



**Part I Minutes of the Oswald Road Primary School's FGB Meeting
held on Monday 25th November 2024 at 6.15pm at School**

Present

Peter Martin (PM)	Co-opted Governor (Chair of Governors)
Stephen Bradley (SB) *	Co-opted Governor
Martha Courtauld (MC)	Co-opted Governor
James Flanagan (JF)	Co-opted Governor
Deborah Howard (DH)	Headteacher (ex-officio)
Helen Savage (HS)	Staff Governor
Victoria Thompson (VT)	Co-opted Governor
Jennie Wiggins (JW)	Co-opted Governor
Victoria Wilshaw (VW) *	Parent Governor

In Attendance

Saffiya Haddad (SH)	Associate Member
Joe Stevenson (JS)	Associate Member
Kim Spooner	Clerk

* *present for part of Item 3 onwards*

The meeting met its quorum and commenced at 6.16pm.

1. Welcome/Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting with special reference to three prospective members: SH, JS and VT.

VW had given advance notice of late arrival to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from EtH, SH & NM.

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

2. Declarations of Interest/s

Resolved: There were none.

3. Governing Body Membership

a) To agree appointment of Victoria Thompson as Co-opted Governor

Resolved: That Victoria Thompson was appointed as a Co-opted Governor for a four year term commencing 25 November 2024.

b) To agree appointment of Saffiya Haddad as Associate Member

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

c) To agree appointment of Joe Stevenson as Associate Member

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

ACTION: PM to on-board/arrange induction for new members.

ACTION: Clerk to complete administrative tasks for new members (including updating membership list on 2024-25 Terms of Reference).

[VW joined the meeting.]

d) To agree Committee membership of new Co-opted Governor

Resolved: That Victoria Thompson was agreed as a member of the Resources Committee for the 2024-25 academic year.

e) To agree Committee membership/voting rights and FGB invitations for new Associate Members

Resolved: That Saffiya Haddad was agreed as a member of the Resources Committee (with voting rights) for the 2024-25 academic year.

Resolved: That Joe Stevenson was agreed as a member of the Teaching & Learning Committee (with voting rights) for the 2024-25 academic year.

Resolved: That Saffiya Haddad and Joe Stevenson were invited to attend FGB meetings (with no voting rights) for the 2024-25 academic year.

[SB joined the meeting.]

f) Appointment of SEND & Equality governor

Resolved: That Stephen Bradley and Victoria Wilshaw were agreed as SEND & Equality co-Lead governors for the 2024-25 academic year.

4. Minutes of the meeting held 16 September 2024

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 September 2024 were formally approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. Actions/Matters Arising

a) Actions

Previous actions were noted as complete or superseded apart from:

4 **Governors** to complete annual declarations – **Pending for SB & EtH**

NEW ACTION: PM to re-send declarations link to SB

NEW ACTION: PM to send declarations link to VT, SH & JS

12 **Governors** (*as applicable*) to complete skills audit / Level 1 safeguarding training – **Pending**

17a **Peter Martin** to upload academisation questions document to GoogleDrive and share link with governors – **Pending**

17a **Governors** to add thoughts/comments/questions to the academisation questions document – **Pending above action.**

b) Matters Arising

In relation to action 17a (MC to share feedback re: the Governors For Schools induction training), MC provided positive feedback about the online training she had completed. **ACTION: PM** to share link with new governor/Associate Members.

In relation to academisation, MC and the Clerk provided updates including that the new Government was

less-focussed on compulsory academisation; grants for voluntary conversion had been withdrawn; and alternative structural options such as federations were possible.

