

# Meadowside Community Primary School - Local Governing Board

## Minutes of the Meeting Held on 1.12.2022

**Present:** Phil Calrow (Chair), Stuart Wright, Adrian Burrows, Jenny Gill, Alan Manuel, Nicola Whyte

**Apologies:** Sarah Dixon, Gareth Harris, Kerry Woods

**In Attendance:** David Clay, Dr. Carsten Kressel

*The meeting was held remotely, via Teams.*

### **Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Sarah Dixon, Gareth Harris and Kerry Woods.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of personal or pecuniary interest in the matters to be discussed were made.

### **Governing Board**

#### ***Governor Training***

No training information had been received.

#### ***Membership***

Mrs. Murray's team of office had ended in November.

Mr. Wright reported that membership of SLT members was discussed at the recent trust business meeting. It was decided that SLT members, who are governors in addition to an elected staff governor, should become associate governors. In keeping with this decision, governors **appointed** Mr. Manuel as an associate governor.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13.10.2022 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record.

### **Matters Arising / Action Log**

The actions from the last meeting had been completed as follows: -

- Action 1 - All governors had accessed and completed Safeguarding training.
- Action 2 - A skills audit had been completed.

Dr. Kressel explained the key findings and areas for development that had been identified in the skills audit: -

- Risk management - Mr. Wright explained that the trust was introducing a score card for the business side of governance, the school's financial health, premises, Health & Safety, and to allow comparison with other trust schools. These score cards will be used in

addition to the score cards for educational outcomes. The card was on the agenda for consideration later in the meeting.

- Succession planning - Governors considered and **agreed** to chair future meetings on a rotation in order to broaden chairing experience.
- Stakeholder engagement - The governor action plan is addressing this issue.
- Headteacher's performance management - Training can be arranged. Mrs. Gill would be interested.

Mr. Wright reported that the trust recommended that governors should undertake Safer Recruitment training. Ms Whyte and Mrs. Gill would be interested.

**Action 1:** Ms Whyte and Mrs. Gill to undertake Safer Recruitment training.

**Action 2:** Organise headteacher performance management training for Mrs. Gill.

## Governance Action Plan

The governance action plan was uploaded.

## Finance

Mrs. Gill had visited the school to review finance and submitted a report that was uploaded. They reviewed the budget up to period 2. She highlighted the following points: -

- All schools in the trust have a 3-5% reserve target relative to their budget. Meadowside has 4.1%. Currently, the school has an in-year surplus of £14.3k.
- The rental for the Polish school was agreed, and £9.5k was paid up-front.
- Funding from the national tutoring programme was received.
- Nursery income has increased.
- The pay increase for support staff was higher than anticipated and exceeded the accrual that was made for this purpose.
- Overtime will be included.
- Admin expenditure has reduced since Mrs. Lowe's departure.
- Caring income is being broken down, as well as staff costs for wrap-around care. This will allow monitoring of viability of the different provisions.
- A significant part of the budget for learning resources was spent at the beginning of the year, in keeping with the usual profile .
- A leak needed to be repaired, causing unforeseen expenditure.
- The cost of David Clay's SENDCo training still needed to be included.
- Challenge was offered in respect of the recording of the pay increases in the accounts. Mrs. Gill confirmed that they were accounted for in the forecast.
- Expenditure - The benchmarking tool on the gov.uk website shows that the school is in line with similar local schools. - This finding was confirmed by the score card.
- The school is in a robust position. No deficits are forecast.

Mr. Wright shared the following information with governors: -

The Academy Trust Handbook was shared with governors.

The outturn for 2021/22 was received earlier in the day. Initially, the school showed an in-year surplus of £102k at the end of the academic year. Following the pay award for JNC staff that was

back-dated to 1.4.2023, it has been reduced by £18k, to £84,752. This outcome was close to predictions. Taken together with the balance of £69.1k from the previous year, it gives a total reserve of £153k.

### ***Budget 2022/23***

Mr. Wright also shared a budget update until the end of October: -

- Recovery premium and school-led tutoring funding is higher than anticipated, but it needs to be spent in-year, within tightly constrained eligibility criteria.
- Staff pay - The support staff increase is affecting the budget significantly. Teacher pay also needs to be monitored. The pay increases were welcomed and felt to be deserved, despite their impact on the budget. Going forward, the budget may need to be adjusted.
- Expenditure on resources is as anticipated.
- Energy costs are monitored closely.

