

MINUTES OF MEETING



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Academy: Sparken Hill Academy
Meeting title: Autumn (2) term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Thursday 8th December 2022 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
Mrs S Wichmann

In attendance

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

FGB/80/22 **Apologies for absence** **Action**
There were no apologies for absence.

FGB/81/22 **Declaration of interest**
Governors **CONFIRMED** they had all now ticked the relevant declaration and confirmation boxes under their profiles on Governor Hub.
Mrs Paton and Mrs Phoenix declared an interest in item **FGB/86/22**, and it was **DETERMINED** that they were to take no part in the voting at that point.
There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

FGB/82/22 **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.
The chair and principal informed governors that the induction process for Cllr N Turner was being arranged in addition to the collation of documentation to conduct the required checks.
Governors **AGREED** to pursue possible options for recruitment to the other vacant position.

		Action
FGB/83/22	Approval of minutes of summer term and autumn (1) term meetings and any additional special meetings The minutes of the summer term meeting held on 30th June 2022 having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true and correct record, therefore it was AGREED that the minutes of 30 June 2022 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. The minutes of the autumn (1) term meeting held on 22nd September 2022 having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true and correct record, therefore it was AGREED that the minutes of 22 September 2022 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 Chair/ Clerk
FGB/84/22	Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties Minutes of the following committees were RECEIVED and NOTED: • Finance & Personnel Committee (13 October 2022); • Audit Committee (13 October 2022); • Finance & Personnel Committee (24 November 2022); Actions in the minutes had been completed or continued to be in hand within the timescales indicated. a Finance & Personnel Committee Governors RECEIVED, NOTED and RATIFIED the following approvals from the F&P committee meetings: • pay progression recommendations (staff and principal); • application of teacher/support staff pay awards; • staffing requests; • staffing structure (support staff) – business case; • the annual accounts and report to trustees/governors 2021-22 which were to be presented to Members at the AGM (9th December 2022). b Audit Committee Governors RECEIVED, NOTED and RATIFIED the internal audit report approved at committee. c Policies Governors RECEIVED, NOTED and RATIFIED the following policies approved at committees: • alcohol & drug abuse (staff) policy; • anti-bullying policy; • finance policy; • lettings policy; • managing allegations (including low level concerns) policy; • no smoking policy; • risk management policy; • staff code of conduct;	All to note

- staff wellbeing policy.
- suspensions and permanent exclusion policy;
- whistleblowing policy.

In addition, governors **RECEIVED, NOTED** and **APPROVED** the following policies:

- appraisal policy;
- child protection policy;
- child on child abuse policy;
- pay policy.

FGB/85/22 Overseeing Financial Performance – financial reporting

The SBM provided a short summary of the discussions undertaken at the F&P committee meetings and highlighted the following key points:

- an outline of the contact from the ESFA regarding the:
 - financial plans of the academy;
 - actions to be taken;
 - future contact including feedback from the consultation;
- the budget review of 7 November 2022;
- detailed budget movement of income and expenditure;
- the 3-year forecast if:
 - no action was taken;
 - planned action was taken.

Governors **ACKNOWLEDGED** the:

- effective monitoring systems of the ESFA;
- swift and supportive response from the EFSA;
- continued budget monitoring required moving forward.

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

FGB/87/22 Holding executive leaders to account: summary of Principal's/Headteacher's report and governors' question and challenge

The principal drew governors' attention to the report previously circulated and highlighted the following key points:

- pupil numbers:
 - F2 currently stood at 58 with 3 new applications received;
 - higher year groups were oversubscribed;
 - numbers in Y6 were at its limit;
 - F1 - from January 2023:
 - there were 19 new starters anticipated (4 x 30-hours);
 - there would be 21 x 30-hour children;
- there were 19 distinct first languages other than English in the school;
- attendance:
 - whole school attendance stood at 93.3%;
 - persistent absence (PA) stood at 28% - no one group presented as worse than any other;
 - incentives were being re-introduced and working well;
 - penalty notices were being issued.

Q. Governors asked about F1 staffing ratios?

A. The deputy headteacher confirmed that there was a 'live' advert for a MDSA and an extra MDSA was covering lunchtime club as not all 30-hour children stayed every day.

