 August 2024.

Q. Is there anything significant that will impact how the school deals with attendance?

A. The big difference is the new 'pathway' for attendance that needs to be communicated with parents. The Headteacher assured that the school is abreast of the changes and the member of staff who leads attendance has completed recent training about the updates.

b) (Paid) religious leave

The Headteacher drew governors' attention to the topic of religious leave, noting the impact it has when there is less available staff and less money to pay for cover. The school has sought HR advice around a commonsense approach that is legally appropriate. The Headteacher emphasised that requests are rarely refused (and the school does not want to refuse any) but the process needs to be made more manageable. The proposed new process will be brought to the next Resources Committee meeting, for further discussion and consideration.

c) Marketing

EtH volunteered his help to market the school and highlighted the need for quality marketing communications ahead of November (when parents are starting to consider schools). The Headteacher confirmed that EL was in contact with the person EtH had suggested regarding promotional video content. Tour dates have been agreed, with some additional Saturdays offering the opportunity for parents to visit Early Years. One of the sports coaches will run toddler sessions to encourage families with younger children to attend.

d) Pay Awards

Q. Is the pay award fully funded by the new Government?

A. Yes but the pay award for support staff is not yet confirmed.

This would be discussed further at the Resources and Pay Committee meetings.

22. Next meeting dates:

- FGB 25 November 2024 6.15pm at school
- Pay 07 October 2024 at 6pm online
- HTPM 09 October 2024
- T&L 04 November 2024 at 5.15pm online
- Resources 11 November 2024 at 5.15pm online.

JW gave advance apologies for the Resources Committee meeting. **ACTION: Clerk** to note.

[HS left the meeting.]

23. Confidential Matters

a) Part II Minutes of the meeting held 24 June 2024

Resolved: That the Part II minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 June 2024 were formally approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

b) Actions/Matters Arising

The one confidential action was noted as complete.

c) Any other confidential matters

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 8.32pm.

ACTIONS FROM FGB MEETING 16.09.24

Agenda Item	Who	What	When
4	Governors	to complete annual declarations	Before 30.09.24

4	Peter Martin	to follow-up with individual governors re: outstanding declarations	After 30.09.24
5	Clerk	to liaise with EL re: publishing governor attendance log for 2023-24 on school website	Complete
6a	Peter Martin	to contact TS re: his role as Associate Member	ASAP
6a	Peter Martin	to circulate details of prospective governors/associate members to governors	Before 25.11.24
9	Clerk	to update the memberships listed in the Terms of Reference, as agreed under agenda item 11	Complete
10	Clerk	to confirm with Clerks of Alma and St Agnes (and with the MCC governance team) re: renewal of Collaboration Agreement	ASAP
11	Deborah Howard	to compile and circulate governor visits schedule	25.11.24
12	Governors (as applicable)	to complete skills audit / Level 1 safeguarding training	ASAP
12	Peter Martin	to confirm whether NM and HS have completed the skills audit and update the tracker as appropriate	25.11.24
13d	Deborah Howard	to ask EL to amend the wording on the Low Level Concerns reporting form to make it clear that the signature is optional	ASAP
13d	Deborah Howard	to ask EL to send staff a link to the Low Level Concerns policy	ASAP
13g	Deborah Howard	to remove the signature sections from the 'acceptable use agreement' (Online Safety policy)	ASAP
17a	James Flanagan	to check if safeguarding visit has been logged (and update the record if not)	25.11.24
17a	Martha Courtauld	to share feedback re: the Governors For Schools induction training	25.11.24
17a	Peter Martin	to upload academisation questions document to GoogleDrive and share link with governors	25.11.24
17a	Governors	to add thoughts/comments/questions to the academisation questions document	
20	Deborah Howard	to consider publishing exit questionnaire comments on school website to share exit questionnaire comments with staff	ASAP
22	Clerk	to record JW's apologies for the Resources Committee meeting	11.11.24

Future Agenda Items

FGB 25.11.24

- Appointment of SEND & Equality governor
- Equality Objectives (*Standing Item*)
- 'Policies/Procedures for review and approval' to be moved further up the agenda for all meetings

Resources Committee 11.11.24

- Religious leave
- Revised Grievance, Bullying & Harassment Policy for approval
- Revised Appraisal (Teacher) policy for approval
- AOB: Parent query around sibling discount for wraparound (3 children)

Teaching & Learning Committee 04.11.24





- Full data set (2024 assessments).

Peter Martin

07 / 12 / 2024

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