



ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Part 1 Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Full Governing Board.
Wednesday 29th September 2021. 7pm.

Present: Robert Howell; Ian Church; Yota Dimitriadi; Sara Fincham-Majumdar; Attia Rafiq-Sharif; Dave Dymond; Adedayo Benson; Faruq Bilbe; Andrew Burrell; Kate Gordon; Laura Kerr.

In Attendance: Alice de Croos.

Apologies: Rachel Lawson -DHT

Clerk: Deborah Savage.

Agenda Item	
1	Apologies. Apologies were received at the meeting from Rachel Lawson who is an associate of the Board. These were accepted.
2	Declarations of Interest. The clerk asked for any declarations of interest -there were none. Permission to record the meeting was also sought at this time – note that the recording did not start until after the elections were held. Permission to record the meeting was given.
3	Election of Chair of the Board of Governors. The Clerk asked the meeting to consider the length of the appointment for both Chair and Vice-chair of the GB. Sometimes these are annual appointments. Sometimes appointments are made for two years. There was a brief discussion and it was pointed out that a new chair might need some time to become effective therefore the proposal was to appoint for two years. This was agreed and is in line with the GB's Standing Orders although recent appointments had been for a period of one year. Dave Dymond was proposed and seconded to stand as Chair of the GB and he left the meeting to wait in the Zoom "waiting room" whilst a vote was held. DECISION: The vote to appoint Dave Dymond to the position of Chair of Governors for a period of two years was carried. Dave re-joined the meeting.
4	Election of Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors. Adedayo Benson was nominated for the post of Vice-Chair and he nominated Yota Dimitriadi to stand alongside him as Co-Vice Chair of the GB. Both Adedayo and Yota went into a meeting room whilst a vote was held to elect them both to the Co-Vice chair role for a period of 2 years.

	<p>DECISION: The vote was carried and Adedayo Benson and Yota Dimitriadi were both elected to the post of co-vice chair of the governing board. They re-joined the meeting.</p>
5	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting 15th September 2021. (From this point on, Dave Dymond chaired the meeting.) The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting and they were accepted as a true record. They will be signed by the chair as soon as possible.</p> <p><i>(The meeting was recorded from this point.)</i> The meeting discussed the fact that a new member was needed to sit on the Pay Committee and Andrew Burrell volunteered to join this committee which is due to meet next week. The meeting was advised that the CoG should not sit on the HTPM panel (which he does not) and that ideally, he should not sit on Pay committee either but as we have no one on this committee who has sat on it before, it was advisable for him to carry on and chair the meeting as intended. This would not be a breach of statutory requirements. The meeting also received confirmation that Faruq Bilbe has resigned his position as Governor with a leaving date (to be decided) before Christmas.</p> <p>The meeting was also informed that 3 potential staff members had expressed an interest in becoming a staff governor (but that this might become 2 candidates). Conversations were being held with these staff. Laura Kerr advised that now other staff had come forward she would resign her post.</p> <p>Governor Question: Can we have an update on progress on work to sort out the policies and the TORs that they are attached to. We are working on the polices and making sure they are attached to correct committees and are reviewed on the correct time scales. This remains a work in progress. We will have an update in future meetings.</p>
6	<p>Matters arising and update on actions. There were no matters arising. There were a large number of actions from the last meeting which was such a short time ago that it was possible there had not been enough time to carry out these actions. They would be carried forward to the next FGB meeting.</p>
7	<p>Verbal Update on the School Development Plan The Head teacher informed the meeting that a briefing paper had been uploaded to the GovernorHub meeting folder and that maybe governors had had a chance to read this. SLT have worked hard to include lots of staff in the development of the SDP so that following the challenges faced in schools over the last few years, the staff all feel that they “own” the SDP. Work is still being finalised, but it is hoped the SDP will be ready to share with governors just before half term. It was felt that, as so many staff had had an input in to the document should governors email any questions to the head, then questions could be answered by the most appropriate staff. All questions and answers would be posted on GovernorHub.</p>

The Head teacher informed the meeting that there are 6 main areas to the SDP.

