



**MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING**  
**DARNHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**HELD ON THURSDAY 24<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2022 AT 6.30pm**  
**The meeting was held virtually via teams**

Members of the Governing Body

Name	Category of Governor	Date of end of tenure	Designated Role	Attended
Mrs Sarah Tomlinson	Headteacher		Headteacher	✓
Mr Richard Strachan	Co-opted	19/05/2024	Chair	✓
Mrs Angela Holden	Co-opted	20/05/2025		✓
Ms Jackie Stringer	Co-opted	20/05/2025	Vice Chair	✓
Ms Chloe Lupton	Staff	21/10/2025		✓
Mrs Steph Moody	Co-opted	09/05/2023		✓
Mr Chris Bate	Co-opted	09/05/2023		✓
Mrs Hayley Rigby	Parent	13/02/2024		✓
Mr Colin Meachin	LA	09/07/2024		✓
Mrs Lyndsey Tasker	Parent	25/03/2025		✓
Vacancy	Co-opted			
Vacancy	Co-opted			
<b>Also in Attendance</b>				
Stephen Ewell	Clerk to Governors			✓

**Part One Non-Confidential Minutes**

**1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies had been received in advance of the meeting, and all Governors were present.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the meeting was deemed quorate.

**2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

**RESOLVED:** That there were no additional declarations of pecuniary interest for this meeting.

**3. MEMBERSHIP/CONSTITUTION**

There were no changes in membership since the previous meeting.



The Chair updated governors that Jen Hughes had had to resign as a Co-Opted Governor as she was now employed at the school in an administration role. This had resulted in a Co-Vice Chair position becoming available. The Chair asked Governors to consider suitable candidates to become Co-Vice Chair. The Headteacher nominated Steph Crane due to her background in safeguarding and with a view to succession planning. Steph Crane confirmed she was willing to pick up the role and Governors were unanimous in appointing her as Co -Vice Chair.

**RESOLVED:** Steph Crane be appointed as Co-Vice Chair for a term of one year.

Governors considered the date of the informal Governors meeting that was scheduled for the 21<sup>st</sup> April, and it was resolved to change the date of this meeting to the 28<sup>th</sup> April. The meeting would be used to review the two Co-Opted Governor vacancies, and to discuss other governance matters and succession planning.

#### 4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Governors considered the non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the non-confidential minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were confirmed to be a true record.

The minutes would be signed electronically.

#### 5. MATTERS ARISING

Governors reviewed the matters arising/action log items.

AGENDA ITEM NO.	ACTION	BY WHOM	UPDATE
20 JAN 22 Item 11	Headteacher to inform parents regarding the change of after school care provider.	Headteacher	<b>Completed.</b>

#### 6. FINANCE

Governors reviewed the budget monitoring report and three-year plan summary which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, as summarised below.



SECTION 1 - SUMMARY MEDIUM TERM PLAN		Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
(A) Balance Brought Forward (previous E)		-8,681	40,319	-19,518	1,392
(B) Projected Income (From F)		2,131,873	2,397,487	2,493,204	2,474,190
(C) Projected Expenditure (from D)		2,082,873	2,457,325	2,472,293	2,480,881
(D) In year surplus/-deficit (B-C)		49,000	-59,837	20,910	-6,691
(E) Projected Carry Forward (A+D)		40,319	-19,518	1,392	-5,299

The Headteacher stated that the school was anticipating a deficit of £19,518 for the current year, and this may be subject to some minor amendments as the school is still processing a number of the outstanding invoices. A meeting had been held with Kristy Gomery, and the school is now confident that the data was accurate. There may also be some additional income to be received from Cheshire East for the funding of child support provision.

In addition, Stockport Council have stopped funding Resource Provision places and the school is short by £7k. The school has so far received £42k, but this amount should be higher due to the number of children requiring Resource Provision.

Governors reviewed the proposed Budget for 22/23. The budget was projecting an in-year surplus of £20,910 resulting in a projected carry-forward of £1,392. The the budget was predicated on the following assumptions:

- Retaining the preferred staffing model.
- £35k of PP funds will be set aside for specific interventions.
- Reflects the new Admin Department structure.
- Include provision for PPA cover.
- Forest School will operate three days a week.

The Headteacher informed Governors that she was comfortable that the proposed budget was achievable by the school. The Chair added that to get to a budget with an in-year surplus was really good for the school and offered thanks to the Headteacher and the team for all the hard work in putting the budget together.

**RESOLVED:** Governors received the Budget Monitoring Report and approved the proposed Budget for 22/23.

### **SFVS Submission.**

Governors reviewed the SFVS submission which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The SFVS is a document that covers the financial governance of the school. Governors reviewed the responses to the questions focusing on the In-Part responses and the comments provided in support of the response.

