



ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Part 1 Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Full Governing Board
Wednesday 13th July 2022. 7pm

Present: Dave Dymond (Chair); Robert Howell; Adedayo Benson; Yota Dimitriadi; Kate Gordon; Andrew Burrell; Sara Fincham-Majumdar; Hajar Alami.

In Attendance: Rachel Lawson; Alice de Croos.

Apologies: Attia Rafiq-Sharif

Clerk: Deborah Savage

Agenda Item	
1	Apologies. Apologies had been received from Attia Rafiq-Sharif and these were accepted.
2	Declarations of Interest. There were no declarations of Interest.
3	SLT Updates on SATS/Phonic check/year 4 maths. Reports had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1 Phonics screening check• Year 2 SATS• Reception baseline assessment• Year 4 Multiplication Timetables Check• Year 6 SATS and the Head talked the meeting through the main points. At the moment, these are unvalidated results and it is important to understand the context. This is our first set of data post covid and this data will be used as a benchmark moving forwards. Reception results show around a 10% downwards shift and from the national figures that are beginning to emerge, it seems a 10% drop is acceptable after what has been experienced nationally over the last few years. In year 1 88% of our pupils passed the Phonic screening check compared to 96% in 2019. We feel that this demonstrates that our speed of catch up has been good. Our KS1 results saw us exceed national averages but also demonstrated around a 10% fall compared to 2019 figures. It is important not to look at these figures in isolation compared to 2019 figures as the figures show that catch up is happening, children are making progress and they are achieving above the national averages which is very pleasing.

On the whole, our children arrive at ASPs broadly below national averages and leave us broadly above national averages – in other words, they make good progress whilst with us. Pupils are closing the gaps in their education caused by Covid, especially in reading, but these good results have been hard fought for by the teaching teams involved.

The Head informed the meeting that he has been a HT at 5 schools during his career and this period over the last 2-3 years has been the most challenging he has experienced. The head encouraged link governors to talk to phase leaders in the new academic year to discuss trends within year groups and the actions being taken to address any gaps.

He informed Governors that all staff are exhausted.

Governor Question: The work that has been done to close gaps in learning – has this required additional resources? The Government provided a Tutoring fund which we could spend on certain resources but we found that the quality of the tuition provided was weak and the management of the tutoring programme was poor. The tutoring programme was not personalised in any way so we drew up our own model and used our own skilled in-house staff and resources. We will continue to use this model next year.

The Year 6 phase lead spoke to Governors about Year 6 and reported that children entering the school arrive broadly below, and by the end of KS1 they are broadly in line with national figures. The school aims to add value across KS2 so most children leave securely above national averages. Reading has been prioritised so that all children can access the rich and broad curriculum the school has in place for them. Year 6 staff are particularly pleased with the progress children have made in reading during their time in year 6 (from AR at the end of Year 5 to above national on leaving.) Year 6 children are also above national in maths. The year 6 lead pointed out that although the year 6 staff team has worked very hard this year to achieve these results – the children have also worked really hard too and should be congratulated on their achievements.

Governor Question: Are there any areas of concern that Governors need to be aware of? Writing is a concern as it has taken a dip (which is also reflected in the national figures). Writing has been most impacted by Covid but we have worked hard to close gaps and are pleased with the progress. Most children are leaving us as confident writers.

Governor Question: have you had any feedback from parents? Parents don't know the results yet as they will be sent out on Friday along with reports. However, parents have told us that children are happy at school and enjoying the wider curriculum including the range of enrichment opportunities we have available. Year 6 have not compromised any curriculum areas to catch up ground.

The HT informed the meeting that investment in reading had had a big contribution to the success of the school this year and the school intends to continue to invest in reading.

Governor Comment (from a parent Governor): As a parent, I am very appreciative of all the school does and the enrichment opportunities you offer are excellent. I know that some families are supported to help their children access trips, events and clubs but I am concerned that, now the cost of living is rising significantly, that there is starting to appear a hidden middle group of families that might before have been able to afford to pay for enrichment for their children but who now can't. I know that it is a strength of our school that we know our families really well but is there more we can do? We do space trips out and for residential allow payments over a long time period. We can put additional payment plans in place if this needed by some families. We do look at cases individually and use our discretion where we can. We would urge families to talk to us – we will support where we can.

