

**ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY**

**LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

**HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 25 JANUARY 2017 AT 9.00AM**

**Present:** Nigel Whittle (Chair), Sofiya Patel, Enid Cathcart, Nazida Patel, Angela Stephens and Jo Atherton (Principal).

**In attendance:** Andrew Cooper (CEO), Sharon Weaver (Deputy Principal), David Mole (Finance Director), Michelle Pogson (HR Director) and Denise Hark (Clerk to the Local Governing Body).

**Nigel Whittle in the Chair**

**Part 1**

1a) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Ismail Kala, Aatika Patel and Salmah Akram.

1b) LGB Membership update

The Chair welcomed, Nazida Patel, the newly elected Parent Governor and also Angela Stephens the new Sponsor Governor to their first meeting.

**Agreed:**

That the following appointments be confirmed:

- Angela Stephens as Sponsor Governor
- Nazida Patel as Parent Governor

1c) LGB Working Party Membership

Following the appointment of the new governors the membership of the working parties was confirmed as follows:

**Agreed:**

- Membership of the Education and Achievement Working Party: Nigel Whittle, Enid Cathcart, Aatika Patel, Salmah Akram, Nazida Patel, Angela Stephens and Sofiya Patel.
- Membership of the Finance Working Party: Nigel Whittle and Ismail Kala

## **FINANCE & HR**

### **2. BUDGET**

The Finance Director reported that when the original budget had been agreed by the Trust Board in July it had been thought that the primary academy budget would need to be supported with £70,000 from reserves to assist with growth. The actual funding subsequently increased which had meant that additional resources became available. Discussions had taken place between the SLT and the Chair of the LGB and it had been suggested that some of this money could be used for interventions. He added that the proposals would be discussed with the Trust Board. The Chair explained that any interventions need to be cost effective and that the Academy was looking to invest additional money in interventions in order to improve results in the current school year.

The Finance Director highlighted the following areas: There had been additional income under Special Educational Needs funding due to a child receiving an EHCP. The staffing budget showed vacancies under teaching costs but the vacant posts were being covered by supply which meant that there was a small overall spend in staffing. There had been issues involving the electricity meter with British Gas being unable to invoice the Academy because they did not have any records of it; there was also a similar problem with gas. The Board had approved the use of the pre-opening grant for the purchase of ICT equipment. It was explained that the budget showed a recharge for Support Services which should not have been included. This would be removed when the report is updated. The Finance Director explained that a list of debtors and creditors was also included in the report to assure governors that the organisation was operating effectively in respect of managing finances.

It was explained that as the academy is still growing additional staffing would be required for September 2017. The academy would receive funding in-year because it is not yet full; this funding is based on an average of the October and January census count and on estimated figures for September. The CEO pointed out that up to four staff were being recruited and asked whether the budget was being set to include new staff being paid at a higher point on the scale. The Finance Director replied that he had budgeted for the appointments being made at the top end of the main scale. He explained that there was a difference of around £15,000 to £20,000 for the cost of an NQT compared to the cost of a teacher on the upper pay scale. He added that if the academy is able to recruit to these posts early enough the actual costs can be put into the budget. The CEO reported that applications for the teaching posts close this week and there had been 14 applications to date, and added that it would be unlikely to recruit to all four posts on the first round of advertising.

#### **Agreed:**

- That the report be noted

### **3. HUMAN RESOURCES (Confidential item)**

*This item was deemed as confidential and as such is contained in the Part 2 confidential minutes*

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

##### **Agreed:**

- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 November 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

All children now have Individual Learning Plans as recommended by the DfE advisor. Each child's ILP has one maths target and at least two English targets and there are also targets for attendance and behaviour for those children who require it. An additional parents' evening would be held this term to share the ILPs with parents and children.

A governor asked whether there had been any update with regard to the possibility of increasing the Christmas holiday period to reduce the number of unauthorised absence due to parents taking children out of school for extended holidays over the Christmas period. The Principal said that she had discussed this matter with the Principal of Essa Academy and with the Trust and the outcome was that the Christmas holiday had been altered from the standard one produced by the Local Authority in that there would be a two week block at Christmas, however, this would not be extended further.

A governor asked whether there had been any progress in respect of having a Crossing Patrol. The CEO replied that the Local Authority had not seen this as a priority and there would have had to have been a number of serious accidents in the area to qualify. The Principal added that in response to a request from a parent the academy would purchase high visibility vests for all the children; this would be at a cost of just under £350. The academy would encourage the children to wear the vests. A governor asked whether addressing the issue with the car park had resulted in a bottle-neck in the local area. The CEO replied that this had not added to the traffic problem however initially there had been some problems with parents parking across residents' drives. He added that the car park was now calmer and safer.

