



Minutes of the Avenue Junior School
Full Governing Body Meeting

held at Avenue Road, Norwich Norfolk
on Monday 24th February 2020 at 6pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Mike Grimble (Chair), Nania Poulson, Debbie Dismore (EHT) Lisa Crossman, Ally Ireson, Sam Rowbury, Margaret Bird, Rachel Paley, Mike Hooper (H of S), Jason Menezes, Graham Moss.

Clerk: Sheila Lewis-Smith

| Action Log | | | |
|---------------|---|------------|---------|
| Date / Item | Details | By Whom | When |
| 4 | AP 2: AH to sign the Code of Conduct at next meeting. (TLP 27 th April 2020) | Clerk / AH | 27/4/20 |
| 24/2/20 12 | AP 2: MB to upload SEND report to Governor Hub. | MB | 20/4/20 |
| 12 | AP3: DD to look at what is available for Whole Governing Body Training. | DD | ASAP |

| No | Item |
|----------|---|
| 1 | Welcome and Apologies / Consent for Absences |
| | Apologies were received and accepted from Nicola Teasdale, Jo Thompson, Sian Jones and Abby Hoffmann. The meeting was quorate. |
| 2 | Declaration of Business/Pecuniary Interests or Conflict of Interests governors have |
| | There were no declarations for this meeting. |
| 3 | Minutes of the meeting on 2nd December 2019 –accuracy |
| | The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by Mike Grimble, as Chair of that meeting. |
| 4 | Matters arising from the Minutes of 2nd December 2019 not appearing on this agenda. |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>The following Action Points were agreed as completed / updated:</p> <p><u>14/10/19</u> 5d Clerk to add Skills Matrix to Spring 1 Agenda. <i>Postponed to Aut 2020</i></p> <p><u>02/12/19</u></p> <p>Item 4 AP 1: DD and MH to check they are happy with their allocation of responsibilities on the Terms of Reference. <i>Confirmed / action completed.</i></p> <p>Item 4 AP 2: AH and GM to sign the Code of Conduct at next meeting. <i>GM completed.</i></p> <p>AP 1: AH to sign Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Item 6 AP 3: Clerk to set up "Completed Governor Monitoring Reports" folder in Monitoring and Strategy folder, as suggested by MH. <i>Completed</i></p> <p>Item 10 AP 4: Clerk to add Governor Strategy Document – Review to agenda for FGB 24th February 2020 <i>Completed</i></p> <p>Item 12 AP 5: NP to upload guide to setting up new email and transferring emails over. <i>Completed and governors reminded to set up new email addresses.</i></p> <p>Item 12 AP 6: MG asked to have access the school's Cloud. <i>In progress.</i></p> |
| 5 | <p>Executive Headteacher's Report – questions to EHT before the meeting</p> |
| | <p>NP congratulated the school for taking the decision to "start again" with the curriculum. It was a brave thing to do, involving a lot of work. DD said that the school had received a visit from Mr Groves from the Local Authority. The school had provided its own action points. NP said that it was not clear where the information from the visit was going or whether there would be a written report issued to the school.</p> <p>Q: Did Mr Groves provide any indication about the political climate in education?</p> <p>A: No.</p> <p>DD said that the curriculum contained some good skills but overall needed reinvigorating. BZ had brought back some interesting ideas from English courses. MH said that the staff had changed over time and it was important for the current staff to have ownership of the curriculum.</p> <p>DD said they had raised a few issues with Mr Groves – Finances, SEND provision and Behaviour and exclusions. They discussed funding being very restrictive.</p> <p>Q: Will this be an annual visit?</p> <p>A: Unsure.</p> <p>Governors observed that the LA is not there so much for school improvement as to intervene when things go wrong.</p> <p>Q: In Year 6 there are 18 Pupil Premium children but only 15 on Free School Meals - clearly an effect of the Ever6 PP rule. Is there any evidence that pupils no longer on FSM achieve differently from the rest of the PP cohort? Also could this be part of the reason why PP attendance seems to be improving in Year 6?</p> <p>A: Historically, probably yes if a child is in Year 6 and still on FSM. This is an area to be explored more fully.</p> <p>It was noted that attendance was improving for Year 6 and governors wondered if there was a correlation.</p> <p>Q: The incidence of SEN seems higher in Year 3 than other Years. Is this any evidence of the</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>trend in Norfolk that parents/carers are more aware of the perceived benefits of having an EHCP for their child?</p> <p>A: It is still not easy to get an EHCP. The data represents the changing cohort, with higher incidents of autism, ADHD etc. This change is also echoed by Recreation Road Infant School (RRIS). Places in specialist provision are at a premium, with incidences such as 25 children bidding for every one place.</p> <p>Q: There appears to be an increase in behaviour reports?</p> <p>A: Over the last 5 years, behaviour incidents have changed and are now of a different nature. Many are an emotional response. Colman Infant School had a few years ago raised the issue of the increasing amount of children with ASD coming into reception and that many of these children could not access mainstream school. These children are now in junior schools and there are still increasing numbers of children coming through. With support, many children with ASD can be successful in mainstream schools but not all and there are not enough specialist places or enough external support available in the LA. All free support sessions have gone.</p> <p>Q: There seem to be a lot of incidents of behaviour – is it adding on from before rather than a picture of a term?</p> <p>A: It adds on. MH said that the data needed to be viewed differently, as a few children can be responsible for a number of incidents. There are different levels of recording incidents on CPOMS, and it is not easy for governors to see the magnitude or type of incident from the data.</p> <p>Q: Can the data be broken down to see those who have SEN or ASD etc?</p> <p>A: Many of the children do have additional needs, but not all. DD said the school could try to add more detail to determine the level of seriousness. Behaviour is a focus for the school, always working to improve behaviour for children. Many of the current incidents are related to extreme difficulties around emotional regulation. There are not so many incidents of aggressive behaviour this year and less restraint has been necessary. Only 3 or 4 children have it built in as part of their individual plans.</p> <p>The Behaviour Policy is currently being reviewed with staff. MH said that the boundaries need to be reaffirmed with staff and children.</p> <p>DD said that Self-Regulation was on the School Development Plan and generally in class, positive behaviour was seen. There is less self-regulation during break times. Fixed Term Exclusions have gone down from last year.</p> <p>Q: Can governors see a baseline when this information is presented again?</p> <p>A: CPOMS is picking it up from September. There are 5 stages on CPOMS but be aware that some incidents tick 2 categories e.g. verbal bullying / homophobic comments. It was noted that there were no reported incidents of cyberbullying and governors considered whether this was a result of the school's policy of no phones in school.</p> <p>Q: What interventions are in place for attendance?</p> <p>A: MH said that the attendance figures were now on target since Christmas. Colour coded letters had been issued to parents; this was to address issues such as parents taking children out of school for holidays.</p> <p>Governors observed that the letters had caused some concerns by parents and questioned whether the tone of the letter regarding Fixed Penalty Notices could be softened. MH advised that the information was presented in such a way to meet legal requirements and therefore could not be altered. MH said that some families need this level of intervention but understood that the cost savings on the holidays outweighed the fines.</p> <p>Q: It is distressing for a child who has genuinely been off ill to receive a red letter – can you add something?</p> <p>A: Information from the NHS is provided for parents so they can judge whether their child</p> |
|--|---|

