



**ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Performance Enrichment Committee.**  
**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 7pm.**

**Present:** Kate Gordon (Chair); Dave Dymond; Robert Howell; Adedayo Benson; Andrew Burrell; Hajar Alami; Zoe Watling; David Colwill.

**Apologies:** No apologies were received. Yota Dimitriadi and Vincent Onuchi did not attend.

**In attendance:** Sarah Tweddle; Victoria Maskell; Jenny Musset; Steph Miles; Annabel Hawkins.

**Clerk:** Deborah Savage.

<b>Agenda Item</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies.</b> 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. No apologies had been received – Yota and Vincent did not attend.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest.</b> There were no declarations of interest.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Verbal Report from the EHT.</b> The EHT had written a report which was circulated to governors prior to the meeting, but he summarised the main points of this report. The EHT thanked the staff for their work to ensure a successful term, in particular to secure a “Good” outcome from the Ofsted Inspection. He informed governors that the main challenge facing the school currently was the changing demographic of the children within school and the level of challenge they bring, especially with regard to SEND -this is of a level not seen in ASPS before. The pressures being faced are much greater than they were 2 or 3 years ago and the catch up that is needed at the start of term is acute. There are staffing pressures around SEND provision and the number of children with EHCPs is rising. However, despite this, the school still manages to provide a high-quality offer to all children, including those with SEND. The school remains popular and tours with prospective new families are going well. The increase in both the numbers of SEND children and the level of need is a national picture which is reflected in ASPS with the acute challenges being felt in school, greater than those ever experienced before.  <b>Governor Question:</b> Is there anything that those of us who meet with LA staff can do to help? Can we talk to them about extra resourcing for example? There is talk about creating a unit for additional provision, which we may formally consider but there are

	<p>questions around who would be the authority that controls admission to this unit. If we started a unit with 8 places, for example, would we be able to ensure that children from within ASPS that had need of this provision would get a place? Or would the LA, who is our admission authority, fill those places for us? We are also holding back on plans for this at the moment whilst we see how other schools, who are starting such units, get on. It is useful to see the mistakes they make as well as what works well as we consider our future plans. It is true to say that the specialist provision units that have already been set up are also woefully underfunded. We would like to get funding to have a SEND teacher in our current sunshine room.</p> <p>The meeting was informed that the LA has the power to “direct” unplaced children and essentially force a school to take them, which could be without the funding required to meet the child’s needs. Staff have been to see the provision in place at Katesgrove and Addington schools. It is the intention of the school to ensure that children with complex special needs that are in our mainstream school are provided with a quality education that meets their needs and that they are not just being “babysat” by the school.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Your “watch and wait” approach seems very sensible – is there anything Governors can do to help you? With the variety of SEND thresholds, there are effectively 5 levels of ability in each year group now. These include very high need children who would ideally be placed in a special school. As a school, we try not to put children on the SEND register unless there is a real need to do so. Our staff that work with complex needs children are specially trained and do a fantastic job, but it is becoming ever more challenging for staff to meet the varying needs of all our children.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Reports from EYFS and KS1 phase leads.</b></p> <p>a) <u>Nursery.</u></p> <p>Jenny had written report that was circulated to governors prior to the meeting and she talked to governors about the main points. Numbers of children in the nursery are good this year, whereas other settings are struggling for numbers. A few new starters will also join in January. Within Nursey, there are some children with SEND needs which are much higher – and the level of need keeps ramping up. Often children arrive with their needs not identified until they start in nursery, which means nothing is in place to support them. Staff then need to start the process of evidence gathering and explaining to parents, who often don’t understand the processes and system, all the paperwork required. These children arrive with no funding to help support them – but they need a high level of support for safety reasons. This can be impactful on the rest of the cohort. It can also mean changing the provision of activities, for example, in order to keep these children safe (so they don’t access equipment that could be a problem for them) and this can also impact on the other children. Currently, within Nursery, there are 4 children with significant SEND need and 9 more that are “cause for concerns”. It can be hard, at this age, to establish if issues are caused by development delay or a significant SEND need – but this needs to be established for them to make the appropriate progression through school. <b>Governor Question:</b> Do you need any additional resources or staffing? No – although for part of the day we</p>

