

SPRING TERM 2025

TURNFURLONG INFANT SCHOOL

MINUTES of the meeting of the FGB Finance Focus meeting of Turnfurlong Infant School held via Zoom on 6th February 2025 at 4.30pm.

PRESENT:

Mrs L Arnott

Mrs C Austin

Mr R Lloyd

Mr M Mardawan (Chair)

Mrs R Ochiltrie (Headteacher)

Mr A Puri

Mrs Y Rabindranath

Mrs S Hounsell

Mrs K Sargeant

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs C Darling (Bursar)

Mrs R Weymouth (Clerk)

ABSENT:

Mrs H Burnett

ACTION

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair opened the meeting and thanked Governors for attending. There were no apologies.

2 NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following items would be discussed under Any Other Business;

- Co-opted Governor application

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

4 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Circulated prior to the meeting, Governors reviewed and agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th December 2024.

4.1 MATTERS ARISING

The FGB Chair advised she had completed a check of the Single Central Record.

5 GOVERNING BOARD MATTERS

5.1 WELCOME ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Mrs Rabindranath was welcomed to the meeting as an Associate Member. Mr Puri was welcomed to the meeting having been recently appointed Parent Governor.

6 FINANCE MATTERS

6.1 BUDGET REVIEW SUMMARY AND COMMENTARY

Circulated prior to the meeting, the Bursar advised;

- The budget has been reviewed with the FGB-F chair and Governors have been with provided Period 9. Period 10 has now been received which will form the provisional 2025/26 budget to be submitted to BC by 28th February 2025.
- The school is predicting a larger carry forward at the end of 2024/25 than predicted at the start of the year and will be just over £33,000. This is largely due to energy costs that were not as high as forecast.
- SEND funding will impact the carry forward before the end of the financial year and there may be some adjustments.
- The provisional 2025/26 budget is in progress and once January data has been reconciled the provisional budget and 3 year projection will be sent to Governors.
- The DFCG was used to purchase new staff laptops and computers. The cost of the computers was slightly more as when they arrived there was an issue with monitors which cost a further £1,000 from the DFCG.
- Financial implications of staffing for all teaching staff pay awards have been included in the budget and 3% for teaching staff and support staff will be added to the draft budget.
- The Supply Staff budget has been reduced and Agency staff increased as the school now have some long term agency staff for the Spring and possibly the summer term.
- There are no new lettings. Charges increased in September 2024, and this has been received well.
- The Contract Review Sheet is on GovernorHub. The only contract for review this term is the PE Equipment check which is within the Headteacher's financial delegation and the school would like to remain with the current company.

Bursar

What period are the energy charges for? Responding, the Bursar advised that gas is to September, the school are still awaiting October-February bills but have estimated what they might be. The actual figures for gas were just under £2,000 and the current forecast budget is £9,000. For electricity, the school have invoices to December and have forecasted January and February to year end. The budget includes £15,000 for this but it may be less.

There is a comment in the budget notes that the Fixtures and Fittings budget was used for a staff room refurbishment. Responding, the Bursar advised the cost for this was going to be paid via the DFCG budget but because of the nature of the refurbishment (being mainly furniture) this cannot be paid using the DFCG and therefore had to be funded from the main budget.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher and Bursar for tracking and adjusting the budget throughout the year to reach a positive year end position.

Circulated prior to the meeting, the Chair presented a representation of the school's income and expenditure and key budget areas to track. The next version of this document will provide financial quarter trends.

If financial data is variable between financial quarters, it would be useful to see the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

6.2 SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD

Circulated prior to the meeting, Governors noted the SFVS. Governors asked;

Why is Question 7 "Does the school take an integrated approach to curriculum planning?" only answered in part? Responding, the Headteacher advised that a proposed action from this document is that training relevant to Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning needs to be identified. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) will also reference this.

There are a lot of acronyms in the document. Responding, the Chair advised he has a list of educational acronyms he can share with Governors.

Governors approved the SFVS.

