



Alma Park Primary School

Full Governing Body Meeting: **4:30p.m. Thursday 11.02.21**

Achievement Partnership Success

Minutes

Present via remote meeting

Mr David Cooke	LA Governor (Vice-Chair)
Ms Kate Hickman	Co-opted Governor
Ms Karen Houghton	Co-opted Governor (Staff)
Ms Sam Howell	Staff Governor
Ms Tina Kirwin-McGinley	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
Mr Ikhlas Ur Rahman	Co-opted Governor (<i>from 17:25</i>)
Ms Carys Williams	Co-opted Governor
Vacancy	Parent Governor

Apologies:

Ms Shazia Dar	Co-opted Governor
---------------	-------------------

In attendance:

Ms Kathy Crotty	Clerk
-----------------	-------

The meeting was quorate

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 & Introductions

Helen Hulme has resigned since the last meeting. This is the last meeting for Carys Williams and she was formally thanked for her services to Alma Park Governing Body.

Governors formally approved the co-option of Kate Hickman onto the GB.
(Kate Hickmans term of office as a parent Governor ended 22.01.21)

2. Apologies for Absence

Shazia Dar is on maternity leave.

3. Declaration of Non/Pecuniary Interests

Monika Neall has one child in the school; Hannah McHugh has one child in the school.

Hannah McHugh works for a company that provides Educational Psychology services.

There were no other declarations of interest other than those already declared on the school website.

4. Declarations of Any Other Business

There were no declarations of any other business.

5. Minutes of the Last Meeting held 3rd December 2020 & matters arising.

The minutes of the Meeting held 3rd December 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising

Carry Forward Action: KH and SH to review how to communicate the link governor role with staff more effectively.

The staff meetings are not occurring due to the lockdown so this action needs to carry forward. Link Governors were asked to continue their link Governor role and to contact staff.

Action: The clerk will share a transparency report after this meeting. This will provide a summary of the progress of declarations for all Governors.

This has been actioned.

Action: Clerk to arrange a new date with the chair for Governor training in January 2021.

This has been actioned. See agenda item 7.

Action: School to survey parents about outdoor trips.

This has not been actioned and will be actioned when the school fully opens. It was agreed this is not appropriate at this time.

Action: The cold classrooms is a health and safety issue to be reviewed by the Headteacher.

The Headteacher has received advice to keep windows open unless very cold, when windows must be opened at breaktimes to flush the air.

Action: School to make sure the worry box accessible during the bubble arrangements.

This has been actioned.

Action: CP to send to the proposed term dates to the clerk to seek approval via Trust Governor, to be ratified at the next FGB meeting.

This has been actioned. See agenda item 8

Action: Policies to be sent to the clerk for the next meeting include Promoting Positive Behaviours; Education Visits Policy and the Complaints Procedure.

Carry forward this action.

6. Approve of minutes of the extra meeting held 11th January 2021 and matters arising

Governors formally approved the minutes of the meeting held 11th January 2021 and matters arising

Action: CP to ask parents what they prefer (food parcels or school meals vouchers) and will ask Manchester Fayre what they intend to provide.

This has been actioned, and the school is now issuing vouchers. The FSM vouchers will also be issued over half term.

7. Governor training

Governors agreed the Q-A (training) session would occur on Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at 4.30pm. Governors were asked to send any questions in advance to the clerk to ensure the questions can be answered. David Cooke will share his training paper on finance.

8. Approval of term dates 2021/22

- Governors discussed term dates and there was consensus term was late starting, Tuesday 7th September 2021. Term usually starts on the first of September.

C: Does the school have any autonomy to set their own dates?

The school has autonomy; however, LA advice is to avoid a three-day week as attendance is affected. (1st – 3rd September). The INSET is needed on Monday 6th September as there will be a new Headteacher.

- Governors asked about the Christmas holidays and suggested an INSET day on the 4th January 2022, this could be a day in lieu.

Q: Why is the summer late? (27th July 2022)

The Deputy Headteacher reported you cannot have two INSET days together and there is guidance regarding the teaching week being less than three days, as this affects attendance.

C: Could Easter be 10 days?

Governors were aware the high school term dates are important for families. These often vary across LAs and within LAs.

C: Could staff be asked to undertake an INSET on Tuesday 31st August 2021?

It was felt this would be very unpopular with staff and technically the new Headteacher will be not be employed until the 1st September.

- Governors discussed whether to wait for MEA to publish their dates. It was felt there was some scope for changing the Easter holidays. Governors agreed to defer a decision on the MCC recommended dates.

Action: Karen Houghton will review the recommended term dates and inform Governors at the earliest opportunity.

9. Headteacher's Report

There are 468 children on roll of which 104 children (vulnerable/key worker) are coming into school during this lockdown.

Home learning

The home learning offering is going well, the technology sometimes creates problems. Staff are now uploading onto YouTube.

