

**MINUTES of the  
KING'S CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL FOUNDATION GOVERNING BOARD  
SPRING 2024 MEETING  
held on Thursday 1 February 2024 at 7.00pm at the school.**

---

**Present**

Caroline Baird (CB)	Foundation Governor (St Anne's)
Aidrian Corke (AC)	Headteacher
Janine Farrance (JF)	<b>Co-Chair</b> - Foundation Governor (SDBE)
Reverend Canon Dr Giles Fraser (GF)	Foundation Governor (St Anne's)
Reverend Dr Melanie Harrington (MH)	Foundation Governor (St Luke's)
Mark Ivory (MI)	Foundation Governor (St Anne's)
Marian Mollet (MM)	Foundation Governor (St Anne's)
Tania Sesay (TS)	Staff Governor
Larissa Sutton (LS)	<b>Co-Chair</b> - Parent Governor
Karen Verge (KV)	Deputy Headteacher – Associate Governor

**In Attendance**

Nicola Cheshire (NC)	Wandsworth Governor Services
Polly Watkinson (PW)	SENCo

**1. Welcome**

LS, who chaired the meeting, welcomed everyone, and thanked them for their attendance.

**2. Opening Prayer**

The opening prayer was led by AC.

**3. SEND Update**

Polly Watkinson (SENCo) gave governors an overview of the current SEND legislation and guidance and an update on the focus of her role, the current SEND provision at the school and the challenges being faced.

The King's School has a reputation for providing a high quality, collaborative and inclusive SEND practice that underpins the role of all teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) in the school. The school is rightly proud of this reputation but also faced challenges because of this and the increasing number of high-level need children at the school. By next year this is predicted to be 7.5%, or 29 children who will have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), when the national average is 4.3%. The primary identified need of these children is autism, followed by social and emotional mental health which includes issues such as anxiety and school avoidance or refusal.

The focus of PW's own role was on building capacity within the staff team to ensure they can identify and support SEN children and their families in the best way possible. A key element of this is ensuring staff have the necessary skills for early identification of need, as this has been shown to be a key factor for successful longer-term achievement of SEN children.

In addition to training and development of staff PW also works with families helping them navigate the process of getting the support they need and are entitled to, such as securing an EHCP and accessing disability living allowance. The sharing of information, knowledge and experience was also

key and had included running parent workshops and setting up a SEN Parent Group to enable them to offer support and practical advice to each other when needed.

**Q** – How much additional funding does the school get for a child with an EHCP?

**A** – For a 32-hour plan, which equates to a full-time TA, the school must contribute the first £6k, and is given approximately £15,700 pa additional funding from the LA, but as the cost of a TA is £27-£28k pa the additional funding is insufficient to cover costs. In addition, the school must meet the costs of supporting the child through the EHCP application process, which takes around a year (two terms of evidence gathering before submitting the application and then a 20 week wait for a decision) with no backpay or exceptions. EHCP funding has not kept pace with inflation and the rates have been frozen for the last 10 years.

**Q** – Why does the school have such a high proportion of ECHP children when compared to the national average?

**A** – The school has a reputation for good SEND provision and inclusive practice and as word of this spreads it has attracted more applications from families with children with higher levels of need.

**Q** – If we forget about money and the economics is there a level of ECHP children that would be ideal with the current level of staffing?

**A** – It is difficult to define as each child is different and has individual needs, but it is about trying to find a balance in the school for everyone. With the current three days a week of SENCo provision about 3-4% would seem reasonable, so additional SEND capacity is needed to meet the 7.5% predicted for next year.

**Q** – From a school perspective are we talking to the LA about the need for additional funds?

**A** – The Local Authority know the position the school is in and the pressures supporting these children places on a school's budget, but they do not have any additional money to give us. A small amount of money is top-sliced from all school budgets and reallocated to schools with higher-than-average numbers of EHCP children, but it is negligible (c£2k this year).

**Q** – The school should feel very proud that they are providing such an excellent service for these children and their families, but how can the governors support the school and the SENCo with this?

**A** – The school is proud of what it does and recognises the benefits other children can gain from such inclusive practice but to do this well is very resource intensive and places considerable demands on staff. Additional SEND funding in the budget for extra resources, particularly staff, is the most obvious way for governors to support the service and this would allow current resources to be released to focus on training and upskilling of other staff in the school. Funds for additional technology and subscription fees for specialist programmes for issues such as dyslexia which children can access independently at school and at home would also be helpful.

Governors thanked PW for her informative and thought-provoking presentation. PW left the meeting.

