

**PART ONE MINUTES
OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING – MEETING 3**

Date	Wednesday 8th December 2021 5:00pm
Venue:	Virtual

Invited to Attend (Governors):	
Simon Cotterill (SC) Lee Williams (CLW) Lesley Dalzell (LD) Esther Holden (EH) Cathryn Walley (CW) Julie Griffiths (JG) Pamela Larner (PL) Paul Deakin Apologies Sarah Jeffery (SJ) Bridget Wall (BW) Richard Woollam	Principal Chair of Governors Co-opted governor Staff governor-left at the end of Part 1 Vice Chair of governors Co-opted governor Co-opted governor Co-opted governor Staff governor Co-opted governor Co-opted governor
Also in attendance	
Karen Crosland Steve Ellis Luci Jones Shelley Hoyle Sue Pomeroy	School Business Manager-left at 6:40 pm CEO, CAT CFO, CAT-left at 6:40 pm Nursery teacher-left at 5:30 pm Clerk to governors

AGENDA ITEM 1	WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Statutory) AND CONFIRMATION WHETHER MEETING IS QUORATE
Discussion:	<p>The Chair opened the meeting and confirmed that it was quorate. Governors agreed that the apologies received from SJ, BW and RW be accepted. Pamela Larner was welcomed to her first meeting as a co-opted governor. The Chair also welcomed Steve Ellis and Luci Jones to the meeting.</p> <p>Governors agreed to take agenda item 6 next (Presentation from Nursery staff).</p>

AGENDA ITEM 6	EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE
Discussion	<p>Presentation from Nursery Staff</p> <p>Esther Holden and Shelley Hoyle gave a presentation to governors on the recent improvements to the Nursery and future plans. A virtual tour of both Nursery rooms was shared with governors, along with a rationale for the improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 11 months ago the school started to discuss ideas to improve the Nursery provision with a view to increasing the numbers of pupils attending. • The inside area was prioritised. • Another school in the Trust has visited the provision as they are also looking to make changes and have been impressed with the outcomes.

- Knutsford Family Hub has been established to reach families at an earlier stage. 2 groups have been set up-babies to 18 months and 18 months plus. This initiative was slow to start but numbers are increasing each week and children are then moving on to attend the nursery. Details of the initiative have been circulated to all local primary schools. Health visitors have copies of the posters and are also helping to market the provision.
- A Website has been set up for the Knutsford Hub and the school is in discussion for a sister website for the Nursery.
- BW carried out a monitoring visit and produced a report which is available on TEAMS.

Q. Has the money allocated to the Nursery been spent on both rooms?

R. There was around £10,00-13,000 allocated and this has been spent on flooring, blinds and furniture. Astro turf is still to be installed.

Q. If money was no object, what else would be required to fulfil the vision for the Nursery?

R. The environment is much improved, and the next step would be to replace old and dated resources. The staff would also like to develop the outside area further with landscaping to make a bespoke feature of the willow tree and to extend the covered outdoor play area.

SE commented that a 3-year plan is required which sets out the vision. Everyone will then be clear on the priorities and they can be built into the budget.

Q. Was funding received from J19?

R. No, but £1,300 was received from the Town Council. It is time consuming to complete grant application bids.

It was noted that the Knutsford Hub is a community-based programme, and this will be beneficial in applying for grants.

Q. Have numbers attending Nursery increased?

R. Yes, there are 17 new starters in N2 in January. The rooms have been re-measured to check they meet the requirements, and the Nursery is close to reaching its capacity.

Q. Does Nursery have the capacity to admit more children after Easter?

R. Yes, this is why the rooms were measured again. Numbers are still uncertain and extra staffing could be required. There is a constant turnover of pupils in N2.

Q. Are N3 children transferring to Reception?

R. Yes, there are currently 25 first choice applications and 24 are from Nursery. This is a good position and numbers usually improve before September. The school has also received more 2nd choice places than in previous years.

SE explained that it is important for governors to continue to monitor the provision and numbers in Nursery. If Nursery is doing well more children are likely to transfer into school and this will then provide the stability to pupil numbers in main school which will stabilise funding and results in future. It was agreed that governors will receive an update later in the academic year.

