



NURSERY • PRIMARY

ABOYNE LODGE

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## Meeting of Full Governing Body

**Date**

14 October 2024 at 6pm

**Location**

Aboyne Lodge School

### Governing Board

Adam Brown (AB)	PAR Co-Chair	Dan Smith (DS)	COP
Alexandra Farley (AF)	PAR Co-Chair	Keith Smithard (KS)	Headteacher
Nadine Farrar-Hockley (NFH)	PAR	Tom Walsh (TW)	COP
Charlotte Scanlon (CS)	COP		
Emma Betteridge (EB)	PAR	Alex Leech (AL)	LA
Hannah Porteous (HP)			

COP= Co-opted Governor; PAR = Parent Governor; STF = Staff Governor; HT = Headteacher; LA = Local Authority Governor

In attendance: Maria Taylor (MT) (HfL Clerk), Kirsten Landau (SBM)

Key: Questions/challenges to headteacher in italics.

### Welcome and apologies for absence and reminder of duty of confidentiality:

MT confirmed the meeting is quorate. Apologies were received and accepted from HP.

#### 1. Notification of any other urgent business:

Removal of Trustees  
Next Governor Newsletter

#### 2. Conflict of interest/declarations:

None were declared. Governors were asked to complete the annual Declaration of interests on GovernorHub if not already completed.

#### 3. Election of Co-Chair and Vice Chair

AB and AF agreed to stand as Co-Chairs for another year. Nominated by TW, seconded by NFH. There being no other nominations, AB and AF were duly elected Co-Chairs.

NFH agreed to stand again as Vice Chair. She was nominated by TW, seconded by AF. There being no other nominations, NFH was duly elected as Vice-Chair.

#### 4. Governor Roles and Responsibilities 2024-25

Resources Committee – TW (Chair), KS, AF, EB  
School Improvement Committee – CS (Chair), KS, AB, NFH, DS  
Governors intend to remain on their current committees for the time being.  
The Terms of Reference have been sent to the Chairs of the committees for review.

There are two vacancies on the Board, one Co-op Governor and one Parent Governor. Another attempt to recruit a parent Governor will be made via the Governor Newsletter. Hopefully one of the new parents will want to get involved. Recruitment of the Co-op Governor will be done with the RC in mind – someone with a background in law, HR or marketing would be very helpful. The Governor recruitment websites will be used.

Safeguarding Link Governor – AL agreed to take on this role.

SEND and PP	NFH
English	CS
Maths	TW and A?

The Board takes a lean approach to the Link Roles and Governors undertake deep dives in other areas as necessary.

**Action:** A post-Ofsted temporary role to be filled by AB to review actions. He will visit EYFS to review the work done on the outdoor equipment over the summer.

**Action:** KS will send dates to Governors for the Governor Focus Week so these can be added to the calendar. Last year this was in the week commencing 17 June, after SATS. Meetings with Link teachers will be organised for that week.

EB is the Sport Link Governor and is Chair of ALSA. She reported that parents are very unwilling to get involved with fund-raising events putting enormous pressure on the few parents who are involved. There are a number of parents in Y4 but in some years no-one contributes. It is even uncertain that there will be a Christmas Fair. This has a community and fun impact on the school. Recruitment of parents to ALSA will also be raised in the Governor Newsletter.

#### 5. Start of term reminders (Clerk)

- Please complete the declarations/confirmations on GovernorHub – especially that you have read KCSIE 2024.
- Safeguarding training – please check that this training is up to date. There are two courses available on Modern Governor.
- If you are unable to attend a meeting, please let the clerk and HT know as soon as possible. Meetings must be quorate to go ahead.
- Please cc the clerk into any questions you have in advance of the meeting.
- Ensure all documents and policies that relate to the meeting are in the relevant GHub folder in advance of the meeting.
- It is very important that as many Governors as possible complete the Exclusions and Complaints training so that the appropriate panels can be convened.
- Please check the available training on Modern Governor and complete as much as you can. HfL and Modern Governor have developed four training pathways to support governors in their role – these can be found [here](#).
- AF offered to put together a list of training completed by Governors (Delegated Administrator form link sent to AF).

#### 6. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Actions from previous meeting taken in each agenda item. Approval of minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

Topic/Title	Action
School Bulletin	Governors to bring together a list of academic, sporting, eco and music achievements to send to parents. See previous HT reports. Completed
SEN Newsletter	This is currently with Michelle and will be shared once agreed. Ongoing
Roles and Responsibilities	Reviewed as in item 5 above. Completed
School Banners	To advertise open days and tours. Add dates to social media, local nurseries and groups.
SCR	The SCR audit will take place in October. KS will review any comments made and action these. AL will also inspect the SCR as part of her Safeguarding role. AF and AB will also do this when in school.

