

# **CROSBY RAVENSWORTH C of E (Aided) SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Crosby Ravensworth, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 3JJ

School telephone: 01931 715265

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## **FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING Wednesday 15 February 2023 at 4.30pm CRVH**

### **Present:**

Barbara Wallis	(Chair)	(BW)	Foundation Governor
Duncan Priestley	-	(DP)	Staff Governor, ex officio
Susan Pattinson	-	(SP)	Staff Governor
Tom Cripps	-	(TC)	Foundation Governor
Sylvia Evans	-	(SE)	Foundation Governor
Anna Lea	-	(AL)	Foundation Governor
George Griffiths	-	(GG)	Foundation Governor
Karen Winder	-	(KW)	Parent Governor
Stephen Tudway	-	(ST)	Church Governor, ex officio
Neil Hughes	-	(NH)	Local Authority Governor

### **Others attending:**

Andrew Clement	(Clerk)	(AC)
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## **1. PRAYERS**

ST offered a prayer.

## **2. PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

### **2.1 Apologies:**

There were none.

### **2.2 Welcome to new members:**

BW offered a warm welcome to Stephen and George.

### **2.3 Minutes of meetings:**

Governors accepted the minutes from:  
Full Governing Board 19 October 2022.

### **2.4 Declarations of interests:**

AC distributed Declaration of Interest Forms to all Governors. The forms would be filled in before the end of the meeting and the signed copies would be kept in School. Governors will be asked to check these forms during the September Meeting each year to confirm they remain accurate or to update any new declarations.

### **2.5 Matters arising (not included elsewhere on the agenda):**

#### **Strike Action:**

BW noted that the recent industrial action by teachers had not resulted in any teacher strike action. DP confirmed this and told the Governors that, whilst no action had been taken on this last occasion, it did not mean that action would not be taken in future. The three members of staff in the union would make their own decision should any future ac-

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tion be called for by the unions. DP may be able to ask them of their intentions when required although the staff have no obligation to respond. BW confirmed that Governors also could ask Staff about their proposed intentions but they were not obliged to answer. The mandate for strike action by NEU members extends until 13 July.

### **Blue Sky Thinking Meeting, Nov 22:**

BW told the Governors present that the feedback from the Blue Sky Thinking meeting would be put on the secure section of the School website. This may be particularly useful for ST, all other Governors had been present at this meeting. BW recognised that this meeting had been a chance to look at significant topics, e.g. academisation, growing size of pre-school, the potential strike etc., as the Board was quite new and it allowed Governors to meet and discuss ideas outside the formal meeting. Whilst it had been enjoyable, it was not necessarily a requirement to hold such a meeting each year.

### **Website Streamlining:**

BW reported that she intended to look at streamlining some elements of the School website. This work would be completed in conjunction with DP and AC to try to reduce duplication of information and to make the website easier to maintain and improve ease of use.

### **Academisation:**

NH confirmed that the Government had withdrawn the bill that intended to see all schools become part of an academy in the near future. He confirmed that this may well be the intention but it would not be completed using legislation. DP assured those present that he continued to have an open-mind about the prospect of academisation.

ST told the board that he was aware that Charlotte Tudway, (CT), the Diocesan Director of Education, had been concerned that schools within the diocese should not be left behind in this process. It was thought that small schools in rural areas may be vulnerable and less attractive to being invited to join existing academies. As a result, processes had been initiated place to ensure they were not disadvantaged by academisation.

BW confirmed that during a December meeting with CT and DP, CT had confirmed that the Diocese was planning to form a second Trust, the first being the Good Shepherd Trust, to allow Voluntary Aided schools choice for joining.

### **2.6 Confidentiality:**

BW reminded the Governors of the importance of confidentiality. It was noted that, being a small school, it was sometimes easy to identify individual pupils with a minimum of information. All efforts should be used to minimise this and ensure individuals cannot be identified. It was also noted that Governors should be wary of discussing confidential items at home. It was recognised that it could be easy to "off load" at home but this should be avoided.

**Committee reports:**

**2.7.1 Resources Committee - 3 February 2023:**

TC had not had time to read through proposed amendments to the Minutes of the Resources Committee meeting of 3 February 2023. He confirmed that he would check through them. TC confirmed to the Governors present that the meeting had shown that the School was in a good financial position at present.

TC expressed some concerns about the Complaints Procedure that had been recommended by Kym Allan (KA) and discussed at the meeting. It had been amended to ensure the deadlines for each stage of this procedure were manageable for the School. TC felt that the document was very complex and he expressed some concerns that this prevents it being accessible to all parents, and that KA should be alerted to this. BW to look at simple options to make the procedure easier to follow and to report back to Resources.

