

**Didsbury CE Primary School  
Local Governing Body Meeting  
Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**Didsbury CE Primary School, Elm Grove, Manchester, M20 6RL  
Minutes**

**Present:**

Paul Good	Chair of Governors (MDBE)
Victoria Rippon	Head of School
Cat Arundale	Foundation Governor
Abbie East	Foundation Governor
Rev Augustine Ihm	Foundation Governor
Rebecca Silver	Co-Opted Governor
Dr Dario tom Dieck	Parent Governor
Joyce Thom	Foundation Governor
Lee Jenkins	Parent Governor
Sam Morgan	Staff Governor

**In attendance:**

Danielle Wood	Governor Support Officer
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**Apologies**

Matt Lee	Foundation Governor
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*Any text in red italics represents Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Trustee and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.*

*Agenda items were discussed in the following order:*

*The meeting convened at 6:08pm*

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Governors were welcomed to the meeting by the Chair.

Welcomed Mr L Jenkins, new parent governor

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Lee and accepted by the governing board.

The board is quorate with 3 governors in attendance

The meeting opened with a prayer.

2. DECLARATION OF A.O.B.

Governors had been invited to declare any items for any other business.

There were no items of AOB.

### 3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

#### a) Declaration of Business Interests

Governors were asked to declare any business, financial or personal interests in any agenda items; no declarations were made.

Governors were reminded that they should declare any interest which arose during the meeting.

#### b) Business Interest Form

Governors were asked to complete and sign the form on GovernorHub.

#### c) DBS Checks and Section 128 Checks

The Head of School confirmed that DBS checks were in place for all governors and that Section 128 checks have been carried out.

### 4. PREVIOUS LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 , copies circulated previously, be approved, signed by the Chair and authorised for publication.

#### Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

<b>ACTION POINT</b>	<b>ACTION REQUIRED</b>	<b>ACTION FOR</b>	<b>ACTION TAKEN</b>
1	<b>The Chair to request list of policies that are under Trust control.</b>	The Chair	Trust policies were available on the Trust website. The Chair explained that Trust wide policies cannot be amended by LGB's due to the legal ramifications.
2	<b>The Head of School agreed to upload any school policies to GovernorHub.</b>	Head of School	The Chair explained that the Trust website and school website was being updated. The focus will be on policies that are out of date and any policies being superseded due to new information. The school curriculum was currently being modified and the Headteacher had shared the programme of implementation with governors.
3	<b>The Chair would email all governors to ask if they would prefer to be appointed to the resources committee or curriculum committee.</b>	The Chair	The Chair confirmed that governors have now been assigned to a committee. Ms J Thom requested that she be added to the curriculum committee.
4	<b>The GSO agreed to email the skills audit to all governors to be completed.</b>	GSO	<b>The GSO agreed to re-send the link.</b>
5	<b>Q – Has the trust communicated the changes to the name? The Chair replied that the trust needs to</b>	The Chair	Please see notes below.

	<p><b>communicate this with the school community and agreed to discuss this with the CEO.</b></p>		
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Action 5 – The Chair stated that the change to the Trust name has been well received amongst the school community.

**Q – Has the Trust welcomed any new schools?** The Chair advised that there are active discussions taking place with at least one school who is keen to join the Trust. There is also a federation who the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is in discussions with and they have two schools, with an overall population greater than all the schools currently within the Trust. The schools are in a deprived area and are Good schools with healthy budgets.

**Q – What is the current Ofsted grading for the school who is keen to join?** The Chair replied ‘Good’, however added that the school requires support and colleagues from within the Trust have been supporting the school as they are due an Ofsted inspection.

The Chair advised that there has been a pause in the DfE position on academisation whilst the country awaits a general election.

**Q – In terms of the White Paper and the changes in government since this was issued, how much of the information is relevant now?** The Chair advised that the information in the White Paper continues to be relevant, however the government are currently not moving forward with policies and the White Paper has not moved to a Green paper to be submitted to parliament.

In addition, the Chair advised that the Diocese position is that they do not want any more Academy Trusts to be created as there are now 12 Trusts in the Diocese. Governors heard that there is currently one Academy Trust in South Manchester and that is Thrive.

## 5. CHAIR’S ACTION

There had been no Chair’s action taken since the previous meeting.

