

Minutes of a meeting of the local governing body of Sparkenhoe Community Primary School held virtually via Microsoft Teams Monday 24th May 2021 at 4pm

Present

Rhian Jones – Headteacher
Jo Webb – Local Governor (Chair)
Nick Allsopp – Local Governor
Michael Cooper – Local Staff Governor
Kassam Mohamad – Local Parent Governor

In attendance

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Jenny Bosworth.

Clerk's Note – Apologies were received from Emma Cull after the meeting.

2. Declaration of Governors' Interests

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

3. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting – 22nd March 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd March 2021 had been previously circulated to all governors and were taken as read, confirmed, and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Ms Webb would circulate the action plan
- ACTION: JW**
- The parent governor election had taken place and a ballot had been held following two nominations. The new parent governor would be attending the next meeting.
 - The SEND visit still needed to be arranged.
 - Ms Webb had arranged a health and safety visit for after half term to undertake a review of processes and procedures. She asked about the school's policy on visitors. Ms Jones explained that it depended on the purpose of the visit. She explained that services were allowed into school and SEND visits were taking place. Ms Jones also explained that they had arranged for some prospective F1 parents to visit after hours to undertake tour of nursery.
 - Emma Cull undertook a visit last week
 - One of the Trustees had rearranged a visit for after half term.

5. Safeguarding Training

Mrs Cooper informed the governors that the whole school safeguarding training had been booked for 25th October at 4pm. She would forward the details to governors.

ACTION: PC

It was agreed that the governor safeguarding training would take place at the first LGB meeting of the new academic year.

ACTION: Agenda Item

Q (NA): Were there any headlines that governors needed to be aware of prior to the training?

Mrs Cooper explained that a new KCSIE would be released in summer and she would provide an update.

The annual safeguarding audit would be shared for the next LGB meeting.

ACTION: Agenda Item

The annual safeguarding report would be completed and submitted in the summer holidays. Ms Jones stated that they would share it with Ms Webb and then report back to governors in the autumn term.

ACTION: Agenda Item (September)

Ms Webb highlighted that a safeguarding governor visit had taken place and she assured governors that knowledge of safeguarding was questioned closely during recruitment processes.

6. Local Governing Body Business

a. Local Governor Vacancy and Parent Governor Vacancy

The parent governor election had been covered under matters arising. Ms Webb stated that she was also liaising with a prospective governor.

b. Training and Development

The training offer for governors was highlighted and governors were encouraged to attend. Dr Allsopp asked whether it would be useful to attend training on the changes to the Ofsted framework. It was noted that it would be useful. There was some intended Trust level training but an external perspective would also be useful.

c. Governor roles

It was noted that a health and safety governor was needed.

d. Skills audit

The skills audit had been discussed.

e. Governor remote visits

Dr Allsopp would arrange a visit to look at pupil premium/sports premium and SEND.

ACTION: NA

Ms Webb would pick up the EYFS visit after half term.

ACTION: JW

7. Finance and Staffing Updates

a. Staffing update

Ms Jones provided a staffing update including recruitment, staffing in Foundation stage and staff returning from maternity leave. She highlighted that following the recent recruitment process the school was fully staffed for next year. Ms Webb asked whether they would normally appoint temporary posts. Ms Jones explained that it was a mixture and that during lockdown they had appointed temporary posts as they were unable to observe teaching. Ms Webb asked whether the teachers were appointed for a specific year. Ms Jones confirmed that they weren't.

Dr Allsopp asked about recruitment in relation to the benchmarking report and that expenditure on teaching staff was below average. Ms Jones highlighted that she was not sure whether this included leaders who also taught. Mr Bott highlighted that the document did not look at context and this was important to consider, e.g. the school had a high premises spend but had three sites. Ms Webb highlighted that the school's chosen as comparators were quite different. It was noted that the Trust benchmarking documents were more useful as the information was more up to date.

b. Budget approval

The budget for 2021/22 had been circulated to the governing board. Mr Bott explained that he and Ms Jones had spent a lot of time working on the current budget and this was reflected in the 2021/2022 budget. He highlighted that a budget commentary had also been circulated for governors. Mr Bott highlighted that the budget was achievable, and it should allow the school to be taken out of the risk category by the Trust.

