



**ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**Part 1 Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Full Governing Board.**  
**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023. 7pm.**

**Present:** Dave Dymond (Chair); Adedayo Benson; Yota Dimitriadi; Robert Howell; Attia Rafiq-Sharif; Andrew Burrell; Kate Gordon; Hajar Alami.

**In Attendance:** Rachel Lawson; Alice de Croos.

**Apologies:** Zoe Watling.

**Did not attend:** Vincent Onuchi.

**Clerk:** Deborah Savage

<b>Agenda Item</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies.</b> Apologies had been received in advance from Zoe Watling and these were accepted. Vincent Onuchi did not attend the meeting.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest.</b> Governors were invited to declare any conflicts of interest. None were declared.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting: 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023.</b> Minutes from the FGB held on 26 <sup>th</sup> April were circulated in advance and governors were invited to make comments. There were no requests for any amendments and the minutes were accepted as a true record.
<b>4</b>	<b>Matters Arising and review of actions from the last meeting.</b> The chair informed the meeting that all governors not employed by the school would be asked to remain on the call for a Part 2 item after the rest of the agenda was concluded. The HT also asked that those governors present on the Federation Working group remained for a brief update. Since the two sub-groups did not overlap, it was agreed that the Federation Governors would pop into school around 9am the following day for an update from the HT.  <b>Review of actions:</b> The chair informed the meeting that all actions had been completed.
<b>5</b>	<b>HT Report.</b>

The CoG asked that the minutes record the GB's thank you to all staff for their hard work this academic year and especially the GB's congratulations on a fantastic set of SAT's results.

The HT had written a report which had been circulated in advance and governors had also been invited to submit questions in advance of the meeting. The HT was invited to draw the meeting's attention to the main points of his report:

- Phase lead reports had been circulated.
- Waiting for an Ofsted visit had become a protracted challenge – it was now possible that the inspection may be delayed until June 2024 since the SAT's results were very good.
- The school had coped well with Teacher strikes this academic year – more are due next year. Some parents had expressed frustrations, but many were understanding.
- Staff retention is high; stability in staffing is extremely valuable and the school is proud of this stability. There are a very high number of vacancies across the school sector and these are often hard to fill. The school values its stable workforce.
- Street Marshals had done a fantastic job enabling the safe walking to school of families.
- The safeguarding workload has increased but the staff are coping admirably with a good internal support network for staff and consistent recording and reporting of incidents using CPOMS.

**Governor Question:** The SEN report mentions a significant increase is possible in the number of children holding an ECHP – is this a worst-case scenario? Yes – most likely. These are based on SEN need not a safeguarding need and there is no correlation between the two.

- The school have successfully filled their teaching vacancies with strong candidates.
- Protocols are being built for the management of the school when the HT is off site. The DHT & AHTS will manage the school in his absence.

**Governor Question:** Your report covers absence figures – is there a cultural reason behind the high unauthorised absence figures? Is there a reason the hardcore absence figures are not improving? Unauthorized absence is mostly due to families taking holidays in school time. We do not authorise any holidays in term time. We have had some absences due to religious observance. However, the school are confident that we are doing all we can to encourage attendance and working with the small number of families who have persistent absences. We have robust systems in place and are fortunate to have the capacity to dedicate an AHT to focus on attendance. We can demonstrate to Ofsted the measures that we take to try to combat persistence absence and work in partnership with our EWO (who are also stretched). We have broadly similar, if not slightly better, attendance figures to the local and national figures. If Governors would like to hear from the AHT responsible for attendance in a future meeting, we can arrange this.

