

**ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY**

**LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

**HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 9.00AM**

**Present:** Nigel Whittle (Chair), Enid Cathcart, Phil Jackson, Aatika Patel and Jo Atherton (Principal).

**In attendance:** Andrew Cooper (CEO), Michelle Pogson (HR Director), David Howarth (Acting Finance Director), Sharon Weaver 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 Nazida Patel and Tasneem Patel.

1b) Resignation of Staff Governor

The Principal reported that she had received a resignation from Salmah Akram, staff governor, as she was due to start the NPQSL course and wanted to focus on this area of work. The Principal added that joining the LGB would be a good opportunity for another member of staff. Governors wished their thanks to be passed on to Mrs Akram for her contribution to the LGB over the past three years. The Principal agreed to speak to all staff about the vacancy and then to put the election process in place.

1c) LGB Working Party Membership

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting to allow absent governors the opportunity to join the working parties.

The next meeting of the Education and Achievement Working Party would take place on Monday 6 November and the Finance Working Party would meet on Thursday 2 November.

**2. BUDGET AND HEALTH AND SAFETY**

2a) Budget Monitoring Report 2016/17

The Acting Finance Director reported that the academy had an agreed overspend of £70,000 but this limit had been overspent by £1,700. This was due to a miscalculation of some funding which had been in the incorrect year, £3,000 would move to the correct year.

It was noted that a large sum, £11,000, had been spent on learning resources. The Principal explained that this was due two lots of expenditure coming out of the same year. The resources for September would normally come out of the previous year's budget but for the 2016/17 budget they had come out twice. The Principal added that because the academy is growing two new classes are being set up each year.

A governor questioned the additional £6,000 that would have to be spent to provide support for the new child with an EHCP. It was explained that this expenditure would come out of the 2017/18 budget.

**Agreed:**

- That the report be noted

2b) Budget 2017/18

The Acting Finance Director reported that the budget was currently showing a £10,000 deficit and this would have to be looked at to see where savings could be made.

The Principal requested that more detailed information be brought to the LGB regarding the Pupil Premium Grant and the Sports Premium funding so that governors can be provided with a set of information which would allow them to provide challenge to the leadership team. The Principal added that governors need to understand where the money is being spent. The Chair agreed and added that he would like this to be an area of focus at the Finance Working Group meeting.

It was pointed out that the academy would need to look at where savings could be made. It was noted that the budget had been set on having 50 children in Reception but there were currently on 46 in this cohort. It was hoped that this year group would increase over time. A governor asked what date children needed to be on roll for the academy to receive funding for any additional children. The Principal replied that the funding was based on the October census. A governor asked whether the additional support which had been provided last year would be continuing. The Principal replied that this had now ceased as there had not been any funding put into the budget for this to continue next year.

It was reported that the Year 2 cohort had increased with only two spaces in that year group. The Principal added that there were a lot of INAs or children who had only been in the country for a while in that year group. In order for these children to get to Age Related Expectations they would need a lot of support. The Teaching Assistants were delivering interventions but the year group would benefit from an additional adult as had happened in the previous year. A governor asked how much this support would cost. The Principal explained that this would cost between £12,000 and £13,000. A governor asked what the impact of the support had been in the previous year. The Principal explained that the Year 2 results were very strong and the speed of progress for some individual students was evident. The Principal offered to provide this evidence to governors. It was explained that this support had started after the Easter holiday last year but if it were to be brought in in January then the cost would double. The Chair requested that a report on the benefit of this intervention be provided in order for a decision to be made. A governor asked how long it would take to get someone for this role. The Principal explained that last year a supply teacher had been used, following an interview for the role. If someone was needed for a longer term then the position would be advertised and this would need to be done after the October half term. The Principal explained that she had been happy with the supply teacher used last year and also the children had been happy with him. The

Chair asked the Principal if funding was only available for one term in which term would be best to make the most impact. The Principal replied that it would be better from the February half term to the May half term as this would allow for greater impact.

**Agreed:**

- That the report be noted

2c) Health and Safety Report

The Acting Finance Director reported that the Trust Health and Safety Committee receive weekly reports on accidents and health and safety for the full Trust. To the end of the previous term at Essa Primary Academy there had been three minor incidents to staff and 44 cases where first aid treatment had been given to children. The Acting Finance Director explained that the statistics were analysed each week to look for any patterns. He added that the majority of the incidents tended to occur on the playground and were due to occasional trips or falls.

