

ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 2018 AT 9.00AM

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

In attendance: David Howarth (Finance Director), Sharon Weaver (Deputy Head Teacher) 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 and Andrew Cooper.

1b) LGB Working Party Membership

The Principal circulated an updated membership list for the working parties. It was explained that there was a vacancy for the Year 1 link governor which would be left open for the new governor. The Chair would no longer be the Pupil Premium Governor and Aatika Patel would fulfil this role with the Chair becoming the link governor for Looked After Children. The Principal explained that it was a priority to recruit a new governor and asked governors to let the Chair know if they knew of anyone suitable. It was noted that the vacancy is for a Sponsor Governor.

2. BUDGET AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

2a) Budget Report

The Finance Director reported that monthly monitoring to the end of January showed that the budget was better by £28,500 than it had been thought it would be at this point. The Finance Director explained that this had been due to the General Annual Grant (GAG) having been under-budgeted and also because more income had been received, including more SEN income than had been budgeted for. The SEN money has now been budgeted with the school receiving £1,800 per month and also a backdated £10,000 which related to 2016/17.

It was explained that the budget also showed an overspend to the supply budget and the teaching budget. It was noted that the teacher appointed through Teach First had left in October and the academy had received a credit of £3,400 for her that had not yet shown up in the report.

The Chair reported that the Finance Working Group had met during the previous week and the overall picture was that the academy has more money than

expected even after the additional expenditure for years 4 and 5. The Chair explained that he had met with the Principal and had discussed whether there were any areas where additional money could be put in to support the children.

The Principal asked the Finance Director how accurate the figures were and commented that this seemed to be a regular pattern over the last three years. The Principal added that she would be reluctant to commit to additional expenditure in case the SEND money does not come in as planned in the summer term. The Chair pointed out that one of the reasons for this increase was that some of the income figures were completely new and the income had not been in the budget initially and suggested that plans were made to spend this money to support the children as this would be done on the best evidence available. The Principal added that the Sports Premium Grant was also included in the budget and this was ring-fenced. There was a need to evidence how this has been spent and for it to be included on the website.

It was noted that the budget for learning resources was underspent by £6,000, however, it was expected that some of this could have changed as these were the January figures. The Chair agreed to meet with the Finance Director and the Principal to plan quickly for any additional expenditure. The Finance Director agreed to double check the last 12 months income for SEN. It was confirmed that there would be an additional amount allocated for the Sports Premium in April.

A governor asked whether the situation had changed as she had thought that the budget was in a deficit position. The Chair pointed out that the academy is part of a Trust and they had approved the deficit in order to pump prime the school. He added that the LGB has to be responsible to ensure that the money is well spent to better the school and added that he did not think the LGB would be criticised for this decision.

Agreed:

- Subject to review to approve the additional expenditure to support learning.

It was noted that if the available amount was small this would be used for curriculum resources but if it is a larger amount then this would be used to employ a person to provide the support.

It was reported that the budget was showing a better position than the agreed deficit. The Finance Director explained that the budget had been reviewed line by line and added that the building work for additional walls had been factored into the budget at a cost of £5,000. The income was showing that the budget was £54,500 better off than it had originally been thought. The Finance Director added that he would provide a year-end forecast for every meeting. The Finance Director agreed to meet with the Chair and the Principal to look at the best estimate.

2b) Health and Safety Report

The Principal reported that a Safeguarding Audit would be taking place across the Trust on 25 and 26 April and this would be carried out by Alliance for Learning along with the four safeguarding leads across the Trust.

It was reported that more quotes were being sought to update the CCTV system.

The Principal reported that letters had been sent out to parents confirming that the gates would be closed during the school day and setting out arrangements for those who might need to get access.

There had been some actions which had been highlighted in the fire safety report. The Principal explained that these had been minor actions which had been raised 3 years ago and were now being actioned.

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 31 January 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

5. POLICIES FOR ADOPTION/APPROVAL

It was reported that the More Able policy was due for review but there had not been any changes recommended to the policy.

It was reported that there had been a few changes to the RE policy in order to tighten up on the scheme that was currently being used.

5ai) Handwriting Policy

Agreed:

- That the Handwriting policy be approved.

5aaii) Assessment Policy

The Assessment Policy had not been submitted for approval at this meeting.

5aiiii) Medicines Policy

Agreed:

- That the Medicines policy be approved.

5aiv) SMSC Policy

Agreed:

- That the SMSC policy be approved.

5av) Attendance Policy

Agreed:

- That the Attendance policy be approved.

