

Minutes of a meeting of the local governing body of Sparkenhoe Community Primary School held virtually via Microsoft Teams Monday 16th November 2020 at 4pm

Present

Rhian Jones – Headteacher
Jo Webb – Local Governor (Chair)
Emma Cull – Local Governor
Jenny Bosworth – Local Governor
Kassam Mohamed - Local Parent Governor

In attendance

Tom Bott – School Business Manager
Penny Cooper – Deputy Headteacher
Dan Cheetham – Deputy Headteacher
Dave Nimmo – ALT DFO
Robyn Cooper – Clerk to the Local Governing Board

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were not received and therefore could not be accepted from Enamul Hoque. The clerk would write to Mr Hoque again regarding his attendance.

ACTION: Clerk

2. Declaration of Governors' Interests

There were no declarations of interest declared in the business to be transacted.

3. Register of Interests

The Clerk would continue to chase the outstanding register of business interests form and send the completed forms to Ms Jones.

ACTION: Clerk

4. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting – 14th September 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th September 2020 had been previously circulated to all governors and were taken as read, confirmed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Item 12b Safeguarding Policy – It was agreed that governors would be invited to the safeguarding training in school. The school was currently awaiting new date as the previously arranged session had been cancelled. Details would be circulated once received.

ACTION: PC/RJ

Item 18 Any Other Business – Mr Mohamed stated that he had contacted Ms Jones regarding the gelatine free flu inoculation. He stated that he had spoken with a doctor who had recommended that people should have the vaccination if there were vulnerable people in their household. Ms Jones explained that this year the form had offered parents the option to choose the injection and there had been a slightly higher uptake.

6. Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher's report had been circulated to the local governing board.

Ms Webb highlighted the high mobility in years 3 and year 4. Ms Jones stated that it was the case in years 3, 4 and 6. She stated that they were not clear on the reasons, but it may be families returning to home countries.

Ms Webb highlighted the increase in pupil premium and noted the impact of the increase in unemployment during lockdown. Ms Jones stated that many family's circumstances had changed during lockdown and the number of pupils in receipt of FSM had increased. **Mrs Cull asked how quickly the funding came into effect.** Ms Jones stated that as soon as the application for FSM was approved the child received the meals. She explained that funding was based on the census data so there was always a lag. Mr Bott stated that the September funding would be based on the January census. **Ms Webb asked whether the school had a sense of which sectors families worked in.** Ms Jones stated that it was mixed, however there was a core group of families that worked in hospitality.

Q (EC): Could you explain what a WOW day was? Mr Cheetham explained that this was a day, which started off a new topic.

Ms Jones explained to the governing board that they needed to be secure that the school improvement priorities were the right ones for the school at the moment. The governing board reviewed the key priorities for this year as outlined in the report.

- There would be a presentation on the curriculum at the next governing board meeting.

ACTION: Agenda Item

- The work to develop leadership across the school was ongoing.
- Ms Jones explained to the governing board that they had not yet done a full analysis of the data to see which pupils would need a bit more support. Ms Webb highlighted the impact of the differences in support at home over the course of the lockdown. Ms Jones stated that they did not think that the gaps had got wider but the support was likely needed for those who were borderline expected/working towards.

Q (EC): How do you intend to capture the information on those at home who had not followed what had been set? Ms Jones explained that in the mornings they stuck to English and maths tasks, but in the afternoon provided a more general project. She stated that it was difficult with 30 – 60 children. Ms Jones stated that they hoped to be able fit some of the long-term projects into the curriculum and some of the non-academic projects could fit into other areas.

Ms Webb noted the challenges listed in report, highlighting absences and the impact on staff. Ms Jones stated that there were additional stresses across workplaces, but they were managing it. She stated that procedures were in place for the SLT to move around the school and go into classrooms for a limited time. **Ms Webb asked whether there had been a negative impact on the quality of teaching.** Ms Jones stated that it had but it was difficult to pin point. She emphasised that the teachers were working very hard and planning good lessons that were interesting and exciting. Ms Jones explained that it was difficult to manage catch up when some pupils had been off. She

stated that they would continue to work on this with teachers and remind them of previous practice and highlight there was room for revisiting and reflecting on practice.