**Action – SEN presentation slides to be shared with all governors.**

Governors had a wider discussion about the issues raised by PW in her presentation, particularly the budget considerations, staffing implications and workload demands and the impact on staff wellbeing and agreed that these discussions should be continued at committee level.

**Action – SEN provision and the budget and staff mental health and wellbeing to be discussed further at People & Resources Committee. PW to attend.**

#### **4. Governing Board Procedures and Administration**

##### **4.1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Deidre Carswell (DC), Auriol Hale (AH), Kennan Michel (KM), Vas Polydorou (VP) and Lynn Tandler (LT). The meeting was quorate.

#### **4.2 Governor appointments and vacancies**

There were no new appointments. Governors decided not to appoint to the Parent Governor vacancy at the present time owing the number of governors on the board who were also parents at the school.

**Action – Parent Governor vacancy on the board to be kept under review.**

#### **4.3 Declarations of interest**

There were no new declarations of interest. Governors were reminded to ensure their declarations of interest record was kept up to date on GovernorHub.

**Action – All governors to ensure their Declaration of Interest record on GovernorHub is up to date.**

#### **4.4 Approval of the minutes of the previous FGB meeting (23 November 2023) and matters arising**

The minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 23 November 2023 were agreed and approved. All matters arising had either been completed or were on the agenda.

**Action – LS to sign the minutes of the previous FGB as agreed and approved on GovernorHub.**

#### **4.5 Committee and Link Governor appointments**

There were no new Committee or Link Governor appointments to record.

#### **4.6 Governor Training update**

Following a discussion at the previous meeting when it was reported that Achieving for Children (AfC) had started to charge for training, confirmation had been received that training for governors remained free of charge, so governors were encouraged to sign up for any courses of interest to them.

AfC had recommended that Governing Boards consider appointing a Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead Governor to ensure their schools are taking account of this and offering appropriate support to staff. Governors recognised the importance of this particularly in relation to the additional pressures on staff that had been highlighted in PW presentation.

**Action – Expressions of interest in becoming the Lead Governor for Staff Wellbeing to be registered with JF & LS.**

The Co-Chairs reported that plans were being made for a Governors awayday later in the year.

### **5. Co-Chairs' Report**

The Co-Chairs report acknowledged the significant amount of work undertaken this term by all committees and governors. There had been a significant increase in governor visits and involvement with the school and greater collaboration with the school leadership and staff team which was particularly impressive. All governors were thanked for the enthusiasm and willingness they had shown to do this, and AC was thanked for facilitating and enabling it.

Whilst progress had been made towards the achievement of the strategic objectives, the school's finance and funding challenges remained a concern for the Board and a priority for the People & Resources Committee. The Governor Fund Appeal had been launched and parent briefing sessions held to inform parents of the school's budget situation.

The Co-Chairs had attended an engaging and interesting Leadership Development Day, organised by the school's School Improvement Team Advisor, Rosemary Hafeez, focused on the School Development Plan and progress against objectives. A particular highlight for the Co-Chairs had been to witness the level of engagement, collaboration, and motivation shared and demonstrated by the leadership team.

The Co-Chairs thanked all governors for a productive and impactful term in support of the school and the achievement of their three main strategic priorities of quality of education, Christian distinctiveness and effective management of people and assets.

## 6. Headteacher's Report

Governors had been provided with a copy of the Headteacher's report in advance of the meeting to focus time at the meeting on governors' questions. Highlights of the report included:

- Good progress against SDP objectives demonstrated by the RAG (red, amber, green) rating in the report.
- The school's readiness for SIAMs and Ofsted Inspections which could come at any time.
- The impressive range of personal development opportunities the school offered children which included:
  - 731 children attending 45 extra-curricular clubs this term, including 33 (97%) Pupil Premium grant children and 49 (57%) SEN children.
  - Year 3 children performing at Kew Sparkle.
  - 52 of the Year 5 and Year 6 children participating in the Young Voices concert at the O2.
- SIP led Leadership Day held to look at SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) which will be used to form a 3–5-year plan for the school.
- Above national average levels of attendance (95.76%) with no complaints, behavioural issues, or racist incidents reported.
- Positive admission rates for 2024-25 academic year with 61 first choice applications for reception from Richmond alone, with 60 places on offer.
- Senso software system now monitoring children's use of school devices.
- The current full year budget forecast is better than previously forecast.

**Q** – Although the first-choice admissions figure is good the overall admissions numbers across all preferences at 110 is significantly lower than normal, why is this?