6. Committee Reports / discussion points arising from Committee meetings

a) Pay – 7 October 2024 *(brief verbal update – minutes are confidential to the Pay Committee)*

- The Committee accepted all of the Headteacher's recommendations.
- Future performance and standard pay progression will be de-coupled. Appraisal will be focused more on professional development and school improvement. The Headteacher explained that performance considerations would remain part of the application to pass threshold (from the Main Pay Scale to the Upper Pay Scale and through Upper Pay Scale) and would still be considered in cases of support plans/capability.

b) Teaching & Learning Committee – 04 November 2024

Governors noted the Committee meeting minutes and received a verbal update from the Chair of the Committee that the meeting included:

- a presentation from the Deputy Headteacher (DW) around curriculum development. DW provided governors with questions that could be asked to ensure effective challenge
- writing progress
- that the flexible grouping model was now embedded.

There followed a brief discussion about the most effective/appropriate use of governors' expertise to support the school. ***The Chair was keen that the school has sufficient support on curriculum from governors and he encouraged the school to ask governors to visit for certain areas.***

c) Resources – 11 November 2024 *(verbal update if minutes not available)*

The Committee meeting minutes were not yet available and would be shared at the next meeting. The Chair explained that the main discussion points in the meeting were:

- the challenges around the budget
- the gap between the national pay awards and the associated funding
- the fact that the budget is subsidised by the wraparound care income (the provision generates approximately £500k of income per year and £120k-£150k of profit for the school)
- further budget savings are not possible without staffing changes. The school carefully considers any recruitment to achieve cost-savings.

Discussion points arising from Committee meetings

d) Religious Leave

After some initial discussion, the agenda item from the previous Resources Committee meeting was deferred to the FGB for further consideration. Governors considered the fairness of current arrangements and the need to make the process more manageable, with specific guidelines for staff, based on consideration of the current financial position of school. The proposal was not to remove the option but to make it more viable when lots of staff requested the same day off.

Q. Is religious leave (paid or unpaid) a legal requirement?

A. The Headteacher undertook to seek legal advice. **ACTION: DH.**

Q. Is current unpaid leave (for other reasons) generally discretionary?

A. Yes. We do not get as many requests for non-religious reasons. It tends to work out okay. Some requests are approved and some are not dependent on the nature of the request and application of policy and these requests are spread out across a school year.

7. Policies/Procedures for approval

Governors had added comments/tracked changes to the circulated policies in advance of the meeting. Questions/answers raised in the meeting are recorded below.

a) Equality & Information Objectives Policy

Governors were reminded of how the school complies with its general duty; the objectives agreed in 2023 and that the Headteacher would provide periodic feedback on progress.

Q. Is the required information published on the school website?

A. Yes.

RESOLVED: That the Equality & Information Objectives Policy was AGREED.

b) Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Q. Are there many 'Looked After Children' in school?

A. There is a fair amount, and some adopted children. We have families who recommend our school to other families with Looked After Children or adopted children because of what we offer.

A governor highlighted that Manchester now uses the term 'CLA (Children Looked After)'.

RESOLVED: That the Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was AGREED.

c) Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

RESOLVED: That the Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was AGREED.

The Headteacher proposed that policies a) b) and c) were merged into one.

RESOLVED: That the three policies were agreed to be merged into one.

d) SEND Policy (detail)

The Headteacher explained the proposed granular detail around areas including: SEND support meetings; Educational Psychologist (EP) assessments; Speech & Language Therapy (SaLT); multi-agency direction of school services; and funded hours. Rationale for the school's proposed stance were explained to governors. The Headteacher confirmed that the proposed wording had been checked by MCC's legal team.

A governor questioned the wording: 'In extraordinary circumstances (deemed by the school), there could be a change of offer.' Following discussion, it was agreed the wording should be revised to state that the panel has the discretion to change offers. **ACTION: DH** to amend policy wording as noted.

The Headteacher noted that a template letter was required for children who are put on a waiting list for EP assessment. **ACTION: DH** to amend policy wording as noted.

Governors suggested that a timescale should be clear in the policy (including clarification in the 'not yet' response letter that the child's case is 'in the system' and that does not mean that the child will be seen by the EP the next Term). Governors noted that the terminology 'EP threshold' in the response letter suggests there is definitive criteria. A governor suggested alternative wording: 'the school feels the child's needs can be met in the classroom'. ACTION: DH to amend policy wording as noted.