The Chair asked whether the website was now fully up to date. The CEO replied that this was an area which could be checked by governors. He explained that the website was now more user-friendly and was easier to edit. The CEO said that he would carry out a compliance check to ensure that the website meets with regulations and added that it was also important that it is user friendly for parents and other visitors to the site and also that it is updated regularly. The CEO said that he has also asked the marketing team to put out newsletters on a little and often basis. A governor asked how the newsletters were sent out. It was explained that these took the format of a hard copy but regular newsletters were emailed out on a weekly basis.

#### **5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Governors made no declaration of pecuniary or conflict of interest.

The newly appointed governors were requested to complete a Register of Business Interest form and return it to the Academy.

## **6. EDUCATION, ACHIEVEMENT AND STUDENT WELFARE**

### **6a Principal's Report**

#### 6ai) Principal's Report

The Principal reported that it had been agreed at the last meeting that data would be looked at in detail at the Education and Achievement meeting with governors being given a summary of the data at the LGB meeting. The data information was provided for this meeting in the format of a data dashboard.

It was reported that previously there had been some inaccuracies with internal teacher assessments, externally verified test papers have now been purchased to standardise assessment. All children are now assessed with the new tests each term, the PIRA test for reading and the PUMA test for maths. The Principal explained that these tests would give an indication as to where children are at compared to national figures. The academy would also continue with pupil progress tests. The Big Write, which is teacher assessed, would still continue. The Pupil Progress tests would also include Phonics testing; these would be the standard screening tests and checks against Phonics teaching which would enable children to be in the right group and to ensure that they are receiving the correct interventions. The Principal explained that there still needed to be some staff training in respect of Age Related Expectations. The Academy would work with the local Teaching Schools to address this area. Teachers would also be attending training on SAT moderation from the Local Authority.

The Chair commented that the in-depth information presented at the Education and Achievement meeting showed that the quality of assessment provided was much better at Autumn 2 than it had been at any other time. Although it looked as though progress was not as good as it had been at Autumn 1 this had been due to the changes in the assessment system. A fair comparison would be to compare assessment at Spring 1 against Autumn 2. It was noted that some year groups and areas were performing well but there were some negatives; action plans had been put in place to address these areas. The Principal explained that progress was being made by a good number of children but they were not all reaching Age Related Expectations. The most significant progress that had been made was with Phonics, due to the introduction of the academy's bespoke Essa Precision Phonics; this has resulted in a large proportion of children reaching last year's pass mark. Every child had made progress in Phonics and a good number of them had made significant progress. It was expected that there would be a higher percentage of children passing the Phonics screening test, including those who were retaking the test in Year 2.

A governor pointed out that the Age Related Expectations at Key Stage One were not looking strong. The Principal replied that there needed to be a focus on Year One and the SLT was currently providing support to the Year One classes and that Year 2 were to get additional intervention. The Deputy Principal added that those children who were nearly at Age Related Expectations were receiving interventions and added that the middle group of children would reach Age Related Expectations with support. The CEO explained that any intervention in Year 2 would be remedial but emphasised that

there needed to be a movement in results. A governor said that looking at the Data Dashboard Year 1 appeared to have low results at the latest assessment. The Principal replied that this would be expected at this time of year as the assessment measured ability at Phase 5 although with the teaching scheme children would not yet have been taught to this level.

A governor said that it appeared that the progress of the Pupil Premium children only appeared to be strong in certain areas and this did not include maths. The Principal explained that the data analyst had focused on certain areas and this had showed that in English the performance of PPG children was better than those children who were not entitled to the PPF grant.

A governor asked whether parents were aware of the Individual Learning Plans. The Principal replied that there would be a parents' evening in the penultimate week before half term and the plans would be presented then.

There had been some staffing changes with the Year 3 teacher now taking the lead for English and the Assistant Principal would take over the Phonics lead on her return from maternity leave in February.

Mobility had settled but some children had left with some returning to their home country and other children who had been on waiting lists at other schools had transferred to these schools because they are closer to home. Three children from Year 2 had recently left Essa Primary Academy who had been at the school for a long while; their places have now been offered to INA children. None of the children who had left had done so because of being unhappy at school.

There were currently 58 children in Reception with two vacancies, 46 children in Year 1; the number of children in Year 2 had reduced by three but these places have now been offered and there was still a waiting list for this cohort. The Year 3 and Year 4 classes were full with waiting lists, and had 34 children per class. There were appeals due to be held in Year 3 and Year 4 during the following week.

