



**MILLTHORPE SCHOOL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors  
held in person on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 at 6pm**

**Present:** Gemma Greenhalgh (Headteacher) Amanda Stipetic  
Lee Probert (Chair) Emma Hughes  
Trevor Charlton Renee Rainville

**In Attendance:** Alex Collins (SBM)  
Jen Mitchell (Director of Personal Development for Trust) *from 6pm until 6.26pm*  
Sarah Watts (Head of Careers) *from 6pm until 6.26pm*  
Merry Wright (Associate AHT) *from 6pm until 6.40pm*  
Sophie Cole (DSL) *from 6pm until 6.49pm*  
Rob Beever (DHT) *from 6pm until 8.16pm*  
Kavina Rothenburg (DHT) *from 6pm until 8.16pm*  
Victoria Armitage (DHT) *from 6pm until 8.16pm*  
Charlotte Law (Clerk)

				Action
1.	<b>Welcome, Apologies, Declaration of Interests, Any Items for AOB</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.  There were no declarations of interest.			
2.	<b>Minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 meeting</b> (previously distributed) The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and duly approved.  <b>Action Plan</b>			
	Action	Person	Update	
1.	Chair to contact Helena re governorship.	Chair	Chair contacted Helena but had no response.	
2.	Clerk to amend minutes to state meeting was held in person not virtually.	Clerk	Completed.	
3.	Chair and Headteacher to meet and design a Headteacher Governor Report – To be completed by the next LGB.	Chair / Headteacher	The HT and Chair met to discuss the action and this agenda reflects the changes.	
4.	The Chair to complete the Governor Annual Statement and Impact Report - Chair and Renee had discussed and would converse with the Headteacher.	Chair	In progress.	
5.	The Chair noted that Dave Merrett had resigned as governor after the last meeting and a letter of thanks was agreed to be sent from the governing board.	Chair	Completed.	
6.	SBM to include the DfE guidance on any further shared material/documentation regarding school uniform consultation.	SBM	The SBM agreed to reference the DfE guidance when applicable.	
7.	The Chair asked for a broad structure from the Headteacher of the Deputy Heads and their roles to be sent to all governors.	Headteacher	On agenda.	
8.	Headteacher to ask the Estates Manager to review	Headteacher /	On agenda.	

	'yellow' banding on lightning and decide whether this was appropriate in relation to the whole building and the location of the computer network.	Estates Manager	
9.	Staffing continuity to be addressed.	Headteacher / Chair	On agenda.
10.	The vice chair asked the Headteacher to investigate the link governor roles and provide a summary background portfolio of the three deputy leads that could work with governors on these link roles.	Headteacher	On agenda.
11.	Clerk to add SEND Policy to January's agenda.	Clerk	This was updated and was awaiting the new formatted MAT policy which was under review.

There were no matters arising not covered by the agenda.

3.

### SLT Team Update

#### 3.1 Careers with Jen Mitchell (Director of Personal Development for Trust) and Sarah Watts (Head of Careers)

Governors were informed of the changes to the careers team and the opportunity this presented to look at how the careers programme could be improved. Jen Mitchell, Director of Personal Development, drew the governors' attention to the careers section on the school website; this included careers events and up to date opportunities which could be accessed on a regular basis. The Director of Personal Development continued to run through the resources on the website with the governors and looked in more detail at the careers programme and the statutory benchmarks.

Sarah Watts, Head of Careers, discussed the apprenticeship offers, careers opportunities and the Google classroom which was set up for each year group to access; and summarised the programme by year group so far.

#### Year 11

- A one-on-one with a career's adviser and a statutory talk from an external adviser was booked.

#### Year 10

- Successfully completed their mock interviews; the feedback was very positive, and the children were noted to be respectful and engaged.

#### Years 9 and 10

- The ISSP masterclass launch with the Merchant Taylors was a success.
- Students were identified by the Head of Business to join this programme.

#### Years 7, 8 and 9

- The route to success programme, held at York St. John University and York University was offered to a group of pupil premium and ethnic minority children.
- This was an engaging and encouraging experience for all pupils involved.
- There were 22 Year 7 students who signed up for the next masterclass launch.

The Director of Personal Development summarised the fantastic work the Head of Careers had done to create these opportunities for the children and asked governors to consider a careers link role; governors agreed to discuss this later in the agenda and commented on the optimistic careers programme available to all children at Millthorpe. The Director of Personal Development informed governors on the changes to the Year 10 work experience model which would now consist of a co-ordinated week of events leading to a one-day workshop with a bespoke company.

