

**Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting
for Alfreton Park Community Special School
held on Tuesday 5th April 2022 at Alfreton Park Community Special School**

Present: Mrs J O'Donnell - Headteacher (HT)
Mrs E Durham – Acting Deputy Headteacher (ADHT)
Mr J Glasby – Chair (Chair)
Mrs F Franklin (FF)
Mr K Dean – (KD) via Zoom
Mr W Jowett – (WJ)
Mrs R Spray (RS)
Mrs C Higgins (CH)
Mrs C Charlesworth (CC)

In attendance: Mrs C Hughes - Clerk
Ms R Dallman - School Business Manager (SBM)

Meeting opened at 10am. Kevin arrived on zoom at 10:03am.

The governors welcomed a pupil of Alfreton Park, who wanted to speak to the governors about the following issues:

Dinners

A discussion took place about possible uses for cooked food that has not been plated up for pupils, sausages for example, and it was agreed that the HT discuss the possibility of older pupils being given the option to have seconds.

The pupil also raised his concern for the difference in what is being offered as dessert and what's on the Derbyshire County Council (DCC) menu. The staff members present explained that during covid it was easier to provide foods that were easier to distribute as single items. The pupil mentioned that custard was being particularly missed along with cornflake tart.

The pupil was asked to arrange for a list of other puddings that are being missed.

The school pool

The pupil expressed his wish that all pupils should be able to use the pool twice a week. The ADHT explained that the pool is a specialist pool for children with physiotherapy plans and that if every pupil got 2 slots a week the children that need it wouldn't get it and reminded him that he gets 1 play swim per term and a swim every week at the leisure centre.

Access fobs for pupils

The pupil requested that older and responsible children should be given access fobs. It was agreed that some pupils should have the responsibility of having fobs, particularly Oak class, some in Cherry class and some in Larch class.

The pupil was thanked for attending the meeting and left at 10:12

Action: HT to speak to the Catering Team to ask if post-14 would be allowed seconds, and whether puddings that have not been served during covid be reintroduced.

Action: Pupil to visit other classes to find out what else is being missed from the lunch menu.

21/55 Apologies

The chair noted and accepted apologies from Richard Sowter. Kevin Dean was in attendance via Zoom.

The chair welcomed Josie O'Donnell to her first governors meeting as Headteacher and congratulated her on her success.

21/56 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

21/57 Agree any other urgent business

- The chair informed the governors that he visited school last week to thank the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for getting school through the struggles of Covid, working out of the old school, and the move to the new school. Well done everybody.

21/58 Minutes of the Full Governors Meeting held on 23rd November 2021 – to agree accuracy

The previously circulated (and uploaded to GVO) minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

21/59 Matters arising from the minutes

- AHT to forward HT performance management to WJ when completed – **completed**
- Clerk to add Teachers Pay Progression to next meeting (see item number 21/73)
- Clerk to ensure all governors approve policies on GVO - **completed**

- Earwig to be brought to next meeting (see item number 21/74)
- Clerk to amalgamate and circulate results of 360 review of chair – **completed – results on GVO**
- Clerk to amalgamate and circulate results of the board skills audit – **completed – results on GVO**
- ADHT to email Chair with a list of words to be included in solar farm presentation – **completed**
- WJ to share latest Move update with governors – **completed**
- AHT to add Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to GVO for approval
- **Action: HT will upload today**

21/60 Standing item - Safeguarding

The HT informed the govs

- that there are no pupils currently on child protection.
- one ongoing staff member in a safeguarding concern.

A governor asked if pupils are settling into the new school ok and the ADHT responded that any pupils that are struggling are getting access to Thrive and there is one pupil who's behaviour has deteriorated at home, however this may not be due to the move.

The HT expressed her opinion that the open day was well worth doing as it gave the pupils an opportunity to see the school prior to the move.

The staff governor expressed her delight that the pupils are now able to move around the building and the freedom that it's given them is amazing.

There were no further questions safeguarding.

