



Full Governing Board

Minutes

Date: 8th May 2017	Time: 4:00pm
Venue: Community Room, Bennerley Fields School	

Governors Present:			Apologies:		
Pauline Wensley	(PW)	Chair – LA	Linda Willis	(LW)	Parent
Sarah Menzies	(SM)	Vice Chair – Co-Opted	Alex Breene	(AB)	Co-Opted
Ann Harrison	(AH)	Headteacher			
Janet Seymour	(JS)	Co-Opted			
Deborah Ratcliffe	(DR)	Parent	Attendees:		
Kay Blissett	(KB)	Staff	Ruth Fowler	(RF)	Clerk
Sedella Hearson	(SH)	Co-Opted	Abigail Evans	(AE)	SBM
Ian Cresswell	(IC)	Co-Opted			
Sarah McGarva	(SMG)	Staff			
Josh Baldwin	(JB)	Associate Governor			

Pre-Meeting Presentation		
	PSHE – Sue Firth (SF)	Action
	<p>Sue Firth (Assistant Head and SENDCO) presented to the Governors. <i>Please see additional enclosures for details.</i></p> <p>SF explained about the Attachment Aware Project – the school won a Bursary of £4,800 to run this.</p> <p>SF and JA (Family Support Worker) have been attending training courses and undertaking an Action Research Project over the last 6 months.</p> <p>The training has been filtered down to staff by a whole school training Inset day, staff meetings and all information being available on the R drive. They also work closely with the Sensory SIP group.</p> <p>Initially the project focused on a few individuals but as it has progressed it became apparent that the techniques used could benefit many pupils across school so focus was given to training staff.</p> <p>SMG stated that they have been able to use the methods in their class and the benefits can be seen already with pupils learning to self-regulate.</p>	

	<p>SF stated that we have seen an improvement in behaviour across school.</p> <p>Working with the Sensory SIP a sensory trolley has been purchased with equipment being added all the time to meet different needs.</p> <p>Governors asked is the different equipment for the different Key Stages?</p> <p>It is more about the needs of individual children so specific equipment requests are made.</p> <p>Governors asked can pupils take the equipment with them as they move up the school?</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>Governors asked how the original pupils that were used in the study were identified?</p> <p>They had already been identified – as SF has done more training it has just clarified that they were the right ones. Some have improved so much that they have come off the tracking scale.</p> <p>Governors asked can students take this home with them?</p> <p>Yes, we share successful tactics with parents. We are not diagnosing students with attachment disorder – but share tactics on dealing with specific behaviours.</p> <p>Governors thanked SF for her presentation.</p>	
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Procedural		
08.05.17		
1	Welcome and Apologies	Action
1.1	Apologies were received and accepted for LW. AB did not attend the meeting.	
1.2	PW stated that LW would like to resign as she is struggling to attend meetings due to child care issues. PW has discussed this with LW and LW will put her resignation on hold if there can be meetings at different times of the day. Governors discussed this option and it was suggested that it would be good to have meetings at different times over the year so that they could allow the most people to attend. AP1 – PW to send out survey regarding meeting times for discussion at July FGB.	

2	Declaration of Interest	Action
2.1	IC declared an interest in the budget setting as he runs the Bushcraft activities that are budgeted for. IC will not take part in any discussions that have an impact on this part of the budget, he can however be part in approving the Annex 1 and 5 overall.	
2.2	AH declared an interest in the staffing plan when the SSEN link is discussed.	

3	Minutes of meeting held 27th March 2017	Action
3.1	The minutes were accepted and agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the chair.	

4	Matters arising from minutes of meeting 27th March 2017	Action
4.1	All Action Points are either for future meetings and will remain in the Action Point section or have been assigned Agenda items this meeting.	
4.2	Page 2 – AC to deliver training on assessments. As AC has been in hospital for a week and is still off sick it was decided to postpone this training until July.	

School Visit Reports		
5	Safeguarding	Action
5.1	<p>JS discussed her previously circulated report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Safeguarding issues • My Concern working very well • JS attended meeting – BF highlighted quite a lot about its success and the positive environment of the school and for having the e-safety 360 accreditation. • Suggestion for JS take on e-safety role from PW. • Agreed for JS to only come into school 3 times per year for meeting with AH – but for Safeguarding to be standing agenda item so any issues can be reported as they arise. 	

