

**Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting for Alfreton Park School held on
Tuesday 5th December 2023 at Alfreton Park School**

Present: Mrs J O'Donnell – Headteacher (HT)
Mr J Glasby (Chair)
Mr W Jowett (WJ)
Mrs F Franklin (FF)
Mrs B Wells (BW)
Mrs S Norton (SN)
Mrs C Charlesworth (CC)
Mrs Marie McCuaig (MM)
Mrs Emma Durham (ED)
Mr R Sowter (RSo) (via Teams, joined at 10.49am)

In attendance: Mrs J Osment – Clerk
Mrs C Hughes – Former Clerk
Ms R Dallman – School Business Manager (SBM)

Meeting opened at 10.05am

23/23 Apologies

The chair noted and accepted apologies from Susan Allen and Carla Higgins. It was noted that the meeting was still quorate.

23/24 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest in any items on the agenda.

23/25 Agree any other urgent business

(i) FGB day is currently Tuesday – could we look at changing this as EHCP reviews currently take place on Tuesdays & Thursdays, and often on Teams. This means that the best place for those to take place is the meeting room. The next meetings are scheduled for – Tuesday 5th Feb, Tuesday 19th March, Tuesday 14th May & Tuesday 16th July.

(ii) Update on the Cycle to Success Project

23/26 Minutes of the Full Governors Meeting held on Tuesday 17th October 2023 – to agree accuracy

The minutes of the meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting and will be electronically signed by the chair on GovernorHub.

23/27 Matters arising from the minutes

- Annual Governing Board Impact statement – completed and on website.

23/28 Standing item - HT report & School Development Plan update

The HT report & School Development Plan update were uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting. PI (Physical intervention) analysis has been added. HT and ADHT have completed Iris training. The difficulty in ways of reporting PI have been resolved. Many of our interventions are not physical and we consider our physical interventions to be extremely low.

Q - What do we do for seclusion and segregation?

A – We use the calming room. This is going to be added to the report as a separate option. It is mainly used by Acorn and Apple class.

Q – What can governors do with this information and how should they measure PI performance?

It is important that governors are aware of it. Inspectors will be asking if the interventions are justified, that the relevant information is recorded and what we are doing to attempt to reduce the numbers. At the last inspection an inspector heard a child being reprimanded – they asked to see the child’s behaviour plan, and whether the incident had been reported, recorded and risk assessed. HT will ask other special schools how they report interventions.

Q – Has this been reported before?

No, it has always been recorded but not reported to governors. It will be included on future HT reports.

Q – Can a paragraph be added to explain any anomalies?

Yes – for instance we would expect there to be more interventions at transition times.

Q – It is lovely to hear about progress with work experience. Do we have an update on the pupil who did an NHS apprenticeship?

No, but we will try and find out.

Q – Do we have students working in the school reception yet?

This is planned for January.

Also, Alfreton Library are short-staffed and we can’t always arrange a visit so work experience pupils will be taking a ‘Trolley Library’ round to each class for pupils that can’t access the library.

23/29 Standing item - Safeguarding

The HT confirmed that all incidents have been reported to the Safeguarding governor with nothing of note to report.

The HT advised there has been one suspension for one day, as stated in the report. DfE guidance was sought and school policy consulted. There has been a positive outcome and both pupils are happy it has been resolved.

The Safeguarding governor had no issues to raise.

Q – Are there any trends with the safeguarding incidents reported?

No

23/30 Standing item – Health & Safety

An updated health & safety report had been uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting.

Appendix 2 – Incidents:

Q – Has the issue with the panel falling off been resolved?

Yes, all panels have been checked since the incident and will be re-checked after any future maintenance.

Q – Has the issue with the sewer resolved?

Yes, there have been no further issues.

Q – There have been several biting incidents – what is being done about this?

A sensory OT is coming in and will assess the incidents and advise. Some pupils have also been provided with chewies. It is difficult to access Hepatitis B vaccines for staff after a bite that breaks the skin. Previously pharmacists would offer this service, but they will only offer it for travel purposes. There is a risk assessment in place and the risk of transmitting Hepatitis B is low. Staff are advised to consult their own doctor. All NHS are vaccinated as a prevention, but the cost is hugely prohibitive given the low risk.

Q – Does the Department of Education recommend vaccination?

No, the NHS does, hence the school nurse advises staff to get a vaccination after a bite.

Q – Would A&E provide vaccination?

Not unless it was considered high-risk.

The HT has checked with other special schools, they are in the same situation as us. They do not vaccinate as a precaution and struggle to get access to vaccination after a bite.

A doctor can confirm that a patient is low risk and advise against vaccination, but we can't. It was also noted that child-on-child bites occur, and that the biter would also be at risk of transmission.

Q – How often would a bite that breaks the skin happen?

About three times a year.

Conclusion – staff members can consult their own doctors for advice. If there is concern about a high-risk bite then they should be directed to A&E.
The Hepatitis policy will be updated accordingly – SBM.

Appendix 3 – Pool H&S Report:

Q – Some of the cleaning items have not been marked.

This will be corrected, there is a written schedule, it is arranged by the school, not the pool manager.

Q – According to the ratings it seems that infection control could be improved.

We think the pool manager has marked himself low in several areas, in reality some of the marks should be higher.

Q – 3a 6 'The setting includes a statement about toilet facilities in the governors' annual report to parents/carers'. What is the reason for this?

Possibly Safeguarding. The information needs to be reported to governors if they need to report to parents/carers. **The information will be brought to the next meeting – SBM.**

23/31 Standing item – GDPR

Data Protection Impact Assessments for WeTransfer and Tucasi need approving. **These will be uploaded to GovernorHub – SBM.**

Q – Was the monitoring & filtering systems training at the last meeting for GDPR or Safeguarding?