Q. Governors enquired whether there had needed to be any changes to the F1 physical environment?

A. The deputy headteacher reassured governors there had been no changes – there were soft spaces available for sleep time.

Governors **DISCUSSED** the adaptations required to cater for the growing number of F1 children staying for 30-hours and **CONGRATULATED** the staff on the remarkable success of the provision.

In addition, the deputy headteacher and principal alerted governors to:

- the introduction of 2 x playgroup sessions in the spring term on a trial basis;
- the intention to consult with parents (after Christmas) to adopt the wraparound provision and offer 10 hours/week to support the children.

Q. Governors queried where the playgroup sessions were to be held?

A. The deputy headteacher advised that these were to be hosted in the hall.

Q. Governors questioned the feasibility of the wraparound?

A. The principal assured governors that the provision was chargeable and therefore the 10 hours cover was not off the school budget bottom line – a business model would be in operation.

Q. Governors asked whether the financial aim of the wraparound provision was to be cost neutral?

A. The principal confirmed that overall, the aim was for the provision to be cost neutral.

Q. Governors enquired whether fining had reduced term-time holidays?

A. The principal shared that some families were factoring in the fine and still going on holiday in term-time.

The principal continued with his summary report which included that:

- there had been no suspensions since the last report;
- **see confidential item;**
- anti-bullying week had been held;
- amendments to the SEND register and protocol had been completed;
- **see confidential item;**
- the school had applied to conduct a self-audit to achieve an inclusion quality mark;
- progress had been made re. zig-zag lines, car-parking issues;
- staffing – **see confidential item;**
- parental consultation meetings went well.

Governors **THANKED** the principal for his report and his responses to their questions.

FGB/88/22 To review

a Admissions

Governors **RECEIVED, NOTED** and **APPROVED** the admissions policy 2024-25 and the admission arrangements for 2024-25 were determined in line with the School Admissions Code 2021.

b School Improvement Plan

The principal reported that progress against the SIP was going well and major pieces of work underway included:

- improving the delivery of history and geography;
- consolidation of a new mathematics scheme (Pearson Power Maths) which was based upon a "Mastery" (White Rose) approach;
- migration of planning from the network to Google Classroom and attempting to raise staff confidence in its use.

Furthermore, the principal shared that after Christmas, a fresh approach to the CPD offer was to be trialled and governors were invited to attend training events.

All to note

Q. Governors queried whether the history CPD training had been externally provided?

A. The principal concurred that this had been the case.

Q. Governors questioned whether staff meetings were to continue after Christmas given the new CPD approach?

A. The principal clarified that the current approach was a weekly meeting which alternated between staff and team meetings – moving forward the format was to make greater use of memos for staff meetings, linked to the new CPD offer.

Q. Governors asked about the team meetings?

A. The principal agreed that team meetings were to focus on the re-establishment of an efficient and effective monitoring and feedback system with oversight provided by himself where necessary.

FGB/89/22 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 and the appraisal meeting had been held and targets set for 2022-23.

Governors **AGREED** that discussion about the appointment of appraisal governors had been undertaken at the F&P committee (see item **F&P/44/22**) and it was **ratified**

that:

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

The principal shared that:

- all staff targets for 2021/22 had been reviewed;
- new 2022/23 targets for teachers had been set – the targets aligned with SIP targets;

- all pay recommendations (including that of the principal) had been approved (see item **F&P/37/22** and **F&P/44/22**) and ratified (see item **FGB/84/22**).

FGB/90/22 Safeguarding information for consideration and action

The principal informed governors that:

- the community team had been highly successful in regaining and initiating relationships within the school community and in particular with some of the most vulnerable families;
- vulnerability meetings were held termly;
- further online safeguarding training was completed by all staff;
- the 3-year training had been booked for staff, to be undertaken next year;
- the NCC NSCB safeguarding audit had been completed alongside the safeguarding governor in November 2022 – it had highlighted good practice within the logging system CPOMs.

All to note

The chair **REQUESTED** that:

- any outstanding governors safeguarding training must be completed by 20th December 2022 to ensure compliance with the NCC safeguarding audit;
- all governors were to update their profile on Governor Hub once the training was accomplished.

All to note

Q. Governors enquired about vulnerability meetings?

A. The principal outlined the premise of the meetings which identified the support for each family, and the RAG rating system. In addition, he explained that the conversations undertaken provided:

- a good understanding of what was being done; and
- reassurance that the families were being fully supported.