1. Mental Health and emotional wellbeing – that staff feel empowered and have their mental health protected. Children’s mental health is at the centre of everything.
2. Leadership and Management – embedding new staff to the school and a collaborative approach to working. Embed new members of the leadership team.
3. Early Years – a new framework means there are lots of changes in EYFS to embed and the school plan to make outdoor education and assessment a priority.
4. Quality of Education – making sure our curriculum is broad, balanced, engaging and culturally relevant to our children. The school want to upskill teachers and help the new staff settle -both new ECTs and those who have joined ASPs from other schools.
5. Personal Development – teaching RHE under the new framework and making sure ASPs values are at the centre of all the school does.
6. Behaviour and attitudes - the children have all returned to school but socialising is still unfamiliar to them and a period of re-adjustment is needed to ensure break times are enjoyable and successful. The school are implementing therapeutic approaches to behaviour management.

The head informed the meeting that writing the SDP has been a collaborative approach from the whole team and that the school hopes to have a successful year on the back of this.

Governor Question: Could this be part of a Governor Training Day? Yes, although I’m not sure what training we could do other than just explain the work that underpins each area of the SDP.

Governor Question: Thank you to you and all the team for this update and all the work you are doing – as therapeutic thinking underpins so much of what you do, would some training in this area help governors as not all governors come from an education background? Yes – we have Alice Boon coming in very soon (Tuesday 5th October at 3.30pm) to deliver training – which governors could attend or we can try to record this session if Alice is happy to do this.

Governor Question: Which training avenue have you opted to use for your ECTs? UCL. There is online training as part of this but we have been surprised by the amount of work the mentors and senior leaders need to do alongside the ECTs. We are giving our mentors ring-fenced time to support them. This is an additional pressure on our existing staff but our new staff are doing really well.

Governor Question: Why did you choose UCL? The LA were pushing UCL and the majority of local schools are using UCL.

Governor Question: You rightly have a focus on wellbeing but what are the resourcing implications to go with this? You mention interventions – are there human or financial resourcing implications? I think more than that it is about the time we give to our teachers to work within their phases to raise the profile of wellbeing. We had already bought wellbeing resources, so we don’t need any more. Having a climate of openness within school to allow conversations to take place helps us

	<p>achieve this. You are not going to train more ELSAs? We have some excellent ELSAs already who are attached to all the phases and we don't see the need to train more yet. We are seeing a positive impact from our clubs and lunchtime groups.</p> <p>Governor Question: You mention that the LA are pushing local schools to use UCL – what would happen if you choose another provider? Nothing would happen. UCL are one of a number of providers but our ECTs seem happy with them so it's not been a problem. Most of Reading schools have gone with UCL.</p> <p>Governor Training: Recent training I have attended has stressed the important role of PE and Sports within wellbeing – can you give us some information about this in school? We are one of a very few primary schools who employ a full-time sports coach (rather than ask class teachers to deliver PE lessons) which enables us to deliver high quality PE for our pupils whilst at the same time offering training opportunities for our staff in this area. We are secure in our PE curriculum and spend above our sports grant on this area. We are developing our after-school clubs to align with that and feel we are very strong in this area.</p> <p>Governor Comment: ACTION: I will shortly align a governor action plan against the SDP so as a GB we have a governor monitoring and assessment plan.</p>
8	<p>Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy</p> <p>This Policy was circulated for the FGB meeting on 15th September and was held over to give governors a chance to ask questions. It was circulated again before this meeting. It has been updated in line with the latest government guidance. A governor asked a number of questions (mostly in the area of the therapeutic approaches to managing behaviour and these questions, along with the answers supplied by staff) had been circulated to all governors via GovernorHub. Governors were again invited to ask questions but no additional questions were asked at the meeting.</p> <p>DECISION: the GB unanimously approved the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2021/2022.</p> <p>The head teacher also informed governors of an email received from Wokingham Social Services praising the work of Sarah Tweddle (SENCO) and June Mills (Family Support Officer) which has also been shared on GovernorHub. The intention is to use GovernorHub to record more praise of the work of staff. Both these staff members worked incredibly hard to support children especially during the pandemic and to have that recognised by one of our partner agencies who also suggest our expertise could be more widely shared with other schools is fantastic.</p> <p>Governor Question: Can we also include their job titles too? For example, SENCO?</p> <p>Yes.</p>
9	<p>Approval of Nursery Admissions Policy</p> <p>The meeting was informed that this policy has been updated (in consultation with the LA) to offer families not entitled to a funded 30-hour place, the opportunity to pay for 15 hours additional childcare weekly. This will be charged at £15.50 a session, payable half termly in advance.</p> <p>This would allow families who are not eligible for the 30 hour funded places (usually due to earning too much, or not having the right to access public funds due to their</p>