## 6. POLICY REVIEW

- Health and Safety Policy

The Chair explained that the previous Health and Safety policy was found to be not fit for purpose. The Trust has changed Health and Safety advisor and the school is now supported by Jeanne Fairbrother Associates who are experienced practitioners and would be undertaking health and safety audits in all schools.

The outcome of the recent Health and Safety audit at the school was reported to be positive with the majority of areas green, with some red items flagged and these are being addressed.

The Headteacher presented Jeanne Fairbrother website on the screen for governors and explained the comprehensive package the school has access to and how this will ensure compliance across all areas of health and safety.

The Headteacher reported that the cost of the support was £600 and there may be a discount for other schools within the Trust if they join

**Q – Is there a requirement for governors to complete annual health and safety training like members of staff?** The Headteacher replied yes and agreed to share details.

**ACTION 1**

The Headteacher explained that the new Health and Safety policy contained more detail and recommended that governors adopt it.

**Q – Please can you explain the red and amber grading?** The Headteacher explained that some areas are considered to be more of a risk than others.

The meeting discussed the benefit of online reporting.

A governor commented that they had read the health and safety audit and commended the Headteacher on the work that they have undertaken.

**Governors APPROVED the Health and Safety Policy subject to any amendments at a later date.**

**Governors considered and APPROVED the following policies which had been circulated prior to the meeting:**

- Educational Visits Policy

The Chair explained that the school uses Evolve and all educational visits are now approved through the system. The system is used by all schools within the Trust and it is also used by a number of educational authorities.

The Headteacher explained that the Evolve Advisor links in with Jeanne Fairbrother systems and they can make comments and highlight any areas requiring further consideration.

**Q – Point 13 on page 8 seemed ambiguous to me: ‘Only staff judged competent...’?** The Chair explained that this relates to the competency of staff to lead and make accurate risk assessments. Members of staff would need to be appropriately qualified for certain activities and environments. It may be more pertinent to secondary schools but the school does participate in outdoor activities.

**Q – Is there a list of competent members of staff retained in the school office?** The Chair replied yes.

- Online Safety Policy
- Schools Emergency Plan Dec 2023

## 7. INSET DAYS 2024/25

**Governors APPROVED the term dates 2024/25.**

The following INSET dates were approved:

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

## 8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND SELF-EVALUATION

- Agree the SIP or SDP targets and strategy
- Agree monitoring schedule
- Agree governor visit schedule

The Headteacher reported that the new History curriculum is fully embedded. Ofsted inspectors identified slight differences in the KS2 history curriculum and advised that the school make sure it is taught in chronological order. Work has now commenced on the Geography curriculum and this will be ready to introduce at the end of half term.

A member of staff commented that the curriculum is detailed and supports members of staff. Ms Hayley Tustain has also led staff meetings around the curriculum.

During the previous Ofsted inspection, EYFS was graded as Requires Improvement. The Headteacher advised that this continues to be a priority area and explained the current staffing structure. Governors heard that a member of staff is covering nursery and reception, there is a class teacher working part time in reception and a teacher working in nursery. The Assistant Headteacher and Acting Special Educational Needs Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO) are also supporting.

The Headteacher explained that members of staff work well together, however the provision needs to be tighter. There is new guidance around ratios in nursery and the school would need to make sure there is a level 3 Teaching Assistant working in there. If the school decides to train a current Teaching Assistant to level 3, this can take 18 months.

Governors heard that outdoor provision is available for EYFS at all times and there is quality teaching with robust planning. Mr A Torr, Consultant, would be attending in a few weeks to review the provision.

**Q – I thought we agreed in the previous meeting that Mr A Torr would not be completing QA visits following concerns raised after the previous visit?** The Headteacher explained that she had raised governor concerns with the CEO and he said that the Trust would not instruct him to complete another visit. Mr A Torr also works for Manchester Local Authority and would be attending in this capacity to provide a QA visit three times per year due to the Requires Improvement status in EYFS.

The Chair advised that Mr A Torr has worked with other schools in the Trusts and his reports have been found to be fair.

**Q – Has the Trust instructed a new advisor to conduct the visits?** The Headteacher advised that the CEO would be attending and producing a QA report.

**Q – Will Geography be part of the review as Mr A Torr was critical of this subject area?** The Headteacher replied that it should be included and the school are now using the plan Mr A Torr shared.

