



## ATHELSTAN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held at the School on  
Thursday 7 December 2017 at 7.00pm

**Present:**

Andrew Parmenter (Chair), Karen O'Donnell (Headteacher), Will Martin (WM), Adrian Wainwright (AW), Adam Palmer (AP), Steve Morris (SM), and Peter Woods (PW)

**In attendance:**

Mark Stephenson (Clerk), NYCC Clerking Service.

Ref no.	Minutes	Action by:
1778	<p><b>Tour of the School</b></p> <p>The Headteacher led the Governors on a tour of the main School building, which highlighted the new classrooms, staff room, and administrative areas, as well as the key modifications / improvements that have been made to existing spaces, including the main hall. The new build project, overseen by NYCC, has cost around £6.5m with significant further investment by the School in order to ensure that learning areas meet the needs of pupils.</p> <p>Overall, Governors were very impressed by the School's accommodation and facilities (recognising that some snagging works are to be completed over the coming weeks).</p>	
1779	<p><b><u>PROCEDURAL MATTERS</u></b></p> <p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Stephanie Stewart (SS) and Caroline Hutton (CH).</p> <p>Governors considered the reasons for and consented to the absences.</p>	
1780	<p><b>Declaration of interests</b></p> <p>Governors were reminded of the requirement to declare interests in accordance with DfE statutory requirements and guidance.</p> <p>There were no new declarations of interest.</p>	
1781	<p><b>Confidential items</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
1782	<p><b>Notification of urgent other business</b></p> <p>Two staffing matters are to be considered.</p>	

Ref no.	Minutes	Action by:
1783	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meetings – 9 October 2017</b></p> <p>The minutes, including the confidential minutes, were agreed as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.</p>	
1784	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Item 1769: Governing Board Constitution</b> – it was reported that Stacey Doherty (SD) had decided that she did not wish to be considered for a further term of office, resulting in confirmation that there is now one vacancy for a Co-opted Member, some discussion took place about the skills needs of the Governing Board at this time and it was agreed that that a local business professional non-parent should be sought; all Governors were invited to put forward potential nominees to the Chair; Members' responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p>With regard to individual Governors' responsibilities, PW was appointed to membership of the Finance and Staffing Committee, which will now be chaired by SM. WM was confirmed as the Safeguarding Governor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Item 1774: Peer Review – protocol</b>; Members received a verbal update on the arrangements for peer reviews, which are coordinated through the STAR Alliance (with the input of external reviewers); it is a free service whereby schools can expect a review every 2 years; any issues identified by the review would be addressed by the individual school, determining the appropriate actions.</li> </ul>	ALL
1785	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>The dates of the next Governing Board meetings were confirmed as Thursdays at 7.00pm on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 February 2018;</li> <li>• 22 March;</li> <li>• 17 May; and</li> <li>• 19 July.</li> </ul>	
1786	<p><b><u>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT</u></b></p> <p><b>Strategic Matters</b></p> <p>Governors received an update on a number of strategic matters, and, in discussions, a number of key points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>STAR Alliance / MAT</b> – following Governors' decision at the last meeting not to join the MAT at this time, letters were sent to all parents, advising of that decision and that the activities of the STAR Teaching Alliance will continue; indications are that there has been very little reaction within the community; whilst the MAT will further develop over the next few months, the School will continue to be actively involved Teaching Alliance work / hosting related network meetings;</li> <li>• <b>School Evaluation and Vision 2017/18</b> – Governors received and noted version 1 of the document; whilst there were no questions at this time, the School Leadership Team will be bringing a progress report (version 2) for consideration at the next meeting.</li> </ul>	

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1787 **Headteacher's Report - Autumn**

Governors received and noted a report that provided an update on a number of School developments since the last meeting.

Through Members' questions and discussion, a number of key points were made:

- Attendance – overall School attendance currently stands at 95.4%, compared to an accepted national average of 95%; an explanation of authorised and unauthorised absence was provided; most School unauthorised absence is as a result of holidays taken during term-time; specific reference was made to the differences in recording of attendance / absence for travellers families; the School maintains close monitoring of attendance and appropriate management actions are taken in cases of persistent absence (under 90% attendance); lateness is monitored separately and is not counted as absence; comparisons were made between different local authorities' approaches to fining / prosecuting parents for taking holidays during term-time;
- Staff absence – a relatively small number of staff (mostly non-teaching) have triggered initial attendance management interviews; there are no identifiable trends, but the position is monitored closely on a rolling 6 months window;
- Staffing – the roles of the two newly-appointed KS Leaders continue to develop and gain effectiveness, taking on responsibilities delegated by the Headteacher; there remains difficulties in attracting appropriate people to key non-teaching roles, such as SEN TA (to support pupils with EHCPs – Education Health and Care Plans), - as being experienced by other schools in STAR Alliance; a permanent caretaker is currently being sought (relief caretaker in place);
- Playground accidents (3) – Governors received a verbal explanation of the use of and related controls for the new playground equipment; risk assessments are in place; midday supervisors (MSAs) are employed to monitor playground activity, including use of new apparatus; use is limited to KS2 pupils and at morning break only; a full re-test of the safety surfaces has been undertaken; playground zones / pieces of apparatus have maximum numbers of pupils at any one time; further training is planned for the MSAs; health and safety have been asked to advise on any further measures that can be taken (including introduction of a height restriction)

Additionally, Governors received, noted, and approved two policies, which have been reviewed and are based on model NYCC documents:

- Child Protection Policy; and
- General Complaints Policy and Procedure

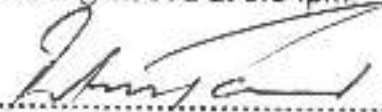
**Ofsted Inspection Report (October 2017)** – Governors received and noted the Report following the School's one-day inspection on 5 October 2017. Overall, the Report is very pleasing with many very positive statements about the School's performance. Governors congratulated the Headteacher and all staff. Some discussion took place about the School's next steps and the importance of a continual focus on high standards and self evaluation.


