**The Governing Body of Steeton Primary School**

**Meeting of Wednesday 12 July 2023**

**MINUTES**

**The meeting opened at 6.04pm**

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| **Attendance** | | | | |
| ***Governors*** |  | ***Others*** | | |
| John Cooper – Executive Headteacher (EHT) |  | Helen Osman (Clerk) | | |
| Stefan Mills |  | Katie Walshaw (potential governor, appointed during meeting) | | |
| Adam O’Neill |  |  | | |
| Emma Wainwright (Chair) |  | ***Apologies*** | | |
| Sue West |  | Claire Redman – Head of School (HoS) | | |
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|  |  | ***Absent*** | | |
|  |  | Adam Longden | | |
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| **Documents** | | | | |
| 1. Executive Headteacher report | | | Item 111/22 | *Available on Teams 12-07-2023* |
| 1. Results 2023 | | | Item 111/22 | *Available on Teams 12-07-2023* |
| 1. Minutes (with attachments) of Link Governor meetings: | | | Item 120/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| * 1. Quality of Education 05 June 2023 | | | Item 120/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| * 1. Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development 09 June 2023 | | | Item 120/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| * 1. Leadership and Management 05 June 2023 | | | Item 120/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| * 1. Parent and Community involvement 12 June 2023 | | | Item 120/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| * 1. Early Years 09 June 2023 | | | Item 120/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| 1. PSHE policy | | | Item 124/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| 1. Register of governor attendance 2022-23 | | | Item 128/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| 1. Terms of Reference for Resources Committee 2023-24 | | | Item 131/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| 1. Committee membership and Named Governor roles | | | Item 132/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |
| 1. Proposed meeting dates for 2023-24 | | | Item 133/22 | *Circulated with agenda* |

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| **Summary of Actions** | | | |
| **Action No.** | **Action** | **Person** | **Deadline** |
| 18/21 | EHT to provide to Steff Mills the details of the Ways of Working flowchart on the school website; Steff Mills to make recommendations on the best way to enable users to view the detail behind each element of the flowchart. [*Action amended FGB 10-05-2023. Action person amended FGB 12-07-2023*] | J Cooper  S Mills | 31-07-2023 |
| 99/22 | HoS to arrange for Primary T to remove old links to the school website/staffing list from search engines. | C Redman | 31-05-2023 |
| 111/22 | Chair to send notes to:   * EHT on pace of learning in Phonics * Literacy leader on outcome of Year 1 Phonics check | E Wainwright | 31-07-2023 |
| 113/22 (i) | Chair to send note to Business Administrator to thank her for her work to manage the school budget. | E Wainwright | 31-07-2023 |
| 113/22 (ii) | EHT to put case to PACT HR that the need to appoint a permanent substantive HoS arises from a leadership restructure required to address the budget deficit. | J Cooper | 31-07-2023 |
| 119/22 (i) | S Mills to undertake LA Effective Financial Governance course during 2023-24 | S Mills | 31-07-2024 |
| 119/22 (ii) | A O’Neill to confirm that he undertakes safeguarding training as part of his work in a school. | A O’Neill | 30-09-2023 |
| 119/22(iii) | A O’Neill to provide to Faye Andrews a copy of the record held by his school of his training in 2023-24. | A O’Neill | 30-09-2023 |
| 119/22 (iii) | * EHT to arrange access to SmartLog for all governors. * Chair to identify on SmartLog all training that governors should undertake. | J Cooper  E Wainwright | 15-09-2023  30-09-2023 |
| 127/22 | Governors to seek to identify potential new Co-opted governors:   * EHT to e-mail Airedale Hospital, cc all governors. * All governors to review their contacts. * Chair to provide piece for the school newsletter. * Chair to attend meeting for parents of the September 2023 Reception intake. | All | 30-09-2023 |

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| **106/22** | **Curriculum focus: Geography** |

1. Item deferred to the next meeting in the absence of the Head of School.

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| **107/22** | **Apologies for absence and their acceptance** |

1. Apologies had been received, and were accepted, from Claire Redmond.
2. The absences of Adam Longden and Adam O’Neill without apology were noted. Adam O’Neill subsequently joined the meeting.

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| **108/22** | **Notification of other urgent business and requests to vary the agenda order** |

1. No other business was notified and there were no requests to vary the order of the agenda, though a number of items would be deferred to the next meeting in the absence of the Head of School.

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| **109/22** | **Declarations of interest in items on this agenda** |

1. There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda for this meeting.

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| **110/22** | **Minutes of meeting of 10 May 2023 and matters arising** |

1. xxx

* ***The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.***

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| **Matters arising** | | |
| **Action** | **Action** | **Status** |