TC confirmed that the Resources Committee had ratified or noted the following:

Policies ratified:

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

**2.7.2 Pupil Progress Committee - 31 January 2023:**

SE confirmed the Pupil Progress Committee had had a successful meeting in January. Those at the meeting had been shown evidence of good progress made by the pupils. It had been noted, however, that progress in Reading had not been as good as had previously been the case. As a result, a concerted effort was being made across the school to improve progress in this area, with 2023 being declared a Year of Reading by DP, who reported that family support was already showing improvement.

Policies ratified:

- SEND Policy
- Single Equality Scheme

**2.8 Full Board - 15 February 2023:**

Policies to ratify:

- Staff Absence Policy

It was ratified with all Governors in favour. It was agreed to add the word "Staff" to the policy title on the School website. Also, it was agreed to remove the Covid Amendment.

- Admission Arrangements

DP said this had not been changed other than to update the date. This is a statutory document and a copy should be sent to the Local Authority once agreed. Governors agreed to this.

To note:

- Missing Child Procedures

Full review by Kym Allan. Governors noted this.

### **3. MAIN BUSINESS**

#### **3.1 Head Teacher's Report:**

BW informed those present that she would lead this part of the meeting. Previously, DP had guided the Governors through this information but felt obliged to cover all aspects. BW confirmed that, as Governors had had the opportunity to read this document in good time before the meeting, she would not cover all aspects but discuss those elements that required noting or discussing further.

#### **Numbers on Roll:**

The Head's report detailed an expectation that pupil numbers for the next two years are stable and might rise by 30% in year three. The School's decision to host the village playgroup in school for monthly pop 'n play sessions has given an opportunity to nurture relationships with potential parents and understand their likely future needs, allowing the School to plan ahead. As many as ten pre-schoolers might be joining by next year, but it is recognised this can be difficult to predict. GG suggested that it might be beneficial for the School to ask prospective parents to confirm that they will require a place to assist with funding. This would allow for the School to apply to the Local Authority for funding to follow the pupil from one setting to another. If the information is delayed, funding may be lost. DP confirmed he would consider this. BW questioned DP asking if he needed any extra assistance with the prospective increase in pre-school pupils. DP replied that he was enjoying the challenge and that no further assistance was required.

#### **Staffing:**

BW confirmed that staffing at the School was stable.

#### **3.2 School Development Plan and Governor Involvement:**

BW asked DP to relay his ideas about increasing governor involvement with the School Development Plan, SDP. DP explained that he felt governance is working better than ever before and that there is a team ethic and level of commitment to be proud of. He went on to explain that next term he would be working on a new format for the School Development Plan to help governors focus on monitoring specific aspects of school improvement in a more systematic fashion and to share the load more evenly. A more prescriptive SDP would be required and that measurable successes would be required as well as clear monitoring of progress. He felt that Action Points would be grouped to allow Governors responsible for that area, Reading, H & S, EYFS, etc. to monitor what was being done. This would ensure that Governors could then question DP effectively and ensure he was accountable.

#### **Parent Pay:**

As Shap Post Office is closing, it had been decided to introduce a new online payment system for parents in April. This was discussed at the Resources Committee Meeting and will involve signing up to Parent Pay who will provide the services for the School to go "cashless".

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### **Attainment:**

When asked about Attainment, DP was pleased to confirm that progress had been generally very positive. All pupils were progressing although some progressed at different rates. The format for monitoring progress, 2 levels each term, remained useful to provide a platform for discussion that could then instigate changes for improvements. An example of this was how the dip in progress in Reading last term had prompted DP to declare 2023 as a Year of Reading, to help focus on improvements in this area.

### **Phonics:**

DP went on to report that the new Phonics scheme – ‘Rocket Phonics’ was nearly ready for implementation. A staff training day has been arranged at Westmorland Hotel on 1st March and an action plan would be prepared shortly after this. DP reported that the posters for this scheme had arrived and that he hoped the new scheme would be implemented at the end of the Spring Term or, possibly, the beginning of the Summer Term.

### **SEND:**

BW recognised that the provision for Special Educational Needs and Disability was all Governors’ responsibility. DP had noted in his report that at the end of each school year, the School now conducts an annual benchmarking audit of its SEN provision: ‘SEND in a nutshell’ which is shared with the

Pupil Progress committee at its autumn meeting. All staff (teaching and support assistants) have engaged in SEND condition training. Training videos covering 8 areas of neurodiversity were shared by Ms Lowthian for staff to engage with. Two twilight staff meetings took place via Teams at which staff shared their reflections on the training making reference to our cohort of children. BW confirmed that the SENCO report would be made every term from now onwards.