Q. Would the school take a case to panel if there was no parental request?

A. Yes.

The Headteacher explained that the school cannot accommodate private assessments on-site and drew governors' attention to the legally-approved wording relating to this. She explained that some exceptions are made for children with very complex physical needs (eg: a private physiotherapist visits school for two children). **A governor raised concern that the proposed wording leaves the school open to challenge.** Following discussion, governors AGREED that the wording should be revised from: 'cannot facilitate private sector providers' to 'cannot be expected to facilitate private sector providers'. **ACTION: DH** to amend policy wording as noted.

A governor suggested that the policy makes reference to the fact that any SEND provision will be provided at the point of formal sign-off, to manage parents' expectations. The Headteacher agreed to add the additional wording. **ACTION: DH** to amend policy wording as noted.

RESOLVED: That the policy principles/wording were AGREED, subject to the noted amendments.

ACTION: DH to append the agreed information to the SEND Information Report & Policy and re-issue for governors' approval.

Governors agreed that the new wording would help to clarify the situation for parents and aid their understanding.

[The meeting was adjourned for a comfort break at 7.47pm and recommenced at 7.53pm.]

Policies/Procedures for information

e) Whistleblowing Policy

An extension of the policy renewal date was requested to allow time for the school to re-draft the policy based on 'The School Bus' model version. The new policy would be presented to the Resources Committee in January.

RESOLVED: That the policy renewal date was extended until January 2025.

8. Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher drew attention to the following points from her written report (circulated in advance of the meeting as paper 8):

- Pupil numbers have dropped significantly, due to a small Reception cohort (noted as a similar theme across local and wider Manchester schools) and lower numbers in Years 4 and 5.
- Nursery will be full from January 2025. It is hoped that the shift to taking more 'Rising 3s' and more part-time children will, in time, boost Reception numbers whilst there are low birth rate years.
- Themes for recent leaving children were explored.
- Staffing changes were explained.
- Pupil attendance is good overall and in-line with expectations.
- Pupil Premium attendance is 92.5%. Patterns within groups analysis were noted.
- **Q. Are you seeing more generally sporadic illness?**

A. There is some. Where absence has been more persistent because of sporadic illness, we have met with the child (if old enough) and the parent to explore the reasons.

Q. What would be the impact if sporadic illness is removed from the Pupil Premium absence data?

A. There would be a significant improvement if sporadic illness was removed.

A governor noted that sporadic illness and discouraging holidays were the only areas that the school can realistically try to influence.

- Governors reviewed the anonymised analysis of Pupil Premium pupils with low attendance (page

7 of the Headteacher's Report) and noted that the school's thoughtful and proactive approach had led to some improvements from Autumn 2023-24 and Autumn 2024-25. The Headteacher spoke about the approach the school had taken for one child whose attendance was 55.1% this time last year and is now 75.6%.

A governor noted other cases that had improved and asked if the child who had moved from 62.5% to 94.2% was due to the school's effort?

A. The Headteacher could not confirm in relation to that specific child (due to looking at anonymised data), but noted that the Attendance Lead has made a huge difference with individual families.

- Overall attendance and absence compared to last year was the same or better.
- Persistent Absence (PA) was 11.1% and Severe Absence (SA) was 0.6%. PA was noted as lower than the national average.
- Anonymised context was provided for the PA and SA children and the school's approach explained.
- Specific part time timetables were discussed (without children's names). Some children in Nursery have a full-time place and attend four times a week, as agreed by the school.
- A range of positive stakeholder comments were noted.

Q. Do you solicit these comments?

A. No.

- There had been no formal complaints.
- The minor concerns that had been raised were explained, as detailed in the written report.
- Reasons for recent LADO advice taken in the Summer and Autumn Term to-date were outlined (with no breach of confidentiality).
- Work on behaviour culture work continues and the underpinning values have been agreed; the vision for behaviours in various places/times in school and on trips has been explored; and articulation of the vision has begun.

