

ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 9.00AM

Present: Nigel Whittle (Chair), Enid Cathcart, Phil Jackson, Aatika Patel, Sofiya Patel, Nazida Patel, Russell Kinch and Jo Atherton (Principal).

In attendance: David Howarth (Acting Finance Director), Sharon Weaver (Deputy Head Teacher), Matt Shurlock (Item 7c only) 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 Tasneem Patel, Ismail Kala, Andrew Cooper and Michelle Pogson.

1b) Appointment of Staff Governor

The Principal reported that following the staff governor election process Russell Kinch had been appointed as Staff Governor. Mr Kinch was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

1c) LGB Working Party Membership

It was agreed that the Working Party membership remain as it currently is.

Class link governor positions were agreed as follows:

Reception: Ismail Kala and Enid Cathcart
Year 1 : Phil Jackson
Year 2: Aatika Patel
Year 3: Angela Stephens
Year 4: Nazida Patel
Year 5: Sofiya Patel

The Principal encouraged governors to make visits to their linked class.

The following subject links were agreed:

English: Aatika Patel
Maths: Enid Cathcart
Humanities: Phil Jackson
Art/Music: Ismail Kala
PSHE/PE:

Science: Nigel Whittle
Pupil Premium: Nigel Whittle
SEND: Nazida Patel
Computing: Sofiya Patel

Governors were requested to provide a report on their visits to the academy.

2. BUDGET AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

2a) Budget Monitoring Report September 2017

A written monitoring report showing the budget position as at September 2017 showing positive and negative variances had been included in the papers for the meeting.

2b) Budget 2017/18

The Acting Finance Director reported that the budget at the beginning of the year allowed for all staff moving up the pay scale. The budget had been re-set following the outcomes of the appraisal process, and also to take into account the updated pupil numbers. It was explained that the budget was currently showing a deficit of £20,000 and savings would need to be identified. The Chair commented that with the increased revenue he was confident that savings could be found. A governor asked whether the grants from the government would continue. The Acting Finance Director explained that the academy had received more than had been budget for and said that he would look into this as it could be an incorrect posting. The Principal explained that as the school was not yet full up to Year 6 the budget had been set on estimated figures and once the actual figures were known any surplus could be clawed back.

Agreed:

- That the Acting Finance Director checks whether the allocation is correct and then report back to the Chair.

It was explained that the Pupil Premium Grant was showing up in the budget as being £115,000, however, it was explained that this was 7/12 of the allocation as the remainder had shown up in the previous year's budget. It was noted that the PE/Sports Grant had increased to £18,840. This grant had been used historically to pay for the PE staff from Essa Academy to teach PE to the children. The Principal reported that Essa Primary Academy would no longer be charged for any staffing support from Essa Academy which included staff from the PE department and from MFL; this would free up the grant to be spent on sport. The Principal explained that the grant would probably go towards having play leaders at lunchtimes and some additional sports coaching. The Principal added that the grant could also be used for additional PE equipment. A governor asked how many pupils the budget had been based on. It was explained that it had been based on 283 pupils which had been the number of children at the October census but there were currently 288 children on roll and this number was changing daily. The budget would then be based on an average of the October and January censuses.

It was reported that staffing accounted for 73% of the budget and that this had increased from 70% last year. The Acting Finance Director explained that the DfE advises that 80% of the budget spent on staffing is high and added that the academy

is well within these guidelines. The Principal reported that the academy had spent £80,000 on supply teaching costs but this year one Teaching Assistant has been upgraded to a HLTA and this means that she can now cover classes.

National Funding Formula

The Acting Finance Director reported that the government wants to introduce a fairer funding system and they are looking at implementing a national funding formula in 2019/20. The academy would gain funding on the deprivation factor and prior attainment but would lose out on per pupil funding. This would result in the budget gaining around £42,000 overall which equates to around 4%. The Acting Finance Director explained that the academy would not feel the effect of the national funding formula as much as some other schools.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted

2c) Health and Safety Report

The Facilities Manager reported that all the immediate short and medium term recommendations identified in the Health and Safety audit have been addressed. The trust wide Health and Safety Committee met and looked at how all policies could be made available to staff.

Padlocks on the gates have been replaced.

A glass cover has been located for the cooker in the DT room which did not have one. Delivery on this item was awaited.

