

**Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting  
for Alfreton Park Community Special School  
held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 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)  
Mr R Sowter – (RS)  
Mrs F Franklin (FF)  
Mr W Jowett – (WJ)  
Mrs R Spray (RSp)  
Mrs C Higgins (CH)  
Mrs B Wells (BW)  
Mrs C Charlesworth (CC)

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

Meeting opened at 13:05pm.

**21/76 Apologies**

The chair noted and accepted apologies from FF and RSp.

The chair also noted and accepted apologies from Susan Allen (SA) – new governor being agreed and appointed at this FGB.

**21/77 Declaration of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**21/78 Agree any other urgent business**

- Ofsted - chair

**21/79 Minutes of the Full Governors Meeting held on 5th April 2022 – to agree accuracy**

The minutes of the meeting have been uploaded to GVO. They have been reviewed by governors and were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

## 21/80 Matters arising from the minutes

- 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-19 be reintroduced.
- Any other feedback from pupils with regards to what they feel they are missing from the lunch menu.

### HT response to the above two points -

School cook off presently due to a fall at work.  
Feedback from all pupils has been gathered and process for making changes has been started.  
Some pupils have had seconds this week.

A meeting has taken place with the school council about Post 14 having extra responsibility. A policy/risk assessment & parental consent letter are in progress for post 14 to have a lanyard and ID badge that will give them access to move around school  
Oak class are currently sharing one access card and this is going well.

**Governor Q - Can individual pupils access be tailored as to where they can gain access?** A – yes.

**Action: HT to upload Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to GVO for approval.**

### HT response

Still not yet completed but will be done post meeting.  
Following the learnings from the recent Ofsted inspection, policies will be an area of focus.  
Governors to approve on GVO once uploaded.

**Governor Q – Is it a DCC policy or bespoke, and does school intend for any others to be bespoke?** A – It is bespoke. Code of conduct and Curriculum is bespoke. Some more thought needs to be given to this.

- HT to arrange a date for a governor learning walk to include Teaching & Learning. –

Not yet arranged.

The Chair requested that governors BW and SA be included in the walk.

**Governor Q – A recent PHSE invitation has been sent out – do governors need to attend?** A – It's 20 minute briefing that needs to be delivered to staff as part of the RHSE award. Not essential that governors attend but they can if they would like to.

- Website to be updated to include current & relevant policies & information.

#### SBM response

A company has been chosen to redo the whole website which will launch in June.

Photographer will be coming in June to take photos for the new website.

Policy review timetable will be published on the new website

**Governor Q – Who will be responsible for updating the new website?** A – a combination of people. The HT PA will do a monthly health check then the HT, SBM, and the Network Manager will all have permissions to edit.

**Governor Q – Will all policies or statutory only policies be published on the website?** A – Statutory.

#### **21/81 Standing item - Safeguarding**

There was nothing to report and no questions on safeguarding.

#### **21/82 Standing item - Health & Safety**

The SBM referred to the health & safety report uploaded to GVO prior to the meeting and invited questions.

**Governor Q – There is no date on the report for the next scheduled review?** A – SBM confirmed that she does a review prior to each governor meeting.

**Governor Q – And what about the annual review/audit?** A – SBM confirmed that she will arrange this for July.

The governors discussed the issues of communication in and around school in an emergency situation.

The SBM explained that they've looked at radio's, however there is an issue with signal strength through the building due to it being made of metal. This also affects mobile signal. An initial quote for 10 new radios was approximately £5k and in a trial they didn't work any better than existing radios. One solution to this is the installation of areals however this would cost approximately £10k.

The SBM informed the governors that the phone system has a pager function and this is being looked into as a way of communicating in an emergency.

A fire drill will be done in the near future with radio communication as the main focus.

**Governor Q – How does a class get hold of the school nurse in an emergency? Could the nurse have a pager?** A – this could also have issues with signal as similar to a mobile phone.

The use of a 'runner' was discussed as an option however there was some concern that a runner wouldn't necessarily know where to 'run' to, particularly if it was the nurse they were trying to locate.

The chair recommended a local communications company ( Zycomm) for a solution and the SBM confirmed that they had already spoken to them.

School confirmed that they would talk about this operationally and will sort something out.

The SBM confirmed that she is scheduled to do a health & safety walk round tomorrow and that she will arrange the next health & safety committee meeting.

**Chair comment – please have a solution to this for the next governing board meeting.**

There were no further questions on health & safety.

