

ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2018 AT 9.00AM

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

In attendance: Andrew Cooper (CEO), David Howarth (Finance 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 Phil Jackson, Sofiya Patel and Nazida Patel.

1b) LGB Working Party Membership

The Principal reported that she would look again at the membership lists of the LGB working parties and send them out to governors. Any governor who wished to move to a different working party could arrange this with the Principal.

2. BUDGET AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

2a) Budget Report

The Finance Director reported that he might have under-budgeted on the GAG as extra funding was coming into the budget. There was also some additional SEN funding received for the previous two years. It was explained that as there are supply teaching assistants being used for SEN this area is showing an overspend.

The Finance Director reported that there was a £12,000 variance in the bottom line figures which were currently showing a £10,000 underspend.

A report detailing remittances was submitted to show monthly income.

2b) Health and Safety Report

The Principal reported that the Trust Health and Safety Committee continued to meet and Safeguarding has now been included in their remit. The Principal explained that there is a fortnightly meeting in school to discuss attendance and

safeguarding issues and this is then reported up to the Trust Health and Safety Committee.

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 8 November 2017 be a correct record.

The Principal reported that she had been in contact with Angela Stephens who had decided to resign from the LGB as she was finding it difficult to attend meetings. This would leave a vacancy for a Sponsor Governor.

Further to the minute regarding the proposed changes to the timing of the school day, the Principal reported that the consultation had now closed and only seven forms had been received back from parents. Three of the parents had been in agreement with the changes and three had raised a concern, one that staff CPD is carried out during the school day. It was also reported that Essa Academy had also had minimal returns to the consultation.

5. **POLICIES FOR ADOPTION/APPROVAL**

5a) Computing Policy

The Principal explained that this policy was a very different policy to the previous one. A governor asked whether it needed more reference to the use of computers at home. The Principal explained that this policy is more of a curriculum policy and the use of computers at home is covered in the acceptable use policy.

Agreed:

- That the Computing policy be approved.

5b) Phonics Policy

The Principal explained that there had been minor amendments to the policy and it now refers to using Essa Precision Phonics rather than Letters and Sounds.

Agreed:

- That the Phonics policy be approved.

5c) Ramadan Policy

There had been no changes to this policy.

5d) Anti-extremism and Anti-Terrorism Policy

It was explained that this is a new trust-wide policy.

Agreed:

- That the Anti-extremism and Anti-terrorism policy be approved.

5e) Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy

The Principal explained that this is a new policy as this area used to be contained in the first aid policy.

Agreed:

- That the Supporting Children with Medical Conditions policy be approved.

5f) Transgender Guidance

It was explained that this is guidance and not a policy and as such does not require approval.

Agreed:

- That the following policies approved by the Board on 8 December 2017 be adopted for use in Essa Primary Academy.

5g) Pay Policy

5h) Admissions Policy 2018

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.

Governors made no declaration of pecuniary or conflict of interest in the items to be discussed at this meeting.

7. EDUCATION, ACHIEVEMENT AND STUDENT WELFARE

7a) Principal's Report

The Principal clarified the use of I-pads at home and explained that only children in Key Stage Two are now allowed to take the I-pads home each weekend. There had not been any concerns raised by parents in response to this change. The Principal explained that the I-Pads were now being used more effectively on a Monday morning as they are fully charged. The Principal explained that this procedure would be maintained and that until children reach Key Stage 2 they would not be taking I-Pads home.

Due to a Safeguarding IT issue a child had received a one-day fixed term exclusion. The child concerned had removed restrictions on an I-pad and had shared this with other children. This had been addressed very quickly and support had been received from the IT team.

Education and Achievement Working Group

An Education and Achievement meeting had taken place earlier in the week. The two governors in attendance had spent time looking at the overall picture for the core subjects and had focused on the data for Reception and Year 2. The Principal explained that it is more relevant for the detail on progress and attainment to go to the Education and Achievement working group.

Mrs Cathcart reported that the working group had looked at EYFS and Year 2 data and had noted that children in EYFS were doing well but there was a lot of mobility. Governors had discussed science provision and it was explained that children in Year 5 had been going to Essa Academy for science lessons. Mrs Cathcart explained that this had had a good effect for the more able children but not for the less able children and this had resulted in the gap being widened. The more able children are going to continue to have science lessons at Essa Academy in the summer term but it had been decided that it would be better for the less able children to stay in school and have science lessons with their class teacher.