	<p>The chair congratulated the DHT (who is also a year 6 teacher) on the excellent SATs results. The DHT informed the meeting that the year 6 team is fantastic and work hard with the children – who are also fantastic children who are keen to learn. The children excelled in ALL areas of their learning and are leaving ASPS well equipped to start their time at their secondary schools. The school is proud of the children. They are ready to move on but leaving year 6 can be an emotional time for them.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Reports from Phase Leads.</b></p> <p>These had been circulated in advance along with an invitation for governors to submit questions in advance as the phase leads themselves were not in attendance at this meeting. No questions had been submitted.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Federation update.</b></p> <p>The chair of governors gave a verbal update to the meeting on the Federation plans and explained that the original proposal, to Federate by the end of the financial year in March 2024 had been extended. This means work will commence on the Federation Proposal Report in September, followed by the consultation with all interested parties with a view to completing Federation by the end of July 2024. The HT, SBM and HOS have been working in Redlands for some weeks, which is earlier than planned for in the MOU, but were now taking a step back until the end of term.</p> <p><b>Governor Question: Is Federation still going ahead?</b> We are continuing to talk to Redlands and will continue to work cooperatively with them in September as we get to know more about the school and its priorities. The original timeline set was too ambitious – we needed to allow more time for the process.</p> <p><b>Governor Question: We know this is a challenging process and we are keen not to exhaust the Leadership team.</b> Their workload is being carefully managed by the Steering Committee – it is the capacity of staff from ASPS that has driven the delay to the timeline.</p> <p>The meeting was informed that there still remain exciting collaborative opportunities for the staff and staff are still keen to explore the career opportunities this offers whilst being mindful of the increased workloads. Staff now have a year to get a deeper understanding of Redlands School and establish if Federation is a viable option for ASPS. Other Federations have taken longer to form, but 12 months seems a more realistic timeframe.</p> <p>The SBM reassured the meeting that the two school’s budgets would remain totally separate. Currently, Redlands has a deficit of approximately 156K and is looking at an in-year deficit of around 160K for this financial year. This could however be more, should staff pay rises need to be funded or partially funded from current budgets. Whilst ASPS is currently in the black, no funds from ASPS will be used to subsidise Redlands. Federation offers cost savings to both schools. It is true to say that ASPS will</p>

	<p>also be facing a deficit budget in the near future should school funding not change at the government level.</p>
8.	<p><b>Federation Working Group TOR for Approval.</b></p> <p>Governors were reminded that all committees and working groups have a Terms of Reference document that outlines the purpose and responsibilities of the committee or working group and how it is to operate.</p> <p>A TOR had been drawn up for the Working Group by the Clerk and circulated in advance of the meeting. The TOR had also been sent to Redlands for approval by Redlands FGB.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Will this TOR change again in September? No – the TOR will remain active until either Federation takes place, or the schools decide not to go ahead with Federation.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> the FGB approved the Federation Working Group TOR.</p>
9.	<p><b>Chair's Report.</b></p> <p>The Chair had written a chairs report that had not yet been circulated to governors.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> this would be sent to the Clerk for circulation.</p> <p>The chair gave a verbal summary of his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanks were given to those governors who have left and welcome to those who have joined the GB.</li> <li>• Governor monitoring visits have been really successful this year with good relationships built between governors and phase/subject leads.</li> <li>• Parent survey was overwhelmingly positive.</li> <li>• The school has managed budgets well in the face of increasing financial pressures.</li> <li>• We have faced uncertainty over industrial action and climate events.</li> <li>• The installation of solar panels by RBC is appreciated.</li> <li>• The loss of the Caversham HT was deeply felt both locally and nationally.</li> <li>• LA support has been disappointing in some areas with schools having to pick up the workload.</li> <li>• We continue to monitor H&amp;S on site and are grateful for a good site team.</li> <li>• School trips and visits have increased offering a wide range of experiences to enhance our broad curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>In summary: there are lots of successes to celebrate.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Governors to consider if there is merit in sending out a Governor's newsletter to parents? If so, should this be translated?</p>
10.	<p><b>Verbal Report from the RCC.</b></p> <p>A report from the RCC had been given to the FGB in April and the Chair of the RCC reported to the meeting that there was nothing new to update them with. He did, however, wish to thank the SBM for her hard work and contribution to Cooperative</p>

