



ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Performance Enrichment Committee.
Wednesday 4th December 2024. 7pm.

Present: Kate Gordon (Chair); Dave Dymond; Robert Howell; Adedayo Benson; Andrew Burrell; Hajar Alami; Vincent Onuchi; David Colwill; Sze-Hang Wong.

In attendance: Rachel Lawson; Victoria Maskell; Christian Lim; Richard Watson.

Clerk: Deborah Savage.

Agenda Item	
1.	Welcome & Apologies. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, the first PEC of this new academic year and especially thanked the staff for their attendance at the end of a long school day. There were no apologies.
2.	Declarations of Interest. There were no declarations of interest.
3.	Verbal Report from the EHT. The EHT gave a verbal report to governors in which he informed them that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school is full• The percentage of EAL children is 52%• The number of FSM children is up this term and is now on an average with Reading LA figures but still below national figures which indicates that there are likely still to be children entitled to but not claiming this additional funding.• SEND figures are high – and the number of children with EHCPs is higher than the LA average at 2.5% due to the ARP.• Attendance is 94.3% on a par with this time last year.• The number of unauthorised absences (many for holidays) is high (26.2%) but below the Local Authority figure. It is however higher than the national average.• Year 5 and Reception are the two years with lowest attendance.• There are currently 3 school refusers in year 5 who are in receipt of support and efforts to get them into school• A year 5 teacher has been recruited to start in January (class has been covered by an experienced HLTA since September.) The school want to formally thank her for doing such a sterling job and hope to support her in the future should she wish to do further study. The new Year 5 teacher is an ECT.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been one 3-day exclusion this term after an incident in Year 6 where 2 or 3 staff were injured. The child involved has an EHCP and SEND needs so the decision to exclude was not straightforward. Due diligence was applied and processes followed and the decision to exclude was not taken lightly. • Children and staff in the new ARP are flourishing. • The school had an Ofsted Inspector contact them with a Section 11A complaint follow up. The Director of Education Brian Grady backed the school and was involved in conversations with the Ofsted Regional Director. This was a stressful event for staff who had not faced such an inspection before (the follow up to a complaint originally made in 2022). Ofsted are obliged to investigate should parents take their complaint to them, as they are entitled to. In this instance, Ofsted concluded the school had followed procedure and found no fault. Vexatious claims by parents are becoming a more prevalent occurrence in education generally. <p>Governor Question: This sounds a particularly stressful event for the staff involved. How are they? It was a difficult time, yes. It is unfortunate that the system we have allows for serial complainers. You would hope that Ofsted do their own due diligence on such matters, maybe with the LA or the Governing Board but they also have a process to follow.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Reports from the DHTs.</p> <p>Reports had ben written by the DHTs and circulated in advance of the meeting and the chair thanked staff for doing this. She hoped governors had had a chance to read them and invited staff to pick out a few key areas and “take-home” messages to discuss.</p> <p>a) <u>EYFS, Phonics and Reading (Victoria).</u></p> <p>Victoria focussed on the many positive points in Reception and informed governors that the initial challenging staffing situation in Nursery has now changed for the better. This has seen improvements for everyone. The new teaching team in Reception is working well. The chair thanked her for her report and was pleased to see that “bumps in road” had now smoothed out.</p> <p>Governor Question: You are “boy heavy” this year – how do we manage that for all the children? Staff are making changes to the physical environment to reduce the speed of movement in the area and also changing some of the resources in an effort to engage the more active boys to greater effect. The ratio of girls: boys changes year to year and it has just fallen like this, this year.</p> <p>b) <u>Key Stage 1 (Christian).</u></p> <p>The chair thanked Christian for another thorough report. Christian informed governors that the new phase lead was working hard, as was the whole team who are very positive. There has been a change to CPD which is also working well. Governor</p>

Question: The change to CPD you refer to is using walk throughs? Have they been well received by staff? Yes – it is a structured way to coach teaching staff and staff have been pleased to have something in place. The DHTs are doing walk throughs and completing training in this by doing a BfC course. This helps us meet our area of focus which is to ensure excellence in the classrooms. Any targets for improvement are shared in meetings, new actions are implemented and we allow these time to settle in. Learning walks are then carried out to see things in practise and any tips and feedback are shared with staff.

c) Key Stage 2 (Richard)

