



Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Term 3
Held On Wednesday 12th February, 2025, at 5pm in Mexico class

1. Record of conflict of interests:

The members were asked to declare any interests to any of the items on the agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared at the meeting.

Welcome by: Alan Mulrooney (AMul), Chair of Governors to:

Mel Hay (MH), Vice Chair

Lorraine Walker (LW), Clerk to Governors

Alyssia Mepstead (AMep), Head Teacher

Esther Hogg (EH), LA Appointed Governor

Andrew Lowson (AL)), Co-opted Governor

Caz Smith (CS), Staff Governor

Craig Sunley (CSun), Co-opted Governor

Dani Crouch (DC), Deputy Head Teacher

Sarah Ellison (SE), Business Manager

Sophie Jarrett (SJ), Welfare Officer

Nicole Deacon-Willis (NDW), SENCO

Apologies: Heather Noble (HN), Co-opted Governor

Is the meeting quorate? Are apologies accepted?

The meeting is quorate. Apology was accepted.

2. SDP Focus - SEND:

NDW gave Governors an update as to where she is with EHCP applications and funding.

Nursery (EYFS1):

EHCPs = 0

SS = 5

EHCP applications planned 24/25 = 2, potentially 3.

Reception (EYFS2):

EHCPs = 1

SS = 5

Children currently under statutory assessment = 2 (first part of the EHCP application).

EHCP applications planned = 1 – submitted

Year 1:

EHCPs = 1 (meets the criteria for specialist provision)

SS = 6

Children currently under statutory assessment = 2

Year 2:

EHCPs = 0

SS = 14

Year 3:

EHCPs = 3

SS = 10

Children currently under statutory assessment = 1

Year 4:

EHCPs = 3

SS = 7

1 x child awaiting to hear decision for statutory assessment.

EHCP applications planned 24/25 = 1

Year 5:

EHCPs = 1

SS = 10

EHCP applications planned 24/25 = 4

Year 6:

EHCPs = 2 (1 confirmed, 1 starting in T4)

SS = 13

EHCP applications planned 24/25 = 1 (we will not see the funding it will be available for secondary school).

For the 2 children with EHCPs that are starting after half term, I said we could meet their needs but need funding to be able to cover the cost of adult support needed. The LA have agreed to support each child with £15,000.

Currently the National figures for SEND are: EHCP – 5% and SS = 14%. Lainesmead's current figures are: EHCPs = 3% and SS = 18%.

I have completed 5 EHCP applications in T1 and T2, 4 are planned to be completed in T3 and T4 and then 4 EHCP applications are planned to be completed in T5 and T6.

For the 4 children that the LA agree need specialist provision, we are awaiting a placement. With waiting lists so long, we are not sure when these placements will happen. Of the applications currently with the LA, I believe that 4 may meet 'requiring specialist provision.'

CHALLENGE: In the academic year 23/24, how many EHCP applications were put in?

I think it was 5, so I am certainly managing to complete a lot more this academic year.

I have been able to refine the process. Training delivered by Gary Freeman has helped me speed up the process.

Gary Freeman has a lot of connections in the SEND legal system and looks at the processes and the way that LAs are being unlawful in the way they allocate funding. LAs are currently trying to push schools back with the number of applications they are sending by requesting unnecessary paperwork. I am using AI to help me refine my paperwork and to reduce my workload. We will check that we are receiving the correct amount of SEN funding. We are fighting for what Lainesmead should be paid. AMep is waiting to see what the other Head Teachers in Swindon are going to be doing, but ultimately needs to be fighting for what Lainesmead is entitled to receive to support our children.

NDW has recently led the SEND Network within the Compass group, is sharing documents that she has been using as good practice and is much more confident in the role especially when challenging the LA.

DC commented that given the weight of SEND and inclusion on the new Ofsted proposal for the Inspection Framework, it's paramount that we've got the funding that we are entitled to to give the children the best possible provision.

When EH met with NDW, she asked how her job and time management were working. Previously it may have been a challenge but not being in the classroom has helped considerably with applications, administration, meetings, etc. We are definitely moving in a good direction and making excellent progress.