	<p>are at our legal staffing ratios and have no one extra to cover lunch breaks etc. It can be hard to resource equipment for SEND children as they don't tend to play with or engage with toys in the same way as other children and their needs can vary so much that it is often hard to cater for them. A few children do not play with anything – they have a very low level of engagement. Governors were informed that sometimes parents do not let the school know about their child's needs. They may have a Paediatric report that they do not pass on to the school. It is possible to apply for an EHCP from birth, and when applying for one is delayed this can be very frustrating for the school. Sometimes information is not shared between the various different bodies that are involved with the care of very young children. <b>ACTION: DD to raise this issue with the LA SEND Manager. ACTION: DD and ST to meet to discuss SEND strategy.</b></p> <p>The meeting was informed that gathering the evidence required and writing reports needed to apply for EHCPs takes a long time and this, combined with the fact that recruiting staff to work with high needs children is hard, is a national problem. The funding provided by an EHCP does not cover the staffing costs, which has budget implications and if a child requires 1:1 staffing for every year they are in school – then they should not be in mainstream schooling. The chair thanked staff for providing governors with this insight into the challenges faced in school – which it is clear is a situation that will not recede quickly and requires a national solution. Governors recognised that Ofsted praised the work being done in Nursery and it is clear that the school values the work the staff do in very challenging circumstances.</p> <p>b) <u>Reception &amp; Reading.</u></p> <p>A Reception report had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting and Victoria spoke to governors about the main points. Children enter Reception from a number of different feeder settings and sometimes children arrive with SEND needs that school is unaware of prior to their arrival. There are currently 5 children in Reception with significant needs. Reception is well staffed and staff are managing to cope with the needs of the children – but the level of need is higher than it has been previously and this does impact all the children in Reception. Staffing has to be fluid in order to support as and when necessary and the staff are confident that they can offer the support necessary to ensure all children can fully access the curriculum. There is a strong curriculum offer for all children but this does have staffing implications. 13 children are currently “cause for concern” but this can change and children are regularly assessed and provision adapted when necessary. Staff absences have had an impact this term and EYFS staff do help to cover lunchtimes by acting as additional dinner controllers. This means that this time cannot be used for CPD. Every day, there is time spent juggling staff to meet the needs of the day. It was pleasing that the Ofsted report was positive – singalongs with nursery are popular and targeted support for children who need it is up and running. Part of the garden has been closed for the winter months making it easier to supervise the children outside and interact with them. We have been following a structured plan for art, design, DT, music and PHSE as part of the wider school curriculum. There are children with poor language development and many with EAL and there is a support plan in place. There is a training session for Therapeutic Thinking with EYFS staff very soon. Work is already underway to plan the transition to Year 1 for those children with SEND needs.</p>
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	<p><b>Governor Question:</b> We have heard in the past about poor behaviours as a legacy of the Covid years – has this issue now gone away? It is hard to know – but we don't think we are fully over the impact of Covid yet. Children's behaviour varies in different settings – we see the impact of Covid resulting in poor behaviour exhibited higher up the school. For us, we see the impact of Covid more in the fact that children with special needs have gone undiagnosed. The children we are now seeing in reception were born during Covid and so were at home and this has impacted on them in the form of poor impulse control and poor self-regulation. <b>Governor Question:</b> Is there any way we can alleviate the need for staff to do lunchtime cover? The turnaround of lunchtime staff is high and we do have to regularly recruit staff for this role. Lunchtime supervision is a constant worry for us for all years in school. Children with SEND also need support in the playground and there is not enough cover, so staff do work at lunchtimes. There is an additional aspect in that very young children need someone with them that they know. Lunchtime work is a demanding role and the phrase "share your calm, not your chaos" is key. There has been some push back from LSAs about lunchtime working. The school are always very clear in the recruitment process about what the roles entail, but some people arrive and find the job is not for them. The chair thanked staff for their clear and helpful report that explained the challenges faced and also celebrated the work achieved.</p> <p>c) <u>Year 1 &amp; Outdoor Learning</u></p> <p>A phase report from Year 1 had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting and Annabel talked about the main points raised in the report. The transition from Early Years to year 1 is a massive jump for the children so for the first part of the autumn term, year 1 took an EYFS style approach to teaching which has been successful. There were a number of new starters to year 1 in September whose poor behaviour has caused waves. This has meant redeploying staff to support with behaviour management. This has impacted on those children who need targeted additional support, as staff have been re-deployed. There are some ideas already on how to manage this in the autumn term of 2024. The curriculum has been adapted to suit the needs of the cohort and our focus has been to build independence, encouraging children to have a go on their own. This is a big transition for children and is a work in progress. New admissions have been a problem for us this term – where children have arrived with no information about some complex needs that have not been addressed in their previous setting. This means we have to start the assessment and evidence gathering process which is impactful. We have also had a number of children arrive that are new to this country and whose parents have high expectations – perhaps based on the provision in their last country. The staffing model we had planned for the start of September has had to change. <b>Governor Question:</b> Are you able to identify and support the more able children in your cohort? Initially, our classes were not streamed, but from the second half of the autumn term we have streamed classes, including creating 4 classes for writing, ensuring smaller groups of children enabling greater teacher input. <b>Outdoor Education:</b> The leads for outdoor education informed governors that this was rolled out last year to all year groups who experienced outdoor learning each term. Resourcing these lessons took a great deal of time, and class teachers are now being asked to resource these lesson plans themselves where</p>
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possible. Sometimes this can be a big issue as it requires some forward planning and staff finding the time to do this. Nursery do assist with outdoor learning resources when they can. Some resources, along with a shed for storage were purchased last academic year. As the modular building is due to be removed at some point this academic year, it maybe some additional space for outdoor learning may become available. The need to encourage staff to be more self-sufficient when resourcing outdoor learning activities was the next step.

