

` Allfarthing Primary School

**Meeting of the Full Governing Board
30 November 2021, 18:30**

Minutes – Part A

Present:

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| James Francis | JF | Co-opted Governor and Co-Chair (Meeting Chair) |
| Tom Holmes | TH | Headteacher |
| David Forbes | DF | Parent Governor |
| Sasha Ralph | SR | Parent Governor |
| James Corry | JC | Parent Governor |
| Jon-Paul Brett | JB | Co-opted Governor |
| James Heale | JH | Co-opted Governor |
| Hannah Snashall | HS | Parent Governor |
| Rachel Amankwa | RA | Co-opted Governor |

In attendance:

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| Debbie Tyson Gooden | DTG | School Business Manager |
| Helen Watts | HW | Local Authority Clerk to Full Governing Board meetings |
| Aine Donegan | AG | Assistant Headteacher |

The meeting opened at 18:35

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from the new staff governor Katie Clark (KC), Lorraine Wait (LW) and Matt Newman (MN - Associate Member). **The meeting is quorate.** As LW had to send apologies at the last minute due to a minor emergency, JF kindly offered to Chair the meeting. He extended a warm welcome to Sasha Ralph and James Corry who are attending their first Full Governing Board meeting as Parent Governors.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Headteacher Recruitment Update

On behalf of the Board, JF congratulated James Heale on his new appointment as Headteacher from January 2022. JF commented that the recruitment process took place in the autumn term as planned. Following an extremely thorough and rigorous process which attracted some strong candidates, JH was the successful candidate. The school is following up on the appropriate paperwork.

JH informed governors that the recruitment process for a new Deputy Headteacher is in progress. The process is external and the advert will go out in January with a view that the successful candidate can be appointed by the February half term and start in the Summer term. The process is similar to the HT recruitment but without the input of the Local Authority. The recruitment panel is made up of the HT and governors and the process is done internally.

4. Note any appointments

JF told governors that Katie Clark is the new Staff Governor. The Board has one vacant space for a Co-opted Governor which it is working on. **Post meeting note:** From January 2022, when JH starts as Headteacher, the Board will look to fill another Co-opted Governor vacancy to replace JH.

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| Action: Governors to fill the Co-opted Governor vacancy to replace JH. |
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5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 July 2021 and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2021 were **approved** as a true and accurate record of the meeting. LW to return a signed copy to the School Business Manager (SBM) for filing.

Governors noted an update on actions as follows:

Item 3 – Governors to continue training and researching into the new Ofsted Framework and attend termly School Link Adviser meetings as silent observers. Governors have started to attend the SLA meetings. - Ongoing

Item 3 – LW and JF to consider the best approach to completing the 20 Questions as part of a governor's self-evaluations exercise.

Item 3 – The work on the school website is ongoing. HS, JH and JB continue to monitor the website. JH added that the Well-Being Cluster commented it is the quickest and easiest website to access well-being materials. The HT added that the website always receives positive feedback. JH offered to review the website in more detail and allow multiple staff access to update documents. HS confirmed the **website is compliant** but it is an ongoing piece of work.

Item 3 – HS reported that she had a very positive meeting with the school council about bullying on Monday 29 November. She will invite some members of the school council to a Children, Families and Community committee meeting.

Item 3 – JH confirmed that the Diversity and Equality Policy is a work in progress and it will go to the spring term CFC meeting before the Spring FGB meeting.

Item 3 – LW to review how to take the Risk Register forward.

Item 7 – DF joined LW on the Headteacher's appraisal panel.

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

Action: LW to return a signed copy of the 2021 FGB summer term minutes to the SBM as soon as possible.

Action: Governors to continue training and researching into the new Ofsted Framework and attend the SLA meetings termly as silent observers - Ongoing

Action: LW and JF to consider the best approach to completing the 20 Questions as part of a governor's self-evaluation exercise.

Action: JH to continue to review the school website with HS and JB and allow multiple staff to update the website.

Action: Diversity and Equality policies to go to the spring term CFC meeting followed by the FGB meeting.

Action: LW to review how to take the Risk Register forward.

6. School Development Plan

JF and a few other governors attended the staff INSET day in September to review and discuss the draft School Development Plan (SDP) Priorities. The SDP Priorities are now divided amongst the relevant committees and embedded in committee and full governing board (FGB) agendas. The HT suggested that governors could have a separate meeting around the SDP. This has not happened in the last two years due to Covid and other factors (including the time spent by the governors in recruiting a new Headteacher). The SDP is a real focus for the school and governors. JF agreed and added that the

discussion amongst staff at the inset day was extremely productive. JF suggested that going forward shorter discussions and highlights from the discussions might be more efficient.

