

MINUTES OF MEETING



School: Ash Lea School
Meeting title: Spring term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 5.30 pm
Location: At the School

Membership
'A' denotes absence

A	Chris Hankinson (Chair)
	Geoff Baker
	Kate Davies (Headteacher)
	Dave Dennington
	Hannah Griffiths
	Helene Maillet-Vioud – until 6.30 pm
A	Charlotte Martin
	Gordon Monaghan
	Luke Skillington
	Jane Wood

In attendance Stuart Northedge (clerk to the governors)

GB/01/23 Apologies for absence Action

Apologies for absence were received from Charlotte Martin and Geoff Baker.

It was

resolved

that the governing body consent to these absences.

GB/02/23 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

GB/03/23 Election of Chair

Chris Hankinson self-nominated for the position of chair. There were no other nominations. It was

resolved

that Chris Hankinson be appointed as chair of the governing body.

The appointment will be until the Autumn Term 2023 FGB meeting.

GB/04/23 Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months

The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body:

1 x parent governor
3 x co-opted governors

It was proposed that Hannah Griffiths, Charlotte Martin and Dave Dennington be co-opted to the governing body and take the 3 vacant co-opted positions.

Governors agreed to co-opt Hannah Griffiths, Charlotte Martin and Dave Dennington to the governing body.

Geoff Baker has now informed the Chair and Headteacher of his resignation from the Governing Body with effect from this meeting. This leaves a further co-opted vacancy.

Overall, this leaves the governing body with 2 unfilled vacancies. One for a parent governor and one for a co-opted governor.

The clerk brought to the attention of governors the following end of term of office:

No governors' term of office was due to end until March 2024.

GB/05/23 Approval of minutes of autumn term meeting and any special governing body meetings

The minutes of the autumn term meeting held on Thursday 1st December 2022 having been previously circulated were confirmed and will be signed by the chair.

Review of Actions

GB/45/22 – Governors to confirm they had read and understood the code of conduct.

Action completed – governors have all read and understood the code of conduct.

GB/49/22 – Headteacher to arrange parent governor election.

Action completed but nobody came forward for the position. However, there is a parent who is now actively considering the vacancy.

GB/49/22 – Governors to complete skills audit.

To be completed once all new governors are in post.

GB/51/22 – Headteacher, Chair and Clerk to follow up vacant Chair position.

Action completed

GB/31/22 – HMV to attend and feedback on Confederation of Schools Trust Meeting – 05/12/22.

Action completed

GB/57/22 – KD, LS and CH to meet representatives of the Archway Trust.

Action completed – a meeting had taken place and staff had visited one of their schools which has a very inclusive approach. The Headteacher felt that the values of the trust fitted well with those at Ash Lea and that the visit was positive.

Question – a governor asked about the Headteacher’s current view on MATs?

The Headteacher explained that they had met with representatives of CiT for a second time during a visit to Ash Lea. Meetings also took place with key staff and governors as part of this visit. Governors and staff who had been involved gave positive feedback on the meeting and felt that the layers of support and the clusters they worked in would be a particular advantage of this trust. Governors felt the meeting had left them much more informed about the wider academisation process and the questions to ask in future meetings such as this. A brief discussion then took place around the benefits of this trust and the challenges that joining this MAT and MATs in general would bring.

The Headteacher also explained that she was also exploring the Esteem Trust and would contact them. **KD**

Question – a governor asked if anything had been produced setting out the details of what each trust could offer?

The Headteacher said that this hadn’t been done yet but as more information was gathered this would be a useful next step.

Governors agreed that Kate Davies, Chris Hankinson and Sadie Fletcher with additional support from other governors and staff would continue to meet with other MATs as part of this process.

Question – a governor asked if the school should meet with one trust a term and review this at the next FGB?

The Headteacher agreed this would be a reasonable approach in terms of time and workload. It was agreed the Esteem would be the next trust to meet with.

GB/57/22 – KD to approach the Evolve Trust.

Action not completed yet. This will be covered as part of the wider consideration of MATs. See above.

Helene Maillet-Vioud left the meeting at 6.30 pm.

GB/60/22 – JW and KD to write and produce Governors Values Statements.

