



## Governing Body of Stormont House School

Minutes of the meeting held at the school  
on Monday 25 November 2024 at 5.00pm

### Membership:

Name	Governor Type	Term of Office end	Present
Beatrice Andrews (Chair)	Co-opted Governor	09/07/2027	present
Dot Hodgson (DH)	Co-opted Governor (Vice-chair)	30/07/2026	present
Rhiannon Eglin (RE)	Co-opted Governor	04/10/2028	present
Kevin McDonnell (KM)	Headteacher	-	present
Justyna Sagan (JS)	Staff Governor	24/11/2028	present
Nicola Pizzolato (NP)	Co-opted Governor	20/06/2025	present
Allan Roddie (AR)	Parent Governor	13/02/2026	absent
Vacancy	Local Authority Governor		
Vacancy	Parent Governor		
Vacancy	Parent Governor		
Vacancy	Co-opted Governor		
Bernard Hawes (BH)	Associate Member	24/11/2027	Unable online

### Also Present:

Donna Knight-Olds (DK) - Clerk to the Governing Body

Sandra Collier (SC) - Deputy Headteacher

Katie Foster (KF) - Deputy Headteacher

Claire Napier (CN) - Sixth Form and Careers Lead

### Action Log

20-03-2023	Liaise with Ms Andrews regarding joining unconscious bias training when arranged for staff.	Ms Foster	ASAP	Ongoing
01-07-2024	Update the website introduction and recruitment information with Ofsted result	Headteacher	ASAP	Completed

01-07-2024	Enquire as to when a staff survey would best be completed	Headteacher	ASAP	Delegated to Resource Committee
01-07-2024	Speak to finance to explore the parameters and amounts regarding the voluntary fund	Headteacher	ASAP	completed
01-07-2024	Check that the contracts for the library build and fit out were fully signed off	Headteacher	ASAP	completed
25-11-2024 Item 2.2	Governors were reminded to complete the Register of Pecuniary Interests on Governor Hub.	All	asap	
25-11-2024 Item 2.3	that one Co-opted Governor with expertise in finance and budgeting be sought and a second Co-opted Governor be sought with an openness to areas of skill; that an advertisement be prepared seeking new Co-opted Governors and all be asked link and share to it via social media channels;	Headteacher	asap	
25-11-2024 Item 5	that a list of destinations for Year 11, 12 and 13 leavers be sent to all Governors.	Claire Napier	asap	
25-11-2024 Item 7	Governors were reminded that they should read the updated KCSIE Guidance then register on Governor Hub that they had done so.	All	asap	
25-11-2024 Item 9	Prepare a policy review schedule	Headteacher	Next meeting	
25-11-2024 Item 11	(i) that Governors should be invited to all suitable school events; (ii) that all Governors should endeavour to attend the 4 February 2025 Coffee Morning and then stay to visit classrooms and talk to students.	Headteacher  All		

## 1 Attendance

There were no apologies but Alan Roddie was not present and Bernard Hawes was unable to access the meeting online.

## 2 Governing Body Organisation

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

2.2 Governors were reminded to complete the Register of Pecuniary Interests on Governor Hub.

2.3 DH summarised the four vacancies the Governing Body was currently carrying and spoke about the Young Governor programme being run by LB Hackney with an aim of increasing the diversity of Governors. The profile of Andre Deen-Swaray had been shared as a potential candidate from the Young Governor programme who could work with the school as an Associate Member - attending Governing Body meetings without voting rights - with support from local authority. DH would serve as a buddy to Andre and after completing the programme he could be welcomed as a Co-opted Governor. It was recognised that a Co-opted position would need to be available at that time but it was felt this could be managed.

QUESTION: As Andre Deen-Swaray had such strong knowledge, skills and experience could he not be appointed as a Governor now?

ANSWER: Yes, but this would deny him and the Governing Body the benefits of the Young Governor programme. It would enable him to have a taste of what being a Governor involved without taking on the statutory responsibilities and without immediately making the four-year commitment.

It was reported that there had been two expressions of interest in the Parent Governor vacancies so the positions would be put out for nomination through the standard process. A hope was also expressed that through increased parental engagement the Friends of Stormont House organisation could be relaunched.

There was discussion of the process for identifying a potential candidate to propose to the local authority for appointment to the vacant local authority appointed Governor position. It was suggested that perhaps RE could be proposed for that position and someone new identified for her Co-opted Governor position. It was also suggested that a senior leader from a local mainstream school could be identified and approached with the suggestion that becoming a Governor at this school was an opportunity to expand their knowledge on SEND and inclusion while expanding the general education knowledge and skills on the Governing Body. DH announced that she was leaving her current role at the Mayor's Violence Reduction Unit and would seek interest from colleagues in taking up a Co-opted Governor role at the school in order to maintain the link with the organisation.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Bernard Hawes be appointed as an Associate Member of the Resources Committee and attend meetings of the full Governing Body;
- (ii) that Andre Deen-Swaray be appointed as an Associate Member of the Resources Committee and attend meetings of the full Governing Body;
- (iii) that the Sixth Form and Careers Lead should contact those running the Young Governors programme about the possibility of alumni from the school connecting with the programme in the longer term;
- (iv) that Justyna Sagan be welcomed to her first meeting as an elected Staff Governor;