**Question:** A governor asked what the feedback was from students and parents.

**Response:** The Director of Personal Development explained that there had been a few queries but once the rationale was explained which had included the quality of work experience for the students, the potential

safeguarding issues and the number of available employers, parents had understood the need for change and saw that it could be both meaningful and impactful. Parents were advised that children could complete a two-week work experience in school holidays if they wished to do so.

*Jen Mitchell and Sarah Watts left the meeting at 6.26pm.*

### **3.2 SEND changes and position of faculty - Merry Wright (Associate AHT)**

Merry Wright, Associate AHT, introduced her role to governors as aspiring SENCO and discussed the updated SEN structure that Millthorpe would move towards. As SENCO, the Associate AHT manages the four SEN needs, and inductions with SEN leads were planned. The SEN vacancies were difficult to fill, and the team had looked into external methods of advertising, including apprenticeship positions. Governors were informed that one of the SEN leads was promoted from a TA3 to a TA4 position and there was one new employee due to start.

The Associate AHT notified governors that improved support and communication with parents of children on the SEN register would be conveyed next week.

**Question:** A governor asked if it was an equal workload for the SEN leads.

**Response:** The Associate AHT stated that the workload would be mapped following a full review and sensory audit. At Millthorpe the communication and interaction need category would be the more prominent need, this was different to the rest of York.

Governors were informed of the increasing number of EAL students and families at Millthorpe as such the school would invest in training for each SEN category and this would be co-ordinated in the summer term.

**Challenge:** A governor asked for a more detailed plan for recruitment of trained SEN teaching assistants.

**Response:** The Associate AHT discussed a review of the job adverts, the schools contingency plan to look at apprenticeships and contact the universities. It was also mentioned that the current agency staff had worked well with the team and permanent appointments may be made.

**Question:** The Chair asked the Associate AHT to confirm that no child was without support.

**Response:** The Associate AHT stated that all children in need of support were provided with it; in addition, the most vulnerable students were associated with the permanent staff.

The Headteacher briefly discussed the staffing re-structure, and the various changes to the proposal. The TA2s had increased from 26 to 30 hours and several of the TA3s had moved to a TA4 position. In terms of the school's current position, there were still some ongoing contractual issues which colleagues were required to sign to end the process; all TAs had the opportunity to apply for promoted posts.

**Question:** The Chair asked about staff morale after the staffing re-structure.

**Response:** The Headteacher addressed the mixed emotions from some staff members but confirmed that all staff continued to support the children throughout the process.

**Question:** The Chair asked if the planned CPD help to improve the morale.

**Response:** The Headteacher confirmed that the aim was for all staff to feel valued and equal with who they were working with; if Millthorpe got the induction stage right this would be a huge benefit.

Governors thanked the Associate AHT for her report, the Chair asked if governors could extend their thanks to the staff who were involved in the recent staffing re-structures; all agreed.

**ACTION: Chair to send letter of thanks to staff involved in the recent staffing re-structure from the LGB.**

**Chair**

*Merry Wright left the meeting at 6.40pm.*

### **3.3 Safeguarding- updates of numbers/issues/challenges/context - Sophie Cole (DSL)**

Sophie Cole, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), introduced her role to governors and reported that safeguarding numbers and referrals were increasing. Millthorpe had four children in child protection, 21 children under child in need, 19 on early help, one child who was looked after and 13 children who were previously looked after.

Governors were notified of the wide range of needs with an increasing number linked to the mental health and/or substance use of parents. Children in Year 8 and 9 were most affected and the DSL drew governors' attention to the progress made.

- A successful safeguarding audit was completed in April 2022 and a further audit from the trust was completed to find any gaps.
- CPOMS was launched with a review of the categories to streamline across the trust and Millthorpe was used as the training tool.
- The DSL delivered training on harmful sexual behaviour to all teaching staff; the information was gathered from pupil voice and an assembly to all year groups was held.
- The DSL was planning to deliver training to all staff on contextual issues in school alongside a police liaison officer to focus on concerns in the local area.
- A review on young carers was completed and showed 60 students who identified as a young carer; future assemblies were planned on this.
- The Deputy Headteachers' were booked onto new safeguarding training; all staff would be asked to complete this relevant and up to date training as the number of issues grow across school.

The Headteacher thanked Sophie Cole for stepping up to the DSL role, the training of staff and for the continued support during many emotionally challenging situations. Whilst an educational psychologist had offered some general support for the DSL, the weight of this load could not be underestimated; governors thanked the Designated Safeguarding Lead for her insight and diligence.