Q. Governors queried whether the school had found a greater need in families just above the FSM threshold?

A. The principal agreed that this was the case and believed that this pattern would continue irrespective of the threshold. He added that the role of the community team was early intervention - to try to identify and support these families before social care involvement.

FGB/91/22 Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, set by governors

Governors **AGREED** for this item be deferred to the spring term FGB

All to note
/Clerk

FGB/92/22 General Data Protection Regulations - Receive report from Data Protection Officer and Information Governance governor

The SBM reported that:

- a new DPO service had been purchased this year;
- consent to receive communications had been issued in September 2022;
- the staff privacy notice had been updated and sent to staff (Dec 2022);
- the parent & pupil privacy notice had been updated on the academy website and communicated to parents;
- there had been no breaches, Fols or SARs since September 2021.

FGB/93/22 Communication

a *From principal*

The principal advised governors of:

- the receipt of resignation letters (see **confidential item**);
- staffing requests (see **confidential item**);
- a letter from the UK health security agency re. Strep A and scarlet fever – see **confidential item**.

b *From clerk – Governor Newsletter*

The clerk drew attention to the content of the second 2022 autumn term edition of the Nottinghamshire Governor e-newsletter and highlighted the following items:

- safeguarding updates re KCSiE changes which included training for governors;
- the annual self-audit tool 2022/23 to be completed by the **20 December 2022**;
- an article about the 'Tackling Emerging Threats to Children' (TETC) team's resources;
- an admissions update - including requirements for own admissions authority schools;
- HR and school finance updates;
- national updates:
 - Ofsted inspection framework handbooks;
 - updated DfE publications;
 - changes to school attendance guidance and statutory regulations;
- message from chair of NAGS: includes information regarding:
 - the new network sessions for Chair's and New to Governance;
 - pupil competition – "environmental sustainability" prizes for the winning schools;
 - the governor conference – **Saturday 4th March 2023**;
- NGA documentation:
 - a guide to joining or forming a MAT;
 - updates and tools;
- governor termly briefings;
- an article explaining about:
 - private fostering arrangements;
 - being an effective chair of governors;
- Governor Hub update;
- governor learning and development opportunities.

FGB/94/22 **Report from training co-ordinator including a skills audit and review of governor training requirements (including safeguarding) for 2022/23**

Governors **DETERMINED** that training still needed to be undertaken around:

- safeguarding – 2 x governors were still to complete this training;
- cyber training – 2 x governors were still to complete this training.

All to note

In addition, 2 x governors still needed to read (and confirm on Governor Hub) KCSiE 2022.

All to note

The principal requested governors:

- send him certificates for any training completed;
- considered volunteering for safer recruitment training.

All to note

The clerk drew governors' attention to the availability of 'managing allegations training' which had recently been updated and dates released by the LA.

FGB/95/22 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:

- health & safety – Mrs Carter;
- F2/KS1 phonics – Mrs Sparks;
- SEND – Mrs Sparks.

FGB/96/22 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, governor monitoring visits and governor training;
- discussion and questions relating to admissions and pupil numbers in particular the success of the nursery provision, wraparound care options and staffing ratios;
- increased awareness and understanding through questions and discussion in relation to financial and staffing matters such as:
 - the impact of the teacher and support staff pay awards on the budget and the mitigation required to maintain a healthy financial position
 - the impact of the T&C proposal on wellbeing and morale;
 - the support in place for all staff during the challenging period;
- consideration and discussion relating to GDPR, pay and appraisal;
- consideration and review of policies and the governor newsletter;
- questions and discussion in relation to safeguarding and support for families and vulnerable children;
- questions and challenge around pupil attendance, staff absence and progress against the SIP priorities.

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

FGB/97/22 Confirmation of dates for 2022/23

The governing body

agreed

- Spring (1) Term 2023 – Thursday 26th January 2023 at 9.30am
- 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/98/22 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

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

- summer term FGB minutes;
- autumn (1) term FGB minutes;
- committee minutes;
- finance report and all associated financial documentation;
- principal's report and associated documentation;
- governor monitoring visit reports;

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

The meeting closed at 6.20pm.



Signed:

(chair)

Date: **26th January 2023**