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| 18/21 | *HoS to provide to Steff Mills the details of the Ways of Working flowchart on the school website; Steff Mills to make recommendations on the best way to enable users to view the detail behind each element of the flowchart. [Action amended FGB 10-05-2023]*  The EHT undertook to send the flowchart to S Mills. | **Ongoing**  **Change of person** |
| 21/21 | *EHT to provide to the next LG/QE meeting a summary of support provided to Year 6 cohort throughout their time at Steeton.*  Completed. | **Closed** |
| 62/22 | *Governors to attend school monitoring events in the Summer term; school to provide the dates.*  See Item 119/22 below. | **Closed** |
| 81/22 (i) | *Chair to review governor training to ensure all have undertaken the training and development appropriate to their statutory and other roles.*  See Item 119/22 below. | **Closed** |
| 81/22 (i) | *EHT to provide to members of the Resources Committee details of the NGA training on financial governance.*  Overtaken by decision above to use the LA Effective Financial Governance course. | **Closed** |
| 98/22 | *Chair to write to staff to congratulate them on the outcome of the LA review of the school.*  Completed. | **Closed** |
| 99/22 | *HoS to arrange for Primary T to remove old links to the school website/staffing list from search engines.*  Governors said that, although the new website could be accessed by typing in its address. A search for the school on Google or Bing produced links to the old site. Primary T should be able to arrange for the search engines to delete the outdated links. | **Ongoing** |

*Sue West eft the room at 6.16pm.*

*Sue West and Adam O’Neill entered the room at 6.18pm.*

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| 101/22 (i) | *Chair to contact Amjid Ahmed about the role of Co-opted Governor.*  The Chair reported that there had been no response to her e-mail of 11 May 2023 to Mr Ahmed. Governors concluded that he no longer wished to join the Governing Body. | **Closed** |
| 101/22 (ii) | *Chair to send contact details for potential new governor to the Clerk.*  Completed. | **Closed** |

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| **Standing and other reports to the Governing Body** | |
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| **111/22** | **Executive Headteacher’s report –** *Documents A and B* |

*Reception intake September 2023*

1. The Executive Headteacher reported that 45 children were expected to join Reception in September 2023. For the benefit of newer governors, he explained that the Governing Body and local authority (LA) had agreed to reduce its Published Admission Number (PAN) to 30 from September 2024 due to falling numbers of pupils: the LA had required the school to continue with a PAN of 45 until that date to accommodate the higher number of pupils anticipated in September 2023.
2. The September 2023 Reception intake included a high proportion of children with significant SEND issues. Steeton was no alone in this: the EHT was aware of several other schools that were expecting more SEND children with more severe needs in September 2023. The Named Governor for SEND (NG/SEND) said that because children had been out of setting (eg nurseries and playgroups) during the Covid period they had not met developmental milestones or been socialised, and SEND needs had not been assessed.
3. The EHT said that the Reception intake would also include several children who were still in nappies. It was a matter of concern that the school had only been informed by the local authority of two of these children: the others had come to light through home visits by Early Years staff or calls from Nurseries asking what the school had not been in touch to discuss the needs of their SEND children. Governors did not miss the irony that the LA SEND review some weeks previously had commented on the school’s exemplary transition arrangements.
4. **Asked** about the level of complexity of need, the EHT said that eight of the new Reception children were known to have SEND; two had applications underway for EHCPs[[1]](#footnote-1) and one was close to having their EHCP agreed. Another child was in a wheelchair but had no EHCP or EHCP application in place. As governors were aware, the Reception area was not wheelchair accessible. The EHT reminded governors that elsewhere in school there were six children with EHCPs and only 7.2 fte[[2]](#footnote-2) Teaching Assistants. Each child with an EHCP as entitled to one-to-one support, leaving 1.2 fte teaching assistants to support the other 67 children with SEND.
5. The EHT had contacted Bradford Council’s Assistant Director for SEND (BC/ADSEND) to highlight these issues and the schools financial and physical lack of capacity to meet this level of need. BC/ADSEND had undertaken to check with the School Funding Team that the school was receiving the correct level of funding for its SEND children and had arranged for an expert on the Disability Discrimination Act to advise the school on wheelchair access. This child had siblings in school and the parents were keen that the child should also attend Steeton. Governors observed that the work required to make the Reception area suitable for a wheelchair user, and to provide suitable toilet facilities, would be extensive and that the short notice would make it challenging to secure tradespeople to carry out the work by September 2023.
6. The EHT said that the parents of some SEND children were unhappy that their children had been allocated to Steeton because they believed they should be in specialist provision. These included the parents of children who were non-verbal, tended to remove their clothing and had other behavioural needs. The school might find itself having to say that it could not admit some children because it could not guarantee their safety or that of other children or staff. Governors were confident that the school would only take such action where strictly necessary and they strongly supported the EHT in doing so: in fairness to children and their families the school had to be clear about what it could and could not do. Furthermore, the GB had a duty to take account of the wellbeing of staff, who would go above and beyond reasonable expectations to meet the needs of children n their care.
7. **Replying to questions**, the EHT said that the school did not have nappy-changing facilities and that the toilets were too small to be used for this purpose. The only solution the school could see so far was to use the floor outside the toilets, with a screen for privacy. Governors considered this solution to be unacceptable on the grounds of maintain the dignity of the children. **Asked** whether parents were aware of this, the EHT said that the school was still considering how to make this work and had not yet informed parents.
8. Governors noted the additional staffing resources that would be required to take children out of Reception to have their nappy changed while maintaining staffing ratios. They noted that the school had a toilet that was currently out of use due to a broken tap that was resisting repair: if the tap could be fixed and the room refitted it could perhaps be made wheelchair accessible and used to change nappies, but this would not address the issue of staff having to be out of Reception to escort children to the toilet and/or to change their nappies.
9. **Asked** how the school would address the issue of maintaining staffing ratios when children were taken to have their nappies changed, the EHT said that the school did not have staff who could be redeployed for this purpose. It would be necessary for all children in both halves of the unit to move into a single half so that they could all be supervised together whenever a member of staff was out changing a nappy.
10. Noting that it was the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children were out of nappies by the time they started in Reception, unless the child had a particular SEND need that prevented this, governors considered what steps the school might reasonably take to ensure that parents fulfilled this responsibility. The EHT said that schools could not refuse to admit a child because they were still in nappies; neither could or would they leave a child in a soiled nappy while waiting for their parent to come into school to change them. The school would issue a protocol to parents this term explaining what they would have to do if their chid was still in nappies in September 2023 and providing links to potty-training links on the NHS website.
11. The GB agreed that:
    * + The EHT/Head of School would keep NG/SEND informed, with copies to all governors.
      + The agenda for the next meeting should include an insight on the new Reception intake, including support for SEND children and those still in nappies.