**Q.** *In terms of Question 19 has the benchmarking exercise been reviewed?*

**A.** *Not yet, but it will be reviewed this year.*



Question 23 was answered No, but in terms of the school ensuring that it achieves the best value for non-staff expenditure, the SBM utilises local buying knowledge through the bursar's network in CWAC for recommendations.

Question 30 - Does the school have adequate arrangements for audit of voluntary funds? This will be completed by Admin Department by the end of May 22.

The Chair thanked Jackie Stringer for all their hard work on completing the SFVS, which will be submitted at the end of the week.

**RESOLVED:** Governors approved the submission of the SFVS.

### **Audit of School Voluntary Fund.**

Governors were updated that as discussed in the SFVS section, this will be completed by the end of May 22.

### **Handley Hill Funding Update**

The Chair provided some background around the Handley Hill funds. When the original primary school was demolished and planning permission given for the building of new homes, all schools in the Winsford area were promised a share in the developer's purchase fee for the site to provide development opportunities for these schools.

The Headteacher summarised the planned expenditure on various projects with the funds as follows:

- New climbing apparatus for KS2 - circa £18k.
- The movement of some of the gym equipment to a different playground.
- The mile track is proving very expensive to install, and consequently the school is not planning to spend money on this. The golden mile for children can be achieved in other ways.
- Surfacing in the EY playground has already been improved.
- The Headteacher will also ask children what they would like the funds to be spent on, and discussions with the School Council will take place over the next few days.

**Q.** *Are there any grant opportunities available to fund the mile track?*

**A.** *This is currently on hold but there may be in the future.*

**RESOLVED:** Governors received the Handley Hill Funding Update.



## 7. HEADTEACHERS UPDATE

The Headteachers updated Governors on the proposed partnership with Footprints in the Forest. The licence agreement had been uploaded to SharePoint for Governors to review, and the plan is to sign off the final document soon. There has been lots off communication to parents, and in terms of feedback from parents, one had asked a lot of questions and why there was a cost increase, but there were no other negative comments forthcoming.

Alex has taken lots of bookings and is ready to go so we just need to get the document signed.

The Chair observed that the provision had been very cheap for a long period of time, but this increase in costs had come at a difficult time generally, but it is still cheap relative to other providers.

**Q.** *Will the school monitor the quality of provision?*

**A.** *There will be the ParentView survey as well as other surveys, and the school will also consult the pupils attending. A number of children were bored with the previous provision, and it needed somebody to lead it and make it more interesting.*

**Q.** *Will governors be able to visit?*

**A.** *Yes, once things have bedded down that would be a good idea.*

The Headteacher informed Governors that there had been thirteen positive media covers since September, which was great publicity for the school. It had also been set as a staff incentive to help secure these positive publicity opportunities.

The Chair added that this was good news and gave the school positive reach into the community.

**RESOLVED:** Governors received the Headteacher's update.

## 8. CURRICULUM TEACHING AND LEARNING

### Pupil Attendance Report

The Pupil Attendance Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was shared on screen for Governors to review.

	Whole School Attendance	No. Persistent Absentees
2018- 2019 (Pre COVID)	95.3%	28
2019-2020 (up to 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2020)	94.8%	38
2020 – 2021 (full year)	95.4%	33
2021-2022 (to Feb Half Term)	91.2%	91



The attendance up to February half term was 91.2%, reflecting the change in analysis of Covid absences of children, but there were no real attendance issues at the school.

The WEP comparison data was reviewed by Governors as follows:

### WEP COMPARISON Whole School Attendance (%)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2018- 2019 (Pre COVID)	95.3	95.12	95.4	89.8	96	94.1	95.4	95.3	95.6	93.7		95
2019-2020 (up to 20.03 2020)	94.7	94.53	95.7	89.2	95	92.8	92.8	94.8	95.6	93.7		94.1
2020 – 2021 (full year)	94.7	79.12	95.3	84	94	93.6	94.8	95.4	95.8	93.4		94.4
2021-2022 (to Feb Half Term)	91.6	90.8	93.7	83.4	92	91.4	91.9	91.2	93.9	91		92.9

The data compared whole school attendance across the 12 schools in Winsford, and it is clear that the trend for low attendance figures this year is evident across the entire school community. Darnhall was school number 8 in the table.

### Full Spring Term Attendance Report 2022

The Full Spring Term Attendance Report was shared on screen. The comprehensive report had been prepared by Jen Hughes and reported current attendance levels at 91.6%.

Despite Covid regulations being lifted, the government advises children who are positive to stay at home for at least 5 days. This is recorded as an 'I' and therefore has a negative impact on our attendance. 72 children on roll are currently classed as a persistent absentee, which is 24.2% of school compulsory aged children. Of those 72 a breakdown was provided as follows:

Number of children	Reason for absence/school action
40	Covid related absence.
16	Require parents to provide medical evidence to authorise absence.
3	Absence monitoring period with Education Welfare Service.
2	Referred to Education Welfare Service as no improvement with school support.