Governors thanked the Nursery staff for the presentation.

Shelley Hoyle left the meeting at 5:30 pm.

ACTIONS

Principal to invite staff provide an update on Nursery provision later in the academic year 2021-22.

The meeting returned to agenda item 2.

AGENDA ITEM 2	DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY/BUSINESS INTEREST (Statutory)
Discussion:	There were no declarations of personal and pecuniary interest in relation to any of the agenda items. JG, PL, CW, CLW and RW were requested to complete their annual declarations of interest.

AGENDA ITEM 3	PART ONE MINUTES OF MEETING
Discussion:	The Part One minutes of the LGB Meeting held on 4 th November 2021 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. The Chair will sign a copy and provide to the school for retention.
DECISION	RESOLVED: That the Part One minutes of the meeting held on 4 th November 2021 be accepted as a true and accurate record.
ACTION	Chair to sign a copy of the minutes.

AGENDA ITEM 4	REVIEW OUTSTANDING ACTIONS
Discussion:	Governors reviewed the action log: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Principal noted that the children's version of the Behaviour Policy still needs to be completed. The Chair arranged to monitor the asset register before the end of the autumn term 2021.
DECISION	RESOLVED: It was confirmed that all other actions, not addressed on this agenda, were met and closed as appropriate.
ACTIONS	

AGENDA ITEM 5	HR/FINANCIAL/BUSINESS PERFORMANCE
Discussion	<p>Governor monitoring report on the asset register It was agreed that the Chair will monitor the asset register instead of JG and report back to governors.</p> <p>Business Manager's Report The report was shared with governors on TEAMS prior to the meeting and on screen during the meeting. The following points were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Outturn 2020-21(as at 31.08.21) Main school-The final outturn was £166,939, approximately £5,000 more than projected. The surplus was from the main school budget. Nursery-A deficit of £28,000 had been projected for Nursery but the final outturn was a surplus of £5,858. <p>Q. Is the Nursery now self-sufficient? R. Nursery is now making a profit. The position is much improved due to increased pupil numbers (an extra 21 children were admitted at the end of the summer 2021 term.) The main issue going forward is staffing as Nursery must operate according to strict staffing ratios.</p> <p>Q. If the school needs to employ extra staff in nursery, will this need to be a 1 x FTE or could it be a part-time appointment? R. The school would need to assess how many children are attending each session and ensure that the pupil: teacher ratios are satisfied. It may be possible to make a temporary appointment for 3 days or 5 mornings, depending on where the need is. It is important to remember that pupil numbers in Nursery fluctuate and the position is uncertain.</p>

JG commented that Nursery numbers had previously been forecast on a worst-case scenario and that going forward actual numbers from the Autumn term will be used.

- DFC balance stands at £6,650. There was no expenditure during 2020-21 and the funds will be used for future IT work.

Q. Can the DFC funds be carried forward?

R. Yes, but there are limits on when the money must be spent. The school will ensure that the funds are used.

Overall Position-surplus of £179,447 against a projection of £133,233. (Variance of £46,214 from the original budget). The main reasons for the variance are the deferral of the development of the outdoor play/Astroturf area (£4,000) and new stairway to boiler room (£1,000) both of which are now due to take place in 2021/2022. Other work has been carried out by the site manager in place of external contractors (decorating, Nursery rooms) resulted in a saving of £5,500 in quoted costs.

A one-off donation of £10,000 was received for Nursery and a table was presented to show a more realistic position without the donation. The actual outturn for Nursery without the donation was a deficit of £4,141.

Q. If the astro turf had been installed, would the deficit have been £8,000?

R. The school is hoping to use Sports Grant funding for the astro turf so it will not affect the Nursery budget.

The Principal commented that Covid-19 had a massive impact on the Nursery and noted that there is no reliable historical data available to help provide reliable forecasts. He also explained that Nursery presents a challenge to the school's financial position; even when numbers have increased Nursery has still not made a profit. The charging policy will be reviewed as fees are lower than at other local Nurseries. However, it is important to remember that profitability is not the major focus of the Nursery.