*Budget*

1. The EHT reminded governors that, due to the financial impact of falling numbers of pupils on roll, the school had projected a deficit at the end of financial year 2022-23 of £93k. Through rigorous budget management, the final end-year deficit had been reduced to £67k. The GB had approved a budget for 2023-24 that projected an in-year surplus of £29k, leaving a projected cumulative deficit of £38k. The Quarter 1 Budget Monitor showed an improvement on this position, with the in-year surplus rising to £42k and the cumulative deficit reducing to £26k.
2. Governors noted that the expectation of the Bradford Council School Funding Team (BC/SFT) was that the cumulative deficit at the end of the 2023-24 financial year should not exceed £37k. The reduction in the projected deficit at the end of Q1 was welcome but, in light of the significant pressures on school, including those discussed above in relation to the SEND and other needs of the Reception intake, governors agreed to defer advising BC/SFT of the reduction in the deficit until after the end of Q2.
3. The EHT said that a key risk to the budget was that the national pay award for staff would be unfunded. He had asked BC/SFT what would happen in that case: BC/SFT had taken the view that most schools would go into deficit.

*Fire risk assessment*

1. The EHT reported that, following the recent fire risk assessment, the school had reviewed the twenty-four areas of high risk that had been identified. Fifteen of these related to doors that did not close properly, were mislabelled or were faulty: the cost of replacing each door closer was up to £200.00. These and the other high risks were being addressed immediately by the Site Manager, who would also review the risks identified as moderate with the HoS on her return to work.

*Attendance and Persistent Absence*

1. The EHT reported that whole-school attendance in 2022-23 had been 93.78%, compared with 93.34% in 2021-22 and a 2022-23 national average of 94%. The Link Governor for Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development (LG/BAPD) said that he had reviewed attendance and Persistent Absence[[3]](#footnote-3) in detail with the HoS and Inclusion & Welfare Officer (IWO). The IWO knew the story behind each child who was persistently absent: on each case the reasons were understood and support was being provide to the family. The EHT added that persistent absence at Steeton was due to genuine health or family issues rather than simply choosing not to attend school.

*School Development Plan* (*SDP*)

1. Governors were pleased to note the summary of progress against the SDP milestones:

* 71% of milestones achieved
* 20% of milestones to be carried forward into 2023-24
* 9% of milestones closed because they were no longer relevant in light of changing circumstances.

1. Each Link Governor group had closely monitored progress against their section of the SDP throughout the year. LG/BAPD made clear that the BAPD milestones that had been carried forward into 2023-24 were important: the reason they had not been achieved in 2022-23 was not because they were of low priority but because they represented significant ongoing work, often in collaboration with partner school – an example was the major initiative to introduce a cross-partnership Pupil Passport.
2. Decisions to close milestones on the grounds that they were no longer relevant had been taken with the Link Governors concerned. The GB collectively agreed that the spread of milestones that had been achieved, carried forward to 2023-24 and closed accurately reflected the GB’s priorities.
3. Governors commented on the value that they continued to attach to their termly Link Governor discussions with senior leaders, which enabled them to contribute to and closely monitor the wide range of issues, great work and creative initiatives involved in the daily life of the school.

*2023 outcomes for pupils*

*Year 1 Phonics check*

1. The EHT said that staff were bitterly disappointed with the 51% pass rate for the Year 1 Phonics check. The validation exercise carried out by Read Write Inc in April 2023 had indicated that 88% of children had reached the expected standard and that the school was on track for a pass rate of 90% in Writing. The outcome was deeply embarrassing to the school, which was a lead school for Phonics, and for the Literacy Leader personally, who worked for the Literacy Hub. Leaders believed that the poor outcome was an artefact of the way the test had been administered by a member of staff who had done it before: the EHT and Literacy Leader took responsibility for the decisions that had led to this. Most importantly, the April 2022 validation exercise and staff knowledge of the state of Phonics learning in Year 1 provided assurance that, despite the poor outcome in the Year 1 Phonics check, these children were working at the expected level and would not be disadvantaged in any way: the EHT had no doubt that they would pass the check when they re-sat it in Year 2. The school planned to confirm this by administering a test from 2016.
2. The Year 2 Phonics outcome had been much more encouraging, with 91.8% of children passing. Governors noted that the Year 2 cohort had been in Reception at the start of Covid. A governor who was a parent said that their child had felt that Phonics teaching had been very lengthy and had, for example, read the same book three times: the child had become disengaged as a consequence. The EHT welcomed this feedback, which he would share with staff: the Chair undertook to send a note on this to the EHT.