Q - In answer to a governor's question, the HT confirmed that the most up to date SDP is on Dropbox.

The School Development Plan priorities for 2021 to 2022 are the following:

SDP Priority 1: To develop high quality inspirational writing across the school;

SDP Priority 2: To ensure any areas that need “recovery” are accurately addressed, combined with effective and purposeful interventions;

SDP Priority 3: To maximise creativity and further enhance the diversity and equality of our curriculum;

SDP Priority 4: The needs of all learners are effectively met through accurate differentiation within planning and teaching and

SDP Priority 5: Ensure subjects are lead in a succinct and consistent manner with subjects being delivered to a high quality.

Governors formally **agreed** the School Development Priorities for 2021/22.

Action: Governors to meet at the start of the academic year every year to discuss the SDP – Ongoing.

7. 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: 2021-22 document (SDP); Allfarthing KS1; Copy of EOY data for governors, Two case studies; Leavers Nov 2021; Link Governor 2021-22 and Positive Feedback.

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

58 children ended up joining Reception in September. The school did have 60 children joining and a waiting list. However, the number is now 55 which is not ideal. 6 children have joined Y4 so the year group does not have to go to one form which is positive. The HT explained that there is always movement and it tends to be the younger years who keep the budget going. The HT confirmed that he leaves the school with the same numbers as when he started. Given the trend of falling numbers on roll in the Borough and particularly Reception places, this is a positive result.

Q – A governor clarified that the destination of leavers predominately seems to be abroad or out of London?

A – The HT confirmed this is the case. Some children left to their country of origin and ended up staying due to Covid.

Q – Presumably there is no waiting list for Reception and has the Anglo-Portuguese school had an impact on Reception numbers?

A – The HT confirmed that there is no longer a waiting list for Reception and the Anglo-Portuguese school does not seem to be having an impact. There is a trend possibly of younger children moving to prep schools.

Q – Is it worth advertising school places outside school?

A – The HT answered that this is a possibility. The HT has drafted a series of profiles which can be used to advertise the school in the form of posters, banners and other marketing materials.

Q – Can you elaborate on the marketing idea?

A – The HT answered that he has posted 2 case studies of parents/carers who have expressed their views about the school on Dropbox. Word of mouth between parents/carers is one of the school's strongest strengths. The information could be used on posters, a welcoming book and the school prospectus. The whole project could cost up to £6,000 which is affordable.

Q – What is the purpose of the case studies?

A – (HT) The information from the case studies can be included in brochures, posters or a variety of marketing materials. Each publication could be about a different family as the school has several case

studies. The information contains some very complimentary quotes. It does not have to be a huge run on copies.

Q – Who would pay for the materials?

A – The HT answered it would come out of the school budget. The Parent Teacher Association pay for events that directly help the children.

The HT went on to explain the numbers of different groups which make up the 344 children on the school roll (40 children Special Educational Needs (SEN), 11 Quality +, 8 have a statement or Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), 60 on free school meals, 64 pupil premium and 85 who have English as an Additional Language (EAL). 65 to 70% of newcomers tend to be pupil premium children. It is good for the school, diversity and the budget.

Q – It is positive that there are no cases of bullying to report?

A – The HT confirmed this is the case and there are no debatable cases to report either. It has been healthy to open up the playground after the bubbles and offer children a mix of children and year groups to interact with.

The HT highlighted the Ofsted headlines and grades, all remaining at grade 2 with the exception of Behaviour and attitudes and Personal development, both of which are now graded at 1/2.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is strong. The Lead is on maternity leave.

Q – Where is the school in terms of an Ofsted Inspection? Is a new HT likely to trigger an inspection?

A – The HT explained that as the school's last inspection was in 2018, the earliest visit could be around Christmas 2022 but possible in 2023. JH added that Ofsted seem to be prioritizing a number of outstanding schools who have not had an Ofsted for 10 years or more in some cases.

The HT went on to update governors on staff and teacher absences.

Q - When might the school hear about possible resignations?

A - The HT told governors that staff who are moving abroad tend to let the school know earlier on in the academic year. However, the official deadline is after the May half term.

Q – The financial figures show a saving with the Deputy Headteacher post?

A – The HT confirmed this is the case. Aine Donegan will be acting Deputy HT next term while the recruitment process is taking place. Phase Leaders will be released to a greater extent and this allows them to gain additional experience.

Q – What is the status of the long term complaint?

A – The HT confirmed the complaint is no longer an issue.

The HT highlighted some safeguarding and monitoring issues.

Q – Can you elaborate on the new Place2Be appointment?