21/61 Standing item - Health & Safety

The SBM informed the board of the following:

- The risk assessment and critical incident plan both need to be updated.
- The fire plan is in place. An arranged and many unarranged evacuations have taken place, some at tricky times, and have worked well. Tweaks have been made where they have needed to be, such

as a new warden zone has been created. All out within a good space of time. Advice has been taken from Greenwatch (Fire Service) and the Facilities Manager now goes straight to the gate to let the fire service in as soon as the alarm goes off.

The chair asked if lockdown drill has taken place and the SBM confirmed that it had not, but will be done soon.

A governor asked if any staff have put forward any health & safety concerns and the SBM confirmed that a meeting needs to be arranged for when school returns after Easter.

A governor asked if the length of time was recorded from the alarm going off to the last child being accounted for and the SBM confirmed that the lunchtime drill was 8-9 minutes and the other evacuations were just over 5 minutes.

The chair raised concern for the first assembly upon the move to the new school, stating that there were 4 children very distressed because of the noise of the assembly and the halls accoustics. The HT acknowledged the chairs concern and explained that the last assembly was very different. The HT reassured the governors that classes have been given further guidance and are under no pressure to keep a child in assembly if they would be better off leaving, staff are asked to bring calming resources for the pupils that need it. The HT suggested the chair visit in a few weeks for another assembly to see the difference.

There were no further questions on health & safety.

21/62 Standing item - GDPR

The SBM informed governors that she has attended a training session on CCTV and the impact on GDPR. She explained the following points:

- The CCTV is a closed protocol, linked into the school and not cloud based.
- Recordings are stored on a PC in the ICT office and autodeleted after 31 days.
- If data needs to be pulled, it's done on an encrypted stick and only certain parties can request it, with any data that's not pertinent redacted.
- Cameras are purely external – no pupils are filmed.
- Camera's are visual not audio.
- Signage will be installed by Henry Brothers.

The chair asked who can request CCTV data and the SBM confirmed the Police and the insurance company.

The HT commented that there is a pupils name in the GDPR report which is not allowed, and is therefore a data breach.

The chair asked if there is any changes with regards to GDPR since the move and the HT explained that in the move, a lot of paperwork has been disposed off.

The SBM reminded governors that even the most minor breaches are recorded so if school was ever to be reviewed by the ICO it would be evident that GDPR is taken very seriously.

The chair asked about GDPR and printing and the SBM explained that printing is locked and the user needs to enter a pin to release their print jobs.

There were no further questions on GDPR.

21/63 Standing item – Finances: including Annex 1 & 5, and ratify budget

The SBM explained that the budget was set at a particular point in time following a meeting with Andy Walker in early March.

The SBM asked if governors were happy to ratify the budget, as it was at that pinpoint of time when that budget was set?

The Chair commented that the important thing was that there was an in-year surplus.

All in attendance showed their approval for the budget.

The Chair asked for the SBM to explain the in-year surplus against the proposed future deficit - which is a big swing.

The SBM explained that it's a balancing act, with the pupils being virtually the only source of income. She explained that whilst not wanting the school to be overcrowded by getting more pupils in, therefore increasing income, there has to be a balance. There are increased costs such as National Insurance increasing, Utility costs increasing and pay rises for support staff. A huge swing in fortunes - At that particular moment in time school was looking at a deficit in future years.

So a frank conversation needs to be looked at to see what can be done to avoid the deficit going forward. The SBM went on to explain that any decisions in personnel has an impact on the budget, and everything has to be able to be paid for. Difficult conversations between Teachers and leaders to may well have to take place.. Every resource commitment is examined and

determined if it's a worthwhile venture. The SBM commented on how to turn the school from a deficit to a surplus or level budget.

At this point the SBM gave out a revised plan to each of the governors and explained that this one was with an additional pupil on a HD profile, than the budget circulated prior to the FGB.

The chair asked what the difference is in the revised budgets and the SBM confirmed it's only the additional HD pupil.

The SBM explained that they don't want to increase class sizes at present, but would like to think about introducing another class from September. This class would be SLD profile, less in terms of staffing and the practical room would be used for this. It would have around 10 pupils and would result in having to recruit 1 additional Teacher and 1 additional TA.

