

Allfarthing Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Board 25 November 2020, 18:30

Minutes – Part A

Present:

James Francis	JF	Co-opted Governor and Co-Chair
Lorraine Wait	LW	Local Authority Governor and Co-Chair
Tom Holmes	TH	Headteacher
Rachel Amankwa	RA	Parent Governor
Matt Newman	MN	Parent Governor
Hannah Snashall	HS	Parent Governor
David Forbes	DF	Parent Governor
Tom Walton-Gould	TWG	Staff Governor
Robert Cachia	RC	Co-opted Governor
Jon-Paul Brett	JB	Co-opted Governor
Anna Mulcahy	AM	Co-opted Governor
James Heale	JH	Co-opted Governor

In attendance:

Debbie Tyson Gooden	DTG	School Business Manager
Helen Watts	HW	Local Authority Clerk to Full Governing Board meetings

The meeting opened at 18:35

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies. All governors are present. **The meeting is quorate.** LW warmly welcomed all governors and especially Jon-Paul Brett, the newly appointed Co-opted Governor. The agenda has been set out so that governors can focus on their strategic role followed by the administrative issues that need to be covered.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Note any appointments

LW told governors that this is JB's first official meeting as a Co-opted Governor. The HT and JF have met JB face to face and he has met other governors via zoom this term. As Andrew Bacon (AB) stood down as Local Authority (LA) Governor at the end of the 2020 summer term, LW is now the LA Governor. Governors **agreed** to the above appointments.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 July 2020 and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2020 were **approved** as an accurate record of the meeting. LW agreed to sign the minutes if not already signed by the previous Chair AB and return a signed copy to the School Business Manager (SBM) for filing.

Governors noted an update on actions as follows:

Item 5 – JF to sign a copy of the 2019 autumn term minutes in case AB has not done so and return to the SBM for filing.

Item 5 – The HT to invite Kate Saksena to the 2020 summer term meeting if possible.

Item 5 – Chair/Clerk to include the Risk Register as a standing item on FGB agendas going forward.

Item 5 – Governors to continue to train and research into the new Ofsted Framework – Ongoing.

Item 6 – The HT informed governors that he believes only Swaffield Primary School opened in the summer holidays for two weeks.

Item 7 – DTG to post the School Financial Value Standard Document from 2019/20 onto Dropbox.

Item 8 – JH informed governors that the Religious and Sex Education (RSE) Policy has been written and is going out to staff. The school is planning to present the RSE curriculum to parents to include an explanation of the resources used and a Question and Answer session. The teaching of female genital mutilation and equality are two of the new additions for Y6. It is hoped that the policy can be signed off in the spring term ready for the summer term 2021, which is in line with the government’s deadline to start teaching the subject.

Item 11 – Governors to revisit their short and medium term strategy. JF commented that it would be good if governors can attend the inset day in September when the School Development Plan is discussed and drafted. Going forward this would be a good time to discuss the Governing Board’s strategy.

Item 11 – HS has kindly offered to Chair the Children, Families and Community (CFC) Committee and is also the Inclusion Governor. MN is now on the Curriculum Committee and RC is on Staffing. JB is hoping to join Staffing and Finance and Premises.

Item 11 – The Chair reminded governors that as part of the Governing Board’s self-evaluation it is important for governors to fill out the Key’s 20 questions at least four weeks prior to the next FGB meeting which is due to take place on 23 March. Governors should send their forms to LW and JF.

All other actions have been completed, are in progress or will be discussed later in the meeting.

<p>Action: LW to sign the 2020 FGB summer term minutes if not already signed by AB and return the signed copy to the SBM for filing.</p> <p>Action: JF to sign the 2019 FGB autumn term minutes if not already signed by AB and return the signed copy to the SBM for filing</p> <p>Action: The HT to invite Kate Saksena to the 2021 summer term meeting if possible.</p> <p>Action: Chair/Clerk to include the Risk Register on all Full Governing Board (FGB) agendas going forward.</p> <p>Action: Governors to continue to train and research into the new Ofsted Framework – Ongoing.</p> <p>Action: DTG to post the School Financial Value Standard Document from 2019/20 onto Dropbox.</p> <p>Action: JH/Chair/Clerk to include the RSE Policy to the spring term FGB meeting</p> <p>Action: Governors to revisit their short and medium term strategy. Going forward governors to attend the inset day in September.</p> <p>Action: Governors to fill out the 20 Questions document posted on dropbox and send to LW and JF before 23 February 2021.</p>
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5. Governing Board update

On behalf of governors, JF thanked LW for all her hard work and support with the Governing Board. He also thanked HS for taking on the role of CFC Chair.

