

The meeting will start at 7 p.m.

**Theme - Premises and Finance**

	<b>FGB 17.3.2022</b>
1	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b>  Governors in attendance: Nikki Brown (NB) (Head Teacher)  Jonathan Gorrie (JG) Chair; Philip Colligan (PC) Vice Chair: Tom Knowles (TK); Caroline Louth (CL); Ruth Kershner (RK); Hilary Toulmin (HT); Verity Motskin (VM); Dan Ashby (DA); Jack Pullen (JP); Pip Wilson (PW)  Guest: Tim Fox (TF)  Guest: Matt Casey (MC)  Clerk: Sonali Rao (SR)
2	<b>Notice of any other business</b>  New Governor DA to undertake induction training – cost approved by NB.
3	<b>Declarations of interest relating to items on this agenda</b>  Users of Spectrum services or parents paying for school meals?  Some governors declared that they use Spectrum services and take up school meals. They will abstain from voting on these issues.

4	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>Email received from a parent interested in becoming a governor. NB has contacted him to discuss vacancies including the parent governor role and process of election .</p>
5	<p><b>Minutes and matters arising</b></p> <p>The minutes held on 24 February were approved by governors.</p>

**6 Review Spectrum provision & review costs**

The [Spectrum Managers Report](#) was circulated in advance of the meeting. MC outlined the ongoing challenges introduced by the pandemic. Since September 2021, the service is feeling more normal and 'back to business' There is less worry about transmission as children are spending the majority of the time playing outside and do not remain in a static indoor environment, thereby reducing the risk of transmission. Children are able to interact with their friends and have more positive and comfortable experience. It has been pleasing to see children being able to restore friendships.

The next challenge is to recruit more staff. Although MC has managed to retain the majority of the team, he feels this may be due to current playworkers having had their personal plans due to Covid stalled and hence are staying on as playworkers.

A governor stated that the evaluation process is very useful and asked how it is graded, ie the framework used or the guidance received. MC stated that he uses the county council/LA self evaluation framework design as guidance and explained the definitions of some of the grading, such as 'good – with elements of outstanding.'

A face to face support visit has been arranged from a childcare and play-work advisor who is one of the people responsible for creating this framework. It will involve professional discussions and the opportunity to get an external set of eyes on the school's process

A governor congratulated MC on the positive feedback received from parents and asked if there has been an opportunity for the children to share their feedback. MC replied that this has not been done formally but children are able to contribute on choosing and setting tasks in time for holiday clubs etc.

Another governor observed that the first 5 months of the current financial year were disrupted due to Covid but there would have been a big growth and asked if this is due to a raise in fees. MC stated that the fees have not been raised, however the sibling discount has been discontinued.

Governors discussed the discontinuation of the provision of food and snacks in the club. MC replied that the majority of parents are happy with this arrangement, although some (14%) have expressed dissatisfaction, as shown by the survey results.

Governors also reviewed and discussed the impact it would have on parents if fees were raised given the fact that living costs in general are increasing. In light of this and with the reduction in the expense on food, it was decided that the fees would remain the same.

A governor questioned if any negative/constructive feedback was received as well as the positive feedback which MC has shared with governors. MC stated that any complaints may go to NB, but usually any issues are resolved quickly. The issues are usually related to play rather than education, so Spectrum are under less scrutiny.

NB asked MC to share and raw survey data with KK as she is the line manager for MC's role.

Governors thanked MC for his time and MC left the meeting.

A governor asked about the operation of zero hours and training of playworkers. NB explained how this works successfully for the school and the playworkers.

7

## **Budget**

The relevant papers were circulated ahead of the meeting. TF summarised the papers and referred to the staffing structure and the summer projects as part of the asset management plan. JG asked if the school is thinking about ways to mitigate some of the challenges that will be imposed on vulnerable families by the cost of living rises. NB stated that that the staffing structure takes into consideration providing support for these families. She pointed out that CCC has ringfenced 33 million pounds to support local vulnerable families.

The best value statement was approved as there are no changes. Governors discussed benchmarking and the SFVS statement and highlighted that it was a good job, given the difficult circumstances. PC highlighted the long term aspirations to further reduce the number of pupils per teacher.

