

MINUTES OF MEETING



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Academy: Sparken Hill Academy
Meeting title: Summer (1) term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at 4.00pm
Location: At the academy

Membership

'A' denotes absence

Mrs V Brooks
Mrs D Carter
Mr P Gawthorpe (chair)
Mr R Lilley (principal)
Mrs C Middleton (vice-chair)
Mrs M Norton Allen
Mrs M Paton
Mrs K Phoenix
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)
Mrs J Broadley (observer)

- | FGB/32/23 | Apologies for absence | Action |
|------------------|---|---------------|
| | There were no apologies for absence | |
| FGB/33/23 | Declaration of interest | |
| | There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda. | |
| FGB/34/23 | Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months | |
| | The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 x partnership governor; | |
| | Q. Governors asked about the partnership governor role? | |
| | A. The clerk explained that partnership governors were usually associated with foundation schools however in this instance, partnership governors were eligible to be nominated if they had the skills needed to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school, in line with the articles of association. | |
| FGB/35/23 | Approval of minutes of spring (2) term meetings and any additional special meetings | |
| | The minutes of the spring (2) term meeting held on 28 th March 2023 having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true and correct record, therefore it was | |

AGREED that the minutes of 28 March 2023 were to be signed electronically by the chair.

Actions in the minutes were reviewed. It was noted that they had been undertaken, were subject to the following updates or were to be discussed in the meeting:

FGB/22/23 Holding executive leaders to account: summary of principal's report and governors' question and challenge

Q. Governors asked whether school numbers were secure?

A. The principal confirmed that pupil numbers were healthy and stood at 573 (see item **FGB/40/23 a**).

Q. Governors enquired how the Y6 SATs had progressed?

A. The principal reported that the pupils had found them hard, particularly the reading test (which reflected the national picture) but had tried their best and were to be congratulated on their efforts.

FGB/36/23 Financial Reporting

a *Monitor expenditure against budget plan and agree adjustments as necessary*

The SBM presented the following documentation for governors' scrutiny and consideration:

- overview of the 2022-23 budget;
- draft 2023-24 budget;
- 3-year financial plan (2023-24 to 2026-27).

The SBM explained that due to the nature of the timings of reporting on the budget forecast returns to the ESFA, the information had been brought to the FGB for consideration so that any changes may be placed before the F&P committee for final approval – **see confidential item**

b *Services for Schools*

Governors **RECEIVED, NOTED** and **RATIFIED** the services for schools' contracts approved at the spring term F&P committee (23 February 2023) – see item **F&P/06/23**.

FGB/37/23 Capital expenditure for consideration and approval

The principal outlined the background and context to the following proposals:

a *Automation of Foundation Gates*

The SBM verified that quotes had been obtained:

- Stapleton's Lock & Safe - £10,107.31 originally (plus VAT) - increased due to increased costs of materials, revised quote £10,227.31
- HSL Electrical - £14,338.00 (plus VAT)
- WASP – only able to do part of the work and are unable to source an alternative company to undertake other necessary works;
- alternative companies were contacted who were able to install gate automation however none were willing to take on gates that they had not installed due to H & S risks.

Q. Governors queried the availability of funding?

A. The principal reminded governors of the DFC monies and additional capital funding (see item **FGB/36/23 a**).

Q. Governors questioned the preferred option?

A. The SBM detailed the reasons for the preference 'Stapleton's Lock and Safe.'

Q. Governors asked about the technical expertise of the company?

A. The SBM assured governors that the company was experienced and had capacity to accomplish the work over the summer holidays.

Q. Governors enquired whether the price included callouts?

A. The SBM advised that if the issue was linked to the installation, then the company would resolve but, if for any other reason, the responsibility fell to the academy.

Q. Governors queried links to the current security systems?

A. The principal confirmed that the gate system aligned with the whole school security processes and procedures.

Following discussion, it was

resolved

that governors **APPROVED** the use of 'Stapleton's Lock and Safe' to automate the gates in foundation.

b Replacement dining table solution

The principal notified governors that the existing tables were nearing the end of their life - they were difficult to manoeuvre, and suitable alternatives were limited due to available storage space and the quantity required.

The principal proposed that the academy purchased 10 x folding tables: each table seated 12 pupils; all tables were time and motion efficient and fitted through the doors. In addition, the company visited the school and helped to work out storage solutions.

Q. Governors questioned seating?

A. The vice-chair clarified that the seating was integral to the tables with optional colour choices at no extra cost.

Q. Governors asked about cost?

A. The principal shared that the tables cost £980 each – this would use up the balance of the DFC money after other projects had been completed.

Q. Governors enquired about manoeuvrability?

A. The principal reassured governors that the tables were light enough for the MDSA's to move.

Following discussion, it was

resolved

that governors provisionally **APPROVED** the purchase of 10 x folding tables, subject to satisfactory testing.

