



Alma Park Primary School
Full Governing Body Meeting: Agenda 4:30p.m. Thursday 25.03.2021

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 Hannah McHugh	Parent Governor
Ms Monika Neall	Parent Governor (Chair)
Mr Charles Parfitt	Headteacher
Mr Ikhlal Ur Rahman	Co-opted Governor (<i>from 17:25</i>)
Vacancy	Parent Governor
Vacancy	Parent Governor

Apologies:

Ms Shazia Dar	Co-opted Governor
Ms Tina Kirwin-McGinley	Assistant Headteacher for the sensory service / Co-opted Governor (Staff)

In attendance:

Ms Kathy Crotty	Clerk
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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

Monika Neall welcomed Governors to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Shazia Dar is on maternity leave. Governors accepted the apologies from Tina Kirwin-McGinley

3. Declaration of Non/Pecuniary Interests

Monika Neall 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 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 11th February 2021

The minutes of the Meeting held 11th February 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

Carry Forward Action: School to survey parents about outdoor trips.

There will be no trips this academic year. The survey will no longer be relevant.

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. See item 10. Education Visits Policy and Promoting Positive Behaviours will be reviewed at a future meeting.

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

This has been actioned.

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

See item 10

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.

This has been actioned.

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

This has been actioned and there have been no nominations from the email request. However, one parents approached the school today with a nomination explaining they had not received the original email.

Governors agreed to accept this nomination for one vacancy and to continue to advertise for the second vacancy.

Governors were keen to ensure applicants fully understand what the role involves.

Action: Charles Parfitt will inform parents one Governor vacancy is filled and there is still one vacancy to fill. The closing date will be after Easter.

6. Headteacher Recruitment update

- Richard Williams has been appointed as the new Headteacher of Alma Park. He is currently the deputy head at Claremont. There were strong applicants and much deliberation occurred.

Governors formally ratified the decision of the recruitment panel.

Q: What happens between now and the start date in September?

Legal checks to occur first, references have been supplied. There needs to be a formal letter and contract issued. The introduction to staff and parents needs to be decided upon. Mr Williams has indicated he would like to be involved in the recruitment for the new assistant headteacher and Governors approved this.

7. Headteacher's Report

Staffing update including attendance and well-being

Q: *Governors asked for an update on the happy days given to staff as part of the wellbeing initiatives*

Karen Houghton informed Governors this is going very well and is very useful to staff. This was detailed to Governors in the Staffing and Budget Committee and some plans were shared at this meeting. The flexibility is proving very popular and this needs consideration for the future. Staff have appreciated this initiative; it is very popular. The Sandwell Wellbeing Charter will be reviewed in the summer term. There will be one staff meeting looking at what has been done. The audit will be re-done to evaluate progress made.

School Development plan / school improvement plan priorities

Behaviour and attitudes

The LA have asked heads for information about CME (children missing education) and the response from Alma Park is there are no children missing as the school knows where they are. The LA is also asking questions about families being abroad during this last lockdown. The children from 10 families were in Pakistan and one family was in Europe, this is 16 children in total. Other schools in the cluster have also had children out of the country. Pakistan is not on the list of countries requiring quarantining on return.

Q: *Are there any safeguarding concerns from the children not in school?*

The school had no safeguarding concerns but families are returning from Pakistan with Covid. Today there are seven families of 12 children still out of the country. Children not in school are marked as unauthorised absences. If a child is not back in school by next Thursday, they can lose their place as this is 19 days. If they are quarantining this is different so flight details will be asked for.

Q: *Can you contact these families to inform them about their school place?*

Yes, but some families do not always answer the phone. Parents were informed of the risks of travelling abroad during lockdown so the school has done all it can. There are families who the school is expecting to not be back until after Easter.

Q: *Might you have shocked parents turning up to find their school place has gone?*

Yes, this could be the case.

Alma Park has had less families abroad compared to some local schools.

Q: *What year groups are affected?*

This is across all year groups as often these are siblings.

The Headteacher informed Governors there are still have families sending children in school knowing the children are unwell and when family members have tested positive for Covid. Families have to be reminded of their responsibilities regarding the guidelines.

Q: *What recourse does the school have when families are not following the guidelines?*

The school can only reinforce the guidance. One family who tested positive had a child needing 1:1 support. Governors were clear that some parents are taking unnecessary risks. If a family has a positive LFTs (lateral flow tests) and then brings the child into school, this is not acceptable.

Action: Charles Parfitt to contact the SSQA for advice about what the school can do about parents not following the Covid isolation guidance as this is a safeguarding issue.

Leadership

The TLR extension needs to be reviewed, (Steve and Anna) and this covers two committees. Governors agreed this is within the remit of the Staffing & Budget committee rather than a personnel sub-committee / working party. Governors wanted to ensure the TLR request is properly scrutinised. Governors agreed the Curriculum & Standards Committee will also review progress made so far. Governors were clear that Covid is not a reason for meeting targets, there still needs to be evidence of achievements.