Website Compliance

To fulfill their responsibility in relation to the school website, on behalf of governors, JB has completed a full compliance review of the website using the Key’s Compliance Checklist. He has reviewed all the new requirements and has alerted the school of any amendments or changes that need to be made. JB

stated that it is a good thorough website. The content is largely there. He suggested that it might be worth restructuring the website as it does have lots of menu options. The HT commented that the school would welcome any advice, support and technical expertise. JB offered to help if he can. HS offered to talk to the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Chair in case a parent/carer might be willing to design or build a new website.

Q – A governor queried if the most recent FGB minutes from the academic year 2019/20 should be posted on the website?

*A – DTG agreed to upload the minutes. **Further to the meeting**, this has been actioned.*

Q - Is it worth drafting a page or so to update our stakeholders about the work of the Governing Board? JF added that the work and perspective from parent governors is important. It is also important to update the attendance records and possibly add the committee terms of reference.

A – HS offered to complete this action.

JB joined the meeting at 7.03pm due to technical issues. However, the minutes are set out in the same order as the agenda.

Action: JB to help check the website is up to date by the end of January 2021.

Action: HS to contact the Chair of the PTA to check if a parent/carer might be able to help to design and build a new website. JB to help if possible.

Action: HS to draft an update on the impact of governors and ensure that the attendance records are up to date. HS to also look into adding the committee terms of reference to the website.

Scheme of Delegation

DF told governors that he started working on the financial scheme of delegation and this piece of work led him to draft a more general scheme of delegation related to governance. DF has noted that the policies in the Governors Scheme of Delegation need to be consistent with the Policy Review Schedule. There may be some repetition between the committee terms of reference and the scheme. The scheme of delegation is a work in progress.

Action: DF to complete the Governors Scheme of Delegation and liaise with the Co-Chairs and Committee Chairs to ensure that the Scheme is in line with the Policy Review Schedule and the Committee Terms of Reference as soon as possible.

Update from the Co-Chairs

JF and LW told governors that they have met with the HT several times to discuss Covid-19 and other issues related to the school.

HT Appraisal

JF, LW and the School Improvement Partner, Kate Saksena formed the HT’s appraisal panel. Both Co-Chairs congratulated the HT for leading the school so well through a difficult period. The comments from the parent/carer body about the strong leadership reinforce the view of governors.

Another governor expressed his thanks to the HT, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all staff for working extremely hard and well in ever shifting sands. The HT has shown outstanding leadership. All governors agreed.

A governor mentioned at this point that DropBox needs some work to tidy and file the documents in the relevant place. Duplication should be avoided and any documents which are no longer relevant or have been superseded by other documents should be archived. HS agreed to take this on and work with JH to ensure that the most up to date policies and school documents are posted on DropBox.

Action: HS to liaise with JH and update DropBox as soon as possible.

JF thanked governors for all their hard work and HS for offering to update the website and Dropbox as mentioned above.

6. Headteacher's (HT) Report to Governors

The Headteacher's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and reviewed by Governors. The HT also sent out the following documents with his report: Allfarthing Note of Visit (NOV) Autumn 2020; Year 3 Comparative Judgement Summary with 2019; Y5 comparison; Whole School Parent Survey Summer 2020 written responses; parent feedback, Copy of parent survey analysis, Allfarthing Primary School risk assessment September and Allfarthing Absolutes.

The HT highlighted the following issues for governors and invited questions on the content.

The HT explained that the number on roll is currently 361 which is relatively similar to last year. There are 9 leavers since the October census to the end of term. As the pupils were on roll during the census the school has received the money for each child. Due to Covid-19 two or three families are leaving the school.

Q – Does the 9 include pupils due to leave or who have left?

