

**Minutes of the Full Governing Board for Alfreton Park Community Special  
School held on Monday 8 February 2016**

**Present:** Mr J Glasby (Chair)      Mrs F Franklin      Mrs R Stephen  
              Mrs C Wright                Mr K Dean            Mr B Jowett  
              Mr R Sowter                 Mrs C Smart (Head)      Mr M Clemens

**In attendance:** Ms S Whitaker, Clerk and Mrs S Siddons, Acting School Business Manager

**24. Apologies for Absence – decide whether to accept**

Governors noted and accepted apologies for absence from Mr Marshall-Clarke.  
Governors noted that Mr Clemens would arrive late to the meeting.

**25. Governing Body Membership//review and approve Instrument of Government**

Governors approved the Instrument of Government as previously circulated.

**26. Declaration of Interest in any items on the agenda**

Mr Clemens and Mrs Siddons declared an interest in Chair's report.

**27. Agree any other urgent business**

- Home-school transport cuts
- Data

**28. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 December 2015**

The previously circulated minutes were **agreed** as a true record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chair on behalf of the Governing Body.

**29. Matters Arising**

7. **A Governor asked whether there is an internal system for moderation** and the Head advised that this will be re-delegated if Mr Hancock does not return after half term.

**A Governor asked whether B Squared assessments are able to go ahead in Mr Hancock's absence** and the Head advised that the information is currently being inputted and these will go out after half term.

**30. Minutes of the Resource Committee meeting held on 1 February 2016**

The minutes had been previously circulated for Governors' attention and were duly signed by the Chair on behalf of the Governing Body.

Mr Jowett advised that the projected carry-forward is higher than anticipated and

reviews are being undertaken to seek best value on purchasing. A Governor said he would be reluctant to start making cuts in light of a fluctuating situation. Mrs Siddons advised that Governors and SLT should be mindful of possible predictions for a deficit budget. A Governor advised that since the meeting a further meeting has taken place with Mr Walker, School's Financial Patch Officer, and the situation is looking healthier than originally predicted. Governors were happy that contingency plans were being put in place and will continue to monitor the budget closely. The Head advised that staff are aware of the need to work as flexibly as possible.

### **31. Minutes from the School Council Meeting held on 15 January 2016 – For information**

The minutes had been previously circulated for Governors' attention.

Four members of the school council joined the Governors. School council is the Government of the school and they discuss what is right and what is not right and they sort it out, such as counter-terrorism and bullying. **A Governor asked if there is any bullying** and a member of the school council advised no that they are not allowed bullying in the school.

The school council are making hearts for the valentine's disco on Thursday. **A Governor asked whether the school council have their photographs on the board** and a member confirmed that they are. They have also made valentine's cakes to sell.

**A Governor asked if they had a survey about safety** and the school council tabled the results of the survey for Governors' attention.

The children visited the Houses of Parliament in London last year.

Governors then discussed the results of the survey with the representatives from the school council noting that 7% of children feel that someone has continued to be horrible to them. **A Governor asked whether 7% equates to one pupil** and it was noted that it does.

Governors noted that 98% of pupils feel safe at school with the remaining 2% (one pupil) saying they did not as they had hurt their hand.

**A Governor asked how the children were elected on the school council** and it was noted that a vote took place in class.

The Chair thanked the student council for joining them and the children left the meeting.

### **32. Headteacher's Report including: Term Dates**

The Head had circulated her report for Governors' attention and invited questions. **A Governor asked whether the attendance is in line with historical figures** and the Head advised that it is. The Head continued to say that for a special school, the attendance

figures are good.

A Governor asked about data and it was noted that this will go to the T&L Committee. The Head advised that during 2015/16 there was no collection of data in October and she will re-introduce this in 2016/17 to close the timescales for Governors receiving information.

A Governor asked about staff attendance and asked how many staff are absent long-term. The Head advised that two staff have started a phased return to work with three more on absence monitoring with a fourth due to start being monitored under the absence control policy. A Governor asked whether the Head receives any support from HR on this matter and the Head advised that she does and HR are involved with one member of staff who is currently absent.

A Governor asked whether any staff have had a verbal or written warning for absence and the Head advised not, continuing to say that lots of short absences would trigger a warning whereas a longer period of absence constitutes a different set of procedures.

Governors discussed the impact of the high level of absence. A Governor asked fellow Governors whether they are all aware of the absence policy with some Governors confirming that they are but others are not.

The Head advised that she has delegated some of the absence monitoring to other members of staff to share the workload on this. The Head advised that if Mr Hancock does not return after half term she will ask Marie Redfern, the most senior member of Middle Leadership to pick up some of his workload including being the nominated Deputy in her absence.

The Chair advised that a Governor should be appointed to look at Fundraising Activities and it was **agreed** that Mrs Stephens would take on this responsibility.

The Chair advised Governors that they should be more involved with the School Improvement Plan including ensuring that the financial resources are in line with this. It was **agreed** that Mr Sowter would take responsibility for the SIP.