The DHT was invited to discuss areas from his report and he informed governors that the current Year 3 (when in Year 2) had behaviour issues that have now improved and the year group is showing greater maturity. There is a focus on Year 3 writing, assisted by the division of the year in to 4 classes for this. Support staff interventions are also working well and the positive impact of smaller classes and interventions is being seen. The Year 4 staff are responding well to new teaching methods. A new ECT in this Year spent some time observing arithmetic teaching in Year 6 and was enthused by what she witnessed. Ideas for writing practise have been shared by Year groups from lower down the school so sharing good practise through the entire school for the benefit of the children is working well. Governors were informed that staff are working on making tighter links between Year 5 and Year 6 in order to narrow the gap between these years and that Rachel is supporting with this initiative. A positive partnership between these years is being established. Staff have been willing to work flexibly which is extremely valuable and we can't thank the staff member covering the Year 5 class enough for her outstanding work.

Governor Question: Having now lost the modular and the break out room that this did provide, is this having an impact? The children have been fascinated by the builders and their equipment, and they are excited to see what the new space will look like. They have coped well with the change.

Governor Question: What is the impact of losing the modular as a teaching space? Rachel wanted to state on record that she wanted to thank the Year 6 staff for their dedication and resilience as year 6 settle into new accommodation. The Year 6 staff team work very hard to ensure that the children flourish academically but also emotionally and socially as staff want to empower Year 6 children to “own” their own journey to becoming independent learners as they prepare to embark on secondary education. The Year group has adapted well to the smaller accommodation they now have and have established new routines that all the staff have worked hard behind the scenes to support. The feeling is that the children are not being short changed in their year 6 experience compared to previous year groups.

d) Year 6 (Rachel)

The DHT talked governors through the main points of her report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Many of the children have already secured accelerated

	<p>progress and staff have been working with parents to encourage support from parents which has had a big impact on some of the children – many of whom have made accelerated progress. Gaps are being closed without impacting or narrowing the curriculum offer in any way.</p> <p>Governor Question: How are you feeling about federation? For us, January will really be a continuation of our current practises as we have already been working over the two schools for some time. This has been very interesting and we are managing to find a balance as we work co-operatively with staff at Redlands. There is much to be positive about – we have got together in subject teams over the two schools and this has already brought benefits to both schools and all the children. Two maths teachers from ASPs are attending Year 6 every Monday to support the Year 6 teacher at Redlands with maths teaching and this has brought big dividends. We are also improving our step count as we dash up and down Crescent Road!</p> <p>Governors were informed that the new leadership structure of 4 DHTs over the two schools was providing support to the Redlands HoS and that the leadership is working hard to promote the federation to all staff so that the transition is smooth. A DHT remarked that the DHTs are in a privileged position – spending half the week in each school as they can see the benefits that other staff don't have the opportunity to witness.</p> <p>Governor statement: I discussed RE teaching with staff and would like to get a defined list of religions at school so we can invite faith leaders in to the schools.</p> <p>Governor statement: I think that there needs to be some investigation into the impact of AI on our IT and computing teaching. Yes – we agree. A staff member has recently attended AI impact training at BFFC and is due to feedback to SLT shortly on this. We are aware that there may be an impact on Cyber security and Safeguarding and the LA is also looking at the impact of AI technology.</p> <p>The chair thanked all the staff for their reports, and for explaining current issues in detail with governors, who really value hearing from staff directly. At this point, (19.23pm) the DHTs left the meeting.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Link Governor Reports.</p> <p>a) EAL - Sze</p> <p>The link governor for EAL had visited school to meet with staff and had written a report following this visit that was circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. The school has a high percentage of children with English as an additional language and ways to help support both staff and children were discussed. An on-boarding process has been implemented designed to find out the needs of children and help them settle faster. An EAL inset day is also being planned. The school is working with outside partners including the Bell Foundation and students from Reading university. The governor reported that he himself had experience of being educated as an EAL student and was delighted to hear of a child who was admitted into Year 2 with no</p>

English but who is now in Year 6 and achieving Greater Depth in some subjects. He noted that children with no English find it harder to make friends and settle into schools and that staff with specialist knowledge can help to make this process easier for them. He informed governors that he was impressed by what he had seen and that staff at ASPS are doing a good job to support children with EAL.

