

Five Spires Academy

Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Board held in the School on Wednesday 16 January, 2019 at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Mrs. Winson (Chair), Miss. Bye (Headteacher), Mr. Agates,
Mrs. Van Dreumel, Mr. Chambers, Mrs. Motorny

In attendance: Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)

1 Opening Remarks:

Governors were welcomed to tonight's meeting by the Chair. Members were advised that they can access documentation for meetings via the online portal, Governor Hub. Minutes from meetings as well as key strategic school improvement documentation will be uploaded to this e-portal and members were asked to consider the documentation posted at their leisure.

Resolved: That Governors become familiar with/access Governor Hub in advance of the next scheduled meeting.

2 Apologies:

Resolved: That apologies for absence be received and accepted from Mrs. Davies and Mrs. Downie.

Resolved: That an apology for absence not be received and therefore not accepted from Mr. Murray.

Governors are reminded that any Governor who does not participate in full Governing Board meetings for more than six months without their apologies being accepted by the Governing Board are automatically disqualified.

3 Governing Board Matters:

a) Membership

The Governing Board is currently operating at full capacity although interest from prospective new members is always welcome. The Academy website lists the current membership and there were no additional updates to share with Governors at tonight's meeting.

Governors should note at the last meeting that the elections of Chair and Vice-Chair were confirmed with Mrs. Winson and Mrs. Davies filling these strategic leadership roles up until the first meeting of the Autumn Term, 2019.

b) Confidentiality

Governors were reminded that all discussions that take place at this meeting should remain confidential to the meeting.

c) Register of Business Interests

Governors were reminded of the requirement to update the register of business interests on an annual basis, and are aware that this must be kept in the Academy and should be included on the Academy website.

The Register of Business Interests was updated in the Autumn Term. No additional action was needed at tonight's meeting other than to remind the membership that if there are any changes in declarations the online Register will need to be updated.

d) Declaration of Interest Business and Pecuniary

No declarations of interest were made by Governors in respect of any items appearing on the agenda.

e) Code of Conduct

Governors were advised that they should have a Code of Conduct in place that all serving Governors agree to and understand and that arrangements are in place to ensure that all new Governors are made aware of the Code when joining the Governing Board.

The Governing Board membership adopted the REAch2 Code of Conduct in the Autumn Term and confirmed its compliance with the protocols listed in this document. No further action was required at tonight's meeting.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the full Governing Board meeting held on Wednesday 14 November, 2018 be approved.

Resolved: That the Minutes, Agenda and all reports and other papers considered at the meeting be made available for inspection.

5 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

There were no matters arising from the November meeting. Mr. Chambers did request a copy of these minutes from the Chair.

Resolved: That the Minutes be uploaded to Governor Hub by the Chair/Headteacher so all Governors can download a copy.

6 Reports:

a) Chair's and Vice-Chair's Actions

The Chair and/or Vice-Chair reported that they had not undertaken any actions on behalf of the Governing Board since the last full Governing Board meeting.

b) Committees

The Academy does not operate a committee structure at the present time.

7 Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher's Report was as always detailed and informative. A number of headlines were picked out from the termly update and were shared with Governors as follows:

1.1

The Academy continues to emphasise the need for a healthy attendance record across the pupil cohort which includes warning parents of the detrimental impact poor attendance can have on a pupil's rate of academic progress. Whilst the current attendance figure is above the national expectation at the present time unauthorised absences will continue to be reported for those parents who decide to take their children out of school during term-time.

One Governor challenged on the nature of some of the postings that appeared on recent parent 'What's App' groups which suggests that the whole attendance issue is for some members of the parent community a cultural mind-set that will be extremely difficult to overcome.

The SLT reassured Governors that the messages around attendance will continue to be reinforced, incentivisation schemes will continue to be implemented and the Academy will work with particular families when attendance drops below a particular threshold. The SLT has detailed attendee data which is continually analysed at a variety of different levels so there is no danger that worrying, emerging trends will go unnoticed. From a Governor perspective, the SLT is always open-minded to any new and innovative ideas that are put forward to improve this key performance indicator.

1.2

Governors asked about how the recently appointed caretaker is settling into their role. The SLT confirmed that the current arrangements are working well with some of the premises tasks previously carried out by the SLT now being assigned to the correct post holder.