### **Health and Safety:**

TC stated that KW and DP had completed some excellent work to implement the recommendations in the H & S Audit. There was now very little required to action but KW would check if anything else was required.

### **Leadership Support:**

DP has begun work as a Headteacher support partner for the year ahead, working with the new Headteacher at Patterdale CE Primary School, Nicky Steels. DP will attend a 2 day training course to help him become a more effective mentor. It was noted that funding is received to compensate for loss of management time.

### **Maths:**

DP thanked SP for her amazing work on Maths Mastery. SP is nearing the end of her Maths Mastery course through the North West Maths Hub. In her closing assignment, she will provide Maths Mastery Leadership to a group of maths teachers from the Eden cluster of Primary Schools. Grant funding has been received to support her development time. Mrs Hollis is mid-way through attending a series of Maths Mastery teaching assistant training days and she has fed back on how useful she is finding this.

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### **Buildings:**

DP reported that the buildings are in good order. KW relayed to those present how she had observed the pupils using the new covered outdoor area in school. She had noted the enjoyment it had brought and that the pupils were engaged in interesting learning activities during their break time. SP confirmed that she felt the area was much improved and was really useful. It was believed that it would be invaluable when the new pre-school pupils arrived. DP was thankful to the Crosby Ravensworth United Schools Foundation Trustees for their financial support for this project. NH, who is a member of the Trustees, agreed to relay the School's appreciation to the Trustees.

### **Telephones:**

DP noted that 2 new telephones had been bought. They used the internet, there were now 2 lines and they were cheaper and had better range than the previous telephone system.

### **3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Visits:**

AL reported that although she had not completed a formal observation, she had spent a good deal of time observing EYFS in school. She reported that she would just need to ask one or two formal questions to be in a position to complete her monitoring visit report.

NH confirmed he would be available to complete a visit.

TC is hoping to visit to observe Computing during the second half of this term..

The following visits were agreed:

Term	First half term	Second half term
Spring 2023	Computing - TC	
Summer 2023	Geography – SE Art & Design - BW	History – ST Design & DT - KW
Autumn 2023	Maths – GG	

DP felt that it was especially important to have Maths observed as it was seen to be an area of excellence. He also indicated that some guidance on a SIAMs Audit this academic year would be helpful. ST agreed to offer any advice he could.

### **3.6 Staff Welfare, Standards and Morale:**

This item has been designated to DP to discuss. DP started his report by confirming his viewpoint that it was not appropriate for him to lead this item. ST indicated an interest in Staff Welfare and confirmed that this was an area he had worked on in the past and would be happy to take a lead on. GG supported the idea that Staff would be better served by having someone other than the Headteacher to approach with welfare issues. It was also considered that the increase in numbers on roll could add to staff pressures and, because of this, Staff Welfare was especially important. It was agreed that ST would arrange for a Staff Survey to be taken in the Autumn and he would digest and process the information and report back to Governors.

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### **3.7 Headteacher's Appraisal:**

TC confirmed that the Headteacher's Appraisal had taken place in December 2022. The appraisal had confirmed that all targets and measurements were being met and that there had been no impact on the School Budget. TC reiterated his gratitude for David Evans' assistance in this process. TC also noted that a new Governor to take DMcC's place on the panel was required. BW stated that the Vice-Chair position would be an ideal replacement for DMcC and that the item later may help with this issue.

### **3.8 SIAMs:**

DP asked ST if he could help with predicting when the next SIAM's Inspection may be. DP felt that that Spring of 2024 was a likely time and no other information to contradict this was available. DP felt that he could prepare during the Summer Term and that an information sheet for Governors, of likely questions Governors may be asked, would be a useful contribution. BW asked about the amount of notice that could be expected prior to this visit. DP felt that a few days' notice was usual. DP confirmed that there was a new inspection framework and also that he intended to attend the Diocese Summer Conference with SP and potentially BW, on 14 June. There were two events and he questioned whether it would be best to both attend one or for each teacher to attend separate meetings. It was agreed to go to one meeting as they were different but had the same objectives. (Subsequent to the meeting the June conference theme was confirmed as 'Justice'.)

ST confirmed that he would need to be present at a SIAMs Inspection and it would be beneficial for himself and DP to meet to get up to date.

### **3.9 Ofsted:**

It was questioned as to when the next Ofsted Inspection could be expected. It was noted that Ofsted had been reported to be behind the expected schedule and an inspection was probably due in 2024-2025. BW stated that the Ofsted Webinars were well worth watching to help Governors prepare.