Q: *Is the work being uploaded being saved?*

This takes too much space so staff are being asked to move these recordings to the shared drive. The move to remote learning has been challenging for staff. The engagement from families is being monitored more closely. A fuller curriculum is offered compared to last time. Teachers are ringing families and undertaking welfare calls. Home learning hero certificates are issued at the Friday assemblies. The school has staff who are working from home and home learning with their own children. Governors reported MEA send postcards to the children congratulating them.

Times table Rock Stars is being introduced for maths and INSET has occurred.

Behaviour and attitudes in the school is good. The Art exhibition is occurring. Sports coaches are working with the children in school.

Action: The anti-bullying policy has been amended and needs to be submitted to FGB for approval

34-35 laptops from the DfE have arrived. Only one family needed a dongle. Not all families have collected their device?

Q: *How long do you wait before reallocating the laptop?*

The families who have not collected a device will be contacted tomorrow. The school will review this after half term.

Q: *Have the HI children been offered any laptops?*

No, as these children are in school. The laptops are for home learning.

Q: *Are there children out of the country still home learning?*

The school is aware of one family out of the country and the home learning is occurring.

Leadership & Management

SLT & MLT have met with the consultant Kerry Cleary. Sandwell have reviewed the well-being initiatives and much evidence was submitted. Despite the best efforts of the school, it will be hard to improve well-being in a national pandemic. Governors noted the substantial efforts made by Karen Houghton to improve well-being. The staff governor reported the staff do appreciate the sentiments. Governors noted the situation could be much worse if these efforts were not undertaken.

Staff attendance

The Headteacher report showed a 5% absence, which is slight increase on previous years.

Q: *Do these attendance figures include maternity leave?*

Yes, the programme used does not differentiate what the absences is for.

Q: *Do these figures include staff who have had to isolate due to Covid?*

No, as these staff are working from home.

The school had a crisis recently in the cleaning team due to one long term illness and the need for isolation. One cleaner tested positive for Covid and the team was sent home. Their role is vital at this moment in time.

Feedback from family and learning welfare calls

The school is receiving positive feedback and there are no concerns.

Staffing update including well-being

A member of SLT is retiring at the end of the academic year.

School Development Plan

C: Governors noted one member of staff has introduced a new EYFS curriculum and another staff member is working on a new PSHE curriculum. Is this a good time for this? Are there sufficient resources to support the new curriculum?

The Headteacher reported the new EYFS curriculum is due to be introduced in September, although this might be delayed. All plans are progressing. Training and development are occurring and the other practitioner in EYFS are well motivated. The Headteacher is confident they are managing well. There are three elements in the SDP relating to EYFS. There will be some expenditure and a wish list has been submitted. The staff have been asked to “think big” and ideas are being shared about the outdoor provision. This will have an impact on the budget but the school is investing in EYFS.

In PSHE the staff member has been working hard this academic year and has led some INSET. There are some strong views regarding resourcing. There is a scheme of learning and a working party is meeting to review the next steps. There needs to be a parental consultation before the summer term.

Q: Have you decided to create your own curriculum rather than buy a curriculum off the shelf?

The Headteacher explained the school initially looked for a scheme and Jigsaw cost a few thousand pounds. The curriculum has to be fit for purpose and would need to be adapted to own setting. The CoG explained the decision was made to not spend £3,000 on a scheme when there was also some controversy about gender identity contained in this scheme. Many of the packs looked at were not compliant with the Equalities Act of 2010 so the school felt they could not justify the expenditure. For these reasons the school invested in staff time to create a bespoke curriculum for Alma Park which was fit for purpose. Governors noted if the school is creating a fit for purpose curriculum this could be sold to other schools.

There is a coordinator with money in their budget who has since asked to buy the Jigsaw scheme. If this scheme is purchased this covers any legislative updates.

The staff member with responsibility is working with Manchester Healthy Schools on the consultation process with parents. Governors did not want to undermine the efforts of the staff member by suggesting the school now considers purchasing a scheme. The Headteacher will speak to the staff member about work life balance and current workloads. The staff governor noted the TAs tend to deliver this lesson and not all TAs are allocated preparation time, this is left to the teacher. The progress on the SRE curriculum will be reviewed in March 2020. The link Governor reported her most recent meeting indicated the staff member was under pressure and overwhelmed.

Governors were informed the SLT are just checking the SDP/SIP (self-development plan/school improvement plan) and this is based on the key priorities based in the SEF. The SEF needs some additional priorities adding.

10. Behaviour and Safety Update

There were no exclusions and no behaviour issues to report at this meeting.

