

MINUTES OF MEETING



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Academy: Sparken Hill Academy
Meeting title: Spring (1) term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Thursday 26th January 2023 at 9.30am
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
Mrs M Paton
Mrs K Phoenix
Mrs S Sparks
Mrs S Wichmann

In attendance

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

FGB/01/23	Apologies for absence	Action
	There were no apologies for absence.	
FGB/02/23	Declaration of interest	
	There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.	
FGB/03/23	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 partnership governor; • 1 x community governor.	
	The chair and principal informed governors that the induction process for the community governor vacancy had stalled.	
	Governors AGREED to pursue possible options for recruitment to the vacant position.	
FGB/04/23	Approval of minutes of autumn (2) term meetings and any additional special meetings	
	The minutes of the autumn (2) term meeting held on 8 th December 2022 having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true and correct record, therefore it was AGREED that the minutes of 8 December 2022 were to be signed electronically by the chair.	Chair/ Clerk

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

FGB/86/22 Terms and Conditions Proposal - see confidential item

FGB/05/23 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

Governors **AGREED** there had been no committee meetings since the last FGB meeting (8 December 2022).

FGB/06/23 Monitoring and Overseeing Financial Performance – financial reporting

The SBM reminded governors that the majority of the financial matters from the budget review were to be tabled at the finance and personnel committee (23 February 2023) however, she presented for governors' consideration and approval:

- the updated 2022-23 scheme of delegation which had aligned with the academy trust handbook;
- the completed school resource management self-assessment checklist (SRMSC);
- the admissions policy 2024-25.

Following discussion, it was

resolved

that governors **APPROVED**:

- the updated 2022-23 scheme of delegation;
- the SRMSC checklist for submission to the ESFA.

Furthermore, governors **CONFIRMED** that the 2024-25 admission arrangements had been determined, in line with the 2021 Schools Admissions Code, at the last FGB meeting (see item **FGB/88/22**).

Q. Governors asked about pupil numbers for September 2023 FAD?

A. The SBM reported that the numbers currently stood at 86 but preferences were unknown.

Governors **DISCUSSED** the complexities and challenges in navigating the new admissions system which had been implemented by the local authority.

FGB/07/23 After-School Club (wrap around care) - see confidential item

FGB/08/23 Consultation

The SBM alerted governors that upon return to school following the Christmas holidays, the ESFA had reviewed the schools' accounts based on the pre-Christmas conversations and requested:

- the consultation outcome;
- the revised forecast after the budget review.

The SBM believed this demonstrated that the ESFA were monitoring schools more closely – she confirmed that all necessary documentation had been submitted.

FGB/09/23 Confirm arrangements to review Child Protection and Safeguarding recording and reporting systems (CP safeguarding file audit)

The safeguarding governor **CONFIRMED** that she had visited the school (12 January 2023) when an SCR check and the confidential file audit had been conducted – the school was compliant, and her report had been written – she provided a short summary for governors.

Q. Governors enquired whether there were any actions from the visit?

A. The safeguarding governor advised that a few minor actions had been highlighted – the principal verified that the identified points had been resolved.

The principal drew governors' attention to the changes to KCSiE 2022 and the inclusion of low-level concerns – he informed governors of an addition to the CPOMS system called 'staff safe' which was very secure and allowed confidential notes to be added regarding adults working within the setting.

All to note

FGB/10/23 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

a *The Schools Bill and School Attendance*

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

- the Department for Education (DfE) were 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 were encouraged to commence data sharing this academic year;
- actions for governors.

The chair **CONFIRMED** that the school had worked tirelessly and invested financially in addressing the issue of attendance.

The principal notified governors that the school had always been an FFT Aspire school and shared the FFT Aspire Attendance Tracker data which showed:

- current whole school attendance = 91.9%
- current PA (persistent absence) = 30.1%

In addition, the FFT data was also communicated to 'Wonde' which meant less of an administrative burden on staff as the data was 'live.'