| | |
|----------|--|
| | <p>should be in school.</p> <p>Governors commented that the DfE information regarding the impact of absence could be seen as an exaggeration; was it possible to explain the impact specifically to parents?</p> <p>Q: How much absence is genuine illness?</p> <p>A: Much of it is genuine. Interventions are not put in place for those incidents. Children at 90-94% start on interventions led by the school's Parent Support Assistant; Breakfast Club has also helped boost attendance.</p> <p>The coloured letters were sent to all other children not on interventions.</p> <p>MH pointed out that overall, school attendance was good with some cohorts having lower attendance.</p> <p>Q: The school has received funding from the Norwich Opportunity Area; will it be possible to embed some of the actions / training that has been received to support attendance?</p> <p>A: Ten staff have been ELSA trained, which is a long-lasting provision. An Inclusion Champion is released one day a week but this may be difficult to sustain with tight budgets.</p> <p>Achievement for All and Emotion Coaching will continue to have an impact. The Transition project can be sustained. There will not be so many opportunities to release teachers to go out of school.</p> <p>Q: When will the NOA funding stop?</p> <p>A: By the end of March but the school are hoping that more funding will be available.</p> <p>Governors observed that they were confident that the school was doing all it could to support children's attendance.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <p>Q: Governors commented that the numbers of pupils involved was large and asked if this was the number from September.</p> <p>A: MH confirmed it was the figure from September and is representative of the school's response to even small issues. It is rising each year, with Domestic Violence featuring more frequently. The school now gets reports from the police when incidents of DV have occurred in a child's family (Encompass).</p> <p>Q: Is the school resourced sufficiently to manage safeguarding issues?</p> <p>A: The school now has two more trained Designated Safeguarding Leads trained but it is time consuming and can dominate workloads.</p> <p>Q: Do the DSL's receive supervision?</p> <p>A: DD said in her opinion, schools should get free supervision like the NHS. There is an element of supervision between the DSL's of RRIS and AJS. MH and Steve Chambers also have the opportunity to speak to DD. Discussion with CADS can only happen with parental permission. MH pointed out that the CPOMS system has cut down the administration process.</p> |
| 6 | Confidential Item |
| | Confidential Minutes were produced for this item. |
| 7 | Safeguarding Update |
| | Dealt with during Item 5. |
| 8 | Review of Spring School Census |
| | Governors had received this information. No discussion required. |
| 9 | SFVS – for submission 28th February 2020 |

