



**A meeting of the Governing Board of the Federation of Sharow CE Primary and  
Skelton Newby Hall CE Primary Schools  
held at Sharow School on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 at 5pm**

**Minutes**



**Present:**

Peter Cannings (PC)	Foundation Governor / Chair
Jacqui Palmer (JP)	Headteacher
Di Tunnard (DT)	Foundation Governor
Jonathan Redhead	Parent Governor
Michael O'Paul (MOP)	Co-opted Governor
Claire Rowett (CR)	Co-opted Governor
Anna Whitham (AW)	Local Authority Governor ( <i>appointed at meeting</i> )
Leanne Eaton (LE)	Clerk

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>		<b>Action</b>
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**PART 'A' – PROCEDURAL**

- 1 **Welcome**  
PC welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Anna Whitham, the nomination for the Local Authority Governor.
  
- 2 **Apologies for absence and to determine whether any absences should be consented to**  
Apologies were received and accepted from Justin Wheatley & Gemma Snodgrass.  
  
Sarah Brewster was not in attendance and apologies had not been received. This absence was therefore not consented to.
  
- 3 **To remind Governors of the need to declare interests, pecuniary or non-pecuniary.**  
None.  
  
**Declaration of Confidential Items**  
One item (11)  
Governors were reminded of the confidential nature of discussion at meetings.
  
- 4 **Notification of urgent other business previously notified to the Chair**  
It was noted that Chris Smith (Co-opted Governor) had resigned with immediate effect. There was therefore a vacancy on the selection panel for the potential closure of Skelton school. MOP agreed to step into this vacancy.
  
- 5 **Appointment of LA Governor – for approval**  
PC had received 6 responses regarding the appointment of AW, all of which were in favour of the appointment. AW was therefore appointed as the Local Authority Governor.
  
- 6 **To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meetings held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022**



The minutes of the meeting were approved and signed by PC.

7 **To consider matters arising from the minutes for which there is no separate agenda item**

- 4: Chase outstanding business interest forms. **Complete**
- 6: Chase outstanding signatures for the Code of Conduct. **Complete**
- 7: Review/Amend Standing Orders once meeting structures agreed. **Complete**
- 11: Scheme of Delegation to the Headteacher to be carried forward to the next FGB – discussed at Resources. **Complete.**
- 13: SATS results to be reviewed at the next FGB meeting – **reviewed at SIP Committee. Complete.**
- 16: Arrange a time to ‘check in’ with JP to look through the toolkit – this is still outstanding.
- 18: Governance Self Audit – review responses and draft an action plan. **On Agenda**
- 18: Skills Audit – collate response and circulate outcomes. **Complete**
- 18: Governor ‘Impact Training’ be included in FGB agendas when necessary. **On Agenda**
- 19: Governor Monitoring Visits – to be arranged with JP. **On agenda.**
- 23: Circulate document to governors which shows potential impacts of governance – PC circulated ‘The Impact of School Governance on School Progress and Development’ and asked governors to read and familiarise themselves with the examples illustrated. It is a working document to be compiled over a three-year period with input from the Chairs of committees and the FGB, with the Chair of Governors responsible for managing/updating. **Complete.**
- 24: Dates for committee meetings and terms of reference. **Complete**

DT/SB

**PART ‘B’ – SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

8 **Headteacher’s report, including safeguarding**

The report was circulated prior to the meeting. JP invited questions from governors and the following was also highlighted:

**Skelton:** there are currently 4 children on roll - 1 in nursery, 1 in Year 1, 1 in Year 2 and 1 in Year 6. The Year 6 child is currently being taught at Sharow. There is a meeting on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February to progress the consultation.

**Sharow:** See also confidential minutes

**Numbers on roll:** as expected.

**Q:** *Is there any improvement on the persistent absentees?*

**A:** *Yes. We are continually monitoring and we may direct one family to work with Early Help. JP has also sent out the document from the NHS called ‘Is my child too ill for school?’*

**SEF:** JP has assessed Sharow as ‘Good’ but is concerned that Leadership & Management maybe ‘Requires Improvement’ as governors need to be able to demonstrate that they



understand the school.

**Attainment:** data was discussed at the School Improvement Committee. There have been pupil progress meetings recently. There are no issues with progress or attainment. Interventions are ongoing and teaching is good.

*Q: Are any children achieving Greater Depth and if so, what do you do to challenge them further?*

*A: Once children have met their targets, we aim to broaden their knowledge and understanding. The target for foundation subjects is that all children are at 'expected.'*

*Q: There is no data given for Skelton – why is this?*

*A: JP has assumed that the children will be moving on so there is nothing to report, and the children who are left are in too small a cohort for any meaningful data, and they can be easily identified. The history of numbers/data is of no use.*

*Q: With the SEF, do schools evaluate themselves or is the SEF just the view of the SEA?*

*A: JP has talked through the SEF with the SEA (Christine Johnson), but she cannot grade it. The mid-year review meeting with Christine is coming up so the SEF will be reviewed then.*

*Q: Why isn't there any data on Pupil Premium children?*

*A: This data is presented for the whole school as the numbers are too low so children can be easily identified.*

*Q: Why isn't there any phonics data for Autumn 2021?*

*A: There wasn't any assessments because of the lockdowns. All schools were asked to choose a new phonics scheme and we have chosen 'Little Wandle' and it is used with fidelity. Phonics is very secure now.*

*Q: Who monitors the phonics?*

*A: Mrs Dixon.*

**Pupil Premium:** The gap is circa. 18-20%. Some pupils are also on the SEN register which impacts the figures. JP is confident to talk about individual children.