- (v) that it be noted that Nicola Pizzolato intended to stand down at the end of his term of office in June 2025, which would lead to a second Co-opted Governor vacancy;
- (vi) that one Co-opted Governor with expertise in finance and budgeting be sought and a second Co-opted Governor be sought with an openness to areas of skill;
- (vi) that an advertisement be prepared seeking new Co-opted Governors and all be asked link and share to it via social media channels;
- (vii) that Beatrice Andrews be appointed as Link Governor for Safeguarding.

2.4 It was recognised that once the ongoing recruitment of Governors was more complete, gaps in skills and knowledge should be identified for training. It was suggested that suitable training relating to the students of this school and their needs could be identified.

### **3 Minutes of the Last Meeting and Action Taken**

#### **3.1 RESOLVED:**

that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

3.2 The Action Log was updated with it particularly noted that the many actions related to Governor recruitment were now completed. It was noted that the parameters of the Voluntary fund had been established and it had not been used for the library.

3.3 No urgent action was reported.

### **4 School Development Plan (SDP)**

The Headteacher introduced the SDP and went through the highlights. He emphasised the ongoing focus on Safeguarding and described the process of preparing the SDP as useful. Reference was made to the ICT Director leaving the school with the Resources Committee expecting to recruit to the teaching elements and divide up the leadership responsibilities with consideration to be given to the best model for the school's needs.

### **5 Pupil Achievements and Destinations**

KF introduced the report which had already been considered by the Teaching and Learning Committee. She explained that the school had decided not continue with the Science iGCSE because it was so hard for SEND students and an alternate accreditation was being sought. She confirmed that the school knew what all recent leavers were doing.

#### **RESOLVED:**

that a list of destinations for Year 11, 12 and 13 leavers be sent to all Governors.

### **6 Headteacher's Report**

KM highlighted the new inclusion of comparison between this year's and last year's attendance figures and it was observed that attendance was much better than national averages for pupils with SEND in mainstream settings. It was highlighted that Stormont House's systems for addressing attendance issues were already in line with new guidance. It was noted that the Attendance Policy had been updated and was inline with LB Hackney guidance. However, it was advised that further thought be given to the school's position on attendance given the national and boroughwide focus and how easily SEND students could meet the threshold to be considered persistently absent. It was noted that the school was working with other special schools in the borough recognising similarities in attendance matters. KM emphasised that attendance concerns were always looked at firstly in relation to safeguarding.

### **7 Safeguarding**

Governors were informed that all staff had received the updates to KCSIE Guidance and

signed to declare that they had read it. The Governing Board had before it the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and it was pointed out that the first three of the five risks detailed were specific to being a Special School. Reference was made to the ongoing discussion about who should write Healthcare Plans with it being explained that the retendered school nursing contract had not included this duty but schools had refused to take on the duty on the grounds medical expertise was needed. Further to negotiation it had been agreed that the school nursing service would write the plans for all new Year 7 students.

Governors were reminded that they should read the updated KCSIE Guidance then register on Governor Hub that they had done so.

RESOLVED:  
that the Child Safeguarding Statement be noted.

## **8 Reports from Committees and Working Parties**

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting held on 7 October 2024 be received;
- (ii) that the report on the Summer Visit of the Improvement Partner be noted.

## **9 Policies for Review and Approval**

A Governor observed that policies were only rarely brought to the FGB for review. KM acknowledged that the school should improve its practice beginning with drafting a schedule of review taking account of which were statutory, which local authority recommended and which were school-based.

## **10 FGB Ways of Working and Future Agendas**

The following points were made about how the Governing Body could improve its ways of working:

- more should be done with Governor Hub to maximise its usefulness
- it would be valuable for the key issue, or issues, on each agenda to be indicated
- there should be a clearly developed and communicated policy schedule

## **11 School Events and Governor Visits**

The following events in the Autumn term were mentioned:

- Christmas Dinner
- Coffee Mornings on the first Tuesday of every month
- Drop-in Sessions
- Carol Service

All Governors were encouraged to book in visits with it being noted that the Teaching and Learning Committee intended to make a visit as a whole committee.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Governors should be invited to all suitable school events;
- (ii) that all Governors should endeavour to attend the 4 February 2025 Coffee Morning and then stay to visit classrooms and talk to students.

**12 Date of Next Meetings**

RESOLVED:

(i) that it be noted that the FGB was due to meet on the following dates:

- Monday 3 March 2025
- Monday 7 July 2025

(ii) that an additional meeting (probably online only) be held on 19 May 2025 to approve the budget.

**13 Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting ended at 6.40pm



Beatrice Andrews  
Chair of Governors

Date: 03.03.25