**A** – All schools across London are struggling with admission numbers due to a variety of factors including low birth rates and families moving out of London because of Brexit and the pandemic. The position in Kingston and Richmond is much better than many other London boroughs who are having to consider merging and/or closing schools, merging year groups, and making staff redundant because of falling pupil roll numbers. The 61 first choice preference is only the Richmond numbers so once we have the Hounslow numbers it is expected to increase.

**Q** – What about the 2024-25 Budget, how is that looking?

**A** – Work is ongoing on this, but the 2024-25 funding will be based on 393 pupils rather than 387 for 2023-24 which represents c£27k of additional income. The final government funding figures for 2024-25 have not been received and until these have been confirmed it is difficult to predict what this will mean for the overall budget. It is still hoped that the school will be able to avoid a deficit budget but to do so it is unlikely to have any meaningful reserves to carry forward to 2025-26.

## 7. Strategic Priorities

### 7.1 Curriculum and Standards

#### 7.1.1 Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee Report

As VP was not present at this meeting there was not a Chair's report from the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

#### 7.1.2 Link Governors Report

LS had undertaken a RE Learning Walk on 22.01.24 and been impressed with the progress made in relation to the consistency of teaching of the RE Curriculum, the behaviour of the

children and the engaging teacher led collective worship observed. LS's full report was available on GovernorHub.

### **7.1.3 Next Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting**

The next meeting of the Curriculum and Standards committee would be on Tuesday 20 February 2024.

## **7.2 Faith and Wellbeing**

### **7.2.1 Chair of the Faith and Wellbeing Committee Report**

As part of the preparation for the next Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) GF had contacted the Growing Faith Foundation, a Church of England initiative looking at the relationship between school, home, and the church. Following a brief discussion about the foundation it was agreed that Reverend Mary Hawes, the local advisor for the Foundation would be asked to meet with governors to discuss this further.

**Action – The Growing Faith Foundation to be invited to meet with governors as soon as possible.**

St Anne's were currently recruiting a new director of music whose job description would include time to be spent with The King's School on collective worship.

### **7.2.2 Progress update on the new Terms of Reference for the committee.**

Work on updating the new Terms of Reference for the committee was ongoing.

**Action – New Terms of Reference for Faith & Wellbeing Committee to be brought to next FGB for ratification.**

### **7.2.3 Link Governors Report**

On a recent RE Learning Walk, GF had been impressed with the good work going on at the school although he had noticed some factual errors in RE teaching which needed be addressed. But having been made aware of how little time staff are given for lesson planning he wanted to place on record how amazed he was that there were able to achieve what they do in such limited time.

### **7.2.4 Next Faith and Wellbeing Committee meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Faith and Wellbeing Committee had not been agreed.

## **7.3 People and Resources (including statutory obligations)**

### **7.3.1 Chair of the People and Resources Committee Report**

#### **a. Scheme of Financial Delegation update and FGB approval**

This item was deferred until the next FGB.

**Action – Scheme of Financial Delegation update to go to next FGB for approval.**

#### **b. 2023-24 Budget Plan monitoring.**

**Action – 2023-24 budget plan monitoring to be discussed further at the People and Resources committee and an update given at the next FGB meeting.**

#### **c. FGB Approval of 2024-25 Budget.**

Work on the 2024 -25 budget had started and would be discussed further at the People and Resources committee and the next FGB meeting.

**Action – 2024-25 Budget to be finalised at People & Resources committee and approved at next FGB.**

#### **d. School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)**

Work on this was ongoing and would be discussed further at the People and Resources committee and an update given at the next FGB meeting.

**Action – SFVS to be completed in at People & Resources Committee ready for update and sign off at next FGB meeting.**

**e. Review of 3-year Budget forecast.**

This item would be discussed further at the People and Resources committee and an update given at the next FGB meeting.

**Action – 3-year budget forecast to be discussed further at People & Resources committee and an update given at next FGB.**

**f. Review and agree any staffing structure changes.**

This item would be discussed as part of the ongoing budget preparation discussions at the People and Resources Committee and an update given at the next FGB meeting as part of the 2024-25 Budget.

**g. Review and evaluate any financial benchmarking data.**

**Action - People & Resources Committee to review financial benchmarking and update governors at next FGB meeting.**

**h. Review and update of School's Risk Register**

Discussions about the School's Risk Register were ongoing at the People and Resources Committee and would be brought to FGB once completed.

**i. Family Monthly Contribution update**

Approximately 25 families had attended the Governors Fund Appeal meetings and plans were in place to send a further update to families about this. To date the fund had received £8,700 from 54 donations of which 20 were standing orders. This was less than had been hoped but governors were mindful of the current financial climate.

