



Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Board, Onslow Infant School Held on Wednesday 24th March 2021 - 19.30 – Via ZOOM

Present:	Katy Peters	Chair
	Jess Sinclair	Vice Chair
	Katherine Donlon	Head Teacher
	Tim Bevans	TB
	Ashley Harris	AH
	Steven Hill	SH
	Rosie Marsden-Farmer	RMF
	Sam Merchant	SM
	Amanda Pardoe	AP
	Roberta Roggerio	RR
	Claire Morris	CM
	Will Salmon	WS

In attendance:	Sarah Churchill	Clerk
	Bernard Murphy	Observer from NGA Leading Governance Course
	Shraddha Baviskar, Kim Cook, Charlotte Palmer, Felicity Robinson, Ashley Taylorson	

The Meeting was Quorate

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - None

INTRODUCTIONS - The potential and existing governors introduced themselves to each other.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** - None

3. **DECLARATIONS OF NEGLIGENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY** - Were read

4. **MINUTES of the meeting 06/12/2020** - Were agreed

MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE IN THE AGENDA

- The updated protocol for alternative participation will be uploaded onto GVO by **KP**
- **WS** will undertake safeguarding training prior to the next meeting. **(WS) TB will recommend some appropriate courses** as it is not clear from the Better Governor website which are necessary.

5. **CHAIR'S ACTIONS** - None

6. **EXPECTATIONS OF GOVERNANCE DURING A PANDEMIC**

The Chair outlined that the expectations of governance have continued during the pandemic. She explained that the role is still to challenge and ask questions as part of scrutinising the education and finances of the school, but it's also important to remember one of duties is to the health and wellbeing of staff and be sensitive to that.

The chair also reminded governors that news and updates are on the GVO and they include the Risk Assessment which is a live document. Part of the role of governors is to be aware of the RA and any updates to it. People can add questions to the GVO and the HT will respond. The HT added that the questions are incredibly helpful as they give pointers to things we might not have thought about.

7. **CONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

a) **Skills matrix**

JS explained to the potential governors that the board creates a skills matrix to ensure there is a balance of the right skills within the board. Some might be general to governance such as financial or educational and some might be more particular to current priorities in the School Development Plan. This helps the board with its succession planning and recruitment.
Action - All governor to complete the skills matrix on the GVO to help with the process.



b) Parent Governor Vacancy

Shraddha Baviskar, a potential new parent governor, was introduced and she was attending as part of her decision making process. If she chooses to proceed she can join after the DBS check is carried out.

c) Community Governor

A number of potential community governors were present and were encouraged to join the meeting as part of the recruitment process so that they could see what a meeting would be like. JS would circulate statements from each potential governor that was still interested and their skills would be compared to the skills matrix to ensure a good fit.

Action - JS to circulate statements and compare to skills matrix

d) Succession Planning and Development

This is part of what is important to the board and involves thinking about the roles people have and how they can develop. It also allows the board to plan to replace skills lost as people move on from the board.

The chair explained that her time as chair would be ending soon and encouraged governors to let her or the clerk know if they are interested in taking on that role next year. Anyone interested can start to be involved in shadowing some of the things that the current chair is involved in, such as the next agenda seating meeting and a meeting to look at the minutes and how they evidence governance.

8. ADDITIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a) School Forum Membership – This is a forum made up of unions and school head teachers and they are looking for governors to join. It is a really useful forum to get first knowledge of what is going to happen in Surrey County Council and to raise concerns as SCC has to consult with the forum. Nominations close end next week. Anyone interested should contact KP after the meeting.

b) Working party on positive income streams –C&L committee suggested a working party was needed to look at positive ideas for funding streams with the support on an external financial advisor who would ensure that the ideas would genuinely create an income stream. It would be beneficial to have someone from F,S&P join the working party.

Action: SM to add this to the agenda for next week.

The potential governors left at this point of the meeting.

