



The Orchard School Governing Board

Bridge Road, East Molesey, KT8 9HT

Minutes of a meeting of the full governing board held on
Tuesday 25th April 2023 at 6pm.

Governors Present: Mark Waters (MW) (Chair)
Sally Cary (SC) – Head Teacher
Joe Elliott (JE) – via Teams
Sarah Adams (SA)
Toby Stevenson (TS)
Kate Mole (KM)
Nina Vlahos (NV)
Marcel Norval (MN)
Damian Norris (DN)

In Attendance: Harriet Hill (HH)
Nicola Wise (NW)
Anna Mantle (Clerk)

Apologies Received: Victoria Campbell (VC)
Katie Donaldson (KD)

Meeting started at 6.05pm.

		ACTION
1	<p><u>Board business</u> Apologies received and accepted from Victoria Campbell and Katie Donaldson. Toby Stevenson joined the meeting at 6.30pm.</p> <p>The meeting was quorate throughout.</p>	
2	<p><u>Declaration of Interest</u> No declarations of interest with reference to agenda items were declared.</p>	
3	<p><u>Constitution</u></p> <p><u>Associate Member</u> Governors welcomed Nicola Wise to join the governing body as an Associate Member with a view to taking on a full governor role in September as vacancies become available. Nicola Wise, appointed Associate Member. Term of office to run until the start of the 2023-24 academic year.</p> <p>No vacancies at the present time.</p>	
4	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</u></p> <p>Governors unanimously agreed that the minutes from the last meeting (23rd March 2023 Parts One and Two) were a true and accurate record. Hard copies signed and filed at school.</p> <p>All matters arising completed, apart from:</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Leave Policy to be brought to the next meeting. • National College Logins to be circulated. 	
5	<p><u>Chair's Actions</u> MW confirmed that he had not undertaken any emergency actions on behalf of the board since the last meeting.</p>	
6	<p><u>Head Teacher's Report</u> SC provided governors with a verbal update. She started by referring to the data circulated ahead of the meeting. (Noted under item 10).</p> <p><u>Admissions</u> SC informed governors that 90 offers had been made for YR next year with a waiting list of 11. She told them that she knew other schools had made fewer offers, however it is important not to be complacent. Birth rates are falling and numbers are predicted to keep falling. The schools planning team are starting to suggest that one of the schools in the locality will need to reduce its PAN.</p> <p>Governors discussed the situation. They acknowledged that any decision made about numbers on roll at The Orchard also had a significant impact on St Lawrence and The Children's Workshop nursery.</p> <p>Governors agreed that there would be no benefit to the families served by the school to reduce the PAN. They acknowledged the hard work put in by SC and her team meeting prospective parents and building good relationships. While numbers of applications remain positive and YR has full admission numbers, no further consideration of PAN reduction will be made.</p> <p><u>External consultant visits</u> Ahead of the meeting, reports from Jenell Chetty's (SIP) visit and the Key Skills Needs Assessment (KSNA) report by Anthony Marsh (Enlighten Learning Trust) were circulated to all governors. The key learnings from both reports have been incorporated into the school development plan.</p> <p><u>Strikes</u> There will be a partial closure of the school on Thursday 27 April and Tuesday 2 May as a result of the teachers' strikes. SA reported that she had received feedback from other parents. She said that they were supportive of the strikes, but had a question about redistributing the teaching capability so that it was not always the same children missing out on education. SC explained that which classes were open was dependent on the day of the strike (since sometimes it fell when staff were out of class and there was already cover arranged). She also explained that supply cover has been arranged to cover two members of staff who are signed off sick, so their classes are open when they would be striking, if they were in work. She also explained that she could not ask staff who are not striking to cover other classes. She said that the Unions would not support this. No comments have been made directly to SC or other governors. Governors agreed that the school should be kept open as much as possible and that transparent communication with parents was very important.</p>	
7	<p><u>Finance</u> Governors had received the pre-year end FMR in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>They acknowledged that errors in the report have made it challenging to track spend clearly this year. Strictly have advised that the carry forward of £81K can be relied upon and this will move into next year's budget.</p>	
8	<p><u>Staffing Structure</u> The budget is significantly constrained for 2023-24. Staffing costs constitute 80% of the budget, which is not theoretically high, however the current climate is squeezing other areas of the budget. It is also unclear what level of EHCP funding the school will receive for the new intake. SC to review the staffing structure and present to governors at the earliest opportunity.</p>	