**7.3.2 Progress update on the new Terms of Reference for the committee.**

Work on updating the new Terms of Reference for the committee was ongoing.

**Action – New Terms of Reference for People & Resources Committee to be brought to next FGB for ratification.**

**7.3.3 Link Governor Reports**

There were no Link Governor reports.

**7.3.4 Next People and Resources Committee meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the People and Resources Committee had not been agreed.

**8. Statutory policies and compliance**

**8.1 To agree the new Policy Review Schedule for the academic year.**

This item was carried forward to the next meeting.

**Action – Updated Policy review Schedule to be carried forward to the next FGB meeting (02.05.24).**

**8.2 To consider new/updated policies requiring FGB approval.**

There were no policies brought to the meeting for FGB approval.

**8.3 School website compliance**

Work on the update of the school website continues and all governors were asked to respond promptly to any requests for information in relation to governance issues.

**Action – Update on School Website compliance to be agenda item on next FGB meeting.**

**9. AOB**

**Parents Survey**

It was noted that the findings of the parents’ survey had been a joy to read with all responses being overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the school and all it does. Every respondent said they would recommend the school to other parents. Although not every family at the school had responded to the survey such a positive response was a huge achievement and recognition of the fantastic work being done at the school. All staff should feel proud to have received such resoundingly positive feedback and governors asked for their thanks and congratulations be passed on to all staff.

**Meeting impact and reflection**

Governors felt that the meeting had been positive and productive. The initial presentation on SEND issues had been helpful and informative and given governors a greater understanding and insight of the issues being dealt with and faced in school. All governors agreed that they would like more presentations like this in the future.

**Action – a programme of information update sessions for FGB on different topics to be agreed and planned.**

**10. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The Summer FGB meeting will be held on **Thursday 2 May 2024 at 7pm at the school.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Larissa Sutton (Co-Chair and Chair of this meeting)**

**Actions agreed at The King's School FGB Meeting on 01 February 2024.**

No.	Agenda Item	Action	Who	Date
1.	3.	SEND presentation slides to be shared with all governors.	PW	09.02.24
2.	3.	SEND provision and the budget and staff mental health and wellbeing to be discussed further at People & Resources Committee. PW to attend.	P&R Committee PW	To be confirmed
3.	4.2	Parent Governor vacancy on the board to be kept under review.	JF&LS	Ongoing
4.	4.3	All governors to ensure their Declarations of Interest are updated on GovernorHub.	All Governors	05.02.24
5.	4.4	Minutes of FGB 23 November 2023 to be signed as agreed and approved on GovernorHub and as a paper copy for retention at the school.	LS	09.02.24
6.	4.6	Expressions of interest in becoming the Lead Governor for Staff Wellbeing to be registered with JF & LS.	All Governors	28.03.24
7.	7.2.1	Reverend Mary Hawes, Growing Faith Foundation to be invited to meet with governors as soon as possible.	GF	29.02.24
8.	7.2.2	New Terms of Reference for Faith & Wellbeing Committee to be brought to next FGB for ratification.	GF	02.05.24
9.	7.3.1. a	Scheme of Financial Delegation update to go to next FGB for approval.	KM	02.05.24
10.	7.3.1. b	2023-24 budget plan monitoring to be discussed further at the People & Resources committee and an update given at the next FGB meeting.	P&R Committee	To be confirmed
11.	7.3.1. c	2024-25 Budget to be approved at next FGB.	All governors	02.05.24
12.	7.3.1. d	SFVS to be completed in draft at People & Resources Committee ready for update and sign off at next FGB.	P&R Committee All governors	To be confirmed 02.05.24
13.	7.3.1. e	3-year budget forecast to be discussed further at People & Resources committee and an update given at next FGB.	P&R Committee All governors	To be confirmed 02.05.24
14.	7.3.1. g	People & Resources Committee to review financial benchmarking and update governors at next FGB meeting.	P&R Committee All governors	To be confirmed 02.05.24
15.	7.3.2	New Terms of Reference for People & Resources Committee to be brought to next FGB for ratification.	KM and P&R Committee	02.05.24
16.	8.1	New policy Review Schedule to be carried forward to next FGB.	AC & AR	02.05.24
17.	8.3	Update on School Website compliance to be an agenda item at next FGB.	AC	02.05.24
18.	9.	A programme of information update sessions for FGB to be agreed and planned.	AC, JF & LS	02.05.24