Governor Question: Thank you for the data and the hard work that is behind these figures. Do you think that this model is sustainable or will you start the next year tired? It is true that there have been lots of additional pressures this year -some teachers are moving year groups to re-enthuse. We feel we have worked out a model that works well for us which makes it easier to plan for next year.

Governor Question: For prolonged or high numbers of staff absences (as we have seen this year) do we have a plan to cope rather than face another crisis if covid strikes again? As a school, we have learnt a lot from this year and are planning strategically for next year.

Governor Question: It is clear from our link governor discussions that staff feel supported, but how understanding will Ofsted be? Ofsted now focus on the curriculum and our results are good (given the context) with marked progress in reading – which Ofsted will view favourably.

Governor Question: Regarding Ofsted's focus on the wider curriculum, do we have more to do? Work on our curriculum is ongoing – we will continue to fine tune it and develop our assessment of pupils. We are now developing portfolios, especially in Art and DT. I would encourage Governors to look at assessment on their next visits with phase leads. Ofsted will look for progress and our teams are now better able to identify progress – especially in writing and maths. We are upskilling our staff to be able to accurately and consistently assess work. We are developing strong subject portfolios – our writing has been moderated and shown a 100% assessment accuracy. Teachers are not working or assessing in isolation but are receiving support from colleagues – we have a strong model in place. Building links between curriculum subjects enables children's strengths to be identified, celebrated and encouraged. Staff feel very happy with the position we are in at the moment.

Governor Comment: When I met with the Year 5 lead it was very clear to me how much attention staff pay when developing the subject curriculums and it is clear that staff are thinking about how Ofsted will talk to children about their learning rather than Ofsted's previous approach of more formal lesson observations.

	<p>Governor Comment: I agree, but I also saw from my meeting with the year 4 lead that building links between different disciplines (which I know is easier to do in a primary rather than a secondary setting) is beneficial and this is really inspiring.</p> <p>Governor Comment: Can we thank all the staff for spending time with the link governors – it is much appreciated.</p>
4	<p>Part 1 minutes of the previous meeting held 27th April 2022.</p> <p>These had been circulated prior to the meeting and were accepted as a true record. They will be signed in GovHub as soon as possible.</p>
5	<p>Matters Arising and review of actions from last meeting.</p> <p>There were no matters arising and actions were not reviewed.</p>
6	<p>PEC related questions from link reports.</p> <p>This agenda item had been covered by discussions under item 3.</p>
7	<p>Chair's Report.</p> <p>The chair summarised the academic year by saying that despite the fact that Corona Virus remains with us and that anxiety remains there had been great work by staff and students, supported by their families and progress had been seen this year. Some families were now suffering from the increase in the cost of living. Governors had been able to return to classrooms and talk to Phase leaders, supported by the PEC chair and this was appreciated as this is probably the best part of the Governor's role.</p> <p>The school community would face more challenges in September, but the chair hoped that the whole school community could face these and move forward together.</p>
8	<p>HT Report.</p> <p>This report (in a new format) had been circulated prior to the meeting and the Head was thanked for providing it – the new format is objective and easy to understand. The Head talked the meeting through the main points of the report and began by thanking the staff team for their hard work during another challenging year. The school continues to face safeguarding challenges and families needing support in a variety of areas. School absence figures are higher than they were pre-covid but are at about the Reading average. Moving from bubble teaching back to more contact between the children lead to high number of absences from Chicken Pox and other more minor illnesses which had an impact on attendance. ASPS's current attendance figures are in line with those of other schools.</p> <p>The school has currently not admitted any Ukrainian children although two families have viewed the school. RBC looks after admissions at ASPS and those children arriving from Ukraine face a lengthy admission process and seem to go to schools with empty places. ASPS can go over PAN to admit and are ready to take any Ukrainian children if asked to do so by RBC.</p> <p>The School Streets scheme is working well and the parents survey shows that it has been well received.</p>