The Acting Finance Director reported that the cooker which had been fitted to the technology area was a domestic cooker with no lid which presented a potential health and safety issue with the residual heat. The manufacturer had been contacted and they had said that they no longer supply lids for these cookers. A governor suggested the possible use of a cooker guard. The Principal replied that this might be useful with the younger children but would not be suitable for the older children.

An independent consultant had visited to carry out a survey of the finger guards. The Facilities Manager would pursue this through ISG as this is a health and safety issue. It was noted that it would cost around £3,000 to replace the faulty ones and £7,000 to replace all of them. The Acting Finance Director added that the Facilities Manager had thought that the finger guards had not been fitted correctly. A governor asked if this was a design fault where would this fit with the DfE. It was explained that ISG had not been challenged on this as they have not had any complaints from other schools. It was also explained that the academy had not received any support from Taylor Townsend about this matter and it would be the responsibility of the academy to rectify the problem even though they had been incorrectly fixed. A governor asked where the money would come from to carry out this work. It was explained that although this work had not been budgeted for, it would come from the premises budget.

The Acting Finance Director reported that a Health and Safety audit had been carried out in July and any urgent or short-term issues have been rectified.

**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**

The Principal reported that she was working on the Academy Improvement Plan with a consultant and said that this would be sent out to governors when completed.

##### **Agreed:**

- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 July 2017 be agreed as a correct record.
- That the Principal sends a copy of the School Improvement Plan to governors.

#### **5. POLICIES FOR ADOPTION/APPROVAL**

##### 5a) Board Approved Policies

##### **Agreed:**

- That the following policies which had been approved by the Trust Board on 7 July 2017 be adopted for use in Essa Primary Academy:

Health and Safety Policy  
First Aid Policy  
Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Procedure  
Food Safety and Hygiene Policy  
Working at Height Policy  
Lone Working Policy  
Sharps Policy  
Procurement Policy  
Scheme of Financial Delegation  
Data Protection Act Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct Policy  
ICT User Policy

##### 5b) Attendance Policy

The Principal reported that the policy had not changed; she added that staff had worked through the behaviour policy with all staff having been involved. The policy would be sent out to parents. It was noted that the only change was that rewards for good behaviour had been increased.

##### **Agreed:**

- That the Attendance Policy be approved.

##### 5c) School Trips and Visits Policy

The Principal explained that this is a Trust-wide policy which has tightened up expectations and procedures from the initial planning stage. The Principal added that the section of the policy which refers to residential trips is now relevant for the academy as there would shortly be a residential trip for pupils. It was noted that the policy made it very clear that there was no tolerance of alcohol consumption on any trips. All staff had received copies of the policies.

**Agreed:**

- That the School Trips and Visits Policy be adopted.

**6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair reminded governors to complete an annual declaration of interest form.

**Agreed:**

- That governors complete the annual declaration of interest form.

**7. EXCLUSION GUIDANCE**

The Clerk reported that the legislation governing the exclusion process remained unchanged following consultation. The statutory guidance however had been updated in a very few areas, in particular, in order to provide greater confidence to head teachers and principals on their use of exclusion and to provide greater clarity to independent review panels and governing boards when considering the decision to exclude.

**8. EDUCATION, ACHIEVEMENT AND STUDENT WELFARE**

8a) Principal's Report

The Principal reported that three children had still not returned to school following the summer holidays and that in addition two of these children had taken 10 days off prior to the summer holidays. The Principal explained that as the children will have exceeded 20 days absence they could be taken off roll. A governor asked which year group these children were in. The Principal replied that they are in Years 2, 3 and 4. The Principal explained that she would be able to instigate the process to remove the children from the school roll and this would mean that they would have to be notified as Children Missing in Education.

It was reported that there were 286 children on roll with places being available in all year groups with the exception of Years 4 and 5. The Principal added that four International New Arrival children had been admitted during the current week to Year 1 and 2 classes. The CEO questioned why the Reception class was not full now the academy has a stronger Early Years Foundation Stage. The Principal explained that the academy was still suffering because of the Local Authority directing children who lived a distance away to attend the academy and parents were refusing places as they did not want their child to attend school until they reach five years old. The CEO commented that having gaps in Reception would have a knock-on effect as the children went through school. The Principal agreed that this was disappointing and said that there had originally been 52 children offered places but only 46 had taken up the places. Those parents refusing places had cited distance or their child being too young; in addition some of them had not applied to the academy for a place.