6	Attendance	Action
6.1	<p>Governors discussed LW's previously circulated report.</p> <p>Governors asked if we could use PAT dogs in school and would it be beneficial (Pets as Therapy)?</p> <p>AH stated that it is something the SLT have talked about and they will look into it in more detail.</p>	

	AH stated that if pupils have long term absence then JA works closely with families and any agencies that can support including OOST (Out-of-School Tuition). Lots of strategies are put in place to help pupils attend and all staff work very hard to ensure all pupils are in school.	
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7	Antibullying	Action
7.1	<p>Governors discussed LW's previously circulated report.</p> <p>AH highlighted the work that is done in school including taking part in anti-bullying week.</p> <p>Governors stated that anti-bullying is such a negative name and asked if we can change it?</p> <p>It was stated that it is a national term and schools are required to have an anti-bullying policy.</p> <p>Governors stated that the school has a very positive environment and that bullying is not a problem here.</p> <p>Governors asked could it be called friendship week?</p> <p>AH stated that it is important that our students know what bullying is and how to deal with it in any situation especially in the community. They need to be prepared for when they leave here– even though bullying is not a problem within school.</p>	

8	School Council	Action
8.1	<p>SM presented her previously circulated report.</p> <p>Things have changed since this report was written as the way School Council was run didn't work for our pupils. AC has discussed with SLT and is in the course of re-organizing the process with the possibility of having the elected members to meet on an informal basis – and other pupils within school to meet at their level in a more formal setting.</p> <p>Options to be kept open year on year – so that the best format can be used for the current cohort of pupils.</p> <p>SM will continue to monitor this as the Lead Governor.</p>	

9	School Visit Action Points	Action
9.1	All resolved now Positive Play – in new budget – continue to do 4 days per week.	

Governor Termly Responsibilities		
10	20 Questions – Questions 15-16	Action
10.1	<i>See updated enclosure</i>	

11	Academy Information Update	Action
11.1	<p>Cotmanhay Junior School</p> <p>SH and JS attended the meeting at Cotmanhay and stated that it was more of a sales pitch for a Rotherham academy who wants to set up more academies and is looking for schools to join. They currently have no Special Schools and do not want a Special School to form a MAT with the local mainstream school. Their ethos is for groups of 3 schools close in locality to join together.</p> <p>However, the presentation was very interesting about what needs to be managed centrally and what remains with the schools -HR/Payroll all need to be managed centrally. All schools to use the same systems - so that comparisons can be made and support given across the MAT. Things to be cautious about when setting up a MAT such as failing schools being able to poach staff from the better schools etc.</p> <p>It highlighted the benefits of working with the Special School Federation to form our own MAT.</p> <p>We need to accept that all the money goes into the MAT – they take top-slice to fund things at that level then dish the rest out to the schools. Some things we do now get taken up to MAT level. Strategy and Aims are MAT level. As the Special Schools already have a very similar ethos and aims this should not be a problem.</p> <p>After discussion Governors are now even more convinced that being part of the FDSS MAT 1st Wave is the best option.</p>	
11.2	<p>FDSS Report</p> <p>See enclosure.</p> <p>PW stated that Peak, Holbrook and ourselves have already decided to join the 1st wave. The other schools are discussing with their Governors</p>	

	during May so we will have a better idea by the next meeting how many will come initially.	
	SH highlighted a document AE had shared regarding 'Questions Governors should be asking when they join a MAT' AP2 – RF to send Document to Governors and put on agenda for next meeting to start working through.	RF

12	Appoint Governor Representative for FDSS Academy Working Party	Action
12.1	After discussion it was decided that SH and PW will share the role for the time being.	

Financial and Personnel		
13	Governor Expenses Information	Action
13.1	<p>See report</p> <p>Governors were happy that this report shows that £2,000 is enough for the Governor budget.</p> <p>Governors were reminded that they are all volunteers and they are entitled to claim mileage expenses – they should not be out-of-pocket.</p> <p>It also gives a true record of what it really costs to run a school.</p> <p>Governors asked will expenses increase as we are now a full complement of Governors? Possibly – Governors will continue to monitor each year.</p> <p>Governors thanked AE for providing the information.</p>	

14	Budget Update and Discussion	Action
14.1	<p>Governors discussed the budget graphs and asked the following questions?</p> <p><i>Do we get any interest on the carry forward amounts?</i> About £600 per year is received on the whole budget.</p> <p><i>Why is there a difference of £6,000 in Internal Charges?</i> It is the way the council works – sometimes money comes in elsewhere in the budget – it is the one budget heading that we have least control</p>	

	<p>over. AE always queries any anomalies and makes sure mistakes are rectified.</p>	
	<p>Is the 'Supply Teacher' overspend compensated for by 'Teacher' underspend? Yes</p> <p><i>Do we profit by £25 every time we use our own Bank TA?</i> Yes –it is always cheaper to use our own – but it is not actually a profit as we still have to pay the annual insurance premium.</p> <p><i>Will we recruit more Bank staff?</i> An advert is permanently on the website and then we put adverts in the local papers twice a year. It is also getting known by word of mouth so more people are showing an interest.</p> <p><i>What caused the overspend for Grade 8 TA's?</i> A range of reasons from part time TA's being paid for coming in on an INSET day to the need for some classes to have cover for meetings as the pupils cannot cope with unknown members of staff.</p>	
14.2	<p>Absence Monitoring Governors discussed the previously circulated graphs and commented on the peak in March year on year.</p> <p>After discussion Governors agreed that absence is not due to low staff morale. Governors will continue to monitor. No Questions</p>	