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

Agreed:

- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 September 2017 be agreed as a correct record, subject to an amendment in item 2C to state that the Health and Safety report had been provided by the Facilities Manager and not the Acting Finance Director.

5. POLICIES FOR ADOPTION/APPROVAL

Safeguarding/CP Policy

It was explained that the Safeguarding/CP policy is a model Bolton Local Authority policy which has been approved by EFAT and tailored to the academy.

Agreed:

- That the Safeguarding/CP policy be adopted.

More Able Policy

The Principal reported that the main change to the policy was an update on the cycle.

Behaviour Policy

It was explained that there had only been some minor revisions to this policy.

Marking Policy

The Principal explained that the biggest change had been made to try to balance the teacher workload. Marking stickers are still being used but the comments to go alongside them have been streamlined. Marking is being made fit for purpose in order to move learning on.

Science Policy

The science policy had been amended due to a change of curriculum in this subject.

Agreed:

- That the following policies be approved

More Able policy

Behaviour policy

Marking policy

Science policy

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair reminded governors to complete an annual declaration of interest form. Any governors who had not yet completed this form would be sent one for completion.

Agreed:

- That any governors who have not already done so complete the annual declaration of interest form.

7. EDUCATION, ACHIEVEMENT AND STUDENT WELFARE

7a) Education and Achievement group Meeting

The Vice Chair reported that the working group had met and had discussed the changes to the science curriculum. Children in Years Four and Five were now visiting Essa Academy for some science lessons. The Committee had also looked at changes in English including the Lexia individual reading programme. It was explained that there is an emphasis on phonics and also the curriculum to ensure that boys are not overlooked.

The working group had noted that there had been a slight improvement in attendance.

Data for Reception had been reviewed and it had been noted that the on entry situation had improved. There had been a positive improvement on children's starting points.

The academy has good publicity in place to attract children to the school next year. The Chair added that the working group had also talked about writing and blogging and had noted that the computer club held at lunchtimes was helping the children write more.

The Deputy Head Teacher reported that the data last year had shown that the internal interventions were working and children were making progress, however, this progress was not good enough. Lexia, which is an online programme individualised to the child, had been recommended. The programme gives the children a year group and a level for reading and it gives them comprehensions skills. Children work on Lexia for 20 minutes per day. It was explained that the programme is very detailed and it gives that children exactly what they need. The programme alerts the teacher if the child is struggling. The academy is having a one month trial on the programme for two classes, one from each key stage and also for some Year 5 children who are working well-below the expected level. It was explained that the programme gives the teacher an in-depth report on the exact area of need for a child. The staff governor added that support is then given to the children at the level they need. Once the trial has been completed it is hoped that the programme will be rolled out for the whole school. It was explained that the programme goes up to a reading age of 14 and it is able to give the children a diet of greater depth. The programme should give rapid progress to get more children to Age related level. A governor asked how often the children would use the programme. It was explained that the children would use it for a minimum of three times per week for 20 minutes and this has been built into the timetable. It was pointed out that the programme is also used at Essa Academy. Governors asked for a demonstration on how the programme works to be provided. It was noted that the cost of the programme is £15,600 for three years for all children. The Finance department had investigated whether the primary school could use Essa Academy's registration but the company had said that because the academies have two separate DfE numbers there has to be two separate orders.

Agreed:

- To the purchase of Lexia for all classes.

7b) Principal's Report

Safeguarding

The Principal explained that since the report had been written the number of children on the Safeguarding register had increased from 42 to 46.

I-Pads/Computing

It was reported that historically I-Pads had been sent home with the children but they were not being used well. Going forward I-Pads would only be sent home for a particular purpose. Feedback from parents had been positive. It was explained that those children in Key Stage Two who had paid insurance for the I-Pads would still be allowed to take them home.

Pupil Progress

The Local Authority data pack compares the academy's results to those of all schools in Bolton and nationally and it also shows a three year trend.

A copy of the updated SEF as at November had been circulated with the papers for the meeting and had been discussed at the Education and Achievement meeting.

The Chair commented that the maths results for Year 2 had been very strong.