**Action: SBM to arrange health & safety annual audit for July.  
School to conduct fire drill focusing on radio communication.  
School to report back on solution for communication at next FGB.**

**21/83 Standing item - GDPR**

The SBM asked if governors have read the GDPR report uploaded to GVO prior to the meeting and all confirmed they had.

The SBM confirmed that school continues to log every minor incident as this demonstrates that data protection is taken seriously. Staff are starting to ask if they are doing the right thing prior to sharing information which shows that they are also taking GDPR seriously.

**Governor Q - Are we getting any better or is there still the same amount/type of breaches being made?** A – There will always be some human error however examples such as diaries going to the wrong home for example have reduced. The number of transactions in school are high, however breaches are low. Many schools wouldn't report the breaches that we report.

**Governor Q – Are there any trends that governors should be aware of?** A – The Network Manager has put a lot of work into email breaches and staff are now more knowledgeable, for example, hiding email addresses, so these breaches have reduced.

**Governor Q – are the Data Protection team at Derbyshire County Council (DCC) happy with our data protection?** A – Yes and the SBM recently got given a star for her work on GDPR.

**Governor Q – Is it a GDPR issue if pupils are given a lanyard with their photograph and name on?** A – parent consent would be gained prior to them getting the lanyard, and only first names would be used on the card.

There were no further questions on GDPR.

**21/84 Standing item – Finances**

All governors confirmed that they had read the finance report uploaded to GVO prior to the meeting. This finance report contained 3 scenarios, each with a different amount of additional pupils and thus a different number of additional staff.

The SBM explained that she was hoping to have a benchmark report for this meeting. Normally uses 10 special schools to benchmark against. This has not yet been done and a report will be ready for the next FGB.

The SBM confirmed that there is a trend in all schools of increasing pupil numbers, with one school increasing by 18.5. Only one or 2 schools have reduced pupils and this is by a small number.

The governors discussed the different scenarios on the finance report, the as yet unqualified utility costs of the new school and inflation. Governors expressed a leaning towards scenario 3 at this stage.

The SBM mentioned that a number of schools have a high surplus and it was agreed that the schools purpose is not to generate money, however decisions do need to be made to ensure that in the next few years to come the school doesn't find itself in financial difficulty.

The governors discussed the frustrations of underfunding with the increases in costs to all school.

**Governor Q - Would re-profiling be an option?** A – This was done 3 years ago with some success.

**Chair comment – An agreement needs to be made and if scenario 3 is agreed upon it's important to note that this doesn't solve all our problems.**

Governors discussed running the school to the end of the fiscal year to enable a better picture of the running costs of the new school, and all agreed that school should be working towards scenario 3 with all in agreement that this is the only sensible way forward.

The HT confirmed that there were an additional 4 pupils for September 2022 making a total of 125 pupils.

The ADHT agreed that after the fiscal year there would be more understanding and assured governors that some classes could have additional pupils in class, depending on the teacher in the room.

Discussions took place around other options for reducing costs/increasing income such as staffing or changing the type of school. The school's senior leadership team (SLT) were adamant that they didn't want to change 'who we are'.

## **21/85 Standing item – Personnel report**

All governors confirmed that they had read the personnel report uploaded to GVO prior to the meeting.

**Governor Q – 26 people are on absent monitoring, what is the total number of personnel?** A – approximately 90. 20% of the workforce are on absent monitoring There is also a number of staff floating underneath the monitoring threshold.

The SLT explained to the governors that many of the reasons for sickness absence are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) which are chronic and concurrent. Many of the injuries are from years of moving and handling prior to any moving and handling training being in place. Working in class is a physically demanding job.

Staff covered by the DDA are only able themselves to make the decision that this isn't a job they are able to do.

The SBM also noted that with such a high number of female staff, and women being the primary care giver in families, it generally tends to fall on them when there are childcare issues or sickness in older relatives. This results in them phoning in sick to look after their children and relatives.

**Governor Q – With such a high figure what is being done to address it?**

A – Adjustments are made for a member of staff struggling with flexibility and possibly moving into a different class. .

**Governor Q – how do we compare with other schools on sickness absence?**

A - DfE benchmark but will only give teaching staff. Other schools are reluctant to share this information.

A rigorous discussion was had about how to ensure that the level of sickness absences reduces and it was agreed that something was put into the job description to ensure that the person applying for a job in class knows the physical demands of the role.