A – The HT answered that some have not left yet but are due to leave before the end of term. Numbers for Reception, Y1 and Y2 are looking healthy. Y5 is strong in numbers too.

Q – Is there a reason why Reception has 59 pupils?

A – The HT answered that there is an issue with the LA Admissions Department. However, the school has been very proactive and organized itself with starters across the year groups. The vacant place in Reception has now been allocated.

Q – A governor mentioned that the school seems to have a healthy number of joiners?

A – The HT clarified that the number of starters is average. There are no children on the waiting list at the LA. The school is pursuing its own list.

Pupil Premium (current Free School Meals (FSM) and previous) is 19.1%. The percentage is slightly higher than the previous two years (17.5% in 2018 and 17.7% in 2019).

Q – There seems to be a disparity in pupil premium numbers within the year groups. How is the money spent?

A – The HT answered that there is a central pot. Each child receives £1,500. The money is used to pay towards residential trips for example or a teaching assistant. There are 30 pupil premium children between Y4 and Y6 so the teaching assistant spends much of their time with the two year groups.

Q – Is there a reason why Quality plus data is only available for Y3 upwards?

A – The HT commented that the school is waiting for some Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Information. The school is defining where children are with SEND.

Attendance figures are shown for the last four years and so far this year. Absence to date is 2.1% without Covid and 4.3% with Covid. The HT informed governors that attendance is better than pre-Covid, as families are not going away before the end of term. Illness amongst staff and children is practically non-existent. General illness is not apparent.

Q – Are national and local attendance figures available?

A – The HT explained that there is some delay due to Covid.

Q – Is more than 10% the threshold of persistent absence?

A – The HT confirmed this is the case.

Attendance is discussed in detail at CFC meetings. The school works very hard to ensure that attendance does not drop below 90% for every child.

Q - Does the school have an update on FSM pupils?

A – The HT and JH work with parents/carers and staff and constantly review the list to make sure it is up to date and correct. Up to Y2 all children receive free school meals which means that the younger years do not sign up. The school reviews the FSM information for all pupils and year groups but focuses on post Y2 when universal free school meals terminate.

Q – A governor commented that the Sainsbury’s vouchers also seem to work well?

A – The HT confirmed that when the lunch vouchers from the government were not working so well, the Sainsbury’s vouchers filled the gap.

Exclusions

The HT reported that there has been a one day fixed term exclusion. Please see confidential minutes.

Q – A governor asked about numbers of English as an Additional Language pupils?

A – The HT commented that he would add a table on EAL pupils in his HT Report going forward. The school is approximately 43% White British. The school has five new starters with no English. One child is facing some challenges but the others are doing well.

In answer to a governor’s question, the HT told governors that a teaching assistant takes the children to work on vocabulary. It is a good forum for the children to integrate and socialize. However, it can be a challenge for teachers. There used to be some money from the government for EAL children but this has ceased.

Behavior is generally good as children can only mix with their own bubbles.

Q – Is there an adverse effect on behavior due to smaller groups?

A – The HT answered no. There have been one or two small incidents in Y6. One child had to be persuaded to come into school but once in school was fine.

A governor noted that perhaps smaller groups get more attention.

Red and yellow cards have decreased in numbers from the 2019 autumn term to the 2020 autumn term. 22 were issued in the 2019 autumn term compared to 9 in the 2020 autumn term.

Q – There seems to be a disconnect between the HT Report on bullying (0 incidents) and the results from the parents’ survey?

A – The HT answered that the language or phrase used in the survey might be misleading. Certainly no cases have been brought to the school’s attention. JH added that the school reinforces the message about “persistent behavior/bullying”. When you get to the bottom of an issue it is not really classified as bullying. One comment from a parent/carer who was “dissatisfied” with this area of the school had already decided to leave the school.

Q – Perhaps the school and governors can raise the profile of what they are doing in relation to bullying?

A – The HT told governors the issue can be raised with pupil voice via the school council.

Monitoring

Phonics has been covered in the 2020 autumn term curriculum meeting. Any gaps are being dealt with. Data is looking promising across the years. Please see the documents mentioned above.

School Development Plan 2020-2021

The relevant priorities from the SDP have been assigned to the committees and discussed.