15	Premises Update	Action
15.1	<p>Governors discussed the previously circulated enclosure.</p> <p>Governors asked about the Tree Clearance? AH stated that pupils hide behind them and we cannot see what they are doing so the bushes are being cut down and the tree canopies raised.</p> <p>AE highlighted to Governors the need for the Minibus line marking – to stop visitors parking there when the minibus is out.</p> <p>Governors asked about the EY Fencing being raised and were concerned that the pupils who are climbing will be coming up to KS2 in September so will the KS2 fence also be raised? It was stated that the KS2 area is on the H&S report for the future – the pupils concerned will not be in KS2 until next September so the work can be done Summer 2018.</p>	

15.2	<p>Health & Safety Report</p> <p>After discussion it was decided that AE will include this report each meeting to keep Governors up-to-date. It has also been made a standing item on the SLT agenda.</p> <p>AE highlighted to Governors the problem with the neighbours fence being damaged and how the Perimeter Fencing stops. The neighbour was very complimentary about the school and the students will fix the fence as an enterprise project.</p> <p>AP3 - AE to see if council will extend metal perimeter fencing.</p>	AE
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16	Approve Staffing Plan	Action
16.1	<p>KB and SMG left the meeting</p> <p><i>See Confidential Minutes</i></p> <p>After discussion the Staffing Plan (see enclosure) was approved.</p> <p>KB and SMG returned.</p>	
16.2	<p>AH left the meeting</p> <p><i>See Confidential Minutes 2</i></p> <p>AH returned to the meeting</p>	

17	Approve Annex 1 and Annex 5	Action
17.1	<p>Annex 5 – see enclosure</p> <p>Governors discussed the document and the accompanying notes.</p> <p>Governors asked about the difference in TA hours per term?</p> <p>This is explained in the notes it is connected to Maternity Cover by a supply TA.</p> <p>All agreed to accept the Annex 5.</p>	
17.2	<p>Annex 1</p> <p>See enclosures and additional graphs.</p>	

	<p>Governors discussed the Annex 1.</p> <p>PW attended the Finance Meeting with the SLT and LA Finance Officer and SH has had a meeting with AE. Both have discussed the budget setting in detail.</p> <p>Governors asked is 'Projects and Activities' enough? Yes –it has increased from last 2 years.</p> <p>AE shared forecast statement.</p> <p>AE stated that quite a generous budget has been set this year – we have not been in a position to do this before. The budget is always set for a worst-case scenario.</p> <p>Governors asked if there was any advice on how much percentage to keep as carry forward? None given – it is up to Governors.</p> <p>AE highlighted that the IMP scheme cost was not available when Governors agreed the Traded Services- it is £9,000. Governors agreed to accept the IMP scheme cost.</p> <p>No further questions.</p> <p>Governors agreed to accept the Annex 1.</p>	
17.3	<p>Governors discussed the staff that attended the France trip and will be attending the KS4 Lea Green trip.</p> <p>SM to send Thank you letters on behalf of all the Governors.</p>	

Close of Meeting		
18	What would you change about this meeting to improve the budget setting process for next year to ensure that the needs of the children are met and all areas are covered?	Action
18.1	<p>Governors felt that the budget setting process had run very smoothly this year. Governors were well informed and all understood the process.</p> <p>Governors will continue with Governors Finance training each year.</p> <p>New Governors found that it was easy to follow and informative.</p>	

	<p>Are we setting the budget from the bottom up? Yes at pre-budget meeting the needs of children was discussed and what staffing was needed to fulfil this.</p> <p>The following suggestions for improvement were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make Budget Setting nearer beginning of meeting as it is a priority. • Rota for Governors to attend pre-budget meeting within school. 	
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19	Dates and times of next meetings	Action
19.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 19th June 2017 at 4:00pm – T&L • Monday 17th July 2017 at 4:00pm – Review 	

PW closed the meeting at 5:55pm

Summary of Meeting Action Points

Teaching and Learning Action Points				
		Action	Who?	When?
1.	13.1	KS visits to be curriculum based from Sept 2017	Govs	Sept. 2017
2.	15.1	Arrange 360 Review of the Chair. Participants to include Governors, AH, RF, AE and AC.	RF	Summer Term 2017
3.		Allocate time at the next T&L focused FGB to discuss updated Governor roles.	RF/PW	June FGB

Resources Action Points				
		Action	Who?	When?
	8.1	Review structure of Strategy Committee to include more Governors. Allocate Governors for four main Ofsted criteria.	Govs	July FGB
	13.3	Prepare a minibus lite policy	AH	when needed
1.	1.2	Send out survey regarding meeting times for discussion at July FGB	PW	asap
2.	11.2	Send' Questions Governors should be asking when they join a MAT' document to Governors and put on agenda for next meeting start working through.	RF	June FGB
3.	15.2	See if council will extend metal perimeter fencing	AE	asap