**Action: Chair**

1. The EHT said that the school would prepare a full report on the reasons for the poor Year 1 Phonics outcome and how to ensure that future Phonics checks properly reflected the state of Phonics learning in school. Steps would include extensive moderation to ensure consistency and giving the Literacy Leader ownership of the whole Phonics check system from beginning to end.
2. The Chair undertook to write to the Literacy Leader on behalf of the GB reaffirming its belief in, and support for, her and her work.

**Action: Chair**

*Key Stage 1*

1. The EHT said that Key Stage 1 outcomes showed that children were on the right trajectory from GLD. National data was not yet available for 2022-23, but it would be reasonable to assume that the national averages would have increased since 2022.
2. Governors were pleased to see that the proportion of children who had passed the Year 4 Multiplication check (45%) was significantly above the national average (27%).

*Key Stage 2*

1. The EHT said that the school was disappointed with the Key Stage 2 Reding outcome (56.8% at Age Related Expectation - ARE), bearing in mind the emphasis that the school had put on reading this year, including through Reading For Pleasure. Governors agreed that the outcome was disappointing, though they were pleased with the outcomes for both Writing and Maths. They noted that children nationally had struggled with the Key Stage 2 SATs Reading paper.
2. The EHT reminded governors that schools carried out a data-checking exercise each year before their overall school data was confirmed by DfE. DfE had directed the Carlton Trust to work with Steeton on how the school carried out this exercise, and the experience had been helpful. Steeton had learned that the school could apply for the outcomes achieved by children who had joined the school from overseas within a specific period could be excluded from the overall school data, as could those of children with police or Children’s’ Social Services involvement, those suffering bereavement etc. Steeton had four of five pupils who fell into these categories. If their outcomes were excluded from the overall school data, the official school Key Stage 2 outcomes would be as set out at the bottom of page 2 of the report:

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| **Potential 2023 Key Stage 2 outcomes following DfE data-checking exercise (% children at ARE)** | | | |
| **Reading** | **Writing** | **Maths** | **Combined Reading, Writing and Maths** |
| 64 | 79 | 79 | 59 |

These figures were close to national averages.

1. Governors were surprised that schools were allowed to exclude these children from their outcome data but noted that DfE had directed Carlton Trust to work with the school to present its data in this way. If this was how DfE expected schools to work, Steeton should comply: governors were clear that the moral purpose of leadership and staff would ensure that the needs of the children who could be excluded from data continued to be fully met.
2. Governors noted that, with the exceptions discussed above, outcomes were broadly in lie with targets for the year.
3. The EHT confirmed that the 2022-23 outcomes would be reflected in the 2023-24 School Development Plan (SDP). The 2022-23 outcomes had hit staff hard and a priority would be to restore morale and work through the reasons and remedial steps as a team, with no sense of blame.

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| **112/22** | **Report on Persistent Absence** – *Document A* |

1. As discussed at Item 111/22 (paragraph 22).

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| **113/22** | **Report from Committee and other meetings –** *Document F* |

* 1. *Resources Committee meeting of 05 July 2023*

1. Sue West, who had chaired the meeting in the absence of Chair/Resources, reported that Bradford Council would return to school in the summer 2023 break to re-do the work to the channel outside Room 4 and line it properly.
2. The new dining room furniture had been received and had been welcomed by children, who found its curved shapes more conducive to conversation.
3. The refurbishment of the old library was well underway and the area would be relaunched as corporate space, named the Woodland Suite, in September 2023. The refurbishment had been funded though the School Fund. Events planned for September included a session for staff from other schools with Greg Bottrill, the founder of Drawing Club[[4]](#footnote-4), for which tickets would be sold. Governors welcomed the additional income stream from the new Woodlands Suite. The EHT reminded governors that the school worked with three organisations at present providing traded services through the Literacy Leader, and planned to expand into North Yorkshire, where it would work with sixty schools on language development.
4. The Named Governor for Health and Safety had reviewed the NGA Health and Safety checklist with staff and had noted the need for certain risk assessments to be updated. The Local Authority and the unions had conducted separate Health and Safety reviews a month later and had identified the same issues, which were being addressed. The EHT said that this work included a Fire Risk Assessment, on which the school would report to the Committee. The school had reviewed its lockdown procedures and would conduct a drill in the autumn term, managed sensitively to avoid unnecessary alarm to pupils.
5. The Committee had approved updates to the Finance Policy Handbook and the IT support Service Level Agreement with Primary T and had ***recommended*** that the GB approve the Committee Terms of Reference for 2023-24.
   * + - ***The Governing Body unanimously approved*** the Terms of Reference of the Resources Committee or 2023-24 as set out in the agenda paper. (*Document F*)
6. The Committee had commended the EHT and HoS on their sterling efforts to manage the very difficult budget situation while minimising the impact on pupils. The HoS had made clear that the Business Administrator had played a critical role in this work: the Chair undertook to write to the Business Administrator on behalf of the GB to thank her.