5avi) LAC Policy

Agreed:

- That the Attendance policy be approved.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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 reported that there were currently vacancies in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. There had been three admission meetings held on the previous day, for places in years 3, 2 and 1. In addition to these children paperwork had been received from the Local Authority for two more Year 2 children and one Reception child.

The Principal reported that an appeal had been held during the previous week for a Year 3 place. The academy had lost the appeal and would be admitting the child which would mean that the class size would increase to 31. It was explained that the parents' reasons were deemed stronger than the schools reasons.

It was reported that it was expected that a family with children in Reception, Year 4 and Year 5 would be moving out of the area and leaving the school. This would mean that the numbers in Years 4 and 5 would go back to 30.

The Principal explained that the academy would lose funding for eight children with the classes having reduced from 34 to 30 but added that the academy has now gone back to the desired position. A governor commented that this was much better for teaching; however, the academy would be vulnerable to appeals. The Principal added that there was a bulge of pupil numbers working through Key Stage 2 in the local area.

The Principal reported that there was currently a child in Year 3 who was going through the EHCP process and had been accepted by the Pupil Referral Unit for a two day per week placement. The Principal added that this had been very positive as there were a lot of applicants for these places. The mentor from the PRU would join the pupil at Essa Primary Academy on Fridays. It was explained that the child would be dual registered. A governor asked whether the academy has to pay for this support.

The Principal explained that this would be without charge, however, the school has to pay for one-to-one support for the child with no funding and a lot of SLT support also goes to the child. It was explained that the child was an INA child on arrival to the academy in the summer term. The child had displayed some challenging behaviour but then seemed to settle. It was noted that there were now a number of agencies involved with the child.

The Principal congratulated Mr Kinch on achieving the NPQL award and added that both he and Salmah Akram would be starting on the NPQH programme.

It was reported that a lot of support on mentoring had been provided by the Executive Principal. This support would continue when he leaves at Easter and would be provided by the Senior Leadership Team.

The Principal explained that she had included the current attendance report with the papers for the meeting in response to a request from governors.

It was reported that there were 59 persistent absentee children which was a significant number. Joint meetings with a member of the Early Intervention team had been arranged for 12 families but only two of these families had turned up to the meeting. All of the families who did not attend would receive home visits from the Early Intervention team. It was noted that a number of families were due to go to court because of non-attendance and nine penalty notices had been issued; some of these were due to poor attendance and some due to holidays in term time.

A governor questioned why there was still a large number of children in Year 2 who were below the target for passing the phonics check. The Principal explained that these figures had not been updated from the last meeting. These figures would be updated at the end of term and emailed out to governors. A governor asked whether the results were expected to be in line with predictions for Year 1. The Principal confirmed that they would be and said that there were no issues in this respect.

Assessment

It was reported that the Deputy Head Teacher would be leading on the Education and Improvement Group.

The academy was working with a Specialist Leader of Education from Heathfield School to tighten up the assessment procedures and calendar to make sure that they are accurate against the national standard and then to use the data to inform future planning. It was explained that there had been a lot of in-depth analysis of different pupil groups, and also looking at where there are gaps so that this can lead into accurate intervention to close the gaps.

The Principal explained that governors had been provided with a more simplified version of the data which showed attainment and progress data for the half-term ending in February which highlighted where there were significant strengths and also areas for development. It was noted that across all subjects with the exception of Year

5, progress was good and showed a significant improvement. The Principal explained that attainment was below where the academy should be nationally but as the progress figures are high this shows that gaps are being closed.

Education and Achievement Working Group report – Mrs Cathcart

Mrs Cathcart reported that the Working Group had found the data sheet to be very valuable. It had highlighted boys reading in Year 3, issues in writing in Year 2 and all three subjects in Year 5 as a concern. The Working Group had agreed that the appointment to the Year 6 position for next year would be vital. A governor asked whether any benefit had been seen for the additional investment in staffing. It was explained that the benefit could be seen in Year 4 but not for Year 5. This was being closely monitored. It was explained that if a similar process of investment was to continue next year this would be an investment in Year 6. The Principal explained that different models were being looked at and there was a need to consider where staff would be teaching.