Staff attitudes and staff voice about SEND shows they are really knowledgeable and everyone is working extremely hard to support the SEND children.

CHALLENGE: Are the LA responsible for finding the specialist provision?

Yes, the LA is responsible for providing the children's provision. For the children that they have agreed need specialist provision, Lainesmead is failing them and the LA is failing them. There is no time frame for when provision should be available because the waiting lists are so long. If another child with a greater need is added to the list, they make take priority over other children on the list. Crowdys School has 80 children on their waiting list but can only offer 16 places each academic year. I email the LA regularly asking if a placement has come available for our children who are still waiting.

Heads of maintained schools are challenging the LA with regard to specialist provision. They will have to build new SEN schools or create SRPs within schools. With a SRP, funding doesn't always cover the cost of the skills/costs needed to supply specialist provision.

ACTION: NDW to report to FGB in T5.

3. Q&A Focus - Safeguarding:

CHALLENGE: How is the school ensuring that all pupils, including SEN, are fully included and supported in all aspects of school life, not just the curriculum, but the broader aspects?

For school trips, a risk assessment is always completed. SEND children have their own risk assessment, which is also signed off by the parent. SEND children have their own individual timetables, so if they need to take a brain break or come out of the classroom for regulation, they are allowed to do that. They have a 'now' task followed by a 'next' task/reward which helps to guide them through their day.

CHALLENGE: How are they monitored/supported out of the classroom?

They would always be with an adult, they use their now/next to guide them. It is only for a short amount of time, they then return to the classroom. For those children with an EHCP, working outside of the classroom and interventions are always monitored to ensure that what is being provided matches their EHCP entitlement. There are lunch clubs available for a small number of children who would not manage in the dining hall with a large number of other children.

CHALLENGE: What measures are in place to address issues, such as bullying or online abuse, particularly those pupils that are vulnerable?

With regard to online safety, we have recently had our E-Safety day, CSun, Governor, came in to see what happens. There is an E-Safety assembly on that particular day and two or three lessons each term depending on the objectives that need to be covered. Any safeguarding issues brought to our attention are investigated. Smooth Wall is an operating system that alerts us if anyone starts to type inappropriate words, they are then investigated and a judgement made.

CHALLENGE: How do you make a judgement, in particular when an outside agency would need to be contacted?

First of all you would speak with the child, followed by the parent. MASH is always contacted to check that what has been decided is the correct approach to take.

CHALLENGE: Have you had many cases to date?

No, it is all very low key. The majority of issues are unkindness on WhatsApp. We have had one where a pupil talked about suicide, but it transpired the child did not understand the word.

CHALLENGE: How do you know or how confident are you that you are made aware of issues?

Teachers log everything on CPOMS to build up a picture and if it keeps happening then we start to investigate. It is difficult if it is happening on mobile phones outside of school times. We always do get involved and make parents aware of the issues.

CHALLENGE: How confident are you that if there is a more broad safeguarding concern, ie. welfare or bullying, that the school becomes aware?

I would say that the staff are incredibly hot on spotting concerns and they are always logged on CPOMS. Parents always flag up bullying concerns to us, as well as the children concerned. Both pupil voice and Thrive help with these instances. Children are often given extra Thrive sessions to help them and to ensure that we are listening to them. It's all about listening, recording and reviewing.

CHALLENGE: How often do you review concerns formally?

We have a daily catch up, often more than once.

CHALLENGE: Do staff know who to speak with to express their concerns?

Yes, everyone is clear. We carried out safeguarding training last week and everyone was reminded that AMep is DSL and SJ is one of the appointed DDSLs with responsibility for the daily operational concerns.

CHALLENGE: Do we do anything or is there the opportunity to intervene, especially with the parents of vulnerable children, more of a preventable approach than waiting for something to happen?

Parents are informed and often say they didn't realise their child was watching something inappropriate or they blame the other parent if they are a separated family. We explain that this behaviour is not acceptable. This is why E-safety talks are held with parents at the start of their annual year group assembly. It is stressed how important it is and they are often amazed when they realise that the data being shared is from their child's actual year group. They are told which games their children are playing and which apps they are using.