## **4. STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES AND GOVERNING BODY MATTERS:**

### **4.1 Governor Vacancies:**

There remains a position for a parent Governor on the Board. It was reported that, although several parents had been approached, the position was still vacant. It was questioned if Pre-School Parents could become Parent Governors. It was felt that this was very likely to be the case but that it would be best to check with the Governor Support Team. All agreed to place an advert for a Parent Governor on Facebook; BW to prepare.

BW felt that the Board would benefit from a member with financial expertise. It was noted that there could be a possibility of co-opting an Associate Member to fulfil this role. The benefit of this would be that they would only be required to attend the Resources Committee meetings. This member would have voting rights on the committee but not at the Full Board Meeting. The reduced commitment required may well make it more attractive to potential candidates. It was agreed to place an advert on Facebook for an Associate Member with some financial expertise; BW to prepare.

### **Vice-Chair:**

BW reported that GG had volunteered to take up the role of Vice-Chair. BW felt GG would be an ideal candidate as she had years of experience in EYFS and Safeguarding. BW proposed GG for the

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Post and DP seconded this proposal. All Governors voted in favour of GG to become the new Vice-Chair. GG would also take a place on the Headteacher Appraisal panel.

### **Link Governor Roles:**

ST agreed to become the Church Link Governor.

GG agreed to become the Reading and Literacy Link Governor. It was mentioned that the Rocket Phonics training would take place at the Westmorland Hotel on 1 March 2023 and that GG was welcome to attend.

SP is currently Numeracy Link Governor and it was pointed out that, as SP was leading Numeracy in school, she would be reporting about herself and this was not ideal. GG agreed to take on this role.

BW agreed to be the Single Equality Link Governor.

### **4.3 Governor Skills Audit**

An updated version of the Governors Skills Audit was shown to those present. DP said this audit showed clearly that there was a very strong Board at present. It was thought that some of the skills shown may well have changed as new Governors had gained experience over the recent months and years. AC agreed to send out the audit form to some of the more established Governors to see if they felt that their skills had changed. An updated audit would be produced using any new information.

### **4.4 Link Governor Updates:**

#### **Church:**

ST told the Board that he intended to visit the School every other week. He also noted that he would be making regular visits to the Church. ST assured those present that he was always happy to help when asked and he would do all that he could to assist when required.

#### **Health & Safety:**

No further updates were required as this had already been discussed.

#### **Governor Training and New Governor Induction:**

BW told the Board that she had completed some informal Governor training to support the new Governors. She also confirmed that she was happy that all statutory requirements had been covered, but would update the Governor Induction list to separate out statutory and non-statutory requirements. BW recommended the new NGA Code of Conduct for Governors. AC would circulate to all Governors for signatures.

#### **SEND:**

No further updates were required as this had already been discussed.

#### **Safeguarding:**

GG confirmed that in her previous post she had completed Level 3 Safeguarding training and that she had also recently completed Level 1 training online. ST had completed Church Safeguarding



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training but would also repeat the Level 1 training online. AL agreed to complete the Level 1 training online and DP agreed to send the link for this.

SE confirmed that Safeguarding Audit action points were being actioned by DP as he worked his way through the audit.

### **Online Safety/Personal Social Health Education:**

SE relayed to those present that she had attended an Online Safety meeting at Orton Primary School, as had BW, DP and JC. SP reported it had been Internet Safety day in the previous week. All pupils had taken part and had been very sensible in dealing with issues covered. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 had been given a homework game to play with the members of their families. This was in preparation for the transition to Secondary School. A letter had been sent home with a link to extra information if this was required.

### **4.5 Governors' newsletter:**

BW confirmed that she would prepare an End of the Summer Newsletter.

### **4.6 School Visits/school trips:**

BW asked if any special requirements were needed for the forthcoming Year 5 and Year 6 residential trip. DP replied that none were required. It was noted that not all the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils were going on this trip and that DP would be accompanying the pupils.

## **5. REVIEW OF MEETING.**

### **5.1 AOB:**

SE wished to relay her thanks to all those responsible for the administration within the School.

BW requested that, as she had now been in post for 12 months, some feedback would be useful. She would welcome comments as to how things were going.

DP reiterated that he felt that the School was benefiting from strong governance.

KW had been involved in the School's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, on the current site, and that the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary would take place in September 2023. Ex-pupils had been invited to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and a similar event may be arranged. DP confirmed his support for this celebration but felt that it was a primarily a celebration for the village and that it was appropriate for the arrangements to be completed by members of the community not necessarily the School.

### **Dates for next meetings:**

The following dates were agreed:

#### **Summer Term 2023**

**Resources Committee**

Friday 16 June 2023 1.15pm

**Pupil Progress Committee**

Tuesday 20 June 2023 3.45pm

**Full Governing Board**

Wednesday 5 July 2023 4.00pm

**The meeting closed at 6.29pm.**