	<p>working with Redlands. Budgets for both a Federation and non-Federation scenario had been prepared and the SBM's support was appreciated. He also informed the meeting that whilst ASPS was not setting a deficit budget at the moment – this situation could change in future years – however, we would not be the first school to do so.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Verbal Report from the PEC.</b></p> <p>The chair of the PEC thanked governors for their time in talking to staff and sometimes for making face-to-face visits to classrooms and the staff for giving up their time to engage with governors. The chair felt that the meetings held over the last academic year had really helped governors gain knowledge about what is taught in school and helped to build strong relationships. Barriers had been broken down and it was felt that staff had been reassured that governors were there to support and not to criticise. Having staff attend some PEC meetings and contribute to governors understanding was also really valuable.</p>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Verbal Report from the HTPM.</b></p> <p>The chair of the HTPM committee thanked the HT for his time in discussing targets and for his open and honest discussions with the Committee. There are 3 governors on the committee, and it is a requirement that all do the HTPM training at least every 2 years. All three members did do this training last year, so there is no requirement for them to do this again, but they may choose to do so to refresh their skills and knowledge. This training runs on 12<sup>th</sup> September, very soon after school resumes. It was noted that other Governors might like to attend the training even if they do not sit on the panel as it is good practise for legacy planning.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Those interested in doing the training to email the Clerk ASAP.</p>
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Verbal Report from the Pay Committee.</b></p> <p>This item was held over to the end of the meeting.</p>
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>Skills Audit.</b></p> <p>All governors had completed a skills audit and the analysis from this had been emailed to all prior to the meeting. It was noted that 4 is the highest score in any given area, but that it is normal, with governors leaving and new ones arriving, that scores of 2 or 3 are most common. A skills audit is a useful tool for the chair to guide governors to courses or online learning that can help them build their skills and knowledge. Ofsted expect GB's to complete a skills audit and to reflect on the findings, taking action where necessary. The chair intends to write a plan to tackle training gaps or to boost confidence in particular areas. Governors were informed that they can create their own training records and can include relevant training completed in other areas (for example in their workplaces.)</p>
<b>15.</b>	<p><b>Policy for Approval – Parent Code of Conduct.</b></p> <p>The HT informed governors that irate parents can be a problem, raising very small issues and becoming threatening to both teachers and support staff. Some parents have been very aggressive to members of the office team which can impact on their</p>

wellbeing and mental health. It was felt that having a parental code of conduct to refer parents to, followed up by letters and if necessary, punitive measures as a last resort, might help in some case. The school were keen to stress that this is a tiny minority of parents.

Examples were given of parents being abusive to staff when they wanted to park in the school car park and were prevented from doing so. The school car park is both a blessing and a curse – it helps attract and retain staff but does require staff to monitor at the start and end of each day. This places strain on the staff stationed at the car park entrances and exits – most often this is the Site team.

The school are aware that this parents code of conduct may not be enough for some offenders but it is felt that to have something in place might help.

**Governor Question:** Do we not have a learner agreement that parents sign that refers to professionalism and respect? Yes – but this more around our values and what we do when parents do not respect these.

**Governor Question:** Do we collect statistics? Can we see if there has been an increase in problems? We don't collect statistics no, as it is such a rare problem and can occur very randomly. Our Site Controller updates the SBM if any car park incidents occur and the office team also discuss any incidents along with any possible measures that can be used if similar events happen in the future, including walking through scenarios.

The office and site team have been booked onto a conflict resolution course next week.

**Governor Comment:** Can we draw up a GB template letter that could be sent to parents and also stress our zero-tolerance approach to abuse of staff (as is seen in other settings – e.g. healthcare). If we demonstrate that the school is being backed by the GB will this help? The policy came from the Key and there are template letters available which **ACTION:** Letter to be shared with governors to see if they want to strengthen the text of the letters and have these sent from the GB.

The meeting was informed that significant incidents are formally recorded, but not a lot happens to follow these up. Sometimes letters do not have the desired impact.