21	Received absence monitoring letters from myself informing parents of their child's attendance this year, and offering support.

**Q.** *In terms of the 40 Covid related absences, are all these Covid or long Covid?*

**A.** *Children seem to be getting Covid more than once but there are no children recorded as having long Covid.*

**Q.** *Of the persistent absentee children, how many of these are PP children or SEN?*

**A.** *The Headteacher will revert with this data.*

The Headteacher added that at one point there were 133 children with attendance lower than 90%. Of the 133 children who have been under 90% attendance since September, 90 of these children have improved their attendance, and continue to be monitored. Lots of work continues in school to reduce the number of persistent absences and the school is always focused on promoting good attendance.

The Headteacher updated Governors that in terms of intake for next year there had been 98 applications for Reception, with 48 applying with Darnhall as their first choice.

### **Staff Absence Report**

Governors reviewed the report which was shared on screen. The only persistent absentees are staff members with serious illness, and one such staff member is now due back in school on 1<sup>st</sup> April on a phased return. It is hoped that the numbers of absentees will reduce next term.

The Chair noted that the absences are evenly spread across the school staff and there will also be an effect from Covid.

**RESOLVED:** Governors received the Pupil Attendance Report, Full Spring Term Attendance Report 2022 and the Staff Absence Report.

The Headteacher updated Governors on the recent subject leaders presentation. The presentations had been uploaded to the SharePoint in the Governor Training and Development Folder. The school was planning to reintroduce the learning walks and Chris Bates will be visiting the school on 18th May for the SEND learning walk. Chloe Lupton will undertake a learning walk for science with two other Governors. Following discussion, it was resolved that Angela Holden and Colin Meachin would take part in the science learning walk.

The Chair added that he will be meeting up with Davey to review LAC on 21st April.

**Q.** *Will the recent class reading visits be followed up in the summer term?*

**A.** *Yes, reading to Year 3 would be really beneficial.*



## 9. POLICIES

The Headteacher updated Governors that in the absence of the SBM, a full review of policies was taking place to ascertain which policies have been ratified and then develop a plan for reviewing policies going forward. The Headteacher and Jackie Stringer would hold a meeting over Teams on 1st April to discuss policies.

## 10. GOVERNANCE

The Headteacher provided an update on the Governors/SLT Meeting which had taken place on 8th March 2022 covering Ofsted and Subject leadership presentations.

The Chair stated that the subject leadership presentations had been really impressive highlighting the increase in standards across the school. Overall, it had been a really positive event.

The school Leadership Partner James Marsh from ECM, who is an Ofsted inspector had visited the school, and his feedback was really positive about the school. The visit discussed subject weaknesses and what the school is doing to address them. He spent a few hours at the school and will come back in the future to do a deep dive. A report for the May FGB meeting will be prepared following his second visit in April.

## 11. COMMUNICATION TO THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS/CHAIRS ACTIONS

The Chair informed Governors that a meeting had been scheduled full Ed Timpson the local MP to visit the school on the 18<sup>th</sup> February. Unfortunately, he did not arrive at the school and no communication was received.

*Q. Has the school complained?*

*A. Yes, the head teacher had inquired about his whereabouts as the school was worried about him, but no convincing response had been received.*

*Q. Are there any additional actions we can take with the MP such as asking parents to write letters?*

*A. Originally, he was going to talk about climate change and the Headteacher had planned to include a tour of the school.*

The Chair added that they had wanted to show him around the school and to highlight the issues the school has with expansion, and the fact that there is no money in the budget for future development.

**ACTION:** Steph Crane will draught an email for the Headteacher and Chair to review which could then be sent to the MP.

The Headteacher added that the DfE were visiting the school to undertake a condition report on the 19<sup>th</sup> May.



## 12. DECISION SUMMARY

- to appoint Steph Crane as Co-Vice Chair.
- to receive the Budget Monitoring Report and approved the proposed Budget for 22/23.
- to approve the submission of the SFVS.
- to receive the Handley Hill Funding Update.
- to receive the Headteacher's update.
- to receive Pupil Attendance Report, Full Spring Term Attendance Report 2022 and the Staff Absence Report.
- to receive an update on the process for managing policies.
- to receive the confidential staffing update.
- to receive the safeguarding update.
- to action the canvassing of Pupils and ParentView with regard to school uniform preferences.

## 13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 6.30pm.

Signed: .....Date: .....

## ACTION PLAN

AGENDA ITEM NO.	ACTION	BY WHOM	UPDATE
24 MAR 22 Item 16	Steph Crane will draught an email for the Headteacher and Chair to review which could then be sent to the MP.	SC	