



SWANMEAD COMMUNITY SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING
HELD ON

Thursday 28th September 2017 at 5.30 pm in Room 5

Present: Dean Aspinall (DA); Marian Gamper (MG) (Chair); Val Keitch (VK); Winifred Nakayama (WN); Jesse Pattison (JP); Duncan Perks (DP); Kate Priddle (KP); Mark Raven (MR); and Mark Walker (MW) (Head).

In attendance: Natalie Wainwright (NW) (Clerk to the Governors)

SCS292 Apologies for Absence – Were received and accepted from Steve Sowden (SS).

SCS293 Governors to declare to the Committee any pecuniary interest in this meeting's agenda items – None declared.

SCS294 Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 6th July 2017 (*previously distributed*) were agreed and signed.

SCS295 Matters Arising – (*from the actions log*)

1. *The Clerk advised of an error in the actions log as the draft Governors Handbook had not been circulated as printed. The format of the handbook will be a simple booklet /cover sheet that provides links to the most up to date core documents on the secure section of Swanmead's website.*
- **Clerk to circulate.**
18. *The Clerk and Headteacher have met and begun the process of amending the policy review schedule and refreshing the document management system for statutory policies and guidance documents. The Clerk and Headteacher will meet again to establish next steps and bring forward policies for review by the Governing Body this term.*
- **Clerk and Headteacher to confirm next meeting date and next steps with Governors.**
20. *The Headteacher expressed his thanks to Governors for their kind gesture of cake and biscuits for staff, which was gratefully received by staff.*
21. *A further Press Release has been issued by the Chard and Ilminster News this week.*
22. *The Chair will bring forward a copy of the draft Strategic Plan to the October meeting and reminded Governors that having a strategic plan can increase the effectiveness of Governing Bodies.*
- **Chair to circulate draft Strategic Plan before 19 October 2017.**

SCS296 Governor Business

(a) **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Governors expressed regret at losing Lucy Clemas as Vice-Chair and wished to note their thanks for her contribution to the Governing Body.

MG was nominated to continue in her role as Chair for a fourth year, whilst JP was nominated as Vice-Chair. VK proposed these appointments, which were seconded by KP. MG and JP left the room, whilst all six Governors present discussed the proposals and voted in favour of the two appointments. MG and JP re-joined the meeting.

Governors were reminded that two vacancies for co-opted Governors remained to be filled. Options discussed were to continue to meet with reduced numbers, or encourage a new parent and staff Governor to join the Governing Body. Governors reflected that since they had lost two strong Governors and occasional absence from meetings was unavoidable, additional members would be welcomed and could add to the existing skills base. The Clerk reminded Governors that a Skills Audit would help to identify areas of weakness. The last Skills Audit was conducted in

Signed as being a true record

Chair

Date:.....

September 2016 and therefore could be refreshed. In the meantime Governors are to contact potential willing candidates, whilst the Headteacher will open the opportunity up to all staff.

- (b) **Register of Business Interests** - The Clerk explained the proposed changes to the declarations process as outlined in the Register of Business Interests document previously circulated and advised Governors 'if in doubt, declare'.

Action – Clerk to recirculate the revised Governor Interests form for review and signature.

- (c) **Governors' Standing Orders** had been updated and approved. The Standing Orders were also accompanied by Terms of Reference for the various sub-committees and the new Finance Working Party. Subject to an amendment to the minimum membership of the Finance Working Party Terms of Reference, ie from a minimum of three to two Governors, these were all approved.
- (d) **Governors' Code of Conduct 2017-2018** – Governors accepted the amendments to this document and signed hard copies of the Code of Conduct, to be retained by the Clerk.
- (e) **Governors' Allowances** - Governors are happy with the current policy not to claim expenses, but to request paper for printing if required.
- (f) **Pay Committee** - Following the resignation of the previous Vice-Chair from the Governing Body a vacancy remains on this Committee. KP had previously volunteered and is willing to join DA on this committee. For the past six years, the Committee has enlisted the help of Education Consultant, Kevin Freedman and would propose doing so again. The Chair indicated that it is not always good practice to select the same consultant every year.
- (g) **Finance Working Party** – DP and MR were confirmed as members of the working party.
- (h) **Governor Handbook** – Covered above under SCS295 Matters Arising.
- (i) **School Open Evening** – KP, MG, JP and WN agreed to attend and represent the Governing Body.