**Action: Chair**

1. The Committee had received the outcome of work commissioned by the Federation Working Group to analyse the budgets of the three partner schools to identify scope for savings and efficiencies if the proposal to federate proceeded. Further work would be required by the EHT and the Business Managers of the three schools to realise the potential financial benefits and the EHT proposed to take this forward through monthly meetings with the Business Managers, starting in September 2023 (before federation), taking one area of their budgets at a time. The Committee had agreed this approach.
2. The Committee had been notified of various appointments and staff moves. It had discussed the scope to appoint apprentices in Early Years to address the additional need for resourcing in light of the high proportion of the September 2023 Reception intake with SEND and other needs. The HoS had expressed reservations about the need for professional staff in Early Years. The EHT said that he would discuss options further with the HoS over the summer: the school would need at least one additional Teaching Assistant or two apprentices.
3. The EHT updated governors on developments at senior leadership level. The substantive HoS, who was currently on secondment to Myrtle Park, had applied successfully for the permanent HoS position there. This meant that Steeton now needed to appoint a permanent Head of School. Initial advice from PACT HR was that the acting Head of School could not simply be assimilated into the role because, although she was already employed by in school, the post had not arisen though a restructure. **Governors challenged** this advice: the decision to second the then substantive HoS to Myrtle Park and cover the position with the then DHT had been taken as part of a leadership restructure that had been required by the local authority’s School Funding Team to address the budget deficit and that had resulted in a reduction in overall leadership capacity. The EHT undertook to discuss this further with Sue West and make this argument to PACT HR.

**Action: EHT**

1. The EHT said that, if PACT HR confirmed that the acting HoS could not be assimilated into the substantive HoS role (and, similarly, the acting DHT into the substantive DHT role), the school would be required to notify the local authority of its intention to recruit. It would be for the GB to determine how to make the appointment: it could be an internal or external recruitment. The usual safer recruitment and other checks would need to be carried out.
2. The EHT said, and the GB agreed, that any recruitment was not urgent: the acting HoS and DHT both had fixed term contracts in place for 2023-24 and any recruitment should take account of the cause of the HoS’s current absence from school.
3. The Committee had heard that recent meetings of the Federation Working Group and the Chairs of the three partner Governing Bodies had agreed that the senior leadership structure of the federation should comprise the EHT and three Heads of School (as opposed to Headteachers).

[*The remainder of the report from the Resources Committee was sensitive in nature and is therefore recorded in a separate confidential minute, for circulation to governors only*.]

* 1. *Joint Committee meeting of 13 June 2023*

1. The Chair said that discussion at this meeting had focused on the development of the proposal to federate, which was covered under other items on the agenda for this meeting.
   1. *Partnership Chairs of Governors meeting of 16 May* *2023*
2. A meeting of the Chairs of the partnership schools had been called to resolve a high-level strategic divergence of views, specifically about whether the proposed federation should be led by the EHT and three Heads of School or the EHT and three Headteachers. The suggestion that the Heads should be Headteachers had stemmed from erroneous PACT HR advice that there had to be a Headteacher (as opposed to HoS) on site in each school when the EHT was not working: the three GBs had agreed an EHT/Headteacher structure on this basis, and Steeton had understood that this agreement would stand when the PACT HR advice was found to be incorrect. Chair/Sandy Lane had taken a different view and had presented sound arguments for an EHT/HoS structure. Steeton had recognised the importance of the title of Headteacher but had acknowledged that a significant strategic decision such as the top leadership structure of the federation could not be based on the desire to confer a benefit on a single individual.
3. The Chairs had asked the Clerk to prepare a discussion paper on the issue for consideration by the Federation Working Group (FWG), and FWG members had been asked to take the view of their Chairs and HoSs on that paper prior to discussion on 28 June 2023.
   1. *Federation Working Group meeting of 28 June* *2023*
4. Sue West, who represented Steeton on the Federation Working Group (FWG), said that she and the Chair had been disappointed to see in the discussion paper on the Headteacher/Heads of School issue reference to the use by Sandy Lane of the phrase “possible deal-breaker”: this did not sit easily with the collaborative approach that the schools had otherwise adopted.
5. The model of senior leadership finally agreed for the federation had been an EHT/Head of School structure with an alignment of the pay of the Heads of School. The FWG had agreed that the model would need to be reviewed once the proposed Federation had been established: for example, as the federation expanded the oversight provided by the EHT would be spread thinner.
6. The Working Group had expressed its disappointment with the initial advice from PACT HR and its effect in terms of wasted time and additional costs. It had considered that the process that it and the Chairs had adopted to resolve this issue of contention – commissioning a factual statement of the pros and cons as a basis for discussion – had been helpful in enabling Governors to review the arguments objectively.
7. The FWG was next due to meet on 20 July 2023. LA advice was being sought on TUPE and land transfer issues for Myrtle Park which, unlike Steeton and Sandy Lane, was a Foundation School and therefore employed its own staff and owned its land. The Clerk was preparing a draft communications plan and the intention was to conduct informal discussions with staff, parents and the unions in the Autumn 1 half term, with a view to formal consultation in the Autumn 2 half term.