#### 7. Headteacher's report

Governor's comments and questions.

a) *How can we thank Mike McCarthy for the new gates and fencing?*

All the work has been done for free but he does not want a big fuss to be made.

b) *What are the marketing developments?*

The work on the video with Matt and Ciara Haley came at no cost to the school. Midnight Blue's work is a paid service. Katie Martin has worked on the school's Insta and Twitter presence. It is likely we will need to get fresh consents from parents for photos of their children to be included – parents will be offered the choice to opt out. The timeline on the flyer for parents and other promotional material is the next week or so as the photos need to be updated. The video will be ready imminently once the logo has been added and permissions checked for children's faces. Events such as Harvest Festival, the Christmas Fair and the school disco will be added to the school calendar and pictures taken. Pictures will also be taken of the school grounds as this is a selling point of the school.

c) *How are the school tours going?*

The tours are filling up and there is only one date available. There are 10 families per tour and seven tours. There is a waiting list for some of the tour dates. The tours are being conducted by the children and KS speaks to the parents afterwards. Some parents mention the tech and ICT available at other schools. Is this something the UKPN money could be put towards?

d) *What is happening with pupil numbers?*

We currently have 187 pupils. The school has received enquiries for places in Ys 2 and 5. A new child is starting in Y6 after half term. They are new to the area. Numbers are ticking up slowly. The issue is with the numbers lower down the school as the birth rate in Herts has dropped over the last few years. Bernards Heath Infants is consulting to reduce its PAN from 3 to 2 forms. Garden Fields have reduced theirs. Windermere and Sandridge Schools both have half forms. St Albans has 250 spaces in Reception this year, only 190 have been filled. The application deadline for next year's Reception is 15/1/25. Visiting parents have commented that City School allows parents to go into classrooms with their children in the morning. Parents will be allowed into classrooms after the Harvest Festival celebration.

**Action:** The school will purchase three large banners to promote the school, as these are not too expensive. These will be placed on the front of the school, the back of the school and the Jubilee Centre outside the car park.

e) *What are the plans for the school's for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration?*

Ideas are being developed with ALSA. Possibilities are a ball, a book putting together memories from past pupils. 2025 is the 75<sup>th</sup> year – events can take place through the year. Something might also be done in conjunction with St Albans Museum.

f) *How are the attendance figures?*

Attendance is 97%. There have been a couple of term time holidays. One should have been fined and the school received a letter from the GP stating why the other family should not be fined. This was challenging for the attendance team and the school. Support from Herts is slow. A formal letter is sent to families whose children miss 10 sessions (i.e. 5 days).

g) *What has been the impact of the reduction of EHCPs?*

The number of EHCPs has reduced to 5 which has reduced funding. We have retained a member of staff as the needs in school are increasing and the additional staff member is needed. This is good for the school, if not the budget. The school is waiting on the outcome of a couple of EHCP applications.

h) *Are there additional needs in the new Reception class?*

This is an issue in other schools but not here. The class is girl heavy and is quite high-achieving. A 1:1 for one child is paid for by a Health Plan. Needs in the class are less than last year.

i) *How does the school support EAL children?*

Some EAL children arrive in school with no English at all. This is very challenging and there is very little support provided by county. School currently uses a total emersion approach. We initially focus on using common nouns to build vocabulary, with support from Google translate and images using widget. JG supports a group of children in the morning with phonics each day too.

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**Action:** TW will do a Link Visit for EAL.

*j) Is there any information you can share on the excluded child?*

Discussions took place about decisions around a fixed term exclusion, the parents' decision for the child not to return and the rules surrounding attendance. School is following policy and communicating with the attendance and inclusion teams. The behaviour of the child has had an impact on staff and children within the classroom as well as damage to school property.

*k) Is the rotting trim trail ok to use?*

It has passed its annual inspection; Terry has made running repairs. Currently the issue is with the wood around the border but it will need to be replaced eventually.

*l) Will the gate lock be in place for the tours?*

It is hoped the electronics will be in place before half term. If not, a padlock has been put on the gates for the tours.

