

## Minutes of a meeting of the local governing body of Sparkenhoe Community Primary School held at the Ark on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 4pm

### Present

Rhian Jones	Headteacher
Jo Webb	Local Governor (Chair)
Jenny Bosworth	Local Governor
Emma Cull	Local Governor
Nick Allsopp	Local Governor
Kasam Mohamed	Local Parent Governor
Fatima Magera	Local Parent Governor
Michael Cooper	Local Staff 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 from Neil Thorpe.

### 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 – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 had been previously circulated to all governors and were taken as read, confirmed, and signed as an accurate record.

### 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Ms Webb would share the action plan with governors after the meeting.  
**ACTION: JW**
- Ms Webb would arrange safeguarding and health and safety visits this term.  
**ACTION: JW**
- A date for the Headteacher's performance management meeting would be arranged. The pay committee had met.
- Governors were reminded that they needed to read KSCIE 2022 and undertake governor-specific safeguarding training.

**ACTION: All Governors**

### 5. School Improvement Plan

The school improvement plan had been circulated to the governing board. Ms Jones invited questions on the plan:

*Q: Bearing in mind the school was a primary without specialist facilities, what does scientific enquiry mean at primary level?*

Ms Jones explained that the pupils undertook investigations and recorded results in every topic and unit of work in science. She explained that the focus was on questioning and building up a repertoire of different investigations as they moved through the school. She highlighted that it was about pupils learning that sometimes

you don't get right or don't get the results and looking at why this happens. She stated that they did have some resources.

*Q: Why was it only EYFS that accessed Forest Schools?*

Ms Jones explained that this was due to there being a new lead and they had not completed all the training. She explained that they had started the provision in EYFS first and then they were looking at year 1 next. Ms Jones also highlighted that finding time in the curriculum was a constraint.

*Q: What area did you use?*

The Ark garden.

*Q: Were there links with other providers that the school could utilise?*

Ms Jones explained that currently they were linked with Leicester City in the community and last year had gone to an established provision at a school in the county. Mrs Cooper highlighted that travel costs were also an issue. Ms Jones stated that unless they could go with a whole class it was not feasible.

*Q: Were there any particular themes you wanted to highlight in the School Improvement Plan?*

Ms Jones highlighted that they were monitoring curriculum as a whole. She explained that in terms of the revisions made, the outcomes were really explicit, and children had a chance to demonstrate learning in various different ways. Ms Jones highlighted that writing was also a theme and a review of the English curriculum. She stated that they were looking at increasing opportunities for writing as well as writing stamina.

*Q: (Re priority 2 long term aim) Does this suggest a staff CPD issue?*

Ms Jones explained that it was not a CPD issue. She stated that what they were trying to get away from was a big piece of writing at the end of a topic. Ms Jones stated that they wanted to increase writing stamina and provide opportunities to write in different formats much more often (e.g., reports in science). She stated that they wanted children to build those skills without having to remind them of the format.

*Q: Was this linked to outcomes at KS2 last year?*

Ms Jones explained that writing was lagging behind reading and maths throughout the school. Mrs Cooper highlighted that this was a National issue. Ms Jones stated that they wanted to make the children writers, not children who can write because they were told to.

*Q: Do you find you find struggle to get the children to write at length?*

Mrs Cooper stated that they did not always want them to write at length, but rather it was about quality.

*Q: Were there differences in pupil premium pupils' attainment in writing?*

Ms Jones explained that there was a gap, but not a significant one by the time they left the school. She highlighted that in some year groups there was no difference and it was very much dependent on cohort. Ms Jones stated that on average pupil premium attainment in writing was lower, particularly greater depth.

*Q: Was a whole staff approach used for teaching spelling?*

Ms Jones explained that they used a spelling scheme. She stated that it had been identified in the English medium-term plans for children to apply the spelling and were encouraged in the unit. Dr Allsopp asked whether there were expectations in other subjects too. Ms Jones stated that there was. Mr Cooper stated that it was now much more explicit across subjects.

### ***Mr Mohamed joined the meeting***

*Q: How does the school encourage reading for pleasure as opposed to functional thing?*

Ms Jones stated that it was an accumulation of lots of small things across the school. She explained the provision in school including the class story (2-3 times a week), children recommending books to each other, displays in classrooms, children writing reviews, class librarians, reading buddies (year 5 buddying up with F2) and support from staff in finding and recommending books. The governing board discussed the provision. Ms Jones also highlighted that it was about access too and children taking books home to read at their leisure.

*Q: Had there been any push back from families about the books?*

Mrs Cooper stated that occasionally parents would think a child had a book that was too old for them, and the school staff then discussed this with them and explained why they had taken more challenging book. She explained that staff often suggested taking 2, a challenging one and another.

*Q: Was the oracy work continuing?*

Ms Jones stated that a lot of work was continuing or taking the next step, there was nothing new this year.

*Q: Can you explain the pupil conferences?*

Ms Jones explained that they had started last year, and it allowed the teacher to have some time to talk to individual children or groups about how they were doing. She stated that previously children did not always know whether they were on track. Ms Jones explained that they were careful about the phrases used with the children and also let them know what they needed to do. She stated that the children had responded well to the targets. Mrs Cooper explained that they also sent targets home to parents. Ms Jones explained that it was on the plan because they did not revisit it as much as they had wanted last year, and they ensured it was timetabled in.

## **6. SEF**

The SEF had been circulated to the governing board. Ms Jones highlighted that the SEF was always a working document and had been updated over the last half term. She stated that they had made it more evaluative and should reflect the SIP. Ms Jones highlighted that the main changes had been in the Teaching and Learning section with some additions elsewhere. She highlighted that governors should be aware of the document.