A – The HT told governors that Elisa Fontana is the Place2Be Lead. She is proving to be very good and has settled into school life well. She is very visible to staff and parents/carers. There is an issue with the number of counselling sessions offered to children. The school has a meeting organized with Place2Be for Friday 3 December to discuss the issue. For two years in a row, Place2Be has been offering counselling sessions for 6 children instead of 12 which is the agreed number.

Q – Does the service level agreement offer 12 places?

A – The HT confirmed it is more of an historic agreement and, the paperwork and report is set out for 12 children. JH offered to report back on the outcome of the meeting.

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| <p>Action: JH to report back at the spring term CFC meeting about the outcome of the discussions with Place2Be including the number of children receiving counselling sessions.</p> |
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The HT finished by pointing out the progress to date made on the SDP priorities.

Q – In relation to SDP 1, I like the word inspirational, but what does that word mean in practice?

A – The HT answered that the school wants the children to be inspired with high quality texts and free writing time. The school does not want to churn work out as matter of routine. The school might organize a pupil survey to get some feedback from the children.

Q – Perhaps the children will be encouraged to read inspirational books?

A – (HT). Yes possibly. The school continues to focus on Reading. The school wants to ensure that what it is doing well is sustainable. The school is making good progress and fits the national picture.

In relation to SDP 2, teachers are not identifying substantial gaps. The new Maths scheme needs to be monitored.

Q – During Covid, has the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium widened which is the case nationally?

A – The HT answered it varies between year groups. For example, pupil premium children are performing equally or outperforming non pupil premium children in Y6. The school does recognize that Y6 is a high ability group. On a general level the school is looking to add value. It is about the progress made by each child. JH confirmed that the gap has not widened and has narrowed with most year groups. There are some gaps, for example writing in Y5 and Y6, and the school has organized the relevant intervention. Ros Kimber has agreed to help in January using Covid Catch Up Funding.

SDP 5 – The HT confirmed that the school has made good progress with this priority. Key documentation of each policy that was complete by September will go on the website imminently – subject policy, subject overview and progression map. It is key for the school now that these are reflected in the classroom and are true living documents. By September 2022 the school should be in a good place with this priority.

Q – What will Ros Kimber be doing?

A – The HT answered that she will be helping with a combination of tasks including writing in Y5 and Y6. The plan is that she will work in the classroom in the morning and help with intervention groups in the afternoon. She is an external moderator for KS1 and KS2 so she is an asset to the school.

Q – Have you met the new School Link Advisor?

A – The HT answered that he is meeting the new School Link Advisor Rachel Mortlock on 7 December and she seems highly experienced and worked for other local authorities.

8. Cyber Security and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Update

The Clerk informed governors that in a similar way to health and safety and safeguarding, cyber security is the responsibility of the whole board. This is because it is seen as central to a school's ability to operate and function.

While school leaders should work closely with the IT department to put precautions in place, it is the responsibility of governors to monitor what the school is doing, and to make sure cyber security is given the time and resources needed to make the school secure.

Governors decided that it might be a good idea to have a Cyber Security/GDPR Link Governor in place.

The GDPR policy was approved at the Staffing Committee meeting on 17 November 2021.

Governors have also been sent the GDPR tracking document which highlights what the school is doing well and areas for development. Staff have undertaken the relevant training.

Q - In answer to a governor's question, the SBM confirmed that the protection of bio-metric information covers information such as children's finger prints and it does fall under GDPR regulations.

The SBM confirmed that there have been no data breaches and no subject access requests.

Action: Governors to think about appointing a link governor for Cyber Security/GDPR. Action completed later in meeting, with JC taking on the role. Please see item 12b.

9. **Safeguarding**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) – Governors present confirmed that they have read, understand and agree to comply with the guidance. Clerk to follow up with governors not present.

Action: Clerk to follow up with governors not present that they have read, understand and agree to comply with the guidance. Post meeting note: MN and LW have confirmed by email that they have read the guidance.

Report from Safeguarding Link Governor

SR as the new Safeguarding Link Governor has posted her report on Dropbox. SR & JH highlighted some other areas to be included in her next report: risk assessment on school trips, recruitment and vetting checks. JH has contacted the Well-Being cluster regarding work shops for parents, there has been an up tick of incidences which do not meet the threshold but nevertheless there are 4 or 5 cases weekly which the school needs to monitor closely. From the spring term Carly Flitter will take over Safeguarding and JH will oversee the work.

Q – With your experience, background and extensive knowledge of safeguarding, are the school’s policies fit for purpose?

A – SR answered the policies are fit for purpose. The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is detailed and thorough. JH added that the school uses the LA template and adopts it for the school.