Ref no.	Minutes	Action by:
1788	<p><b>Committee Reports</b></p> <p><b>a) Standards Committee – 23 November 2017;</b>  It was reported that, as in previous years, all Governors (and key staff) had attended the meeting to receive a presentation of the main headlines arising from the Analysing School Performance (ASP) Report (which has replaced RAISEonline) and the Ofsted Inspection Data Summary Report. It was noted that an anonymised pupil case study is to be considered at the next Committee meeting.</p> <p>The minutes and headlines are to be distributed.</p> <p><b>b) Finance and Staffing – 16 November 2017</b>  The key points discussed at the meeting were summarised.</p> <p>Governors approved the Revised Budget 2017/18 and Financial Forecast; it was noted that an in-year deficit (agreed with NYCC) of £40.9k is expected with a negative c/f of £69.5k by the year end.</p> <p>Governors also approved the updated Committee terms of reference, including the change of name to the Finance, Staffing and Resources Committee.</p> <p>Governors received and noted the minutes of the Finance and Staffing Committee.</p> <p><b>c) Headteacher's Performance Management</b>  It was reported that a positive review meeting had taken place; a summary of the agreed objectives, linked to the priorities in the Evaluation and Vision, was provided.</p>	SS
1789	<p><b>Governance Matters</b>  Governors received a verbal update on several key developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GB Self assessment Process 2016/17; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff perceptions questionnaire – 25-30 completed response forms had been passed to SD;</li> <li>○ Chair's 360 degree appraisal – following an anonymised analysis of the completed forms by the Clerk, the Chair gave a verbal summary of the main points – strong aspects and areas for further development; at this point, the Chair referred to a proposal from SD to undertake governance self evaluation work on a voluntary basis; after some discussion about the practicalities / timescales, it was agreed that the work should be undertaken from within the membership of the Governing Board and, in this respect, WM (assisted by AP) offered to take responsibility and report back at the next meeting; it was suggested that a comprehensive governance self-evaluation should take place every two years during the summer term allowing the outcomes to feed into the School Evaluation and Vision;</li> <li>○ 1 to 1's – the Chair indicated that he would write up individual summaries for each Governor that would form the basis for individual discussions;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	WM

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1789 cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 20 questions – responses to be checked ;</li> <li>○ Skills audit – responses to be checked.</li> <li>• Governors Newsletter – the next edition is to be published in February 2018, with content to be sent to the Headteacher by 7 February; AP agreed to draft the content, in liaison with the Chair</li> <li>• Governor impact – reference was made to the Ofsted Inspection Report, where there are many positive statements (providing support and challenge to the Headteacher), relating to Governors and their effectiveness.</li> </ul>	WM AP / Chair
1790	<p><b>Health, Safety, and Buildings</b></p> <p>The key points relating to the Health and Safety Governor's meeting / inspection with the School Business Manager and the Health and Safety Adviser were summarised. It was noted that the inspection had taken place relatively soon after the completion of the new building project, during which comprehensive health and safety arrangements were in place and are now being harmonised with School systems and procedures. Unreasonable expectations of the Adviser were suppressed, with the assurance that the harmonisation process will have been fully completed in readiness for the next visit in May 2018.</p>	
1791	<p><b>Governor visits</b></p> <p>It was reported that the session, which allowed individual Governors to meet up with their allocated link Subject Co-ordinators, had been particularly successful; all involved commented positively about the streamlined approach; a further session will be scheduled later in 2017/18.</p> <p>Reference was made to a numeracy initiative whereby parents receive a booklet that explains how numeracy is taught in each year group.</p> <p>The Chair is to accompany a School trip to London next March; additionally, it was confirmed that a recent scheduled trip to York had been cancelled due to the low number of positive responses received from parents (the cost was under £10 per pupil).</p>	
1792	<p><b>Governor Training</b></p> <p>The Governor School Improvement Network Meetings will take place at Escrick on 8 February 2018 (the date of the next Governing Board meeting) and 24 May 2018 – AW and PW to attend. Booking to be made through the School.</p> <p>STAR Alliance events – PW is to attend a Governor induction session.</p>	
1793	<p><b>Other business</b></p> <p>Governors considered two staffing matters – written requests for unpaid leave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two days in July 2018 – agreed due to change in NYCC term dates;</li> <li>• Week commencing 7 July 2019 – agreed due to exceptional circumstances.</li> </ul>	

1793 cont.	Response letters will be prepared and sent by the Chair.	Chair
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The meeting closed at 9.04pm

Signed:  ..... (Chair)

Date:  .....