The Principal reported that she would be starting formal lesson observations in the current week and there would also be SLT learning walks to look at specific elements of learning. A governor commented that she had carried out a learning walk and said that this had been helpful to her as a governor as she had seen a lot of what is talked about in practice. The Chair suggested that each subject link governor should meet with the member of staff with responsibility for that area.

**Agreed:**

- That the report be noted.

6a ii) SEF

The Principal explained that there had been a minor change to the SEF with the grading for Behaviour and Welfare changed to a 3 because there had not been an improvement in attendance. For Early Years an extra action had been added to focus on attendance as 28% of the children in these classes were persistent absentees.

6a iii) Academy Improvement Plan update

Governors were provided with a copy of the monitored action plan.

One action was that pupil progress should be discussed each term by the Local Governing body. It was explained that the report from the Education and Achievement group would need to be fed into the full meeting.

The action to appoint a PPG governor had been completed during this meeting.

To achieve the objective of engaging governors in learning walks, governors were asked to visit the academy at least once per term.

6a iv) Pupil Premium Report 2016-17

An audit of the Pupil Premium Grant would be carried out by a Teaching School Alliance for the Trust as a whole. A copy of the Pupil Premium report had been put together to support this process. The Principal explained that a further letter had been sent to parents to encourage them to apply for free school meals and this would be followed up by the Family Support Worker at the parents' evening. The Citizens Advice Bureau had also been invited to attend the meeting to provide support.

6a v) Attendance Report

Attendance and punctuality was still a significant concern with attendance standing at 93.6% to date which was still below the target and below the national average. The number of children categorised as being persistent absentees was 63 which was a significant concern, although if eight of these children attend during this week they would come off the list. There was still an issue with extended holidays in term time; after the Christmas holiday two boys did not return from their holiday and took two additional weeks holiday and there were still requests for holidays in term time. It was explained that the core of these children had been identified and tackled and support was being provided from the Early Interventions Team at the Local Authority. There were a number of children who do not attend school on a daily basis and there was more work to be done in school with these children to reinforce the importance of coming to school every day. There was an issue with some of the children in the Reception class who are not made to attend school by their parents if they say they do not want to go, and this was becoming more prevalent. A member of staff from the Early Interventions Team at the Local Authority, along with the Principal, had carried out meetings with the four families which have the most significant attendance issues. This term he would be working with ten families, however, only three of the families

turned up to the meetings. The Principal explained that of the 63 persistent absentees, three were due to genuine ongoing medical issues; there were also a large number of these absences due to extended holidays. A governor asked whether lateness to school impacted on the attendance figures. The Principal replied that if the child is late after the register closes then this is counted as an absence. A governor asked whether this presented a significant problem. The Principal replied that this was being tackled and it was getting better, however there had been a dip in punctuality when the changes to the car park were introduced but this has now improved again.

All of the persistent absentee children have a reward chart in school and are awarded stickers every day. The Principal explained that it was recognised that improving attendance needed to be a whole school approach so those children who do attend school regularly are not being overlooked with the rewards system.

**Agreed:**

- That the report be noted.

6avi) School data dashboard - Autumn

The Principal explained that this was a new document put in place to condense the data. A full data report had been provided at the Education and Achievement meeting.

It was explained that some of the figures for behaviour looked to be high; however, these were not due to significant issues. Behavioural incidents are logged on the Progresso system if a child is sent to the Principal or Deputy Principal. It was explained that the vast majority of these incidents were low level concerns. It was noted that there had been a change in reporting behaviour incidents, last year the system had been used for reporting serious incidents only.

A governor asked whether the academy employed trainees or had students working in school. The Principal replied that for September they were looking at the possibility of employing Teach First candidates who would be considered as trainees as unlike NQTs they were not yet qualified. A governor asked whether there were any Nursery Nurse trainees on placement at the academy. The Principal replied that there were a few Teaching Assistant placements, one currently being in the Reception class and one Teaching Assistant doing an apprenticeship. The Principal added that the academy does not yet have many trainees because of staff mobility but this could change in future as the staff grows and becomes more stable.