The Deputy Head Teacher added that there would be a different set of data to inform which cohort would need additional support. It was explained that in the current Year 5 there was a high number of persistent absentee children and children with a poor attitude to learning which was being worked on. A dramatic improvement had not been seen to date but this could improve once they start accessing what has been provided for them. The Principal added that in Year 5 out of the 30 children 12 do not have Key Stage One data as they had joined the class within Key Stage Two as INA children. She added that when the progress of the children being at the academy for the maximum amount of time the progress was significant. It was noted that only five out of the 30 children had started at Essa Primary in Reception. A governor expressed a concern that some of these children might not be secondary ready. The Principal explained that the academy was aware of the vulnerability of some of the children and the current Year 5 teacher had met with the Year 7 transition lead from Essa Academy to discuss mental wellbeing. It was reported that Mr Kinch would be taking a lead on transition as there was a need to ensure a smooth a transition as possible. As part of this Year 6 children would be going to Essa Academy once a week for singing lessons with Year 7. A governor commented that there had been an issue with science lessons for this year group at Essa Academy where some children had benefitted and some had not. The Principal replied that the Senior Leadership Team were mindful of this and have put as many opportunities in as possible.

A governor asked for an explanation on the colour coding on the data sheet which showed Year 3 shaded in a lighter green. The Principal explained that light green showed above age related expectations and darker green was further above. The darker green showed real accelerated progress with some which were close to being double the expected progress. A governor asked whether the school has progress targets. The principal explained that the academy does not have progress targets but has attainment targets. A governor asked if the attainment targets could be included in the data sheet. It was agreed that this could be added and it was pointed out that there was no national benchmark for progress as this was too individual. The Deputy

Head Teacher agreed to include the national target and the school target on the data sheet for governors.

Mrs Cathcart had explained that the Education and Achievement Group had talked about the Free School Meal children and PPG children being very different and had agreed that persistent absence was more of an issue and had suggested that a comparison of persistent absentees and non-persistent absentees could be made.

7b) Safeguarding Updates

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

7c) English and maths Developments

Mr Kinch reported that the uptake of reading had improved. Regular reminders were being sent to children and staff about the expectations of reading. He explained that he was able to see how many children were not engaging and said that he would see the parents of these children so that this can be picked up quickly.

Focus resources have now been used for six months. It was explained that the scheme gives medium term plans plus the books that should be used.

Mr Kinch reported that he had been working with Nicola Rafter, an English Consultant.

The academy was working on the Reciprocal Reading project for Year 4 and 5 until the end of the school year. Mr Kinch explained that he liked aspects of this work but would not recommend that it be used wholesale across the school.

Lexia was now being used in all classes three times per week with children getting certificates weekly. Mr Kinch explained that an improvement from using this was being seen. It was noted that Lexia was only being used in Reception for children when they had reached a particular level.

Mr Kinch reported that the academy has now been looking at handwriting and a decision had been made to go with the Pen Pals Scheme which had been developed by Cambridge University. The expectation of this is that it is carried out daily.

Beanstalk reading was ongoing. Two children on the scheme would be leaving the academy and they would be replaced on the scheme by different children. It was explained that this was provided by a charity but the school had to pay for this support.

It was reported that writing would be a major focus moving forward especially cross curricular. A collaborative writing project with the blog was being carried out.

Salmah Akram had set up a school library system and has encouraged parents to use the library with their children after school; there are also parents volunteers running it. It was explained that this is all done electronically which enables the school to see

which children are not accessing reading. The Love to Read project had been carried out last term and this work was displayed in school.

Mr Kinch explained that he would be working on transition for the NPQH.

One of the English teachers from Essa Academy had carried out lesson observations and a learning walk. Mr Kinch added that he would be meeting with the Vice Principal from Essa Academy to put together an action plan for transition.

An English policy and a writing policy were being developed.

A governor referred to the report from the Local Authority advisor and asked why standards in writing were low in Year 2. It was explained that there had been an influx of INA children in that year group, the vast majority of these children were not even at letter formation level. A governor commented that there was a need to ensure that staff continued to push these children. The Principal explained that there was an additional internal teacher providing support for Year 2, and a HLTA has been allocated two mornings per week to support the more able groups as she has a lot of experience in this area. The HLTA had just been accepted on the Teach First programme and the balance of her time would shift more to Year 2. The Chair pointed out that the report had showed that Years 3 and 4 were doing well. Mr Kinch explained that these were settled groups with no children starting and three of the lower achieving children having left. The classes also have the most experienced teachers. He added that the other classes have mitigating factors. The Principal added that the children who are in classes of high mobility are constantly losing friends and this had had an impact on them.

A governor commented that it was good to see the impact of training on what has gone on in school.

Maths presentation – Mr Shurlock

It was reported that a revised maths action plan was in place which included the SLT working on coaching. It was explained that this had been changed so that each of the priorities was specifically related to areas for improvement raised by Ofsted. The next stage of the work was to make sure that evidence is being collated.