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| **114/22** | **Termly report from Named Governor for Safeguarding** |

1. Stefan Mills, Named Governor for Safeguarding (NG/SG) reported that he and the HoS had reviewed the Safeguarding audit again to ensure that all actions had been completed. They had also reviewed progress on two concerns identified on his previous visit:
   * + The Single Central Record was now 100% compliant with requirements. They HoS had highlighted the excellent work of the Business Administrator in bringing all information up to date.
     + The school continued to struggle to provide adequate staffing to monitor the complex school site during lunchtimes and playground breaks. There was a weak spot on the perimeter at the bottom of the playground where there was a gap between the hedge, a low wall and the houses, with trellising on the residential side that was in a state of disrepair, and where there was scope for a child to exit the site without the knowledge of staff. Staff were ware of this weak spot, monitoring it closely and distracting children from it. The school had spoken to the new resident, who planned to repair the trellising in the immediate future. NG/SG would check progress on this with the HoS. In the worst case, if a child exited through this weak spot they would find themselves in a secure garden with high fences and locked gates. There was, however, a risk that someone could enter the school at that point. The EHT said that, in the absence of the HoS, he would check the weak spot.
2. **Asked** about a CPOMS record about an opening near the MUGA, NG/SG said that he had reviewed the perimeter at that point but had been unable to see a way for a child to get through.
3. NG/SG said that he had observed children in Forest School and undertaking PE in the park: all had been properly supervised. He had discussed with the HoS the need to conduct invacuation and fire drills in the autumn term. There had been a small number of safeguarding incidents, including two allegations against staff, which had been managed by the school in accordance with its policies and procedures. The main safeguarding concern for the school was the level of staffing, which was stretched to the limit.

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| **115/22** | **Outcome of parent survey** |

1. Item deferred in the absence of the Head of School.

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| **116/22** | **Outcome of staff wellbeing survey** |  |

1. Item deferred in the absence of the Head of School.

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| **117/22** | **Note any safeguarding incidents since the previous meeting** |

1. The EHT said that he was not aware of any safeguarding issues other than those reported elsewhere.

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| **118/22** | **Report on Chair’s actions and correspondence** |

1. The Chair sad that she had written to the Local Authority and the Arish Council to express her serious concern about congestion in the car parking area at pupil drop-off and collection times. The Chair herself had been obliged to step in to direct traffic. She had made clear that neither she nor school staff could be held liable if there were an accident. Previous discussions with the LA and Parish Council had not led to action. She had received responses from Cllr Whitaker and an LA officer and would meet them shortly to discuss the issue further; she would keep the GB informed.
2. At the request of a governor, the Chair had contacted the Parish Council to ask for an update on action to address the poor state of repair of the park next to the school. The Chair of the Parish Council had asked to attend a Governing Body meeting: governors welcomed this and agreed that she should be invited to the next meeting.

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| **119/22** | **Report on Governors’ visits, training and development** |

1. Governors reported as follows:

*Visits*

* + - Emma Wainwright had undertaken Book Looks in Reception and Years 1, 2 and 4.
    - Stefan Mills had undertaken a Book Look in Year 5.
    - Stefan Mills had conducted several Safeguarding visits and had accompanied a school trip.
    - Sue West had accompanied a school trip to the cinema.

*Training and development*

1. The Chair had reviewed governor training to ensure that governors had all undertaken the training and development appropriate to their statutory and other roles. She reported that the only mandatory training was on safeguarding:
   * + Stefan Mills, as NG/SG, had undertaken safeguarding training twice during 2022-23.
     + Emma Wainwright undertook safeguarding training as part of her work.
     + The GB asked that Adam Longden and Adam O’Neill confirm that they undertook safeguarding training as part of their work in schools. [*Clerk’s note: Adam Longden confirmed by e-mail on 22 July 2023*]

**Action: A O’Neill**

1. It was an expectation that all new governors would undertake induction training and that members of the Resources Committee would undertake training on effective financial governance. Governors agreed that this training should be the LA Effective Financial Governance course, since Steeton was an LA Maintained School.
   * + All governors had undertaken induction training on joining the Governing Body.
     + Emma Wainwright and Sue West had undertaken the LA Effective Financia Governance course; Stefan Mills would do so during 2023-24.

**Action: S Mills**

1. For the future, governors agreed that:
   * + Training should be recorded using SmartLog.
     + The EHT would arrange for al governors to have log-ins for SmartLog.
     + The Chair would identify on SmartLog the training that governors should undertake.

