

Thomas Russell Junior School

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held in school on Thursday, 8th December 2022 at 6.00pm

Present: Mr Terry Wells (Chair), Mrs Shelley Sharpe (Headteacher), Ms Claire Branson, Mrs Elaine Watling (Vice Chair), Mrs Marie Keasley, Mrs Rachel Bennett, Mrs Lou Vardy, Mrs Helen Gobran, Mr Jujar Singh and Mrs Helen Whitby

In Attendance: Ms C Jones, Clerk to Governors

544 Apologies were received from Tom Clamp, Paul Johnson and Jenni Hill
Resolved that apologies be accepted from Tom Clamp, Paul Johnson and Jenni Hill

545 Election of Chair

Mrs Sharpe proposed Mr Wells as Chair for a further term, seconded by Mrs Watling – **all in favour**.

Resolved that Mr Wells be appointed as Chair of the FGB for a further one-year term.

546 Election of Vice Chair

Mr Wells proposed Mrs Watling as Vice Chair for a further term, seconded by Mr Singh – **all in favour**.

Resolved that Mrs Watling be appointed as Vice Chair of the FGB for a further one-year term.

547 Governing Body Matters

- a) Membership:** The Chair reported that Dr Peter Madill's term of office, as a parent governor, has come to an end. This end of term, along with Andrew Lloyd-Jones's resignation, means the FGB has two vacancies currently. A recruitment campaign will be undertaken after the Christmas holidays.
- b) Confidentiality:** Governors were reminded that all discussions that take place at this meeting should remain confidential to the meeting. In addition, minutes of the meeting do not become a public document until ratified at the next Full Governing Board meeting.
- c) Register of Business Interests:** All Governors have now signed the Register of Business Interests. HT assured FGB that a system is in place for all new Governors to sign once appointed.
- d) Code of Conduct:** All Governors have now signed the Code of Conduct. HT confirmed that arrangements are in place to ensure that new Governors sign the Code of Conduct when appointed.
- e) Declaration of Interest Business and Pecuniary Interest:** No declarations of interest were made by Governors in respect of any items appearing on the agenda.

548 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 7th July 2022

Governors confirmed they were content to accept the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

The Chair clarified that Miss Branson had been re-appointed to her co-opted role at the end of her term.

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting held on the 7th July 2022 be accepted for fact and accuracy.

Resolved: That the minutes, agenda, and all reports and other papers considered at the meeting be made available for inspection if requested.

549 Action Points and Matters Arising from the 7th July 2022 Minutes

532a	Consider a suitable candidate for the co-opted governor vacancy	Actioned.
532c	Mrs Bennett to complete the register of business interests	Actioned.
532d	Mrs Bennett to sign the code of conduct	Actioned.
535	Committee member to be agreed and Chair elected	Actioned.

550 Review of Committees and Nominated/Link Governors

The Chair reported that Mrs Gobran has joined the Pool Committee and brings with her financial knowledge, which will be useful going forward.

551 Chair's Actions

The Chair reported that he has dealt with two complaints over the past couple of weeks. The complaints have been dealt with in accordance with the Policy. Mr Wells reported that he has looked into the complaints and responded accordingly. This afternoon the school had received a Complaint Review Request form regarding the first complaint: Mrs Watling would be arranging a sub-committee to conduct the review.

552 Headteacher's Report (including Safeguarding, Discriminatory Incidents, Pupil and Sports Premium Funding)

The Headteacher's report had been circulated with the agenda and paper copies provided at the meeting, as this is easier for Governors to review and make notes where necessary. **Governors indicated that they prefer paper copies of the HT report for ease of reference.**

HT reported low mobility with pupil numbers. **Governors enquired if there is a maximum number of pupils per class?** HT reported, not for KS2 classes – around 30 is preferable but class sizes can be up to 35. With infants there is a legal class size of 30.

All staff have undertaken full Level 1 Safeguarding training this year, following on from HT attending Train the Trainer. Staff have been made aware of KCSiE, highlighting the specific updates, including child on child abuse – staff signatures have been collated to acknowledge reading and understanding their role and responsibilities in line with KCSiE 2022.