Pupil Mobility

It was reported that there were currently 289 children on roll which had dropped slightly from 291 in the previous week. There were seven available places in Reception, 4 in Year 1, five in Year 2. Year 3 is full and the Year 4 and 5 classes are both above the Planned Admission Number. The Principal explained that there would be seven appeals for places in Years 4 and 5 held on 15 November and this was in addition to the 12 children on the waiting list for these year groups. A governor asked how many children were in the Year 4 and 5 classes. It was explained that the largest class had 33 children and it was hoped that these classes would reduce to 30. A governor asked whether the children appealing for places had siblings at the academy. The Principal replied that there were only two of these children with sibling links and the majority of children appealing had not yet been allocated to any school. The Principal added that the academy to date had not lost any appeals and pointed out that the academy is still over the Planned Admission Number.

Staffing update

A lot of the staffing vacancies have been filled and the new staff would be shadowed. Most of the new staff would be starting at the beginning of December but the Year 5 Teaching Assistant would start on 20 November. Most positions were due to

additional SEN funding. A governor asked whether the Teaching Assistant who had been upgraded to HLTA had received any additional training. It was confirmed that she is currently completing the HLTA training. A governor asked whether the HLTA would be able to support the SEN children. The Principal replied that the HLTA would be able to do this work but it would be more appropriate for other TAs to carry out this work. It was explained that this role was being trialled and the person had been appointed on a fixed term basis.

Academy Improvement Plan

The Academy Improvement Plan had been received with the papers for the meeting. The Principal explained that the improvement plan had been shared with all staff and all of the subject leads have reviewed their action plan. It was noted that the plan is in a different format and that it is a two year plan.

Regional Schools Commissioner

The Regional Schools Commissioner had written to the academy just before half term, a copy of the letter and response from the Principal had been included with the papers for the meeting. A one page improvement plan would be sent to parents. A document identifying progress to date, which would be updated every term so that governors can see improvements, was also included with the papers for the meeting. It was explained that the Regional Schools Commissioner has received a response to the letter from the academy. It was noted that if the Regional Schools Commissioner is happy with this information no further action would be required but she has any concerns then this might result in an HMI visit.

7b) Safeguarding

The Trust Safeguarding group is meeting on a twice monthly basis. It was explained that the group, which would be led by the Principal, and which has representation from across the Trust will work on the review from the Safeguarding audit.

Agreed: That the report be noted

7c) English and Maths Development

Math Report – Matt Shurlock (Maths lead)

Mr Shurlock reported that he had started at the academy in September and explained that the key priorities for maths was the calculation policy and for it to be embedded to allow for a clear set of expectations around the four functions. Building blocks were being put in place and monitoring was taking place to ensure consistency across the academy. Mr Shurlock explained that he would be meeting with Laurence Hicks from Manchester University to work on the calculation policy.

There would be a focus on reasoning and problem solving. Teachers are to have a balance of fluency and to put them into problem solving which could be used in real situations.

It was explained that the feedback to pupils for maths needs to be of a high quality and the marking policy has been amended accordingly. Focus curriculum from Clive Davies is being embedded. It was explained that this is based on the 2014 curriculum. It was explained that these lessons are better tailored to the children.

Mr Shurlock explained that there is a need to look at how to assess at each half term. Target sheets at the front of exercise books have been implemented to this effect. He explained that teachers were being encouraged to talk to children about their targets. A governor asked whether there were any plans to share the targets with parents. It was explained that once the policy is in place the policy would be sent out to parents and they would be invited into school to show them how they can give the correct support to their children. It was also explained that the key learning targets in English and Maths had been shared at the parents welcome meeting.

The Chair asked where the academy was up to with the introduction of Symphony software which is similar to the Lexia programme used for English. The Principal replied that this had been put on hold at the moment as the academy was looking to trial an app in Year 1, paid for by Education Endowment and developed by the universities of Nottingham and Oxford. This would allow for daily intervention via an app and the children would work with Teaching Assistants. Mr Shurlock explained that the Year 1 teachers were keen to participate in the trial and an application to take part in the trial has been made.

English presentation – Russell Kinch

Mr Kinch explained that the priority for reading was to increase child engagement. Expectations have been raised so that every child who reads four times each week at home would receive a treat. It was explained that the impact of this initiative last year was that in the Year 1 classes this had increased from no children reading at this level in January to 55% and 64% in July; for the Year 2 classes this increased from 7% and 3% in January to 60%; Year 3 from zero to 94% and in Year 4 from zero to 88%. It was explained that the impact has continued and this needs to be reinforced by the new teachers.