The chair thanked the governor for his report and noted that having such a high percentage of EAL children was wonderful but also a challenge that it seems the school are rising to. It was particularly lovely to hear of a successful case study.

b) English – David C

The link governor reported that he had met with 3 staff members and that they had had a wide-ranging conversation covering writing, reading, phonics, and speaking & listening skills. Cohort complexity was a challenge but the aim is to encourage all children to enjoy reading for pleasure and to ensure fundamental skills are learned in a fun way. Books in the library are updated to encourage interest and reading together in the classroom (choral reading) was a useful tool. Reading is continuously assessed but informally. Writing is a big focus across the whole school.

c) Computing – David C

The link governor met the computing lead who has been carrying out an audit to establish staff comfort levels with IT and teaching this subject to their classes. Computing skills are a fundamental life skill that all children need and computing is a cross curricular subject that can be taught alongside other subjects in, for example, project work. Computing skills are teacher assessed using a traffic light system of red, amber and green. It is expected that support to Redlands staff with teaching computer skills to the children will increase in the future but having the same curriculum in both schools will assist with this. Training is planned to increase staff confidence levels with this subject. **Governor Question: Is there sufficient equipment and resources and a suitable environment to teaching computing skills in?** No equipment issues have been raised and there is a weekly visit by our tech support company to address any issues but also support us with a capital replacement plan.

d) Maths – Vincent

The link governor for maths reported to the GB that he had had an informative and encouraging meeting with the maths teaching team including some new teachers so he was assured that succession planning is in place. He was pleased to see that the maths team are very supportive of each other and this helps support staff wellbeing. He recognised that ASPS has a good reputation for maths teaching excellence and is especially successful in teaching maths to children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The governor acknowledged that the wide use of technology by children (and adults) can impact attention spans which can cause a challenge in the classroom. Technology sometimes distracts rather than enhances the learning environment. Staff manage to find a balance between maintaining a high standard of teaching and support for children who need it with interventions being offered. Staff reported to the governor that they felt supported by school leaders. The link governors also mentioned the challenge of AI – which needs some investigation and thought.

e) Humanities (Dave D)

The governor made a verbal report to the GB stating that he had met with 8 staff across 4 subjects – some of whom were new to their roles. He reported that staff were excited and enthused to have a new focus and were very positive. Collaboration with Redlands staff was positive and staff reported that they were already feeling the benefits to this. There was mention made of some extra money to support curriculum development but with so many in the meeting it was hard to go into detail. However, assessment of knowledge in all subjects is a focus. The governor was pleased to see that science has a practical focus where ever possible with activities that allow children to become hands on e.g. growing plants. The meeting was really positive.

f) The Arts (Andrew)

The link governor reported that he found it really useful to see how different subjects and teachers interact with each other – that nothing is taught in isolation. Staff informed him that working with other schools, including Redlands and Leighton Park was both helpful for staff and gave children wider opportunities. In art, for example, some art work from ASPS children had been displayed alongside art from LP children. The governor reported that he was especially pleased to hear how SEND children often thrive in arts subjects – producing work of the same level as their non-SEND peers. Performing arts is being developed with plays planned to be rolled out across the whole school. He reported that staff are passionate about their subjects and have a great work ethic. Collaboration with Redlands is bringing benefits of sharing expertise over the two schools. Gymnastics knowledge in Redlands was mentioned as an example of how ASPS children are benefitting from the collaboration.

The chair thanked all link governors for their reports to the GB and remarked that it was great to see that all reports mentioned the sense of passion staff have and bring to their lessons and how supported the staff feel. This is reassuring to hear as the challenge to deliver is great but it is good to hear of staff resilience.

g) SEND

In an addition to the agenda, the SEND link governor reported that she had managed to arrange a visit into school to see the ARP (known as daffodil class) in action. She reported that the room was a lovely environment with relaxed and confident staff working with the children in there – which leads the children to develop confidence too. The ARP teacher was very organised and structured with evidence of this displayed on the walls. It was clear that a great deal of effort goes on behind the scenes to ensure the children in the ARP make progress against their own targets – some of which was evident in just a few weeks.

There have been recent changes to the way that schools and the NHS work to diagnose autism and ADHD with the emphasis now more on schools and families to work together to gather evidence to present to the NHS before the NHS will accept referrals for assessment. This is an additional challenge on schools but one which ASPS staff have risen too.