Safeguarding.

Q – Is the HT set up to receive the reporting emails in case Richard is off?
Yes, this has been actioned.

Q – Would the safeguarding governor be made aware of any safeguarding issues from the monitoring & filtering systems?

Yes.

23/32 Standing item – Personnel report

The personnel report had been uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting. The SBM asked for approval for the requests on the report. Governors gave unanimous approval for the requests on the Personnel report.

23/33 Standing item – Finance

The resignation of the PA to Headteacher/Clerk to Governors is not included in the finance figures as notice was received after the finance report.

It was noted that absences are increasing.

Q – Are absences just for October, and if so can all months since the last report be included?

Yes they are just for October, all months will be included in future reports.

Q – How often do we repeat formal reviews?

There are lots of different factors that trigger when reviews are required. We take advice from DCC HR and have recently taken advice from Browne Jacobson for an ongoing absence.

The SBM asked for approval to recruit a Grade 5 LSA/HPCA and a Grade 6 School Business Assistant to replace recent resignations. Governors gave unanimous approval for the recruitments.

RSo joined on Teams at 10.49am

Q – The Govenors haven't seen the report from Andy Walker regarding the Autumn Term budget meeting.

SBM - This will be uploaded to GovernorHub after the meeting.

Q – It appears that the budget is improving.

Yes, there have been savings in a few areas:

- The pay increase for support staff was less than we estimated.
- The air conditioning unit has been repaired instead of replaced as budgeted.
- Salary saving of SLT member who has left.

We are still in deficit, but the deficit is decreasing.

Q – What are we doing to address the deficit? Assuming no outside help from DCC or DoE, would we be able to balance the books?

Base funding is increasing by a lower percentage than all other costs, therefore the only way to save money is to increase pupil numbers or decrease staff numbers/expense.

We have been thinking of alternative ways of increasing pupil numbers. Whilst monitoring incidents and accidents in the EYFS classes it has become apparent that the recent increases in incidents coincides with moving to the new site. The classrooms at the old site were much smaller, which suggests classrooms may benefit from zoning. There is potential for a complete modular classroom with kitchen, bathroom and hoist for EYFS, which would free up a classroom in the main school. This would therefore increase pupil numbers.

Q – Where would the money for this come from?

The money would come from the devolved capital fund and any fundraising and grants that are available. The LA should provide funding to increase provision and spaces.

Cost-savings should also be seen from changing the Grade 8 TA's to Grade 5 LSA's and HPCA's.

Q – Governors should still be seen to be addressing the in-year deficit.

A deficit is common for most schools, and Andy Walken isn't concerned about our financial situation. However, we should still strive to reduce it.

23/34 Policies to be reviewed

Governors gave unanimous approval for the following policies:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- ECT Policy

22/35 Hiring out the school

There have been a few parties interested in hiring the MUGA, but no firm bookings yet. We are more expensive than other than other venues, but our facilities are better and we need to charge accordingly to make it worth our while.

Q – Is the pool hired out when not in use?

Yes, as much as it can be.

23/36 Reading in school

The Reading in School report will be uploaded to GovernorHub.

A third of pupils are reading in some form – this is a high percentage.

Teachers recently visited Copthorne Community Infant School to look at their EYFS resources and practices. We have regular reading volunteers, a school library, trips to Alfreton library and will soon have a school trolley library all with the aim of developing readers.

Q – Should we measure the percentage of pupils that can read?

Yes, this is on our school improvement plan so is being constantly monitored.

23/37 Governing board healthcheck

Completed forms will be collated and fed back at the next FGB. If Governors haven't yet done so, please print off and complete the form and return it to the Clerk.

23/38 HT performance management

The HT performance management report has three objectives:

- To ensure the curriculum is finalised
- To ensure the approach to reading is consistent across all staff
- To ensure staff wellbeing

Chair - will review the report and sign it this afternoon.

23/39 Any other urgent business

(i) Time and date of future FGB meetings

Meetings are currently on Tuesday mornings. Ideally EHCP reviews need to take place on Tuesday mornings in the meeting room, and mornings are also generally busier for the office.

All agreed that future FGB meetings will take place on the current scheduled days, but starting at 1.30pm instead of 10am. It was noted that meetings will need to finish before the end of school at 3.30pm.

(ii) Cycle to Success Project

We have plans to build a cycle workshop to provide our students with more skills. We have received several donations recently – (£3.5K from the Hedley Foundation, £2.5K from SC Travel, £1.5K from Tesco). Cabins for Schools have offered to supply a £25k cabin for £12k, however if we want to go ahead we need to place the order soon. The funds will come from grants, donations and the Friends of Alfreton Park School account.

Q – Where would the cabin go?

On the lower part of the south side of the school. There is room for the cycle cabin and a modular classroom.

Q – What would we need to purchase to go inside the cabin?

Everything, including all the tools. We are looking at a Toyota grant application for this.

Q – Would it need staff?

Yes, a member of staff has indicated they would be interested. We would also need volunteers.

Q – Would this lead to qualifications for the students?

Yes, that is the aim.

Q – Could it produce an income?

Yes, by offering bike repair services.

Q – Would it qualify for training grants?

Yes.

(iii) Approval of Pay Progressions

Governors formally agreed the teacher pay progression which was decided at the Teacher pay progression committee on 23.10.2023.

The HT thanked the SBM and Leadership team for attending.

The Governors passed on their thanks to the former Clerk.

The meeting ended at 11.18am

Next meeting 1.30pm on Tuesday 6th February 2024.