Q. Are staff on-board?

A. Yes. **The staff governor agreed.**

Next steps are: working with the 'Rights Respecting' Ambassadors and re-visiting underpinning values; checking the agreed vision is consistently in-line; and considering how adults will consistently manage behaviour across school.

- There had been one violent incident in school, resulting in an injury to a child. The Headteacher assured that the process was properly documented and dealt with as per school policy.
- There are currently no major concerns or themes identified for behaviour. The language that had been previously noted as a growing trend seems to have settled via intervention and education with the Behaviour Lead. However, a few instances of unkindness have been witnessed from older to younger children, which was noted as unusual for Oswald Road. These were dealt with in-line with policy and an assembly was held with the Headteacher and Behaviour Lead to re-iterate the importance of kindness.

Q. Is there any difference between behaviour in school and holiday clubs and wraparound care?

A. The Headteacher did not have data regarding holiday club behaviour but was able to confirm that after-school club behaviour tends to be good as the activity is a free choice. During a teaching & learning walk last week, the behaviour in wraparound was very good.

- A full behaviour report will be shared at the next FGB meeting.

Governors were referred to papers 8a-8c, circulated in advance of the meeting.

a) Phonics screener analysis (November 2024)

- 90% of pupils achieved 10+ in the baseline screener (the national average is 80% for 32+ at the end of the year).

- At 10+, no group is causing concern (ie: no group is more than 5% from the national average for all children).

b) Reception Predictions Analysis (November 2024)

- 72% of students are expected to reach a Good Level of Development (GLD) (the national average is 67%). Accelerated progress is needed as their level on entry was 44%.
- Groups analysis:
 - there are more boys than girls in this cohort. Boys are overall marginally below overall national for 2023, however, slightly higher-attaining than boys nationally.
 - EAL children are predicted to attain lower than children overall and lower than EAL nationally (62%). The school trend for EAL pupils is rapid progress later in the school, particularly in Key Stage 2 (KS2).
 - Summer-born children are predicted to attain lower than children overall and Summer-born nationally (59%). Looking at last year's national data (achieving GLD), there was significant difference between Autumn and Summer-born attainment looking at achievement of all Early Learning Goals.

Q. When do you usually see the Summer-born gap close?

A. In KS2, but it has been reported that it is still evident in secondary school.

- Boys and Summer-born are the biggest sub-groups within the group of children who are not predicted to achieve GLD.

c) Year 6 predictions overview

- Year 6 students are on-track to achieve strong results, with 85% expected to reach the Expected standard (or above) in Reading; 77% in Writing and 84% in Maths.
- Reading, Maths and Combined is significantly above national; and Writing is above national.
- At Greater Depth, Writing and Combined are in-line with national; Reading is above national; and Maths is significantly above.
- Progress measures are strong in Reading, Writing and Maths from the end of Year 2.
- Progress measures are strong in Reading and Maths from the end of Reception, with neutral measures from the end of EYFS.
- There were 19 children with no data from EYFS.
- Groups analysis:
 - Writing attainment at Expected for EAL, boys, Pupil Premium and SEND is notable.
 - There are generally positive progress measures across groups based on predictions. Writing for boys, PP and SEND support is flagging as lower.
 - Progress of the school's more complex SEND pupils is positive.

9. School Improvement Plan (SIP)

The SIP had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting and had been discussed at the most recent Teaching & Learning Committee meeting.

Q. What are the challenges of bringing a new writing programme into the school?

A. That people might prefer what was previously done. It has been trialled in classrooms and spread out to other classes and it has been well-received. **The staff governor confirmed that to be the case.** External advisors will provide support at certain points. Handwriting books were working and parents had said they were impressed with their child's handwriting.

Q. Do children see a model of how to write?

A. The Headteacher explained some examples including use of the interactive whiteboard and examples displayed in the classroom. The PTA has also now sourced visualisers for the classrooms, which is hugely appreciated.

