



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD
OF WESTMINSTER NURSERY SCHOOL, CREWE
ON MONDAY 3rd MARCH 2025**

Governors Present:

Emma Connor	(EC)	Headteacher
Donna Reed	(DR)	Chair
Su Garbutt	(SG)	
Neil Smith	(NS)	
Leanne Jennings	(LJ)	
Steve Hogben	(SH)	
Jill Chadwick	(JC)	
Graham Chadwick	(GC)	

Others in attendance:

Maria Wilson	Clerk to the Governors
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PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

The meeting commenced at 4pm with a presentation entitled: Teaching Communication and Language Skills at Westminster Nursery.

ITEM	
	PRESENTATION Action: EC to send the Clerk an electronic copy of the Teaching Communication and Language Skills at Westminster Nursery presentation – done The following documents were shared with Governors during the presentation: • Teaching Communication and Language Skills presentation • Listening /Speaking Focus document • Reading spine to provide children with a broad range of experience • WellComm Planning – week beginning 25/11/24 • Autumn Term 2 2024 outline • Phase 1 phonics planning w/c 25.11.24 <u>Presentation Discussion</u> EC guided Governors through the presentation on screen, adding the following information where relevant: • There is a broad range of speaking abilities in Caterpillars 0-3 years. • In Butterflies, some children are at the expected standard, some children are not. Being able to express a point of view and debate, at 3-4 years old, is a challenge but something the school needs to address. • The speaking and listening focus document was handed out during the meeting. Development Matters helps to branch away from the format shared. • Governors were advised that Word Aware is a scheme used in school. • There are many levels for teaching communication and for implementing speech and language care plans for children.

- The post-Ofsted action plan asked questions about whether teaching was systematic and whether children were retaining the information. A medium-term planning sheet was shared with Governors. It shows that there is a focus on vocabulary (both the new and the revisited). This plan is broken down into a more detailed weekly plan. The Word Aware scheme involves direct teaching and is used to plug gaps in children's understanding. Children are currently working with the book Going on a Bear Hunt.
 - A Reading spine to provide children with a broad range of experience document was distributed. The school is finding it difficult to source appropriate, simple non-fiction to use with the children.
 - The school uses Chatty Learning software for its 2-year-old children. This addresses the first 100 words. There are sets of words and images on the screen which can be discussed. Teaching is direct and planned.
 - All teachers and teaching assistants reinforce language and vocabulary through play. There is a home-play corner which changes every two weeks. It has been a hairdresser, an ice cream van and other venues. It is used to develop vocabulary. Water play occurs every day.
 - The school uses Phase 1 Phonics. All children learn Aspects 1-3. Aspects 4-7 cover the traditional Phonics teaching in preparation for Reception. This is planned weekly. The W/b 25.11.24 was handed out.
 - The WellComm document was handed out. This programme is used with 2-year-old, 3-year-old and 4-year-old children. It is taught to **all** ability classes. The whole school completes the WellComm screening. It is a good programme generating discussion around the curriculum offer in the Autumn Term.
- An anonymised WellComm planning sheet was shared with Governors. Sections 2&3 are play based. Some English as an Additional Language (EAL) children work better than others. Some have no speech. Members of staff can tell which children interact with their parents at home. Assessment can be 'what can you see?'. If a child does not respond the question is repeated with a focus on key words – in, on, under etc.
- Layla Tudor, a part-time TA, provides support and extension work with intervention groups. There are different groups focused on vocabulary, listening and attention etc. Interventions run for half a term then are evaluated to see who continues and may be referred to Speech and Language Therapy, and who leaves the group.
 - Core Boards are used for children who are at the pre-pointing stage. On a 1:1 basis, members of staff model. Repetition is used. PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) are used in line with autism training guidance. Pointing, gestures and body language are used.
 - Makaton is used with all children.

Some books were shared with Governors from across the spectrum.
In 2023-2024 Westminster Nursery School was part of a Book Trust Pilot scheme. This was good for mental health.
The school is now ready for the next step.