*Sophie Cole left the meeting at 6.49pm.*

### **3.4 Attendance/punctuality/exclusions/bullying evaluation/actions and behaviour system amends - Rob Beever (DHT)**

#### Attendance

Rob Beever, Deputy Headteacher (DHT), introduced his role and discussed attendance, how post covid numbers had not recovered, and the use of a more robust attendance system and tracking element.

- A new process for capturing attendance data was followed by staff.
- The punctuality of children getting to school on time was addressed, including discussions on the difficulty of the site and the number of entry points which had posed safeguarding issues.
- At 8.45am the only way for students to enter was via the front gate; if a student was not in school at 8.45 then they were recorded as late.
- The Assistant Heads were at the front gate to sign students in and reduce late attendance.
- There was a spike of low attendance after the holidays; young carers and those with travel issues were filtered out and the deputy heads of year had a condensed number of students to address.
- The FastTrack system used for attendance cut off at 90% but Millthorpe had put in an earlier intervention at 97%. This included communication via text message which had created some issues with parents; governors discussed this impact and how the school could communicate in advance of new changes to a system.
- The intention for the communication with parents around attendance was to get more students into school learning and socialising.
- Raising awareness on attendance tracking had a positive impact and Millthorpe were circa 91%.
- Millthorpe had a new attendance officer in post with a pastoral background.

A governor commented on the attendance data document which showed the absence week on week as

opposed to the year-to-date school pulse document and thanked the DHT for the clarity of data.

#### Detention

The Deputy Headteacher shared the overall analysis data on detentions which was completed every term; it checked that pastoral staff members had acted on all cases with due diligence. The data received fed directly into the personal development curriculum and an example was provided.

#### Behaviour

The Deputy Headteacher commented on the broken routines witnessed in school from the Covid lockdowns; some children had little or no education at this time whilst others were well supported. The school had implemented a simplified list of expectations inside and outside the classroom in poster format. These were broken down into five simple expectations for each which were shown on screen to governors; staff were trusting students to make the right choices. The Deputy Headteacher discussed the behaviour system that was in place which showed an escalation process resulting in certain sanctions.

Governors were informed about a small number of students defying the systems in place, but the routes for teachers to directly report behaviour issues with the pastoral team was simplified and could be seen instantly. The Deputy Headteacher explained that the triangulation of student behaviour must be planned and processed, an objective was set for each head of year to create a raft of interventions which would be carried out before suspensions; in summary if the number of suspensions continued to rise then there was a plausible need for more interventions.

**Challenge:** The Chair asked the Headteacher to discuss the communication from Millthorpe around the new posters.

**Response:** The Headteacher wrote to parents last week to explain the reasons and rationale of the simplified behaviour strands, the new one-way system, attendance, and the closure of certain gates. Explanation was provided and simply put the decisions were to get children into school to learn, have a high-quality education, and be happy and safe. The Headteacher added that the school had 1100 children in the corridors which must be managed properly; Millthorpe were mindful of communicating to parents before changes were made but some quicker than anticipated actions, such as boarding the windows had resulted in later communication.

**Question:** The Chair asked about the community activities on social media.

**Response:** The Headteacher explained the exceptionally careful and positive use of language on the posters. There was no change to the ethos of the school and staff had spoken openly at a training session with Kavina Rothenburg (DHT) about the use of a shared language and the benefits to all students including SEND students. Moving forward the Headteacher hoped to share some of the training and pedagogy behind the consistent language and messages used on the posters with parents and students who had potentially misunderstood.

**Challenge:** A governor discussed the issues raised here and the actual changes made may not have been the issue, but that the lack of communication was most likely the problem.

**Challenge:** A governor agreed that the lack of early communication was preventable, and in future this should include staff to avert any disgruntlement.

**Response:** The Headteacher added that there were some changes which the school wouldn't usually expect to communicate, since the impact was minor. However, the Headteacher acknowledged that the context of engagement was different for Millthorpe.

The Chair mentioned the need to reach out to the local MP and summarised how it was not possible to over communicate, but maybe Millthorpe should counteract the social media claims and respond proactively to amplify the message of support for children to learn.

### **3.5 T&L/QA/priorities/curriculum - Kavina Rothenburg (DHT)**

Kavina Rothenburg, Deputy Headteacher (DHT), introduced herself to governors and discussed the revision

work on the curriculum for both Key Stage 3 and 4. This work would focus on the intent though to the design and planning whilst ensuring a challenging curriculum for all students. The Deputy Headteacher had started deep dives in all subjects, and provided governors with an overview of this process, and commented on the support from the trust board around curriculum development.

