

MINUTES OF MEETING



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Academy: Sparken Hill Academy
Meeting title: Autumn (1) term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Thursday 22nd September 2022 at 9.30am
Location: At the academy

Membership

'A' denotes absence

A Mrs V Brooks
Mrs D Carter
A Mrs M Cutts
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/55/22 Apologies for absence

Action

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs V Brooks (personal).

It was

resolved

that the above apology for absence be accepted and consented to.

Governors also welcomed the new clerk and the new staff governor to the meeting.

FGB/56/22 Declaration of interest

All governors **CONFIRMED** that they had:

- reviewed and signed the declaration of interest form and eligibility form;
- read, understood and signed the school governors' code of conduct.

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

Mrs K Phoenix and Mrs M Paton declared an interest in item **FGB/65/22** on the agenda. It was determined that these governors would leave the meeting for this item. Consequently, governors **AGREED** for the item to be moved to the end of the agenda.

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

FGB/57/22

Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months

The principal alerted governors to receipt of a letter of resignation from Mrs M Cutts (community governor) with immediate effect. Governors **THANKED** Mrs Cutts for her valuable contributions to the governing body over the period of her tenure.

In addition, the principal reassured governors that Mrs Cutts remained one of the Academy Trust Members

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

- Mr P Gawthorpe (partnership governor) - 31 October 2022.

Mr Gawthorpe indicated his willingness to stand for reappointment.

Mr Gawthorpe left the meeting at 9.38am

Governors **NOTED** and **DISCUSSED** the skills, expertise and benefits of Mr Gawthorpe's continued membership and it was

resolved

that governors **APPROVED** the reappointment of Mr Gawthorpe as a partnership governor with effect from 31st October 2022.

Mr Gawthorpe re-joined the meeting at 9.40am

The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body:

- 1 x community governor;
- 1 x partnership governor.

The chair and principal informed governors of an expression of interest received from Cllr N Turner for the position of community governor. Following discussion, it was

resolved

that governors **APPROVED** the appointment of Cllr N Turner as a community governor subject to satisfactory completion of all relevant documentation and statutory checks.

Governors **AGREED** to pursue possible options for recruitment to the other vacant position.

FGB/58/22

Determination of term of office for chair and vice-chair

In line with the articles of association, governors **DETERMINED** the term of office for both positions as one year.

FGB/59/22

Election of chair

Mr Gawthorpe indicated that he would be prepared to stand for the position of chair.

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 2023 autumn term meeting.

Action

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

FGB/60/22 Election of vice-chair

Mrs Middleton indicated that she would be prepared to stand for the position of vice-chair.

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 2023 autumn term meeting.

Clerk

FGB/61/22 Approval of minutes of summer term meeting and any additional special meetings

Due to the changes in clerking arrangements, governors **AGREED** that the minutes of the summer term be reviewed and approved at the autumn (2) meeting.

Clerk

Governors **RECEIVED, NOTED** and **APPROVED** the 2022-23 Scheme of Delegation.

FGB/62/22 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

All governors **CONFIRMED** that there had been no committee meetings held since the summer term FGB meeting (30 June 2022).

The principal reported that the child protection/safeguarding policy was to be submitted for approval to the FP&A committee meeting (13 October 2022).

All to note
/Clerk**FGB/63/22 Update on Education White Paper**

The chair **SHARED** the two related documents with governors:

- 'Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child';
- overview of government expectations.

In addition, the chair highlighted:

- the main implication for governors - the push for all schools to move from maintained and/or stand-alone status to become part of a MAT;
- previous conversation to hold a FGB meeting with a single agenda item to discuss the matter.

All to note

The principal outlined the vulnerabilities which may have informed the paper, such as the shrinking LA capacity and the tightening of financial systems. In order to research options available to the academy, he and the chair had attended briefings by the LA and the Church of England Diocese.

The principal advised caution and patience and alerted governors to some recent developments, contacts and conversations with the RSC (regional schools commissioner) which may provide alternative options for consideration.

The chair **SUMMARISED** the 3 options facing governors:

- do nothing and be done unto;
- join a MAT;
- explore the establishment of a MAT.

