

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXCALIBUR SCHOOL LOCAL
GOVERNING BOARD HELD AT THE SCHOOL
ON 25TH NOVEMBER 2024 at 17.00.**

Name	Governor Category	Designated Role	Attendance
Gail Whittingham	Co-opted Governor	Chair	Present
Gill Burgess	Co-opted Governor	Vice Chair	Apologies
Juliet Jones	Headteacher	Headteacher	Present
Felicity Hawkins	Co-opted Governor		Present
Rachel Hackney	Co-opted Governor		Present
Tom Egley	Co-opted Governor		Present
Shaun Smith	Co-opted Governor		Absent
Sarah Sproston	Co-opted Governor		Apologies
Philip Yeomans	Parent Governor		Present
Rachel Morrison	Parent Governor		Present
Kay Griffin	Staff Governor		Present
Sue Lambeth	Clerk		Present
Yvonne Hilditch	SBM		Present

PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

The meeting was quorate and started at 17.07.

	Item
1.	<p>Mathematics Presentation (For full detail refer to the document in the meeting pack)</p> <p>Anna McArdle, Mathematics and SEND Lead, shared a presentation and governors learnt that the achievement of greater depth in Maths was a key focus on the School Development Plan (SDP).</p> <p><u>Current Position and Aim</u> Historically, approximately 40% of children at Excalibur achieve GD in KS2 SATS. However, summer term data across the school highlights this this number of children at the higher standard is not reflected in all year groups. Triangulation had identified that challenge around problem solving could be improved.</p> <p>The school followed the White Rose Maths Scheme together with other resources, and the aim was now to increase problem solving and reasoning in lessons.</p> <p><u>Delivery of Maths</u> The structure of lessons had now changed, and Maths lessons for all classes began in the same way with 15 minutes allocated to Fluency 5 or Tough 10 followed by Flashback 4 before moving to the main sections from White Rose</p>

curriculum. The White Rose curriculum comprised a floor to ceiling model starting with skills and moving to reasoning and problem solving. Extension work was provided by White Rose where required and Twinkl was used for further extension.

Additionally at the end of each lesson, or at a point during the lesson, three Rapid Reasoning problem-solving questions were undertaken by pupils at their ability level either independently, with teacher modelling or with scaffolding. All pupils were exposed to this, which had not previously been the case.

Q: Are practical resources used alongside this?

A: Yes, for some KS1 and KS2 pupils concrete operations are very helpful.

Rapid Reasoning plus the White Rose scheme were all easily accessible to teachers who were encouraged to adapt and to be flexible, and lessons reflected previous learning and included revisiting areas.

Q: Is it necessary to tailor lessons to fit the time available?

A: This is not an issue at Excalibur. Power points are popular with staff and contain appropriate visuals and content which can be backed up by concrete resources if required.

Consideration was being given to whether sufficient skills work was included for those pupils who found topics challenging. Each lesson now had a dedicated 10 minutes where all pupils were exposed to reasoning-style problems at their own levels.

Q: Is it possible for higher ability level pupils to start with the reasoning element rather than the skills?

A: It is important to ensure that higher ability pupils are exposed to the skills and strategy. There is excellent provision in place for high ability pupils.

Adaptive teaching approaches had been adopted by the teachers to match pupils' needs, and suitable material for all pupils was always available. Reasoning and problem solving books in different formats had been purchased for KS2 classes and were completed after each of the four Maths units per term.

Governors were assured that the new scheme was having an impact and the latest data drop had indicated significantly better performance in Maths. Monitoring was showing an impact.

After consideration of the statutory times table test outcomes for the current Year 5) at the end of the previous year (average score 16 from 25), a lack of consistency in teaching had been identified. In order to address this, certificates and class winners for achievement in Times Table Rock Stars (TTRS) had been re-introduced. The current Year 6 had requested a TTRS