11. Benchmarking

- The staffing and budget committee have reviewed some data comparing staffing levels in similar schools. Governors have looked at the DfE data which shows the school has less teachers than comparable schools, and TAs are low in comparison. There is a comparable outstanding school with a lower ratio of TAs. In most areas Alma Park does benchmark average.
- Alma Park has five senior leaders which is more than most schools so it was suggested to have a review of the staffing structure given there will be a new Headteacher. The CoG reported on discussions with the SSQA. The SSQA has suggested some future proofing of decisions for instance the pay policy needs a statement about the deputy pay scale. Governors were keen to review the staffing structure in the light of senior leader resignations. Governors identified the need to look at the impact of the current structure.

Q: Might there be other staff who resign this academic year?

30th May is the deadline for resignations.

- The resignation of one of the Assistant Headteachers will be affect the role in the Zen Zone and will impact on curriculum developments and other leading initiatives. The Assistant Head role is for inclusion and all of these areas of responsibilities will remain.
- Governors discussed which committee was best able to undertaken the review and it was agreed if a staffing restructure is discussed in both committees this might take up too much time. A restructure will need a formal consultation.

Governors agreed to a wider discussion via a “restructure working party” and Governors agreed to convene on Thursday 4th March 2021 at 10.30am.

12. Committee minutes – for information

Chairs meeting 20.02.21

Standards & Curriculum 28.01.21

Staffing & Budget held 04.02.21

Governors noted the draft minutes of the committees.

Governors asked about the new trim trail installed after the leak in the playground and suggested this needs an inspection as there is an uneven surface.

Action: The Health & Safety link Governor David Cooke when next in school will look at the trim trail to ensure this is safe for use.

13. Policies – for review and approval

Home Learning Policy

Governors formally ratified the Home Learning Policy as approved by the Curriculum & Standards Committee.

14. Governing Body Matters

Governor vacancies

The chair had emailed an update to governors and also spoken with Ruth Bradbury from the LA governor services to seek advice on managing the vacancies during the lockdown. The two parent governor vacancies can be held open until a fair election can be held upon the full opening of school. There is one person who has expressed an interest. Monika Neall reminded the GB her term of office ends this year and she cannot be chair after six years. The CoG has discussed succession planning with Shazia Dar who is willing to consider co-chairing when her maternity leave ends. It was suggested the parental governor recruitment advertises for someone with leadership experience. Governors were reminded there is training for the chair's role. It was noted voting can be undertaken online.

Action: When the Government announces the two weeks' notice of full opening of the school, the parental elections will begin.

Link Governor Reports - Carys Williams - PHSE

The report was submitted in advance of the meeting and was uploaded onto the Trust Governor portal.

Formal thanks were given to Carys Williams for her contributions on the GB

Governor training undertaken

David Cooke attended a One Education briefing for chairs. This covered the LA priorities during this pandemic lockdown.

15. Any Other Business

Heads recruitment

- Six Governors met with the SSQA and reviewed the job description and person specification; the advert and recruitment pack; and timeline for Covid safe recruitment. The TES advert will be live next week. Governors had asked if the school should accommodate visits from prospective candidates and the SSQA suggested if this fits with the risk assessment this can be done. It was suggested visiting during the school day is necessary.

Governors agreed prospective applicants would be welcomed to visit the school on Monday 1st March or Tuesday 2nd and the school will endeavour to accommodate this. This will be included in the advert.

Q: What is the process on the day of the interview?

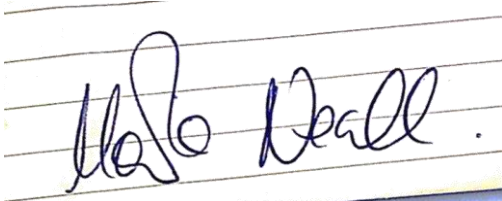
This will depend on the applications. There will be a task, a presentation and an interview panel. The decision has not been made about meeting children due to Covid restrictions.

- The SSQA suggested Governors consider whether there is any support for Alma Park to academise. This has been explored before and was rejected. Local autonomy and control of the vision was preferable to the GB. It was noted there has been a roll back on the academies programme at central government.

Governors reiterated their lack of support for conversion to an academy.

16. Dates of future FGB Meetings

- 25th March 2021 (Budget closedown) at 4.30pm
- 20th May 2021 at 4.30pm
- Thursday 24th June 2021 at 4.30pm



Signed.....
(Monika Neall Chair of Governors)

Date: 25th March 2021

Meeting ended 18:10

Summary of actions

- Carry Forward Action: School to survey parents about outdoor trips.
- Carry Forward Action: Policies to be sent to the clerk for the next meeting include Promoting Positive Behaviours; Education Visits Policy and the Complaints Procedure.
- Action: Karen Houghton will review the recommended term dates and inform Governors at the earliest opportunity.
- Action: The anti-bullying policy has been amended and needs to be submitted to FGB for approval
- Action: The Health & Safety link Governor David Cooke when next in school will look at the trim trail to ensure this is safe for use.
- Action: When the Government announces the two weeks' notice of full opening of the school, the parental elections will begin.