The reading results had improved with the gap between the academy and the national average having improved from 22% in 2015 to 8% this year. There had been an improvement in writing over the same period from 32% to 19%.

It was noted that there were still issues with parental engagement. A lottery had been introduced for parents so that when they sign to say that they have heard their child read their name is entered into a draw with a prize of a restaurant voucher. It was explained that this has had an impact on the number of children reading at home.

The academy has been successful in getting a place on the trial for Reciprocal Reading for Years 4 and 5. This trial is being carried out by Fischer Family Trust and Queen's University, Belfast. It was explained that this is a very focused on slow reading process. Children are asked to predict what will happen, then clarify it and question around it. They then summarise the text at paragraph level. A governor asked how this was being carried out. It was explained that a small group of five or six children from Year 5 and all Year 4 children were part of the trial. A governor asked whether this would be too much for the teacher. It was explained that it fits into the guided reading lessons. A governor asked what the response from the children had been. It was explained that the children had been positive. Mr Kinch added that it teaches children skills to use on any text. A governor asked whether this scheme helped with the lower ability children. It was explained that the children work in mixed ability groups which gives them a safe environment and going forward this would be done in groups. At the end of last year every child in the test group had taken a Fischer Family Trust baseline test prior to participating in the trial. It was explained that Reciprocal Reading can be taught from Year 1 and that there is a lot of data from Australia to show how it works.

A guided reading scheme has been introduced. The academy was continuing with the Beanstalk Readers charity system which involves volunteers reading with the children.

The results in writing were still well below the national average but were improving.

Target sheets in books have been implemented.

The academy was working with an internationally renowned blogger on a blogging project with children in Years 4 and 5. This is linking in to getting the children to write for purpose. Mr Kinch said that the blogging club had helped with boys' writing and behaviour in his class.

The curriculum has moved to Focus Education. Each class will study one core text every half term. It was explained that the scheme does not provide lesson plans but gives them objectives. Mr Kinch added that the only downside is that there is not the breadth of texts.

7d) External Support/Validation

The academy is working with Jo Lindon, a Local Leader of Excellence who will be focusing on school improvement.

Laurence Hicks from the University of Manchester is providing support in maths.

Deb Butler, the School Improvement Professional from the Local Authority had looked at the previous year's data on her SIP visit.

The SENDCO is receiving support from a Specialist Leader of Education from Alliance for Learning.

David Mitchell is providing support on a writing project (blogging).

The academy is working with Fischer Family Trust on Reciprocal Reading and is participating in Achievement for All – a two year programme with a personal coach - Tony Mallard.

It was explained that all this work was in response to Ofsted who had advised that external validation would help to move the academy forward.

7e) Impact of an additional Year 2 Teacher

At the last meeting a discussion had taken place around the impact of appointing an additional teacher in March 2017. This had enabled the classes to be split into three groups with the additional teacher working with the higher ability children and the two class teachers providing booster support. It was explained that by the end of the year a significant increase in progress had been seen with 14.6 in reading, 19.8 in writing and 31.8 in maths. The Principal explained that it is clear that there was a rapid increase in progress from the spring half term to the end of the school year. A supply teacher had been used at a cost of £100 per half day for 55 days. The Principal explained that she would like to roll this out again but in a different way. The current Year 2 is a more settled cohort and the Principal advised that she felt that there was a greater need further up the school. It was explained that Years 4 and 5 were challenging cohorts with pupils of a wide range of abilities. Additional support for these year groups would help to get the children ready for SATs and for high school. The Principal explained that if agreed by the LGB the request would need to go the Trust board as there would need to be an application for funding. It was explained that the cost of an additional teacher would be £11,300. A governor commented that she had visited the Year 4 class and some of the children had been working at a Year 1 standard. The Principal explained that all of the children were making progress but this progress needs to be accelerated.

Agreed:

- That the proposal for funding for an additional teacher be taken to the Trust Board.

8. **GOVERNANCE**

8a) Governor Visit and Training

Mrs Cathcart reported that she had visited the Reception class and she had also met with the Deputy Head Teacher to look at Safeguarding.

Mrs Cathcart also reported that she had attended the Bolton Governance Services conference and said that it had been a day well spent.