Ms Webb highlighted that the rise in SEND and falling pupil numbers were the key points. Mr Bott stated that the SEND numbers was a city-wide issue with more demand placed on maintained schools with a lack of special school places. He highlighted that the high needs of the pupils was triggering the high level of funding. Mr Bott stated that it was also about supporting these pupils and creating an inclusive atmosphere considering space, facilities and health and safety. He stated that they would have to wait until September to see if the pupils did come into school and what their needs were. Dr Allsopp asked what the percentage was of pupils requiring additional support in comparison to the city. Mr Bott explained the admission spreadsheet and the trigger for additional funding. He explained that SEND was noted on the admission spreadsheet and the SENCO was already investigating. Mr Bott stated that they had a number of high needs pupils and also a variety of needs. Dr Allsopp noted that the school was forecasting an additional £100,000 in comparison to 2021. Mr Bott explained that they were forecasting £160,000 at the end of this year and then £270,000 at the end of next financial year.

Ms Webb asked what the impact was on those who were SEND but did not bring the additional funding. Ms Jones explained that they used the money in the general budget for those pupils and this was why they had general classroom TAs too. She highlighted that quality first teaching was important to support these pupils and there were targets in plans and interventions are put in place. Ms Jones stated that they had to balance this with TA deployment, however over time they may need to replace those who leave with high needs SEND TAs.

Ms Webb asked whether high needs SEND pupils stayed at school or moved on to other provision. She highlighted that the difficulties in terms of space in the Gopsall building. Ms Jones stated that there were currently no high needs pupils in Gopsall and those with an EHCP managed. She stated that it very much depended on the needs of the children. Ms Jones explained that it was discussed as children moved through the school, including with the parents. Ms Webb asked whether it was still difficult to get special school places. Ms Jones explained that the LA had created additional places for September or spring 2022.

Mr Mohamad asked whether they were on target to get the budget into a positive position by September as was the target from the Trust. Mr Bott highlighted that the

in-year surplus was £5226 and if everything went to plan Dave Nimmo (DFO) will recommend the removal of additional support/monitoring to the Trust.

Dr Allsopp asked about the narrative behind the 19/20 in-year deficit of £92,000, reduction to £15,000, then a small surplus and then back into deficit. Mr Bott explained that they did not include the AWPU increases but the expenditure increases were included. He explained that it was a worst-case scenario budget and he would expect 2022/23 to look better than projected once they had more information on the funding. Ms Webb also highlighted that historically the school had a large surplus and the deficits were only in-year not cumulative.

Dr Allsopp asked which cost centre the income from university placement students would show on the budget. Mr Bott explained that it showed under income from facilities and services and was approximately £10,000. Dr Allsopp asked whether they had a contract for a certain number of students. Mr Bott explained that it was dependent on applications and who was accepted. Ms Jones explained how the placements worked. Mr Bott explained that the income from facilities and services cost centre also included breakfast club and afterschool clubs. The governing board discussed the pedagogy of the programme. Mr Cooper highlighted the benefits for teachers in school working as mentors to the placement students.

Dr Allsopp asked why the school used ESPO if it was expensive. Mr Bott explained that the school also used other companies and suppliers.

The local governing board agreed the budget.

c. ALT Finance Strategy

The finance strategy had been circulated to the local governing board. Mr Bott took the governors through the main points of the strategy, which provided more clarity for business managers, headteachers, governors and trustees on reserves.

d. Benchmarking report

The benchmarking report had been circulated and was noted.

e. Outturn [Standing Item]

The outturn had been circulated to the governing board. Mr Bott explained that he continued to work with staff on the budget and he would bring the latest outturn to the July meeting.

f. CIF Bids [Standing Item]