Governor question: Does the school have regular contact with the Speech and Language Team?

	<i>Response: Yes. We call the team, then they observe the child and model the use of the Core Board.</i> Governor question: How long are the Boards used for? <i>Response: They can be used for two months.</i> Governor question: Is an improvement seen? <i>Response: Yes, sometimes this is within the two months.</i> EC explained that using the Boards helps the child to look at someone's face more. Governor question: Is it more difficult in Butterflies or Caterpillars? <i>Response: The groups are mixed.</i> It was noted that the school has a wide spectrum of abilities. Teaching communication and language skills is very important. Governors thanked EC for the very informative presentation.
1.	APOLOGIES AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) ITEMS Apologies had been received from Liz Austin and Linda Buchanan. The apologies were accepted. There were two items of additional business to discuss: The staff consultation document and the Governor skills audit.
2.	CONFLICT OF INTEREST The following pecuniary interest was declared: • Su Garbutt is employed by Cheshire East. No conflicts of interest were declared with the business of the meeting.
3.	MEMBERSHIP a) Su Garbutt was welcomed to the Governing Board for the term of four years from 06.01.2025. Governors were pleased to have SG on board. b) No parents had come forward when the Parent Governor vacancy had been advertised. Action: EC to continue to advertise the Parent Governor vacancy c) It was noted that no terms of office are due to expire before the Summer Term 2025 FGB meeting. d) NS is in the process of completing SG's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The Clerk advised the meeting that no member of the Governing Board is on the Section 128 list. Governor Question: What is this list?

	<i>Response: People who are banned from the administration and financial management of schools are on the list.</i> Action: NS to action SG's DBS check e) NS is responsible for updating Getting Information About Schools (GIAS).
4.	PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING a) The Part One minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2024 and their attendant action log had been shared with Governors in advance. The minutes were approved by Governors as a correct record of the discussion held. b) The action list from the Autumn 2024 FGB meeting was reviewed and the following noted: The Parent Governor election process would be repeated. The school had reviewed and will purchase CPOMS in the new financial year. Action: Governors to send contact details for Mornflake Oats to EC to contact to become school sponsors Action: Governors to complete statutory and agreed training – PREVENT, safeguarding, engagement by Easter 2025 Action: LA to review the Asset Register in the Summer Term 2025 All other actions had been completed.
5.	CHAIR'S ACTION AND CORRESPONDENCE No actions had been taken on behalf of the Board under the Chair's Power to Act.
6.	PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES a) Governors acknowledged receipt of the Spring Term 2025 committee minutes circulated via Governor Hub prior to the meeting. <u>Premises and Engagement Committee (03.02.2025) – minutes shared in advance</u> Governors were advised that: - Engagement with different groups had been a focus. Parents had interacted with the school. Governors had completed a site walk round. - Health & safety works both planned and unplanned were discussed. Planned works were prioritised. - Relevant School Development Plan (SDP) actions had been reviewed. - The use of budget funding to address new signage at the front of school was discussed. Governor question: There is a split in the guttering and part of it is hanging down. Can something be done about this, please?

Response: This is an ongoing issue. The damage was caused when the children got onto the roof. The guttering has slipped and needs to be pushed back.

Action: EC to action a guttering repair

Curriculum Committee (14.01.25) – minutes shared in advance

The Committee discussed:

- SEND
- EAL
- PP (Pupil Premium)
- The relevant sections of the SDP
- The Caterpillars data was reviewed, and, in all areas, it had improved.
- Toilet training.
- 37% of the three-year olds are on a SEND register.
- Butterflies data was reviewed and, in some areas, an improvement was noted.
- Children work better with number than literacy.
- Speech and language is a school priority,
- The school's assessment system, Target Tracker, is now obsolete and needs to be replaced.

Governor question: Could Pupil Tracker be used?

Response: I, (EC), am asking the Headteacher Nursery Group for recommendations.