**Governor Comment:** Staff sometimes face a great challenge after an incident in coping with the impact and the fear of a repeat incident. Can I ask that Governors are informed of these incidents faced by the Site and Office staff?

**Governor Question:** Where will this Code of Conduct go? On the school website. It was discussed that maybe some communication can go out to parents about the need for a Parental Code of Conduct and pointing out where to find it.

**ACTION:** H&S link governor to consider ways of keeping statistics and tackling poor parental behaviour.

16.	<p><b>Governor Training for 2023/24.</b></p> <p>Governors were reminded that besides the face-to-face and virtual governor training programme put together by Governors services and the RGA there are online training and resources available on the BFFC area of GovernorHub.</p>
17.	<p><b>Issues for Parents/ Confidentiality.</b></p> <p>Some items discussed at this meeting are recorded under Part 2 confidential Minutes.</p>
18.	<p><b>AOB.</b></p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Can I ask for an update on the Climate Education conference we attended? Two members of staff have been looking at our curriculum, especially in geography and science to see what is already taught across the school and they plan to draw up an action plan looking at the bigger picture but one that links into our curriculum next year. We also hope to re-start the eco-council in September.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Did I read about a government grant? Yes – the government are giving schools a capital grant to be used towards sustainability projects over the next few years. The grant is £20K and is one-off. We will work with RBC to decide how best to spend this on environmental improvements. We do not have to write a report on how we spent this grant, but we will update the FGB.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> A reminder that we need to re-read and familiarise ourselves with changes to KCSIE and that some training is available also.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> I notice in the staffing structure that there are changes to phase lead arrangements and subject leads which will mean we might have to look again at link governors into phases/subjects. As a parent governor, I will have a child in the year group I previously monitored so I will have a clash of interests. Yes – we may need a new chair for the PEC should we lose an experienced governor, so will look at this in September.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Current Chair of PEC will speak to the Clerk about this.</p>
	<p><b>ITEM RECORDED UNDER PART 2 MINUTES</b></p> <p><b>SCHOOL STAFF (APART FROM THE SBM) LEFT THE MEETING</b></p>
13	<p><b>Pay Committee.</b></p> <p>This agenda item was recorded under Part 2 Minutes.</p>
19.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting: TBC but will be in early September 2023.</b></p>

**Meeting closed: 8.45pm**

**Actions:**

<b>Action:</b>	<b>Owner:</b>
Chair's Report to sent to Clerk for circulation.	DD
Governors to consider if Governor's newsletter is to be sent to parents? If so, should this be translated?	ALL
Those interested in doing the HTPM training to email Clerk asap	ALL

Template Parent Code of Conduct letters to be shared with governors.	SBM
Consider ways of recording poor parental behaviour stats.	DD
Chair of PEC to talk to Clerk about reorganising link governor roles in line with new staffing structure.	ARS/Clerk

### Attendance at FGB meetings 2022/23 (5 virtual meetings to date)

Dave Dymond	5 of 5 meetings
Robert Howell	5 of 5 meetings
Adedayo Benson	4 of 5 meetings
Yota Dimitriadi	4 of 5 meetings
Attia Rafiq-Sharif	3 of 5 meetings
Kate Gordon	5 of 5 meetings
Andrew Burrell	4 of 5 meetings
Hajar Alami	4 of 5 meetings
Zoe Watling	2 of 3 possible meetings
Vincent Onuchi	1 of 3 possible meetings

### Items circulated to the GB since the last FGB:

- Updated guidance on PP
- Presentations from May Director's briefing
- Info and documents form Strategic Planning workshop.
- Info in School Improvement webinar
- BFfC May newsletter
- Info in finance training for new governors
- Template training feedback form for Governor use
- Governor Services summer term newsletter
- Governor training 23/24 schedule
- Webinar on changes to KCSIE 23 – fileting and monitoring
- Info on H&S training for governors
- Info on new uniform guidance
- Info on a webinar on managing complaints.