



## Irresistible Learning

Kindness – Respect – Ambition

### MINUTES [AGREED 4.7.2024]

Board: **Middle Street – FGB 5**

Trust: Middle Street Governing Body, Brighton

Date: **THURSDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024**

Time: Start time: **9.30 am** End Time: **12.10 pm**

Venue: At the school

Attendees:

Oli Sharpe [OS]	Chair of Governors / Co-Opted Governor
Sally Coleman-Lewis [SCL]	Parent Governor / Vice-Chair of FGB
Rob Cooper [RC]	Headteacher
Vanessa McGeachin [VM]	Co-Opted Governor [from 10.15 am]
Ray Williams [RW]	Co-Opted Governor
Anna Racher [AR]	Parent Governor
Mark Juba [MJ]	Co-Opted Governor

In attendance:

Governance Professional [Clerk]: **Donal McCarthy** [Judicium Education]

#### 1: **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all to the FGB 5 meeting of the Middle Street FGB for the academic year 2023 / 2024.

#### 2: **Standing Items**

- 2.1 Apologies for Absence: **Rob Shepherd** and **Karlynn Layzell**.
- 2.2 Declarations of Interest: **no new declarations noted**.
- 2.3 Confirmation of Quorum: 50% of Governing Body – **Quorate**
- 2.4 **AOB** – two items – Chair Recruitment and Training for Governors noted.

#### 2.5 **Minutes of the FGB 4 – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024**

The minutes of the last FGB Meeting (FGB 4) on **22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024** were **AGREED**, as an accurate record.  
The confidential minutes of the last FGB Meeting (FGB 4) on **22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024** were **AGREED**, as an accurate record.

#### Action Log from Middle Street FGB meeting held on: **22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024**

Agenda Item	Action	Actionee	Date
2.1	Consider having a temporary replacement Staff Governor for KL for FGB 5 & 6.	RC	Progressing
4	It was agreed to re-name the Headteacher Report to 'Headteacher & DSL Report' from FGB 5	RC	CLOSED

4	Consider the opening and closing times of the school gates at the start and end of the school day. <b>There was an issue following the FGB 4 with a potential drug dealer and this was considered a Health &amp; Safety issue and led to police involvement. It was now agreed that the gate is to remain closed, outside registration times, with visitors 'buzzed in'.</b>	RC	CLOSED
4	Consider creating a meeting space, within the school site, and challenge parent attitudes and behaviours.	RC	CLOSED See the action above.
5	Equality & Inclusion Report to be given at FGB 5. <b>It was agreed that this item be deferred to FGB 6 – with an Annual Monitoring Report with handover to AR as EDI and Safeguarding Link Governor.</b>	OS / RS	Deferred to FGB 6
6.3	Section 175 Safeguarding Audit Report to be uploaded when completed.	TB	CLOSED
6.3	Safeguarding handover between AR and RW to take place after the Easter break.	AR / RW	Progressing
6.3	RW to conduct a check with RC on his DSL responsibilities and report back via a Monitoring Report. Deferred to FGB 6.	RW/RC	Progressing
6.3	All Governors are to complete Safeguarding Training and confirm to FGB by 29.3.2024. <b>RS is still to be completed.</b>	FGB	CLOSED
8.3	OS to upload the revised/updated Structures and Rhythms Document, Terms of Reference, and Resources folder to Governor Hub.	OS	CLOSED
9	Arrange a separate FGB meeting (pre-end of 2023/4 year) to discuss succession planning on the FGB how might this work and how the structures and rhythm principles are to be applied.	FGB	CLOSED
9	Clerk to conduct Website Check by FGB 5. <b>To be completed and reported at FGB 6.</b>	Clerk	Progressing
9	FGB Skills Audit (simplified format) to be completed by FGB by FGB 5 and collated by Clerk – <b>deferred to FGB 6.</b>	FGB	CLOSED