d) Year 2 & PHSE

A phase report for Year 2 had been circulated to Governors before the meeting and Steph talked governors thorough the main points. Year 2 have experienced an influx of children new to English and also with high SEND and undiagnosed needs. This was a huge challenge initially. Classes were mixed from the previous year, and this did help with behaviour but there are high numbers of children who exhibit constant low-level poor behaviour which means staff are constantly having to redirect children's behaviour impacting on teaching. Year 2 children exhibit the impact of Covid in their inability to self-regulate and a lack of basic respect for others. They often have a poor desire to learn and participate in class. This is seen particularly amongst boys - there are a small number in each class whose behaviour in the playground has needed the involvement of the AHT responsible for behaviour. This is unusual for year 1 children. Year 1 children have a wide range of needs that staff are stretched to meet. We are fortunate to have an extra person enabling us to divide the cohort into 4 groups for writing. There are a number of children with poor letter formation and handwriting who are being supported. This is hard work but good progress is being made. Children are settling at last and accepting the school routines so we do see some progress. The whole staff team work really well together and care deeply about the children. Some children in Year 2 are still being taught phonics and are being assessed regularly. Work is underway to improve fluency and progress can be seen. **Governor Question: Do you discuss behaviour, especially that of the small number of disruptive boys, with parents?** We do, with mixed response. Some parents have already heard the same from other settings and know their child's behaviour is an issue. Some children might have genuine ADHD traits, in other children this might be learned behaviour. Most parents are supportive of the school on behaviour issues, but some parents can be needy too. **Governor Question: For those children new to English, are their translation services available or support from outside groups such as religious groups?** Translation services no longer exist. Should we have any major concerns, we speak to the Senco. We have looked at a 6-week block of intervention support available via Leighton Park, but this has staffing implications. For those children new to English who have no SEND need and whose parents have some English themselves, these children are usually ok. However, if the child has a SEND need, and especially if the parents also have a SEND need themselves there are considerable issues. These parents have less ability to support their child and sometimes less willingness too. **PHSE.** The personal development of children is going well – our core values are well imbedded and demonstrated by the children. We are using a bought in PHSE scheme – although the lesson content has not changed. This helped prepare us for Ofsted's visit and Ofsted acknowledged how strong the children's personal development is. Our