The Clerk informed governors of the new Bolton Governance Gateway, an online paperless way of managing meetings. Governors were in agreement that this would be a more secure way of receiving documents for LGB meetings.

Agreed:

- That the LGB moves to using the Bolton Governance Gateway.

8b) Any Other Business

8bi)

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

8bii)

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

8biii) Daily Mile

It was reported that the Daily Mile had been introduced to replace playtime. This is a national programme with the aim of increasing the amount of activity children are doing. It was hoped that this would help the children to become healthy and to improve behaviour around school. The children go outside as a class with the aim of running either a mile or doing 15 minutes activity, whichever comes first. It was noted that since this had been introduced there had not been any behavioural issues at playtime.

8biv) Marketing

The Chair reported that the Education and Achievement Working group had discussed the marketing of the academy in relation to increasing numbers in Reception. The Chair added that having the nursery would help with recruitment to the Reception class. A graphic designer who is working at Essa Academy is designing a flyer for the academy and it was explained that she could be used for other marketing material. Mr Kinch added that there has also been a push on Twitter. The working group had also discussed increasing the activities between the academy and the nursery.

10. CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS

Agreed:

- To consent to the absence from this meeting of Tasneem Patel
- Not to consent to the absence from this meeting of Angela Stephens, Ismail Kala

The Principal agreed to contact Angela Stephens and the Chair agreed to contact Ismail Kala to see if they were experiencing difficulties in attending meetings.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:

- That the next meeting be held on Wednesday 31 January 2018 at 9.00am
- That the Finance Working Group meeting be held on 30 January and the Education and Achievement Working Group be held on 29 January.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

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

Minutes 3 , 8bi), 8bii)

The meeting closed at 11.10am

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____

ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 9.00AM

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In attendance: David Howarth (Acting Finance Director), Sharon Weaver (Deputy Head Teacher) and Denise Hark (Clerk to the Local Governing Body).

Nigel Whittle in the Chair

Part 2 Confidential Minutes

3. HUMAN RESOURCES

A parent governor commented that as there was a new supply teacher in Year 2 parents had been concerned with the changes of teacher. The Chair replied that four new teachers had been appointed to the academy, three of whom are very strong. The Principal explained that the Teach First teacher was no longer at the school and the person's appointment had been terminated on 31 October. It was explained that this person had been doing a job share with the Assistant Head Teacher and a supply teacher is based in Year 2 until the end of the autumn term. A governor pointed out that this particular class had also been affected by staffing changes in the previous year.

The Executive Principal was working with senior staff on providing support and coaching.

It was reported that performance management was being carried out and the Chair and CEO would be meeting with the Principal to discuss the Principal's performance management.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted.

8bi) Proposal to change the timing of the school day

The Principal reported that consultation had taken place with staff over the proposal to change the time of the school day. If the LGB was in agreement the proposal would then go out to staff for consultation.

It was explained that there would be no change to the start time in the mornings but at the end of the day there would be a slightly earlier finish on a Monday at 2.45pm to allow for staff CPD, and the end of the day would be 3.20pm on Tuesdays to Fridays. There would no longer be a very early 1.30pm finish on a Friday. The Principal explained that attendance was not as good on a Friday as it is during the rest of the week. The proposal would allow for additional curriculum time and would bring the academy more in line with other schools and should have a greater impact on the timetable. The timings would allow older siblings from Essa Academy the time to pick up and drop off children at Essa Primary academy as Essa Academy would finish at 3.10pm. A governor expressed a concern over parking and traffic. The Principal replied that she was not convinced that there would be an impact as parents often arrive very early to pick up their children. The proposal would mean that children would have 1 hour and 15 minutes longer in school each week. It was explained that the proposal, if agreed, would come into effect in September 2018.

Agreed:

- In principle to changing the times of the school day.

8bii) Essa Academy

The Principal reported that Essa Academy was reviewing their curriculum model and one of the changes proposed was the increase in the amount of release time for planning. Main scale teachers would be allocated 20% PPA time and core subject leads 30% release time. Senior Leaders would get between 45 and 60% release time. The Principal advised that if Essa Primary Academy went in line there would need to be an extra 2.6 teachers and this would be very expensive, however, some of these costs could be offset by using Essa Academy staff.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted.

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____