	<p>Following discussions in previous meetings about our Wraparound care provider, The school are changing supplier to run this in-house by an experienced staff member. They are very positive about this change and feel that the after-school provision will now be able to reflect ASPS values and ethos. The scheme will be community focussed and bespoke to the school and its needs.</p> <p>Reception is full for next year and attracting local families and the school has waiting lists in many years.</p> <p>Looking at the school’s demographics, ASPS’s EAL figures are very high compared to local and national averages and the school has taken the decision not to mix classes as they move up a year so that we can keep relationships strong within the classes.</p> <p>Staff supporting vulnerable families are very busy – not really due to additional families needing support but that the families already receiving support now have additional needs. This has also been complicated by the high staff turnover amongst social workers in RBC – and getting them to engage with us has become an issue. More work is falling on schools rather than social workers which is increasing our workload.</p> <p>Governor Question: The report includes figures that show that ASPS average teacher pay is lower than other schools – why is this do you think? We don’t know how that figure is arrived at as our staff are paid according to National Teacher Pay Scales like all other teaching staff. Perhaps it is because we have 3 ECT’s and more staff on the main pay scales? (some data in this format of report is drawn automatically from Government figures).</p> <p>Governor Question: Do you have a plan to accommodate any Ukrainian children should they be admitted? We don’t know how RBC will rank refugee children compared to any other children on our waiting lists and RBC have not formally approached us to ask us to take any Ukrainian children. However, as a school we are receptive to admitting Ukrainian children – but those that have arrived so far have gone to other schools.</p> <p>Governor Question: How are you addressing the needs of EHCP children coming into Reception this year? They follow our normal admissions process but we visit them in their current setting beforehand.</p> <p>Governors were invited to submit any further questions to the Head Teacher by email.</p>
9	<p>Report from the RCC.</p> <p>This summary report was given to governors by the SBM as the chair of this committee has recently left the GB.</p> <p>The Q4 figures for 2021/22 were discussed by the RCC and approved and submitted to RBC. The school budget for 22/23 was also discussed and approved and Governors signed the SFVS and approved the tendering process and purchase of 11 new interactive whiteboards. Solar panels have been installed and are now running. RBC</p>

	<p>has just changed the energy supplier and we have no clear indications yet about our future energy costs.</p> <p>This summer break, flooring in Yr1, Yr2, Senco, drama and the annex dining room will be replaced – this is being funded from our delegated budget.</p> <p>A new Fire System is also being installed over the summer – this is being funded by RBC.</p> <p>As discussed at the CEC meeting, 4 members of staff had potential pension implications from the 2021 Teachers Pay freeze. All affected staff were written to and all asked for the £2 temporary payment to alleviate the problem. This will be paid in the July payroll.</p> <p>The RCC lost the Chair as Ian Church ended his term of office and Adedayo has kindly agreed to step in as Chair from September. He has been Vice-Chair of the RCC for some years now.</p> <p>Our Q1 figures will be ready to be circulated via email to Governors shortly and you are invited to submit any questions via email.</p> <p>Governors were thanked for their support this year in the financial management of the school.</p> <p>Governor Question: Regarding the faulty fire alarm panel – are you continuing with your Fire Watch procedures? Yes – these will continue until the end of term and additional smoke detectors have been installed. We are ensuring all equipment and lights are off at the end of the day.</p>
10	<p>Report from the PEC.</p> <p>There was no report from the PEC chair who was absent due to illness.</p>
11	<p>Report from the CEC.</p> <p>The CEC had few opportunities this year but welcomed the results of the travel survey showing a positive impact of the School Streets scheme locally. There were also successful PTA fairs.</p> <p>The CEC chair informed the meeting that it was intended to look at the school vision in the new academic year to see if it needed any changes.</p>
12	<p>Report from Pay Committee Chair.</p> <p>The Pay committee met to discuss teacher and support staff pay and the meeting was informed that a new chair of this committee was being sought.</p>
13	<p>Report from HTPM Chair.</p> <p>The Chair of the HTPM informed the governors that a meeting would be held to discuss and prepare for the next cycle of Performance Management. An additional governor is required to sit on this panel and ACTION: those interested were asked to contact either the Chair or the Clerk. All on the panel are required to undertake the training – which is planned for 13th September. ACTION: Governors to book places on this training. A new independent panel member is also needed for the new academic year.</p>