	<p>teaching is very strong and the topics being delivered are more important than ever – instilling British values and respect, discussing feelings and the right to have opinions. Our next PHSE steps are to look at clubs and trips to ensure that our vulnerable children have adequate access and to ensure that the trips and clubs we offer reflect a wide range of cultural experiences to boost “Cultural Capital”. We plan to hold more International Days to celebrate our diversity. We are planning to track core values in a visual way with class charts. It is hard to assess PHSE but we are forming an assessment grid similar to the way that Art is assessed so we can evaluate progress. We were pleased with the good feedback from Ofsted and are proud to have made this significant contribution to our Ofsted outcome. <b>Governor Question: Has the situation in the Ukraine or Gaza caused issues in school?</b> Children were more aware of the Ukraine invasion last year; the younger ones especially are not so much aware of Gaza. The school is remaining neutral and supporting efforts to work towards peace and no issues have arisen in school. The chair thanked staff for their helpful report and stated that is valuable to hear about the “lows” whilst recognising that there are “highs” to celebrate.</p> <p>e) <u>SEND</u></p> <p>A SEND report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting, and the SENDCo had joined in discussions with phase lead staff about SEND issues in their respective year groups. It was stated again that the level of SEND need now being seen in school is different to, and higher than, that seen in previous years. The ARE of children coming into school is also lower as is the percentage of those children working at ARE and gaps are getting harder to close. There needs to be a national level consideration of this with possible adjustments. Cognition levels are lower in some children which limits their potential capacity. <b>Governor Question: Do we need 2 sunshine rooms now?</b> No – it is better for children to be in a classroom with their peers if at all possible, by adjusting teaching and support levels. Whilst they were here, Ofsted made careful checks on the children in the sunshine room to make sure that they really <i>needed</i> to be there.</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, the phase leads left the meeting.</p>
5.	<p><b>Link Governor Reports.</b></p> <p>a) <b>EYFS &amp; Reading/Phonics</b></p> <p>The link governor had visited school to meet with the phase lead and had written a report following this visit that was circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. She reported that it was clear from her visit that staff were doing everything that could be done to meet the needs of the children and that the impact of the expenditure on books was really positive. The school are making great efforts to get children back to pre-Covid levels of reading and phonics and are making progress with this. Staff absences are a challenge, as is finding the time out of class to plan and lead the phase. The link governor had made no plans as yet to carry out classroom observations.</p> <p>b) <b>PHSE</b></p>

	<p>The link governor for PHSE was not in attendance and no report had been sent. The meeting was informed that he had not yet met with the phase lead. <b>ACTION: Clerk to email this governor and discussion carried over to next meeting.</b></p> <p><b>c) RE</b></p> <p>The link governor for RE was in attendance at this meeting but the connection was very bad. <b>ACTION: This subject will also be carried over to the next meeting.</b></p> <p><b>d) SEND (Kate)</b></p> <p>The link Governor for SEND had met with the link staff and a report from this meeting had been circulated in advance of the meeting. David, our newest governor joined Kate for this meeting. The link governor reported that it was clear SEND was having a massive impact on all aspects of the school and that hearing from staff directly, as well as via their reports helped governors get a true sense of the range of needs of the children and the challenge for staff. This is a big issue in every year of the school. However, it is also clear that amongst the staff there is real passion and desire to do the best for all the children at ASPs, despite the stretch on staffing. This is exacerbated by the movement of children and the anxieties newcomers bring with them. The staff are all very focussed to provide the best education at every phase of education and the challenges faced are replicated through out the borough. Ofsted recognised that the work with SEND children at ASPs is strong – and it is good to see this recognition.</p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023.</b></p> <p>The minutes from this meeting were circulated to governors prior to the meeting and they were accepted as a true record. <b>ACTION: Chair to sign these in Governor Hub ASAP.</b> The Clerk ran through the actions from this meeting which has been completed.</p>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising.</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Governor Training &amp; Development.</b></p> <p>The CoG reported that he had had conversations with Sarah Shortt at Governor Services which resulted in the circulation of a training schedule of formal training events available for GBs in the Spring and Summer terms. He would be looking at this and the skills audit governors completed to recommend training to fill gaps in knowledge and experience within the board. He had also spoken to the developers of GovernorHub to suggest changes to the way this system records governor training and to make their calendar more dynamic. This is a work in progress.</p>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Wellbeing &amp; Equality.</b></p> <p>The Lead Governor for Equality had met with the EHT and written a report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. She summarised the main points for the meeting. The school's aim is to celebrate every single person within school, and evidence of this in practise could be seen in the phase reports and heard directly from the phase leads. The school is ambitious for ALL pupils and works hard to ensure all make progress and attain to their potential. SLT and phase leads carry out book scrutiny to measure progress and also regularly talk to the children to hear about their learning. This personal feedback direct from the children is very insightful. Great efforts are made to ensure all children can access the curriculum – provision mapping is used in each classroom and interventions are put in place where necessary to support children. The effectiveness of these measure can be seen in our outcomes which are consistently</p>