Chair

Governors were reminded to submit their completed Financial Skills Matrix to the Bursar as soon as possible.

6.3 FINANCIAL BENCHMARKING

Circulated prior to the meeting, Governors reviewed the Insight Tool financial benchmarking comparing 2023/24 financial year data to 30 comparator schools.

Governors discussed that funds spent on Teaching and Teaching support Staff are higher than other schools and is due to the high level of support needs children on roll have as well as an experienced teaching staff which is more costly to the school.

The Headteacher advised that SLT are at the top of their pay scales and there are a number of experienced teachers with an average age of 45-50. Increasingly people are working for longer but reducing hours and it is expected that the school will see a pattern of this over the next 3-4 years.

There are also a high number of children with SEN at the school and therefore there is a higher ratio of support staff to provide support.

Is a job share across 5 days a more expensive staff model? Responding, the Headteacher advised that with on costs it is.

Costs for Educational ICT is also higher than other schools. In the last couple of years, the school have purchased laptops for the school and new servers. This budget code also funds software packages the school purchase.

Governors discussed it would be interesting to discuss these costs with other school Bursars and review the previous year's data for this benchmark.

Do the school look at how the software purchased impacts children in terms of value for money? Responding, the Headteacher advised this is evidenced through things such as the quality of the Computing Curriculum meaning that children have the ability to access learning at their junior school settings.

It is however likely that the increase in costs under this budget code are due to the purchase of the server.

It would also be useful to select comparator schools that are more local.

6.4 CONTRACTS AND LEASES TERMLY REVIEW

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

6.5 SCHOOL FUND UPDATE

The Bursar advised that the Voluntary School Fund is currently being independently examined and will be available for the next meeting.

6.6 PHONE PROPOSAL

The Headteacher advised that the school need to change the current phone system to internet based phones.

The school's internet has been updated previously, and the school have looked at 5 different providers.

Circulated prior to the meeting, Governors reviewed the quotes received noting the schools preferred supplier (Blizzard) which offers the best value for money.

Does the quote from Blizzard include technical support? Responding, the Bursar advised yes.

Blizzard is not listed on the document as a school specialist, should this be considered? Responding, the Headteacher advised that on considering the quotes the school feel that Blizzard will provide the school with everything it needs. The school have also contacted other schools working with Blizzard and have received positive feedback.

The Bursar advised that the school specialist aspect is more to do with IT support services which will be useful when the school review its IT contract.

The last quote on the sheet does not include cabling costs. Was this a timing issue in terms of submitting the tender document? Responding, the Headteacher advised the company had time to respond.

The Bursar advised that the length of the contract is 5 years for all providers except JSL who have quoted a 3-year contract. The school would also like to pay costs upfront.

Agenda

Is there a preference for upfront or a lease? Responding, the Bursar advised the school would prefer paying upfront as in the long term this is better for the school.

Is there a warranty? Responding, the Bursar advised this is included.

Governors agreed the contract should be awarded to Blizzard.

7 PREMISES UPDATE TO INCLUDE;

7.1 PREMISES ACTIVITY/ISSUES

Circulated prior to the meeting, Governors noted the Premises update. The Headteacher advised;

The school now have another cleaner which is having a positive impact.

The Premises Manager continues to manage ongoing maintenance of the site well.

Some larger projects have been funded by Buckinghamshire Council (BC) such as ramp access to the nursery outdoor area and electrical cabling in the hall for catering which will be installed in February half term.

7.2 LETTINGS UPDATE

This item had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY TO INCLUDE;

8.1 TERMLY ACCIDENT REPORT OF ANY ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS AND DANGEROUS OCCURANCES

The Headteacher advised that 7 incidents have been reported to BC across the Autumn term. The school do take caution and if a child has been referred to their GP or the hospital following an accident this is reported to BC. There has been a period of children having accidents in different ways none of which are related and were not during breaktimes so there is no discernible pattern.

With the introduction of OPAL Play the school are seeing fewer accidents when compared to a year ago. Spring term data will be interesting as it will be a full year since this was introduced.