The HT report gives governors an update against each priority. The SDP priorities for 2020-21 are the following:

1. An effective and reactive Recovery programme for all children;

2. **A succinct and progressive Curriculum for our children and community;**
3. **To ensure all the SDP priorities from 2019-20 are completed (PP, Oracy, Technology, Reading)**
4. **Maths and English teaching and learning reflects the needs of our children post lockdown.**
5. **Ensure that all our teaching and learning embodies our “Allfarthing Absolutes”.**

Q – Is there a reason why the data only covers Y5?

A – The HT confirmed it is the only year group where it was possible to cover the data.

The HT went on to say that average attainment is better than previous year 4s. 18 children have dropped in Maths by more than 10% but the issues are resolvable and also due to the time in the year. Middle ability and greater depth ability have dropped the most but the school has noted this and is taking appropriate action.

JH told governors that Y3 are part of National Assessment scheme. The information is taken for the year group and compared to other schools and ranked nationally. Y3 is the first group to take part. To date the school has the following information:

Pupils are 11% higher than other schools at expected and 19% higher at greater depth

The scheme makes moderation easier and gives the staff confidence. Only one child with SEND is not where they should be.

Q – The data shows 96% of non pp are at expected whilst 70% of pp are at expected? How do you intend to close the gap?

A – The HT answered that the school has split up the English role. The Y6 teacher is leading on writing. The school has also invested in pp support and extra staff. Also, some of the pp pupils might have SEND. The school receives £1500 per child which is not enough. The school has narrowed the gap by 7% from last year but continues to narrow the gap further. JH added when compared to other schools the difference in expected for pp is plus 11%. At greater depth it is plus 22%. The percentages are not only favorable when compared to other schools, but they are up on the school’s results for last year. The HT told governors that a pp child that reached expected in Y2 is on track to achieve greater depth in Y6. If this is the case, it would be a huge success for the child and the school.

Q – How is the school planning to spend the Covid-19 recovery fund?

A – The HT told governors that the entire allocation will be spent. Each child has been allocated £80. The school is using the money to release class teachers to work with their groups. There is an intervention program for phonics for three months.

Q – Are contingency plans in place if a bubble has to shut down?

A – The HT confirmed that the school has a process to follow. Plans have been made and packs are ready for each year group.

Well-being and Safeguarding

Staff are well and doing a sterling job but past anxieties have come to the forefront.

Q – Are staff using Place2Be?

A – The HT commented that there is no requirement for the school to be told.

JH reported that he and AM as the Safeguarding Link Governor met on 9 October and are planning to meet on 11 December. A Monitoring Visit form from AM has been added to DropBox. Child Protection and Children in Need cases have dropped. Two early help referrals have been made and a third is possible. There has been a rise in Operation Tea Rose cases. Operation Tea Rose involves the school being notified about domestic incidents that take place outside of school hours. The school is normally informed between 24 and 48 hours after the incident to allow them to offer any necessary support to a child. The school has had to deal with three families and four children. The school does its very best to act swiftly. A case that was brought to the school's attention this morning was dealt with and escalated to the correct person by 10am.

Q – A governor queried whether some zoom well-being workshops can be organized instead of coffee mornings?

A – The HT will speak to the lead person at Place2Be for some ideas. Zoom meetings have proved to be successful.

A governor mentioned that perhaps a zoom session can be run for parents/carers who have children with SEND?

Q – What is the school doing to help parents/carers well-being?

A – JH answered that the school has many processes in place such as a push on Place2Be, the Education Welfare Officer is on hand, "My Concerns" is working well and worry boxes are available. The school checks in on the well-being of the children constantly and regularly. JH and AM are due to discuss parental engagement further at their meeting on 11 December. At their meeting on 9 October they mentioned that parents/carers are more forthcoming about their circumstances. It is a testimony to the level of trust that the SLT has built up. Class emails have been working well. There is better communication now than pre-Covid and the school plans to build on this relationship.

Action: HT to double check information for Quality plus

Action: HT and staff to raise the profile of the work being done around bullying to the pupil voice via the school council.

Action: HT to speak to the Lead person at Place2Be to see if it is possible to organise a zoom or other appropriate well-being sessions for parents/carers;

Action: HT to review whether a zoom session for parents with SEND children is possible.