There had been concerns over history and geography and these areas were now being more closely planned and monitored.

The working group had looked particularly at Year 2 and noted that mobility is an issue and that there are still four available places in this year group. The Year 2 cohort was performing better at this stage this year than the previous Year 2 cohort had been at the same time last year.

Writing

Nicola Rafter, an Educational Consultant for English, had met with Mr Kinch and was working to improve English teaching. The academy would start implementing the ideas discussed in spring term 2.

Attainment/Progress – SEN

A parent governor commented that she had looked at the data for Years 5 and Year 2 and felt that progress for the SEN children in these cohorts was not good enough. The Principal replied that there was some room for improvement; however, the SEND needs in Year 5 were very great as there were two children receiving one to one support and seven of these Year 5 children were working at Year 2 level. The Principal explained that she would expect slower progress from these pupils but added that she would still expect it to improve.

Phonics

A governor asked whether the phonics figures compared well to the previous year. The Principal replied that they were higher than last year. The Principal explained that the three year trend would be presented later in the meeting by Salmah Akram. The Principal explained that any child that does not pass the Phonics check whilst in Year 1 has to be re-tested in Year 2. Currently 39% of the 23 children who hadn't passed in Year 1 are on track to pass in Year 2. The Principal explained that these children are receiving a lot of intervention but added that she does not expect the results to be at the national average. The Principal added that the figure should increase from 39%, and explained that some of these children were INA children who had arrived in Year 2. The Principal reported that she would need to breakdown figures on how many children didn't pass the check in Year 1 and how many children hadn't taken it. Governors requested that a breakdown of these figures be provided.

Action:

- Principal to provide a report on how many of the Year 2 children who will be taking the phonics check hadn't passed in Year 1 and how many of them hadn't taken it in Year 1. (this was provided later in the meeting by Salmah Akram).

It was reported that at the beginning of the year, 70.8% of the children in Reception had been predicted to achieve a Good Level of Development, however, there were huge mobility issues in Reception. The Principal explained that there were 51 children in Reception last term but two of these children had been reported as Children Missing Education. There are now 54 children in the year group and two pending offers, both of whom are INA children. The Principal explained that all the children new to the class were targeted as being below GLD. The target has now reduced to 64.2%. A governor asked how this compared with the previous year's figures. The Principal explained that this was still in line with the previous year.

The Principal then explained that regarding mobility there were still five places to fill in Reception with every application being either for INA children or a child who had not long been in the country. The Principal added that due to mobility over the last couple of weeks there had been a huge amount of change in the class. There had been four new children on Monday of the current week, however, another child would be leaving on Thursday and there would be another admission to Reception on Friday. The

Principal explained that the academy is not in a stable position because of the vacancies in Reception and Year 2.

The Principal reported that a few children from Year 4 and Year 5 had left and both these classes are now at 31 pupils. It had been the aim to reduce the class size for these cohorts to 30 children. The Principal reported that there was also some mobility in Year 3 but added that the classes were still full.

The CEO asked what the picture was about what is going on in the classroom as Ofsted were critical about what they had seen, and asked whether it is improving. The Principal replied that joint observations were being carried out in the spring term and added that these were two thirds of the way through. The Principal reported that she had had some concerns in lessons but had seen sustained improvement in some areas. Those staff who needed additional support were receiving this from the Associate Deputy Principals. This involved teaching and learning support and staff were having bespoke CPD development plans targeting areas of concerns. It was explained that this is a 6 week programme and the staff work closely with mentors with support including demonstrations, team teaching and support with planning. The Principal reported that not all lessons in school were good yet.

It was reported that a SLE has been secured to support with attendance and the academy has been partnered with a school in Manchester. Two half days have been booked with their attendance lead. The Principal reported that she had met with the Local Authority to see what else could be done to improve attendance. The number of meetings with parents regarding attendance has increased and more attendance letters have been sent out. After three absences in a term the academy expects medical authorisation for sickness absence to be provided. Pre-warning letters are sent out if the child is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee and a warning letter is sent out after 15 absences. Letters are also sent out to those children who are regularly late. The Principal explained that generally those children with poor punctuality are also poor attenders. Three attendance letters sent out triggers a one to one meeting with the attendance team.

Governors requested the percentage absences for the autumn term and the spring term to date. These were provided at the end of the meeting under AOB.