	<p>lunch club, and access to the programme was available at home, in school and during the club.</p> <p>Anna was thanked for her input and left the meeting at 17.25.</p>
2.	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Any Other Business Governors were welcomed by the Chair.</p> <p>Apologies received from Sarah Sproston and Gill Burgess were accepted. Shaun Smith was not present.</p> <p>No other items of Part One business were requested.</p>
3.	<p>Declarations of Interest There were no potential pecuniary interests or conflicts of interest between an individual and the governing board as a whole in connection with the business to be discussed during the meeting.</p> <p>Almost all declarations of interest for all governors had been updated on GVO. Tasks would be created on GVO where required.</p> <p>TASK: To contact Shaun Smith to check email address, attendance and GVO tasks. (GW)</p> <p>TASK: To log onto Every and read all outstanding documentation. (GW, GB, KG, PY, SS and TE)</p>
4.	<p>Chair's Action The Chair reported no actions had been taken on behalf of the LGB since the previous meeting.</p>
5.	<p>Membership The membership of the LGB was confirmed to be as shown on this document.</p> <p>The LGB agreed that no <u>new appointments</u> were currently required.</p> <p><u>Vacancies</u> Rachel Hackney's term of office due was due for renewal on 3rd July 2025. No other terms of office expired before the end of the year.</p>
6.	<p><u>Headteacher (HT) Update – Part One</u> The HT reported that the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bid for the roof was still in progress. Director approval up to £110k had been given; however, the bid writers had indicated that costs would be considerably higher than this and subject to a school maximum contribution of 20%. Multiple surveys had been carried out and further discussion on the increase on the previous cost indication was taking place.</p> <p>Q: Is the school obliged to use specific bid writers?</p>

	<p>A: As far as the school is aware, the trust bid writers have to be used and three quotations will be obtained.</p> <p>Governors expressed their frustration around the situation regarding the roof work.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Head and had no further questions.</p>
7.	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>The School Business Manager (SMB) joined the meeting at 17.35 and finance documents were tabled due to difficulties with the PS Financials system.</p> <p><u>Management accounts October 2024</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual figures only were available on the PS Financial system currently. • The year to date stood as school making a £9624 loss. Accruals and pre payments had not been included and some income might not be included. No analysis or virements were possible at this time. • (A0) Main General Annual Grant (GAG) funding of £158k had been received from the DfE. • (A1) Other DfE income stood at £26.4k e.g. teacher pay and pension grants. • (A3) showed other private sector donations. £1859 represented banking from the previous year. • (A4) represented any other income. • (B0-B5) showed total staffing expenditure split between teaching, educational support staff, premises and administration staff (office) and other staff (before and after school club). <p>Q: Does the staffing expenditure include add on costs?</p> <p>A: Yes. The figure shown is the gross figure including National Insurance and pension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (C0) related to maintenance of premises included maintenance. • (C1) represented other occupational costs included electricity, gas and insurance costs. • (D0) related to Educational costs and supplies and services. • (E0) Other supplies and services included catering costs which had represented a large income and expenditure. Once the new system was in place parents would pay the new company direct. School would be responsible for the payment for those pupils eligible for Free School Meals. • (F0) IT costs were currently high as the server had been replaced and the mini hybrid computers had been replaced by 32 laptops. The previous internet connection had limited the amount of the IT curriculum deliverable and had now moved from 100 megabytes to

400. All other hybrid computers deemed still usable had gone to Key Stage 1 (KS1), there were now 10 iPads in each classroom in KS2 and 6 in KS1. All machines were being used.

- (G0) related to indirect employee expenditure such as the Apprenticeship Levy.
- No latest forecast was possible.

5 year budget forecast

This document included the estimates for each year, assumptions made and other information. Details of the composition of the budget had been included and governors were assured that this was discussed regularly by the HT and SBM.

Q: Where are the Friends of Excalibur (FoE) monies shown?

A: In private sector donations. FoE will have their separate account which will show in the school accounts, and they will make donations to the school to pay for items.

Q: How is it possible to project staffing costs forwards?

A: All staff are on the BPS budgeting software with details of their contract and incremental rises. The pay rise assumption comes from the government, and any agreed rise above this is provided for by way of a government grant. Projections do not account for moves to the Upper Pay Scale (UPS) which are not classed as a natural progression.

The SBM reported that previously those pupils with Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs) leaving school were taken out of calculations; however the trust now requires the cost of staffing and the SEN and Pupil Premium (PP) funding to remain in. All Chancery schools now follow the same principle.

A loss of £5k was forecast for 2024/25.

The CMAT expectation of a carry forward was currently 11% of GAG and was predicted by the SBM as £111k. Losses of £5k for 2024/25, £41.6k for 2025/26, £58.7k for 2026/27 and £74.5k for 2027/28 were forecast which were normal trends. After three years school would be in a positive position.

The SBM confirmed that after the settlement of pay rises in December a check would be carried out to ensure all figures were in line. Salaries were the major expenditure and an accrual had been put in for non-teaching staff.

Q: Is the school receiving support for the teaching and non-teaching pay rises?

A: Teachers yes, but not non-teaching staff.

Q: Where would the payment for the CIF bid come from?