All to note

Both the chair and principal recommended that in preparation for exploring the options fully:

- a meeting was arranged to discuss the white paper implications;

- the SBM emailed to all governors, copies of both documents to ensure everyone was fully prepared and able to attend the meeting with a list of questions.

All to note

Following discussion, a meeting was agreed for Wednesday 30th November 2022 (4.00pm) at the academy.

All to note

Q. Governors asked about the timeline for a decision/action?

A. The chair and vice-chair reassured governors that there were still several years before the proposed deadline given in the white paper, and the process, whichever path was chosen, was also complex and necessarily time-consuming.

FGB/64/22 Staffing update – see confidential item

Mrs Norton Allen left the meeting at 10.19am

FGB/65/22 Overseeing Financial Performance – Financial reporting

As discussed under item **FGB/56/22** this item was moved to the end of the agenda for consideration as a **confidential item**

FGB/66/22 HMRC – PAYE audit outcome

The SBM notified governors that:

- the academy had been selected at random for a PAYE audit by HMRC;
- the process had been complex and time consuming;
- the outcome had been received over the summer;
- the HMRC inspector had reported that:
“...you have very good policies and procedures in place. As there are no outstanding matters, I am closing my review.”

The SBM shared that the outcome provided significant reassurance that the processes, policies and procedures in place were thorough and rigorous. She extended her thanks to the whole team for the hard work and support during the audit.

Governors **ACKNOWLEDGED** the hard work and effort of the SBM and her team and **CONGRATULATED** everyone on the positive outcome of the audit.

FGB/67/22 Disposals/Write off request

The SBM presented the following items for write off:

- PE kit V1 (white logo t-shirt) - £56.00
- PE kit V2 (Zeon game top & over top) - £6931.93

Governors undertook a brief conversation about uniform which covered the pros and cons of personalising clothing items.

Q. Governors enquired whether the personalised tops were re-useable?

A. The principal confirmed that they were and detailed the process by which the clothing could be re-used.

Q. Governors queried the positioning of the initials and the rationale?

A. The SBM explained that it was to prevent any potential GDPR issues.

Q. Governors questioned the time needed to personalise each top if done in-house?

A. The staff governor clarified that it was a straightforward process which could be completed on PE day.

The principal added that it was his intention to write to parents about uniform.

Following the discussion, governors **APPROVED** the items presented, for write off.

FGB/68/22 To review

a Examination results

The principal drew governors' attention to the following summary data dashboards, recently released by the LA:

- early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP) 2022;
- phonics 2022;
- key stage 1 (KS1) 2022;
- key stage 2 (KS2) 2022.

The principal provided an overview of the data which included:

- clarification that these were the first formal sets of data since 2019;
- an explanation of the rankings and quintiles;
- the findings from an objective assessment of the teaching of phonics and the progress made following the instigation of an action plan;
- the impact of work undertaken in relation to the Nuffield catch-up scheme;
- targets and the expected growth of phonics next year;
- the excellent progress scores at KS2 – a testament to the hard work of everyone in the academy;
- the changes in mathematics attainment which coincided with the introduction of mastery.

Outcomes

- EYFS – achieved 51.4% GLD which was the second highest result in 10 years and reflected an improving trend especially considering the pandemic impact;
- phonics:
 - Y1 – 62.2% of pupils passed their phonics check;
 - Y2 – 47.4% of pupils passed the phonics re-check;
 - Y2 – 84.8% of pupils in total met the required standard;
- key stage 1:
 - reading – 50.7% of pupils achieved ARE;
 - writing – 49.3% of pupils achieved ARE;
 - mathematics – 50.7% of pupils achieved ARE;
 - attainment showed:
 - a drop in reading compared to historical data; and
 - broadly in line in writing and mathematics;
 - progress showed improvement;
- key stage 2:
 - GPS – 68.8% of pupils achieved ARE (the highest GPS score ever) with 16.3% GD;
 - reading – 70% of pupils achieved ARE, with 22.5% GD;
 - mathematics – 70% of pupils achieved ARE, with 22.5% GD;

- writing (TA) – 70% of pupils achieved ARE, with 23.8% GD;
- combined – 56.3% of pupils achieved ARE, with 8.8% GD;
- progress was excellent.