The Bolton EYFS data pack which is based on entry data showing a comparison to Bolton and national data was provided with the papers for the meeting. It was noted that children come in below or well-below national, however, this year they were slightly higher than the previous year's cohort. It was explained that the target was ambitious but it was felt that it was achievable with the cohort that it was originally set for but that it would need reviewing in line with the current cohort of children.

Achievement for All

The Achievement for All termly report had been included with the papers for the meeting.

Tony Mallard, the coach, carried out an end of term review with the report showing the next steps for development. The Principal explained that four areas are focused on with him and one of these areas is attendance.

The progress of six children who had been selected from each class is tracked. It was noted that three classes of these classes now only have five of the selected children as children leaving are not being replaced on the programme. These children had been selected because they are disadvantaged, with Pupil Premium entitlement, SEN and previous poor attendance being the criteria. The Principal explained that rapid progress is needed to be seen for these children.

Structured conversations, which are an in-depth version of parents' evenings, have taken place and interpreters have been used where necessary. At these meetings staff go into greater detail with the parents. It was explained that these meetings are carried out with the target children. It was reported that staff were finding it difficult because of the low engagement of parents; however, parents were being given another appointment if they had not attended. On average about half of the parents had been seen to date. A governor asked how parents had responded to the initiative. The Principal replied that some of them had found it beneficial as they had not had a real understanding previously. It was explained that there is an element of challenge from the teacher back to the parent. This process has been supported by interpreters where necessary.

A further area focused on was improved understanding from middle leaders. They had been set ongoing CPD and they have to write reflective journals.

The Principal reported that she had seen improved accountability for the progress of all children in a class. There had also been improved attendance monitoring.

The Principal explained that the academy was feeling the benefit from the programme.

It was reported that a different way of holding parents' evening was being piloted with Reception. Each key worker has one child each week to focus on and each week four parents are being seen, they have a 20 minute detailed consultation and parents are able to tell teachers what they would like their child to learn next. Year 1 would pilot this in the summer term and a decision would be taken whether to roll it out further or whether to keep it just to Reception and Year 1.

It was explained that so far there had been 100% attendance from the parents in Reception compared to the previous highest attendance of 59% which showed that it was having a bigger impact.

The Academy Improvement Plan which had been amended and updated would be looked at during the next Education and Achievement working group meeting and was included in the appendices for governors to review.

Assessment Analysis Report

It was explained that this report looked at areas of strength and development and provides a summary. It was explained that an increase in children reaching Age Related Expectations had been seen, however, children were not making rapid enough progress. A governor asked why this was the case. The Principal explained that some of this was due teacher expectations and some of it is differentiation for the more-able. The Principal added that expectations were not high enough for some children. A governor asked how this could change. The Principal replied that this could be through teaching and learning support. She added that it is not a concern in some of the classes. It was explained that homework is being changed but it was still too easy for the more able children.

There was a need to see consistency across the school and across subjects. There was also a need to make sure that impact is seen in writing as well as in reading. It was explained that impact had been seen in writing because of the blogging project, particularly from boys in Key Stage 2.

A governor asked whether there is greater improvement for those children who have been at the academy from the beginning. The Principal agreed that there was, and added that separate groups are being tracked including those children who have been at the academy from the beginning, and also those children who have been at the academy for two years or longer,

It has been seen that those children who had been at the academy for a longer period were making better progress.

The Chair pointed out that Ofsted had commented on boys. The Principal explained that improvement is being seen consistently throughout the school. There is a narrowing of the gaps and in some year groups boys are outperforming girls.

It was reported that there had been a good performance in Year 2 maths. The Principal explained that the targets had been ambitious but there was still a concern in writing.

Ms Akram reported that a phonics tracker had been introduced because Ofsted had felt that the academy needed to look at the tracking process. The academy has introduced the tracking system Phonicstracker.com which had been developed by primary teachers. The academy had signed up to a free trial and it was reported that staff were positive about it as they had found that it had reduced their workload and they were able to build in more assessment of phonics. The academy has now gone to a full subscription and it would be used for Reception and Key Stage 1 and for years 3, 4 and 5 for those children who were still being taught phonics. It was explained that it does not report on phonics for children in Key Stage Two but the tracker allows staff to move phonics classes about more easily.

It was noted that other benefits of the system are that staff can start to track the progress of different pupil groups. It was explained that staff still look at data as they are going along and that the academy still works with Justine Hatter the trust data manager to look at assessment in more detail.