Q. How do the Nursery fees compare with those in other settings?

R. The school charges £12 per session and this has remained the same since 2016. Bexton charge £18.

Governors asked if it would be possible to be presented with some information on income and fixed costs for Nursery. The Principal responded that it is a complex situation as some children do not attend for any extra paid sessions, whilst others attend from anything from one extra session up to a full week. There is no set pattern. It is unlikely that the school will increase the fees by a significant amount. Other settings in the local area are full and charge twice as much. The focus for the school is to build on the success of the newly established Knutsford Hub and increase the demand for free places in Nursery as this will drive an increase in admission numbers to Reception. The SBM will prepare some figures on the impact of scaling up the Nursery fees-for example if they increase by £2.00 per session.

- **Summary of funds outside the main budget**

The SBM explained that School holds funds which sit outside the main annual budget. These consist of contingency reserves, revenue reserves, DFC and the nursery surplus and amount to a total of £220,922.

The contingency reserves stand at £41,475. The aim is to increase this to cover one month's salaries.

Q. Does this just apply to Manor Park?

R. The Trust Policy on contingency reserves is the same for each school in the MAT.

Q. How much does one month's salary costs equate to?

R. The net monthly amount is just under £50,000. The school was able to use the balance from the unofficial school fund it held as a maintained school towards building up this contingency reserve so that it does not impact on the operational budget. An annual contribution of £1,500 is made by the school to continue to build the contingency to meet the target.

Q. Is the revenue reserve considered to be high?

R. Yes, and the implications of this can be seen in the forecast for future years.

- **Benchmark data**

Financial KPI's for all the schools in the trust was presented to enable internal benchmarking to take place. The average class size at Manor Park is lower than in the other schools due to the establishment of the Explorers class. Spend per pupil is also lower on this report as it only analyses 8/12ths of the financial year, given the conversion date of 01.01.21.

The total trading income is considerably less than that of the other schools in the Trust. This is made up of income from Wrap Around Care (WAC), school meals and paid Nursery sessions.

Q. Why is there such a significant difference in the trading income?

R. One of the main reasons is that the school outsources the WAC provision. The school took the decision to establish WAC provision in this way as it reduces the liability to the school. Pupils previously accessed WAC at a neighbouring school and Manor Park had to act quickly to provide the provision on site when the previous arrangement ended. The primary focus was not to make a profit and the outside provider could operate rent free initially.

Q. What are the attendance figures at the WAC provision?

R. On average round 16 pupils attend, the majority at after school club with lower numbers at breakfast club.

Q. What are the charges for the WAC provision?

R. The cost is incremental; £10 per day, plus a weekly utility cost, increasing to £20, then £30. The school is happy with the outside provider and they have offered to share their accounts. The current numbers of pupils attending does not warrant a change in the arrangements.

Q. Is there a risk that the business is not viable?

R. No. The company utilises the manager at another site during the day. They also make money from running holiday clubs.

SE commented that it is good for the school to consider different income streams and that affordability is important but there are other options which could provide an income stream.

LJ reminded governors that the total trading income is not the same as the net profit.

The trading income forecast for the current year is £33,775. This is an improvement on previous years but still does not match that of the other schools in the Trust. Each school is in a different position with regards to the operation of its kitchen and the provision of school meals, WAC and Nursery.

- **Budget 2021-22**

The SBM reminded governors that this budget was approved in July 2021. The figures are showing a deficit currently, but it is expected that the Nursery position will improve. An amount of £173,000 was carried forward so there are no concerns.

• **3-year budget forecast 2021-24**

Q. The figures presented in June 2021 show an in-year surplus of £7,500. The revised figures show an in-year deficit of £21,828. Why is this?

R. This is due to an increase in staffing costs due to the decision to split the Year 3 class in September 2021. The class increased to 37 pupils and it was decided to split the class and employ an extra teacher on a temporary basis. This is not an ongoing cost to the school. Additional teaching assistants have also been employed to deliver Catch-Up interventions and some of this cost is funded by the DfE. The cumulative position at the end of the year is expected to be in a similar position (£151,495) because some additional expenditure items included within the budget are being offset by the surplus carry forward.