Action - Clerk to liaise with school office staff regarding the provision of lanyards and Governor badges for this event and for ongoing use when visiting the school site.

- (j) **Three-year Strategic Plan** – Covered above under SCS295 Matters Arising.
- (k) **Training, CPD, Briefings** –
A copy of the Clerk's Briefing notes are attached to these minutes.
The Clerk advised Governors that she would be setting them up with access to the new and improved Support Services for Education (SSE) website, which includes new resources and enables Governors to book their own training. Sue Spurway will still need to 'check-out' these bookings however, so an ongoing review of the budget for Governor training will be required.
KP confirmed that she had undertaken further safeguarding training.
- (l) **Link Visits** – No Link Visits were reported during the meeting. The Clerk's records indicate that a Science link visit was completed on 19.07.2017 and a SEN visit on 03.10.2017. Reports have been submitted.

SCS297 Policy Review and Renewal

It was agreed that the review of the Capability of Staff and Data Protection policies be deferred until the policy review schedule work is completed.

Governors had read and agreed to the Chair signing the Fair Access Protocol 2017 (previously circulated), on behalf of the Governing Body.

SCS298 Finance and SFVS

The Headteacher proposed that the Office and Finance Manager, Sue Spurway, attend the next meeting at which there would be a focus on: Month 6; the Financial Audit Report and Actions; and the Single Financial Value Standard (SFVS). Sue will also present the Pecuniary Interests of staff and the revised Finance Policy, the latter having been passed to the Chair for review.

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Since setting the budget, the Headteacher advised Governors of the new Pay Award options for staff. The Headteacher explained Options 1, 2 and an alternative implementation option. Governors gave their permission to apply Option 1, ie. A 2% increase to all main scale points and a 1% increase to all other pay points, including Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) and Special Educational Needs (SEN).

The Headteacher confirmed that the school is due to receive £11,000 of Somerset Challenge money.

SCS299

Safeguarding

Safeguarding will be a focus for the next Governors meeting and shall include renewal of Governor commitments to safeguarding: completion of Prevent refresher training and reading the Keeping Children Safe document.

Governors requested clarification on what sort of information would be reported to the Governing Body, as safeguarding reporting currently appears very light. The Headteacher confirmed that Some incidents may be briefly reported to GB meetings, although more detail is shared with the Safeguarding Governor. Reports are generally to reassure Governors that processes are being followed through, rather than individual cases discussed. The results and actions arising from the school's safeguarding audit, which was conducted last year and reviewed by the Safeguarding Governor and Headteacher, may also be of interest. Since the audit, Safeguarding has been included as a standing agenda item on Governing Body and Senior Management Team agendas. What other changes have been implemented? Better systems available for stakeholders to challenge Safeguarding, more staff and Governor Training, improved records management and better transition arrangements in place with feeder and Upper/Secondary schools.

SCS300

Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher presented his report.

Governors commented that the direction of travel in terms of pupil numbers was positive. Although data regarding intake numbers and change over time is shared with the Finance Working Party, it was felt to be helpful if an additional column presenting this information could be included in future Headteacher's Reports.

The information regarding pupil numbers in feeder schools information was considered helpful. If operating as a business, the school could identify these pupils as potential customers to target early. Governors suggested looking at the school's relationship with feeder schools and parents and proposed setting a target for conversion to Swanmead. Does the Headteacher go to the feeder schools open days? Yes and a Governor reported positive feedback from a parent about the Headteacher's recent attendance at Wadham's Open Day. Governors still consider there to be a need to promote the Middle School and three tier option more. It is a relatively unknown system amongst prospective parents. Mark Chairs the National Middle Schools Forum. Can materials be shared? A booklet is already given to parents called Middle School Matters, although this could be refreshed. The Headteacher commented that the problem is mostly around the loss of children at Year 6 rather than getting pupils to start at Swanmead. Governors propose including a regular Wadham feature in the Swanmead Pen newsletter and getting Year 6 pupils to visit Wadham. When do pupils in Year 6 currently visit? Children don't currently visit in Year 6 or 7.