TB noted that some of the potential governors had skills that would be relevant to this working party and the board should consider asking them to be an associate if they are not able to be the Community Governor

9. HT REPORT

a) Y1 Data - The HT highlighted that there were differences in Y1 results in maths and English between classes and that she would be speaking to the teacher about those differences to get a better understanding of the causes of this and how it would be tackled through covid catch up funding.

b) Safeguarding - This had been covered in C&L but key points were that during lockdown teachers had made regular calls home and seen the children online during zoom assemblies. During this time two children were moved onto a Children in Need Plan.

c) Staff wellbeing - KD highlighted how teachers have managed two types of learning and that this was difficult for them. However, in terms of wellbeing SLT had tried to create some kind of balance between home learning and in school learning by staff alternating.

Questions Arising from the HT Report



JS said it wasn't very clear from the PP report how the measures listed were helping PP children progress more than other children as many of the measures were whole class measures. **She asked** whether it possible to explain how much of the resource was focussed on PP children and how it was impacting on their progress? **KD responded** that due to the small numbers it was very hard to talk about measures in reports without identifying children. However, all the PP money was being used to support PP children. **KD suggested** it was a priority for the Inclusion Link Governor to talk through the PP strategy with the Inclusion Lead and unpick how it is helping particular children. It would be useful to use anonymised case studies to support this. It would then be possible to report back to C&L. JS agreed that would be very useful especially helping understand the SEN cross over with PP.

ACTION - RG to focus on the PP strategy in her next link meeting and report back to C&L.

JS asked if the school was identifying any extra PP children resulting from the economic effects of covid-19. **KD replied** that checks are made regularly and there will be one at beginning of the summer term.

JS noted that the amount allocated to covid-19 catch-up was greater than the recovery fund received and **questioned** how this would take place, for example had extra staff been employed.

KD replied that schools are allowed to spend over the amount in the recovery premium, they can just not spend less. The school has just reallocated existing resources, so KD and AP are leading the intervention group that are being set up after teachers have identified any gaps. This means interventions are led by highly qualified staff at no additional cost.

JS asked how pupil wellbeing would be measured. **KD responded** that a pupil survey will be carried out in the summer term. Anecdotally children are rushing in looking happy and the classrooms feel positive. However, it is clear that stamina has suffered again during lockdown. Teachers are doing lots of outdoor activities to support their learning and increase stamina.

JS queried whether parents are aware if they don't use the clubs they may become unviable and stop operating. **KD replied** that it wasn't something the school had alerted parents to. However the clubs are getting busier even with the restrictions as a lot of the out of school clubs are still via zoom.

CM asked whether there had been any uptake on lateral flow test from parents. **KD explained** that the tests were voluntary and parents have to arrange them through their employer or pick them up from a local site. The results are not fed back to the school and are kept centrally by the government

KP asked whether there was an update on admission figures. **KD replied** that this information wasn't available.

9a RISK ASSESSMENT

TB highlighted an error on the class lead for otter class which was now corrected.

TB asked whether lateral flow tests were offered to after school club and on-site caterers and whether this should be explicit in the risk assessment. **KD confirmed** the caterers and clubs were offered tests and would update the RA to reflect this.

TB asked whether the risk assessment was clear enough around forward facing tables. **KD said** it is a living document so at the moment is worded as the children do a mix of table work and continuous provision. As they move to more formal learning the RA will be adjusted.

TB asked what are the specific actions expected of caterers and afterschool clubs regarding Covid-19 as our RA only mentions school staff. KD said we do have expectations and contracts that go out to all our external providers so the RA does need to specifically reference this. KD will also ensure that they have received copies of the risk assessment.

ACTION: KD to update RA with regard to external contractors and ensure they have a copy of the RA.

10. UPDATE FROM THE FINANCE, STAFFING AND PREMISES COMMITTEE



The **SFVS** was submitted to Surrey County Council on the 17th March 2021. SM explained that it was reviewed at every finance meeting and it uses a traffic light system to highlight issues. All governors had seen and agreed with the SFVS as submitted to SCC.

