

Minutes of a meeting of the local governing body of Sparkenhoe Community Primary School held at the Ark on Monday 1st November 2021 at 4pm

Present

Rhian Jones – Headteacher
Jo Webb – Local Governor (Chair)
Emma Cull – Local Governor
Jenny Bosworth – Local Governor
Kassam Mahomed – Local Governor
Nick Allsopp – Local Governor
Fatima Mangera – Local Parent Governor
Michael Cooper – Local Staff Governor

In attendance

Tom Bott – School Business Manager
Penny Cooper – Deputy Headteacher
Neil Thorpe – Associate Member
Robyn Cooper – Clerk to the Local Governing Board

1. Apologies for Absence

All governors were present.

2. Declaration of Governors' Interests

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

3. Register of Interests

The outstanding forms were completed by the governors' present. These would be countersigned and kept in school for audit purposes.

4. Election of Vice Chair of Governors

Dr Allsopp was elected as Vice Chair of Governors for the 2021/22 academic year.

5. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting – 27th September 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on the 27th September 2021 had been previously circulated to all governors and were taken as read, confirmed, and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Ms Webb will circulate her health and safety visit report
- The safeguarding training for those governors who were not present at the last meeting was completed prior to the meeting and Dr Allsopp also attended the whole school safeguarding training.
- It was agreed to remove the review of 2020/21 action plan from the outstanding actions and move forward with the 2021/22 plan.
- Ms Webb had arranged a health and safety visit for the 9th November and would arrange a safeguarding visit. Ms Mangera had undertaken her general induction visit.
- Mr Bott would send risk register to be shared.

ACTION: JW

ACTION: TB/Clerk

7. School Improvement Plan

The school improvement plan had been circulated to the LGB. Ms Jones explained the process for drafting the plan and deciding on the priorities. She explained that it would be shared more widely with staff at the January inset day. Ms Jones highlighted the change in format and the review process. She also highlighted the initiatives included at the end of the plan, which were not one of main priorities, but they did not want to lose sight of.

Ms Jones highlighted that it was a working document. She explained that they had worked with each of the leads and reviewed every section together. Ms Jones highlighted that part of the rationale was that everyone was involved and had an overview. She explained that she would also meet with the premises team to look at the project side too.

Q (EC): Do you review it regularly? How often do you get together?

Ms Jones explained that they would review it again with the middle leaders in the same process as outlined and look at it more regularly in between as an SLT. She explained that there were lots of conversations going on in between that fed into the review process through phase leader meetings, observations, and curriculum meetings (which Mr Cheetham was undertaking with individual members of staff).

Q (NA): It mentioned online safety starting in January?

Ms Jones explained that this had been part of the plan for a long time. She stated that actions from previous plans had been undertaken but they were finding that things in the curriculum and in school were not having the desired impact. Ms Jones explained that some pupils were not always practicing the skills learned despite being able to answer the questions when asked. ***Dr Allsopp asked what the objective was for the provision.*** Ms Jones stated that this was still in the planning phase. She took the governors through the new DfE documents. Ms Jones explained that they would look to address specific issues through activities and needed to look at the links through everyday teaching and learning. Mrs Cooper explained that they had delivered parents meetings, but it tended to be the same parents who attended and not those that they needed to. She explained that they needed to provide pupils with the skills to know what to do when they came across something upsetting online, on TV and games. ***Dr Allsopp asked whether they needed to consider differentiating across year groups.*** Ms Jones stated that they would differentiate. ***Ms Cull asked what sort of external support was available, e.g. through other Trust schools, guidelines in the curriculum etc.*** Ms Jones explained that there was plenty of guidance available and they would review what was best for the school and the pupils. ***Ms Webb asked whether there was a function or process where parents could inform the school of something that they were concerned about so other parents could be informed.*** Mrs Cooper explained that there was, and parents did inform them of new trends and concerns.

Q (NA): Were there resources locally for the EYFS playground priority that they could utilise, e.g. across the MAT and the same for e-safety?

Ms Jones stated that e-safety was worth exploring across the MAT. Mrs Cooper highlighted that there was a MAT PSHE group. Ms Jones explained the focus for forest schools and the playground. Mr Thorpe highlighted that plans were in action already in terms of forest schools. Ms Jones explained that it was about providing opportunities

in school but also try to take it wider. She stated that it was about acknowledging where the pupils lived and what they could do within area they lived in as well as wanting to broaden horizons.

Q (JW): Could you explain what is mid-write is?

Ms Jones explained the concept of a mid-write. She stated that the cold write at the start of the unit did not serve a purpose for the children or teachers. Ms Jones and Mr Cooper took governors through the changes to writing. They explained that it was part of the aim to embed skills.