Action completed. The Governor Values were shared and discussed at the recent Strategy meeting.

GB/62/22 – LA Safeguarding Audit to be submitted.

Action completed.

GB/62/22 – All governors to confirm they have read and understood KCSiE by 20/12/22.

Action completed.

GB/65/22 – GM to distribute details of training on Governor Roles in HR Processes to all governors via Rachel Day.

Action completed.

GB/65/22- Governors to undertake details of training completed to Rachel Day.

Governors were reminded of the process for submitting training details and on how to complete and return governor monitoring reports.

GB/66/22 – Headteacher to share updated governor monitoring roles.

Action completed by Jane Wood, Chris Hankinson and Kate Davies.

Governors then discussed these roles and what had been allocated to each of the members of the governing body. The document listing these roles will be shared with all governors via Governor Hub. The Equalities and Complaints governor roles will be agreed following discussions with Charlotte Martin and Gordon Monaghan ahead of the next meeting.

KD/CM/G
M

GB/06/23 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

Review of actions

There were no actions to review from committees.

Policies for Approval

Careers Policy

Governor agreed and approved the Careers Policy.

It was noted that several other policies that were shared via Governor Hub were for information, as the scheme of delegation allowed these to be approved by the Headteacher.

Approval of NCC Pay Policy (if applicable)

Agreed in the Autumn Term.

Approval of Finance Policy

Agreed in the Autumn Term.

GB/07/23 Holding executive leaders to account: Summary of Headteacher's report and governors' questions and challenge

The Headteacher had shared an extremely detailed and comprehensive report ahead of the meeting and governors were asked for any questions they had on this.

Question – a governor asked about 36 incidents logged as other in the health and safety report?

The Headteacher explained that these related to incidents that didn't necessarily fit into one of the specific categories.

The Headteacher also explained that she felt the school weren't necessarily making the best use of the Behaviour Watch system for analysing behaviour and

health and safety issues. To address this the Headteacher and key staff will meet with the company to discuss this.

KD/LS

Question – a governor asked about baseline and interim assessments and the RAG rating of this and how this compared to previous years and if the school was where it should be at this point in the year?

The Headteacher explained this was based on each child's individual IEP. The Assistant Headteacher gave details of how the system worked and how progress meetings took place with teaching staff and any children still rated as red were highlighted and discussed. Staff were challenged at these meetings to explain the reasons behind any lack of progress and the steps being taken to address this. Also, children already shown as green were considered and further targets set for their development.

However, the data to compare directly with previous years IEP data hadn't been presented and governors felt this would be a helpful addition. The Headteacher agreed this could be added in future reports but gave details of how the measure might be slightly misleading because it was based on individual child's target's rather than a set assessment for all. This meant you wouldn't be directly comparing the same measurements.

KD/LS

Question – a governor asked about the 23 accidents listed as being related to buildings and equipment in the Spring Term 2023?

The Headteacher gave outline details of this and how many of them would relate to accidents such as injuries with play equipment, bumping into doors or trapping fingers. The Headteacher confirmed that these weren't related to faults and in most cases nothing could have been done differently to avoid them.

Question – a governor asked if the ramp and steps had now been addressed?

The Chair confirmed it hadn't but that it was constantly being chased.

The Headteacher confirmed for new governors how defects with the building were reported, logged, and addressed. Dave Dennington will look at this information with the Headteacher as part of his induction and role as health and safety governor.

KD/DD

Question - a governor asked about the one staff RIDDOR reportable incident in Spring 2022?

The Headteacher didn't have the details immediately to hand but agreed it would be checked with Dave Dennington on his arranged visit.

Question – a governor asked for an update on the air conditioning quotes?

The Headteacher explained that the quotes ranged from £36,000 to £69,000 and the proposed work had gone out to tender and 3 quotes had been received. The SBM had budgeted for the expenditure on this.

There were no further questions and governors thanked the Headteacher for her comprehensive report.

GB/08/23

Overseeing Financial Performance – Financial reporting

School budget

The Headteacher detailed the work taking place on the budget which would still be in surplus, but the percentage of the budget spent on staffing had now reached 98% which was being considered at length by herself and the SBM with support

from the LA Finance Team. The budget planning currently shows the surplus being taken into the 2023-24 school year being used up and staff reductions through natural wastage were now being considered and discussed. The Headteacher highlighted that having 98% of the school budget allocated to staffing was unsustainable.