#### Matters Arising:

- It was agreed that, in FGB meetings where possible, we highlight questions asked (in black) and challenges to the school (in blue). It was agreed best practice was to upload minutes of the FGB on the school website.  
**Action: The FGB Minutes from 2023/24 are to be uploaded to the school website [RC].**
- Chair succession issues to be discussed in item 8.
- It was noted that Karlynn Layzell would be leaving MSS [but had not formally resigned yet] at the end of the summer term 2024. Exit interview to be carried out by MJ.  
**Action: Engage HR support with advice on exit interviews [RC].**  
**Action: Conduct an election to elect a new Staff Governor by FGB 6 [RC].**

### 3 Headteacher Report / DSL Report

RC presented his Headteacher/DSL report, which had been pre-loaded and was assumed to have been pre-read.

#### School Profile data.

No on the roll – 188 (September 2023 – 175) Maximum capacity – 210 pupils  
Mobility – 37 pupils in and 15 out by the end of the school year.

Discussion took place around the impact of changing numbers, through mobility, and the need for more publicity to advertise MMs e.g. as a Beach School/ USP. It was agreed that a better understanding of why pupils choose MSS was required and could further work be undertaken to better understand the reasons – this would support the FGB and planning for the school ahead.

**ACTION: A Parent Survey is to be conducted and parents are to be asked 'Why choose MSS?' - this be commenced at the Parent Consultations in w/c 20.5.2024 [RC/School].**

**Attendance:**

Whole School	91.9% (increasing)
Unauthorised Absences:	1.4% (reducing)
Persistent absences:	26.5% (increasing)
Severely absent:	1.0% (reducing)

	School	LA	Nat. Average
<b>FSM</b>	32.9%	21.8%	24.6%
<b>SEN EHCP</b>	2.6%	4.4%	4%
<b>SEN Support</b>	27.1%	15%	13%
<b>EAL</b>	20.7%	17%	22%

RC expressed the view that, if inspected now by Ofsted, MSS would be judged Good, and this view was expressed and recorded in the updated SEF.

DOM has now replaced LK as the ECT Mentor. It was noted that this had not impacted on the ECT's provision.

SEN numbers at MMS were increasing and were now more than 30%. The LA has offered support on SEND had has visited MMS. The possibility of an SEN base, located in the flat and rented by the LA, was discussed along with the Early Years Project, the transition of SEN pupils into Reception – MSS engaged in this project. There is no new additional SEND money from the LA. 60% of SEND pupils at MSS are in disadvantaged groups.

**Challenge: What has been the impact on the school/classes of additional pupils and in particular those new pupils being admitted with additional needs?**

There is more additional need now in the classes, particularly EAL needs. Also, additional child protection issues, safeguarding issues, and changes to the established class profiles make it harder to gel the classes, particularly with dynamics and friendship groups. The increasing number of admissions with additional needs increasing the 20% bottom cohort and the additional pressure it brings to the teaching and learning.

**Challenge – With the bottom 20/25% is there an overlap between SEN/EAL and how this gets identified? This link is not yet clear within the school and RC is to follow up on this data.**

**ACTION: RC to check the data for EAL pupils that are also SEND [RC].**

A brief staffing update was given. Staff absence continues to be an issue, but it was confirmed that the the school holds Staff Absence Insurance, for over 5 days of absence.

**Q: Is the absence rate for teachers attributed to a specific factor?**

A: No – it is a mix of factors – but teacher workload issues are an important issue. Adjustments are made and support strategies are put in place for staff. Concern was noted that some conversations between staff (re: staff absence) were inappropriate and how this might be managed will be discussed further with SLT. It was **agreed** that staff should be asked how they would like their absence to be communicated.

The safeguarding numbers were noted. Further work is taking place on SG training, specialist SG training, SCR checks, Safeguarding Policy updates, and the Section 175 Report action plan.

Following a question from SCL RC explained how parental views of bullying are followed up and that

checks are made against CPOMs and the issues that are recorded. There were two racial incidents recorded since the last FGB and circumstances explained by RC.

Any trends or patterns from CPOMs will be brought to the FGB by RC/AR.