The Principal reported that two children from Year 1 had also left the academy with their parents citing the Ofsted report as a reason for leaving. Another child in Year 3 who lives at a significant distance from school would be leaving in the following week. A governor asked whether there was a waiting list. The Principal replied that there was a waiting list for places in Year 3 but not in any other year group. The Chair asked whether lower numbers in this year's Reception class was common in other schools. The Principal agreed to check this with other schools in the local cluster.

The Principal reported that the new staff had been appointed early and said that she was pleased with what she has seen as they had displayed a higher expectation of learning.

A governor requested an update on attendance. The Principal replied that although it was early in the term some of the persistent absentees from the previous year had already taken some time off school. The Chair commented that the Autumn 1 term last year had been the weakest period for attendance last year and asked how this year was comparing against the previous year. The Principal replied that it was better than at the same time last year; however, there had been seven families who had been missing for the first three days of term.

A governor asked how many prosecutions there had been for non-attendance. The Principal replied that there had been nine last year, four of which had gone to court with all cases being found guilty. The CEO added that he felt that the number of prosecutions needed to be higher. A governor asked whether there had been any positive impact on attendance following the prosecutions. The Principal replied that there had been in about half the cases with the initial fines making a difference for some families. It was noted that all the families who had been taken to court had been found guilty in their absence but there had been no impact on their attendance for these families.

### School Improvement Plan

The Principal explained that the School Improvement plan is a two-year plan. The main priorities identified for improvement are:

#### SEND

- To increase opportunities for pupils in English and maths
- To improve subject leader knowledge
- Sports Premium funding
- Governor training to improve support and challenge.

It was noted that each priority has a lead person identified.

The Principal explained that a significant part of the Leadership and Management aspect of the plan is to make sure that middle and senior leaders are fully accountable.

The subject leaders would be accountable with an expectation that they would own their subject.

The LGB would consider the school improvement plan at each meeting and subject leaders would be requested to make a presentation to governors on their subject. The Chair explained that the LGB had previously focused on English and maths but there was also a need to look at other subjects. It was explained that other leaders would be coming to LGB meetings to speak for three or four minutes and then to be held to account by governors. The Principal added that the plan includes milestones which help to see what to expect at particular times. The CEO said that his main concern was that the plan was very detailed which makes the monitoring of it difficult and suggested that something overarching be put together. He added that the four priorities identified by Ofsted could be a starting point. The Principal explained that she would put out a one page document to parents. The CEO explained that the challenge is to be able to track the rapidity of improvement and the monitoring of the plan was critical in this process. A governor commented that the letter to parents was a good idea as this would provide them with reassurance. The Principal added that in addition to the letter monthly coffee mornings would be taking place and this would be a good opportunity to talk to parents. The CEO asked how the parents were invited into the coffee mornings. The Principal replied that these were linked into the assembly mornings.

The CEO pointed out that the Ofsted Requires Improvement report starts with negatives. A parent governor commented that this could be a problem as there are a lot of parents whose first language is not English. The Principal added that she hoped that the coffee mornings would open up communication with parents. A parent governor added that parents did not see the hard work which goes on behind the scenes in respect of school improvement.

A governor asked whether governors would be provided with a curriculum plan. The Principal replied that this was currently being looked at in respect of where the trips fit in. The long-term plan would be shared with parents by October and this would be looked at during each meeting. A parent governor commented that she had already seen an improvement in maths.

The Principal reported that there were new schemes of work in place in maths, English, science, ICT, art and DT. The schemes of work for PE, RE and music had been kept the same as in the previous year. The Principal added that the work in children's books was much improved. The Principal explained that the particular curriculum model had been chosen because of the challenge that it expects. The academy is working with Achievement for All on a two year programme. This is based on outcomes for children and links into the school improvement plan. The Principal reported that work took place on a fortnightly basis with the coach Tony Mallard. The next staff training session would be on having structured conversations with parents in order to improve dialogue. The academy was also working with David Mitchell to improve children's writing. Laurence Hicks, a maths consultant, was working to develop a calculation policy which would be bespoke to the school. The Principal

pointed out that the academy was now getting external agencies in to provide support. The Chair advised that the academy needs to get the positive message out to parents.

A governor asked for clarification over the interventions. The Principal explained that the Deputy Principal identifies children each term after assessment to put programmes in place to best support them. This term the interventions had been based on last term's assessment and focused on those children who were a little bit behind on the teacher's planning. There was also small group work with Teaching Assistants for those children who were further behind. These sessions take place in the afternoons with the aim of the children making rapid progress. It was explained that the progress of these children could be measured against the other children.