The ADHT said that a class of 10 pupils could not be run on 1 Teacher and 1 TA and the SBM explained that they would be additional staff, and also would use staff already accounted for in the budget.

The SBM believes this would reduce the deficit from 100k to 6/10k, depending on the grade of the Teacher.

The chair asked if staff could be employed on temporary contracts and the SBM explained that this wouldn't address the overall issue and that the new class would not be temporary.

Problem is trying to make a 3 year plan but not to get too hung up on the 3rd year. Either get more pupils or have less staff are likely to be the only options.

Need to work together. HT has big ambitions, quality of education cannot suffer.

130 pupils would not have a direct impact on class sizes as it would mean a whole new class.

Has to be seen to be reducing teachers workload. An additional class doesn't take them over those numbers.

A governor asked the point of the practical room and what the impact will be in taking it away The SBM explained that it was designed as a classroom for it to be a classroom. Currently it's there as a science room, however science lessons take place in each individual classroom.

The chair asked when does any decision on pupil numbers need to be made and the HT said that she needs to be able to go to Steve Parfit almost immediately to state the age ranges and with needs that can be met, to try and agree the additional base places. **The chair asked what happens if the**

base places aren't met and the HT confirmed that the pupils could be taken without the funding. The SBM interjected that this doesn't address the issue.

A governor asked how it is decided that the current classes are full and that pupils can't be placed in existing classes and the ADHT explained that it's less about data and more about teacher workload. Staff wellbeing would be compromised if classes become fuller. The quality of life of the pupils would suffer.

The HT explained that there are currently 12 classes. To put 1 child in each class may not work, realistically it is impossible to know what a new pupil is like until they've been in school for a few weeks. One pupil can have a huge effect on the rest of the class and is a huge pressure on a class.

The chair asked if the SLT are recommending to governors that this extra class is the way to go and the HT said probably it would be the preferable way to go. Would like to get consultations, visit the pupils and if the consultation don't match the children then address the problems.

Chair asked for comments.

Recognising that governors are taking steps to address the budget. Need to ensure that we are getting the right pupils. A Governor asked if we had a waiting list -HT indicated more EYFS and more complicated needs children alone.

The chair asked for agreement from the other governors to pass this back to the SLT in order that they gather more information as at the moment there are too many variables. Nothing to stop SLT having conversations. RD will have had some more information on costs which might allow more accurate forecasting.

The HT asked what the impact would be if the class would be put in place for September 2023 and the SBM explained that this would already set a deficit budget for next year.

Really interested to hear what Steve Parfit thinks.

A governor mentioned the moral issue of if we have the capacity to offer 10 more pupils a place then we should / hospital example.

The HT will report back to governors.

21/64 Standing item – Personnel report

The SBM asked for approval for the recruitment of a permanent Deputy Headteacher, permanent Assistant Headteacher and an additional cleaner included in both sets of figures discussed during item number 21/63 budget.

This was approved by all governors.

It was discussed and decided that the position of Deputy Headteacher would be advertised externally.

The HT ran through the options for the recruitment of a permanent Assistant Headteacher and it was agreed that this be decided upon in the future.

There were no further questions on the personnel report.

21/65 Standing item – Teaching & learning update

The chair asked if there is anything to report that's not covered in the teaching & learning update section of the HT report.

The HT said that the new facilities have provided greater opportunities so by default improvements have been made.

Marie as Assistant Headteacher is focusing on improving teaching where it needs to be improved.

A governor asked for more information on the 2 members of staff that are on undergoing extra support and asked if they pose a risk with regards to a future Ofsted visit? The HT explained that one was a recently qualified teacher and the class she is in is not her area of strength or experience, Marie, who does have a vast amount of experience in this area is having weekly mentor-style meetings.

The other Teacher is fully capable and has proven this under observation so they just need to ensure that they stay on top of it.

She is therefore confident that they pose no risk during an Ofsted inspection.