*m) What is happening with the nursery contract?*

Carter Jonas are in the process of negotiating the lease. Albany Montessori are no longer being considered. Apple Day Care will be taking over the lease instead. Negotiations over the lease are in progress. Apple have offered the full amount for the lease. Bills will be calculated as a percentage based on the size of the building. Apple want to run the nursery for 364 days per year – the school is open for fewer days. All of this will be factored in through the lease negotiation. The provision of wraparound care will form part of the school tours as this will help with younger children. The nursery is likely to open in January. Parents are clear that the nursery is being operated by a private company and is not Aboyne Lodge provision.

**Action:** Governors suggested that signs be put up in the nursery window advertising Aboyne Lodge and that Aboyne Lodge makes sure its name also features in nursery advertising.

*n) What is happening with UKPN and what will the school do with any revenue?*

The school is negotiating with UKPN who want to temporarily use a section of the playground, in the corner by the pond. They have offered £30,000 for 9 months' use of the space. This money could be used in the development of the playground, such as adding a multigym. If the wall is taken down, they will replace like for like. There are a lot of issues to be worked out (Party Wall Agreement, if lease is extended). It should be noted that the Foundation cannot lease land that belongs to county. This will be discussed in depth at the next RC meeting.

(EC and BS left the meeting at 7.30pm)

## **8. Policy review**

The Attendance Policy has been updated to comply with the new attendance framework,

The Behaviour Policy has been updated.

The Curriculum and Equality Policies are not based on model policies.

The other policies are based on HCC model policies. They are annual updates of existing policies.

The policies will be returned to the committees for approval, having been agreed by email. They will then be returned to the FGB to be ratified.

## **9. Approval of School Development Plan**

There is a curriculum review happening now. KS believes that the volume of the curriculum will be thinned with more focus on specific areas and it is rumoured that the Government intends to make PE a core subject and that the arts will be more important.

*What do you intend to take out?*

Lots of the three year plan will continue from last year although there are some additions to be made – specifically reflecting the work on behaviour and the behaviour curriculum as well as the playground development.

## **10. Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2024-25**

NFD has met with Rebecca Jones (PP lead). The PP strategy is updated every three years. Previously it has focussed on Covid, but this is less relevant now. EAL is now a bigger issue, as is the cost of living increases. The school has a number of

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refugees on role, such as those from Ukraine. The funding to support this has decreased. Some students arrive with no English at all. The school provides tutoring and also uses external sources of support. For example, Read Write Inc. provides resources such as mirrors and sand-sensory methods.  
Governors commended it was a good three-year plan.

The PP Strategy Statement 2024-25 was approved.

#### 11. Safeguarding Update

As above, Governors are asked to read KCSIE 2024 and to confirm this in their profile on GHub. Safeguarding training to be updated if due.

The SCR will be audited and the new Safeguarding Link governor, AL, will make a visit.

#### 12. Resources Committee update

The first meeting of the RC will take place next Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October at 8am. An update will be brought to the next FGB.

#### 13. School Improvement Committee update

The first meeting of the year took place last week, 8<sup>th</sup> October. Covered in HT report.

Safeguarding Link Governor has now been appointed and other link roles.

The Minutes will be added to the folder once agreed.

Future meetings will possibly take place on Wednesday mornings, or via Teams. Meeting weeks will be highlighted in the calendar and links added.

#### 14. AOB and Items for next agenda

- Rob and Ollie need to be removed as Trustees of the Foundation. They have been removed from the Business Account.
- The Governor Newsletter is in progress and will be circulated at the end of the week before half term.

#### 15. Summary of action points

Topic/Title	Action	Owner(s)	Target Date
Post-Ofsted Review	A post-Ofsted temporary role to be filled by AB to review actions. He will visit EYFS to review the work done on the outdoor equipment over the summer.	AB	Next FGB
Governor Focus Week	Dates for the Governor Focus Week to be sent to Governors and added to calendar. Meetings with Link teachers will be organised for that week.	KS	Next FGB
Governor Newsletter	Recruitment of parents to ALSA will also be raised in the Governor Newsletter.	AB	Half term
School Banners	The school will purchase three large banners to promote the school, as these are not too expensive. These will be placed on the front of the school, the back of the school and the Jubilee Centre outside the car park.	School Office/KS	ASAP
Governor Visit	TW will do a Link Visit for EAL. AL to make a Safeguarding Link Visit – check SCR	TW AL	Next FGB
Nursery	Signs be put up in the nursery window advertising Aboyne Lodge's name to feature in nursery advertising.	KS	?
UKPN	Contract to be discussed in depth at the next RC meeting.	RC	23/10/24
Policies	To be agreed over email and returned to next FGB for ratification.	All	Next FGB

**Signed:**

**Date:**