Ms Webb highlighted the photos included in the report. Ms Jones stated that it was important to remember the great things going on in school. She stated that pupils were really happy to be in school.

School Improvement Plan

Ms Jones stated that she had circulated the plan as a reminder of the plans that had been in place. She stated that they had looked at the key priorities but not done a full review. Ms Jones explained that the priorities outlined in the Headteacher's report would be in place for this year.

Ms Jones stated that the next Headteacher's report would include an analysis of the data and projections.

Dan Cheetham left the meeting

7. Local Governing Body Business

a. Review of Governing Body & 2019/2020 Action Plan

The review of the governing body and action plan had been circulated and were agreed.

Ms Webb reminded the governing body to send the completed skills audit to the Clerk.

ACTION: All Governors

b. Action Plan 2020/21

Mrs Cull suggested including safeguarding training into the plan. Ms Webb would include this into the training programme

ACTION: JW

Ms Jones highlighted that the engagement with community section may need to include different actions in light of Covid restrictions.

The local governing board discussed visits and how this would take place. Ms Webb stated that there would normally be pupil premium, Safeguarding and health and safety visits this term. She explained that the LA had released guidance on virtual visits. Ms Webb drew attention to the potential governance risks of not being able to visit school and over-reliance on Ms Jones for information. She stated that that needed to be aware of this and mitigate the risks.

c. Local Governor Vacancies (2x)

Ms Jones stated that she had contact from someone who expressed an interest in joining the governing body Dr Nick Allsopp. She stated that he had experience in governance, and she had spoken to him over the phone. The clerk suggested asking Dr Allsopp for a pen portrait/information on skills and circulate this to all governors.

d. Training and Development

Ms Webb, Ms Jones and Mrs Bosworth had attended the Trust School Improvement and Ofsted training delivered by Vincent Hampton. Mrs Bosworth took the governing board through the training and highlighted that it had been valuable, particularly in

terms of the discussions around the governor's involvement in the school improvement plan. Mrs Cull suggested presentations from curriculum leads too. Ms Webb explained that this was part of the plan for the year.

8. Review of Policies, Procedures and Publications

a. Virtual Attendance Policy

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

ACTION: Agenda Item

b. Intimate Care Policy

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

ACTION: Agenda Item

Dave Nimmo joined the meeting.

9. Finance and Staffing Updates

a. CIF Bids [Standing Item]

Mr Bott explained that they were working with Barker Associates on the bids for this year. He stated that they had started the process earlier than the previous year and surveys were being completed. Mr Bott explained that the first bid would be for the doors and windows in Saxby and the second bid for the roof.

b. Staff Reward and Recognition

Mr Mohamed explained that he had raised this with Ms Webb and asked whether there was some way of rewarding hard work that the teachers put in during lockdown (e.g. vouchers) to recognise the work put in. Following a discussion, it was agreed that to ensure they were fair to all staff the governing board would write to staff personally as recognition for their work. Mr Mohamed would put a letter together and circulate it to the governing board.

ACTION: KM

c. Pay Committee

The pay committee had met, and minutes circulated for information to non-staff governors.

d. Headteacher Appraisal

The headteacher appraisal had taken place, supported by Jane Ridgewell, CEO.

Internal Audit

Mr Bott had circulated the internal audit report to the governing board. He explained that the audit had been a health check and been carried out remotely. Mr Bott explained that there had been 4 recommendations from the check and took the governing board through them and the actions taken:

- Business interests' forms needed to be published on website
- Official orders raised for all appropriate purchases. Mr Bott explained that this had been an issue during the first lockdown and the need for the school to be reactive, however official orders had been raised on all purchases for the last 2 months.
- Pay roll needed to be signed by the Headteacher prior to being sent to the DFO and this would happen going forward.