## **Premises, Health & Safety**

### ***Health & Safety Audit***

Two audits were carried out, one by Adele Partridge, a Health & Safety consultant, another by the RPA. An action plan was devised in response, as shared with governors. The majority of actions has already been completed, those highlighted in yellow are in progress. Mr. Wright highlighted the following key points: -

- Fire doors - Advice is sought whether they need to be replaced or existing ones can be upgraded.
- A risk management action plan is being produced.
- A bomb evacuation policy is in the process of being drafted.
- COSHH - The school is compliant. That compliance is being validated.
- Asbestos and legionella management training is being organised by the trust.
- Hot water heaters under classroom sinks may need to be removed, as it is too expensive to replace them, and they are not required.
- Manual handling training is being organised on I Am Compliant.
- Electrical isolator switches in the dining room are in-hand.
- In future, five areas of evidence will be sampled every month.

Minutes from the Health & Safety team meeting were uploaded.

### ***Maintenance***

- The cost of reactive maintenance already amounts to £8k, out of a budget of £10k for the full year. It is hoped that no more expensive emergency repairs will be needed. In the meantime, all maintenance activities have to be authorised individually by Mr. Wright.
- An underground leak needed to be identified and repaired. This work included asbestos removal.
- A roof leak on the main corridor needed to be repaired.
- The entrance barrier to the car park is prone to defects and causes expensive repair bills. A better long-term solution would be an electric gate, but this would be prohibitively

expensive for the school at present. A bid will be made to the trust. In priority rankings, the gate will be prioritised after children's toilets.

### ***Helping Hands***

The trust has agreed to the building work to adapt space for Helping Hands going ahead. Apart from facilitating the work of that organisation, it will make the space more lettable in principle.

### ***Outdoor Space***

The specification for the project is being put together. The work is due to start at half-term.

### ***Roof***

Part of the roof has been replaced. Other parts remain to be replaced in future stages.

## **Safeguarding**

Ms Whyte had met with Alison Stokes to discuss Safeguarding. She reported that the school had started to add children with extreme behavioural needs to the vulnerable risk register. She also reported that Early Help appears to be successful; all children, whose families are in receipt, are in Year 3 and below. This shows the success of the Early Help and Safeguarding work. Parent and toddler group can be used as a vehicle to invite in representatives of support services, who can meet with the adults. The greatest need appears to exist in respect of parenting and behaviour.

Absence was reviewed. The register of persistent absentees was reviewed, and 18 children were identified, where more work is required.

Mr. Wright stated that attendance and persistent absence are on the priority action plan (PAP). The team is very persistent in promoting good attendance and tackling persistent absence. Attendance is 94.3% (94.7% without Reception class), in line with national (94.6%). Persistent absence is lower than last year. Attendance of children with EHCPs is lower, often reflecting underlying health issues and the need to attend medical appointments.

## **Behaviour**

Mr. Wright reported that a one-day suspension had been necessary for one child. The school works with the family. A behaviour plan is in place.

Behaviour-related incidents occur more in the playground than in the classroom. This is the reason for the planned outdoor development, to give the children more meaningful opportunities to occupy themselves during breaks and lunchtimes.

The number of red and blue letters that needed to be sent has reduced.

**Governors asked** if there had been any feedback from outreach groups. Mr. Wright answered that the figures were positive. - Ms Whyte agreed to visit outreach groups.

**Action 3:** Ms Whyte to visit outreach groups.

Staff have received attachment and trauma training.

The Behaviour Policy will be reviewed carefully, in light of training and also in consultation with school council.

## **GDPR**

Nothing reported.