A governor referred to the curriculum rollout and the sequencing, particularly the three I's, and asked the HT if she is confident that all TA's and Teacher's that would be able to fully articulated the sequencing if asked. The HT explained that there has been a real focus on medium term plans being displayed on the wall or easily displayed in a booklet in class, and explained that TA's would be able to use them as a reference point.

A governor asked how this can be tested. After a short discussion it was agreed that governors would come into school on a Learning Walk to ask

class staff why they are teaching what they are teaching. And if they fully understand the curriculum requirements.

The HT explained that staff are asked a curriculum question of the day during the daily staff briefing. These questions are rota'd to put people on the spot, with regular responders being asked to hold back to allow those that don't more of a push to respond.

The ADHT informed governors that some of the TA's that don't feel as confident in this have asked for information on the three I's be fixed on the back of a cupboard door – which is proof that they are interested and do want to develop their knowledge.

The staff governor also pointed out that now and then she's randomly asks why are we doing this lesson?

Governors commented that felt very reassured that staff are taking it so seriously.

A Governor asked what are the three I's? Information, implementation and impact.

Action: HT to arrange a date for the learning walk.

21/66 Standing item - HT report & School Development Plan

The HT asked if everyone has read the report.

The HT explained that she's intent on making sure the curriculum builds on knowledge and skill explaining that pupils don't stay on the same pathway throughout their entire school journey

She is currently in the process of writing the long term plans, with plans to hold sessions with staff to ensure that they understand them.

RSE is in place.

Read /write phonics is still in place, and the difference in the pupils is amazing, with some not able to read upon joining the school but now able to sound out sounds, so definitely having an impact.

With regards to careers and Enterprise, school will be purchasing the external careers advice again this year and 4 of the post-16 pupils are accessing supported internships.

The HT was pleased to announce that for the first time ever one of school's post-16 pupils has been offerered a one-year work place at Chesterfield Hospital. This pupil would still be on the school roll, but transport funds can

be used to take him to his workplace instead of to school. She confirmed that there are still some barriers to knock down. If the trust deem it suitable they will offer him a job at the end of the year. School will of course still support the pupil.

The governors were all delighted by the news.

The HT commented that the progress that Emma and Amy have made has been phenomenal.

Discussions took place on other avenues that are currently being explored around careers and Enterprise.

A parent governor asked if parents can be invited to the next careers open day, to allow parents to see how supportive it is and this was agreed.

The Chair explained that he feels that he has lost his link to the school development plan (SDP), when in the past he felt close to it and asked other governors if they felt the same way. He asked if the HT could upload it to the GVO to make it more accessible? The HT agreed to do to upload an updated copy prior to every meeting, as it is now a standing item on the agenda.

A governor asked if it runs from September-August and it was confirmed that it's currently tied to the financial year so April-March.

The chair said that the question 'What are the key elements of the SDP and how far have you got?' could be asked by Ofsted and asked the HT if she could do a review of how far she's got.

It was discussed that it is a 3-year plan, and that transition to the new build can now be removed and standards in teaching added.

A governor asked how up to date the school self-evaluation is and the HT confirmed that it needs updating to spring term. The governor asked her to please ensure that lesson observations are evidenced within it so they are well documented.

HT briefed the governors on sensory support being offered in school with the introduction of a sensory classroom, always having sensory regulation, Sensory OT. She explained that a teacher with a lot of experience in that area has been involved with the sensory integration room timetable. A senior sensory person was invited in on the inset day who provided training specific to individual classes.

The Chair commented on Thrive and how it has been a positive addition to the school, with pupils benefiting greatly from it. The HT explained that the Art Mentor also worked on Thrive through art sessions.

There were no further questions on the HT report & SDP.

21/67 Data collection

The Chair commented that the report is fantastic and easy to understand.

A governor commented on the increase in female progress. To be able to identify that this area needed to be improved, seeing that actions were taken and the impact that has been made shows that it has been successful. Useful evidence.