Assessment takes place every 6 weeks on phonics using mock reading tests. A governor reported that she had seen Year 2 children working on phonics during her recent governor monitoring visit and had noted that there was still a number of children in this year group working below expectations in phonics.

It was explained that children who didn't pass the phonics check in Year 1 are usually children with additional needs such as SEN or language problems. It was explained that mobility is an issue and nine INA children who started at the academy just before taking the test all came out as a zero.

The target reported, 76.3%, was for all children taking the phonics test from both Year 1 and 2. It was explained that this is a realistic target as there are a significant number of children who have SEN. It was noted that the progress of those children in Year 2 needed to be accelerated.

The Chair commented that Year 1 seemed to be making strong progress although there seemed to be a number of children in Year 2 who still needed to pass the phonics check. Ms Akram explained that there are now 48 children who have to take the test in Year 2 as this cohort has been affected by mobility. She explained that having different points of entry of the pupils makes it difficult. A governor asked whether there was any formal testing of phonics beyond Year 2. It was confirmed that there wasn't any formal testing but phonics is still taught in Key Stage 2 where needed.

Teaching and learning

Mr Kinch and Ms Akram had started to provide support to staff in December. It was noted that all staff would get support. Every teacher is given six weeks of targeted support in the classroom and they are asked to identify the areas for support or advice. The Associate Deputy Principals had worked with staff to develop strengths, look at weaknesses and agree the next steps. Both were now working with two members of staff. It was noted that some staff had identified differentiation and some questioning. Mr Kinch explained that one teacher had asked for challenge for Greater Depth pupils. It was explained that the support was bespoke and that staff were requested to complete a reflective journal after each session. A governor asked what the feedback from staff had been like. It was explained that it had been very positive so far. One member of staff had initially raised a concern but this came out positively in the end. It was explained that this is not part of the appraisal process, however, if something comes out which needs to be reported it would have to go back to the Principal. A governor asked whether the benefit could be seen coming through in children's improvement. It was explained that it was still very early on in the process. Ms Akram added that she had carried out some joint observations and had seen significant improvements.

The Associate Deputy Principals were also supporting middle leaders and a lot of work around action plans had been carried out to ensure that all were written in same way as there had previously been a lot of discrepancies. They would also make sure that policies are all in place for all subjects.

7b) Safeguarding Updates

The Principal reported that all staff had carried out further training on safeguarding. Trust training had taken place on social media and there had also been online training on self-harm and forced marriages. Certified courses had been completed over a period of time.

It was noted that the Deputy Principal would be undertaking Prevent training in Wigan.

It was explained that the Trust will have an external audit of safeguarding processes.

Trust Safeguarding meetings were taking place on a regular basis in order to be consistent and to work through the safeguarding audit.

7c) SRE Developments

The Principal explained that a meeting with parents had been held to talk them through the SRE curriculum. She added that this meeting had been quite well attended. It was explained that parents would have the opportunity to see the proposed curriculum and would be informed what they need to do if they don't want their child to take part in the lessons. The training had been provided by the company who designed the curriculum and it was explained that another session would be held for parents. The Principal added that she would follow-up on some of the comments raised by parents. The Principal explained that this is a bought-in curriculum called the Jigsaw and added that it is a work in progress and further meetings would be held.

7d) External Support/Validation

The Principal reported that she had secured support for assessment and attendance through the Teaching Alliance. There would be two full days support for assessment and two half days for attendance.

Mrs Butler, a Local Authority consultant would be undertaking a termly review and would look at data and carry out a learning walk.

7e) Building Developments

Additional walls had been installed for Years 1 and 2 last year and the same work had been proposed for Years 4, 5 and 6 this year. Three quotes had been received for this work with the lowest quote of £5,095 coming from a company which had previously carried out work at the academy. The Principal explained that hopefully this work could be carried out in the Easter holidays but added that she wanted to timetable it in to co-ordinate with the work going ahead at Essa Academy.

Agreed:

- That approval be given for the installation of walls for the year 4, 5 and 6 classrooms
- That the lowest quote of £5,095 be accepted.

The Finance Director reported that a bid had been placed for CIF funding and the academy would find out if the bid had been successful in April. The Finance Director explained that the bidding process covered five categories and explained that a lot of things that had been bid for were medium and low risk. It was explained that the bid was in regard to the room above the office to create an additional PE space. Currently there is only one hall which is not big enough to cater for all the children for lunch at the same time, there would need to be three lunch sittings. The Finance Director explained that there would be a spare classroom for Year 6 but in the long term this work would need to be done to facilitate PE lessons. From an equality point of view PE would be timetabled in if the bid is unsuccessful.