Governor question: Is it the parents' view that school should be toilet training the children?

Response: This is very personal to the family. The school is in conversation with individual families.

Governor question: LJ, are you finding that toilet training is an issue?

Response: Some children are trained at age two or two and a half. For some this is too early. We should not be there to judge families. This is a concern of parents.

EC noted that Westminster parents do not feel anxious. However, some lack the culture understanding of toilet training.

Chairs Committee (14.01.25)

The Committee discussed:

- Staffing.
- Supply cover costs for a member of staff on long-term sick leave.
- Safeguarding.
- The SDP.
- School policies.
- The FGB action log.
- The terms of reference documents.
- The Governor Induction Pack. SG was asked about induction and replied that it was very thorough. She had an induction meeting with the Chair of Governors and Headteacher on 30.01.25.
- A date was set for the Summer Term 2025 Headteacher mid-year review with DR, EA and Tim Nelson.

	b) <u>Safeguarding Link Governor Report – February 2025 – shared in advance</u> DR explained that this report had been delayed due to staff absence when the original meeting had been planned for. The content of the Report was referred to the Part Two minutes for the purpose of confidentiality. c) <u>SEND Link Governor Report – visit 12.02.25 – shared in advance</u> EC shared LA's report. LA completed a Learning Walk on 12.02.25 which noted: • There has been a parent drop-in session with the transition team. • There has been a meeting with the Portage and Inclusion Team. • The sensory room was serviced week commencing 24.02.25. • Claire Williamson, Cheshire East Director of Education, Strong Start and Integration, is visiting the school on 04.04.2025 following another letter from EC and a letter from LB. The SEND report noted that: • Individual children were discussed – their access to external agencies, programmes to support them and the time taken completing relevant documentation. • Individuals were spoke to about targets, systems in place to support children, children's barriers to learning and assessments. • The DfE guidance was reviewed regarding Governor responsibility in cases of SEND. Governor question: Is it right that Pupil Premium funding is increasing from 60p to £1 per pupil? <i>Response: Yes, this increase begins in April 2025.</i> Governors were advised that EC is in a meeting, along with CE Headteachers, with Connor Naismith on 21st March 2025. SEND funding will be discussed. It was noted that Mr Naismith was a governor of Westminster Nursery School.
7.	FINANCIAL MATTERS Governors were advised that NS could only present a verbal update as the Governor finance meeting with the Cheshire East Budget Officer only took place today. NS explained that: • Numbers on roll were reviewed during the meeting. • Known and expected SEND numbers were reviewed. • Staffing was scrutinised line by line. • A worst-case scenario was discussed. • The main cost centre document was reviewed. • There was discussion of the earmark reserve, what it was earmarked for and possible repurposing. • The Devolved Formula Capital money received annually to be spent on capital projects was discussed.

- The Unofficial School Fund has about £19k in it. Some of this money will be transferred to the main budget as it is received from fee paying parents.
- In Y1 (2024-2025) the school has a projected carry forward of £94k. In Y2 (2025-2026) there is a projected deficit of £32k. Governors were advised that the school has mechanisms in place to reduce the Y2 deficit. The budget figures will be fully reconciled by the Summer Term 2025 FGB.
- The School Financial Value Standard (SFVS) has been completed in draft. It now needs to be transferred to the pro-forma and uploaded to Governor Hub.

Governor question: In Section 5 it states that the Business Continuity Plan and process needs to be reviewed annually. It needs to be reviewed in Spring 2025. On Governor Hub, the BCP is dated 2023. Does this mean that the document was not uploaded last year?

Response: It does.

It was discussed that the SFVS should be completed by Governors. JC and GC informed the meeting that they had read the document. It was requested that additions be written in a different colour.