Do children have a snack in the morning? Responding, the Headteacher advised they do.

The Headteacher advised that the school used to see a spike in the Autumn term with children wanting to come inside as they were cold and bored. This is no longer the case.

Have there been any accidents where parents have raised a concern? Responding, the Headteacher advised that a meeting has taken place with one parent as their child had 2 accidents in short succession in the afternoon break session. They were concerned about the wheelchairs children play with as part of OPAL and did not feel these were appropriate for children to play with. The Headteacher met with the parents and shared reduced accident data since OPAL. The school have also made an adjustment to the way the wheelchairs are used at lunchtime.

Have any of the same children been involved in recurring accidents? Responding, the Headteacher advised not to the extent it has been a concern. Some younger children with speech and communication needs can bite but this tends to be in Reception and or Year 1.

How many of these injuries are because of school property such as slippery surfaces? Do the school have any data on this? Responding, the Headteacher advised that if there has been an accident related to an area of the school it is recorded where it happened on the accident form. Currently the school use a paper-based system but hope to move this to an electronic system. Accidents tend not be faulty equipment or issues with the site but children running into each other.

8.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY WALK REPORT

The Health and Safety Governor advised she had arranged a visit for after half term.

9 OTHER ITEMS;

9.1 STAFFING UPDATE

The Headteacher provided the following staffing update;

H & S Governor

- A member of staff on long term absence has been covered by an agency teacher who is an ECT and will be leaving at the end of term.
- A member of staff left at Christmas who was supporting a child in Year 1 with additional needs. Agency support staff has been and will be used until Easter. This may also continue for the summer term if this is affordable.
- There is a delay in children getting their EHCP's approved and there are several children at the school where the EHCP has been agreed but the school is waiting up to 40 weeks for the final plan without funding. In the meantime, the school must support these children from the existing budget. The SEN crisis is affecting every child at the school as it means that the school is unable to have a TA in every Year 2 class.

The Staff Governor advised this is very challenging for support staff as often TAs are filling in and moving around classes where there is most need.

9.2 INCREASE OF EARLY YEARS AND PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING

Governors **NOTED** the government's plans for Early Years providers to benefit from £2 billion extra investment compared to last year, to support the rollout of 30 hours of government-funded early education from September 2025.

9.3 TEACHER PAY AND FLEXIBLE WORKING DISCUSSION

Governors noted the request from the DfE for input on the barriers in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and potential wording changes to better support flexible working.

It was agreed this item would be tabled at FGB-C.

FGB C

10 POLICIES

There were no policies or review at the meeting.

11 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Spring Term:

Wed 5th Mar 25 – FGB C

Thurs 3rd Apr 25 – FGB

Summer Term:

Thurs 15th May 25 – FGB F

Thurs 5th Jun 25 – FGB C

Thurs 3rd Jul 25 – FGB

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Circulated prior to the meeting, the FGB Chair advised she had circulated an email from an individual interested in becoming a Co-opted Governor.

The FGB Chair advised that the individual has made it clear that they will not be able to perform any other additional duties other than attending meetings.

Governors discussed that if this person would like to be a Governor this includes more than just attending meetings and they would be expected to adopt a Governor role. If another Governor were to resign there needs to be Governors on the board that are willing to help and support and ensure succession planning.

The board and school relationship is based on trust and working towards a common goal. There is concern over how this individual would align with these values.

It was agreed that the FGB Chair would advise the individual of the boards expectations and provide an update at the next meeting.

13 IMPACT OF MEETING

Governors discussed the following impact of the meeting;

- SFVS approved
- Phone contract approved

14 CONDUCT OF MEETING

Governors confirmed that the meeting was conducted in an open manner and that all governors were invited to participate and contribute to discussions. It was confirmed that all members of the Governing Board would have access to these minutes **(with the exception of any Restricted Confidential Minutes)**.

The meeting closed at 18.51pm.

Signed Date

CHAIR