**Action: EHT, Chair**

1. The GB agreed that it would be useful if governors who worked in other schools could provide to the Business Administrator at the end of each school year a copy of the summary report that their school held of the training they had undertaken during the year. [*Clerk’s note: Adam Longden confirmed by e-mail on 22 July 2023 that he had sent his training record to the Business Administrator.*]

**Action: A O’Neill**

1. The Chair reported that she would begin the Level 6 Effective Governors course, though Bradford Council, in the week following this meeting. The course, which would last until April 2024, required her to submit statements of her impact at three meetings and three other governance activities, prepare a 1500-word submission on governance, and undertake an Ofsted-stye interview.

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| **School performance, planning and impact** |

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| **120/22** | **Termly review of School Development Plan and Link Governor meetings** *– Documents C* |

1. Governors had reviewed progress against the 2022-23 SDP milestones at their meetings with senior leadership during the summer term. They had agreed to draw the following points to the attention of colleagues.

*Leadership and Management – meeting of 05 June 2023*

1. Link Governors had recognised the need for the new HoS to focus during 2022-23 on consolidating the curriculum and ensuring that the school was well prepared for the anticipated Ofsted inspection. They had agreed the following timetable, and they and other Link Governors had adjusted the timing of a number of SDP milestones accordingly:

Summer 2023 term: consolidation of the development in 2022-23 of staffing and the curriculum; preparation for Ofsted.

Autumn 2023 term: focus on collaborative work with Myrtle Park and Sandy Lane on assessment; preparation for Ofsted.

Spring 2024 onwards: development of a number of initiatives, including:

strategic planning of the school’s before- and after-school offer, where there remained a mis-match between the school’s current provision and its aspiration;

identification of one or two core objectives for fund-raising and planning of whole-school fund-raising activity; and

production of videos by pupils.

*Quality of Education – meeting of 05 June 2023*

1. Link Governors had met a group of pupils of mixed abilities from Years 2, 4 and 5/6. They had been impressed by pupils’ depth and retention of topic knowledge (eg he Great Fire of London, Greeks, Romans) and had found most of them to be confident and articulate speakers. They had given good explanations of the move into the Design Technology phase of Magic Mondays, where the school was expanding the curriculum for older year groups. Pupils had been delightful, and the session had been valuable in terms of enhancing governors’ understanding of the school from a pupils-eye view.
2. Link Governors had met the SENCo, who had given an excellent overview of the school’s SEND provision and the challenge faced by both pupils and the school. The Inclusion and Welfare Officer (IWO) had presented case studies demonstrating the support provided for children and its impact. Governors had discussed with her the fourteen languages spoken by children, the recent influx of children from a particular region of southern India and the role of older pupils in supporting these children and staff by translating for them. Governors suggested that the school might provide a small gift to thank these children for their help, if it had not already done so.
3. The SENCo had suggested that, as the school was working with an increasing number of SEND children, it could consider offering Designated Specialist provision or Resourced Provision. Governors noted that, unlike its work on literacy, this would be less about offering a traded service than about having the school’s work with SEND pupils recognised, led and funded by the LA. To offer such provision was a very significant undertaking that had many implications for the school and might well not be the right direction for it to take, but might be worth exploring with the LA.

*Early Years – meeting of 09 June 2023*

1. Link Governors had been greatly pleased to learn of the success of the buddying arrangement between Year 6 and Reception pupils and impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of the Reception teacher, who had presented the arrangement to them. They had discussed ways to encourage Year 6 children to reflect on what they had learned from the arrangement. Governors who were parents of children I school spoke of the impact of the buddying arrangement: their children now recognised and played with other children in the village, and were keen to participate in the arrangement when they reached Year 6.
2. As discussed earlier at this meeting, in light of the particular challenges posed by the September 2023 Reception intake, Link Governors recommended that the GB and the Resources Committee consider Early Years as a priority when decisions were made on the use of the school budget.

*Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development – 09 June 2023*

1. Link Governors had discussed with the Inclusion and Welfare Officer (IWO) and HoS the development of a new Behaviour and Relationships policy that would draw on the training that the IWO had undertaken as a Senior Mental Health practitioner.
2. The IWO had presented case studies that demonstrate the considerable work that the school did to support pupils with severe behavioural issues, and the significant impact of that work on the lives of these vulnerable children.
3. Link Governors had met a group of pupils, whom they had found to be polite, poised and confident. They had known all about the school’s FOREST[[5]](#footnote-5) values and had spoken engagingly of Forest School. They had been confident that staff dealt well with behaviour issues most of the time and had spoken positively of how they flet about school. Their main concern had been about the school’s extracurricular offer, which they felt lacked variety and was too focused on sports. Governors noted that there had been a wider range of activities some time ago but that the cessation of Extended Schools funding and the increasing pressure on the school’s budget had meant that the school had been unable to afford to continue with activities unless enough pupils attended to enable the school to cover the cost of running the sessions. This was something that they and school leaders hoped to be in a position to address towards the second half of the 2023-24 school year.