Governors were notified that the DHT met with the seven heads of faculty each week to discuss their subjects and ensured their SLT had accountability to drive the curriculum forward. The feedback from the heads of faculty was refined clarity on the direction of the curriculum, and empowerment to lead their team.

The Deputy Headteacher discussed the team's professional development sessions which were delivered this term and included the listen to learn approach. Upcoming sessions were discussed and shared with governors, the feedback from the CPD sessions was strong and changes in the classrooms had been noticed. Primarily this had come from lessons observed by the DHT, longer learning walks, training and support, and relative feedback. The DHT noted the highly committed number of staff at Millthorpe.

Governors were informed that a student voice on listen to learn was completed and some feedback and examples were shared with governors. The staff team had looked at adding routines to focus on the students learning, and valued the comments received.

### **3.6 PPEs/intervention plans/BRAG/Options - Victoria Armitage (DHT) (taken out of order)**

Victoria Armitage, Deputy Headteacher (DHT), introduced herself and discussed the curriculum and the recent work done to allocate the right amount of learning time to each subject at each Key Stage.

#### Key Stage 3

- Governors were notified of the changes to the number of lessons and hours associated to each subject which were worked out to equal parity ahead of the GCSEs.
- Science and English were increased.
- Personal development increased by one hour.
- MFL was reduced to balance other subjects.
- Music and Drama was put on a rotation across the year.

#### Key Stage 4

- There was an imbalance found and subsequent work had allowed for parity in all options subjects with five hours of teaching time per week.
- Millthorpe held an options evening and communicated the changes to parents and students; students were given a Pathway dependent on their Maths and English grades.
- 116 students were on Pathway 1 which meant they would study a humanity and a language.
- Every student was considered individually and only 10 students changed pathways after consultations with parents.
- If a child was on Pathway 2, they could still opt to take a language.
- The changes were not to restrict or streamline a child but offer breadth and challenges which had been mapped individually.
- The DfE currently recommended 75% of students should be on Pathway 1, however this would be reviewed by Millthorpe each year depending on the cohort.
- All children mix throughout the school day.
- Pathway 3 entailed bespoke English and Maths and consisted of smaller groups of students who required extra support.
- Through the Pathway process curriculum levels had remained and no choices were restricted.

**Question:** A governor asked if any conclusions for Pathway options had been drawn from the current Year 10s and the impact of Covid.

**Response:** The Headteacher stated that the Year 10s had positive grades and each student recognised that they were held to account for their own development.

	<p>The Headteacher added that the main challenges staff were faced with had come from parents whose children were on Pathway 1 and who did not want to do a language. The government had shifted the expectations and History was now part of the EBacc subject combination with a national ambition for 90% of all students to be on this Pathway by 2025; last year Millthorpe had 14% of its students following the EBacc route. It was further explained that Ofsted and the government found significant issues in enforcing a language on those children who were not achieving their English and Maths.</p> <p>The DHT shared the latest Year 11 data which showed that Maths 5 and 4 plus required extra focus alongside a reduction in the gap for the disadvantaged and vulnerable students. Governors were informed that the figures from the disadvantaged, vulnerable and SEND children do impact on the school's overall figures and working with these children even when they were absent from school was a priority.</p> <p>As such the school had launched a ten-week passport to the exams/summer for the whole cohort with bespoke academic interventions including student wellbeing, family engagement and teacher supportive accountability. Governors were notified that the school would be engaging in more Year 11 learning walks and look at student voice to set targeted interventions. Core PE was considered as a tool engage children and creatively provide an outlet for worries and concerns; there would also be specialist tutor time and additional support for Maths. The DHT was working with all faculties and subjects to notice trends through attainment level and support accountability.</p> <p>The Chair discussed the school improvement plan and all governors agreed that the SLT team update had covered all their questions.</p> <p><b>3.7 Site developments/improvements/priorities/ revised budget - Alex Collins (School Business Manager)</b> Discussed in agenda item 4.</p>	
4	<p><b>Strategic Plan Reporting and Evaluation</b></p> <p><b>4.1 School Improvement Plan 2022-2023 – Alex Collins (School Business Manager)</b></p> <p><u>Premises</u> Alex Collins, the School Business Manager (SBM), discussed the site management and transition period of investment and the site team who assessed the challenges at Millthorpe. Governors were notified that the school could access money through the trust for site investment. This was done firstly by risk and then the learning environment to create conducive spaces which were fit for purpose.</p> <p><u>Risk</u> There was an investment in the security of the site, asbestos, lightning as discussed previously, and the duty of care was to assess this in a considered approach. The team were introducing a new compliance system which meant that all the assets in the building would be registered, and all statutory checks completed. This updated way of working would implement an asset management plan and cover areas such as the main hall roof and the heating issues.</p> <p><u>IT</u> There was a big investment in the Wi-Fi and wider network, which put the school in a good position. The SBM addressed the years of under investment around the hardware and devices available to students and noted that they would move towards laptops and chrome books.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> A governor asked how this investment would be shared between departments. <b>Response:</b> The SBM noted that previous decisions had concluded that not all departments needed the devices. However, the teaching and learning discussion from Key Stage 4 had brought to focus the need for this to change so that computing and business lessons in Year 7 could spark maths development throughout a student's school journey in systems such as SENECA.</p> <p><u>Finance</u> The SBM notified governors that the first draft of the revised budget was under review by the trusts CFO.</p>	

