

**Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting
for Alfreton Park Community Special School
held on Tuesday 23rd November 2021 at Alfreton Hall**

Present: Mrs J O'Donnell - Acting Headteacher (AHT)
Mrs E Durham – Acting Deputy Headteacher (ADHT)
Mr J Glasby – Chair (Chair)
Mrs F Franklin (FF)
Mr K Dean – (KD)
Mr R Sowter – (RS)
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 1:05pm.

21/26 Apologies

There were no apologies.

21/27 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

21/28 Agree any other urgent business

- Solar farm
- The Move program
- Mobile phones

21/29 Minutes of the Full Governors Meeting held on 12th October 2021 – to agree accuracy

The previously circulated minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

21/30 Matters arising from the minutes

- 30.1 Clerk to add school self-evaluation summary to next agenda – **completed**
- 30.2 Clerk to add Earwig as an item to the next agenda/AHT to arrange - **completed**
- 30.3 Clerk to circulate and add to the next agenda the GB's annual impact statement for 2020/2021 – **complete**

- 30.4 Clerk to add 'review and adopt pay policy' to the next agenda – **completed**
- 30.5 Clerk to investigate the best way to conduct a GB financial skills audit – **it was agreed that the general governing board skills audit, which includes questions relating to finance, would be used going forward due to the absence of a specific finance skills audit on the Key and NGA.**
- 30.6 Clerk to add GB skills audit to next agenda – **completed**
- 30.7 360 review of the chair to be circulated – **completed**
- 30.8 Clerk to add impact of sports premium expenditure & plan for sports premium expenditure to next agenda – **completed**

21/31 Standing item - Safeguarding

FF informed the board that the school safeguarding team had been dealing with a few worrying safeguarding issues. These issues are being investigated in the correct manner.

FF updated the Governors on 2 recent safeguarding issues.

There has been a safeguarding instance involving 2 pupils on 2 occasions. This has resulted in a short exclusion of a day and a half for the pupil that caused harm to the other pupil. The pupil has been moved classes and will be kept away from the other pupil and will not play outside with other pupils. An educational psychologist has been arranged for this pupil also, and both pupils will be accessing Thrive sessions.

A governor asked if the child that was excluded is a risk to other pupils? The ADHT explained that they have a risk assessment in place for this pupil, and that they have eliminated the risk, which is playground based. A further explanation on the steps taken can be found in the behaviour and attitude section on the HT report, but that both families are happy with the steps taken and feel supported by school.

WJ informed the board that he has now completed safer recruitment training.

There were no further questions on safeguarding.

21/32 Standing item - Health & Safety

WJ reported that the first health and safety committee has taken place and plans have started to be made regarding evacuation procedures for the new school, being mindful that the pupils will know how to safely evacuate with the least impact on them.

The chair asked that governors get copies of the minutes of future meetings.

WJ confirmed that there were no issues raised at the meeting.

A notebook will be placed in the staffroom for staff to make comments and raise issues.

A governor asked about the building risk assessments and whether they will be in place prior to moving into the new build. The SBM explained that the risk assessment mentioned in the previously circulated report is regarding the current school, and is the normal annual risk assessment review which is a live document and is emailed to every member of staff. The SBM informed governors that she hopes new risk assessments will be written prior to the move as much as possible.

The chair asked if anything needs to be arranged to ensure that she has sufficient time before the pupils move into the new school and she confirmed that she hopes there will be enough time in January, as all of the classrooms are standard size but will need input from Donna Speight and others to ensure completion. The chair asked if this is adequate time and the AHT requested that there be only one governing board meeting next term to ensure that time is freed up for this. The SBM hopes that there will be a week from getting the keys to the new build before the pupils move in, in which to finalise them and ensure that they're adequate. WJ told the governors that he will do his best to be available as much as he is able for that week.

There were no further questions on health & safety.

21/33 Standing item - GDPR

The chair commented that there seems to be a lot more breaches being reported and asked if this is due to the cramped situation in school. The SBM explained that school takes GDPR very seriously and reports even the very minor instances. The Data Protection Officer has noted that he's pleased that the school is reporting low level instances, and this shows that the school is taking data protection seriously. The school will continue to maintain strong GDPR principles.