8a) Governor Training and Development

Mrs Patel reported that she had been invited into school by Mr Kinch to look at English. Mrs Patel explained that she had looked at Year 1 books and reported that these were showing a positive improvement. All classes had been split into colour coding for child ability. Mrs Patel added that in the book scrutiny she had seen that teachers' expectations were consistent and high.

Mrs Patel reported that she had made another visit to check phonics and English plans. During this visit a guided reading class was taking place in one class. Mrs Patel explained that she could see how children were interacting and that this was positive. She added that lesson planning was quite detailed and expectations were included on lesson plans. Mrs Patel explained that she had also carried out a learning walk through school and found children to be focused and positive.

The Chair reported that he had attended a Senior Leadership meeting in December and this had been positive. The meeting had included a lively debate which went into detail in relation to how individual areas were being developed. There had been a lengthy discussion on maths and commitment to the points being raised was shown. The Chair added that he would attend a further meeting and would look at the Pupil Premium.

8b) Any Other Business

External Review of Governance

It was reported that Annette Harris, the Local Authority Governor Development Officer, would be conducting a governance review. The first step would be meeting with individual governors. A governor asked what the focus of the external review would be. The Principal explained that Mrs Harris would look at how the LGB is working and make recommendations. She added that this would help governors understand their role and provide the next steps for development. The secondary academy had already

had a review and had felt that this was a very positive process. The Principal added that this is external support as part of leadership and management improvement.

English Classes for Parents

The Vice Chair reported at the Education and Achievement working group a discussion had taken place about providing English classes for parents. It had been noted that many parents could not read or write the language they speak. If parents were to learn English this would help them to help their children and would be of benefit to both academies. It could also help parents them understand British cultures including attendance at school. The Principal agreed to take this on board.

Attendance

Attendance for the autumn term was 93.80% which showed a slight improvement on the previous year which had been 93.54%.

Attendance currently stood at 94.04% which was slightly up on the same point last year 93.59%.

Term Dates 2018/19

The LGB received a copy of the proposed term dates for 2018/19 and noted that these were in line with the Local Authority pattern. Three occasional days still needed to be determined and the Principal explained that these would be done in line with Essa Academy. One occasional day would be used for Eid and two for INSET days.

10. CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS

Agreed:

- To consent to the absence from this meeting of Nazida Patel, Tasneem Patel, Sofiya Patel and Phil Jackson.
- Not to consent to the absence from the meeting of Ismail Kala.
- That the Chair contact Ismail Kala about attendance at meetings.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:

- That the next meeting be held on Wednesday 21 March 2018 at 9.00am
- That the next Education and Achievement working group meeting be held on 12 March 2018.

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 number 3

The meeting closed at 10.35 am

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____

ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2018 AT 9.00AM

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

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

Nigel Whittle in the Chair

Part 2 Confidential Minutes

3. HUMAN RESOURCES

The Principal reported that interviews had taken place in the previous week and two teachers had been appointed to start in September. One teacher has experience in EYFS, and one teacher has been appointed to the Upper Key Stage Two team who is the maths and PE lead at his current school where he teaches in years 5 and 6.

Advertisements have been placed for a SENCO and a mainstream teacher and interviews for these posts would take place before half term.

The Principal explained that she would make sure that the academy would be in regular contact with new recruits and they would be involved in transition meetings in June and July as in the previous year.

The Chair questioned the minibus provision and explained that the LGB had been keen to stop it but the Board had not been in agreement. The Principal explained that there were only five children using it and these children come from three families. She added that no parents had expressed concerns that it would not continue as they had not expected it to be permanent. The Chair questioned whether the provision should be stopped earlier than the summer. The Principal explained that she had approval for stopping the provision at the end of the summer term. The CEO explained that the minibus driver would be leaving at the end of the school year and said that this was a post which had been removed from the staffing structure.

Agreed:

- To approve the minibus service finishing at the end of the summer term.

The Chair questioned the 22 days teacher sickness absence in the first term and asked how it compared to previous years. The Principal agreed to check this with the HR Director. It was requested that this figure be provided as a percentage and also that the figure for associate staff be provided so that it could be monitored.

It was reported that the CEO and the Chair had carried out the Principal's Performance Management.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____