	<p>A: The CIF bid would be based on a loan with repayments affordable to the school as a 10% contribution. Loans are awarded on a points basis over 10 years.</p> <p>Governors were advised November and December accounts would give a more accurate picture.</p> <p>Q: Is school looking at income generating activities e.g. use of the site?</p> <p>A: Yes, there are ideas.</p> <p>Strategies and reports on the use of PP and Sports Premium (<u>ringfenced funds</u>) were available on the school website.</p> <p><u>Income generating activities</u> Treetops Out of Hours had made £27k and £43k in previous years, and the Nursery had made £20k in 2023/24 both of which were having a positive impact on the school.</p> <p>No figures for <u>virements</u> were available at this point.</p> <p><u>Debtors and any write offs</u> Debtors were split between trade, Treetops and Pre-school stood at £16,327, £9k of which were current and £3.5k which were between 31 to 60 days. Older debts at £2718 and £1103 mostly related to Treetops and pre-dated the current system. These would be pursued.</p>
8.	<p>Premises / Health & Safety (H&S) Report</p> <p>The termly <u>SBM Report</u> in the trust format was available on GVO.</p> <p>The SBM had taken on responsibility to ensure H&S had not been compromised in the absence of a Site Manager. The team had stepped in and governors thanked the staff.</p> <p>There were no <u>urgent issues</u> to discuss.</p> <p>The SBM confirmed that the fire risk assessment had been organised, a successful fire alarm had been carried out, and the PE equipment audit was being organised. Classroom risk assessments were awaited after which the Curriculum risk assessments would be circulated.</p> <p>The Chair agreed to carry out a H&S walk around on Monday 2nd December, and it was confirmed that the Vice Chair was happy to continue in the role of H&S link governor.</p> <p>TASK: To carry out a H&S walk around on Monday 2nd December. (GW)</p> <p>The SBM left the meeting at 18.01.</p>

9.	<p><u>Chancery collaboration</u></p> <p>The <u>MAT Action Plan for the year</u> including the CEO video which mapped out the future movement of the trust was available on GVO.</p> <p>The Chair reported the next meeting of the <u>Chairs' Forum</u> would take place on 17th January 2025.</p> <p><u>Collaboration across the trust</u> continued in work streams as previously and the action plan mapped out movement forwards.</p> <p><u>Chancery communications Autumn 2024</u></p> <p>Governors were advised that the reference to the MAT growth update and discussions with the regional team related to tentative enquiries. Currently there was no push from the government for schools to academise, and all options for future growth based on the correct match for Chancery were still being explored.</p>
10.	<p><u>Link governor reports</u></p> <p><u>Behaviour and attitudes to learning walk around</u></p> <p>Discussion took place on the use of technology, and laptops in particular, outside the IT curriculum and also how parents could be encouraged to use concrete resources with pupil at home. Many positives were found and the high expectations of pupils which were demonstrated at all times were clearly visible. Although behaviour in a learning context was not observed due to timing, collaborative learning techniques had been discussed.</p> <p>Governors were requested to send details of availability for visits to the HT.</p> <p>TASK: To send details of availability for visits to the HT. (all)</p>
11.	<p><u>Impact statement</u></p> <p><u>Impact of the work of the governing board on the pupils of Excalibur School since the last meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors questioned the Maths Lead and received assurance of the development of the Maths curriculum in order to raise the attainment of pupils across the school, especially the greater depth children and lower attainers. • The explanation of the budget and projections greatly increased the depth of governor understanding of the school's finances and provided assurance that school was maximising opportunities to generate additional income and revenue. • The discussions of the meeting increased the governors' understanding of forward projection for future staff pay rises and changes to the operation of FoE.
12.	<p><u>Policies</u></p> <p>The LGB confirmed the approval of the following school policies on GVO subject to the comments on GVO:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premises Management Policy • RHE Policy • Anti-bullying Policy • SEN Info report • Surveillance and CCTV Policy • Staff Handbook • Child on Child Abuse Policy <p>TASK: To send the Intimate Care Policy to the clerk for uploading to GVO for approval. (HT)</p> <p>TASK: To approve Autumn 2 policies on GVO. (GB, GW and SS)</p>
13.	<p>Cheshire East Director of Children's Services Report</p> <p>Governors noted receipt of the report and the summary from Jenny Whiston and had no comments.</p>
14.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting, matters arising and actions</p> <p>The LGB confirmed the approval of the Part One minutes of the meeting on 30th September 2024 on GVO.</p> <p>There were no <u>matters arising</u>.</p> <p>Governors were requested to address outstanding tasks from the previous meeting and mark them as completed on GVO.</p>
15.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no other business for discussion.</p>
16.	<p>Date of Next meeting</p> <p>The date of the next meeting of the LGB was confirmed as 3rd February 2025.</p>

KG left and the Part One meeting closed at 18.22.