A governor commented on the frequency of belongings going home in the wrong bag, and mentioned the instance of medication going home to an incorrect pupil and asked how this can be controlled? The SBM said that the current cramped environment makes it difficult for classes to sort items going home in a methodical way but in the new school there will be more space to ensure that more care is taken.

The AHT also said that with additional nursing support mentioned in the personnel report will also help.

There were no further question on GDPR.

21/34 Standing item – Finances

Due to the personnel report having a huge impact on finances, it was agreed that it would be beneficial to discuss this in line with the personnel report.

21/35 Standing item – Teaching & learning update

The AHT informed the board that a teaching and learning update is included in the HT report circulated previously.

21/36 Standing item – Personnel report

A governor asked for clarification on what was meant when the report referred to critical support staff and the SBM confirmed that this meant members of the senior leadership team.

The governors discussed the proposal in the personnel report, and agreed that the budget looked healthy enough to handle it.

The Chair explained that the grouping of a school is defined on the size of the school and is dependent on the number of pupils on role and staff members and other factors. The AHT informed the board that more information on this can be found on the Department for Education website in Teachers pay and conditions.

The salary range for the AHT is currently set on the school being group 5, and other key personnel salaries should reflect this change.

A governor asked if the school moving from grade 4 to grade 5 affects the income and the SBM confirmed that it does not, other than the total income bought in by the pupils.

The chair explained that the rationale behind the grouping is that the salary of the head of a group 7 school has to be higher than that of a group 4 school.

A governor asked about the current apprentice that was employed specifically to work alongside the Family liaison Officer, and the AHT explained that the Apprenticeship position hadn't worked out in the way they had hoped, but that the Apprenticeship will still be completed in full.

A governor commented on the importance of knowing the financial implications of the proposal, when prior to this report the school was

reporting a surplus, and following this proposal is reporting in year deficits, and although schools should not be in the habit of accumulating surpluses, the finances do need to balance, and the years that follow are concerning if there is a big deficit.

The SBM reminded governors that for the past 6 years a deficit budget has been forecast, but only one year out of those 6 actually had a deficit, and that if school does that it's likely that school will have 120 pupils from September if not more and that the support will be needed for these pupils.

The chair informed the board that he cannot sign off on a deficit budget unless a plan is in place to get back into a positive budget, and that the caution is justified, but suspects that the 120 pupils would cover the proposal.

The SBM confirmed that the school will be getting 36k back into the budget this year as a result of the change due to the cleaning proposal.

The SBM explained that without knowing the needs of each of the 120 pupils, it's difficult to know for sure what the budget will be, and will always assume the worst-case scenario with assumptions. Additionally, the proposed music and art mentors will become part of the team and that resources are employed effectively.

A governor asked how many pupils/staff members will be in each class, as school doesn't want to end up in the same cramped situation as it is currently in and the AHT explained that it is hoped that there will be an average class size of 10 pupils with smaller groups. The SBM said that the art and music rooms will always be art and music rooms, and will not be turned into classes. The ADHT explained that with some year groups there will be pupils that are out of class, for example, doing horticulture or work experience so not all pupils will be in class all of the time. The AHT went onto explain that she is working with the local authority to increase capacity for children with SEN with possible satellite provision for some pupils, so that they are on school roll but are actually accessing a local college – this will also free up physical space within school.

The chair asked if all governors are satisfied with the information they have? The SBM added that all of the positions mentioned in the personnel report will be fixed term contracts from Apr 2022 – Aug 2023.

The SBM commented that in October there were no pay increases to consider in the budget but have now been informed of a 2% increase for the next 3 years, although this is yet to be ratified.

A governor asked if the personnel proposal has to be run by Andy at DCC and the SBM confirmed not.

A governor asked why it was mentors for art and music and not TA's and the SBM explained that as they will be leading on a particular subject they will be on a higher grade, and that they will be also supporting teachers in their planning.

A discussion took place about the decision to employ the assistant to Family Support and the Nurse internally, and it was explained that the roles are sensitive and someone that already has relationships and knowledge of the pupils and their families would be hugely beneficial. TA's to replace those successful candidates will be external so will bring fresh perspective to those roles.