The Chair advised that a Governor should take responsibility for academisation and it was **agreed** that Mr Dean would take responsibility for this. A Governor asked whether there are any benefits in converting to an academy and this was discussed. A Governor asked whether conversion to an academy could be forced upon the school and it was noted that if the school did not have a favourable outcome from Ofsted then academisation could be forced. A Governor asked whether the special schools would all convert together and the Head advised that there are mixed feelings amongst the special schools. A discussion took place and it was noted that the special schools are all completely different with different issues. The Head advised that the buildings are local authority owned.

A Governor asked the Head to speak about the term dates and the Head advised that school is due to finish on Tuesday 26 July for the summer holidays and proposed to

Governors that the school closes on the previous Friday with the two days being took as twilight sessions in 2016-17. Governors discussed whether this would be detrimental to parents and it was agreed that it would not as parents will be given plenty of time to make child-care arrangements.

Mr Clemens joined the meeting at this point.

The Chair advised that a report on bullying should be brought to every meeting and it was agreed that this would be included in the Head's report. **ACTION: HEAD**

Governors noted from the earlier school council agenda item that there is no bullying perceived to be taking place in school.

A Governor brought the issue of school transport and advised that parents are lobbying appropriate departments. Friends of the school are putting together a letter to the LA. **A Governor asked whether the Governors would write to the LA to support the argument not to cut home-school transport.** This was discussed and a Governor said it is not a school issue and parents would stand a better chance of success as a majority body than Governors. Governors **agreed** that Mrs Wright and Mrs Stephens would write on behalf of the Governors which would be signed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors. **ACTION: CW&RS**

Governors noted the new Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016 Departmental advice for maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and local authorities (January 2016). The Head advised that she would wait for the LA policy which she will bring to a future Governors' meeting.

The Chair thanked the Head for her informative report.

### **33. Chair's Report including:**

#### **1. External complaint against staff**

The Chair advised that a complaint has been received and the formal complaints procedure has been followed. The Chair and Head have met the parent and her sister and the issue is ongoing.

#### **2. Correspondence with Deputy Head**

Mrs Siddons and Mr Clemens declared an interest in this agenda item and duly left the meeting.

The Chair advised that he has corresponded with the Deputy Head regarding a personal issue.

Mrs Siddons and Mr Clemens returned to join the meeting.

## 34. Financial Issues

### 1. SFVS – to approve

Mrs Siddons advised that the SFVS had been discussed at the Resource Committee Meeting and it was **agreed** that this would be signed by the Chair on behalf of the Governing Body and the Clerk would return this to the LA. **ACTION: CLERK**

### 2. Budget Report

Mrs Siddons advised that a report had been formulated following the meeting with Andy Walker, School's Patch Officer which shows a healthier carry-forward than originally anticipated. The 16/17 carry forward is now predicted to be around £175k. 2017/18 does show a predicted deficit of £80k and Mrs Siddons advised that whilst Governors need to be mindful, there is no need for immediate concern. Mrs Siddons advised that the increase in NI contributions, the loss of one particular student and the cessation of protection for the single status increases have all contributed to the reductions in the budget surplus. A Governor advised that the per-pupil income is not due to rise as in previous years.

Mrs Siddons advised that by changing of the caretaking and cleaning contract, a saving of approximately £15k will be made. The proposal was put to the site supervisor last week and he has subsequently spoken to the LA but no response has yet been received. **A Governor asked whether there are jobs that the caretaker currently undertakes which will need redirecting** and it was noted that there are and a handyman will be employed on as an and when basis to undertake this work. Mrs Siddons advised that the current caretaking is leaving at the end of April. The Chair advised that all areas of expenditure need investigating in order to ensure that the school's budget does not go into deficit.

Mrs Siddons gave examples of the cost of using the LA for small repairs which the school is charged heavily for. Governors agreed that the School Business Manager would pursue areas of money saving.

The Head tabled the budget report for Governors' attention.

### 3. Pool Committee Report

The papers had been previously circulated and Mr Jowett advised that this had been discussed at the resource committee including the pros and cons of hiring out the pool to external groups.

## 35. Federation Action Plan

The Head had previously circulated the federation action plan, which she advised is still a draft document. The Head advised that the school is considering selling some IT time to the other schools. The Head invited questions. A Governor said the document shows good sharing of resources and a useful source of benchmarking and experience.

The Head advised that Governor training could be opened up to other schools to share costs.

### **36. Priorities for School Improvement Plan**

The Head had previously circulated the SIP for Governors' attention. A Governor asked whether the Governors are satisfied that the main areas of improvement are included within the plan and Governors **agreed** that they are satisfied that the priorities are appropriate for the school.

A Governor asked the Head whether the priorities can be given the time needed to complete given the high level of long-term staff absence and this was discussed. A Governor suggested that the curriculum coordinators' files could be updated as part of the aggregated INSET days.

### **37. Anti-bullying**

Had been covered under other agenda items.

### **38. Policies:**

#### **I. Policy for ex-students to return on volunteer basis**

Mrs Stephens was not present for this agenda item as it had been left to the end of the meeting.