Action – Headteachers of Swanmead and Wadham to provide evidence of further collaborative working.

The Headteacher drew Governors' attention to the combined table of performance in reading, writing and Maths by Middle Schools, which shows a move from the bottom of the table to second position. Selway and Minehead have both received Good Inspection reports, despite lower performance in this table indicating that lower performance is not the whole story.

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Governors were reminded that Middle Schools face a challenge as KS1 spans ages 7-11 and the first two years of teaching occurs elsewhere. The floor standard for Maths is not currently met by Swanmead pupils.

In respect of Progress data the Headteacher confirmed that teacher assessment occurs in addition to external assessment and proceeded to explain the application of the Emerging, Developing, Secure and Mastery/Greater Depth titles to evidence pupil progress. If a child in year 5 is Secure and is assessed as such in year 6 this is called a 'standard conversion'. If Mastery is achieved by year 6, this is called a Golden Conversion. If Secure in Year 5 but Developing at Year 6, this is called a 'Reverse'. The report shows a high proportion of Standard or Golden Conversions. More children are now making progress to Secure or above. **Whilst most able students are still below national standards, if someone is expected to achieve mastery and achieves mastery how do you show their progress?** The curriculum improves in its intensity and difficulty each school year, if you have shown a 'Mastery' standard during one year and then again the following then clearly progress has been made. **Although the data is helpful there is no mention of the non-curricular subjects in the school, which is one of its big strengths.** Some mention of these subject areas would be helpful, although data may not be necessary. Link Governors also have an opportunity to explore the other subject areas in more depth.

19:05 - DP left the meeting

Do senior leaders and department heads write their own development plan? Yes. **Governors requested sight of a set of minutes from Staff meetings to evidence what is happening beyond the core subjects?** The broader subject offer is part of the marketing exercise for schools like Swanmead. Governors would like to invite subject leads to attend future meetings.

What would the school headlines be for 2016-17? School has maintained a high level of attainment in reading and writing at the end of KS2 but Maths remains an area for improvement. The % of pupil attaining a Greater Depth judgement also requires improvements particularly in Writing and Maths. The school also needs to develop further support and challenging relating to the provision for disadvantaged pupils. The Headteacher wishes to communicate the 'Achievement for All' work during the next meeting. **If Maths is the weaker area, why are more English sessions timetabled?** There is more to fit in and proficiency in reading underpins learning in other subject areas, including Maths.

Governors acknowledged and accepted the **staffing model**.

The SDP has been reviewed by staff and is being amended following feedback. Governors approved the direction of travel. A Governor column is included to show roles and responsibilities in relation to the SDP priorities. VK agreed to act as the Link Governor for Maths going forwards. **Action – Clerk to update Link Governor records.**

It was agreed that the Health and Safety Governor be the named Governor for Achievement for all, the Safeguarding Governor for Achievement for all and Well-being, and the Schools Future would remain a Full Governing Body responsibility.

SCS301 Any Other Business

VK asked whether pupils had been invited to participate in the competition to design a Mayor's Christmas card. The Headteacher confirmed that they had not as yet.

SCS302 Date and Agenda for next Governing Body Meeting – Thursday, 19th October 2017 at 5.30pm in Room 5, to include:

- **Finance and SFVS** - Month 6 Report, SFVS, Finance Policy, Financial Audit and Actions; Pecuniary Interests of Staff, Pension Deficit Charge;
- **Safeguarding** – Presentation, Updated Safeguarding Policy, Impact of 2016 Audit, SCR;
- **Policy Review and Renewal** – Attendance Policy, Finance and Safeguarding (see above);
- **Governor Business** - Draft Three-Year Strategic Plan;
- **Headteacher's Report** - Monitoring of SDP

The Meeting closed at 19:20

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Chair

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