Mr Shurlock explained that a lot of things had been put in place to improve outcomes. This included the pre-teach process of staff gathering information on where pupils are at before introducing new topics in order to ensure that lessons are tailored to the needs of the children.

It was explained that concrete manipulatives were being introduced which might mean using something like a pebble to introduce concepts and also bar modelling to show a pictorial representation of real-life mathematics. A governor asked for a more detailed explanation of this. Mr Shurlock explained that it was similar to a number line and is a process by which children can recognise what they need to do. He added that maths skills need to be taught explicitly so that this can help the children solve problems

which include words. On the CPA journey (Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract) the children need to understand the concrete or pictorial stage in order to help the abstract concept. Mr Shurlock explained that it helps to physically touch the object. He added that the classes in Key Stage One were at the concrete stage and every class has something based on what the teacher thinks the class needs.

It was explained that for fluency in problem solving the aim was to try to move to a balance across the week to give children the opportunity of giving reasons for what they are saying and for problem solving in order to add deeper understanding. It was noted that staff have been provided with resources.

A parent governor commented that it could be seen by the homework how maths teaching has changed, but parents were struggling with how maths is taught.

It was explained that the next step was to share the calculation policy with parents.

Mr Shurlock explained that he had also asked staff to provide thumbnails from the policy which could be dropped into the homework. He added that he would also invite parents in to explain the system and added that the academy was trying to encourage fluency based homework.

Mr Shurlock reported that he had recently carried out a staff survey on maths. The survey showed that 100% of staff were using the pre-teach task, but a majority had disagreed with the question about pupils being able to talk about maths. Mr Shurlock explained that in order to address this sentence stems have been put in all classes. All staff were now using the new Focus curriculum. Mr Shurlock explained that the new calculations policy was being used but added that there was still some room for improvement.

It was reported that there would be some CPD on maths provided to staff. Mr Shurlock explained that the staff in Years 3 and 4 were not doing the concrete part of the scheme, Year 5 was fine, however, Mr Shurlock said that there was some room for improvement here. He added that the Reception and Key Stage One staff had felt confident doing the scheme.

7d) External Support/Validation

A report had been provided with the papers for the meeting to provide reassurance to governors that the academy is continuing to seek external support. Deb Butler from the Local Authority would make a further visit in the summer term. The Principal explained that the academy has selected for the option to have her in as and when she is required. It was noted that support was also being provided from the Teaching Alliance.

The Principal reported that every year the academy had bought into the Behaviour Support Service Level Agreement from the Local Authority. The Trust had said that they did not want to continue with this service next year. The Principal explained that officially the Service Level Agreement finishes in March and said that she would like to

request that it continues next term. The £7,000 cost of this has been built into the budget. The Principal explained that the Trust had thought that there might be a better alternative going forward, however, the Principal said that she did not want the academy to be vulnerable during the summer term.

The Principal requested approval for the service to continue subject to the agreement from Behaviour Support that they would be able to provide the service.

Agreed:

- To purchase the services from Behaviour Support for the summer term.

The Chair asked what would happen in the following year. The Principal explained that the amount paid over the two academies could equate to a person's salary. It was explained that if a child needs a referral to CAMHS the school is not able to do it but Behaviour Support are able to do so. The Principal explained that it is the wider support that is valuable. A governor asked what the secondary academy would be doing from April with regard to Behaviour Support. The Principal replied that she did not know but added that she would inform them of the decision by the LGB at her next meeting with the CEO.

7e) Governor Audit

It was reported that most governors had attended the feedback of the External review of governance. The Principal commented that it was a positive report which would help to move governance forward.

It was noted that there was a need for a skills audit to be carried out as this had not been done for some time.

It had also been a recommendation that the Chair talks to governors individually about their roles.

It had been advised that the LGB needs to be stronger on the liaisons with subject leaders.

The Principal advised that an action plan needed to be developed and governors would need to meet as soon as possible after the Easter holiday to discuss an action plan. It was agreed that a pre-meeting would take place with the Principal, Chair and Vice Chair on 16 April with a full meeting taking place on 23 April. It was explained that the skills audit would fit into the action plan. It was noted that there had been a parallel review at the secondary academy.

Agreed:

- That a meeting take place on 23 April to look at the Governor Action Plan.

Mrs Cathcart reported that she had visited Reception in her role as link governor for that year group. She reported that she had seen Numicon, which was new to the children, in practice and added that it had been good to see things in practice that had been talked about at meetings. She added that there had also been a lot of boy friendly activities in evidence.

Mrs Cathcart reported that she had been able to see the issues highlighted by Ofsted at forefront in the classroom.

Mrs Cathcart pointed out that mobility had been an issue in Reception this year.

