

MINUTES OF MEETING



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Academy: Sparken Hill Academy
Meeting title: Autumn (1) term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Thursday 21st September 2023 at 4.00pm
Location: At the academy

Membership

'A' denotes absence

A Mrs V Brooks
Mrs D Carter
Mr P Gawthorpe (chair)
Mr R Lilley (principal)
Mrs C Middleton (vice-chair)
Mrs M Norton Allen
A Mrs M Paton
Mrs K Phoenix
A Mrs S Sparks
Cllr N Turner
Mrs S Wichmann

In attendance

Miss J Littlewood (clerk to the governors)
Mrs V Dashper (school business manager – SBM)

FGB/70/23 Apologies for absence Action

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Mrs M Paton (personal);
- Mrs S Sparks (personal).

It was

resolved

that governors accepted and consented to these absences.

FGB/71/23 Declaration of interest

All governors present completed and signed the following documentation:

- declaration of business interests;
- declaration of eligibility;
- governor code of conduct 2023.

The SBM agreed to follow up with the absent governors.

VD/Clerk

In addition, governors **AGREED** to access their profile on Governor Hub and tick the appropriate boxes to provide further evidence of the above actions.

All to note

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

FGB/72/23 Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months

Governors **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the governing body membership list.

	The principal notified governors that he had received a resignation from Mrs V Brooks (with immediate effect) – the chair AGREED to send a letter of acknowledgement and thanks. The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body: • 1 x co-opted governor; • 1 x partnership governor. In addition, the clerk drew attention to the following ends of terms of office: • Mrs D Carter (co-opted governor) – 24th June 2024; • Mrs C Middleton (community governor) – 22nd June 2024. Governors AGREED to continue to explore options for recruitment to the vacant positions.	Action Chair
FGB/73/23	Determination of office of chair and vice-chair In line with the articles of association, governors DETERMINED the term of office for both positions as one year.	
FGB/74/23	Election of chair Mr Gawthorpe indicated that he would be prepared to stand for the position of chair. <i>Mr Gawthorpe left the meeting at 4.15pm</i> In the circumstances, there being no further nominations, it was: resolved that Mr Gawthorpe be elected chair for a period of office expiring at the date of the 2024 autumn term meeting. <i>Mr Gawthorpe re-joined the meeting at 4.18pm</i>	Clerk
FGB/75/23	Election of vice-chair Mrs Middleton indicated that she would be prepared to stand for the position of vice-chair. <i>Mrs Middleton left the meeting at 4.19pm</i> In the circumstances, there being no further nominations, it was: resolved that Mrs Middleton be elected vice-chair for a period of office expiring at the date of the 2024 autumn term meeting. <i>Mrs Middleton re-joined the meeting at 4.21pm</i>	Clerk
FGB/76/23	Approval of minutes of summer (2) term meetings and any additional special meetings The minutes of the summer (2) term meeting held on 19th July 2023 having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true and correct record, therefore it was AGREED that the minutes of 19 July 2023 were to be signed electronically by the chair. Actions in the minutes were reviewed. It was noted that they had been undertaken or were to be discussed in the meeting.	Chair/ Clerk

FGB/77/23 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

Governors **CONFIRMED** there had been no committees or working parties since the summer (2) term meeting of the FGB.

Policies

Governors **RECEIVED, NOTED** and **APPROVED** the following policies:

- anti-bullying policy;
- equality policy;
- EVC policy;
- freedom of information policy;
- medicines policy.

In addition, the principal reported that:

- the history policy; and
- the child protection policy;

were to be submitted to the autumn (2) term FGB meeting for approval.

**Principal
/Clerk**

The principal informed governors of the cost-saving and sustainability conversations being held with staff including greater, smarter use of Google and Chromebooks – it was intended that these new arrangements, once implemented would enable governors to gain access to live policy documents to better aid responsibilities in terms of review and approval.

All to note

FGB/78/23 Review risk management arrangements

The SBM provided the following updates for governors:

- there had been no change to the risk management policy; and
- the academy had bought back the RPA again at £23 per pupil – total estimate was £12,190 for the year.

Q. Governors enquired about what was included in the cost for RPA?

A. The SBM explained that RPA worked like an insurance, governors were also covered under the policy.

Q. Governors queried whether staff were covered?

A. The SBM clarified that staff were covered separately under staff absence insurance.

FGB/79/23 Review of delegation and organisation of committees

a Agree committee structure and membership of committees

Governors **AGREED** to retain the current committee structure and membership:

- finance and personnel – all governors - Mrs C Middleton (chair);
- audit – Mrs D Carter, Mr P Gawthorpe, Mrs C Middleton, Mrs M Norton Allen, Mrs S Sparks (chair), Cllr N Turner, Mrs S Wichmann;

In addition, governors **DETERMINED** that any matters related to pay progression were to be approved at the finance and personnel committee without the presence of staff governors.