	<p>The headline was that the school would have a surplus at the year end, albeit slightly reduced than they had hoped for. Some caveats ensued, including utility costs which the SBM was currently working on with the procurement team.</p> <p><b>ACTION – Trevor Charlton would like to meet and discuss the revised budget with the SBM when it was available to do so.</b></p> <p><u>Staffing</u> There was an understanding of what the curriculum looked like, and the staff associated with it. Whilst the recent staffing changes had impacted the school from a financial point of view, the assumptions which were built into the budget were realistic. The challenge would be acquiring the highest possible calibre of person.</p> <p><u>Subscriptions</u> There were some additional costs related to IT subscriptions which had been looked at and any savings were challenged to improve the teaching and learning for all staff and students at Millthorpe.</p> <p><i>Kavina Rothenburg, Rob Beever and Victoria Armitage left the meeting at 8.16pm.</i></p> <p><b>4.2 Headteacher Report</b> There was no further update to report.</p>	TC/ SBM
5	<p><b>Educational Performance (Reports and Discussion)</b> <b>5.1 School Pulse</b> There was no further update to report.</p>	
6	<p><b>Safeguarding</b> There was no further update to report.</p>	
7	<p><b>Finance and Budgeting (Reports and Discussion)</b> There was no further update to report.</p>	
8	<p><b>Health and Safety</b> There was no further update to report.</p>	
9	<p><b>Risk Record</b> The SBM advised governors that there was no update yet, but the new director of estates would be working on a new document to share with governors.</p>	
10	<p><b>Governor Business</b> <b>Governor Training Sessions</b> <b>ACTION: The Chair advised governors to look at the training schedule shared in the agenda pack and to complete any required training as quickly as possible.</b></p>	ALL
11	<p><b>Special Projects</b> None.</p>	
12	<p><b>Policies for Review</b> None.</p>	
13	<p><b>MAT Business</b> The Headteacher informed governors that there was a MAT training day planned and feedback would follow.</p>	



14	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>1. Governor recruitment, future plans and link roles - EH</b></p> <p>The Chair agreed to contact the governance service to enquire about independent governors and there was a plan in place for parent governor elections which would begin when the current noise on social media had diminished. The Chair requested governors to actively recruit through word of mouth.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that they had written to Janet Bennett and thanked her for her service as a governor. Governors added their gratitude for the work she did with SEND.</p> <p><b>ACTION: The Chair agreed to circulate the governor link roles by correspondence, after assessing each governor's interest.</b></p> <p><b>2. Parent/carer engagement - EH - negative posts/groups on social media and encouragement of complaints to the LA around Millthorpe as well as negative OFSTED parent view responses being submitted. Was there a plan from school to engage parents and cares to understand and reassure concerns?</b></p> <p>This was discussed in agenda item 3.4</p>	Chair
15	<p><b>Future Meetings</b></p> <p>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023  Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023  Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023  Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023</p>	

Meeting end time 8.23pm.

These minutes were approved by the Chair at the LGB meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

**Action Plan following the Meeting of the Local Governing Body on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023**

	Action	Agenda	Person	Date
1.	Chair to send letter of thanks to staff affected by the recent staffing re-structure from the LGB.	3.2	Chair	Spring 2
2.	Trevor Charlton would like to meet and discuss the revised budget with the SBM when it was available to do so.	4.1	Trevor Charlton Alex Collins	Spring 2
3.	The Chair advised governors to look at the training schedule shared in the agenda pack and to complete any required training as quickly as possible.	10	ALL	Spring 2/ Summer 1
4.	The Chair agreed to circulate the governor link roles by correspondence, after assessing each governor's interest.	14	Chair	Spring 2

**Future Agenda Items**

Next Meeting	Future Meeting
Governor Link Scheme	