- Procurement cards should only be used for business transactions, not personal. Mr Bott explained that this was Covid related and linked to how the school had to arrange collections for members of staff leaving at the end of the summer term. He explained that the Trust would be circulating guidance on this going forward. Ms Jones highlighted that there was a full audit trail.

Mr Bott would send the report back to the auditors accepting the recommendations.

Outturn

Mr Bott had circulated the outturn to the governing board. He explained that at the start of the year the school had set a deficit budget, which the Trustees had flagged as Red for intervention. Dave Nimmo would work with Ms Jones and the school on monitoring the budget. Mr Bott stated that going forward they needed to set a budget that was cost neutral. He would produce an outturn each month for governors to review and monitor the variances. Mr Bott stated that they could analyse the spend on utility bills, services, SLAs etc. and by the end of the year they would have a closely scrutinised budget to support setting a cost neutral budget going forward.

Mr Nimmo explained that this was a supportive measure. He explained that Mr Mohamed had been invited to the next Audit and Resource Committee meeting. Mr Nimmo also highlighted that he would be delivering training for governors in December on finance and how to interrogate financial data as a governor.

Ms Webb highlighted that there was a lot of variance in some areas including the reduction in Early Years funding. Mr Bott stated that there were some positive variances including pupil premium and additional grants (catch up funding). He stated that the Early Years had been a negative variance, explaining that they had budgeted for 55-60 in F1 but there were only 34 pupils in the Nursery. Mr Bott stated that the Government had committed to funding schools in the autumn term based on last years' numbers, however had not committed to that for the spring term. He stated that they would see a reduction if the funding reverted to NOR. Mr Bott stated that they would take steps to try and increase numbers including offering places to F0s for those who can start in January and they were also looking at 30-hour provision.

Mr Bott highlighted that income from educational visits was down as these were not taking place. He stated that this tallied up against the trip/visits expenditure. Mr Bott highlighted the cost in Agency Supply and explained that they had taken teachers onto the payroll, so this cost was expected to reduce and level out. He stated that the cleaning costs may increase.

Mr Nimmo informed the governing body that there were a large number of groups who were lobbying Government for support for Covid-related costs.

Mr Bott highlighted that they had budgeted for a 2% pay award but this had been agreed at 2.75%, which impacted salaries budget.

Mr Bott stated that they expected to be £5000 better off. He highlighted that a caveat to this was that they were doing the Gopsall project (£45,000).

The outturn report would take same format every month and governors would be able to review and compare. It was agreed that this would be a regular standing item.

ACTION: Agenda Item

Mr Nimmo outlined the work being undertaken by Mr Bott and the support being provided. He stated that they needed to get to a place where the school was able to match spending with income. Mr Nimmo stated that governors were welcome to contact him with any questions.

Ms Webb highlighted that the school did have 3 sites, which resulted in higher overheads. She also highlighted that one of the reasons for joining the Trust was being able to gain benefits of financial economies of scale.

10. RSE [Standing Item]

An update on RSE had been included in the Headteacher's report. It was agreed that this would be removed as a standing item.

ACTION: Clerk

11. Attenborough Learning Trust

- Ms Webb informed the governing board that she had attended the Trust Chairs of Governors meetings and provided an update.
- Ms Webb and Ms Jones had attended the Trust Standards Committee meeting. Ms Webb highlighted that there was a good level of challenge.
- Ms Jones explained that a survey had been circulated to all staff in the schools on the views of the Trust and what different networks/groups, training etc. would be useful going forward. She stated that as a result a Deputy Headteacher network had been set up.

12. Documents Received by the Chair of Governors

There was nothing received to bring to the governing board.

13. Any Other Business


There was no further business.

14. Date of Next Meetings

- 25th January 2021
 - Curriculum Presentation (DC)
- 22nd March 2021
- 24th May 2021
- 5th July 2021

Ms Webb and Ms Jones would also look at reflecting on the reduced numbers of meetings and whether this was working for the LGB and school.

ACTION: JW/RJ

Signed.....Date: 25th January 2020