	<p>immigration status) to access spaces. The school are limiting this to 6 spaces a year, to ensure that there are sufficient places for those eligible for 30 hour funded places, and 15-hour places. The meeting was also informed that the school want to increase the cost of lunch club to £3.50 a day from January. The cost of lunch club hasn't increased since we started offering it about 4 years ago. As context, Crescent Under Fives charge £4. This summarises the changes made to the Nursery Admissions Policy. The updated Nursery Admissions Policy had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Governor Comment: We need to revise the wording of the second paragraph of the Policy but otherwise I am happy with it.</p> <p>The Clerk asked for some clarification over a TOR for the Nursery Admissions Committee which cannot be located – it has not been a policy that has been included in the annual review cycle in recent years. ACTION: FB to locate a copy of this policy and forward to the Clerk.</p> <p>Governor Question: there are two separate references to the cost of the lunch club. One refers to a £3.50 charge and the other to £3 charge. Is this due to the price rise taking effect from January 2022? Yes, it is. We will update this again in January and change the Terms and Conditions.</p> <p>DECISION: the GB unanimously approved the revised Nursery Admissions Policy with the proviso that the wording in the second paragraph is changed.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk and SBM to make editing change to the Policy.</p>
10	<p>Date for Governor Day in school and preliminary plan.</p> <p>There was some discussion held about when it was best to hold a Governor Day in school. Some thought it best for the Head teacher to offer a date when he felt the time was right and when such a day would not impact on staff too much, but the view was also expressed that this was best done before Christmas rather than leaving it too late into the school year. The Head said it might be possible to hold such a day towards the end of the Autumn term but that staffing was already impacted by staff off work with COVID etc.</p> <p>The SBM updated the meeting on staffing issues since the start of the academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 staff off today (29/9/21) • 4 staff have COVID-19 at the moment • 2 staff have had operations requiring 2 weeks off work • 1 staff member is on jury service for 2 weeks • 1 staff member is having some compassionate leave due to bereavement • 1 lunch time controller has resigned • The school has lost 40 working days due to non-covid related illness since the start of term. <p>However, interviews to appoint new lunchtime controllers were successful with 3 new appointments. The Head informed the meeting that the school was in a transitional period and they want to welcome governors into school but a date in the latter part of November might be possible. It was suggested that pencilling a date into the calendar would be possible with the intention to consider the viability of such a visit closer to the date.</p>

Governor Comment: We don't want, as a Governing Board, to be putting the school under avoidable pressure.

The head thanked the GB for their support and informed them that training had been changed to a virtual format because of staff covid cases and that things were very changeable in school at the moment.

Governor Comment: if we pencil in a date and then can't come into school may be the GB can instead do self-reflection, peer-reviews and self-analysis amongst the board. It is possible that government guidance might change again with the onset of winter.

The Head stated that many staff are testing themselves almost every day (even though guidance is to test twice a week) as there are so many symptoms around in the autumn that are symptoms of both covid and non-covid infections.

Governor Question: How is the current fuel shortage / fuel supply issue affecting your staff? No one has mentioned fuel is a problem yet. One member of staff who travels a long distance reported making contingency issues as fuel is in short supply with local petrol station closures.

Governor Question to the staff governor present who has a distance to travel to school: What contingency plans do you have in place in case you can't get into school? I would contact staff in Reception and Year 2 to make sure arrangements would be made to cover my class. I have my own contingency plans for childcare reasons too. We do have contingency plans in place in case of sickness. It does seem to be easing in that I have seen more fuel deliveries being made.