Question 8 Answer is 'in part' as all IT kits are fully listed by Richard from ICT, however TF would like the site manager to check and make note of the more valuable items around the school.

Question 16 – It was noted that the answer to this question should be 'Yes.'

*Has the school published on its website the number of employees (if any) whose gross salary exceeded £100k?*

8

## **Agree staffing structure**

NB shared her presentation with governors, which was also circulated in advanced of the meeting. The first slide reflects on the situation last year and the challenges that were lying ahead due to the pandemic and closures and the priorities set at the time.

The situation the school is in now are the long term effects of Covid. NB compared this to the effects of 'Long-Covid.'

NB described the challenges and suggested solutions to overcome them.

NB shared some challenges that staff are experiencing and highlighted the need to maintain the support for the children, but also to look at a recovery program for the school in order to ensure the delivery of inspiring and strong lessons continue. NB explained that the addition of the second HLTA role has proved particularly successful as agencies have not been able to provide supply cover. The time needed to be given to high needs children has also increased and there has been a high turnover for TAs. Recruitment of Admin staff also remains a challenge.

NB walked governors through the new roles and changes she is proposing for the year. This information was shared and read by governors ahead of the meeting.

It was noted at the additional positions will mean that the school will be using more of the carry forward total. NB reiterated that this is a recovery plan, therefore may only be short term and run until a pre-pandemic level is reached and gaps are closed.

A governor asked how the provision of EAL and high needs is managed by the same member of staff. NB state that she will try to cover this through recruitment.

A governor asked what the impact would be of less time given to pupils as a result of more teachers spending time away from class. NB stated that the school has always tried to ensure that classes are covered by in-house teachers, as opposed to brining in agency staff, so children are seeing and learning with familiar teachers.

A governor asked about the provision of Mental Health/First Aid. NB stated that the role of the Wellbeing lead has been useful. Drop in sessions have been helpful and well-being Wednesdays are currently appreciated. Several options were discussed

	<p>with staff, and suggestions included, a well being policy, well being committee etc. NB recognises that staff are the most valuable asset in the school.</p> <p>Governors expressed strong support for NB's proposal and approach to looking after staff well being.</p> <p>The staffing structure proposed was agreed.</p>
9	<p><b>Review catering finances &amp; set school meals costs</b></p> <p>Governors reviewed and discussed the catering and cleaning contracts. Governors have had the opportunity to read these before the meeting and are happy to approve both proposals.</p> <p>School meals – Governors discussed the costs. It was agreed that the costs would not be raised, however it is necessary to keep an eye on the quality and portion sizes.</p> <p>A governor asked a question regarding the uptake of free school meals. TF stated that it has been increasing. NB shared that she is mindful about families who are on lower income but not eligible for benefits. She is having conversations with those parents.</p>

10 **Premises update**

The Asset Management plan was circulated ahead of the meeting. A governor asked regarding the IT refresh for laptops. Richard from ICT is onsite every Thursday and ensures that laptops are in good working order. Another governor asked for clarification in the cost of painting by an external against internal body. TF stated that high level decorating is completed by external companies while the internal, lower level work, such as classrooms and NB's office are done by the site manager.

Governors approved the Asset Management Plan.

Governors also approved lettings rates for an increase of £1 to the hall/CR rate, £2.00 for combined.

The rates are only used as a starting point when assessing the appropriate charge for a new tenant and have not been raised for 2 years.

TF uses discretion to ensure that an appropriate amount is charged for each letting, depending on the individual circumstances.

11 **Head's Update**

SDP update – This was shared and read by governors ahead of the meeting. NB met with SDP Priority action group. Some good headway was made on the priorities.

13	<p>Governor Visits</p> <p>Visible Learning</p> <p>Website</p>
14	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>The following HR policies were circulated ahead of the meeting. Governors approved all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Whistleblowing Policy</li><li>· Support staff probation</li><li>· Management of sickness absence</li><li>· Discretionary leave</li><li>· Bullying and harassment</li><li>· Grievance Procedures</li></ul> <p>It was agreed that the EPM logo would be retained on the front page of each HR policy to differentiate them from the school policies.</p>
15	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>None</p>

	<p><b>Close</b></p> <p>The meeting closed at 8:50pm</p>