**ACTION: AR to view CPOMs categories on her next visit to the school [AR].**

#### 4 Education

The detailed Curriculum & Monitoring Report from MJ had been uploaded, was noted, and assumed to have been pre-read.

This report was considered to be excellent. The Curriculum provision was superb, with very strong procedures and protocols in place, in line with school policy. All plans are in place and are to be embedded into 2024/25. MJ was clear that the school was strong within the area of curriculum provision. Congratulations were extended to DS and the whole teaching team – the successes are to be congratulated.

Pupil Progress data had been confirmed with DS.

The next steps were noted:

- Increased CPD opportunities for staff.
- Further, develop resource provision.
- Continue the development of subject leadership experience.

MJ & DS (and curriculum leaders) were thanked for the excellent report and the monitoring work.

#### 5 Safety & Wellbeing

6.1: **Staff Wellbeing Report** – noted.

A brief verbal update was given by VM. Staff morale, because of increased workload, remains a concern and an ongoing issue.

6.2: **Attendance & Monitoring Report**

See HT report – attendance trends appear stable.

6.3: **Safeguarding handover from RW to AR**

This handover had not yet taken place between RW and AR. This will be completed by FGB 6. AR was confirmed as Governor Safeguarding Lead from 16.5.2024.

#### 7 Finances & Resources

**ACTION: SRMA Report to be uploaded to GH.**

The report is based on pupil numbers of 197 in 2024/2025. John Sale, SMRA, visited the school and forensically analysed the MSS budget for 2024/2025. He validated the issues, and concerns, previously and currently identified by the FGB and made suggestions on issues that the FGB should consider as part of the 2024/25 budget arrangements. The suggestions have been benchmarked against 1fe schools and the budget is predicated on a 7-class structure for 2024/2025. These conversations, and suggestions, have been shared with the Budget Monitoring Group [BMG] and the school's finance team.

The following appendixes were noted:

- Appendix 1 – Business case for BSC / ASC
- Appendix 2: Staffing -Current model & proposed model.

- Appendix 3 – SMB model.

RC updated on the key issues and proposals identified by the SRMA.

A discussion then took place on the decisions to be made and the issues to be discussed – including the risk of losing staff, modeling of the school limited by funding allocations, an HLTA replacing a teacher to deliver PPA, prioritising additional staff if required and will MSS have a sustainable budget if advice from the SRMA is ignored? The FGB **agreed** to accept most of the advice and proposals from the SRMA and the various models discussed could be flexed.

The Clerk advised that discussion take place around proposed roles and responsibilities and for the FGB not to discuss the operational decisions around specific staff placements and responsibilities. This was agreed upon by the FGB.

If the SRMA advice is followed the likely surplus/deficit figures are likely to be:

- 2024/25 – A projected in-year **deficit of £40k**
  - 2025/26 – A Projected £72k surplus
  - 2026/27 – A Projected £72k surplus
  - 2027/28 – A Projected £52k surplus
  - 2028/29 – A Projected £67k surplus.
- (the 2023/2024 deficit budget is predicted to be **£118,106**)

### **SBM Role – Appendix 3.**

This proposal was discussed in detail, in Appendix 3. The present model has provision of three staff costing £114,816 and the proposed model would have five staff totalling a cost of £115,071. It was noted that the cost of engaging the financial support (Business Manager & Finance Team member) with Varndean School (1.5 days weekly) would cost £20k.

It was agreed that this new model could and would provide improved support, scrutiny, and monitoring of finance at MSS, would greatly reduce the mitigated financial risks to MSS, and would provide strong financial experience and support to and for MSS and the FGB.

The FGB **agreed** this was a good model to be implemented for Middle Street School.

RW reported on the present monitoring protocols and cited historical financial pressures and context at MSS. It was agreed that a new approach was needed with Management Accounts, and it was *recommended* that the Management Accounts be shared with the Budget Monitoring Group. A written monitoring trail to the FGB is needed.

**ACTION: Clear link roles and responsibilities [for financial monitoring] need to be clarified and agreed by FGB by FGB 6.**

The BMG recommended this draft budget for approval but wished it to be made clear that the FGB would prefer to manage the budget differently and that MSS is significantly underfunded, leading to the inability to carry out priorities identified by the FGB.