*Q: You have been bold with the assessments?*

Ms Jones explained that they had but the work had been done in conjunction with SLT and conversations with the CEO and external reviews. She stated that they knew they were a Good school but it was harder to get outstanding under new framework.

Governors suggested that they review the SEF following ALT reviews to compare the document. This was agreed.

## **7. SACRE Determination**

Ms Jones explained that the SACRE Determination process was different now the school was an academy, and it was for the Trust to do the determination, however the school still had to consult parents. She circulated the letter sent to parents.

Ms Jones highlighted that there had been 105 responses from parents - 100 yes and 5 no. She explained that 2 of the no responses, indicated yes in their comment. She stated that 2 of the parents who indicated no, left no comment or name and the other no did leave a comment that backed up their response. Ms Jones explained that they had talked to a lot of parents in the playground about the Determination and explained it.

*Q: Did you speak to the parent who responded no and left a comment?*

Ms Jones stated no, she explained that she read and understood their viewpoint.

Ms Jones highlighted those parents who had responded yes also had left comments and highlighted some of these to the governors.

*Q: How long does the determination last?*

5 years

*Q: Were there assemblies based on different faiths?*

Ms Jones explained that they were thematic and do link to festivals. Mrs Cooper explained that rather than end with a prayer, they ended assemblies with thinking time. Ms Jones stated that children could pray if they wish. She stated that the assemblies were linked to values and respect for all.

*Q: How long had the school had the Determination?*

Ms Jones stated that she thought the school had always had a Determination (as long as available). It was noted that it was common across the city.

The local governing board agreed to renew the SACRE determination.

## **8. Local Governing Body Business**

### **a. Action Plan 2022/23**

This had been discussed under matters arising.

### **b. Governor Visits**

Mrs Cull and Dr Allsopp had undertaken a pupil premium and sports premium visit before the meeting and looked at the budget and objectives. A report would come to the next meeting.

***ACTION: NA/Agenda Item***

### **c. Training and Development**

- Mrs Cooper and Ms Jones would set up governors on the safeguarding for governors National College module.

***ACTION: PC/RJ/Governors***

## 9. Review of Policies, Procedures and Publications

### a. Fire Safety Policy

The fire safety policy had been circulated to the governing board and was agreed.

## 10. Finance Updates

- Mr Bott explained that they had looked at the unbudgeted pay award costings. He stated that for teachers they had budgeted 3% and 5% had been agreed and for support staff it could be between 4-10% dependent on grade. He stated that the support staff award was still in consultation. Mr Bott explained that if the support staff award was agreed, along with the teacher pay awards, the cost would be £79,000 of unbudgeted costs. He stated that this was the biggest impact in Trust as the biggest school.

*Q: Does this mean we have to make cuts elsewhere?*

Mr Bott explained that it would come out of the school's carry forward, which was £385,000 at the end of last year. He stated that the Government had pledged an increase in funding per pupil, but they would see if this happened in January.

*Q: Why does the school have a big surplus?*

Mr Bott explained that it was historical.

*Q: Why not spend this on the building, particularly considering the unsuccessful CIF bids?*

Mr Bott explained that they had to keep a certain amount as carry forward (8-10%). He stated that if there was a problem with the monthly money, they had to have the funds as a contingency to pay staff. Mr Bott explained that the CIF bids were high, for example, the bid for the Ark was £300,000.

*Q: If the school put in half the funding, was there a possibility it would be more successful?*

Ms Jones explained that they had included a fairly high percentage contribution within the bid submitted. Mr Bott explained that sustainability was an important criterion for the bids. He highlighted that the CIF bids were there so schools did not have to use revenue, which should be spent on education and teaching.

*Q: Was the high carry forward an impact of being a 2-form entry school?*

Mr Bott explained that the school was run well in terms of finances and staffing costs and the building was kept in good shape generally, protected with BESS and LA. He highlighted that the school did not use supply for teaching. Mr Bott explained that to reduce the carry forward the school had to spend it on big projects but the carry forward would not reduce straight away based on capital and depreciation.

*Q: Was there any chance that the Trust will take any more of the school's reserves?*

No.

### a. CIF Bids [Standing Item]

There was nothing to report under this item.

### **11. Safeguarding**

The Code of Conduct had been shared at the last meeting. Mrs Cooper explained that at a training course she had attended it was recommended that it was recorded that governors agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct.

All governors were present at the meeting. The governing board agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct. A table would be circulated for governors to sign.

**ACTION: PC/All Governors**

### **12. Health and Safety**

There were no updates to bring to the governing board.

### **13. Attenborough Learning Trust**

- The clerk would circulate the Trust's conflict of interest policy for the next meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk/Agenda Item**

- The application for Charnwood Primary School to join the Trust had been submitted.

#### *Q: What were the advantages of Charnwood joining the Trust?*

Ms Webb highlighted that the school was outstanding and soundly good in terms of performance. The Headteacher had also already been included in the ALT review process. Ms Jones highlighted that it extended the opportunity for KS2 in the Trust in terms of moderation and sharing good practice.

- Ms Webb and Dr Allsopp had attended the Trust's schools' standards and improvement committee.

### **14. Documents Received by the Chair of Governors**

- Ms Webb highlighted that she had been sent information about an NEU strike ballot.

### **15. Any Other Business**

There was no further business.

### **16. Date of Next Meetings**

- 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022
- 6th February 2023
- 27th March 2023
- 22nd May 2023
- 3rd July 2023

### **17. Staffing**

- The following update was provided for non-staff only. Ms Jones provided information on a resignation from a member of staff. She explained the solutions for covering the post and their responsibilities.

Signed ..... Date: 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022