CHALLENGE: When you phone MASH, and it doesn't meet their threshold, do you ever think it should be challenged?

It is always challenged. If I feel it needs challenging and I am not listened to, AMep will always get involved. However, this has not been necessary because I am usually successful with the challenge.

4. Q&A Governor Focus – Staff Wellbeing:

CHALLENGE: What is the strategy for addressing mental health among the staff?

It is a standing item on the SLT agenda. All employees have access to Care First who offer support across many different areas. BRYIM training was delivered to all staff on the TD day on 6.1.25. SE is the MHFA (Mental health first aider) and is available to talk with. Staff workloads are monitored to check the impact this may have on mental health and stress levels. PPA is protected and never cancelled, it may be postponed but always rearranged. No emails are read/sent during holidays/weekends. We don't ask too much of staff. The staff room was refurbished in August '23 to create a comfortable space for staff to use during break times. Staff can use the tranquillity garden during break times. All staff have a peer to work with, a year group leader for support and a SLT link. Staff know who their Line Manager is. We look out for staff with issues and help before the situation gets out of control – staff are very open. Staff achievements are recognised and AMep often sends out hand written 'thank you' notes. Thank you breakfasts are held at the end of every term and a recent 'cans and cakes' day was very much appreciated. Flexible working requests are considered and where possible staff can work from home. The National College is available for all staff to access training courses on line. Staff voice is sent out regularly and changes are implemented if possible. All staff are invited to social events with summer and Christmas events well attended.

CHALLENGE: In terms of the SLT, what do you do to ensure that you have got adequate support and your well-being is maintained? Is there anything that the GB can do to support you?

AMep plays healing music in her room. We are good at taking the pressure off each other and we check in with each other regularly. We practice what we preach and don't send emails during the evenings, weekends and holidays.

A lot of it is down to having a balanced work and home life. If school leaders have a positive approach, all staff will follow the same ethos. It is good to have an open and familiar relationship with staff and to be approachable. It is no 'them and us' we are all staff members.

5. Review actions/approval of minutes dated 18.12.24/matters arising:

Minutes dated 18.12.24 approved by all Governors.

To confirm that Jen Olden, Adam Skill and Sam Eatwell were attendees at the above FGB meeting.

ACTION: GDPR Audits to be uploaded to the Hub for Governors to review. SE will upload as and when available. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: Contact to be made with the landowner of the pumping station. SE will report to Governors when a reply is received. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: Teachers Pay policy to be reviewed in T3. On the FGB Agenda. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: PPG absence data to be analysed in comparison to non-PPG children. PPG children 23% and non-PPG 17%, so it is slightly higher. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: April, May, June, July, August bank statements to be filed with the minutes. Signed bank statements to be given to LW.

ACTION: Friends of Lainesmead account to be checked and confirmed. ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION: All Governors to read the SFVS and make comments. To be sent to SE. HN, AL and AMul still to complete reminder sent.

ACTION: Response with regard to increased pupil charge will be reported to Governors. The charge has gone down from £22 per child to £20 per child. ACTION COMPLETE.

6. Policies for approval:

Intimate Care policy approved (with 1 small amendment already complete)

Teacher Pay policy approved.

CSun checked the pay scales against the teaching union website and confirmed all match and look ok.

Admissions, including Nursery – not approved.

ACTION: Move to T4 FGB – Claudine Woodman, Admin, has additions to the policy.

CHALLENGE: The policy says 30 places, does that mean that the variation to 45 places has not been approved?

SBC have said that at present the reception numbers are low, they will be starting to allocate places for September '25 in the next few weeks. At present, we would not be in a position to increase above 30. In order to move forward with planning the budget we are planning for 1 EYFS2 class this September. We have applied to raise the PAN to 45 in September '26.

CHALLENGE: The lunchtime charge within the policy (£5.20) differs from the application form (£4.70).

£5.20 is in line with SBC, the application form will be amended.

Equality Statement approved.

Governor Allowances approved.

CHALLENGE: Do we need to change 'will be reviewed annually by the S&F Committee'?

Yes, it will be amended.

Support Staff Performance Pay approved.

Social Media approved.

