

**The Federation of Lowick & Holy Island First Schools**

**Governing Board Minutes – Autumn Term 2021**

**Thursday, 18 November 2021 at 6 p.m.**

<b>Invited</b>	<b>Governor Category</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
Mr Robert O'Rourke	Authority (chaired mtg)	Yes	
Rev Adam Hood	Foundation	Yes	
Rev Sarah Hills	Foundation	No	Yes
Dr Margaret Cartlidge	Foundation	Yes	
Rev Charlotte Osborn	Foundation	Yes	
Mrs Rebecca Simpson	Headteacher	Yes	
Mrs Kim Gillings	Parent	No	Yes
Mrs Nikki Gamston	Parent	Yes	
Mrs Heather Stiansen	Staff	No	Yes

**Opening Prayer**

Rev Hood opened the meeting with a prayer.

**PART 1 (Classified non-confidential)**

Items discussed under Part 1 of this agenda will not be classified as confidential. The minutes and supporting documents must be made available to any person wishing to inspect them.

**1. Election of Chair**

Governors noted Mr O'Rourke's resignation as a Governor and thanked him for his support, dedication, and expertise during his term of office.

The Head agreed to liaise with Mrs Gillings regarding Co-Chairing with Mrs Gamston –

**Action: Head**

**2. Election of Vice Chair**

This item was deferred to the Spring term – **Action: Governors.**

**3. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and consent given for the absence of Mrs Stiansen, Mrs Gillings and Rev Hill.

#### **4. Membership Update**

Governors agreed to publicise vacancies – **Action: Governors.**

#### **5. Declaration of Personal and Pecuniary Interests in this Agenda**

Governors declared that they had no personal or pecuniary interest in any item on the agenda.

#### **6. Minutes and Action Grid**

Minutes of the following full governing board meeting, having been circulated to the Governors, were adopted, and signed as a true record:

- 24 June 2021

The following actions from the Action Grid that had been delegated to individuals, groups or committees at previous meetings were reviewed and updates received as follows:

- Mrs Stiansen was not present at the meeting and was therefore unable to confirm if she had further pursued PCC vacancies – **Action: Mrs Stiansen**
- The Head had ensured publication of the reviewed annual declaration on the school website
- The Head had circulated dates for M&E visits (English & RE)
- The Resources committee had not yet further discussed the budget contingency - **Action: Resources**
- The Head & Mrs Gillings had further discussed arrangements for the South African Heritage Day.

#### **7. Receive Minutes of Committee Meetings**

Governors noted there had been no committee meetings held.

#### **8. Annual Review of Committee Membership (if appropriate)**

Governors considered committee membership, delegation arrangements in respect of the Headteacher and terms of reference defined for committees.

It was agreed that no changes were required to the current arrangement of inviting all members to meetings.

## 9. Headteacher's Report

Governors considered the report from the Headteacher circulated prior to the meeting.

Suggested items to cover and documents to include:

- Covid 19 Update & Recovery Plan
- SIP (School Improvement Partner) Report (for circulation & discussion)
- Updated requirements for Pupil Premium Strategy Statements
- Cyber Security (NCC (Northumberland County Council) SLA (Service Level Agreement) or other arrangements to be noted)

### Items Under Discussions:

- School Population
- SEND/PP
- Staffing
- Safeguarding Overview
- Premises
- Leadership & management
- Staff Training
- Quality of Education
- Data
- Behaviour & Attitudes
- Attendance
- Personal Development
- Collective Worship
- School Trips / Enrichment Opportunities

### Governors questioned/agreed/discussed/noted:

- Safeguarding - KCSIE (Keeping children safe in education) document circulated - Governors agreed to inform the school once they had read and understood part one – The Head confirmed there were strategies in place to address any peer-on-peer abuse as appropriate.
- ***Governors asked the Head how “catch Up” was progressing?*** – The Head explained the children were in an advantageous position as there had been less gaps identified this year, than last September and that staff remained optimistic regarding children reaching their targets. Reception children had missed out on a lot of socialization opportunities. Staff continued to have an ongoing vigilance. The curriculum had been tweaked to allow year groups to interact with one another