7. Governing Board Committees

- a. Committee Terms of Reference - The Committee Terms of Reference need to be aligned with the Governors Scheme of Delegation as mentioned under item 5.
- b. Link Governors and Visit Focus in line with School Development Priorities. LW agreed to add the following Link Roles: Remote Learning Governor and Well-being. Equality and Diversity can be included in the Inclusion Link Governor role carried out by HS.
- c. Report from Committees

Finance and Premises

A governor commented that the carry forward is less than expected due to Covid related expenses and nursery places are down. The carry forward has been reduced by approximately £25,000.

In answer to a governor's question, the HT answered that it would be prudent in the current climate to have a carry forward of approximately £100,000. Please see the HT Report for more information on the budget to date.

Governors **agreed** to delegate the drafting of the 2021/22 budget to the Finance and Premises Committee.

The school has a Health and Safety Inspection on 26 November and the report will be discussed at the 2020 spring term Finance and Premises meeting.

There were no questions from other committee meetings.

Action: LW to add Remote Learning Governor and Well-Being Governor to the link governor list.
Action: Finance and Premises to discuss the Health and Safety Inspection from 26 November 2020 including any actions at its spring term meeting.

8. Safeguarding

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)

The Guidance was circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Governors stated that they have **read, understand and will comply** with the guidance.

- Report from Safeguarding Link Governor

As mentioned above, AM has posted a monitoring visit report from her visit on 9 October. Please also see the information about Safeguarding under item 6

9. Governing Board Administration

- a. Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS) Checks

The School Business Manager (SBM) confirmed all DBS checks are up to date.

- b. Get Information about Schools (formerly Edubase)

The SBM confirmed this is up to date.

- c. Website compliance checklist

Please see item 5

- d. Governors Code of conduct. Governors **agreed** the Code of Conduct 2020-2021.

Action: LW or JF to sign the Code of Conduct.

- e. Register of Business Interests – information to be published on the school website

All governors were emailed a Business Interest Form 2020/21 and asked to complete, sign and return the form to the SBM as soon as possible

Action: All governors to complete, sign and return the Business Declaration Form to the SBM as soon as possible.

10. Governing Board Strategy

- a. Agree Governing Board Annual Work Planner 2020/21. HS and DTG offered to update the document to include the policy review schedule. Governors **approved** the model template from the LA in the meantime.

- b. Agree Governor Training.

1. JF has completed several modules from the National Governance Online Training;
2. DF has completed the Finance for Governors course run by the LA in October and;
3. JB has completed the Governors Essential Course run by the LA.

Action: HS and DTG offered to update the Governors Annual Work Planner as soon as possible

11. Equality Objectives

JH is in the process of tweaking the equality objectives for 2020-23. He will add them to the school website once completed. He asked governors to review the objectives once they are on the website. Governors can revisit the progress made on the objectives in the summer term. Governors also decided to invite the Lead Diversity member of staff to the spring term meeting.

Action: Chair/Clerk to add Equality Objective 2020-23 to the summer term FGB agenda.

Action: HT/JH to invite the lead Diversity member of staff to the first 30 minutes of the spring term meeting.

12. Policies

Staff discipline, conduct and grievance procedures - The school will check this policy and governors can review it at the spring term FGB meeting;

Governors **adopted** the LA Human Resources Statutory Policies list.

Governors **approved** the Child Protection policy, noting that the policy had been reviewed by CFC. The policy includes a section on Allegations of abuse against staff.

Governors **adopted** the LA Financial Handbook Procedures. The LA Financial Handbook was reviewed by the Finance and Premises Committee.

Governors **approved** the Scheme of Delegation 2020/21 which had been previously reviewed by the Finance and Premises Committee at its 2020 autumn term meeting.

Governors **approved** the Pay policy, noting that the policy had been reviewed by the Staffing Committee.

Action: Chair/Clerk to add Staff discipline, conduct and grievance procedures to the 2020 spring term FGB agenda.

13. Any other business

None

14. Date of the next meeting

23 March 2021

7 July 2021

The meeting closed at 20.30

Approved on _____

Signed by _____