HT updated Governors on the new IT protection package, Securus, which is really good as this provides “live” checking, which makes it easier to deal with real incidents as they are happening. **Governors asked if the settings can be changed to stop the non-relevant information being flagged up in reports?** The new system still grades incidents 1-5 but the difference is that the “live” notifications immediately flag up 4 and 5 incidents, instead of having to check through reports, which might be a day or so old. **Governors asked if the system is manageable now?** Yes, because of the “live” warnings.

KCSiE 2022 includes guidance on online checks for staff on their social media. As personal profiles can't be used to do the checking school has signed up to a County package whereby they will do the checking – we have signed up to the most cost-effective package of paying per check (£10), as we generally won't need to carry out that many checks. HT updated Governors on staffing changes, including Mrs Watling being successful at interview for a TA position. Night Owls/Early Birds – numbers continue to rise. An additional adult is now employed to accommodate the increasing numbers. **Governors asked how many adults are needed?** The guidance states 1:20. Plus there is always a member of SLT on site, someone in the office for First Aid purposes, with walkie talkies in use for ease of communication. Governors asked if there are set areas for the children? All the children are in the hall together to start with, then they tend to split into different activities in different sections of the hall, so there are always staff around to support each other. **Governors asked about safeguarding precautions?** The staff are always in each other's company and have walkie talkies to call for support from SLT or first aid.

Absences are being covered in-house with the HT and other teachers working together. **Governors asked if this is working OK?** There has been a cut back in management time but this approach is best for the children – for consistency and standard of teaching. It is three-way for Maths and two-way for English and appears to be working and is manageable at the moment.

The whole School Improvement Plan is now available on the staff room wall, with plans being reviewed and added to as the year progresses.

Governors acknowledged that SATs results are amazing. **Governors asked if targets have been set for this year?** HT reported that we have considered KS1 data and set each child their personal best we feel they can achieve. The first round of assessments were carried out last week; we will look at data in February and from that we will be able to see how the children are progressing, and in particular the Y6s leading up to SATs. HT assured that everything is very promising so far. Local Authority letter received designating TRJS as Level 1 - no concerns.

Behaviour standards remain high but not at the standard pre-Covid. HT reported on a small number of issues of late which are being monitored and/or being dealt with. School is liaising with the Behaviour Support team where applicable.

Work has begun on the United Against Bullying programme, with whole school audits, which will result in an action plan. Some training has taken place and further training is planned.

HT reported that attendance seems to be improving. Punctuality is generally really good. However, there are a small number of children who are persistently late.

HT provided an update on EHCPs.

Governors discussed at length the request from TRIS to change our start and finish times to accommodate changes at the Infant school. Following full discussion regarding the possible impact and any benefits, it was agreed that TRJS school hours will not be changed.

HT updated FGB on the difficulties which have surrounded the toilet refurbishment. **Governors asked if the contractors are on the County approved list?** Yes, they are on the approved list. They were much cheaper than the other quotes; it has been such hard work to get the work done over the Summer holidays.

We now have a new H&S Adviser (has worked for County for a long time). A recent Zoom overview consultation was fine. A visit has been arranged for the 14th February to carry out an on-site check for specific areas.

Governors indicated they had no further questions or comments.

Resolved that the Headteacher's Report be accepted with thanks.

553 Committee Reports including new/reviewed policies (minutes had been circulated with the agenda)

a) **Curriculum** – Mrs Watling highlighted that flightpaths had been discussed in detail with everything going in the right direction. **Governors asked about the Y7 data?** The results are for the children who left in July. **Governors indicated that there were no further questions or comments.**

Resolved that the Safeguarding Policy (Sept 2022) and Child on Child Abuse Policy (Sept 2022), SEN Information Report (Oct 2022) and Prevent (Oct 2022) be accepted.

b) **Premises** – **Governors indicated that they had no questions or comments.** Mrs Keadley will visit school on the 14th February to take part in the H&S Inspection.

Resolved that the First Aid and Medical Emergency Policy (Oct 2022) and Business Continuity Scheme (Oct 2022) be accepted.

c) **Finance** – the Chair reported that arrangements will be made for Mr Clamp and Mrs Gobran to visit and meet with the Finance Officer next time they visit. HT will make the necessary arrangements. HT and Mr Johnson have reviewed catering to look at whether it might be worthwhile considering whether we should bring the provision in-house. Having sought specialist advice, it might not be as easy as it first seemed due to TUPE, H&S, training, keeping up to date with legislation and rules etc.

