



Alma Park Primary School

Full Governing Body Meeting: **Minutes 4:30p.m. 05.12.19**

Achievement Partnership Success

Present:

Mr David Cooke	LA Governor (Vice-Chair)
Ms Shazia Dar	Co-opted Governor
Ms Kate Hickman	Parent Governor
Ms Karen Houghton	Co-opted Governor (Staff)
Ms Sam Howell	Staff Governor
Ms Tina Kirwin	Assistant Headteacher for the sensory service / Co-opted Governor (Staff)
Ms Hannah McHugh	Parent Governor
Ms Monika Neall	Parent Governor (Chair)
Mr Charles Parfitt	Headteacher
Ms Carys Williams	Co-opted Governor
Mr Ikhlas Ur Rahman	Co-opted Governor

Absent:

Mr Ibad Ur Rehman	Parent Governor
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In attendance:

Ms Kathy Crotty	Clerk
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Any text in red bold italics represents Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Governor and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.

1. Welcome and introductions

- The Chair welcomed all governors to the meeting.

2. Apologies

The GB agreed to remove Ibad Ur Rehman due to non-attendance for six months and failing to confirm intentions with the clerk as agreed. All other governors were present.

3. Rachel Holmes – Update on Odd Project

- Rachel Holmes thanked the school for their involvement in the project. The aims of the project were to explore “oddness” and aimed to captivate the children’s interest and relate to “displacement” and feeling “out of place”. The mixed teams were explained, which includes socially engaged artists working alongside those with an educational background.
- Equipment that heightens senses were introduced to children such as a stethoscope. The school is near a railway line and yet people in the building no longer hear the trains. The children were encouraged to listen to various sounds using a stethoscope. An endoscope (camera) was used to explore areas not usually visible to explore different perspectives. An after-school club was established called the



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curious club. The children tried to make themselves invisible. Listening devices were used and the children enjoyed learning about where sounds belong. These ideas will be developed further this year.

- Work has occurred on ethics and how to work with children ethically. The children have interviewed researchers and looked about what was 'odd' in the university building. The children have explored the outdoors in different ways. One researcher found the materials used were companions and sand was one of the materials enabling children to make friends. The children have been involved in film making and movement.
- What does oddness mean for children at different times was explored. Discussions with parents were insightful. Children in this school are allowed to be different yet still belong. Themes are now emerging in the research project. The findings will be shared with other schools.
- Governors were invited to the 18th December even after school which includes the Odd Project exhibition.

Q: What is happening in the school in this final year?

Two researchers are working in the school from January with the Yr5 children doing writing. Children apparently like guidance and structure when writing and the teachers are deliberately not involved in this activity to avoid influencing the children.

Q: Did the researcher ask the staff not to be involved?

The staff chose their PPA time and felt their involvement would result in helping the children. The teacher's involvement would influence the children so it was seen to be more useful to exclude the teachers.

- The children will be asked to remember information from last summer which will be interesting to see if they do remember. The project is looking at trans-language, moving from language used at home and in school. There are proposals for a series of workshops including dance, sound artists, and there are many activities planned until the summer 2020.

Q: The activities seem fun. Is there an opportunity to give some of the activities to staff to undertake with future years?

This is a funded project; the resources and equipment will be left with the school. The researchers will look at the legacy of the work.

Q: Governors noted children are allowed to feel different yet part of the collective, and asked what are staff doing and how is this ethos sustained in this school.

This is part of the discussions and will become clearer as the project develops.

Q: Can the focus group with parents be shared with staff?

- Yes, this is excellent and staff would enjoy the feedback confirming children feel different yet included.

4. Declaration of Non/Pecuniary Interest

- Monika Neall has two children in the school; Kate Hickman has one child in the school; and Hannah McHugh has one child in the school.
- Hannah McHugh works for a company that provides educational Psychology
- There were no other declarations of interest other than those already declared on the school website.

5. Minutes of the Last Meeting held 17.10.19 & Matters Arising



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Action: Clerk to contact Mr Ibad Ur Rehman about his attendance.
This has been actioned.

Action: Clerk to include analysis of skills audit by governors on the next FGB meeting scheduled for 05.12.19.
See item 6

Action: Clerk to include Anti – Bullying award on the FGB agenda 05.12.19.
See item 7

Action: The Headteacher will reaffirm with staff the need to make a appointment with their link Governor.
This has been actioned

Action: MN to arrange Governor training with One Education
MN reported the training identified was for induction, well-being and operation and strategic. All of these topics are too much for one training event. The decision has been made for the January 2020 training to focus on well-being and the difference between operational and strategic. One Education will offer separate courses on induction for new governors later on in the year.

6. Audit of Governor skills

Most Governors have now completed the skills audit on TG (trust governor)

Action: Clerk to send the audit summary to Monika Neall

7. Anti-Bullying Award

- There is a meeting on the 6th December 2019 to discuss this further. The school has achieved the bronze award and will aim to apply for the silver award in the summer term 2020. There is a newsletter sent to parents every half term. Denise Samuels Assistant head for inclusion is leading on this award. Governors noted the children's anti-bullying posters displayed around the school are excellent.