	<p>higher than National figures. The new online Class charts system is proving very valuable.</p> <p>The school takes a pro-active approach towards PP children – encouraging and making available free places for club enrolment.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Have you spoken to the school council to gather their opinions on equality of provision? My own daughter sits on the school council so I am kept informed of their discussions.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> There has, in the past, been some opposition from some parents to the teaching of some aspects of Equality and Diversity – what do you if you receive questions from parents? We have had this recently with some Year 5 parents questioning the PHSE curriculum for their children. We held a session for parents to cover the lesson content and address their concerns which was useful. The aim is to prevent parental playground discussions circulating inaccurate information. The meeting has helped to settle parental concerns.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> Our Staff Governor does a good job in the playground engaging with parents. She is a good advocate for the school and really helps to allay parental concerns.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Governor for her report to the meeting.</p>
10.	<p><b>Issues for Parents/FGB/Confidentiality.</b></p> <p>There were no issues to be communicated to parents/carers nor any for the FGB. There were no confidential issues discussed.</p>
11.	<p><b>AOB.</b></p> <p>A pro-forma template link governor visit report had been circulated to governors and some governors had used this to report on their recent visits to school. The chair asked governors for their feedback on the usefulness of this template report which came from The Key. A governor expressed the opinion that she found it useful to help prepare for the meeting she had and to prompt her to consider further actions and additional resources. She also found that it encouraged using more specific wording in her report. Another governor agreed that the format encouraged focus on specific aims and encouraged planning in advance. The chair agreed that the report had “grown on her” as she used it and suggested that governors who have not yet used it tried it for their next link report. There was reluctance to make using this report format compulsory however.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Governors were encouraged to use the template report for future visits and feedback their opinions. <b>ACTION:</b> Clerk to consider ways of storing link governor reports in GovernorHub to make them more accessible.</p> <p>There was some discussion about a Governor Day in school and the current meeting programme that has two FGB meetings in January. <b>ACTION:</b> Scheduled FGB on 10<sup>th</sup> January is to be cancelled and replaced with a Governor Day in school. <b>ACTION:</b> EHT</p>



	to suggest a few suitable dates for this so a date for the Governor Day in school can be arranged.
12.	Date of Next meeting: Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> January – KS2 meeting

### **Actions:**

Action:	Owner:
CoG to raise issue of poor communication between agencies involved in the care of a SEND child with the LA SEND Manager.	DD
CoG to meet with SENDCo to discuss SEND strategy.	DD
Contact link Governor for PHSE and carry this report over to January meeting.	Clerk/VO
RE report to be carried over to January meeting.	Ade B
Chair to sign minutes of meeting held 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2023 in GovHub.	KG
Governors to trial template report form and feedback in Jan meeting.	ALL
Storage of Link Governor reports in GovHub to be reviewed to make them more accessible.	Clerk
Scheduled FGB on 10 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2024 – cancelled.	ALL
Date for Governor Day in school to be established.	EHT

### Attendance at PEC meetings 2023/24 (1 meeting to date)

Dave Dymond	1 of 1 meeting
Robert Howell	1 of 1 meeting
Adedayo Benson	1 of 1 meeting
Yota Dimitriadi	0 of 1 meeting
Kate Gordon	1 of 1 meeting
Andrew Burrell	1 of 1 meeting
Hajar Alami	1 of 1 meeting
Zoe Watling	1 of 1 meeting
Vincent Onuchi	0 of 1 meeting
David Colwill	1 of 1 meeting