CHALLENGE: P2 – should this say 'staff, students, governors and parents/carers are required to read, understand and comply with this social media policy.'

The policy has been updated.

CHALLENGE: P3 – does this need the apart from family members line added to it 'accept friend requests from, or communicate with, pupils past or present.'

I understand the suggestion to add 'apart from family members' to this section, however I believe it's important to keep the policy clear and consistent to protect professional boundaries and staff well-being.

If we explicitly allow exceptions for family members, it could create ambiguity and make it harder to reinforce the rule in other cases. It may also set a precedent where staff feel pressured to justify individual relationships, which could lead to complications. Ultimately, this policy is about safeguarding and professionalism ensuring that all staff have a clear and consistent guideline to follow.

CHALLENGE: P4 – can we say that pupils and parents 'cannot' use social media to complain about the school? Is this not a free speech issue? Especially when we say social media includes WhatsApp. I think this is over reaching a bit.

CHALLENGE: Could this read 'should not' rather than 'cannot' as we don't really have any way of enforcing that?

The policy already states 'should not', which makes it a guideline rather than an outright ban. This wording is important because without it we would have no basis to challenge inappropriate or damaging discussions that could negatively impact staff, pupils or the wider school community. Including WhatsApp in the definition of social media reflects its use for wide group discussions, where issues can quickly escalate. The intention of the policy is not to dictate what parents can do, but rather to provide us with a framework to challenge inappropriate content is necessary. The policy does not prevent parents from raising concerns but encourages them to do so through appropriate school channels, ensuring matters are addressed constructively rather than in a way that could cause unnecessary conflict or misinformation. Additionally, this policy aligns with the guidance set by The Key, which I trust and believe provides best practice in managing social media expectations within the school community.

CHALLENGE: In regard to 'when using social media, staff must not use personal accounts to conduct school business, accept friend requests from or communicate with pupils past or present.' There are staff at school who have been there long enough that some of their ex-pupils are fully fledged adults – can the wording here be adapted to reflect this?

I appreciate the point about long serving staff having former pupils who are now adults. However, the purpose of this policy is to ensure clear professional boundaries and protect staff from any potential safeguarding or reputational risks. While ex-pupils may be adults, maintaining a clear distinction between personal and professional relationships is still best practice. Keeping this policy in place provides staff with a clear guideline and removes any ambiguity about what is appropriate.

This is about ensuring their safety as much as the pupils, for these reasons, I believe it is important to retain the current wording to uphold these professional boundaries.

CHALLENGE: Is there not a chance then that many staff would already be breaking the policy, by keeping it as it is?

The same expectations around social media use are also clearly outlined in our Staff Code of Conduct, which all staff have read and signed to confirm their agreement. This means that staff are already aware of the policy and the professional boundaries it sets. Ultimately, my role is to ensure that staff understand the policy and its importance. If a staff member chooses not to follow it and this leads to an issue, then the appropriate course of action, including potential disciplinary measures, would be taken. In fact, we have recently had an incident where a staff member's social media connection with a parent almost led to disciplinary action. This reinforces why having clear and consistent policies in place are so important in protecting both staff and the school.

7. Pupil Voice – Do you feel safe at school:

DC is giving Governors a summary of the pupil voice and the actions that she is going to take as a result. This is the first time that we have asked these questions, so it is hard to judge what a normal response is. It was decided to ask similar questions in the next pupil voice at the end of T6, with perhaps a couple of different questions too. Eirian would have had previous results. DC will report back to Governors in T5 about the early impact of the next steps being undertaken.

Enjoyment of school and learning:

Y4/Y5 gave the most concerning answers, with many pupils indicating they only enjoy school and learning some of the time or less. In Y6 a significant number of pupils reported lower enjoyment. As a result DC will talk to some focus groups from Y4/Y5/Y6 and ask them why their enjoyment is low. Is there something specific or do they just not enjoy coming to school. DC will then use these findings to see how lessons could be adapted, perhaps by using more technology.