1.3

Governors asked about the teaching status of a returning member of staff from maternity leave. The Headteacher confirmed the member of staff would be supporting Year 2 and any cover requirements around the Academy until she resumes normal class teaching duties from September. On a more strategic note, the Headteacher informed Governors that the Academy will not need to recruit this year for teaching staff (an excellent position to be in) and there are also plans to take on a student through the School Direct Programme who will go into Key Stage 2. This educational programme is basically on-the-job training with there being every possibility that the individual concerned will go onto complete their NQT year with the Academy. Governors welcomed this approach to succession planning and were also pleased to hear that the existing teaching staff continue to thrive and develop their professional practice at Five Spires.

1.4

The Headteacher was congratulated by Governors for her recent accreditation as Local Leader of Education. Governors suggested this news should be shared with the parent community in the next newsletter.

Resolved: That this action be covered off when the next newsletter is published.

1.5

Governors were informed that a Learning Walk had taken place at the Academy on 05.12.18. A number of Governors had completed the walk with the SLT and had spent time in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Their feedback at tonight's meeting was extremely positive and various remarks were made around peer to peer support, focused learning, the importance of the learning values and how this manifested itself in pupil learning behaviours

and, finally, the positive way that pupils were interacting with their immediate classroom environment. Mrs. Motorny had produced a write-up from the Walk and this will be posted to Governor Hub following tonight's meeting. *A Governor also challenged that the Learning Walk should be repeated with a different focus to enable those Governors who did not participate in the last engagement activity to benefit from a similar opportunity.* It was felt for non-staff/non-parents of the Academy an exercise of this nature really does provide a valuable and enriched insight into different aspects of Academy life which can only add value to the Governor-based role

Resolved: That the listed report be added to Governor Hub and a future Learning Walk be organised by the SLT around a different theme.

Resolved: That the Headteacher be thanked for her informative and detailed update.

8 Scheme of Delegation:

It was confirmed that the Scheme of Delegation had been reviewed at the last meeting. No further action was required although Governors can always view the Scheme of Delegation at their leisure.

9 Safeguarding Updates:

The Safeguarding update in the Governor Information Pack was noted and as the Academy's Safeguarding Link Governor, Mrs. Van Dreumel will discuss with the SLT whether any further action needs to be taken in relation to the points listed. Many of the central directives around Safeguarding come directly from REAch2 itself and Mrs. Van Dreumel confirmed she had checked the Single Central Record since the last meeting with no issues to report.

There was a discussion around the recent changes to procedure around DBS clearance and how Entrust has taken over the checking of this information prior to known external third parties coming onto the Academy premises. *A challenge was made as to who would take the responsibility in the unlikely event of an incident now this responsibility has been delegated from the Trust to Entrust.* Governors wanted this point minuted so at least the Trust can review this delegated responsibility when the Minutes from this meeting are circulated at Trust Board level.

The Headteacher then notified Governors that a Safeguarding Audit has been scheduled for 14.02.19 at Five Spires, the outcomes from which will be shared with Board members at a future meeting. Finally, Mrs. Motorny announced that the Academy would be participating in Safer Internet Day on 05.02.19 with various activities planned around online safety and other related themes. Governors welcomed the robust Safeguarding processes and procedures that are currently embedded at Five Spires and Mrs. Van Dreumel will continue in her role as Safeguarding Link Governor to hold the SLT to account in this key, critical area.

10 Six Features of Effective Governance:

The remainder of the agenda focused on the six features of effective governance. The Clerk drew out some of the key highlights from the termly update and these were shared with Governors. Discussion focused on the following themes:

1.1

The Headteacher confirmed the SDP and SES are available via Governor Hub as key strategic documents which drive school improvement. The documents are fluid, working documents which will be updated throughout the year and are a source of information which can form the basis of challenge-based questions when Governors carry out various engagement activities.

1.2

The Headteacher's Report contained aspirational targets for the current academic year which have been agreed in liaison with REACh2. The Headteacher reported that pupils remain broadly on track to achieve these targets which will become data projections at the next Progress meeting scheduled for 13.02.19. Governors were informed that there are no discernible gaps or worrying trends in the current data set and Board members will continue to receive further updates as the various data milestones are reached through this term and into the Summer. *Governors did challenge whether Five Spires has any significant groups that require a closer analysis in terms of progress and attainment.* The Headteacher reported that the only significant group given the numbers involved is gender (boys v girls) and she confirmed there are no worrying, emerging trends in this specific data set.