Q. Governors questioned whether the structure continued to be effective for the academy?

A. The principal confirmed that there was still work to be completed with Members to include them more in the strategic overview and raise their profile.

Governors **DISCUSSED** options and opportunities for this greater awareness, knowledge and understanding of Members to be achieved.

b *Approval of scheme of delegation 2023-2024*

Governors **RECEIVED, NOTED** and **APPROVED** the scheme of delegation 2023-2024.

c *Note annual planner 2023-2024 to support agenda setting*

Governors **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the annual planner 2023-2024.

d *Policy checklist 2023-2024 – statutory policies for schools*

Governors **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the policy checklist 2023-2024.

e *Review of and appointment to link governor roles*

Governors **AGREED** to retain the link roles as outlined on the academy website with the following amendments:

- curriculum – Mr P Gawthorpe;
- humanities – Mr P Gawthorpe;
- mental health & wellbeing – Mrs M Norton Allen, Cllr N Turner;
- sustainability – Mrs D Carter.

FGB/80/23 To receive and approve pupil targets and review examination results

The principal alerted governors to the following external data:

- NCC data dashboards which comprised outcomes for:
 - EYFS;
 - phonics Y1 and Y2;
 - KS1 SATs;
 - KS2 SATs; and
- from September 2023, KS1 SATs were now optional.

In addition, he outlined the format of the dashboards and the measures used to rank the academy against other Nottinghamshire schools.

The principal presented the following headline data from each of the dashboards:

a *EYFS (early years foundation stage)*

- 50% of pupils achieved GLD (LA = 67.5%, national = 67.3%);
- 50% of pupils achieved EXS level across all ELGs (early learning goals);
- 12.1% of pupils achieved average ELGs at EXS.

The principal recognised that the outcomes were low but reminded governors that the school had 40% FSM – the target for next year was to try to move the quintile on GLD and aim for 60% GLD.

Q. Governors asked about the rationale for this target?

A. The principal advised that the rationale behind this was that this was the first year that a sizeable proportion of the children entering F2 had attended the 30 hours provision in F1.

Q. Governors enquired how the number of FSM compared to the F2 cohort this year?

A. The principal shared that this was currently uncertain as the impact of the Wilko closure had not yet taken effect – it was anticipated that there would be a rise in the FSM figures – parents had been contacted to encourage them to consider the availability of FSM.

b Phonics

- Year 1 – 66.2% of pupils passed the phonics screening;
- Y2 recheck – 71.4% of pupils passed the phonics recheck;
- **see confidential item;**
- the Y1 phonics target for 2024 was 78%.

Q. Governors queried the high target?

A. The principal explained that 74% was a typical outcome for the school, the percentage had dropped through and following the pandemic even though there had been some ground made and it was feasible to achieve 78% given the number of pupils in the cohort, the training, monitoring, tracking and personnel in place.

Governors **DISCUSSED** the use of triads and peer support amongst the KS1 team including the teaching assistants.

The principal continued with his update of the summer term outcomes and highlighted:

c Key Stage 1

- reading – 61% of pupils achieved EXS with 21.1% at GD (greater depth);
- writing – 55.3% of pupils achieved EXS, with 9.2% at GD;
- mathematics – 65.8% of pupils achieved EXS, with 21.1% at GD;
- moderation had been undertaken with this cohort;
- all the GD values were in the second quintile.

d Key Stage 2

- reading – 66.8% of pupils achieved EXS, with 22.5% at GD
- writing – 71.3% of pupils achieved EXS, with 17.5% at GD;
- mathematics – 78.8% of pupils achieved EXS, with 22.5% at GD;
- SPaG – 76.3% of pupils achieved EXS, with 27.5% at GD.

The principal drew governors' attention to the 'closing the gap' summary dashboard which indicated that:

- progress scores at KS2 were all green:
 - reading = +1.9;
 - writing = +3.6;
 - mathematics = +2.8;
- the conditions for growth had been significantly better for the group of children moving through than expected.

e 2024 targets

The principal notified governors that the outcomes for 2023 had beaten the 2024 FFT50 parameters across the board and were close to some of the FFT20 so it was the intention to present the following aspirational targets based on FFT20:

- phonics = 78%;
- KS2 reading = 75%
- KS2 writing = 78%
- KS2 mathematics = 82%
- KS2 SPaG = 80%
- KS2 combined = 66%.

Q. Governors questioned how the staff had received the targets?

A. The principal verified that the staff had accepted the targets.

FGB/81/23 To review admissions and the draft SIP (school improvement plan)

a *Admissions*

The principal informed governors that:

- total pupil numbers across the school = 537;
- Y6 was full, with a waiting list;
- all KS2 year groups were either at PAN or oversubscribed;
- in KS1 the cohort numbers were under PAN (75):
 - YR (F2) = 59;
 - Y1 = 60;
 - Y2 = 73;
- numbers in nursery (F1) = 42.