All governors approved the proposal for an assistant to the Family Liaison Officer and an assistant for the school Nurse.

All governors approved the personnel report.

The SBM informed the board that it is unclear where the school sits with regards to wholesale gas, whether the contract will be with the school or DCC. DCC may have a better buying power. The contract for the pool gas is currently 1.72p per kw hours, but indications are that future supplies may be as high as 7p/kwH which is a huge increase and is up for renewal in November.

It was agreed that the governors pay close attention to the budget over the next 2 to 3 years.

21/37 Standing item - HT report & School Development Plan

The AHT gave an overview of the information provided in the previously circulated HT report and school development plan.

A discussion took place in the schools PAN number, which it was explained is the school's set pupil admissions number. The AHT informed the board that both she and the previous HT have been unable to find the official number for Alfreton Park, but it was agreed that it will change on moving into the new school. – can't find it. The pan will have to change with the new school Have got net capacity for the new school? The SBM the discussions are taking place with DCC to agree a new PAN number for the school.

The AHT informed the governors that there are 2 pupils not attending school due to covid complications – one has a GP letter advising not to attend school. Both are accessing home learning and are well supported by school with weekly contact and timescales to return. There are no safeguarding concerns with these pupils.

The AHT informed the board of a sharp increase of covid cases in school with 4 technical outbreaks (2 or more in a class). These have all been reported via the DfE coronavirus hotline, and they haven't advised any further measures. School have asked staff to complete a daily lateral flow test prior to each school day, and wear face masks around communal areas. Staff that have been in close contact with a positive case are asked to book a PCR test as a precaution.

The AHT thanked the senior leadership team for doing an incredible job in the two weeks when she herself had to isolate for 10 days due to testing positive for covid.

The AHT informed the board that 2 Teachers are currently absent due to ill health and one working from home due to a weakened immune system. Phased returns will be arranged on their return.

The AHT informed the board that the recently recruited HT PA, started yesterday, and that one TA has resigned and leaves at Christmas.

A parent governor thanked school, from a parent's perspective, on the information that had been sent to families regarding the situation with covid in school.

A governor asked what is Dojo and the AHT explained that it is a communication platform between parents and school.

A governor asked about for more information surrounding the lesson observations that were deemed inadequate, and asked where school is in the process of turning that into a 'good' outcome. The AHT explained that the teacher in question was an NQT last year, so it was opted to keep them on the Early Careers Framework next year and will be mentored by Assistant Head who will teach alongside her. More experienced TA's have been put into the class to help, but pointed out that there are no serious concerns regarding the quality of teaching.

21/38 HT performance management

The AHT confirmed to the board that it was proposed that she have 2 performance management targets, due to the Acting Headship ending in July and the large nature of the targets, which are Transition of staff and pupils to the new school and complete a curriculum review.

WJ asked to be copied in on the finalised paperwork.

Action – AHT to forward to WJ once confirmed.

21/39 Teachers pay progression

The Pay Policy Committee has agreed the Teachers pay progression as proposed by the AHT – this was circulated prior to the FGB, but alterations need to be made before full approval can be made. Due to the next FGB being in April, due to the move to the new school) all governors gave their intended approval subject to the agreed changes. Final approval will be made and minuted at the next FGB.

21/40 Key personnel pay progression

The chair explained that governors have never been involved in key personnel pay progression before, and as the school will be growing, there will be more key personnel. To ensure that they are paid fairly, he would like to ensure governors are involved in this.

21/41 Family Liaison

Covered under item 21/36 – Personnel Report.

21/42 School medical requirements

Covered under item 21/36 – Personnel Report.

21/43 Policies to be reviewed

- **Admissions Policy**
- **Complaints Procedure**
- **Data Protection Framework Document**
- **Data Protection Policy**
- **Financial Regulations Policy**
- **Managing allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers Policy**
- **Online Safety Policy**
- **Special Category Data Policy**

To be agreed or queries resolved on GVO.

Action: Clerk to ensure completion by all.

21/44 Review and adopt pay policy

Governors approved the acceptance of the DCC Pay Policy as per usual.

21/45 ILP progress data

The ADHT invited questions on the previously circulated ILP progress data report.