Question – a governor asked why the budget forecast had changed since the last projection at the Finance meeting?

The Headteacher confirmed that staffing costs had doubled since 2019 and it was related to the increases in staff wages and the additional staff employed to meet pupils' needs.

The school budget for 2023-24 will be discussed in full at the Finance and Personnel Meeting in the Summer Term.

Scheme of Delegation for 2022/2023

This will be completed in the Summer Term 2023.

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) for 2022- 2023

Gordon Monaghan gave a summary of the SFVS for 2022-23 and the discussions that had taken place around this in the Finance and Personnel meeting. He detailed the red area which was the cost of education support staff and the 4 other areas that were rated as amber.

He explained that the reasons for the high education support staff costs was related to the number of staff needed to support the complex needs of pupils. The new amber area was the cost per teaching member of staff and was related to the strong retention of staff who had now reached the higher end of the pay scale.

Governors agreed to approve and submit the SFVS for 2022-23.

Year-end re-forecast

This will be considered in the Summer Term Finance and Personnel Meeting.

Services for schools

This will be addressed in the Summer Term Finance and Personnel Meeting.

Accessibility Plan

The Headteacher explained that the SBM had sourced a quote for £10,500 for an accessible path to the school as part of the accessibility plan. The path would run around the car park and the quote also including the installation of a hard standing area.

Question – a governor asked do we need to have a tender process and gather 3 quotes?

The Headteacher confirmed this wasn't required as it was an LA quote and therefore a tender process and 3 quotes weren't needed.

Governors then inspected the plans and quote that had been shared and commented on the importance of such a project going ahead as soon as possible.

Governors agreed and approved the quote of £10.500 for the path and associated work.

GB/09/23 Update on appraisal process for headteacher and staff including an update on the wellbeing of the headteacher and staff

The clerk highlighted that due to an administrative oversight the pay increment agreed for the Headteacher in 2022 had not actually been applied.

Governors therefore confirmed their agreement that the Headteacher should be moved up one point on the leadership scale with affect from September 2022.

The Headteacher then directed governors to the wellbeing section of her report. She detailed the coaching she is doing herself in her own time and how valuable this was.

The staff wellbeing survey was highlighted as well with a 39% response rate. This had been very positive, but some staff had requested this was anonymous next time. This had been agreed for the next survey.

The school arranged a staff wellbeing session with the mental health support team. The feedback received from staff was positive.

The school uses the SAS's (School's Advisory Service) wellbeing package. The support offered includes physiotherapy, counselling, menopause and weight loss support. Since signing up to the package on the 1st of April 2022 the company indicated that staff accessed counselling, Be Mindful app, Feeling Good app and support. They have no records for numbers of staff who have accessed the GP helpline, but this is also available to staff.

In addition, SAS have agreed that the school can also refer parents if they wish. This information has been shared with teaching staff so that they can offer this to parents if they feel that there are having difficulties, particularly around mental health needs.

GB/10/23 Confirm arrangements to review Child Protection and Safeguarding recording and reporting systems (CP confidential file audit)

This has been completed by Kate Davies and Chris Hankinson and a review of the single central record took place at the same point.

GB/11/23 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

School Attendance

The Department for Education are introducing several important changes to the non-statutory guidance, policy framework and statutory regulations related to school attendance and the use of legal interventions.

The policy and legislative changes will set an expectation for local authorities to take on a more strategic role in relation to school attendance.

Schools will be expected to develop and publish a school attendance policy covering attendance expectations, named attendance staff contacts, day-to-day attendance management processes, their strategy for using attendance data, their strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, and the point at which sanctions will be used.

The Secretary of State for Education will introduce a statutory requirement for schools to sign up to data returns to be collected by a company called Wonde from September 2023. Schools are encouraged to commence data sharing this academic year.

Action for governors

Questions governors will want to ask:

1. How familiar is your school with the new non-statutory guidance for 2022-23?
2. Does the school have an attendance policy in place that will meet the requirements set out above?
3. How effective are school leaders in tracking pupil attendance?
4. What are the school's current arrangements for the use of Education Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences in term time?
5. Has the school begun to share attendance data with the Department for Education using Wonde?