**Q – What concerns did governors have with Mr A Torr?** The Headteacher explained that during the previous QA visit, Mr Torr graded the school as outstanding. Leaders shared this with Ofsted and they did not agree. Leaders were under the impression that the school was outstanding and therefore this showed weak leadership. The Headteacher added that during the previous visit from Mr A Torr, he did not review pupils work books.

A member of staff commented that following the Ofsted inspection, Mr A Torr met with subject leaders and provided support and guidance that was very useful.

A governor commented that parents were not aware of this as they were under the impression that leaders knew before the Ofsted inspection.

The Chair explained that the school was following its own curriculum and this was considered to be successful due to the assessment data. Leaders were not aware of Ofsted stance that

unless schools had a strong defence for following their own curriculum, the national curriculum should be followed. This is the reason for the extensive work to revise the curriculum now.

Governors were informed that a new RE curriculum would be introduced in the near future as the Diocese would be implementing their own.

The Headteacher advised that subject leaders are part of the process and they will be confident to discuss their subject areas.

The Headteacher moved on to discuss monitoring and assessment. Learning walks and books looks are taking place, with maths identified as a priority area.

The Headteacher explained that leaders have visited other schools in the area to review different maths schemes, however leaders have not been persuaded by any of the schemes. The school currently follow White Rose and this links with National College for Excellence in Teaching Maths (NCETM) strands which the government advise schools use. The Headteacher reported that Power Maths was robust, however quality first teaching was essential.

**Q – As a member of staff, how do you think White Rose is doing?** Staff governor replied that the school used Abacus last year and this was outdated. This year teachers have PowerPoints to follow instead of teaching the class using resources and whilst there is more challenge, the PowerPoints are not the best way to teach.

Governors agreed that maths should not be taught using PowerPoints, however acknowledged that there needs to be a balance for teacher's workload with lesson planning and reducing paperwork.

Staff governor stated that she would next be looking at ensuring that lessons are fully resourced and this will require some investment in maths resources.

The Headteacher advised that the school is part of the Maths Hub in KS1.

Governors heard details about Anthony Reddy and the Concrete, Pictorial and Abstract approach to maths. Members of staff would be attending training and Anthony Reddy would be attending school for a day.

The meeting proceeded to discuss the importance of pupil engagement during maths lessons. The staff governor advised that workbooks are being considered for early years as they can be a useful resource.

**Following a discussion, governors endorsed the Headteacher to take time to evaluate Maths schemes and find the best one for the school.**

**Governors thanked Ms Hayley Tustain for her work with the humanities curriculum.**

## 9. HEAD OF SCHOOL'S REPORT

The Head of School's Report had been circulated to the governors prior to the meeting; key points were noted and questions invited:

- CPD and impact
- Attendance and behaviour
- Numbers of Exclusions, suspensions, incidents, physical interventions
- Safeguarding matters, including the LA audit form
- Vulnerable children
- Pupil wellbeing

- Staff wellbeing and absence
- Number of Complaints at level 2 &3
- Number of accidents

**Q – Which trees are you referring to in your report?** The Headteacher explained the location of the trees near the main school gates and the hazard they are causing as they are growing out of the wall.

**C – The school does not have much greenery and this must be considered for the future.** The Headteacher agreed.

The Headteacher explained that the School Council have suggested extending the main playground, removing the nursery railings and creating a quiet area with planters and space for pupils to relax with friends. A zoned area for football was also suggested.

The Chair explained that the trees have been identified during a tree inspection as needing to be removed. The trees are diseased and too close to the wall. The Chair shared concerns about losing the trees and the shade that they provide.

Governors proceeded to discuss the positive impact nature has on wellbeing and how the school could consider using planters to add greenery.

The Headteacher advised that the next super learning week would be linked with children's mental health week and classes would be encouraged to visit the local park.

### Staffing

The Headteacher explained that at the end of last year the number of pupils attending kids club increased to 80 pupils. A member of staff left and they were not replaced, the ratios have been monitored and have been manageable, however there is a high number of pupils attending some nights and an additional member of staff is required.

Governors discussed how staffing for the kids club has been an ongoing challenge at the school as recruitment has been difficult. It was suggested that the school consider approaching local colleges to advertise the vacancy to students.