The budget for 2024/25 was **AGREED** and **APPROVED**.

**ACTION: Budget for 2024/25 to be forwarded to LA by 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

## 8 Strategic Leadership / Governance

### 8.1: Progress update on Chair succession

It was noted that meetings had been held internally. A process to advance was proposed and considered – through ‘Governors for Schools’ to advance the recruitment of a new chair of the FGB. This process would cost £750 when a successful appointment is made. In the interim period holding patterns were discussed and these would only be temporary solutions.

**ACTION:** *Agree to proceed with ‘Governors for Schools’ to appoint a new Chair of the FGB and follow up with the LA.*

**ACTION:** *Re-send simplified skills audit for completion by FGB members – to be collated and discussed at FGB 6.*

### 8.2 Structures & Rhythms Document

There are presently three documents in place – Structures & Rhythms Document, Terms of Reference, and a Resources File of useful materials. It was agreed that the Budget Monitoring Group and Future Funding issues be split again within the document. Further discussion will be required when the new arrangement with Varndean School commences.

**ACTION:** *FGB 6 to agree on the final versions of the Structures & Rhythms at FGB 6.*

## 9 Policies to Approve / Consent Items

The following policies were agreed:

- First Aid in Schools – **AGREED**
- Equality Information & Objectives [Public Sector Equality Duty ] – statement for publication [EDI] - **AGREED**
- Complaints Policy – **AGREED**

[Notwithstanding changing names and roles, as appropriate with all the above policies]

**ACTION:** *Summary of parental complaints (numbers) to be included in the Headteacher Report, at least annually.*

## 10 AOB – none noted.

## 11 Dates for the 2024/25 academic year.

It was agreed at the meeting that future dates for the FGB would be agreed between the Chair, Vice-Chair, Headteacher, and Clerk and be communicated to the FGB. After the meeting, the following dates for FGB meetings in 2024/25 were agreed and confirmed.

**FGB 1 – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 @ 9.30 am**

**FGB 2 – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024 @ 9.30 am**

**FGB 3 – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 @ 9.30 am**

**FGB 4 – Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025 @ 9.30 am**

**FGB 5 – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 @ 9.30 am**

**FGB 6 – Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025 @ 9.30 am**

12: Date of next FGB Meeting: **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024 @ 9.30 am.**

The meeting ended at: 12.10 pm

Minutes End



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## Action Log from FGB 4: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024

Agenda Item	Action	Actionee	Date
Matters arising	The FGB Minutes from 2023/24 are to be uploaded to the school website.	RC	ASAP
Matters arising	Engage HR support with advice on exit interviews.	RC	When required
Matters arising	Conduct an election to elect a new Staff Governor by FGB 6.	RC	By FGB 6
3	A Parent Survey is to be conducted and parents are to be asked 'Why choose MSS?' - this be commenced at the Parent Consultations in w/c 20.5.2024.	School	Now (and reported to FGB 6)
3	RC to check the data for EAL pupils that are also SEND.	RC	ASAP
3	AR to view CPOM categories on her next visit to the school.	AR	Next School Visit
7	SRMA Report to be uploaded to GH.	RC	Now
7	The budget for 2024/25 is to be forwarded to LA by 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2024.	RC / RS	By 17.5.2024
7	Clear link roles and responsibilities [for financial monitoring] need to be clarified and agreed upon by FGB by FGB 6.	RS / FGB	By FGB 6
8	Agree to proceed with 'Governors for Schools' to appoint a new Chair of the FGB and follow up with the LA.	OS	ASAP
8	Re-send simplified skills audit for completion by FGB members – to be collated and discussed at FGB 6.	Clerk	By FGB 6
8	FGB 6 to agree on the final versions of the Structures & Rhythms at FGB 6.	OS	At FGB 6
9	Summary of parental complaints (numbers) to be included in the Headteacher Report, at least annually.	RC	Ongoing