Governors noted and commended the increase in school attendance shown in the data in the Headteachers' Report.

Harm outside the home toolkit

The Harm Outside the Home Toolkit was created with the aim of supporting schools in developing their capacity as a protective factor for children at risk of harm. Creation of the toolkit was one strand of Nottinghamshire's involvement in the DfE's regional Practice Solution Project which involved working in partnership with Lincolnshire and Leicestershire. A co-production approach was adopted drawing together teams from across Children's and Families Services: Tackling Emerging Threats to Children Team, Social Emotional and Mental Health Team, Partnership Team and the Educational Psychology Service.

The aim of the toolkit was to create something meaningful and useful; grounded in evidence-based practice, mindful of what our children and young people have said, and what our schools and settings have reflected whilst at the same time ensuring it is purposeful across different contexts, different settings, and across counties

The toolkit is published on the Em-ed website and will also feature in the regional website once completed Links to each are below:

<http://www.em-edsupport.org.uk/harm-outside-the-home>

<https://www.childexploitationeastmidlands.org.uk/>

Action for governors

To support the longevity of this project, Governing Bodies and Trust Boards are requested to monitor use of the toolkit in their schools and across their organisations.

From Chair

No further communication.

From Headteacher

The Headteacher reported that she'd been informed by the Nottinghamshire Highways Team of more double yellow lines being installed around some of the junctions near to the school.

The Headteacher explained the lack of consultation there had been with the school over this, and governors agreed that this wasn't acceptable.

From Clerk - Governor Newsletter - spring term editions

The clerk highlighted the two Spring Term governor newsletters and in particular highlighted the following areas:-

- Safeguarding updates – including a reminder that the audit should have been submitted by 20/12/22 and information on audits of Child Protection and Confidential Files.
- The appointment of a new Governor Services Team Manager
- Details on resources and support for the recruitment of governors, including a template letter for schools to use.
- Admissions update.
- Governor Learning and Development opportunities
- HR update – including details on the additional bank holiday on May 8th 2023 and the potential for industrial activity in the Spring Term.
- OFSTED Annual Report 2021-22.
- Update from Nottinghamshire Association of Governors (NAGs).

GB/13/23 Report from training co-ordinator including a skills audit and review of governor training requirements for 2023

Luke Skillington has been appointed to this role as part of the discussions earlier in the meeting and will produce a report for the next meeting.

GB/14/23 General Data Protection Regulations

Review and confirm the appointment of the Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Senior Information and Risk Owner (SIRO)

Governors confirmed that the DPO is Andy Crow (DPO for Education) and the SIRO is Kate Davies.

Report from the DPO and Information Governance Governor

Main Privacy Notice

Gordon Monaghan gave outline details of the privacy notice and its purpose and why this notice needed bringing to the FGB for consideration.

Governors agreed and approved the Main Privacy Notice for the school.

GB/15/23 Review of governor monitoring visit reports – key actions for governing body

Gordon Monaghan had produced a visit report on his meeting and discussions around GDPR with Rachel Day and had posted it on Governor Hub,

The Headteacher explained that she had updated the governor QA calendar and suggested a week should be set aside for governor visits in the future.

The Chair referenced the governor values document that had been produced and discussed in the Strategy meeting. The values that had been produced were then read for all new governors to hear.

The Chair then gave thanks to the previous Chair, Mags Bailey and the work she had completed over many years as a governor at the school. Chris Hankinson will now write a piece thanking Mags Bailey and introducing himself as the new Chair for publishing in the next school newsletter.

CH

GB/16/23 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Challenge and questioning on pupil progress and health and safety in the Headteacher report.

Questioning around the budget for 2023-24.

Detailed discussions around academisation.

GB/17/23 Confirmation of dates for 2023/24

The governing body

agreed

Summer term 2023 – Wednesday 12th July 2023 at 5.30 pm

GB/18/23 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that part of GB/05/23 would remain confidential.

The meeting closed at 7.59 pm.

Signed



..... (chair)

Date12/07/23.....