| | |
|----|---|
| | <p>The SFVS had been made available for governors on Governor Hub. MG said that there was an element of comparison with other schools. The statements were all graded green. The SFVS had been approved by Resources Committee.</p> <p>MG and DD were thanked for their work on this document.</p> <p>SFVS approved by FGB.</p> |
| 10 | <p>Committee action points and recommendations</p> <p><u>10.1 Resources</u></p> <p>10.1.1 Budget – Revision 3 and funding issues</p> <p>MG advised that the BR3 had been tight. Although there were to be increases to teacher's pay, it was not known how the funding would be calculated. There are also issues around the National Living Wage increases.</p> <p>The budget for 2020-21 is due to be received on 28th February and the full Budget Setting will come to the FGB.</p> <p>10.1.2 Staffing</p> <p>DD advised that she is currently looking at the Staffing Structure to present against the Budget Setting.</p> <p>10.1.3 Premises, including update on BMP5 if available.</p> <p>The current BMP scheme involves schools paying in annually and then getting building maintenance work done as part of the package. There are funds still available as the scheme draws to a close and DD had asked for the conservatory to be repaired but after initial discussions, NPS had emailed and said that the project was not going ahead. JM and DD are due to meet with Charles Tyndal from NPS to discuss this matter further.</p> <p>10.1.4 Audits – School Audit and Themed Audit – Safer Recruiting</p> <p>The School Audit had been good and an agreed action plan had been approved by the Local Authority.</p> <p>Safer Recruitment – governors acknowledged the importance of safer recruitment procedures. Some schools had not checked all the required details; MG confirmed that AJS was compliant in all areas.</p> <p>Q: Is health screening routinely done?</p> <p>A: Yes.</p> <p><u>10.2 TLP</u></p> <p>In the absence of SJ, MH updated the governors on the last TLP meeting, which had focussed on data. Reading is a strength but the school is working on early reading skills. Four staff are due to attend a training day at RRIS.</p> <p>A bigger focus is on writing. The assessment system has changed and there are now higher expectations to gain a "level". This has had the effect of making the outcomes look poorer than previously. No More Marking has shown that children do not compare favourably at Yrs 3,4,and 5. Governors noted that the Year 3 assessment was conducted in early October. Governors had raised questions about the Year 6 targets and current levels of attainment. MH advised that there has been a new data drop and this shows a narrowing of the gap between the target data and current attainment.</p> <p>NP pointed out to governors that the targets were on the front of the Headteacher's Report.</p> |
| 11 | <p>Policy reviews</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>i. Charging Policy</p> <p>This had been updated and reflected current list of benefits that would trigger Free</p> |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| | <p>School Meals which could allow remission of charges. Proposed by MG, Seconded by NP. Policy approved.</p> <p>ii. Governor Expenses Policy This had been updated. Proposed by MG, Seconded by NP. Policy approved.</p> <p>TLP None to present</p> |
| 12 | Governor training / monitoring visits / involvement in school form |
| | <p>The Monitoring Visits forms / reports are to be uploaded to Governor Hub when completed. MB has a SEND report to upload.</p> <p>AP 2: MB to upload SEND report to Governor Hub.</p> <p>NP confirmed that MB was not monitoring Equalities. LC commented that there did not seem to be many training opportunities in the Educator Solutions brochure. Governors raised the issue as to whether the subscription fees were value for money. Safeguarding training attracts an additional cost of £165.</p> <p>Q: How much does the school spend on the subscription to Educator Solutions? A: This information was not available at the meeting. JM had completed a Health and Safety Course. SR had attended a Library Resources course. Al is due to attend "Holding School Leaders t Account" course.</p> <p>AP3: DD to look at what is available for Whole Governing Body Training.</p> |
| 13 | Disability / Equality Issues |
| | Minor work to an accessible sink had been completed. |
| 14 | Correspondence |
| | <p>i) A letter had been received regarding a Govern-Ed course for governors. This was recommended by NP an MG.</p> <p>ii) A complaint had been received and dealt with under the Complaints Policy.</p> |
| 15 | Any Other Business |
| | <p><u>Sports Centre</u> – DD advised that the committee were still working on sorting out a management system. Resources Committee will be updated at the next meeting.</p> <p><u>Governor Roles</u> – NP advised that as she has some specific aspects of governance to focus on, JT (Vice Chair) will be stepping up her role to take responsibility for monitoring to support this. Given the ongoing situation with SJ, it has been agreed that RP will take on the Chair of TLP Committee, with SJ becoming Vice Chair.</p> |
| 16 | Dates of 2020 FGB meetings: Monday 20th April 6.00pm – MG gave apologies. Monday 13th July 6.00pm |

Meeting closed at 20.02

| | | |
|--|--|-------------|
| Signed as a true and accurate record. | | Date |
|--|--|-------------|