**Safeguarding:** There are currently 15 children being monitored, which has increased from 11 this time last year. Some children have been added due to incidents occurring outside of school. 1 referral to Social Care and 1 Child in Need.

**Curriculum:**

*Q: Why isn't there any data for after school activities?*

*A: there aren't any activities.*

**Leadership & Management:** There is a lack of data here as governors have not been



monitoring. This is improving so the data will also improve.

Staff:

*Q: the reports state there was 100% of staff of sick at once – was this Covid related?*

*A: yes.*

**9 SEA Reports**

SEA reports on Safeguarding, SEND, Attendance, Curriculum and EYFS, were all circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that these had been done early in the academic year so actions can be taken. JP advised that the staff have all responded well to the visits and appreciate Christine's support.

**10 SIP/SEF Update**

SEF update in item 8. SEF & SIP were circulated prior to the meeting.

Update on response to latest Ofsted reports / Governance Action Plan: PC has worked on the Governance Action Plan. PC used the recent governance review, criticisms of governance in LA and Diocesan reports and the 2 most recent action plans to create this document. PC highlighted the following:

- Governors must support and challenge school leadership. This will be covered in one of the training events, but this then needs to be evidenced in meetings where challenges will be recorded.
- PC will cover the questions governors should be asking in a future training session. The DfE provide guidance on 13 areas governors could receive data/information on.
- JP requested, if possible, governors send in questions before meetings.
- HTPM: all governors need to be aware of the process but only 3 governors carry out the review. Governors also need to be aware of how JP carries out staff appraisals.
- Training: PC urged governors to attend training based on the objectives in the action plan, and this would also be good evidence for Ofsted.

*Q: What areas would JP like monitoring to take place in – are there any gaps?*

JP

*A: JP will look at potential areas for further monitoring and will feedback to governors.*

Governing Body Self Review/Action Plan: PC circulated a data collection grid prior to the meeting. This was based on the skills audit. The outcome of the self-review indicated that the following areas require further development, but it was noted that a lot of this will come with time and experience of being a governor:

- Experience of being a Chair of a Board or Committee.
- Confident to carry out HT performance.
- Knowledge of school funding and what money is spent on.
- Can interpret budget monitoring reports and ask relevant questions.
- Knows what the schools' strategic priorities are.
- Can identify risks and evaluate potential impact.



- Knows how the curriculum meets all pupil needs.

The impact of the outcomes are as follows:

- When recruiting new governors, ideally candidates with a background in finance, and also potential chairs for the future would be prioritised.
- Training for governors to cover finance, strategic planning, curriculum planning and risk analysis.

PC advised that when the skills audit is done again at the end of the year, it is hoped that the averages will have increased as governors gain experience and confidence and undertake more training.

Governors thanked PC for the work on this and the action plan was agreed.

#### 11 **Update on Consultation of Skelton Newby Hall potential closure**

JP advised that 'Federation Fridays' were starting up again from this week. This will hopefully give the staff and children at Skelton a boost.

Feedback from public meeting: JP and PC attended the public consultation meeting, and were supported by Senior NYCC Officers and the Diocese of Leeds. The meeting was well attended (approx. 30 people). It was an emotional meeting - the overall feeling was the villagers were not happy about the potential closure and they feel badly informed about the process. Everyone in attendance was invited to submit to the consultation online. JP reported that it was an uncomfortable meeting, but JP did feel well supported by NYCC. There was also a governor from Kirby Hill in attendance, as Kirby Hill will be one of the schools that is likely to be included in the new catchment area for Skelton village.

*Q: Were the people who were frustrated about small school closures, frustrated overall or just at Skelton?*

*A: it was focused on Skelton.*

Expenditure Controls Letter: JP has received a letter from NYCC informing school that any spend over £1k at Skelton needs to have Local Authority Approval. Governors acknowledged receipt and adherence of this letter.

**See also confidential minutes.**

#### 12 **Wellbeing**

JP reported that staff are anxious about the meeting next week (7<sup>th</sup> February). JP has created a Wellbeing team for staff which is a mix of teachers and TA's.