Governor Question: To return to Governor visits to school as our role is strategic it seems to me that visits might be better made in the summer term when they can be more celebratory and reflective, rather than add to the pressure felt by staff now? In reality we would need at least 3 visits a year to cover the full spectrum of things governors should be looking at. There is however no statutory guidance on the number of governor visits a year. It is more about the impact of those visits.

Governor Comment: I understand your sentiment that the GB should avoid putting pressure on staff especially as the school is still in a recovery period, but part of the role of the GB is to monitor what goes on school to make sure they are doing what the school tells us they are doing and you will only know that if you go into classrooms and carry out "book looks" and see progress being made. I would even say that 3 visits a year is not enough.

There followed some discussion that governors without a teaching background could look at a child's book and not know what they were looking at so governors should be supportive and questioning from a distance, rather than from within a classroom.

	<p>The discussion concluded by agreeing to pencil in a Governors Day sometime towards the end of the autumn term.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Wellbeing and Equality.</p> <p>This item is now part of every meeting agenda. Covid has made the need to appoint a link governor for wellbeing more important than ever. We have a number of governors interested in these topics and we agreed this would be a standing item at committee and GB level. I think we need to see the SDP which might help us consider these issues in more detail. We know that wellbeing has a big impact on people’s lives – governors included and we should be mindful of supporting everyone where we can.</p> <p>The Head informed the meeting that the first wellbeing committee in school would meet tomorrow for the first time, and maybe governors could have some feedback from that or link into those meetings in the future. The committee is large as all categories of staff are represented. A link governor for that committee might be a good idea.</p> <p>Governor Comment: Lots of governors showed an interest in wellbeing and getting involved with the school in this way.</p> <p>Governor Comment: there might be a Job Description for a wellbeing link governor role. If this is to be a standing item, the GB should be clear where the input into this agenda item is coming from? Is it from a link Governor or for the SLT to raise any appropriate issues they want to raise?</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Issues for parents/confidentiality.</p> <p>The school website needs to be updated. There were no items of a confidential nature.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>AOB.</p> <p>The Head informed the meeting that the LA has approached him to support a local school in special measures. RH had been HT at St Mary and All Saints school in Coley for 5 years and it was a “Good” school when he left 10 years ago, but had been in special measures for most of the time since then. It had now been agreed that RH would go and support the new HT in this school for half a day a week. As this school is part of the White Horse Trust, it would also be useful to ASPS to see how a trust school works. The Head informed the meeting that he had been approached to work as a consultant to the school for a day a week or possibly more, but that he had not got the capacity to do that. The agreement is being finalised but it is due to start from the week commencing 4/10/21 and ASPS will be paid £10K to enable RH to do this work.</p> <p>Pay Committee: Andrew Burrell offered to sit on this committee.</p> <p>The Chair offered thanks to Faruq Bilbe for his dedicated and long-term work and support of ASPS. The hope was expressed that a social event could be held before Christmas.</p> <p>Whatsapp for Governors: It was suggested that a Whatsapp group could be set up to notify governors that emails with a short time response had been sent as people check</p>

	<p>their emails at different time. This was something governors were asked to think about.</p> <p>Date of next meeting: the SDP will be circulated and governors were invited to send in questions via email in advance of a meeting. It was suggested the already scheduled PEC meeting on 1st December might be a good date to look at the SDP. This might help to inform governors visits. The GB needs to ratify the SDP.</p> <p>Date of Next (FGB) meeting: at the PEC meeting (1st December) inviting all governors and some additional staff members too.</p>
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Meeting closed at 20.21pm

At this point, all school staff present on the meeting left the meeting (RH, LK and AdC)
The meeting continued with a part 2 confidential meeting with a separate agenda.

Actions:

Action:	Owner:
Write a Governor action plan aligned against the SDP	DD
TOR for Nursery Admissions Committee to be located/updated	FB/Clerk
Nursery Admissions Policy to be edited	SBM/Clerk

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

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

Items circulated to the GB since the last FGB on 15th Spetmebr2021.

- Details about training available in Ofsted subject reports.
- Information on a Safeguarding webinar sent to our safeguarding governors.