Action: NS to upload the MIFP, Business Continuity Plan, Asset Register and SFVS to Governor Hub when complete

Action: Governors to read the MIFP, Business Continuity Plan, Asset Register and SFVS. To pose any questions/recommend any amendments on the Governor Hub Noticeboard. To only mark the documents as read using the three dots if they have no questions/recommendations and approve the documents

Action: Clerk to add an item to the Summer Term 2025 FGB agenda: To ratify the MIFP, Business Continuity Plan, Asset Register and SFVS

- The Unofficial School Fund Audit Report is on Governor Hub.
- The Pupil Premium Strategy document is on the school website.
- Governors were reminded that they can access the budget papers through the Finance Committee folder on Governor Hub.

Action: Governors to review the budget papers in the Finance Committee folder and the FGB folder and to raise questions for NS on the Governor Hub Noticeboard

Action: Clerk to add an item to the Summer Term 2025 FGB agenda: To approve the 2025-2026 budget

8. PART ONE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING

The following document was shared with Governors in advance:

- Headteacher's Report February 2025

Discussion of staffing was referred to the Part Two minutes for the purpose of confidentiality.

	EC guided Governors through the following information: • Staff have completed a lot of CPD (continuous professional development). • Staff were asked what would improve their wellbeing. Their response was dress-down days. This has already been actioned. • SEND and safeguarding updates have been shared in agenda item 6. • The school has no reported instances of radicalism. Governors were advised that PREVENT is under review following recent national events. The school's ethnicity has reduced slightly, but is still over 60%. • Attendance amongst 2-year-old children is higher than the attendance of the 3-year-olds. The school has had a lot of illness and now chicken pox is prevalent. • Work has been done around parental engagement. There is always a face at the school door. Communications were listed. • Toddler sessions have been advertised for the 07.03.25. Currently 9/10 families have expressed an interest. • The school's wider engagement was listed in the HT's Report. • On receipt of a positive testimonial, Kixx Football have offered the school a discounted price. • There have been five staff incidents/accidents. Three members of staff were hurt by children. Members of staff have undertaken Positive Handling training. • The Premises and Engagement Report is now outdated. • The school has received an £8k grant. Governor question: This is excellent. Can it be used to purchase additional support? <i>Response: The money is to be used in co-ordination with the Cheshire Wildlife Trust to construct a pond to add to our biodiversity.</i> • The school has 11 children accessing 30-hour funding. • An Early Years Pupil Premium (PP) grid was shared with Governors to demonstrate how the school provides a bespoke response to the child's need. • The school receives £7.48 for each 2-year-old child; £5.59 for each 3-year-old child and as mentioned earlier in the meeting the Early Years Pupil Premium funding will increase to £1 per pupil per hour from April 2025.
9.	SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN A copy of the Westminster SDP 2024-2025 February RAG was shared with Governors prior to the meeting. It was noted that: • There are no areas left to be addressed– highlighted red. • The school has completed a large proportion of its Development Plan as can be seen by the prevalence of green highlighting. Governors noted that great progress has been made with the SDP, particularly noting that we are just over half-way through the academic year. Governor question: Have the intervention groups been suspended?

	<i>Response: They were suspended in January because of staff illness (this was explained to Governors). They have now restarted.</i>
10.	STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE – ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND CLERKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2025-2026 SG abstained from this discussion. DR explained that the committees are clerked internally. The FGB is clerked by the Local Authority. The proposal was that this arrangement should be continued in 2025-2026. Governors approved this proposal.
11.	DIRECTOR'S REPORT A copy of the Report had been shared in advance. The following points were discussed: • The school does not use the DfE benchmarking because it is not relevant for nursery education. NS benchmarks against small rural schools. • The increase in cost of using Governor Hub moving forward. It was explained that currently schools purchase Governor Hub and Knowledge as one package. The two elements will need to be purchased separately moving forward. The Local Authority has tried to hold a conversation with the providers, and, whilst a discounted rate will be available, the cost will be higher for 2025-2026. Governor question: Is Knowledge the same as the NGA Learning Link? <i>Response: Knowledge contains more articles. Their learning modules are still in the development stage.</i> It was agreed that the school would continue to use the NGA learning Link for the next twelve months. Governors can also access other resources.
12.	GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT The following documents were shared with Governors in advance: • Governance development plan 2024.5 • Up to date training register a) GC had circulated a draft training register prior to the meeting. GC informed Governors that: • All Governors should complete safeguarding and PREVENT training in the first term of the school year, as agreed at the previous Autumn Term FGB. The deadline for 2024-2025 is Easter 2025. Moving forward this training will be done annually by all Governors in the Autumn Term of each academic year. Action: Clerk to email Governors to remind them of the statutory training to be completed at the start of the school year