*Q: What is the purpose of the team?*

*A: we are sending out surveys and we need to action the responses so staff know they are being listened to. We are equipping staff with strategies to manage their own wellbeing.*



*Q: is anxiety linked to the recent media/union actions?*

*A: possibly but it is mainly the lingering impact of Covid and the workload on staff. We struggle to progress issues when there isn't a full staff team, so we are trying to mitigate any absences. This was the first September in a couple of years that we have been back to 'normal' and now we are facing a potential restructure.*

*Q: Do NYCC support on wellbeing?*

*A: We have bought into 'Health Assured.' One member of staff has used it and they were very positive about the service, but they are only given 6 sessions.*

### 13 Safeguarding

JP & JR are meeting regularly and looking at different areas at each meeting. There is a programme of meetings scheduled in for the rest of the year. JP is waiting for HR to come to school to check the SCR.

JR has also spoken to the children about bullying and advised nothing was raised that caused any concern.

PC passed a document on the Safeguarding Link Governor role to JR.

Safeguarding Audit: JP is working on this and will send to JR for review once it is complete.

Governors need to formally agree this document by the end of March so JP will circulate for approval via email as there isn't an FGB scheduled until May. JP

### 14 Update from Committee meetings:

Resources (30<sup>th</sup> November 2022): minutes were circulated prior to the meeting. JR was appointed Chair of the Committee. The main issue discussed was the revised budget. There is a deficit forecast in Year 3 but in a small school, the smallest of changes in both income and expenditure can affect the budget, so whilst this is noted, it is not an immediate concern.

GS view on using school hall as a classroom: GS was not at the meeting but JP has spoken to her. Whilst it is an inconvenience with lunches, collective worships etc, the teacher needs to be very organised. GS also advised it is a nice room to be in and the children do like it because they like having a 'big classroom!' It was noted all round that whilst it isn't ideal, there is nothing that can be done to alter the situation.

School Improvement (7<sup>th</sup> December 2022): the meeting wasn't quorate but still went ahead so JP could share information. Since the meeting, there has been an increase in behaviour incidents. There has been progress on the SPIP with lots of actions being completed. It was noted there could still be an Ofsted inspection at Skelton as a Year 6 is being taught at Sharow. There was a minor change to the minutes which LE will amend.



A Chair will need electing at the next SIP Committee meeting.

## 15 Governance

- Vacancies – recruitment update
  - 1 x foundation
  - 1 x Co-optedJP advised there was a parent who was interested in being a governor so JP will approach.
- Training: PC proposed the following dates for Governor training:
  - 21<sup>st</sup> February
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> March
  - 29<sup>th</sup> March

JP

Impact Training – PC presented training on Pupil Premium Funding: assessing the impact, and ensuring it is being spent effectively. It was noted that there needs to be a system where governors know what money is coming in and under which categories; what the money is being spent on; and being able to demonstrate governors are monitoring the spend and how effective it is.

The Pupil Premium Governor is Michael O’Paul. CR offered to share information with MOP MOP and will then complete a monitoring report and feedback at the next FGB.

CR/MOP

## 16 Governor Monitoring Visits

Safeguarding visit: covered in item 13.

Priority 1: JW has visited school for a monitoring visit, but the report is pending due to illness.

MOP will contact JP regarding a monitoring visit on Pupil Premium.

MOP

SEN Link Governor: Chris Smith was the link governor but due to his resignation another governor will need to take on this role. AW offered to fill this role. Governors thanked AW for this offer.

## 17 Policy Review

The following policies were circulated prior to the meeting and **were approved by the FGB**:

- Managing serial and unreasonable complaints
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour in Schools
- Behaviour Principles written statement
- Developing Performance
- Equality Information and Objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for



publication

- Exclusion Policy
- Parent behaviour
- Children in Care (CIC)

It was noted that the following policies had been agreed at the Resources committee:

- Budget Management Policy (Inc. the Scheme of Delegation to the HT – up to £5k)
- First Aid Policy
- Governor Allowance Policy: agreed that Care Arrangement would be £40 per hour.
- Pay Policy
- Self-Harm Policy
- Suicide Ideation Policy
- Workplace Substance Misuse policy

#### PART 'C' – OTHER BUSINESS

**18 To deal with any matters agreed for consideration under item 4 above**

None.

**19 How has this meeting impacted on the progress and welfare of our pupils?**

Governors have recognised the improvement in the data, attendance, teaching and disadvantaged children. Outcome of the document to be produced in item 7.23 will focus governors' minds on ensuring that the focus of governance is on making a difference in pupil welfare and progress.

**20 Dates of future meetings**

**FGB's**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May

**School Improvement Committee**

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March – it was noted that the SEA is attending this meeting and all governors are invited to attend if they are free.

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July

**School Resources**

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May.

#### ACTIONS

No.	Action	Who
7	Arrange a time to 'check in' with JP to look through the toolkit (c/f from October meeting).	DT/SB
10	JP to look at potential areas for further monitoring and will feedback to governors.	JP





13	Safeguarding Audit to be circulated for FGB approval, for submission by 31 <sup>st</sup> March.	JP
15	JP to approach parent as a potential Co-opted governor.	JP
16	CR to share Pupil Premium information with MOP	CR/MOP
16	Monitoring visit on Pupil Premium to be arranged.	MOP