A governor commented that the report seemed positive, and that the decrease between the summer and autumn term was typical of most schools due to 6-week holiday, and asked if parents accepted that part of the solution to this lay with them? The ADHT said it's very dependent on the pupil as sometimes it's about engaging them in learning depending on how able the pupils are, and that the key is in ensuring the targets are things that can be done at home.

Comments were made on absent pupils skewing the data and a governor suggested removing the pupils that are largely absent from school from the figures to get a more accurate set of data on the pupils that are in school. The ADHT agreed that this is a good idea

A governor asked why more significant progress is being made in Autumn 2021 compared with Autumn 2020 and the ADHT explained that Autumn 2020 was hugely impacted by Covid, and that school now has a better system in place, for instance, home learning.

The chair asked to ensure that the summaries are completed on the report – as they are very useful and the ADHT agreed to include them.

21/46 School self-evaluation summary

The AHT referred the board to the Leadership and Management section of the previously circulated HT report.

The AHT explained to the board that she had used a checklist from the key to develop the self-evaluation summary, which is broken up into areas of Ofsted judgement. The main areas that need to be focused on are CPD for staff and Quality of Education. The AHT explained that responsibility has been allocated to Charlotte Young to accurately record what has been completed. This will be fed into the school development plan. The Chair expressed that he would like to see this go green as soon as possible. The AHT agreed and commented that the Curriculum Policy needs to be updated as well as a few other things that will enable this.

The AHT informed the board that the school will hopefully have the new curriculum up and running in January and explained that the sequencing was the key, with long term plans needing to be really explicit, showing the threads through the curriculum as a child moves through school.

A governor asked why there was no colour in Early years and the AHT explained that she just couldn't get the cell to go green.

WJ confirmed that he is waiting for a report from the Victoria regarding early years and the AHT confirmed it is on its way.

21/47 Earwig

The AHT explained that Earwig is an app/website that school is using to upload evidence to prove pupils progress towards their targets, by uploaded photo observations etc. A governor asked who sees it and the AHT confirmed that presently it is just staff, whilst school ensures its accurate, then once it's passed scrutiny it will be opened up to enable parents to access it for their own children. It is hoped that this system will eventually replace paper-based recording.

Action: Example to be brought to a future meeting for governors to see.

21/48 GB annual impact statement for 2020/2021

The governors expressed that they agreed with the annual impact statement, circulated previously via GVO, however the class buddies and subject governors need to be eliminated as they are not currently operating. Also, the committee information is not accurate.

Action: Clerk to amend and re-upload to GVO for formal adoption.

21/49 Skills audit – financial and full board

There are 2 outstanding board members to complete.

Action: Clerk to circulate once they have all been completed.

21/50 360 review of chair

All governors confirmed that they have completed the 360 review of the chair.

Action: Clerk to amalgamate and circulate results to the Chair and the board.

21/51 Impact of sports premium expenditure

The AHT confirmed that the impact of the sports premium expenditure has been uploaded to GVO and the school website.

There were no questions on the impact of the sport's premium expenditure.

21/52 Plan for sports premium expenditure

The AHT confirmed that the plan for sports premium expenditure has been uploaded to GVO and the school website.

There were no questions on the impact of the sport's premium expenditure.

21/53 Any other urgent business

- **The Solar Farm**

The Chair read the board a speech that he will be hopefully giving at the planning meeting on the 6th December. All members present agreed that the speech said what it needed to.

Action: The ADHT to email the Chair a list of key words that should be contained within the speech.

- **The Move program**

WJ informed the board that the Move program is going really well and will share a recent report to governors shortly.

Action: WJ to share Move report with governors.

- **Mobile phones**

The ADHT asked all those present at the meeting to ensure that mobile phones are not used during governing board meetings.

The AHT asked the board if she could upload the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for approval and this was agreed.

Action: Clerk to upload policies for approval and monitor when completed.

The SBM informed the board that Alfreton Park school had been selected for a charitable donation from Henry Brothers of £5,000.

21/54 Set time and date for next FGB

The next meeting was arranged for Tuesday 5th April. Hopefully this will take place in the new school.

The meeting ended at 2:47 when staff governors and members of the senior leadership team left.