Q: Is the bronze award given indefinitely?

This award is for two years and then the school has to spend money on reapplying for the award.

8. Headteacher's Report

SEF update and School Development Plan – progress in key areas

- These documents are work in progress and the next meeting will include this on the agenda. This has been matched to the new Ofsted criteria. Staff are attending training and the curriculum development is well underway.

Q: Governors asked about the 0.9% unauthorised absence, is any of this due to the children participating in the climate strikes?

This is not known.

Action: Headteacher will explore the unauthorised absences to see if any are a result of the climate strike.



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Governors were informed Sam Howell and David Cooke are planning to running a climate change club on a Friday lunchtime, there is more demand than places available at the moment.

Q: How are you going to select who is in the club?

The staff governor explained invitations were sought from Yr5 and Yr6 and there are some children who may have indicated interest but for other reasons, this will be explored.

C: How is the work from this club going to be disseminated down the school?

As the club has not yet met, this has not been decided and this can be explored at an early meeting. An assembly was identified as a useful way to cascade information.

C: Is this climate club open to local residents to be involved in this club, such as the walking bus.

Guest speakers could be invited. The bee people have been into the school already and are working with the school council.

Ikhlal Ur Rahman reported on some initiatives children at other schools have been involved in with parking near the school. There may be money to fund some initiatives.

Staff attendance

- There is a spreadsheet being devised of all staff group and this will include last year's attendance data for comparison. This data is not yet anonymised so not shared with governors. The current staff attendance is 91% but seven of these are maternity and long-term absences. This is being produced by Sandwell. The clerk advised the maternity leave does not have to be included as an absence.

Action: Headteacher to share attendance data when this is anonymised and reports on the different groups of staff.

Premises update

- Governors were referred to the staffing and budget minutes where a full discussion occurred. There are new planters in the grounds as part of the first phase.

9. Behaviour and Safety Update

Health and safety issues

- The required legionella work is being dealt with. The higher water rates reflect a leak with the overflow pipe. This is being resolved by the removal of a tank.
- The asbestos survey indicated some remedial work is needed. The asbestos plan has been delivered. This will cost about £2,000 and this has to be done. The school is installing finger shields on doors.
- The fire risk assessment was completed on the 6th November 2019 and this was a thorough assessment taking over 10 hours. Actions include removing wedges used by staff to open fire doors.
- A fire drill occurred today and the building evacuated in three minutes and 11 seconds. Six members of staff had not signed in and this will be dealt with.

Behaviour



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- During the recent observations of lessons, the behaviour of the children was observed as remaining very positive. Governors involved in the school disco were really impressed with the children's behaviour.
- There has been one exclusion which was a two-day fixed term exclusion. There is a background explanation for the behaviour but the severity of the behaviours merited a fixed term exclusion.

C: What has the impact of this exclusion been on the child's behaviour?

This does not change much for this child and the LA have not been responsive on this issue. In other cases, an exclusion often does lead to a change in behaviour.

Q: Can you do anything about the LA not engaging?

The Headteacher has spoken to the QA advisor and this school is now experiencing injuries to adults and children. This has been reported to the LA. Governors noted the virtual school is supposed to be the advocate of the child and to support the school. Schools are told the virtual school is for signposting, parents are told something different. The supervisions from Catalysts for staff have been very helpful.

C: When a child returns from an exclusion, has the behaviour changed in any way?

There is a re-integration meeting with the child which explores the exclusion in language at their level. In the Headteachers experience most children are ready to come back and if they are not ready the exclusion can be extended. In this instance this is not going to be possible given the issues of the child around rejection.

C: Governors discussed when a child does not feel remorse does an exclusion help?

The families of the children being injured are concerned and this means the school has little alternative.

Q: What does the school want from the LA? Is this a SEND issue?

This school is not receiving the support from the virtual schools as expected. The virtual school is part of the LA and they have statutory responsibilities.

- This child is a previously looked after child and the remit is still with the virtual schools.
- There has been some progress with statutory assessments but there is an issue with a high attaining child and so is not perceived as a SEND issue. A submission has been made as a parental request.

C: Should there be a complaint about the virtual school?

The Headteacher will speak to Liz Clarke (the QA) in the first instance. The LA continues to insist looked after children are not to be excluded.

10. Benchmarking

- Some questions have been sent to the SBM. This school did not have any clawback from the recent excessive balance calculation from the LA

S: Governors noted the school is to be commended for not having an in-year deficit and formal thanks were given to Anne Smythe.



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11. LA Health and Safety Audit

- This has to be completed by the 31st January 2020 and the school is on track for completion. The link governor is working with the school to develop a monitoring plan for the year.