A governor asked whether the moderate band referred to would be in a good or outstanding Ofsted outcome? The ADHT explained that data shows what the data is and that she has had discussions with Teachers where pupils are not meeting their ILP targets as well as they should. She wondered if it is in how the data is collected. Teachers showing good/outstanding but if progress is moderate then that it doesn't match up. The Chair asked if it's a numbers game? And the ADHT agreed that it is. The chair asked if the figure was arbitrary, and if so would Ofsted accept the arbitrary number? The ADHT responded that she would rather the pupils meet their ILP targets as well as they could rather than tick a box for Ofsted.

The HT stated that it's quite clear where the downfall is. The ADHT has systems in place and by summer..... ILP's are always focused. They will work alongside the teachers whose data isn't good or outstanding, to raise the standards rather than raise the data.

One class was discussed as being significantly lower, and the HT assured governors that she was (ADHT) in class every day highlighting where they've not made the evidence.

A governor asked if it's moderate rather than good because of this one class and the ADHT confirmed that's this is the case, explaining that the class is on their 3rd teacher of the year. Now it's obvious where the issue is, an ILP buddy system has been put in place to ensure that changes are made and progress is made.

A governor commented that this could have been clarified in the report.

Discussions took place over ensuring that the system be more resilient, so having things in place when it's obvious that there is going to be a drop, i.e. a change in teacher. It was agreed that this will ensure that ILP's remain a priority.

The ADHT assured governors that the data will be improved by summer.

The HT said that 3 teachers on long-term absence hopefully won't happen again.

A governor commented that the ADHT seemed disappointed with the results and she explained that the cramped spaces in the old school were not helpful. Excluding the one class mentioned we are showing better figures. The chair expressed the opinion that she shouldn't feel disappointed and that overall there is significant improvement so lots of positives to be taken from it.

There were no further questions on data collection.

21/68 Traded services decisions

The SBM informed the board that there are no decisions to make currently.

21/69 Ratify school insurance policies

The SBM explained that it is currently purchased through DCC. That they may look at buying from the government in future but not at this stage.

The Private school fund 2020-2021 has been approved by Jonathon Elton from Ashgate Croft school.

21/70 Teachers pay progression official vote

The chair asked for a show of hands to approve the Teachers Pay Progression and all governors raised their hands.

21/71 Earwig

The staff governor explained the software Earwig – which is the system school currently uses to log pupil progression, lessons and progress made. Every lesson can be logged and evidenced and it can be used to track how pupils are doing. It can be used to evaluate how pupils are or aren't achieving their goals and aid in deciding the next steps for each pupil. ILP's are updated every cycle per pupil. All logged. Because every pupil has got an earwig account, every pupil in every lesson will be assessed in Earwig. The objective of a lesson is personal to each child and photos can be uploaded by SLT, teaching staff and TA's. At present parents and carers are not able to access the software but the option is there when/if school is 100% confident in it. It is used as a basis for reviews and she believes it to be brilliant for information.

The HT and ADHT explained that they have been using it since September and they feel that it doesn't show progress over time as much as they would have liked it to and that they have some reservations with it, although it does have a lot of positives. They explained that it was designed for mainstream but is the most SEN friendly software that they have found and that they will persevere and give it more time.

There were no further questions on Earwig.

21/72 Check governor page for compliance

Refer to the next item number 21/73 as this was discussed in one go.

21/73 Check website for compliance

The chair commented that the school website does not give a good impression of the school as it is not accurate or relevant.

The SBM explained that school is currently looking at a different website provider.

A governor commented that it is not the website itself which is the problem, it is the data that's on it, and reminded the SLT that this is the first thing that Ofsted will look at.

The chair asked that all of the outdated pieces of data be corrected on the current website, prior to the new website going live. This is not to be left until September.

The SBM confirmed that she will get a list from the clerk of the issues with the website and assured governors that they will work hard to ensure that it is made up to date.

Action: website to be updated.

21/74 Any other business

There was no other business to be discussed.

21/75 Set time and date for next FGB

Short FGB - May 17th - including update on school self evaluation instead of School development plan - 1pm

Full FGB - July 12th - 1pm

The meeting ended at 12:20.