



**MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING**  
**DARNHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**HELD ON THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2024 AT 17.30pm**

Members of the Governing Body

Name	Category of Governor	Date of end of tenure	Designated Role	Attended
Mrs Sarah Tomlinson	Headteacher		Headteacher	✓
Mr Richard Strachan	Co-opted	19/05/2028	Chair SEP 25	✓
Ms Jackie Stringer	Co-opted	20/05/2025	Co Vice Chair May 24	✓
Mrs Steph Crane	Co-opted	09/05/2027	Co Vice Chair May 24	Apologies
Mr Chris Bate	Co-opted	09/05/2027		✓
Mrs Hayley Rigby	Co-opted	19/10/2026		Apologies
Mr Andrew Robinson	Co-opted	01/03/2027		✓
Ms Chloe Lupton	Staff	21/10/2025		✓
Mr Richard Mault	Parent	19/10/2026		✓
Mrs Lyndsey Tasker	Parent	25/03/2025		✓
Mr Colin Meachin	LA	09/07/2024		✓
Vacancy	Co-opted			
<b>Also in Attendance</b>				
Matthew Young				✓
Stephen Ewell	Clerk to Governors			✓

**Part One Non-Confidential Minutes**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received in advance of the meeting from Steph Crane and Hayley Rigby.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the apologies received from Steph Crane and Hayley Rigby be accepted.
- That the meeting was deemed quorate.



## 2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no additional declarations of pecuniary interest for this meeting.

**RESOLVED:** that there were no additional declarations of pecuniary interest for this meeting.

## 3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE FGB

Governors reviewed the remaining Co-opted Governor vacancy. The Chair stated that the current FGB was a strong group with good experience in education and finance, and that there was no immediate requirement to make an appointment. Consideration should be given as to how to advertise the role to the parent group as well as the wider community, and that succession planning for the role of Chair was also a factor to be considered.

## 4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Governors considered the non-confidential minutes of the previous meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the non-confidential minutes of the previous meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were confirmed to be a true record.

The minutes would be signed electronically.

Jackie Stringer joined the meeting at 17:40pm.

## 5. MATTERS ARISING

Governors reviewed the actions carried forward from the previous meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO.	ACTION	BY WHOM	UPDATE
25 JAN 24 Item 9	Headteacher to investigate what additional school communications could be utilised to support attendance.	Headteacher.	Completed. #1

**#1** The Headteacher informed Governors that she had raised the matter at the recent Winsford Education Partnership meeting. There were no significant alternative solutions raised and the school is positive about the current strategy for improving attendance.



The school has also focussed on improving attendance before the end of term when attendance tends to dip. This was achieved through the incentive of providing Entertainer Toy Shop vouchers to parents to encourage attendance at school. In addition, there is focus on encouraging an *Attendance Streak*, which is a run of good attendance utilising terminology the children can relate to. This will be undertaken again before the Easter break. There will also be a focus on attendance at Parents Evening.

Governors discussed attendance and noted that there is now a national push to improve attendance, and the new prosecutions mechanism that the Government is introducing to support this. The Headteacher added that today five members of staff had visited children's houses to encourage them into school.

**Q.** *Is there still a Covid influence on attendance?*

**A.** *Yes, in terms of some parents having a more casual attitude to schooling.*

## **6. CURRICULUM TEACHING AND LEARNING – ECM LEADERSHIP VISIT**

The Headteacher stated that the latest ECM Visit Report had been uploaded for Governors to review. James Marsh had visited the school the previous day and the visit was used as an opportunity to review the school's curriculum following the school's recent Ofsted inspection.

The school is reviewing the Curriculum post Ofsted and identifying opportunities to update the curriculum in some areas identifying what the children really need to know and building year on year progression. The school will also assess what schemes are available to support the curriculum development.

One option is to stop teaching French and move to teaching Spanish.

**Q.** *What would be the rationale for this change?*

**A.** *Many other schools including High Schools are teaching Spanish, and it is a much more widely spoken language.*

Another area that will be reviewed is Forest School, and whether this is run every year or every other year.