Q. Governors asked about the interventions in place for Y2 pupils who had not met the required standard?

A. The principal reassured governors that the Y2 received interventions twice a day.

Q. Governors enquired about considerations to ‘push on’ the attainment in future years?

A. The principal explained that when looking at SIP targets, the two points of reference were FFT (Fischer family trust) and the quintiles on the summary dashboards.

b Admissions

The principal alerted governors to the position regarding admissions and shared that:

- as predicted by the LA, the F2 numbers were low – this had presented the opportunity to maximise staffing capacity;
- the new admissions portal was problematic and challenging;
- in almost all year groups, there was a waiting list.

Q. Governors queried whether there was a legal limit to numbers?

A. The principal explained that:

- KS1 was bound by ICS (infant class size) legislation;
- technically there was no limit to class size in KS2 though net capacity limited pupil numbers per sqm³.

c Draft School Improvement Plan

The principal confirmed that the SIP was still at draft level though almost complete, with areas of focus including humanities and art.

FGB/69/22 Update on appraisal process for principal and staff including an update on the wellbeing of all staff

The chair **ADVISED** governors that the principal’s appraisal meeting had been undertaken and targets set.

The principal shared that:

- now his targets had been determined it was possible to filter the main themes through to the rest of the staff;
- staff had undertaken preliminary work to review and set targets and schedule appraisal meetings.

Q. Governors questioned whether staff potentially eligible to move through the threshold, had been factored into the budget?

A. The principal verified that this had been actioned, described the tight system in place in relation to threshold progression and reminded governors that it was incumbent upon staff to collect the required evidence to qualify for consideration to move from MPG (main pay grade) to UPS (upper pay scale).

The chair **ALERTED** governors to the need for an additional governor to access headteacher appraisal training and become one of the headteacher appraisal governors moving forward – the NCC training schedule had been uploaded to

Action

Governor Hub and headteacher appraisal training courses were available for governors to book onto – anyone who was interested should contact the chair and book onto the training.

All to note

FGB/70/22 RPA – cyber protection conditions

The SBM notified governors that the RPA team had informed the academy that to offer the cyber cover, the academy needed to meet the following four categories:

- the academy must ensure there are online backups available – this had been actioned;
- all employees and governors who had access to the Member's information and technology system must undertake NCSC Cyber Security Training – this related to everyone so a link had been provided;
- the academy must register with Police Cyber Alarm – this had been actioned;
- the academy must have a Cyber Response Plan in place – this was included in disaster recovery plan (the DfE Cyber plan template had been used).

All to note

The SBM requested that all governors completed the training as soon as possible, email the certificates to her so that this could be confirmed at the next FGB meeting (8 December 2022).

**All to note
/Clerk**

FGB/71/22 Academies Handbook 2022

The SBM confirmed that the handbook and a summary of changes had been sent to all governors.

Governors **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the academies handbook and summary.

FGB/72/22 Policies for review

Governors **RECEIVED**, **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the following policies, subject to the agreed amendments, for ratification at the FGB meeting (8 December 2022):

- capability policy for support staff;
- capability policy for teachers;
- complaints policy;
- data protection policy;
- disaster recovery plan (including cyber plan);
- disciplinary policy;
- ECT policy;
- health and safety policy;
- relationships and behaviour regulation policy.

Clerk

FGB/73/22 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

a Place Planning

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

- local authority statutory responsibility to ensure that sufficient school places were available to meet the needs of their local school aged child population;
- following the strategic school place planning workshops in April for schools, the report provided all governors with confirmation that the birth rate

continues to decline and that many schools over the coming 5 years may need to plan for a reduction in their school population;

- important actions for governors related to the responsibility to fulfil their statutory duties in ensuring that the strategic and financial planning for the school was conducted effectively;
- background information about how the LA produced projections and the methodology used;
- an outline of the legal basis of the LA responsibility.

b *School Teachers Pay Award, School Pay Policy, Appraisal Policy, Safer Working (recruitment and selection) and other information.*

The clerk provided a summary of the content of the report and highlighted information in relation to:

- teachers pay award September 2022 which summarised:
 - the proposals for 2022/23 and 2023/24;
 - funding;
 - performance related pay progression;
 - teachers pay timeline
- support staff pay award, effective from 1 April 2022;
- school pay policy, toolkit and guidance 2022;
- school appraisal policy and guidance updates 2022;
- updates to recruitment and selection safer working documents 2022;
- school employee code of conduct;
- Nottinghamshire school disciplinary procedure: part 2 - managing safeguarding risks and allegations/concerns of harm and abuse made against all school staff;
- school induction policy;
- training opportunities;
- actions for governors.