The Headteacher explained that the school would be recruiting a Teaching Assistant and candidates may be interested in the kid's club role.

The Headteacher moved on to discuss the school caretaker. The school was currently being supported by the caretaker from West Didsbury CE Primary School who was attending each Monday to undertake the necessary checks. The school continues to advertise for the position.

### Confidential Appendix I

The Headteacher reported that the staff absence continues to have an impact in school.

Governors acknowledged the challenges that the school is facing and agreed that they support the school in being inclusive, however noted that resources are needed to provide the support that pupils need.

The Headteacher stated that members of staff continue to work hard. The whole staff team had attended positive handling training.

**Q – Has the school received trauma informed advice?** The Headteacher confirmed that they have and the school works with families and provides support. IThrive have been providing support.

**Q – When the school receives an application for a pupil looking to join the school can they decide whether or not to accept?** The Headteacher replied that whilst the school has places available the Local Authority will allocate the places to pupils.

The Headteacher added that if the LA contact the school to enquire about a place in year 2, the current situation would be shared.

**Q – Can the school access any additional funding to support in year 2?** The Headteacher advised that the school has received an additional £14,000 and an additional Teaching Assistant is now working in year 2. The Learning Support Assistant working in year 2 is assigned to a child with an EHCP. £14,000 does not cover the cost of employing a Teaching Assistant in the class.

Governors discussed the need to ensure that classes are resourced to support staff wellbeing.

The staff governor commented that the Headteacher is very supportive and this reduces the pressure on members of staff. The staff team in school support each other.

The Chair reported that he had visited year 6 and noticed the progress that 2 pupils in particular had made during their time at the school.

A governor shared details of an English as Additional Language (EAL) student who joined the school and since leaving in year 6 is continuing to progress at high school. This is credit to the school team.

**Q – When will the behaviour policy be ready?** The Headteacher replied after half term.

**Q – 59 safeguarding logs, is this average?** The Headteacher confirmed that it was an average number and some of the logs may involve the same families. Staff governor added that some logs may be small things that we add to build a picture over time.

**Q – How many children are included in the logs?** The Headteacher replied around 5.

Governors discussed how it is a good sign if the school are adding more logs as it is always best to log something as it may be used to build a picture at a later date.

**Q – Are there pupils other than the ones discussed who have been involved with positive handling?** The Headteacher replied yes.

**Q – Have there been any physical assaults on teachers?** The Headteacher replied yes and advised that they are recorded on CPOMS, however consistency is needed to make sure all assaults are logged.

**Q – What support is available for members of staff?** The Headteacher replied that there is no set system in school, however a debrief would take place after an incident.

**Q – Have all members of staff attended positive handling training, including Teaching Assistants?** The Headteacher replied yes.

**Q – Does positive handling take place in front of other children?** The Headteacher explained that a restraint would be required, however the pupil would be taken out of the classroom.

**Q – Do you anticipate an impact on the year 2 class results due to the disruption?** The Headteacher replied that pupil progress meetings have taken place and any pupils identified as needing extra support have been highlighted. A lot of the pupils in year 2 are on track and working at greater depth. The cohort are being monitored. Parents previously expressed concerns however they were reassured that there would not be any impact.

**Q – As a mainstream school there may be concerns raised due to pupils misconception of the situation in year 2. Do you communicate with parents?** Governors discussed the

challenges with balancing how much information to share with parents and communicating only when necessary.

**The Chair thanked all members of staff for their continued hard work and expressed the governing board appreciation for the work that they do under demanding circumstances.**

#### 10. STAFFING AND APPOINTMENTS

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### 11. TRUST ENGAGEMENT AND CEO REPORT

- Latest report
- Interim updates since last meeting
- Outcomes of school visit/Trust review
- Reports from external advisors

There were no further updates to discuss.

#### 12. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

To note the ways in which the school engages with its:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents
- Local community

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### 13. FINANCE

- Latest budget update
- Performance statements
- Planned expenditure
- Pupil premium
- Sports Premium

The Chair explained that a new financial system is being introduced at Trust level and once the administration systems are in place, school budget information would be accurate and readily available to present at governing board meetings.

The Headteacher explained that version 1 of the budget plan had been shared and there was variation noted in staffing and premises.