<p>9</p>	<p><u>Budget</u> Governors had received a version of the budget for review ahead of the meeting. It had been revised again and recirculated just ahead of the meeting. Notes from KC (School Business Manager) were circulated in hard copy at the meeting.</p> <p>Confirmation has been received that 6 places in the Centre will be fully funded for the next year.</p> <p>The notes from KC indicated the assumptions on which the budget has been drawn up. She has undertaken significant renegotiation of all the school's external contracts to reduce spend where possible and secure school framework contracts where possible.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that the school is awaiting confirmation on SEND funding details, depending on the YR intake (which will be confirmed on 2 May).</p> <p>Governors agreed the budget with £2K surplus for 2023-24.</p> <p>They expressed their gratitude to KC and SC for their hard work preparing the budget. They recognised that work continues to renegotiate supplier contracts and that every effort is being made to maximise spend on improving all children's outcomes. There were discussions about developing a strategy for building a more sustainable, future proofed budget for years 2 and 3, recognising the lack of contingency available at the present time.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p><u>Partnerships/Academisation</u> SA and KM updated governors that they were still in the process of information-gathering and building a schedule to look at the benefits of wider collaborative working.</p> <p>It had been agreed jointly between St Lawrence School governors and The Orchard that they would explore more ways to collaborate between the two schools. Governors discussed activities that could be undertaken collaboratively within the Summer term. The following suggestions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics (although there are budget implications for St Lawrence buying into the same scheme as The Orchard) • Zones of Regulation • Pastoral activities – buddies etc. • Subject leader collaboration <p>It was agreed that SC would contact Grace MacLean and that subject leads will be encouraged to identify an area of collaboration, gather evidence to monitor impact and report on this at the July governors' meeting. Case studies, including pupil voice, to be presented. All agreed the importance of starting with the "why" and defining the intended impact on outcomes of the collaboration, before deciding on the "what".</p>	<p>SC and JE</p>
<p>11</p>	<p><u>Safeguarding</u> SC has completed Safer Recruitment Training.</p> <p>Nothing further to report since the last meeting.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p><u>Governor Monitoring Visits</u> It was agreed at the March FGB that governors would arrange to meet staff to observe lessons in the Foundation Subjects that they discussed at the previous monitoring visit. Governors were reminded to organise this.</p> <p>NV and MN to agree a date for SEND learning walk.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>MN and NV</p>
<p>13</p>	<p><u>Policies</u> Staff Leave Policy to come to July meeting.</p> <p>Policies were circulated in advance for review ahead of the meeting. The following policies were reviewed in detail by the governor in brackets and signed off at the meeting by the full governing body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff grievance (SA reviewed) – approved. 	<p>SC</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement procedure of dealing with an allegation of abuse (reviewed by MW) Finance (reviewed by TS) – minor change made in the copy on the share. Agreed as amended. Whistleblowing (reviewed by MW) – needs to include governors as individuals who can blow the whistle. Approved with this amendment. <p>Requiring further review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capability of Teachers and Support Staff – SA requested to review the procedure documents outlined in the policies. Discipline Policy and Procedures – NV to review and provide feedback via email to SC. Touch Policy – MW reviewed and suggested some amendments on which he would like feedback from the FGB. MW to circulate via email with comments tracked. 	
14	<p><u>Pay Committee</u></p> <p>No meeting since July meeting.</p>	
15	<p><u>Training</u></p> <p>Governors received the SAfE governors’ bulletin.</p> <p>Check National College log ins for all governors</p>	
16	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u></p> <p>Next meeting in person 13 July 2023 at 6pm.</p>	
19	<p><u>Part Two</u></p> <p>Confidential minutes taken and filed separately.</p>	

Meeting closed at 7.53pm

Professional Negligence Statement: Advice given by governors at The Orchard School is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity.

Confidentiality Statement: Governors should respect the confidence of those items of business which the Governing Body decides and not disclose what individual governors have said or how they have voted within a meeting.

Signed: Dated:

Name: Chair of FGB

Summary of Action Points

	Agenda Item	Action	Who	When	STATUS
23rd March 2023					
22	4	Presentation of Trust obligations doc to be included on July agenda	Clerk	July meeting	
23	13	Report from working group ref Academisation to the FGB – July	KD, KM, SA	July FGB	
24	15	Staff Leave Policy to be added to April FGB agenda	SC	April FGB	
25	17	Check National College logins for all governors	Clerk	April FGB	
25th April 2023					

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26	10	Collaborative activities with St L to be reported at July FGB	SC and JE	July FGB	
27	12	Organise monitoring visits for the summer term	All	July FGB	
28	12	Agree date for SEND learning walk	NV	Summer term	
29	13	Staff Leave Policy	SC	July FGB	
30	13	Send procedural docs from Capability Policies to SA for review	SC	ASAP	
31	13	Review discipline policy and feedback	NV	ASAP	
32	13	Circulate Touch policy for comment	MW	ASAP	
33	14	Circulate National College logins	Clerk	ASAP	