*Parent and Community involvement – meeting on 12 June 2023*

1. As discussed in other Link Governor meetings, the Link Governors for Parent and Community involvement had recognised that the rate of progress against SDP milestones had been affected by the need for the HoS to focus on consolidation of the curriculum and Teaching and Learning and preparation of the school for the forthcoming Ofsted inspection. Link Governors and senior leaders were keenly aware that community engagement was a core element of the school vision and strategy and had agreed that Parent and Community involvement should be a key SDP priority for the Spring and Summer 2024 terms.
2. Link Governors had discussed the need for homework to be purposeful and for the school to make clear to parents what homework they should expect to be set for their children. They had agreed that the HoS should undertake a survey of parents’ views to inform a review of the homework policy. The policy was on the agenda for this meeting but would be deferred to the next meeting in the absence of the HoS.

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| **121/22** | **Review the use and impact of Pupil Premium and Sports Premium funding** |

1. Item deferred in the absence of the Head of School. In the meantime, noting the requirement for the school to publish a statement on Pupil Premium by 31 July 2023, ***governors agreed*** that the EHT should post the statement on the website.

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| **122/22** | **Agree overall SDP priorities for 2023-24** |

1. The EHT said that he and the HoS had started work on preparing the 2023-24 SDP, which they would bring to the next meeting for approval.

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| **Review policies and other key documents** |

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| **123/22** | **Approval of Curriculum Policy Framework** |

1. Item deferred in the absence of the Head of School. In the meantime, the EHT confirmed that policy statements were in place for all subjects, and those for Writing and Maths were available on the school website: governors had seen the policy statements at various stages in their development.

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| **124/22** | **Approval of PSHE Policy –** *Document D* |

* + - ***The Governing Body unanimously approved*** the PSHE policy.

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| **125/22** | **Review Homework Policy – approach and management of parent expectations** |

1. Item deferred in the absence of the Head of School.

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| **Governing Body business** |

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| **126/22** | **Appointment of Co-opted Governor** |

1. Katie Walshaw, potential new governor, briefly introduced herself and spoke about her interest in joining the Governing Body.

*Katie Walshaw withdrew from the meeting.*

* + - ***The Governing Body unanimously agreed*** to appoint Katie Walshaw as a Co-opted Governor.

*Katie Walshaw re-joined the meeting.*

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| **127/22** | **Review governor vacancies** |

1. The Clerk reminded governors that the Governing Body had vacancies for two Co-opted Governors. Governors noted that the national database had not yielded any potential governors. They agreed the following actions:
   * + The EHT would e-mail Airedale Hospital to ask whether they had any staff, perhaps nearing retirement, who might have time and be interested in supporting the school as a governor. He would copy the e-mail to governors to draw upon in approaching their own contacts.
     + Governors would review their formal and informal networks of contacts.
     + The Chair would provide a piece for the school newsletter inviting readers to consider joining the Governing Body.
     + The Chair would attend the meeting that would be held for the parents of the September 2023 Reception intake to sound them out on becoming governors.
2. Governors would bear in mind previous discussions about the desirability of enhancing the financial skills and experience on the GB and increasing the number of governors from outside Steeton village itself to widen the school’s reach within the area served by the school.

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| **128/22** | **Review governor attendance in 2022-23** – *Document E* |

1. The Governing Body noted the attendance record for 2023-24 and agreed that it did not present any concerns.

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| **129/22** | **GB skills audit and next steps on training and development planning** |

1. Covered at Item 119/22 above.

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| **130/22** | **Consider whether to hold a GB Development session in 2023-24** |

1. Governors agreed that it would be useful to hold a GB Development session in the second half of the autumn term to consolidate and review the implementation of the school’s vision prior to the proposed federation in April 2024. They agreed the following arrangements:

Date Tuesday 14 November 2023

Time 12.00 noon to 3.00pm

Venue The Woodland Suite, Steeton Primary School

Refreshments School to arrange sandwiches

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| **131/22** | **Approve Committee Terms of Reference for 2023-24** – *Document F* |

1. See Item 113/22 (a) above.

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| **132/22** | **Agree Committee membership and Named/Link Governor roles for 2023-24** – *Document G* |

1. ***The Governing Body appointed*** governors to Committees and Named/Link Governor roles as set out at Annex A.

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| **133/22** | **Agree meeting dates for 2023-24** *– Document H* |

1. ***The Governing Body approved*** the schedule of meetings for 2023-24 as set out at Annex B.

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| **Closing items** |

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| **134/22** | **Any other business referred from Item 108/22 above** |

1. There was no other business.

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| **135/22** | **Date of Next meeting** |

1. The next meeting would be held at 6.00pm on **Wednesday 17 October 2023**, in person.

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| **136/22** | **Closure of meeting** |

1. **The meeting closed at 8.23 pm.**

**Helen Osman Governance Services**

*Supporting excellent governance in Bradford*

1. EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan: Introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. fte – full time equivalent. A full-time staff member counts as 1.0 fte; someone working 3 days per week counts as 0.6 fte etc [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Persistent Absence (PA) – attendance by a pupil of less than 90% (ie 19 days or more missed in one year) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. ## Drawing Club – an approach to Early Years literacy that draws on the imagination of the child to enrich their language skills and develop their fine motor skills. Developed by Greg Bottrill, a former Early Years Lead and Assistant Headteacher.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. FOREST – Friendship, Opportunity, Resilience, Empathy, Self awareness, Teamwork [↑](#footnote-ref-5)