**Agreed:** That the report be noted

6b) Mathematics Developments

Sharon Weaver, the Deputy Principal and Mathematics lead, gave a presentation on maths teaching in the academy. At the end of the autumn term the Deputy Principal explained that she had analysed the maths data and spoken to the teachers to look at the performance of children on an individual level; key issues had been identified and

interventions were set up for children. Three main groups of children were identified; children targeted for teacher input to make progress in Age Related Expectations; those children who were working one to two terms behind Age Related Expectations; all the children targeted were receiving at least three sessions of maths teaching in the afternoons and all Teaching Assistants had been targeted to support them. Some of this work had been carried out through the maths passports. The other aspect was one to one teaching which comprised a formal scheme of repetition on areas such as number bonds and times tables. It was explained that the maths passports had had a good impact but now this needed to be stepped up. There had also been a correlated assessment programme. Teachers have been given a task to fast track these children in order to get rapid progress.

A formal style of assessment had been introduced as previously children were unfamiliar with this type of assessment. Staff plan a daily challenge which is a formal style challenge in the format of a test-style question so that children see this type of question daily. The Year 2 classes are being prepared for SATs with the Deputy Principal working alongside the teachers to build in preparation throughout the year. It was explained that children had not been fully prepared last year.

The Chair said that looking at the data dashboard in respect of maths it looked as though the scores for attainment were better than they had been in the previous year and asked whether this was a like for like comparison. It was explained that this compared the scores end of year to the end of the autumn term and was a rolling programme. Good progress was being seen and also an improvement in Age Related Expectations however there was still a large gap.

At the next meeting governors would receive a presentation from the English Co-ordinator.

**Agreed:**

- That the report be noted.

6c) Health and Safety

An EYFS risk assessment had been carried out which was more detailed and now covers the Nursery and Reception.

It was explained that the Trust now has a Health and Safety Committee to look at the site as a whole with representation from all the settings on the committee. The Principal agreed to bring anything pertinent back to the Local Governing Board. The Principal added that there were no major concerns in this area.

**Agreed:**

- That governors read and approve the risk assessment.

## **7. GOVERNANCE**

### **7a Approval /Adoption of Policies**

The following policies which had been reviewed in school were presented for approval:

#### **7ai) EYFS Policy**

The EYFS policy had been updated to come in line with their curriculum.

#### **7aii) Missing /uncollected child policy**

This policy covers both the nursery and the primary academy.

#### **7aiii) Debt Policy**

It was explained that the debt policy was a new policy which had become necessary as Year 3 and Year 4 children have to pay for school meals and some were accruing debts. This was presenting difficulties as there was no policy in place. The policy had been reviewed by Ms MacGowan and also the Finance Director to check that it was compliant with legislation. A governor asked whether the number of free school meals was rising in these classes. The Principal replied that they were not rising and the only year group with a poor uptake of FSM was Year 1. A governor acknowledged that it was difficult to encourage parents to apply for free school meals while they were free for Key Stage One children.

The policy included the requirement for parents to send their child with a packed lunch once they are in arrears so that they do not go further in debt. It was noted that there were a few families with debts over £20.

#### **Agreed:**

- That the EYFS Policy be approved
- That the Missing/Uncollected Child Policy be approved
- That the Debt Policy be approved
- That authority be delegated to the Principal for future minor changes.

The following policies which had been approved by the Board on 9 December 2016 were presented to the LGB for adoption:

#### **7aiv) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure and checklist**

It was explained that there had been significant updates to the policy which was in line with Bolton Council's policy. The policy covers all the establishments in the Trust. The Safeguarding Link governor agreed to read the policy fully.

#### **7av) Managing Sickness Absence Policy**

#### **Agreed:**

- That the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and checklist be adopted for use in the Academy

- That the Managing Sickness Absence Policy be adopted for use in the Academy

### **7b Governor Training and Development**

The CEO presented the Development Plan for Governance for 2016-17 and explained that some of the areas identified in the plan were already taking place. The plan was for the Trust and also for both Local Governing Bodies to assist them in getting ownership of governor training and development.

One area identified was that governors should be assigned to key roles, which is part of the monitoring spending and the effectiveness of outcomes. Governors would be able to shadow leaders to see what was being carried out in the academies and to carry out triangulation. The CEO suggested that as many governors as possible come into the academy to carry this out.

There had been good progress in respect of governor recruitment.

Governors would be encouraged to attend appropriate training. The CEO said that while EFAT was a small Trust it needed to ensure that enough governors and trustees have the opportunity to attend a range of training. A governor commented that she had attended four training courses last term provided by Bolton Council and these had been worthwhile. The CEO said that governors would be supported and encouraged to attend governor courses in those areas that interest them. Governor training represented a key part of the plan.