The chair **REMINDED** governors of the reasons why the PAN had been exceeded in KS2 – governors **SUPPORTED** the reasoning of the school.

Q. Governors asked how the school balanced the extra numbers in Y6 and teacher wellbeing?

A. The principal detailed the class organisation and the need to remain aware of the distribution of Y5/Y6 in those classes which enabled more focussed, supported teaching.

Q. Governors enquired about the lower numbers in F2 and KS1?

A. The principal acknowledged the financial concern caused by the lower numbers and the steps taken to mitigate this however, if F2 numbers had not increased by start of Y1 then he outlined the options available.

b *Draft SIP*

The principal updated governors in relation to the draft SIP which had been shared with the staff for approval and contained the priorities around the Ofsted judgement areas of:

- teaching and learning;
- behaviour and attitudes;
- personal development;
- leadership and management; and
- EYFS.

Examples of the priorities/actions included:

- handwriting across the school;
- phonics;
- non-core subjects: art, geography, DT;
- science targets which had rolled over from last year;
- Ofsted action points related to attendance;
- review of House points/rainbow awards;
- monitoring of PHSE;
- lesson observations for co-ordinators;
- outdoor area, play group, 30 hours.

The principal agreed to circulate the draft SIP to governors for approval at the autumn (2) term meeting.

Principal

Governors **DISCUSSED** the need to understand the curriculum model in use and the principal proposed that he provided a synopsis for governors which demonstrated how the curriculum underpinned the school vision.

Principal/
All to note

FGB/82/23 Update on appraisal process for principal and staff including an update on the wellbeing of all staff.

The chair **NOTIFIED** governors that Mr Clive Richardson had been appointed as the external advisor.

Following discussion, it was

resolved

that governors **APPROVED** the appointment of:

- Mr Gawthorpe and Mrs Norton Allen as the principal's appraisal governors; and
- Mrs Middleton as the QA governor.

The principal reported that:

- his appraisal meeting had been scheduled for 3rd October 2023;
- draft targets had been formulated;
- staff reviews and target-setting were scheduled to be completed by end of October 2023.

PG/MNA

Q. Governors queried whether, if all staff were successful in achieving pay progression, this had been budgeted for?

A. The SBM reassured governors that in setting the budget, this outcome had been anticipated and so was already part of the budget plan.

FGB/83/23 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

a *Nottinghamshire SEND Improvement Programme*

The clerk provided a summary of the content of the report and drew governors' attention to the following:

- actions undertaken since the local area SEND inspection by Ofsted and the CQC (Quality Care Commission) which included:
 - the establishment of a SEND Improvement Board to oversee improvements arising from the inspection report;
 - the first meeting of the board;
 - production and approval of a priority action plan (PAP);
 - submission of the PAP to Ofsted and CQC for approval;
- the remit of the SEND Improvement Board;
- a summary of the aims and outcomes of each priority action;
- where the SEND Priority Action Plan was to be published following approval;
- actions for governors.

b *HR updates*

The clerk provided a summary of the content of the report and highlighted the following information:

- Teachers Pay Award 2023 and proposals for 2023/24;
- funding and school finance support;
- performance related pay progression (September 2023);
- teachers pay timeline;
- HR service letter;
- support staff pay award (effective 1 April 2023);
- updates in relation to:
 - School Pay Policy, Toolkit and Guidance 2023

- School Appraisal Policy and Guidance updates 2023;
- Recruitment and Selection Safer Working Documents 2023;
- School Employee Code of Conduct;
- School Induction Policy 2023;
- counselling support for all school-based employees – reminder
- length of the school week
- the new SENCO qualification requirements from September 2024;
- actions for governors.

FGB/84/23 Safeguarding Information for consideration and action

The principal informed governors that:

- the NCC NSCP SiE safeguarding audit was being compiled and was to be submitted to the autumn (2) FGB meeting;
- the biggest update from KCSiE 2023 related to 'filtering and monitoring' of IT systems;
- the school had purchased and introduced a system called 'Smoothwall' which addressed the issue;
- all staff had completed the 3-year safeguarding training provided by NCC;
- all staff had read KCSiE 2023 and signed to confirm the fact;
- governors needed to read KCSiE 2023 and tick the appropriate box under their profile on Governor Hub.

**Principal
/Clerk**

All/Clerk

Q. Governors questioned what happened for staff who had missed the training?

A. The principal assured governors that staff who had missed the training were to receive a condensed, higher-quality version formulated and delivered by the school.

FGB/85/23 Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, set by governors

Governors **AGREED** for this item to be deferred to the autumn (2) FGB meeting.