The 4% variation in premises was due to increased cleaning costs and maintenance costs due to issues with the cleaning contracts. The Headteacher advised that this is not expected to increase any further.

#### 14. COMPLIANCE/SAFEGUARDING

- H&S Latest report and summary of actions – discussed earlier in the meeting

- Fire Risk Assessment – due to take place next half term
- Premises
- Safeguarding audit and actions – to be completed in March 2024

## 15. LGB MATTERS

- Committee membership and Link Governors

Link governors were agreed as detailed in appendix I.

- Terms of Reference Committees

Curriculum and Evaluation – shared ahead of the meeting  
Resources – awaiting CEO approval

The Chair suggested that the committee meetings cover items such as pupil premium, curriculum and more detailed discussions about the premises and ethos of the school.

The Chair explained that the new Health and Safety policy would reduce the number of policies governors are required to consider, however there are still some policies that need to be reviewed in detail. Governors heard that the RSE policy would require detailed discussions and consideration. The Chair recommended that the RSE policy be considered in the second half of the summer term when Ms E Chamberlain is back at the school.

The Chair advised that Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural policy was also out of date and this needed to be addressed.

- Governor visit reports
- Vacancies  
There were no vacancies on the local governing board.
- Skills Audits
- Agree Governing Board Development Plan
- Outcome of skills audit

**The GSO agreed to re-send the skills audit to governors on GovernorHub to complete.**  
**ACTION 2**

## 16. DATES

Tuesday 11th June 2024, 6pm

## 17. A.O.B.

Eco School

***C – We have a plaque to say that the school is an Eco School, however parents have raised concerns that the school is not following this ethos due to the use of plastic cutlery and plastic toys during events. The Parent Teacher Association do a fantastic job, however we need to have a consistent approach.***

The Headteacher advised that she had received emails from parents raising the same concerns.

The meeting proceeded to discuss a recent PTA event where pupils were able to purchase plastic toys and glow sticks and suggested alternatives to this. Governors noted that there is a lot of old

stock at the school that the PTA are selling at the moment and this may be the reason for the high amount of plastic items.

**The Chair proposed that the Headteacher contact the PTA and advise that governors would like them to move towards using recyclable products during events.**

**ACTION 3**

In addition, the Headteacher stated that she has contacted the council to request a green bin and they have advised that they will not collect from a school.

With no further business to discuss, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8:10pm with a prayer for the school, staff and wider community

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

Mr Paul Good (Chair)

**DIDSBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**SPRING TERM 2024 LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**MEETING ACTION POINTS**

ACTION POINT	ACTION REQUIRED	ACTION FOR	DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
1	<b><i>Q – Is there a requirement for governors to complete annual health and safety training like members of staff?</i></b> The Headteacher replied yes and agreed to share details.	Headteacher	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
2	The GSO agreed to re-send the skills audit to governors on GovernorHub to complete.	GSO	Post meeting
3	The Chair proposed that the Headteacher contact the PTA and advise that governors would like them to move towards using recyclable products during events.	Headteacher	Post meeting

APPENDIX I

# Didsbury CofE Primary School

## Membership

Name	Governor Type	Term From	Term To	Roles
Mrs Catriona Arundale	Foundation governor	13 Sep 2020	12 Sep 2024	SEND and LAC
Mrs Abbie East	Foundation governor ( PCC Standing Committee )	01 Sep 2020	31 Aug 2024	English EYFS
Mr Paul Good	Foundation governor	05 Feb 2024	4 Feb 2028	Chair Safeguarding
Lee Jenkins	Parent governor	13 Oct 2023	12 Oct 2027	Maths
Mr Matthew Lee	Co-opted governor ( PCC )	25 Jan 2021	24 Jan 2025	Sports & PE Premium
Samantha Morgan	Staff governor	04 Oct 2022	3 Oct 2026	
Victoria Rippon	Head of School			
Becky Silver	Co-opted governor	05 Oct 2023	4 Oct 2027	Pupil Premium
Revd. Augustine Tanner-Ihm	Foundation governor	05 Oct 2021	4 Oct 2025	Health & Safety
Mrs Joyce Thom	Foundation governor ( PCC Standing Committee )	01 Sep 2020	31 Aug 2024	Ethos & RE
Dr Dario tom Dieck	Parent governor	13 Oct 2023	12 Oct 2027	Wellbeing