- Numbers – Slight dip from 37 to 32 - ***Governors asked if the Head knew why numbers had dipped?*** - The Head explained numbers in Nursery were generally small this time of year, people moving, and partnership discussions. However, it was anticipated numbers would increase in Nursery.
- Berwick Partnership – The Head felt there would be some interesting and challenging times ahead for both schools - Demographically pupil numbers were dropping across the Partnership, and this was a huge issue – Affordable housing was also an issue - Lowick had the advantage of being on a large site - ***Governors asked if there had been any outcomes from the initial consultation?*** - The Head explained there had only been 200 responses and no, no specific outcome had been reached – Various options had been considered with some not being feasible - ***Governors asked for the Head's own thoughts?*** - She explained she was unsure at the moment but agreed losing children to the Alnwick Partnership was not an option – Governors agreed they would like to see a strong high school in Berwick, which could then cascade experience and standards across the Partnership – ***Governors asked how difficult it would be to transition to a Primary?*** - The Head confirmed her own personal experience was a Middle School background, additional classrooms and teachers would be required however, a lot more conversations would need to be held before any decisions were reached.
- ***Governors asked if the tree situation had been resolved?*** - The Head confirmed the trees had been trimmed and hedges removed. No further complaints had been received.

## 10. Safeguarding Update

This item was discussed under Item 9 Headteachers Report

## 11. Changes to the School Admissions Code (particularly for Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies)

Governors noted the most recent changes to the School Admissions Code. The main purpose of these changes is to improve support for the in-year admission of vulnerable children. The changes include introducing more detail on the process for managing in-year admissions; changes to improve the effectiveness of Fair Access Protocols; giving children adopted from state care outside of England equal admissions priority as children who were previously looked after in England (see attached guidance note); and clarification of which address to use for the admission of service or crown servant children. There are also further minor clarification changes.

Governors noted their understanding that the admission authority must comply with the code.

## 12. Governors' Monitoring Reports

Governors received and considered the following reports:

- English – Mrs Gillings and Mrs Gamston – Rigorous assessment processes, reading, organisation of timetables observed. There were ambitious standards at the heart of all subjects across the whole school, rigour without losing the love and passion for reading.
- RE – Rev Hood – Looked at Sikhism first half of the term and focused on Christmas second half of the term. Raised many interesting questions at a level which was impressive for children so young.

## 13. Budget Update

Governors received and considered a written summary update of the school's current budget position from the Head Teacher.

Governors noted that a revised operational budget for 2021/2022, along with an indicative budget for 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 would need to be drawn up and submitted to the Local Authority by 1 December 2021.

### Governors noted:

- Bottom line was fairly good
- Money to be allocated from DFC funds– Resources to discuss further - Propose a project that could be managed by the office manager - **Action:**  
**Resources**
- Lowick outdoor area needs to be expedited
- Student from Sunderland afforded the school £9k income
- PP (PUPIL PREMIUM) - received more funds than anticipated
- Pupil numbers had been cautious
- Stay and Play extremely popular
- Before and after school provision a real selling point – Banner destroyed by weather would need replaced

## 14. Schools' Financial Value Statement

Guidance from Internal Audit had been shared directly with the school. This guidance explained the process for completing the SFVS (Schools Financial Value Standard) this year and that the school's financial value statement 2021/22 would need to be

completed and submitted to the County by 31 December 2021.

Governors approved the SFVS

Skills Matrix would need to be completed - **Action: Head to circulate**

#### **15. School's Voluntary Account (if appropriate)**

Governors received a certified copy of the school's voluntary account and noted that the accounts had been appropriately checked and validated.

#### **16. GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) Update**

Governors noted that the Data Protection Policy had been updated and would be made available on the school website.

A suite of draft letters was now available to support the school in dealing with Subject Access Requests. The DPO (Data Protection Officer) would continue to support the school in their duty to respond to any SAR (Subject Access Request) that is made.

#### **17. Urgent Business – with approval of the Chair**

There was no urgent business.

#### **18. Dates of Future Meetings**

- Spring Term - Wednesday 16 March to be held face to face at Lowick (changed from 17 March)
- Summer Term – 7 June at Holy Island (changed from 23 June)

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.p.m.

#### **Further Information**

Presentations and supporting information shared with Chairs/Vice Chairs at the termly briefing sessions are available at: [www.northumberlandeducation.co.uk/governors](http://www.northumberlandeducation.co.uk/governors)

**Chair** \_\_\_\_\_

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Nov 2021

**Date**\_\_\_\_\_

## **PART 2 (Classified Confidential)**

Matters discussed in this part of the agenda and any supporting papers will be classified as confidential and are for Governors only. The resulting minutes will be marked 'Not for Publication'.

CONFIDENTIAL