The Chair advised that there are currently two ex-students volunteering at the school and asked Governors to consider how the school would manage if more students asked for this in the future. A Governor asked how old the young people are and it was noted that they are 20 years old which led to a discussion around whether they would need a DBS check. It was **agreed** that Mrs Siddons would check on this.  
**ACTION: SS**

The Head advised that requests from other ex-pupils had been refused as they were deemed unable to work without direct supervision. Mr Clemens advised that the two volunteers currently onsite are clearing the leaves from the school premises and other maintenance jobs.

A Governor asked whether there is a general protocol for volunteers into school which would incorporate this situation and it was noted that there is one. Mrs Siddons will look at the wording of the protocol. A Governor asked whether this has been opened up to ex-students of other schools and Mr Clemens advised that it has not been 'opened up' to anyone and the two ex-students made a specific request to return to the school as volunteers. It was **agreed** that the situation and protocol would be reviewed annually. The Head advised that she has made enquiries of the other Special School Heads and will update Governors of their responses. The Head advised that both of the young people in question are on the school's SCR.

## **2. Separated Parents Policy**

Governors **agreed** to adopt the policy as written, noting that it is a LA Model Policy.

### **39. Governing Body Matters**

#### **1. A Framework for Governance – Governors to read**

The framework had been previously circulated for Governors' attention which Governors confirmed that they had read.

#### **2. LA Maintained Governing Body Delegation Planner**

The Chair had circulated the delegation planner and Governors ratified the document as written.

#### **3. Complete Team Health Check**

The Vice-Chair had completed the Team Health Check on behalf of the Governing Body highlighting that the Governing Board are working together effectively to establish a strong working group.

#### **4. Clerk to Complete Model Job Description – Clerk**

The clerk signed the model job description and the Head will send a copy of this to all Governors. **ACTION: HEAD**

#### **5. Ensure Actions are identified in the minutes – Chair/Clerk**

Governors noted that all actions are to be identified in the minutes.

#### **6. Identified Roles of the Chair and Vice-Chair**

It was **agreed** that a 360 degree review of the Chair of Governors would be done. The clerk will circulate this to all Governors, who would complete and return it to the Clerk who will collate the results and add these to the next FG agenda. **ACTION: ALL GOVERNORS/CLERK**

#### **7. Questions 6-10**

Mrs Franklin led on the self-evaluation where questions 6 – 10 were discussed and answers collated by Mrs Franklin.

Mrs Stephens left the meeting at this point.

#### **8. Governor Induction**

Mr Dean has attended the induction process on 19 January 2016 where he received the new Governor Induction Pack.

## 40. Safeguarding

### 1. Golden Thread of Safeguarding

The Head spoke to the previously circulated 'Golden Thread' of Safeguarding at the school and it was **agreed** that this would be put in a prominent place on display in school. **ACTION: HEAD** A discussion took place around the school's website. The Head confirmed that the school's website does contain all of the statutory requirements but it was noted that some of the photographs are dated. The Head advised that Mr Heald considered the website to be of a good standard and he had highlighted a few areas where it could be improved. **A Governor asked who updates the website** and the Head advised that it is Gary Rogers the IT Technician, but that teachers need to take responsibility for giving him the information to update.

2. Mrs Franklin, as named Governor for Safeguarding advised that there are six children in school who are subject to a child protection plan.
3. The Head advised that Debbie Peacock, Child Protection Manager visited the school to speak to the Head last week and advised that e-safety is now known as on-line safety. The Head advised that Mrs Peacock suggested that a guide to parents is produced and published on the school's website. The Head advised that an updated Safeguarding Action Plan is currently being formulated. **A Governor asked whether the Head has a backup with a second person trained in Safeguarding to cover in the event of her absence** and the Head advised that Sharon is on a phased return to work.
4. The Head advised that David Heald, School Improvement Partner had checked the Single Central Record during his visit into school last week.
5. Governors signed to confirm that they had all read the PREVENT Strategy which had been previously circulated for their attention.

## 41. Training

### 1. Received including:

#### 1.1 'Welcome to Charing' course feedback from the Chair of Governors

The Chair had attended the above named course and disseminated the information to other Governors.

### 2. Identify Training Needs

Mr Jowett and Mr Sowter are due to attend LA Finance Training.

Mr Jowett is due to attend Assessment Training on the 25.2.16.

Mrs Wright has attended Positive Behaviour Support, a three day training course and offered to cascade this to Governors. It was **agreed** that Mrs Wright would give an overview of the training before the next Full Governors' meeting. **ACTION:**

## **CW/CLERK TO ADD TO THE AGENDA**

### **3. Governor Training Matrix to be updated by the Clerk**

The Clerk updated the training matrix.

### **42. Any Other Urgent Business**

The two items of any other business had been incorporated into other agenda items.

### **43. Date and Time of Next Meeting –**

Governors noted the dates for forthcoming meetings:

Monday 18 April 2016 T&L 12.30 pm

Monday 18 April 2016 Resource 2.00 p.m.

Monday 25 April 2016 Full Governors 1.00 p.m.