## **Staffing & HR**

Mr. Wright reported the following staffing developments: -

- Gemma Murphy was appointed as a new MDA.
- Becky Geoghan was appointed as admin support. She has worked in that role since Donna Lowe left at half-term. The position was advertised at a lower grade than when Donna Lowe was in post, due to the lower level of demand on the role, reflecting strong central support from the trust centre.
- Alicia Kirkham was promoted to a lead role on grade 5. Her general talent has been identified.
- Mrs. Barter reduced her working commitment to 50% teacher and 50% as a HLTA in the summer. More recently, she has worked four days per week teacher and one day as a HLTA. This arrangement is subject to review.
- Mrs. Woods and Sammy are training as senior mental health support leaders. The cost of training one of them is met by the DfE, with the school paying for the training of the other.
- Kitchen staff are now employed directly by the trust.

## **PAP Score Card**

Mr. Wright introduced the PAP Scorecard . The scorecard starts with an overview of the context: The school has 54% boys, which has an impact on teaching and learning. 19.8% of the children are classed as EAL.

A summary action tracker gives an overview of identified actions, with target dates where applicable: -

- Response to the Health & Safety and RPA audits
- Training requirements
- Progress of the Helping Hands project
- GDPR training from RPA - Not requested for governors yet.
- Governance - Regular update of information on Governor Hub
- Website - Regular audit and update.
- Finance - Information on staffing ratios.

The score card benchmarks also records the following categories: -

- Key financial information. In this context, staffing ratios were benchmarked by the trust. Mr. Wright explained that the school has fewer children per adult and per teacher. Therefore, the contact ratio is also lower. This reflects the context of high needs due to the DP and nursery. It is queried regularly, and the explanation is accepted.

- HR information includes the head count, absence, feedback (take-up of the most recent staff survey was low), two long-term absences; safer recruitment for governors.
- Accidents - Over-reporting on I Am Compliant was investigated and has reduced. In the current year, three accidents were reported. That figure is in line with trust expectations.
- Estates management - The school has received significant investment totalling £1.654m since becoming an academy, including £1m from the RPA for the repair of flood damage; further income from the RPA for replacement of flood-damaged learning resources is anticipated.
- The trust is applying for funding to install sustainable heating in all its schools. This would help to improve the heating system in the school and make it more economical.
- GDPR - Low level of breaches. Staff training will be useful.
- Complaints - None.
- Website audit.

This score card will be made available every term in future.

**Action 4:** *Establish if governors should complete RPA cyber security training.*

## **Admission Arrangements 2024/25**

Admission arrangements for 2024/25 were **agreed** without change. Children, who attend the nursery, have been given priority for admission to Reception class from last year.

## **Policy Review**

Governors **agreed** the following policies: -

- Administration of Medicines Policy December 2022
- Anti-Bullying Policy December 2022
- Charging and Remissions Policy December 2022
- Exclusions and Appeals Policy December 2022-23
- Meadowside Determined Admission Arrangements 2024/25
- Online Safety Policy December 2022-23

A Risk Policy and a Lettings Policy are being prepared by the trust.

Mr. Wright made governors aware of the Academy Trust Handbook.

## **Any Other Business**

Governors noted the following matters: -

- IQM - Flagship status was retained for the third year running.
- The TCAT Review of education at Meadowside was positive.
- TCAT have published a Sway document for the termly governor training. Governors were asked to access it and complete the training. The notification with the link was on the Governor Hub messages.

- Mr. Wright has resigned with effect from the end of the spring term, to move to a larger school. Recruitment of a new headteacher is in progress. It is planned to appoint the new headteacher in January. **Governors asked** the following questions: -
  - What would happen if no-one was appointed? - Answer: The trust would need to make arrangements.
  - Is this a usual time to leave a school and change headteacher positions? - Answer: Changes can happen throughout the year.
- The library will be reopened on 6.12.2022 with a high-profile launch event.

**Action 5:** *Governors to access and complete the Sway governor training document.*

## Date and Time of the Next Meeting

9.2.2023, 4 pm

## Action Log - October 2022

No.	Description	Responsible
1	<i>Ms Whyte and Mrs. Gill to undertake Safer Recruitment training.</i> <b>Action 2:</b>	Ms Whyte / Mrs. Gill
2	<i>Organise headteacher performance management training for Mrs. Gill.</i>	Mr. Wright
3	<i>Ms Whyte to visit outreach groups.</i>	Ms Whyte
4	<i>Establish if governors should complete RPA cyber security training.</i>	Mr. Wright
5	<i>Access and complete the Sway governor training document.</i>	Governors