**Q.** *How is the Forest School Curriculum developed?*

**A.** *The plan is to survey all staff involved in Forest School and look to identify outcomes.*

**Q.** *What are the timescales for changes in the Curriculum?*

**A.** *The changes to the English Curriculum took place last term. The school will now focus on reviewing inter-connections between subjects, with gradual*



*changes to ensure there are no gaps created. The fully developed plan will be ready by September.*

Governors were requested to take the opportunity to further review the ECM Visit Report.

**RESOLVED:** Governors received the Curriculum Update.

## 7. FINANCE

The Finance Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The following areas were highlighted:

- The Draft Budget 24/25 will be shared with the Finance Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> March 24 and will then be presented to FGB on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024 for approval.
- The completed SFVS has been uploaded to SharePoint. It will be reviewed at the Finance Committee meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> March, and ratified at the FGB meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> March so it can be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

**RESOLVED:** Governors received Finance Report.

## 8. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

### Building Project Presentation – Matthew Young

Matthew Young had prepared a comprehensive presentation and had attended the meeting to present to Governors and receive any questions.

Governors reviewed the Financial Summary. The two mobile units at Blacon have been secured for a cost of £110k and the school has spoken with the contractor who put them on site at Blacon. The financial projections have also been reviewed by Magnus Theobald at CWAC. One block can be fitted out for an overall cost of £125k, and both blocks will cost £225k, to include the Meeting Room and Sensory Room.

We are confident that the financial projections are prudent, and the aim would be to beat these budgets when implementing the project.

Following discussions regarding the contractor's schedule, it will not be possible to install over the summer Break, as this a peak time for the contractor, and an installation off season may also secure a better price. The contractor won't allocate time in their schedule until the planning and funding is in place.



It is estimated it will take 4-5 weeks for completing the groundworks, placing the units on site and fit out. If the project commences mid-September, then the aim would be to finish by the end of October Half Term. The contractor has confirmed they can undertake the installation safely whilst the children are in school.

**Q.** *How will the units be placed on the site?*

**A.** *They will be craned into place.*

In terms of Funding, the school has requested CWAC provide £95k from the SEND Budget. A decision on this should be clear by the end of March.

Governors reviewed a financial summary of the current Resource Provision and the proposed new provision with two scenarios of providing 18 places and 24 places. Currently the provision is in deficit by £34k per annum. The new provision with 18 places will reduce the deficit to £22k per annum, and at 24 places the provision would generate net funds of £68k.

The school will also look into grants available for developing the Sensory Room offering.

The Headteacher added that the school currently has a number of experienced staff already in place that can move into supporting the increased provision. The only concern is that originally the school had indicated that the new provision would be in place for the start of term in September.

In terms of sourcing the additional funding that will be required, the school will approach the Duke of Westminster and the National Lottery, as well as a number of other potential sources of grant funding. In addition, it is worth noting that the net surplus generated by the new provision of £102k (-£34k to +£68k) will in just over two years cover the cost of the project.

The proposal will strengthen the Resource Provision at the school with dedicated provision in place for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children.

Governors reviewed a financial summary of the current Nursery Provision which detailed a £79k increase in net income from £39k to £118K, which will be generated from the additional space made available for the Nursery.

**Q.** *When does the school need to decide whether to acquire one or both of the units?*

**A.** *This can be determined when confirmation is received regarding the CWAC SEND funding, and when a finalised budget for next year has been completed.*

The Chair added that the school also needs to begin setting some funds aside for a Maintenance Sinking Fund, as there are a number of premises related remedial works that will be required going forward.



**Q.** *How much of the surplus generated will the school need to return?*

**A.** *The school has offered £20k. In addition, the school will support Blacon with a number of grant applications and is confident of securing £30k of funding for Blacon.*

Governors discussed the proposal in detail and reviewed on screen the architectural drawings and series of photos provided. It was noted that the new units should fit into the school premises really well.