	The chair thanked everyone for making the visits into school and reporting back to the GB.
6.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting held 8th May 2024.</p> <p>The minutes from this meeting were circulated to governors prior to the meeting and they were accepted as a true record. ACTION: Chair to sign these in Governor Hub ASAP.</p>
7.	<p>Matters Arising.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
8.	<p>Policies for approval.</p> <p>1. Offsite activities (previously known as Educational Visits)</p> <p>Governor Question: Does a parent of a SEND child have to attend these visits? This is decided on a case by case basis – usually only if the child has acute need or if behaviour is likely to be an issue with health & safety concerns. DECISION: Offsite activities policy adopted.</p> <p>2. Food Policy</p> <p>Governor Comment: I found the section on packed lunch contents quite eye opening. I note carbonated drinks are not allowed. Governor Question: Why is there such a big disparity between the cost of the Breakfast Club (£6) and the cost of a school lunch (£2). They are separate entities and the breakfast club is well staffed. It is not just the meal - it is part of wrap around care. Parent Comment: The breakfast club is a bargain for those who need it! DECISION: Food policy approved.</p> <p>3. Alcohol and substance abuse policy.</p> <p>Governors noted that this was a standard HR policy (although there was a typo on the date on the front page.) DECISION: Alcohol and Substance abuse policy approved.</p> <p>4. Feedback policy</p> <p>Governor Question: How do staff deliver feedback? Is there an ASPS standard way to do this? This varies by year and subject – it could be a picture or a verbal or written comment. Governor Question: How is feedback monitored? Subject leaders carry out book looks which allows for scrutiny of feedback. DECISION: Feedback policy approved.</p> <p>5. 5 Supporting pupils in school with medical conditions.</p> <p>Governor Question: Do you keep a register of children with medical conditions? Yes – this held and maintained by the medical administrator. Parents report medical conditions via a form. Governors noted that this is a policy from the LA. DECISION: Supporting pupils in school with medical conditions was adopted.</p>
9.	<p>Governor Training & Development.</p> <p>The CoG reported that there is a Director’s briefing in the new year and also financial and exclusions and Ofsted training. A governor noted that the Governor Hub app no longer seemed to be working.</p>
10.	Wellbeing & Equality.

	<p>The Link Governor for wellbeing made a verbal report to the GB. The previous wellbeing lead for staff has now left the school and another staff member is undertaking training. There have been lots of accommodation changes since the summer but children seem to be very resilient to these and Years 2 and 6 have worked out their new routines and logistics and are happy with no complaints received. There has been an impact on staff due to changes to the staff room to accommodate the ARP – the new staff room location does not encourage staff from the different key stages to get together any more which is making staff relationships harder. KS2 staff have also been impacted by staff shortages meaning many have been working through their lunch breaks. Perhaps opportunities might be found in the future to get staff together more.</p> <p>Governor Question: Do you still have whole school meetings? Yes, but we tend to have a range of different meetings – including some for each Key Stage where the DHT for that KS will feed back to the staff of that KS. We have lost some strong teachers from the classrooms and new phase leads are taking some time to settle into their roles. It will take some time to embed staff and we are working hard to cope with all the changes that there have been. There have been some pinch points that have felt the pressure and federation does cause some staff to feel uncertain. The whole of the SLT are working to try to make the transition as smooth as possible for staff.</p> <p>Governor Comment: Thank you for sharing this insight into how staff are feeling – we did anticipate these teething issues - are you trying to make sure everyone feels they are part of the change? Do staff feel they have the chance to contribute? This is hard to answer – we are doing what we can but perhaps this might be best answered in January when we have federated? We expect some staff will need to air their concerns and opinions and we are encouraging our DHTs to allow this, to listen and to reassure staff where they can. We will continue to work hard in the new year to embed the changes and work to make this a positive experience for all staff.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Governor for her report to the meeting – it is important to hear how staff are feeling. It was hoped that the wellbeing link governor has someone she can talk to and get support from.</p>
11.	<p>Issues for Parents/FGB/Confidentiality. There were no issues to be communicated to parents/carers nor any for the FGB. There were no confidential issues discussed.</p>
12.	<p>AOB. There were no items of AOB raised.</p>
12.	<p>Date of Next meeting: To be confirmed after federation.</p>

Meeting closed: 20.25pm

Actions:

Action:	Owner:
Chair to sign the minutes from 8 th May 2024 in Governor Hub ASAP	KG

Attendance at PEC meetings 2024/25 (1 meeting to date)

Dave Dymond	1 of 1 meeting
Robert Howell	1 of 1 meeting
Adedayo Benson	1 of 1 meeting
Kate Gordon	1 of 1 meeting
Andrew Burrell	1 of 1 meeting
Hajar Alami	1 of 1 meeting
Vincent Onuchi	1 of 1 meeting
David Colwill	1 of 1 meeting
Sze-Hang Wong	1 of 1 meeting