	<p>The need to appoint new governors was also discussed and ACTION: The Chair would arrange for notices to be placed on the University of Reading's Community Interest portal.</p>
14	<p>Policies for Approval.</p> <p>A number of policies for approval had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting which was informed that some of these policies were based on model policies and were being looked at now as a result of new statutory guidance coming into force in September 2022 (school uniforms and attendance). Other policies were on a schedule of re-approval. There was one new policy for the school (based on a DfE model policy) the Policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints. The chair indicated he had seen some minor editing changes that ACTION: he would send through to the SBM for changes to be made.</p> <p>Regarding the new policy for unreasonable complaints, it was noted that post-covid complaints seem to be increasing and these can be difficult and time consuming for the school to deal with. There seems to be a rise in the number of malicious complaints and serial complainers are now becoming an issue for the school. This policy is a good first step to protecting the school. The meeting was informed that the school buy-in to HR and Legal advice from RBC.</p> <p>DECISION: All policies were approved by the Governing Board.</p> <p>The policies were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Complaints Against the Curriculum b. School Uniform Policy c. Collective Worship Policy d. Policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints e. Attendance policy
15	<p>Governor Recruitment/training for 2022/23.</p> <p>The Chair informed the meeting that he has mapped the skills and knowledge of governors against RBC's training offer and would post this in GovernorHub so governors could book courses to maintain their competencies and build additional skills.</p> <p>He encouraged all those who had recently sat on panels such as the complaints panel to include this in their personal record as this assists with showing a range of skills and competencies across the Governing Board.</p> <p>We are in need of Governors with financial skills, and should we academise in the future, then specific professional skills are required of the Governors/Trustees.</p>
16	<p>Issues for Parents / Confidentiality.</p> <p>There were no issues to be communicated to parents and no items of a confidential nature in Part 1 of this meeting.</p>
17	<p>AOB.</p>

	<p>This was Sara Fincham-Majumdar's last meeting as she has resigned from the Governing Board to enable her to focus on her PhD. Sara had served as a Governor since 2019 on both the CEC and PEC committees and also as Link Governor for SEND. She has taken an active part in the school community with the litter picking initiative and fund-raising events. Her humanity was clearly seen in her contributions to meetings alongside her contributing a family perspective to discussions. Sara will be greatly missed and was thanked for her time on the Board. She was assured of a warm welcome back!</p> <p>Sara expressed her thanks to the board for their warm wishes and her regret at having to leave.</p>
18	Date of next meeting: To be advised (September 2022)
	8.15pm – at this point all those employed by the school left the meeting.
19	Approval of Part 2 minutes from 27th April 2022.

Actions:

Action:	Owner:
Governors (not employed by the school) interested in sitting on the HTPM asked to contact the chair or clerk	ALL
HTPM panel members asked to book on training running on 13 th September 2022.	YD/AB
Advertise governor vacancies on Reading University Community pages	DD
Minor edits to policies to be forwarded to SBM	DD

Attendance at FGB meetings 2021/22 (5 virtual meetings to date)

Faruq Bilbe	1 of 2 possible meetings
Robert Howell	4 of 5 meetings
Adedayo Benson	4 of 5 meetings
Dave Dymond	5 of 5 meetings
Ian Church	4 of 4 possible meetings
Yota Dimitriadi	5 of 5 meetings
Sara Fincham-Majumdar	5 of 5 meetings
Attia Rafiq-Sharif	4 of 5 meetings
Julia Wordsworth	0 of 1 possible meeting
Laura Kerr	2 of 2 possible meetings
Kate Gordon	5 of 5 meetings
Andrew Burrell	5 of 5 meetings
Adam Jones	0 of 1 possible meeting
Hajar Alami	1 of 3 possible meetings

Items circulated to the GB since the last FGB:

- Info on a webinar re School's White Paper
- Directors Briefing from RBC
- Info on Safeguarding training
- RBC Governor Services newsletter May 2022
- Info on summer term training events
- Info on DfE training on View My Financial Insights tool
- Info on School transport appeals panels
- Info on Safeguarding training available from Better Governor
- BffC Governor Training schedule 22/23
- Info on September Governors for Schools Conference.