Challenge in Lessons:

Y4/Y5 pupils said they would like more differentiated lessons, we have moved away from that way of teaching and more towards meeting the needs of all pupils. DC will talk with the pupils, perhaps they don't understand 'challenge' and think it might be something difficult rather than a way to stretch their knowledge. Sometimes the children lack resilience, as they were 'Covid' children.

Behaviour Management:

Y4/Y5 have reported that the behaviour of other pupils is good only some of the time or less. There were similar concerns in Y6. DC will again, talk with these particular year groups to find out what sort of behaviour is happening. DC will focus on the school rules in her first assembly after half term and also ask the teachers to remind their children of the school and class rules during their Thrive sessions. It is also important that staff are consistent and the escalation protocols are being followed in all classes.

CHALLENGE: From a parents point of view, children's experience of school can sometimes be influenced by their learning partner within the classroom. How often are learning partners changed?

Parents should talk to the class teacher if there is a problem, because it shouldn't impact their learning and experience at school.

Key Priorities:

- Improve pupil engagement in learning.
- Addressing behaviour concerns.
- Enhancing challenge in lessons.

Next Steps:

- Monitoring the impact of pupil engagement strategies.
- Strengthening peer support and positive behaviour models.
- Lesson observations focussed on challenge and behaviour.

8. Head Teacher report:

CHALLENGE: Is there an update on the deficit recovery meeting?

Please see the Confidential Minutes attached.

CHALLENGE: What was the outcome of the EHCP meeting with Jeremy and what progress has been made against the barriers you were coming up against?

This was answered in the SEND focus provided by NDW earlier in the FGB meeting.

CHALLENGE: 50% of KS2 children are feeling that racism is an issue/concern. As this hasn't come up before can you provide some context to this?

A parent spoke to AMep about a racist incident that happened outside of school during football. A follow up assembly has already happened, the same parent then came into the school requesting that AMep phone him about racism in the school. He didn't feel that the first incident had been dealt with adequately by the previous Head. AMep phoned the parent and agreed to do additional PHSE lessons and Thrive sessions with the children. The child concerned was spoken to and said that he felt the incident had been properly dealt with. The parent then contacted the school again, and AMep followed this up straight away with a phone call. AMep and DC asked the children if they thought there was racism at Lainesmead and were very shocked when 50% of the children came back and said yes, they did. It was decided to go back and speak with the children. Do they understand what racism is, have they personally experienced racism. Only one racist incident has been logged on CPOMS. If there is an issue it will be dealt with. After a discussion, the children decided they wanted more posters around the school. They are making the posters and the best ones will be displayed around the school. The local PCSO is also coming into school to do an assembly, we will also have a look at how the question was worded and it may have been something that happened a few years ago that they are thinking of.

ACTION: DC will report any findings at the FGB meeting in T5.

CHALLENGE: What was the outcome of the filtering and monitoring check?

Everything was fine, the only concern is that we still have a problem with Smooth Wall, but that has now been fixed. If something inappropriate is typed on an iPad, it will alert AMep with the iPad number so the child can be located and spoken with. We are also changing our provider to City Fibre.

CHALLENGE: Can you please RAG rate each of the school improvement priorities with a couple of comments/notes, this will be very useful?

When leaders present, as Adam Skill did at last week's Curriculum meeting, they update Governors on targets and impact.

CHALLENGE: Is there any underlying issue that is causing the amount of physical assault?

It is peer on peer that has been identified. Any inappropriate behaviour/physical assault is directed straight to SLT to deal with.

CHALLENGE: Is there anything that Governors can do about the continued concerns related to parent aggression towards staff?

There is nothing major that cannot be dealt with by staff at Lainesmead. A recent ban of a parent has now been lifted, they recognised they were out of order and have also been on an anger management course.

CHALLENGE: Could you update us on the use of the reading bus?

It is used every lunchtime by groups of children. Sam Eatwell is due to present to Governors in Term 5, I will request that she gives a more detailed update on the reading bus, including her vision for its use, including class sessions in there.

CHALLENGE: Attendance in week 7 was the highest and in week 16 it was the lowest. Is there a particular reason behind this?

Week 7 was after the September holidays where children have settled into the new school year and before the winter bugs kick in. Week 16 experienced a particularly low attendance due to a high number of children being off sick, the weather had also changed so likely contributed to the decline in attendance.