Action: Invite Steve & Anna to the summer 1 Standards & Curriculum Committee to review progress and identify the timescale to complete actions.

Liam Trippier has been in school today and reviewing English and Maths. There are lots of positives, and he has found some issues. The report is not yet received but will be shared with governors after the SLT have reviewed the report.

8. Behaviour and Safety Update

There were no significant incidents to report; no exclusions; and behaviour continues to be very good. The input of restorative approaches is being trialled.

9. School Street Campaign

- The school is supportive of this campaign, and has shared the many proposals about how to progress this. Some parents are promoting this. Councillor Ben Clay is trying to convene a meeting with St. Marys. The Headteacher is supportive of this and is aware strong opinions for and against. It is not clear who is responsible for the implementation.
- Ikhlas Ur Rahman was asked to comment on the presentation shared with Governors in advance of the meeting. He is working with the two schools (Alma Park and St. Marys) and is linking with the Burnage team and their schools. The intention is to test the model in Levenshulme and then roll out a template. Discussions are occurring and planning is beginning. Tesco will be approached to ensure parking is available for those parents to who drop off their children by car. Sustainability is an issue.

Q: Who is going to staff the implementation, is this teachers, parents or councillors?

It is not yet known but this is expected to be led by parents who are involved in the climate campaigns and clean air campaigns. Schools are expected to commit some support.

- Governors discussed how they would be unhappy if school staff were involved in traffic control. Practically, staff could not be involved as they need to be in the school building. People who try to control traffic also receive much abuse and this is not within the remit of school staff.
- It is not clear what Governors are being asked to do. The Headteacher has been approached and campaigners are willing to talk to Governors. The Headteacher is willing to talk to council staff but there is no staff capacity to move this initiative forward. Ikhlas Ur Rahman stated this will have to be re-thought. Governors who live near the school were aware of the implications further afield than Alma Park school as road closures might shift problems elsewhere in the locality. The Headteacher is happy to go back to parents to explain the position of the GB (Governing Body).

10. Finance update

SFVS approval

The SFVS has been updated to include the latest staffing structure. Governors had been invited to send questions the SBM (school business manager).

C: When a budget indicates problems in the future, for example the Yr1 budget looks healthy, but there is a projected deficit budget for Yrs2 and Yr3. What is the process to ensure that the deficit is managed and doesn't cause issues? Governors were aware that there was an extraordinary meeting last year to look at budgets and often things change last minute, or throughout the year.

There are several meetings throughout the year and any constraints that the school budget is or would be facing is brought to each of those meetings and as you pointed out, there was an extraordinary meeting last year for that very reason.

Governors had noted declarations of pecuniary interests are also covered and minuted in every governor meeting. In relation to questions 16 and 17 benchmarking data is available via Trust Governor linking to the DfE site. In relation to questions 22, the classroom Health & Safety checklist is updated annually. There is also a process for staff to report on-going Health & Safety repairs.

Governors formally ratified the staffing and budget committee approval of the SFVS

The chair of the Staffing & Budget Committee reported there is a higher in-year surplus than was projected due to some underspending due Covid, Also, there has been an announcement of no pay increases. The recent LA chairs briefing reported some schools have kept the projected increases in the budget in case the government changes its mind. The SBM has left in the pay increases for APT&C staff as this has not yet been confirmed.

Kate Hickman was formally thanked for her attendance at this committee covering for Shazia Dar whilst she is on maternity leave, it has proved helpful to receive the curriculum committee input.

Governors formally approved the budget report

11. Premises, Health and Safety Update

The headteacher and the link Governor David Cooke have met and this was reported to the Staffing & Budget Committee held on the 18.03.21

12. Committee minutes – for information

Chairs meeting 10.03.21

Q: Governors asked for an update on the Manchester Fayre replacement?

This is now a pressing issue. Governors will be updated in the summer term.

Ghyll Head cannot go ahead this year

Q: Governors asked if there was any other provision that can occur.

Staff are looking at this, Sam Howell is collecting information and prices and Chair's this will be shared at the next curriculum meeting. Debdale is the most likely due to its proximity. This also needs discussions with parents.

S: Governors thanked school for the planned activities for the Yr6 children as they have missed out on Ghyll Head.

Standards & Curriculum 11.03.21

There were no questions on these minutes.

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13. Policies – for review and approval

Complaints Procedure

There are some minor amendments to make and the appendix to be attached

Governors formally approved the Complaints Procedure

Anti-Bullying Policy

This was shared with governors in the autumn term, then shared with staff and is now ready for approval subject to the amendment of including sex and gender identity.