**All to note
/Clerk**

FGB/86/23 Communication received and updates

From clerk – Governor Newsletter

The clerk drew attention to the content of the first 2023 autumn term edition of the Nottinghamshire Governor e-newsletter and highlighted the following items:

- a welcome back from the Governor Services Team Manager – Sinead Allan;
- school admissions information;
- safeguarding in education news and updates;
- the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) consultation;
- an article about:
 - support for governors – advice and guidance;
 - FAQ for governance issues – headteachers and governors A-Z;
 - dealing with exclusions – support for headteachers and governors;
 - school collaborations;
 - can governing boards use 'WhatsApp' or 'Messenger'?
 - school governors right to time off work;
- NCC education library service;
- national updates/articles with news (and links) from Ofsted and the DfE:

	- o updated guidance document on inspecting maintained schools and academies in England under the education inspection framework; - o school sport and activity action plan; - o the new SENCo qualification and requirements; • governor termly briefings; • a message from the chair of NAGS, Susan Beasley; • governor recruitment – support for boards from Inspiring Governance and Governors for Schools; • how to use GovernorHub if new to governance; • governor learning and development updates.	Action
FGB/87/23	Report from training co-ordinator including a skills audit and review of governor training requirements (including safeguarding) for 2022/23 Governors AGREED the following mandatory training was to be completed: • governor safeguarding training – all governors; • governor cyber training – all governors; • reading KCSiE 2023 – all governors. The principal requested that: • all governors completed the training section under their profile on Governor Hub; • all governors completed the skills audit recently circulated. On behalf of the training coordinator, the SBM shared that: • no further governor training had been reported this term; • free training was available through 'The Key,' Em-EdS and National College.	All All All to note
FGB/88/23	Review of governor monitoring visit reports – key actions for governing body Governors AGREED that the following monitoring visits had been undertaken: • health & safety – Mrs D Carter. The SBM advised that all identified actions from the H&S visit had been resolved. The principal alerted governors that the commercial dishwasher in the kitchen was on the point of breakdown – a replacement ranged from between £14k - £20k – the principal requested approval for replacement of the dishwasher if it broke down between governing body meetings. Governors DELEGATED authority to the chair of governors to use 'chair's action' if this happened and report back to the FGB at the earliest opportunity. The chair REMINDED governors to: • liaise with the principal prior to each visit; • ensure at least one governor link visit per term for each governor link; • complete visit forms once a visit had been undertaken. Governors DISCUSSED and CONSIDERED the creation of a governor action plan for governor monitoring visits – the principal drew governors' attention to the school's monitoring timetable and proposed that governors aligned visits to complement it – governors AGREED.	All to note All to note Principal All to note

Mrs Dashper left the meeting at 5.45pm

FGB/89/23 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Governors identified impact through:

- consideration and discussion regarding governance matters including:
 - membership, vacancies and recruitment;
 - eligibility/business interests, code of conduct;
 - review of delegation and organisation of committees;
 - governor training and monitoring visits;
- discussion and questions relating admissions specifically pupil numbers, class organisation and actions to be considered to address potential low numbers;
- increased awareness and understanding through questions and discussion in relation to summer term outcomes and target setting including:
 - actions taken to address underperformance;
 - the impact of FSM on outcomes;
 - the rationale used for target setting;
 - the use of comparative data;
- consideration and review of policies, Corporate Director's reports and the autumn (1) term governor newsletter;
- questions, challenge and discussion related to:
 - risk management;
 - attendance and rewards;
 - curriculum;
- consideration and discussion in relation to:
 - staffing matters and appraisal;
 - the school improvement plan (SIP);
 - safeguarding; and
 - health and safety.

Accountability continued to be evidenced in all governing body and committee meetings through regular review of actions, question and investigation.

FGB/90/23 Confirmation of dates for 2023/24

The governing body
agreed

Autumn Term 2023

- Thursday 12th October 2023 (9.30am) – F&P/Audit Committee;
- Thursday 23rd November 2023 (9.30am) – F&P Committee (Streets);
- Thursday 7th December 2023 (4.00pm) – FGB Meeting;
- Friday 8th December 2023 (9.30am) – AGM/Members Meeting

All to note

Spring Term 2024

- Thursday 25th January 2024 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting;
- Thursday 22nd February 2024 (4.00pm) – F&P/Audit Committee;
- Tuesday 26th March 2024 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting

Summer Term 2024

- Thursday 2nd May 2024 (4.00pm) – FGB Meeting;
- Thursday 6th June 2024 (4.00pm) – F&P/Audit Committee;
- Thursday 18th July 2024 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting.

FGB/91/23 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that there was one confidential item and that the confidential sections of the following reports:

- summer (2) term FGB minutes;
- examination outcomes and linked documentation;
- governor monitoring visit reports;

be deemed confidential but that all other papers and reports be made available as required.

The meeting closed at 6.00pm



Signed:

(vice-chair)

Date: **7th December 2023**