Governors were also advised to seek opportunities to listen to stakeholders. Some of this could be informal with governors chatting to parents to see how the academy can improve in what it does. There could also be an annual survey which could be commissioned by governors. It was explained that a parental survey had been carried out in the previous year. The Principal added that the next one would be completed later during the academic review meeting this half term, a further one would be carried out at the end of the school year. It was agreed that the results of the surveys could be presented at the Local Governing Body meetings. The CEO added that this would enable governors to compare the findings over time. A further opportunity to engage with stakeholders could be governors sitting in on school council meetings.

Governors should be involved in pay award decisions. This item had been reported at last term's meeting. Performance Management for the Principal was in place and is carried out by the Board.

Governors should assure the assessment information by asking probing questions.

It was expected that the plan would help the LGB to work as a team and to give governors the access to skill themselves up.

#### **Agreed:**

- That the results of parental surveys be brought back to the LGB for information.
- That the Governor Training and Development Plan be received.

#### **Agreed:**

- That the following LGB representatives for key areas be appointed as follows:

Safeguarding	Enid Cathcart
SEND	Nazida Patel
Pupil Premium	

### **Core Subjects /Year Groups**

Reception	Enid Cathcart
Year 1	Sofiya Patel
Year 2	Angela Stephens
Year 3	Aatika Patel
Year 4	Nazida Patel
SLT & HR Link	Nigel Whittle
Science	Ismail Kala
Computing	Sofiya Patel
Maths	Angela Stephens
English	Aatika Patel
PSHE	Enid Cathcart
Cornerstones	Aatika Patel

### **7c Speech Therapy Request for Funding**

The Principal explained the process behind referring children for speech therapy. Currently the school completes an early help form and then parents are expected to take their child to an appointment out of school. The school had been putting in requests in but some parents were not taking their children to the appointment. The Principal reported that she had approached a company who could provide this support within school and said that this would have an impact on learning. The cost of this service for one day per week for a year would be £8,190. The Principal added that she felt that this would be of great benefit and said that when children attend the appointments they make good progress, however, this level of progress is not being reached with the vast majority of children because of non-attendance at appointments. It was proposed that the contract with the company would only be signed for support up to the end of the summer term and then this would be reviewed. A governor asked how many children this could benefit. The Principal replied that the company preferred to work on a one to one basis or with a small group if their need was less great. They would be able to provide support for ten children. A governor asked whether the level of support could be doubled in the short-term to benefit a greater number of children. The Principal replied that she could ask the company if they had additional capacity to extend the service to more children. The Chair pointed out that money needs to be targeted so that improvement is seen however there was not enough money available to set a precedent as the deficit needed to be reduced. It was agreed that parents should also be encouraged to attend speech therapy sessions outside of school where appropriate.

**Agreed:**

- To proceed with the Speech Therapy service.
- That the Principal enquire whether the provision could be extended to more children.

## **8. BUILDING AND SITE**

It was reported that a meeting had been held with the EFA who were supporting the process with the issue in respect of the drains. When the surveys had been carried out originally it had not been possible for some of the drains to have been included in the survey. This issue has gone back to EFA for support. It was explained that there was a poor quality of drains on one side of the building.

Quotes were being approved for the roof work in administrative area; this expenditure had been approved by the Board, however, there had been an issue around finding companies prepared to give quotes because of the size of the work.

### **Agreed:**

- That the building update be noted.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### Term and Holiday Dates 2017/18

The Principal circulated a proposed term and holiday list for the academic year 2017/18. It was explained that the holiday pattern was in line with the holidays at Essa Academy; however, there was an additional INSET day on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September because of the growth of the staff team. The holiday pattern would differ from the Local Authority for the Christmas holiday as the academy would be taking two full weeks with term ending on 22 December and returning on 8 January. There would also be a closure day on 25 June for Eid. If Eid were to move then this day would be moved accordingly.

### **Agreed:**

- That the proposed holiday pattern be accepted.
- That the holiday pattern be put on the website.

## **10. CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS**

**Agreed:**

- To consent to the absence from this meeting of Ismail Kala, Aatika Patel and Salmah Akram.
- Not to consent to the absence from this meeting of Sahar Amran.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Agreed:**

- That the next meeting of the Local Governing Body be held on Wednesday 29 March 2017 at 9.00am
- That the next Education and Achievement working group meeting be held on 20 March

**12. CONFIDENTIALITY**

**Agreed:** That in accordance with Article 125 of the Articles of Association for the Academy the following matters be designated as confidential:

Minute (HR Report)

The meeting closed at 11.10am

Signed as a correct record: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_