Catering is currently running at a loss. We currently charge £2.45 for a dinner – the recommendation is that we increase the cost to £2.65 to reduce the deficit. **Governors asked if catering is running at a loss who is covering the loss?** School is covering the loss – the Finance Committee has already discussed the options for increasing the cost of a dinner and about notifying parents via the newsletter. **Governors asked if the reason for the loss is not enough children taking up meals?** No, it is because of the increase in the cost of food and staffing costs increasing since the budget was set. **Governors asked what is the uptake for meals?** Currently 140 to 155 every day, out of 248 children, which is a really high uptake.

For the 2023-2024 budget we are being advised to increase the cost of the dinner to £2.60 at least to break even. At £2.45 it would cost school £3,560; at £2.50 it would cost school £2,087 and at £2.55 it would cost £615 to school.

HT proposed that the cost of a school dinner be increased to £2.65 with effect from February half term. **Governors approved this price increase for the reasons discussed.**

Resolved that the cost of a school dinner be increased to £2.65 wef February half term 2023.

Resolved that the Staff Discipline, Charges and Remissions (Oct 2022), Complaints and STPCD Policies be accepted.

Mr Wells advised that he will be reviewing the Governor Allowances Policy in the near future.

d) **Pool** – The Chair reported that there has not been a meeting since the last FGB. A meeting will be arranged for January 2023.

554 Other Reports

a) **Performance Management** – The Chair reported that a Pay Committee had been convened prior to FGB. All pay awards will be backdated to September 2022. A revised budget report had been provided for Governors; increased pay awards will come out of the top line teacher costs. HT reported that the budget still looks comfortable following the update. Mrs Watling reported that a PM review regarding the Headteacher took place on the 29th November 2022, supported by Nicky Bell, external adviser.

b) **Link Governors**

- **Sports Premium (JH)** – Mrs Hill has visited school – report pending.
- **Pupil Premium (EW)** – Mrs Watling will be arranging a meeting with the HT for early January.
- **Anti-Bullying (EW)** – Mrs Watling will wait for the results from the Anti-Bullying Audit before arranging a PSHE visit with Miss Branson.
- **Safeguarding** – Mrs Whitby will be arranging a meeting with the HT.

c) **Any Others** – There were no other reports to receive.

555 Other Information Items – Governors noted the contents of the Governor Information Pack. The Chair highlighted the following:

- a) KS1 Assessments becoming non-statutory from September 2023 – Governors asked the HT's understanding of what this will mean for school? Infant schools will be able to choose whether they administer KS1 tests or not. Governors asked if there will be a knock-on effect for us? The change will not be that significant for us as we already receive teacher assessments and a score from the Infants.
- b) National Tutoring Programme – Governors asked if school has signed up to the programme? We didn't need to sign up to the programme; all schools received a pot of money. For TRJS this was a very small amount of money, which we have used the best we can for the children concerned.
- c) PE and Sports Premium – Governors asked if we have been taking part in the sampling programme? No, but if we did we wouldn't have a problem with the evidence.
- d) Music Development Plan – Governors asked if school has a development plan? Yes, we have a plan. As mentioned earlier, every subject has a development plan.
- e) Online Checks for New Staff – Governors noted that this change in guidance was discussed earlier in the meeting.
- f) Safeguarding Training – Governors asked what is meant by Governor training should be regularly updated? It is expected that Governors attended full training every three years, with annual sessions to cover any updates.
- g) Safeguarding Updates – Governors are urged to ensure that they read all updates provided.

556 Confidential Items

FGB agreed that the update regarding EHCPs, within the Headteacher's Report, should be marked as Confidential and not included in the documentation which is made available on request.

557 Dates and Times of Future Meetings –

Thursday, 23rd March 2023 at 6pm

Thursday, 13th July 2023 at 6pm

Meeting closed at 7.25pm

Action Points

547a	Recruitment campaign to fill GB vacancies.	HT/Chair
553a	Mrs Keasley visit on the 14 th February 2023 – H&S	MK
553b	Mr Clamp and Mrs Gobran visit to meet the Finance Officer	HT to arrange
553c	School dinner cost increase from February half term 2023	HT
553c	Governor Allowances Policy to be reviewed	TW
555g	Read safeguarding update contained in the Governor Information Pack Pages 32-39.	All Governors

Signed..... Date.....

Chair