#### 8b) Safeguarding updates

It was reported that the Trust Safeguarding team meet twice per month and one of the meetings each month has a focus on attendance. A governor asked whether there were any links between attendance problems at Essa Primary Academy and at Essa Academy. The Principal confirmed that there were links between the persistent absentee children at both establishments. It was planned that this year the same procedures would be followed at the same time, in particular with regard to penalty notices to ensure consistency.

#### 8c) English Developments

Fischer Family Trust Reciprocal reading was being used in Years 4 and 5 to provide additional support. The Principal explained that this gives different strategies to try to plug gaps.

#### 8d) External Support/Validation

The Principal reported that she was working with the consultant Julie Price Grimshaw on the School Improvement Plan. The academy was also working with David Mitchell to improve writing and was working with Focus Education for support on the core curriculum.

#### 8e) Big Lottery Funding and Art for Their Sake

The Principal reported that the academy had received a grant of £10,000 from the Big Lottery Fund to improve the library which has now been painted with a woodland theme, and to provide a new Sanctuary room. Staff were to receive training in mindfulness and wellbeing. Art work had been commissioned from Art for Their Sake to make the rest of the library into a special place. Governors were invited to visit the new room and the library at the end of the meeting. The Principal added that she wanted to commission the artist to carry out further work to the shared area between the Reception and Year One classrooms to have a four seasons display. The Principal explained that there was money available to have this work carried out. A governor asked whether the £10,000 had been fully allocated. The Principal confirmed that it had been.

8f) Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

The Principal reported that she was currently working on the 2017/18 Pupil Premium Strategy Statement and explained that everything was in place. The Principal said that she wanted the Pupil Premium Grant to be noted in the budget report as this would help to look at the impact of the grant.

**Agreed:** That the report be noted

**9. GOVERNANCE**

9a) Governor Training and Development

The Chair reported that he was keeping a list of governor training and any governor who has attended training to let him know so that he could update the log.

The Clerk circulated a copy of the Local Authority Governance Training programme for information. The Clerk reported that the Local Authority Governance Services Team were to hold their annual Governor Conference on Saturday 4 November 2017 at the Mercure Bolton Georgian House, Blackrod, with the theme of "Positive Futures for Children and Young People". Governors were informed that they could book a place at the Conference on the Governor Exchange website.

9b) Building and Site

The Facilities Manager reported that work had been carried out on the Key Stage One classrooms with the partitions being extended to make four distinct teaching areas. It was reported that this work had come in £500 below budget. The Principal commented that this work had made a huge difference to the school, and added that further work of this kind would be carried out in stages with the Year 4 and 5 classrooms being completed before September 2018.

It was reported that the work on the roof had been completed with all significant faults having been rectified and new flashings and insulation installed.

9c) Any Other Business

Governors were asked to read the document on the School Governance Quality Mark.

**10. CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS**

**Agreed:**

- To consent to the absence from this meeting of Ismail Kala, Sofiya Patel, Angela Stephens, Nazida Patel and Tasneem Patel.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Agreed:**

- That the next meeting be held on Wednesday 8 November 2017 at 9.00am

**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

The meeting closed at 10.30am

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

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

**ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY**  
**LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING**  
**HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 9.00AM**

**Present:** Nigel Whittle (Chair), Enid Cathcart, Phil Jackson, Aatika Patel and Jo Atherton (Principal).

**In attendance:** Andrew Cooper (CEO), Michelle Pogson (HR Director), David Howarth (Acting Finance Director) and Denise Hark (Clerk to the Local Governing Body).

**Nigel Whittle in the Chair**

**Part 2 Confidential Minutes**

**3. HUMAN RESOURCES**

The HR Director reported that all vacancies have now been filled and the Executive Principal would be providing support at Essa Primary Academy.

Five members of staff have been identified for the leadership development programme.

Additional support is being provided for the Teach First teacher.

There was currently a vacancy for a chef. This vacancy is being backfilled by Essa Academy.

New Teaching Assistants have been appointed to provide special educational needs support due to funding being received via EHCPs for two children. The Principal explained that one child was entitled to 18.5 hours of support and added that the school would have to find the first £6,000 of the support required for each child. A governor asked whether this money had been budgeted for. The Principal replied that it had been for those children who the academy had been aware of when the budget had been put together but not for this particular child who is in Reception.

The HR Director explained that there was no update available on the 2017 Teachers' Pay Award as she was waiting for confirmation from Bolton Local Authority HR team about the model pay policy.

**Agreed:**

- That the report be noted.

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

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