Furthermore, the principal alerted governors to:

- the significant increase in the amount of paperwork required by the LA for each child who was absent before legal action was taken;

- the recent advice from the LA which indicated a move away from fining and towards support and challenge.

Governors **DISCUSSED** the availability of 'Attend' training for key staff around anxiety related non-attendance (ARNA) and it was proposed that this be offered as a session at an upcoming Inset Day.

All to note

Governors **RECOGNISED** the robustness of the attendance system in place and were comfortable that the school had responded to the matter in a positive and constructive manner.

b *Harm Outside the Home Toolkit*

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

- 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;
- 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 children and young people had said and what schools and settings had reflected; whilst at the same time
 - ensuring it was purposeful across different contexts, different settings, and across counties;
- the toolkit was published on the Em-ed website and was to 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/>
- actions for governors.

FGB/11/23 Communication

a *From principal*

The principal advised governors of:

- the receipt of resignation letters (see **confidential item**);
- a parental email (see **confidential item**);
- a letter of thanks from the Worksop Society of Artists for the use of the school and a request to use the school hall again – governors **AGREED**.

b *From clerk – Governor Newsletter*

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

- an introduction from the new Governor Services Team Manager – Sinead Allan;
- an update from Peter McConnochie, NCC Service Director, Education, Learning and Inclusion including:

- information on the SEND review and new framework that comes into operation for local area reviews for children and young people with SEND;
- an update on the School's Bill;
- admission arrangements;
- HR updates which included advice regarding:
 - staffing reductions;
 - industrial action;
 - additional bank holidays; and
 - HR training opportunities;
- safeguarding updates;
- an article about apprenticeships which gave information about opportunities and funding arrangements for schools to access;
- national updates/articles with news from the DfE, Ofsted and the NGA;
- a message from the chair of NAGS, Jane Mansell;
- a School Governors' Awareness Day being celebrated on 28th February 2023 for governors to take part in if they so wished;
- governor recruitment – support for boards from the NGA (national governance association), Inspiring Governance and Governors for Schools
- governor learning and development updates - Spring Term 2023.

FGB/12/23 Report from training co-ordinator including a skills audit and review of governor training requirements (including safeguarding) for 2022/23

The SBM informed governors of the advice from the internal auditor that another governor (not the principal) undertook the role of training coordinator.

Governors **DETERMINED** that the final decision on the role be finalised at the next FGB meeting (28 March 2023).

**All to note
/Clerk**

The principal shared the staff training/workshops schedule which governors were invited to attend – anyone who wished to join the training was send an email to him.

All to note

FGB/13/23 Review of governor monitoring visit reports – key actions for governing body

Governors **AGREED** the following monitoring visits had taken place or were to be undertaken:

- F2/KS1 phonics – Mrs Sparks;
- health & safety – Mrs Carter;
- PE – Mrs Paton;
- safeguarding – Mrs Middleton;
- SEND – Mrs Sparks.

The principal outlined the PE assessment document (which was to be used as a template for all other subject areas) as an example of high-quality monitoring documentation.

FGB/14/23 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 governor training;
- discussion and questions relating to admissions and attendance in particular the systems and procedures in place e.g., FFT Aspire attendance tracker;
- 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;
 - the impact on staff working hours, training and support;
 - communication with parents;
- consideration and review of Corporate Directors reports and the spring term (1) governor newsletter;
- questions and discussion in relation to staffing matters and consultation outcomes;
- questions and challenge around finance and safeguarding.

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

FGB/14/23 Confirmation of dates for 2022/23

The governing body

agreed

- Spring (2) Term 2023 – Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 4.00pm
- Summer (1) Term 2023 – Thursday 18th May 2023 at 9.30am
- Summer (2) Term 2023 – Wednesday 19th July 2023 at 4.00pm

FGB/15/23 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

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

- autumn (2) term FGB minutes;
- finance report and all associated financial documentation;
- wraparound care presentation;
- governor monitoring visit reports;

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

The meeting closed at 11.30am



Signed:

(chair)

Date: **28th March 2023**