12. Committee minutes Pay Committee – verbal update

Pay Committee 20.11.19

All Headteacher recommendations for pay progression were approved. The committee approved the recommended cost of living rise of 2.75% which is funded by the DfE.

Governors ratified the decisions of the pay committee

Chairs meeting 06.11.19

- The school website is being reviewed and the meeting discussed the outsourcing of the maintenance and updating of the website to make this more accessible to parents.

Q: Do parents use the website?

Parents do not use the website sufficiently.

Q: Who is responsible for updating the website?

This is usually done by a member of the administration team but there is staff sickness? Governors felt the website has been out of date prior to the staff sickness.

Q: Could the school ask a computer science student to help?

The school will explore the virtual services in the first instance and acquire quotes for this work.

- The chair informed Governors the outstanding actions from the chairs meeting are being undertaken.

Standards & Curriculum 07.11.19

Action: The Standards & Curriculum 07.11.19 minutes to be circulated after this meeting.

Staffing & Budget 21.11.19

- The chair of the staffing and budget committee informed governors this GB needs to be aware of the financial situation for 2020/21 where there is a negative of £106,000. The budget cannot be set for this year on the current income and expenditure plans. There is an extraordinary meeting Monday 13th January 2020 4pm to discuss various options for ensuring a balanced budget and all governors were invited.
- The committee was asked to review staff using their own car for business. The clerk advised staff include business use on their own insurance as there is no extra cost.

Action: Include the car insurance advice in the staff handbook.

13. Policies – for review and approval

Pay Policy 2019/20

This policy was approved by the Staffing & Budget Committee on the 21.11.19

Governors formally ratified the approval of the Pay Policy for 2019/20



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Safer Recruitment Policy

There are no changes to this policy since the last approval. A Governor who attended training on GDPR informed the committee this policy does not take account of potential changes arising from GDPR. The clerk advised when One Education update this policy (expected in 2020) this should be brought back for earlier re-approval.

It was agreed external agencies policies relating to DBS will have to stand, the school cannot require the NHS to ensure school nurses are checked more frequently than their policies require. Governors felt other contractors have to follow the school policies. The Headteacher explained all external agencies comply with the statutory requirements.

Governors formally approved the Safer Recruitment Policy

Flexible Working Policy

C: Does this policy cover all instances regarding the requests the school tends to receive?

Up to now yes, this policy has covered all requests.

Governors formally approved the Flexible Working Policy

Grievance Bullying & Harassment Policy

Governors formally approved the Grievance Bullying & Harassment Policy

Maternity & Paternity Policy

Governors formally approved the Maternity & Paternity Policy

Appraisal Policy

Governors formally ratified the Appraisal Policy

14. Governing Body Matters

Link Governor roles

The chairs committee had discussed the roles relevant and agreed to maintain the same list as last year except for GDPR.

The following link Governor roles were agreed for 2019/20

Area of responsibility	Link Governor	How often
Welfare and Behaviour, (includes PP, SEND, LAC Safeguarding and attendance)	Monika Neall	Termly
Data and Standards	Kate Hickman	Termly
Health and Safety & Premises	David Cooke	Half termly
Personal development / Equality (PHSE)	Carys Williams	Annual meeting



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Maths	Shazia Dar	Autumn 2 and Summer 1
English – Reading	Monika Neall	Autumn 2 and Summer 1
Science	Carys Williams	Autumn 2 and Summer 1
ICT e-safety	Shazia Dar	Autumn 2 and Summer 1
Sports / PE / Sports premium	Dave Cooke	Annual
EYFS	Hannah McHugh	Autumn 2 and Summer 1
DT & Art	Tina Kirwin	Term 2
MFL	Kate Hickman	Term 2
Geography	David Cooke	Term 2
History	David Cooke	Term 2
Music	Hannah McHugh	Term 2

Action: MN to send new link Governor report proforma to the leadership before circulating with Governors.

15. Any Other Business

- The school is a polling station for the general election and the school will remain open. The schools are approached on an annual basis and this school has indicated they will no longer be able to offer the space for elections.

S: The CoG gave formal thanks to the parents and staff for their work on the school disco. Governors gave formal thanks to the cleaner who went above and beyond her role.

16. Dates of future FGB Meetings

- Thursday 13th February 2020
- Thursday 26th March 2020 (Budget closedown)
- Thursday 14th May 2020
- Wednesday 1st July 2020

Signed.....

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(Monika Neall Chair of Governors)

Meeting closed 18.30pm

Summary of actions

- Action: Clerk to send the audit summary to Monika Neall. ***This has been actioned.***
- Action: Headteacher will explore the unauthorised absences to see if any are a result of the climate strike.
- Action: Headteacher to share attendance data when this is anonymised and reports on the different groups of staff.
- Action: The Standards & Curriculum 07.11.19 minutes to be circulated after this meeting. ***This has been actioned.***
- Action: Include the car insurance advice in the staff handbook.