FGB/39/23	Ofsted update	Action
	The principal reported that the Ofsted report had now been published and uploaded to Governor Hub – he also alerted governors to the positive report in ‘The Worksop Guardian.’ <i>Mrs Paton left the meeting at 5.10pm</i>	All to note
FGB/40/23	Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action	
	<i>The DfE’s SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan</i> The clerk shared a summary of the report which included that: - the Improvement Plan was the Government’s response to the consultation on the SEND Review which was published as a Green Paper in March 2022; - the Improvement Plan reinforced the Green Paper proposals most of which were confirmed by the consultation process; - the threefold mission of the Improvement Plan was to: - fulfil children’s potential; - build parent’s trust; - provide financial sustainability; - the 9 key proposals of the Implementation Plan were to be realised over a 3-year period with no current proposals for legislation; - actions for governors.	
FGB/41/23	Communication	
	<i>a From principal</i> The principal informed governors of: - the receipt of resignation letters – see confidential item; - staffing matters – see confidential item; - the update on the NCC ‘under lease’ arrangement (see item F&P/08/23) – progress was slow; - a bid for central government funding to commission someone to explore an upgrade/replacement of the Building Management System; - parental communication – see confidential item.	
	Q. Governors queried when the existing arrangement with ‘Cherubs’ ended? A. The SBM verified that the existing lease agreement was due to end on 30th October 2024 – she reminded governors of the detail of the discussions (F&P/08/23) – see confidential item.	
	Q. Governors questioned whether there was any support from the ESFA re the Building Management System? A. The SBM explained that the ESFA had been approached and were exploring the matter for the school – feedback was expected.	
	She added that in the short-term, ‘Eddison’s’ had been contacted and agreed to conduct a survey (free of charge) to ascertain the level of work required, the feasibility and whether there was funding available – Eddison’s had been successful in supporting schools/academies in submitting successful funding bids.	All to note
	The survey had been conducted and it had been suggested by the surveyors that due to the complexity and necessity of the work required and the prohibitive cost, it was likely that there would be a need for a CIF bid (Condition Improvement Fund) – the report from the survey was to be shared upon receipt.	All to note /VD

b *From clerk – Governor Newsletter*

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

- a message from the service director related to wellbeing support for staff;
- an update about 'Education Investment Areas' identified in the levelling up white paper;
- safeguarding updates;
- a HR update about the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Bill which was to include harassment by third parties and sexual harassment;
- changes to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) referrals;
- an article about 'Commissioning Alternative Provision – The Role of the Governing Body;'
- information about 'Stress Awareness Month;'
- an article about the governor termly briefings;
- feedback from the Governor Conference – Overcoming Barriers;
- a message from the new chair of NAGS, Sue Beasley;
- parent governor vacancies on NCC Children and Families Select Committee;
- a small article about Governor Hub;
- governor recruitment – support for boards from the NGA (national governance association), Inspiring Governance and Governors for Schools
- governor learning and development updates.

FGB/42/23 **Approval of in-service training days 2023-24**

Governors **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the following Inset days from the principal with the request that three were disaggregated* for twilight training:

- Monday 4th September 2023;
- Friday 20th October 2023;
- *Wednesday 24th July 2024;
- *Thursday 25th July 2024;
- *Friday 26th July 2024.

Following discussion, it was

resolved

that the governors **APPROVED** the Inset days.

FGB/43/23 **Report from training co-ordinator including a skills audit and review of governor training requirements (including safeguarding) for 2022/23**

Governors **AGREED** the following training had been completed or booked:

- DSL refresher training – Mrs Middleton;
- governor induction training – Cllr Turner;
- governor's guide to Ofsted – Cllr Turner.

On behalf of the training coordinator, the SBM shared that:

- no further governor training had been reported this term;
- everyone had been sent the governor training brochure;
- all governors who had requested training were booked onto courses;

All to note

- free training was available through 'The Key,' Em-EdS and National College.

FGB/44/23 Review of governor monitoring visit reports – key actions for governing body

Governors **AGREED** the following monitoring visits had taken place:

- extra-curricular activities – Mrs Middleton;
- phonics – Mrs Sparks.

The chair **REMINDED** governors to complete visit forms.

All to note

FGB/45/23 Health and Safety

The SBM notified governors that:

- an external health and safety audit had been conducted by NCC – there were no recommendations;
- there had been one RIDDOR reportable incident – **see confidential item**.

FGB/46/23 Policies

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

- emergency plan;
- probation policy;
- phonics policy.

FGB/47/23 Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, set by governors

Governors **AGREED** this item was to be discussed at the summer (2) term FGB meeting (19 July 2023).

**All to note
/Clerk**

FGB/48/23 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 and recruitment;
 - governor monitoring visits and training;
- discussion and questions relating to financial and budgetary considerations specifically:
 - capital expenditure projects and affordability;
 - availability of funding streams and uses;
- increased awareness and understanding through questions and discussion in relation to wrap-around care provision including:
 - the financial implications and the mitigation required to ensure success;
 - availability to disadvantaged pupils;
 - promotion, marketing and development of the provision;
- consideration and review of policies, Corporate Director report and the summer (1) term governor newsletter;
- questions and challenge around:
 - attendance and rewards;
 - health and safety and the mitigation of risk;
- consideration and discussion in relation to:
 - staffing matters and mobility;

- pupil numbers and the SATs experience;
- Ofsted and media reporting.

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

FGB/49/23 Confirmation of dates for 2022/23

The governing body

agreed

- Summer (2) Term 2023 – Wednesday 19th July 2023 at 4.00pm.

FGB/50/23 Confirmation of dates for 2023/24

The governing body

agreed

Autumn Term 2023

- Thursday 21st September 2023 (4.00pm) – FGB Meeting;
- 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;
- Thursday 28th March 2024 (4.00pm) – FGB Meeting

Summer Term 2024

- Thursday 16th May 2024 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting;
- Thursday 6th June 2024 (4.00pm) – F&P/Audit Committee;
- Thursday 18th July 2024 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting

FGB/51/23 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that there were seven confidential items and that the confidential sections of the following reports:

- spring (2) term FGB minutes;
- finance report and all associated financial 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:

(chair)

Date: **19th July 2023**