**Q.** *How old are the units?*

**A.** *They are around five years old and have a forty-year lifespan.*

An updated financial summary will be presented to the Finance Committee 21st March 24, before being brought back to the FGB for approval.

**Q.** *Will there be an increase in cleaning costs?*

**A.** *Yes, and additional class phones will be required. This will all be reflected in the draft Budget.*

Matters were summarised that the key issue is securing the SEND funding, so that the project can start to move forward. Landlord consent from CWAC should not be an issue as the school is increasing the number of Resource Provision places available, which is a key requirement currently. The Chair added that there will also be a requirement to source two further quotes to satisfy competitive tendering requirements.

**RESOLVED:** Governors received the Building Project Presentation.

### Sport England

The Headteacher and Matthew Young provided an update. The school is considering installing a MUGA and improving the existing school field. In addition, Muir Housing have indicated that they may transfer some land to the school so the result would be a circa 50% increase in land use, rather than any reduction in available land.

The proposal would be to secure a grant to improve drainage so that two sports pitches can be provided, and then install the MUGA which would be made available to the local community.

Governors discussed the proposal and noted that there was now no Football Association development taking place locally, and that there was a shortage of MUGA facilities in the local area.

**Q.** *What is a MUGA?*

**A.** *It is a Multi-Use Games Area, with an all-weather surface.*



The planning consultants will be undertaking a survey next Tuesday. The school is required to spend £1k to support the pre-application to Sport England.

**RESOLVED:** Governors approved the £1k spend to support the pre-application to Sport England.

Governors thanked Matthew Young for all his hard work in preparing the Building and Sport England proposals.

Matthew Young and Richard Mault left the meeting at 19:07pm.

## 9. POLICIES

There were no policies presented to the meeting.

## 10. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Hayley Rigby and Richard Strachan had undertaken the Health and Safety site visit with the School Caretaker. A number of areas were highlighted as requiring attention:

- Window Replacement.
- Door Replacement.
- Replacement Of Fluorescent Lights with more Efficient LED Lights.
- Car Park Re Servicing and Drainage Repairs.

Hayley Rigby and Richard Strachan will prepare a full list of required remedial works in a Maintenance Schedule, which can also be used for Budget planning going forward.

**RESOLVED:** Governors received the Health and Safety Update.

## 11. GOVERNANCE

Richard Strachan and Chris Bate had undertaken updated Anti-Fraud training.

Richard Strachan and Matthew Young had supported the school at the Community Takeaway Evening, which was a very successful evening and 189 pizzas had been distributed to local families.

## 12. COMMUNICATION TO THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS/CHAIRS ACTIONS

The Chair stated that there were two matters to be brought to Governors' attention:

- The Chair had given approval for the £1k spend to support the pre-application to Sport England, which would cover the essential survey and



mapping work. The FGB had ratified this approval earlier in the meeting under Item 8.

- An email had been received from a parent complaining that the school would not be picking up her child whilst she had a two week stay in hospital. The school had offered lots of support. The Chair responded suggesting she look at other solutions and engage with the school, and the matter has now been resolved.

Governors discussed the matter and noted that some parents now seem to believe it is not their responsibility to ensure their children can get to school.

### **13. DECISION SUMMARY**

- Received the Curriculum Update.
- Received the Finance Report.
- Received the Building Project Presentation.
- Approved the £1k spend to support the pre-application to Sport England.
- Received the Health and Safety Update.
- Received the Confidential Staffing Update.
- Received the Safeguarding Update.

### **14. AOB**

There were no additional non-confidential matters for Governors to discuss.

### **15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The 23/24 meeting schedule is detailed below.

<b>FGB</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>28/03/2024</b>	<b>17:30</b>
<b>FGB</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>16/05/2024</b>	<b>17:30</b>
<b>FGB</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>13/06/2024</b>	<b>17:30</b>
<b>FGB</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>11/07/2024</b>	<b>17:30</b>





**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

There following actions were carried forward to the next meeting.

**ACTION PLAN**

<b>AGENDA ITEM NO.</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>