1.3

Governors were reminded that the School Business Manager (Miss. Dixon) applies the necessary due diligence in relation to the Academy Budget to ensure expenditure is closely monitored and value for money is secured. When the time comes to set the Budget for the new financial year then the relevant information will be shared with members. For now, Governors discussed the financial impact on an Academy that is steadily growing. This is because the Budget is always playing catch-up as it is dependent on the previous year's census which can put a financial burden on an Academy until it is operating at full capacity.

1.4

Governor training was discussed. The Chair is accessing CPD in the coming weeks and there was also discussion around the online training modules Governor Space that may become available to the Academy depending on the future clerking SLA that is taken out with Entrust. It should be noted that REACh2 is also proactive in providing various CPD opportunities for Board members.

1.5

From a Health and Safety perspective, the Headteacher suggested it would be a sound move to organise a Learning Walk with the designated Link Governor, Mrs. Davies particularly as there are a number of premises issues that do need addressing, issues that had previously had funds earmarked but have since fallen through. In addition, Governors were informed that the School Business Manager will be undertaking mental health aid first aid training in the coming months so that in time she will be in an informed position to signpost key resources for staff who may need additional support in this area.

Resolved: That the Health and Safety Learning Walk be organised.

1.6

The changing nature of Ofsted inspections was noted. Whilst the Academy has only recently gone through an Ofsted cycle the changes to the framework and surrounding emphasis will be important as the Academy moves forward with its post Ofsted action plan. For now, the information in the Governor Information Pack was noted.

11 Any Other Business:

The following items of any other business were discussed at this point in the meeting:

1.1

The latest Pupil Premium Statement was shared with Governors. Given the small number of Pupils that fall within this vulnerable group, the SLT has to be careful what information is published online given the need to avoid recognising individual pupils in the supplied data. The amount of Pupil Premium funding that is received by the Academy is very small compared to other schools but every attempt is made to ensure this funding delivers the

greatest impact possible. In fact, given the Pupil Premium cohort is at times out performing its peers the focus is very much on determining how the funding can stretch and offer challenge to this pupil group which is naturally aligned with the Academy's own strategy around the More Able Cohort. Governors can read the Statement for themselves which has been made available on Governor Hub and members were also informed that in time a Sports Premium Report will follow along similar lines, the only difference being that the Academy has more funding at its disposal in this area.

1.2

The Chair confirmed she would contact Mr. Murray to ascertain his future intentions with regard to the Governor role. This is because Mr. Murray has not attended a series of meetings and apologies have not been received.

Resolved: That the Chair follow up on this action.

1.3

The Clerk checked with Governors that copies of minutes can be shared with Governor Services. Governors agreed to this action being taken.

1.4

Staff were thanked for their hard work and dedication in organising the Xmas plays which had been extremely well received by the parent community.

12 Confidential Items:

Governors were asked to identify if there were any items/materials which needed to be excluded from any Agenda, Minutes, reports or other papers discussed at the meeting which would normally be made available for inspection following the meeting.

Governors were also asked to identify any items included on the Agenda which require recording in a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes.

Resolved: That no items be identified as needing to be recorded as a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes.

There were no items/materials identified for exclusion.

13 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:

A date for the Summer Term full Governing Board meeting was finalised at tonight's meeting. It can be confirmed as Wednesday 8 May, 2019 at 5.30 p.m.

Governors were at this point thanked for their contribution to the meeting and it was brought to a close...

Chair

Date

Five Spires Academy

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on Wednesday 16 January, 2019 at 5.30 p.m.

Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
1	Governors	Become familiar with Governor Hub interface.	
4	HT	Publish November minutes.	
5	Chair/HT	Upload copy of November minutes to Governor Hub.	
7	HT	Ensure Headteacher's recent accreditation is highlighted in next newsletter.	
7	Mrs. Motorny	Post Learning Walk report to Governor Hub.	
	HT	Organise a future Learning Walk around a different theme.	
10	HT	Organise Health and Safety Learning Walk with Mrs. Davies.	
11	Chair	Contact Mr. Murray regarding his future Governor role.	

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 8 May, 2019 at 5.30 p.m.

Absent Governors to be informed.