Mrs Cathcart explained that she had also planned to meet with the maths co-ordinator.

The Chair encouraged all governors to try to visit the academy at least once before the June meeting.

8. **GOVERNANCE**

The Principal provided governors with a copy of the governance handbook and explained that she was looking to set up a physical file of the core documents for governors. It was noted that the governor handbook had not been updated for a while.

The Chair reported that he had spoken to Mr Kala about non-attendance at meetings and he had raised a point over the timing of the meetings which have always met at 9.00am. The Chair explained that a discussion had not taken place recently to discuss whether this time was still suitable. Mr Kala had indicated that morning meetings were difficult for him because of work, and explained that the secondary LGB meetings had moved to early evenings.

The Chair asked governors whether they would like to consider different meeting times. The Principal advised that meeting times should reflect the current membership and when new governors are appointed the time of the meetings should be made clear. Governors were in agreement that meetings should remain at 9.00am.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A parent governor asked why there had not been anything communicated about the change in the provision of Halal food. The Principal replied that nothing had been communicated because nothing had changed at Essa Primary Academy which was still using HMC food. She added that there would have been a communication if there had been a change.

A governor asked for clarification about Key Stage One pupils not being allowed to take I-Pads home. The Principal replied that they would not be taking them home and it was also likely that Key Stage Two pupils would not be taking them home either. The Principal explained that this would be a Trust decision.

The Principal reported that SPTO had been used for tracking attainment but she was looking at introducing Target Tracker which would be cost neutral.

10. CONSENT TO ABSENT GOVERNORS

The Principal reported that Phil Jackson had left the academy and would not be continuing with his role as governors. The Principal added that clarity was needed around the two co-opted governor positions which had been for one year and were coming to an end. The Principal pointed out that Tasneem Patel's contribution in the Ofsted meeting had added at strength to the LGB. It was suggested that Tasneem Patel be approached to see if she would like to continue in this role. A governor asked whether she would be eligible to become a Sponsor Governor. The Principal agreed to discuss this with the CEO.

Agreed:

- To consent to the absence from this meeting of Tasneem Patel and Ismail Kala.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:

- That the next meeting be held on Wednesday 27 June 2018 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 number 3 and 7a)

The meeting closed at 10.55 am

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____

ESSA PRIMARY ACADEMY
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING
HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 2018 AT 9.00AM

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

In attendance: David Howarth (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

It was reported that a resignation had been received from the current Year 2 teacher and it had been negotiated that she leaves at Easter as it would be more appropriate for the hand over to take place after a holiday. Matthew Hannon would be taking over in Year 2 and would be in school during the week before the Easter break. A letter would be sent to parents to tell them about the staffing change and Mr Hannon would also attend the parents evening.

It was reported that five of the vacancies had been filled for September.

A new SENCO had been appointed and would be visiting the school on the following Monday.

Amelia Newman had been appointed as an NQT.

The Principal explained that there was one final vacancy but added that a few leads were being explored before this post is advertised.

It was reported that the Office Manager had been offered a fixed-term promotion in HR and her post would be backfilled by Sara Padaliya from Essa Academy who had been part of the start-up at the primary academy. The Office Manager would return to Essa Primary Academy before Christmas.

The Chair asked for clarification over the expectation around the outstanding post. The Principal replied that this would depend on who applies but added that she did not really want another NQT. This post would be advertised after the Easter holiday. A governor asked whether this vacancy would be for Year 2. The Principal replied that she had not yet decided who would be teaching where for next year.

A governor pointed out that Ofsted had highlighted that there had been a lot of movement of teachers. The Principal explained that the Year 2 teacher was leaving for personal reasons. She added that there would be two additional classes from September and the Trust were offering staff 20% PPA time. There was also a need for a SENCO as the existing SENCO was stepping down from this role. There was only one member of staff who would be leaving the academy this year.

A governor asked whether the staff sickness levels were acceptable. The Principal explained that although this looked significant she had no concerns about teaching staff and the absences amongst the associate staff was due to one or two individuals. The Principal added that she was making sure that meetings were taking place with staff when they hit the triggers for three absences in six months or four absences in twelve months.

Agreed:

- That the report be noted

7b) Safeguarding Updates

It was reported that there would be a two-day safeguarding audit carried out in the summer term.

It was reported that an internal safeguarding incident had been held because a child from the Reception class had got out of the school at the end of the day with another parent. A full investigation had been carried out and action had been taken. It was explained that the CEO had been involved and was happy with the outcome of the investigation.

Signed as a correct record: _____

Date: _____