C: The Yr6 anti-bullying council is currently not working, what is the school doing instead?

Their primary function is to support younger children to enjoy playtimes, and this is very different due to Covid and the children being in bubbles. Playtime is now more purposeful. There is now more space as the play times are staggered. There is more equipment also.

Governors formally approved the Anti-Bullying Policy

Amendment to the Pay Policy

The Staffing & Budget committee reviewed the amendments requested. The important amendment about the Deputy Heads Pay was approved. There are some remaining highlighted areas not discussed.

Governors formally ratified the amendment recommended by the Staffing and Budget Committee who met on the 18th March 2021.

Action: Karen Houghton to check the current Pay Policy is a finished document.

Health and Safety Policy

The Staffing & Budget Committee have reviewed this policy and recommend approval. Governors noted the policy still refers to Manchester Fayre (3.7). It was suggested change this to “Manchester Fayre and future catering”.

Q: Does there need to be a reference to allergies in the animal visits section?

Allergies are covered in risk assessments but can be included also in this policy. Governors were concerned some families are not following the requests to not bring nuts into school. Governors asked for spitting to be more than ‘discouraged’. The Headteacher will tweak this.

Governors formally approved the Health and Safety Policy with the above amendments

Draft SRE for Consultation

- This has been shared and there have been no formal responses received so far. Parents will be invited to comment before finalisation.
- Governors noted there are references to “external providers” and suggested this needs to be made explicit about how the school will ensure safeguarding protocols.
- Also, Governors felt personal boundaries need to connect with other policies. Understanding marriage needs to include civil partnerships. Obesity is mentioned and needs to also include malnourishment and being underweight.

- Where the policy refers to the parents right to withdraw, it states the Headteacher will discuss with parents, Governors suggested this is changed to state it can be a member of the SLT as some parents might prefer to speak to a female member of staff.

Q: Are all the children taught all the curriculum, for example do boys learn about girls' periods?

The national curriculum is for all, puberty is in the science curriculum and this can be taught single sex or mixed. In UKS2 male teachers teach the boys and females teachers teach the girls, covering identical topics so boys do learn about periods.

Q: Is the decision about mixed or single sex teaching decided by looking at what works best for the cohort?

Partly, sometimes this is done more urgently. There will be an understanding that staff have to be flexible to meet the needs of a specific cohort. The school also uses a school nurse to deliver some of this curriculum area.

Action: Charles Parfitt will ask PHSE coordinator about mixed teaching for RSE.

14. Governing Body Matters

Governor Vacancy

There is one vacancy for a parent Governor as discussed in item 5.

Link Governor Reports

- David Cooke – PE report: This was discussed at the Staffing & Budget Committee. The main point was about money taken from the PE budget to cover lunchtime provision, and the committee agreed the school will be more flexible with this budget and for the PE co-ordinator to submit full costings.
- Kate Hickman has uploaded the data report on Trust Governor and this has been discussed at the Standards & Curriculum Committee.
- Ikhlas Ur Rahman has met with humanities teacher and will send the report to the clerk for sharing.
- David Cooke has met with the Geography teacher.

Governor training undertaken

David Cooke has attended One Education finance update training.

Monika Neall has attended training on wellbeing, staff retention; the competency framework for governance; and Safeguarding.

15. Any Other Business

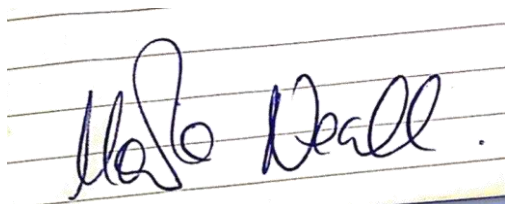
Sam Howell reported she would like to offer a cricket club and CITC (City In The Community) to run a before school club. Grassroots sports can occur after the 29th March 2021, but this would mean the bubbles are mixing outside. The Headteacher reported he will seek advice from someone who specialises in the risk assessments, although this information is hard to acquire. Schools have been asked to maintain bubbles even though children are allowed to mix in other situations. Governors appreciated this is inconsistent but were mindful of the need to be able to track contacts in case isolation was required.

Action: Charles Parfitt to find out if children can mix in other bubbles for grassroots sports and school clubs.

16. Dates of next FGB Meetings – 4.30pm

Thursday 20th May 2021

Thursday 24th June 2021



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

Date: 20th May 2021

Meeting ended 18:10

Summary of actions

- Action: Charles Parfitt will inform parents one Governor vacancy is filled and there is still one vacancy to fill. The closing date will be after Easter.
- Action: Charles Parfitt to contact the SSQA for advice about what the school can do about parents not following the Covid isolation guidance as this is a safeguarding issue.
- Action: Invite Steve & Anna to the summer 1 Standards & Curriculum Committee to review progress and identify the timescale to complete actions.
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