CHALLENGE: There was one racist incident recorded but doesn't appear on the peer to peer list.

This should be on the peer to peer list. A racist incident doesn't always fall under peer on peer abuse. It depends on factors like intent, impact and whether there's an ongoing pattern of harm. A one-off comment while completely unacceptable might not meet the threshold for peer on peer abuse in a safeguarding context. To make sure we are handling this consistently, I will be reviewing incidents further with the safeguarding team and making sure we are applying the right definition.

9. Standing Items:

Cash flow and bank statement: AMul to sign off and a copy added to the minutes.

Friends of Lainesmead account:

CHALLENGE: Is there a plan for how the 'Friends' money will be spent?

Following the pupil voice earlier this year, we would like to purchase picnic benches to go on the field under the trees to enable the children to have somewhere to sit in the shade and also to enable them to eat their lunch outside in the summer. In a parent voice survey, it was suggested that children spend more time outside learning.

Friends have recently agreed to fund a Bike Maintenance workshop. The technician will assess up to 60 bikes during the day and put right minor defects.

Update on the financial position to the end of the academic year: this has already been discussed at FGB and Governors made aware of the current situation.

10. SFVS –Protecting Public Money and Value for Money:

AL, HN and AMul still need to read through this document and ask any questions they may have.

ACTION: LW to contact AL, HN and AMul on Governors WhatsApp to remind them.

11. Staffing and Confidential:

See attached Confidential minutes.

12. AOB:

E-Safety training:

The school is trying to get an accreditation, but part of this requires training to be undertaken by Governors.

- All Governors are recommended to do; and at least to do, the National College's Annual Certificate in Online Safety for Governors/Trustees.
CSun will complete plus other Governors.
- CSun to do either the Cyber Security for Governors/Trustees on the Governor Hub or the National College does an Annual Certificate in Cyber Security for Governors.
- Review with AMul what training he has done/could do related to the DfE Filtering and Monitoring standards, as I understand this is covered by safeguarding.

ACTION: All Governors to be invited to the National College Certificate in Online Safety. CSun to send the invite.

ACTION: MH to send Prevent training certificate to LW.

ACTION: LW to check with HN if she has any appropriate training certificates in E-Safety or Prevent.

Governor Training (free) through the LA:

Governor Refresher training – Wednesday 5th March – 6pm to 9pm

Role of the Clerk – Thursday 20th March – 6pm to 7pm

Let's Talk about SEND – Wednesday 2nd April – 6pm to 7pm (clashes with FGB)

Safeguarding and Attendance – Tuesday 22nd April – 6pm to 8pm

Admissions – Thursday 8th May – 6pm to 7pm

Role of the Virtual School – Monday 19th May – 6pm to 7pm

Finance for Governors – Tuesday 3rd June – 6pm to 7pm

ACTION: Governors to let LW know which course they would like to attend and she will book.

H&S Matrix:

CHALLENGE: Will the Business Continuity Plan be updated before FGB?

Due to our attendance at a Critical Incident Planning Training course on 25th February, we have postponed drafting the BCP until after the training to incorporate the latest insights and best practice.

CHALLENGE: When will the catering equipment duct ventilation and ventilation system and the boiler service be carried out?

ACTION: SE to confirm.

Ofsted Consultation:

CHALLENGE: Are we planning to feedback on Ofsted's consultation regarding the changes to their model?

I will be sharing a summary document with staff at briefing on 28.2.25 and have put it in the monitoring cycle to discuss it at our PDM on 26.3.25. We have until 28.4.25 to respond so I will encourage as many staff as possible to input.

CHALLENGE: The DfE have also provided guidance on the use of reasonable force.

This has already been responded to.

Writing NoV 27.1.25:

CHALLENGE: Is there a suitable plan of action to move forward on the recommendations?

Natasha Griffith is due to present to Curriculum Governors in T4, she will be asked to feedback on her action plan.

- Meeting closed at 7.24pm.

The date of the next FGB meeting is Wednesday 2nd April, 2025 at 5pm in Mexico class.

Signed Date
Chair of Governors