An important issue going forward is how to manage the financial position given the historic volatility of pupil numbers at the school. Pupil numbers on census day in 2019 were 213, 219 in 2020 and 228 in 2021. Governors were reminded that funding is lagged and so the additional 9 children in main school at Census date 2021 will not generate the approximate amount of £40,500 income until 2022. The RAMP assessment of the three-year forecast is currently that it is 'high risk' across all financial areas. This is because of the volatility of numbers on roll.

The budget is monitored 3 times per year, and this provides a more realistic picture. Reserves should be allocated according to the priorities on the SDP, for the benefit of the children, whilst protecting the school against the unpredictability of pupil numbers and potential impact on the budget. In 2023-2024 (year 3) it should be noted that an end of year/cumulative surplus of £120,622 is forecast. The school would like to invest in further improvements to the Nursery and to invest in IT resources but is mindful that if pupil numbers continue to increase then it may need to split further classes, and this will have a major impact on staffing costs. SE commented that it may be necessary to revert to split year groups and to consider that the school does not currently have the capacity to house another class.

The Principal commented that the school needs to retain the capacity to grow and admit more children.

Q. Are numbers for Reception places high in Knutsford?

R. Generally there are between 5 and 15 families who are not successful in their first 3 choices of a Reception place. Some of these children come to Manor Park and some then try to secure a place at another school.

LD noted that there are new housing developments in Knutsford which could provide an increased number of children attending the school. There is a formula for what schools can expect from new housing in terms of pupil numbers.

Governors commented that they need to consider the likelihood of different scenarios and the major cost risks of additional staffing and building costs and contrast this with a wish list of what the school would like to spend for the benefit of the children.

IT has already been identified as a major area for investment and represents a significant cost. The following expenditure is planned:

New school server	£6,500
Wi-Fi upgrade (16 hubs and 2 server switches)	£3,800
50% computer suite machines replaced	£10,000
50% computer suite machines replaced	£10,000
Internet and phone	Tbc
Class/admin computers	Tbc

	<p>The SBM informed governors that the server is over 7 years old, and that the new version of Windows will not work on the existing machines as they are out of date. Also, the Wi-Fi in school is poor.</p> <p>Q. Is replacement of the machines in the ICT suite the best value for money? R. The school is investigating the use of portable devices and this would free up space in the school. However, there are advantages to having a dedicated ICT suite.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GDPR Training will be provided at academy level for governors in the spring term 2022. <p>Q. Who needs to complete the training? R. All governors will need to complete basic awareness GDPR training, and the named link governor will require more.</p> <p>Approval of expenditure under the Scheme of Delegation Governors approved the expenditure of £6,500 for a new school server. Approval was required as the school is not opting for the cheapest quote but is looking for the best option to allow for future growth.</p> <p>Governors thanked the SBM for the finance report.</p> <p><i>KC and LJ left the meeting at 6:40 pm.</i></p>
ACTIONS	Principal to prepare a wish list of items to invest in, linked to the SDP.

AGENDA ITEM 6	EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE
Discussion	<p>Review of priorities and targets in light of IDSR and FFT data dashboard The LGB Outcomes document was updated with the autumn term data and targets and was circulated prior to the meeting. The Principal highlighted the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The incorrect document was shared on TEAMS. The correct one will be circulated. • All children have been assessed. • Covid-19 has had an impact. • Pupil mobility remains a challenge for the school; children have joined with low academic performance. Out of 14 new starters, only one was on track for EXP in Reading. Another child has joined the school today who has social care involvement and has not attended school since September 2021. • Generally, children enter school with low starting points and then make progress. • Some children have regressed, and this will be discussed with teachers to understand the reasons and to plan interventions. Progress in Year 6 is not as strong as expected; there has been a dip in Reading and Writing. • The progress of disadvantaged children, who do not have SEND, is good. • The progress of SEND children is strong from low starting points. • There is no clear trend on gender. <p>Q. Has the Trust seen the same dip across the other CAT schools? R. Not to the same extent.</p> <p>Q. Is this cohort specific? Is the school supporting the teacher in Year 6 who is new to the year group? R. The children in the class with the teacher new to the year group have made more progress than the children in the class with the established Year 6 teacher. The school has a plan in place to address the issues.</p>