There were no updates

8. Headteacher update on attainment, progress and catch-up

Ms Jones provided a verbal update on attainment, progress and catch up. She explained that they had assessed pupils not long after pupils were back in school from 8th March to provide a benchmark. Ms Jones informed the governors that for every year group 50% were at what was considered age expected prior to Covid. She stated, however, that they had to be cautious about assessing with these expectations. Ms Jones highlighted that the younger pupils had lost more compared to the older. She stated that it would be a long journey and it was likely that the DFE would use the

previous expectations and return to end of year assessments. Ms Jones explained that they had to look carefully at what the pupils needed, and quick fixes were not sustainable. She stated that they had unpicked the English curriculum and paired things back and also built in the missed work back into the maths curriculum. Ms Jones explained that they had a clear list of the coverage this year. She stated that they expected to be doing this for the next few years.

Ms Jones explained that they had identified additional support maths for the catch-up funding. She stated that reading and writing could be in the current curriculum with guided and shared reading in class. She stated that they needed to unpick pupil's misconceptions in maths otherwise they would fall further behind. Ms Jones stated that they had identified a larger group for catch up after returning in March. She explained that 6 pupils from each class were undertaking after school tuition and this was going well.

Dr Allsopp asked what the school improvement partner and Ofsted thought of the school's approach. Ms Jones explained that there had been visits with the CEO and SIP. She stated that the CEO had more of an overview across the 4 schools and it was a similar picture in terms of assessment. Ms Jones stated that there was an assessment meeting after half term so they would be able to look at other school's figures and strategies. She stated that she was confident in the quality of work in classrooms and books. Ms Jones stated that they had evidence of progress and of what they had tried to do. She stated that due to the importance of quality first teaching they would not withdraw pupils from lessons but rather deliver interventions in lessons. She stated that there had been a lot of staff training and inset on lesson flow and pitch. Ms Jones stated that she was confident that they could show Ofsted that they were doing the best thing for the children and had the evidence to back that up.

Ms Webb highlighted that the evidence nationally was those who had missed out most were from less wealthy backgrounds. Ms Jones stated that this was true for the school and you could see impact every day. She explained that this was why they had chosen those for the after-school intervention carefully. Ms Jones explained that some children did well at home. Ms Webb noted that the school had been realistic in terms of how it was addressed, and they did not want to fall into using the pandemic as an excuse. Ms Jones stated that the idea was to get back on course rather than use it as a year on year excuse. Ms Webb highlighted that pupils had also lost out on the enrichment activities, which were often the most memorable part of the primary experience. Ms Jones stated that they were aware of this and why they had reviewed the curriculum to ensure those wow activities are there, e.g. space day.

9. Health and Safety

Ms Jones reported that they were meeting with the premises staff this week to look at policies and procedures to ensure everything was in place. She explained that following the focus on covid and the RA some procedures had slipped, so they would review all procedures and policies and update staff where necessary. A programme would be put in place.

10. Review of Policies, Procedures and Publications

There were no policies to review.

11. Disposal of IT equipment

Ms Jones shared the list of old equipment which needed to be disposed. She explained that they had replaced the equipment with new and everything would be disposed of properly and certified. The governing board agreed to the disposal.

12. Safeguarding

Mrs Cooper and Mrs Ridgewell (CEO) were working on putting together a policy for the trust on safeguarding in terms of the monitoring of the individual schools.

13. Attenborough Learning Trust

a. Trust Committee Vacancies

Mr Mohamad reported that he had applied to join the Trust resources committee.

b. Trust governance session – summer term

The Trust governance session was scheduled for 1st July. Ms Webb informed the governors that a joint Chair and Headteacher meeting had been scheduled for the 24th June.

14. Documents Received by the Chair of Governors

There were no documents received to bring to the meeting.

15. Any Other Business

There was no further business.

16. Date of Next Meetings

- 5th July 2021

2021/2022 Suggested Dates

- 27th September 2021
- 1st November 2021
- 6th December 2021
- 7th February 2022
- 4th April 2022
- 23rd May 2022
- 4th July 2022

Signed 5th July 2021