Ms Webb suggested the inclusion of a governance objective under leadership and management, perhaps linked understanding of the curriculum. It was agreed to invite the following leaders to meetings going forward:

- Oracy
- EYFS and KS1
- SEND

Ms Jones suggested an oracy governor visit to sit alongside the presentation. Dr Allsopp stated that he was interested in undertaking an English visit.

8. Local Governing Body Business

a. To Consider the Appointment of Local Governor – Luke St Clair

A pen portrait had been shared with the LGB. Ms Jones suggested meeting with the prospective governor and inviting him into school before considering the appointment.

ACTION: JW/RJ

b. Review of Governing Body & 2020/21 Action Plan

Discussed under matters arising.

c. Action Plan 2021/22

The draft action plan had been shared with governors. The LGB agreed the plan.

d. Governor Visits

The following visits would be arranged:

- Safeguarding (Ms Webb)
- SEND (Ms Mangera)
- EYFS (Ms Mangera)
- Pupil Premium (Ms Cull and Dr Allsopp)

e. Training and Development

- Mrs Bosworth would arrange to undertake the safeguarding training completed.
- Ms Mangera had completed online introduction to governance training.

9. Review of Policies, Procedures and Publications

a. Safeguarding Policy

The safeguarding policy had been circulated to the LGB. Mrs Cooper took the governors through the changes and highlighted that the whistleblowing policy was attached as an appendix.

The LGB discussed the culture of vigilance and the importance of the mindset that 'it could happen here' when it came to safeguarding in school. Ms Jones confirmed that everyone was subject to same checks and questions.

The governing board agreed the policy.

10. Staffing

Ms Webb informed the governors that the pay committee had met on 25th October. She explained that the committee had been advised of the recommendations, how these were reached and what the objectives were. The committee approved all recommendations. Ms Webb confirmed that all recommendations were anonymised. She assured the rest of the board that the objectives were coherent with what was in the SIP coherent. Ms Webb thanked Ms Jones for the level of information and clarity.

11. Finance Updates

The audit report had been circulated to the governing board. Mr Bott explained the process for the audit and that the Trust had decided that Sparkenhoe would have a 2-day audit rather than health check this year. Ms Webb highlighted that there were no recommendations following the audit and commended Mr Bott and everyone involved. The governing board congratulated Mr Bott and the school.

Ms Cull agreed to undertake an asset register check.

ACTION: EC

Mr Bott reported that they were now 2 months into the financial year, and they were continuing the good practice from last year. He stated that there were no immediate concerns in terms of the budget. Ms Webb highlighted that one of the anticipated benefits of converting to an academy and joining a Trust was the financial management and the successful audit was demonstration of that coming to fruition.

a. CIF Bids [Standing Item]

Mr Bott reported that they had started the process for this year's round of CIF bids. He explained that the company had contacted Mel Thorpe to arrange visits. He stated that the bids would be for the Ark roof and Saxby windows. Mr Thorpe would accompany the visits/surveys. Mr Bott stated that the bids would be submitted by the end of December.

12. Safeguarding

Mrs Cooper reported that the school now had a Family Support Worker (FSW) in school once a week. She stated that they worked 2 days a week across the Trust. Mrs Cooper explained that they were already supporting parents and were building up a portfolio of families. She stated that parents were very appreciative and the FSW was already having good impact.

Mr Mahomed asked whether sessions were arranged as drop ins or appointments. Mr Jones explained that sessions were appointments as the FSW was not always here the same day each week. Mr Bott explained that the FSW was funded by the Trust until the end of the year and then there would be a discussion about what to going forward and the level of the financial input from schools.

Health and Safety

There was nothing to report under this item.

13. Attenborough Learning Trust

Ms Webb reported that the half termly COG catch up meeting was scheduled for this week and on the agenda was support for LGBs in terms of Ofsted readiness, governor code of conduct, shadowing opportunities and succession planning and vice chairs.

14. Documents Received by the Chair of Governors

Ms Webb reported that she had attended the LA online chairs of governors meeting and explained the agenda. She stated that the meeting had explained the Element 3 funding consultation. Ms Jones outlined the current system for SEND funding and the impact of the consultation. ***Dr Allsopp asked what happened when pupils were admitted mid-year.*** Ms Jones explained that the school funded the provision until the paperwork went through. She stated that they could apply for emergency funding. Ms Webb explained that the meeting also reported on pupil place planning and the declining birth rate in the city. It was noted that this was being discussed at Trust level and was having a bigger impact in other Trust schools. Mr Bott explained that the issue had been added to each individual schools' risk register. Ms Webb stated that the planned Education Strategy was also reported.

15. Any Other Business

Staff members left the meeting

Staff Request

The following item is minuted as confidential and is not available for public inspection.

16. Date of Next Meetings

- 6th December 2021
- 7th February 2022
- 4th April 2022
- 23rd May 2022
- 4th July 2022

Signed 6th December 2021