SM highlighted that the budget for 21/22 showed a surplus not a deficit which wasn't initially expected. This was in part due to some additional catch-up funding and SEN transitional funding which was not included before.

SM mentioned that the financial consultant had said despite this positive news there is a significant in-year deficit in 21/22 and the budget is being propped up by the carry forward. Therefore SCC will want to see evidence of how the budget will be balanced in years 2 and 3.

Governors identified that the proposed staffing structure review was part of the plan showing how the school is tackling its deficit but queried if it will still be needed.

KD confirmed that the current situation is better than expected but a discussion around the staffing structure would still need to take place but with less immediate pressure. This item is discussed further under Part 2.

KD reminded governors that the working party detailed in point 8 will hopefully identify some income streams. She also explained that one positive aspect on the budget is that vacant places have significantly reduced. When there was 30 vacant places across the school was paying for a teacher it couldn't afford and that is no longer the case.

Governors agreed that at the next finance committee they would gain a fuller understanding of why the financial situation has improve including a more in-depth understanding of the SEN transitional funding and understanding whether there are some additional covid-19 costs that are yet to come into light which might change the more positive picture.

Morning Club

A member of the Morning Club staff has resigned with immediate effect. The reduced fees from lower numbers and lower staff cost mean the overall impact on the carry forward shouldn't vary too much.

11 UPDATE FROM CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Safeguarding

- Teachers phoned each family regularly and children were seen at whole school and class assemblies weekly. This was very helpful in terms of safeguarding and mitigating any problems with access to learning quickly.

Learning Resources

- Lots of good learning resources were developed over lockdown and these would be saved and be used to help children who were struggling to access school or in class

Recovery Curriculum, Identifying Gaps and Catch-Up

- C&L had discussed the assessments in December and how these were going to inform what interventions were needed, but the situation immediately changed as the children went back into lockdown.
- The children had only been back in school for 3 days at the time of the meeting so there was only a limited amount of information. However, there was a discussion about how some pupils lacked stamina, and increased issues for speech and language and learning behaviour.
- **KP asked** whether there has been some form of assessment to identify gaps after the second lock down. **KD replied** that assessments had taken place in the first two weeks. Each year group have identified gaps in English and Maths and planning interventions that go with that. The intervention will be led by KD and AP. Those groups will be monitored against the gaps that have been identified and progress measure against the gap.
- The next C&L committee will look into how effective the interventions were.



Visits

- If anyone has a visit report they haven't submitted yet, please email the clerk so that all the hard work can be evidenced and learnings shared.

Community Links

- RG will be establishing a link with the governing board at QE in particularly looking at transition preparations for this year.

Policies

- The EYFS policy was approved

12 SAFEGUARDING

TB reiterated that the HT had described safeguarding good practice and was very proactive and had shown a great level care over lockdown

13 POLICIES

Staff Behaviour Policy - approved.

Governors were alerted that the Bursar would show the amendments to SCC as they provide personnel and legal service to the school and this was a move away from their recommended policy. It was unlikely there would be any problems but it is better to have a conversation now to highlight any potential issues, than after an issue has arisen.

14 Governor Visits

KD/KP will meet to discuss the focus of the visits during a catch-up meeting and will email governors with the focus before the visits take place. Anyone who wants to be involved with this discussion as part of succession planning or as a development opportunity is to let KP know. The visits will take place a couple of weeks before the last Children and Learning Committee Meeting.

16 MEETING SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC YEAR/DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Virtual meetings that will start at 19:30. Meeting dates:

Full Governing Body

- 21nd April 2021
- 7th July 2021

Children and Learning Committee

- 23rd June 2020

Finance, Staffing and Premises

- 31st March 2020
- 16th June 2020

Minutes agreed on

Signed (Chair of Governors)