10. **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

JH told governors that the new Pupil Premium strategy and PE Grant need to be added to the website. JB offered to check the website in the spring term and report back to the spring term CFC committee and FGB

d.Governors Code of conduct. Governors **agreed** the Code of Conduct 2021-2022.

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

All governors were emailed a Business Interest Form 2021/22 and asked to complete, sign and return the form to the SBM as soon as possible. DF informed governors that he no longer needs to declare a conflict of business interests.

f.Standing Orders – 2021/22. All governors **agreed** the Standing Orders 2021-2022.

g. Instrument of Government – Governors agreed the Instrument of Government is fit for purpose

h. Annual Governance Statement – HS is in the process of finalising the statement.

i. Meeting attendance for the previous year 2020-2021 – The SBM confirmed that LW has completed this piece of work and the information is on the website.

Action: School to upload the pupil premium strategy and the PE Grant 2020/21 on the school website. JB to check the website is compliant in the spring term and report back to CFC and the FGB meeting.

Action: Clerk to check with governors not present that they agree to the Governors Code of Conduct. Post meeting note: MN, LW and KC have confirmed that they agree to the Governors Code of Conduct.

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

Action: HS to finalise the Annual Governance Statement and post it on the school website.

11. Governing Board Strategy

- a. Agree Governing Board Annual Work Planner 2021/22 – HS is in the process of finalising the Annual Work Plan and will liaise with the Clerk before posting the document on Dropbox.
- b. Agree Governor Training – JF urged governors to continue training. LW and the Clerk have emailed governors this term with the most recent lists of training.

Action: HS to finalise the Annual Work Plan and liaise with the Clerk

Action: Governors to review available training opportunities and book where appropriate.

12. Governing Board Committees

- a. Committee Terms of Reference - The Committee Terms of Reference having been approved at committee level were **approved** by the Board.
- b. Link Governors and Visit Focus in line with SDP Priorities. The HT has sent a list of link governor roles which have been linked to the SDP priorities. JF urged governors to visit the school next term at least once. JC **agreed** to be the link governor for GDPR, Cyber Security and More Able Pupils.
- c. Report from Committees

Finance and Premises

The HT summarized the school budget in his HT report and highlighted some key areas. The budget is looking positive, there is a healthy carry forward and the school is still predicting a balanced budget. DF added that the P6 was submitted with £25k more than expected. From January to March there will be some variances in the staffing budget, some of which will continue to September 2022, all of which should cost less than the budget prediction.

Governors **agreed** to delegate the preparation of the end of year 2021/22 budget to the Finances and Premises Committee;

Governors **agreed** to delegate the drafting of the 2022/23 budget to the Finance and Premises Committee and;

Governors **agreed** to delegate the drafting of the School Financial and Value Standard Document (SFVS) to the Finance and Premises Committee.

The school had a Health and Safety Inspection which went well as reported in the HT report.

There were no questions from other committee meetings.

Action: Governors to email the relevant member of staff at school and arrange a visit around their link role and/or SDP priority. JC is the new link governor for More able Pupils, Cyber Security and GDPR.

- d. Agree sub-committees – JH, LW and JF will do this off-line.

Action: JH, LW and JF will agree the sub-committees off-line.

13. Equality Objectives

The Equality Objectives Statement was **agreed**.

14. Policies

Allegations of abuse against staff policy – Please see the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy below.

Staff discipline, conduct and grievance procedures – Governors **approved** the policy

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 2021/22 which had been previously reviewed by the Finance and Premises Committee at its 2021 autumn term meeting.

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

Approve School Journeys - Further to the meeting, the SBM has confirmed that two residential school journeys are planned for 6 May and 23 June 2022. The school journeys can be approved at the spring term Finance and Premises Committee meeting followed by final approval at the spring term FGB meeting.

Action: JH will draft the 2021/22 Pupil Premium Strategy and the 2021/22 PE Grant using the new templates from the Department for Education, circulate them to governors and post them on the school website.

Q – Does the PE Grant cover all children?

A – The HT confirmed this is the case.

15. Any other business

JF told governors that it has been 2 years since governors have been able to meet in person at a full governing board meeting. Covid has caused some considerable upheaval. Tom has proved to be an excellent leader and has steered the ship in the right direction at all times but especially during some unpredicted and difficult times. He joined the school at a bumpy time and has turned the school around. His hard work and efforts are amazing and should be commended. Both TH and JH have worked together well and it is of course sad to see TH leaving. However, the school and governors wish him the very best in his new role. The school and governors are very lucky to have JH taking over. On behalf of the Board, JF sincerely thanked TH for all his hard work, commitment and leadership.

16. Date of the next meeting

22 March 2022

5 July 2022

Approved on _____

Signed by _____

There are no confidential minutes.