FGB/74/22 Communication

a *From principal*

The principal advised governors of:

- the receipt of resignation letters (see item **FGB/64/22**);
- further communication re. the painting of yellow lines outside of the school;
- potential parking options for the future;
- the donation of a brand-new 70" UHD Samsung television, won in a competition, from the grandparents of a pupil.

b *From clerk – Governor Newsletter*

The clerk drew attention to the content of the first 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**;
- updated complaints policy:
 - governors were advised to adopt this in full and publish on school website;
 - a comprehensive toolkit will be made available as part of governor

- services advice and guidance (A&G) package;
- an admissions update - including requirements for own admissions authority schools;
- governor termly briefings were replacing heads and chairs briefings;
- national updates:
 - requirement to publish school uniform policy;
 - requirement to publish school opening hours on website;
- proposed changes to school funding (National Funding Formula);
- governor services - revised documents:
 - declaration of interest and the register of interest (summary);
 - website compliance checklists were now available as part of the A&G package;
- 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 guide to joining or forming a MAT;
- 'No planet B' – The Church of England proposal to be net zero carbon by 2030 and the invitation to other schools to join them on this journey;
- governor vacancies – Education Trust Board and Early Years & Schools Forum;
- supporting and celebrating governance:
 - NGA film – 'Visible Governance' campaign;
 - Dave Hill – 50 years of governance;
- governor learning and development opportunities.

FGB/75/22

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

The principal reminded governors of the requirement to:

- complete the online safeguarding training – the principal agreed to forward the link to everyone;
- read KCSiE 2022 and confirm by ticking the declaration under governors' profile tab on Governor Hub.

RL

All to note

Q. Governors enquired whether the online safeguarding course was mandatory if the staff school-based safeguarding training had been undertaken?

A. The principal and chair confirmed that the online training was not mandatory if the annual staff safeguarding course had been completed.

In addition, the principal agreed to email out the skills audit for completion by governors and inform any training requirements moving forward.

All to note

FGB/76/22

Review of governor monitoring visit reports – key actions for governing body

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

- health & safety – Mrs Carter.

Governors also **COMMENDED** Mrs Carter on the quality of the visit undertaken and the report submitted

FGB/77/22 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 safeguarding training;
- discussion and questions relating to admissions and pupil numbers in particular the implications of a declining birth rate;
- increased awareness and understanding through questions and discussion in relation to exam analysis: EYFS, phonics, KS1 and KS2 and progress data;
- consideration and discussion relating to GDPR, RPA and cyber security arrangements;
- consideration and review of policies, Corporate Director's reports and the governor newsletter;
- questions and discussion in relation to the staffing matters and appraisal;
- discussion, questions and consideration in relation to financial matters in particular the impact of the teacher and support staff pay awards on the budget and the mitigation required to maintain a healthy financial position;
- consideration and questions relating to the Education White Paper and the implications for the academy.

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

FGB/78/22 Confirmation of dates for 2022/23

The governing body

agreed

- Autumn (2) Term 2022 – Thursday 8th December 2022 at 4:00 pm
- 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

Mrs Paton and Mrs Phoenix left the meeting at 11.20am

Governors **DISCUSSED** item **FGB/65/22** as a **confidential item**

FGB/79/22 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

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

- summer term FGB minutes;
- finance report and all associated financial documentation;
- data report and all linked paperwork;
- RPA report;
- governor monitoring visit reports;

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

The meeting closed at 12.20pm.



Signed:

(chair)

Date: **8th December 2022**

School Display Copy

School Display Copy