**Governor Q - Can you get any information from the federation on the percentage absence of other schools?** A from HT – I will ask and also speak to an academy to see what their terms are.

The personnel report was approved by all governors.

## **21/86 Standing item – HT report - verbal**

There are currently 120 pupils on roll +1 educated offsite.

There are currently 15 consultations at present so will definitely get the extra 5 pupils mentioned in the finance report.

Nothing to report on safeguarding.

The SLT are thrilled with the draft Ofsted report. It is not as clinical as was expected from the summing up meeting.

Community updates – school have recently had a lovely visit from a special school in Mickleover for a football match. Half termly matches are going to be arranged with weekly football training sessions to start for pupils in school.

In half term school are hosting the beacon lighting ceremony for the Jubilee celebration on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June. More information to follow but there will be a choir. Primarily it will be outdoors, but people in the community are curious about the new school so there might be tours.

Goveronrs discussed whether the post 14 pupils could give people tours and the possibility of having a donations bucket for the deer shed project.

Post 14+ do the tours. Donation bucket – deer shed project.

There were no questions on the HT report.

#### **21/87 Safeguarding annual audit**

It was agreed that this would be added to the next meeting.

#### **21/88 Policies for approval**

There were no policies for approval.

#### **21/89 Governing board**

The chair asked his fellow governing board members for their opinion on whether they wished to continue to serve on the board when their term ends.

The chair informed the boad that he had spoken to FF prior to the meeting and that she has expressed that she would like to stay on.

A discussion took place on the workload of each governor and it was agreed that this be evaluated using the range of skills for each governor.

The chair asked if anyone would like to become vice-chair.

WJ was the only interested person and this will be officially decided on at the next meeting.

The chair requested that the board have someone to take the lead for wellbeing and this will also be officially agreed at the next meeting.

The chair informed the board that DCC have requested that he moves into the position of Local Authority Governor.



It was agreed that the 2 new governors BW and SA meet to decide how they will share their areas of responsibility.

The term for staff governor ends on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022 so an election needs to take place either before or straight after the summer holiday.

**Action: SBM to update GIAS.**

## **21/90 Strategic aims**

The chair explained that he would like to visit the strategic aims due to the recent Ofsted visit.

The new 5 year plan needs to fit in with the school development plan, but should also have some aims.

The chair requested that the SLT should come to the next meeting with some ideas on where they think the school should go.

Example aims:

Outstanding Ofsted result  
Post 19

It was agreed that this will be discussed at the next meeting.

## **21/91 Any other urgent business**

Teaching & Learning to be a standing item .

SBM – The official school opening is set to be the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022 although not yet confirmed.

Governors discussed options for who could officially open the school.

It was agreed that there should be a committee for the opening.

The HT reminded the board that the vision and values launch is Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June. This is to publicise the new logo, vision and values. Parents and local businesses will be invited in.

The ADHT informed governors that Chinley are closing their garden centre attached to their day centre, which would ultimately make the day centre an unviable option, and asked that governors look at signing the petition against it.

The Chair introduced another item 'Ofsted inspection' which has been added as an additional item number 21/93.

## **21/92 Agree date and time for next meeting**

12<sup>th</sup> July at 1pm.

RS and BW are unable to make the next meeting.

The governors discussed the options and agreed to stay with the current model of 6 FGB's per year with no committees.

There will be a meeting tied in with budget on the 18<sup>th</sup> October and a short meeting in December.

## **21/93 Ofsted inspection**

**Governor Q – Has a response to the Ofsted report been submitted? A - yes.**

Governors discussed the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection.

The chair expressed some disappointment at not getting an outstanding result, but was more concerned with the fact that under Ofsted rules we would probably not have another chance for at least 5 years. This appeared to be a lengthy delay for a school that will be capable of a re-assessment within 2 years.

The SLT expressed their feeling that the Ofsted report reflected the family atmosphere of the school well and that shortcomings that came up were accurate.

Governors commented that the inspector recognised that the leadership team are very driven to make things right, and that processes were being put in place whilst he was there, to ensure that shortcomings were dealt with.

The HT clarified to governors that if it was felt that if an outstanding result would be likely, the school could request another inspection in 2 years. This would be at the request of the HT.

It was agreed that members of the board and the SLT were ultimately happy at this stage, to slot back into the inspection cycle.

**The meeting ended at 14:55.**