Q. Do you teach cursive all the way through?

A. No.

Q. What does 'moderation opportunities' mean?

A. Ensuring that there are more opportunities for staff to meet to share thoughts on writing (eg: reviewing a sample of books and discussing which is the strongest writer and why).

Wraparound

The school is exploring the possibility of an external company providing all-year round wraparound for Nursery (including holiday care) from September 2025. This would mean that Little Owls Club could grow and house everybody that needs a place from Reception upwards.

10. Chair's Action (if any)

There was none.

11. Governor Visits

Governors were referred to the schedule prepared by the Headteacher and were encouraged to choose a visit based on their interests/areas of expertise. The Headteacher reminded that governors were always welcome to visit the school in addition to the identified core visits. The Chair explained that visiting provides the opportunity to meet staff/children and brings to life all that is discussed in governors' meetings. Governors were reminded to document their visits using the governor visit form.

ACTION: DH to link VW with the SENDCO (HW).

12. Governor Training / Induction

Governors were reminded to complete the mandatory safeguarding training. Resources Committee members were reminded of the training available for them.

13. Equality Objectives (Standing Item)

An update regarding accessibility for a pupil was recorded in the confidential section of the minutes.

14. AOB

a) Field of Os

The Chair proposed to organise the stakeholder meeting agreed by the Resources Committee. JW volunteered her involvement. ACTION: PM

b) Virtual Autumn Term Chairs' Briefing 03.12.24 at 5.30pm-7pm

The Chair encouraged governors to attend the next MCC online briefing. **ACTION: PM** to send details of Chairs' Briefing to governors.

c) Residential Risk Assessment

The Headteacher would confirm how governors will agree/approve the Risk Assessment for the upcoming Residential and whether an online meeting was required. **ACTION: DH.**

15. Next meeting dates:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| • FGB | 31 March 2025 6.15pm at school |
| • T&L | 13 January 2025 at 5.15pm online |
| • Resources | 20 January 2025 at 5.15pm online. |

16. Confidential Matters

The discussion under agenda item 13 was recorded in the Part II confidential section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 8.49pm.

PART I ACTIONS FROM FGB MEETING 25.11.24

Agenda Item	Who	What	When
3	Peter Martin	to on-board/arrange induction for new members	ASAP
3	Clerk	to complete administrative tasks for new members (including updating membership list on Terms of Reference)	Complete
5a c/f	Stephen Bradley & Ernst ter Horst	to complete annual declarations	End of Term
5a	Peter Martin	to re-send declarations link to SB	ASAP
5a	Peter Martin	to send declarations link to VT, SH & JS	ASAP
5a c/f	Governors (as applicable)	to complete skills audit / Level 1 safeguarding training	End of Term
5a c/f	Peter Martin Governors	to upload academisation questions document to GoogleDrive and share link with governors to add thoughts/comments/questions to the academisation questions document	31.03.25
5b	Peter Martin	to share Governors For Schools induction training link with VT, SH & JS	ASAP
6d	Deborah Howard	to seek advice as to whether paid religious leave is a legal entitlement	Complete
7d	Deborah Howard	to amend the SEND policy wording as noted (<i>x4 instances recorded on pages 4-5 of the minutes</i>)	31.03.25
7d	Deborah Howard	to append the agreed information to the SEND Information Report & Policy and re-issue for governors' approval	31.03.25
11	Deborah Howard	to link VW with HW for a governor visit	ASAP
14a	Peter Martin	to organise stakeholder meeting to discuss Field of Os	Complete
14b	Peter Martin	to send details of Chairs' Briefing on 03.12.24 to governors	Complete
14c	Deborah Howard	to confirm how governors will agree/approve the Risk Assessment for the upcoming Residential and whether an online meeting was required	Complete

Future Agenda Items

FGB 31.03.25

- Resources Committee 11 November 2024 minutes (*for information only – meeting was discussed at the previous FGB meeting*)
- Revised SEND Policy for approval

Resources Committee 20.01.25

- Revised Whistleblowing Policy for approval.

Peter Martin

27 / 07 / 2025

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