- All Governors had been asked to complete the Engagement training by Christmas 2024 and Early Years Education by Easter 2025. This has not been done by all Governors. The deadline has been extended to Easter 2025 for those Governors who had not completed these two Learning Link training units..

Action: GC to email Governors who have not completed the relevant training after considering his email response with the Chair

Governor question: Could the training document be RAG-rated?

Response: I (GC) would rather email individual Governors.

- b) The following feedback to training undertaken was given:
- The Education for Early Years training was very dry. It was a document not a presentation or interactive training session. It did discuss the prime areas. It was very poor.
- c) DR explained that the SDP is written in the Summer Term and forwarded to Governors for comments and input. The Governor skills audit and staff survey are reported to the Summer Term FGB, following their distribution and completion by Governors in early Summer Term.
A Governor Development Plan is then written in September to include some of the outcomes of the SDP, Governor skills audit and staff survey. This document would then be approved at the Autumn FGB meeting.

The evaluation of the Governor Development Plan shows:

- Engagement is highlighted amber as not all Governors have completed the training module.
 - The visibility of Governors at school events will be highlighted green by the end of the year.
 - Education for Early Years is highlighted red, as not all Governors have, as yet, completed the training module and have until Easter to complete.
 - School-based training is highlighted amber. EC needs to complete her final presentation in the Summer Term 2025.
- d) The school website has been updated.
- e) Copies of all Governor Learning Walks are on Governor Hub for all Governors to access as agreed in former FGB meetings.
DR completed a Learning Walk on Friday 28th February 2025. Her report is on Governor Hub. She observed children's gross motor skills and the impact of the new outdoor provision on motor skills.
She saw children taking turns. Children were on the bicycles, and no one had an accident. Girls and boys were playing football.
Children in Caterpillars were blowing bubbles and talking about them. This showed language and vocabulary development.

DR explained that, on her next Walk, she would observe fine motor skills.

There were no other Learning Walks reported on. (LB's has been reported on)

GC, JC and SH had trimmed the hedge on the premises. Children had come out and talked to the about this. There was no shyness or hesitancy in their conversations. JC will complete a Learning Walk pro-forma for this and send to

	school. Other Governors were advised that they should complete their termly Learning Walks before the Easter holiday.
13.	SCHOOL POLICIES One policy was presented for approval: • Pay Policy It was noted that this policy was delayed in its publication by Cheshire East. The policy was approved by Governors at an EFGB held on 09.12.24. The Pay Policy was ratified by Governors.
14.	MEETINGS Governors agreed the date of the Summer Term 2025 FGB meeting: Monday 14th July 2025.
15.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS Action: DR to action the annual Governor skills audit and to meet with GC to discuss and distribution and collating results of audit Action: DR to action the annual staff survey These decisions were made after discussion of which skills audit to use: the school's bespoke version or the new Governor Hub version. It was agreed to use the school's bespoke version. Thanks were extended to JC, GC and SH for cutting the hedges. GC explained that, whilst they were cutting in the wild area, they noticed an overgrown path. He asked if a working party including parents could be assembled to clear the path. This could be marketed as support for the Governors. It might break down the barrier between parents and Governors. Action: EC to ask for parent volunteers to support Governors to clear the wild area

The meeting moved to Part Two.

The meeting closed at 6.10pm.

..... Chair



..... Date