	<p>SE informed governors the LGB Outcomes document follows the same format for all the schools in the Trust and provides clear information. Governors were invited to submit any further questions on the report to the Principal. He also explained that he had had met the SLT to discuss target setting for Year 6 and that this was included in the Record of Visit (ROV). SE requested that the RoV be added to the agenda for the LGB meeting in January 2022.</p> <p>Q. Is there anything in the assessment data which affects the school's priorities? R. No.</p> <p>Q. Does the school have any concerns following the assessments? R. The school is concerned about the impact of Covid-19 and the amount of support required by the Year 6 children before they take the SAT's tests. However, these are not new issues, and the school is confident that it is addressing them.</p>
ACTIONS	<p>Governors to submit further questions on the LGB Outcomes report to the Principal. Clerk to add RoV to the LGB meeting agenda in January 2022.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 7	COMPLIANCE AND SAFEGUARDING
Discussion	<p>Chair's Action There were no actions to report since the last meeting of the LGB.</p> <p>Principal's Action There were no actions to report since the last meeting of the LGB. A Headteacher's report was circulated prior to the meeting on TEAMS and governors were asked to forward any questions to SC via email.</p> <p>Website Compliance A website compliancy document was circulated on TEAMS prior to the meetings which shows that all required information is published by the school on its website.</p> <p>Quality Assurance Document The Quality Assurance Document was shared on TEAMS prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Impact Statement The impact statement was completed and shared on TEAMS prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Policies Governors approved the Behaviour Policy which is bespoke and delegated to the LGB.</p> <p>The Principal provided a verbal update on the operation of the GDPR Policy and Children with additional Medical Needs Policy.</p>
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors to forward any questions on the Headteacher's report to SC.

AGENDA ITEM 8	GOVERNANCE AND RISK
Discussion	<p>Governor Training The clerk discussed induction training for new governors with the Trust clerk. There are plans to offer such training from CAT and the Cheshire East induction modules are still considered to be appropriate.</p> <p>Training on interpreting pupil assessment data will also be offered in January 2022 by the Trust. Governors who have not yet done so were reminded to complete the NGA Safeguarding course.</p>

	<p>Governor Visit Reports The Principal thanked governors for the following monitoring visits: CW (Phonics/Guided Reading), JG (Finance), CLW (Safeguarding), LD/PD (Pastoral), EH (OPAL)</p> <p>Q. Do governors complete a record of visit? R. Yes, there is a standard form. It should be shared with the link person in school and then with the Principal and clerk for distribution to all governors.</p> <p>SE commented that the governor safeguarding monitoring visits should coincide with the CAT safeguarding visits going forward.</p> <p>Annual Declarations of Pecuniary and Personal Interests The following governors are still required to complete the annual declarations of Pecuniary Interest form: CLW CW RW JG</p> <p>Governance Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Uniform Guidance The clerk drew governors' attention to the new Statutory guidance on the cost of school uniform from the DfE (November 2021). SE confirmed that this will be discussed further by the Trust in the spring term 2022.
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CLW to attend CAT safeguarding visits going forward.

AGENDA ITEM 9	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
Discussion:	<p>The Chair noted that the autumn term 2021 has been extremely challenging for the school and thanked the Principal and all the staff for their hard work and professionalism in dealing with the ongoing challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Principal responded by thanking the Trust and the governors for their support.</p> <p>SE commented that the Trust appreciate the work of the LGB and noted the dedication of the Chair in visiting school so regularly. The staff survey demonstrated support for the leadership in school and reflects the fact that there is a strong team in place.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 10	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
Discussion:	The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 13 th January 2022 at 5:00 pm. Venue TBC

EH left the meeting.

The meeting moved to the Part Two agenda.

Signed: 

Dated: 13/01/22