



SWANMEAD COMMUNITY SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING
HELD ON

Thursday 19th October 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) (Headteacher).

In attendance: Natalie Wainwright (NW) (Clerk to the Governing Body); Michaela Sharman (MS) (Observer); Sue Spurway (SSp) (Office & Finance Manager).

SCS303 Apologies for Absence – Were received and accepted from Val Keitch (VK) and Steve Sowden (SS). Governors noted four consecutive absences and the Chair of Governors agreed to follow up with an email.

SCS304 Governors to declare to the Committee any pecuniary interest in this meeting's agenda items – None declared.

SCS305 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 28th September 2017 (*previously distributed*) were agreed and signed.

SCS306 Matters Arising – (*from the actions log*)
24. *The Office and Finance Manager had provided temporary passes to Governors who attended the Open Evening and will now obtain four permanent badges for those Governors who do not yet have one. These will be named but will not carry a photo or open the front door to the building.*

SCS296(a) Governors agreed that they would like to identify another Governor to fill the existing vacancy and that this would ideally be a parent. It was suggested that the skills audit be completed to identify skills gaps first. **Action: Clerk to instigate Skills Audit.**

SCS296(b) *The Register of Business Interests, from now on referred to as the Register of Governor Interests, has been updated and was signed by all Governors present at the meeting.*
Action: Clerk to obtain remaining signatures.

SCS307 Finance and SFVS

a) The **Month 6 Report** was distributed at the meeting and provides further detail to the *Chart of Accounts – Cost Centres* spreadsheet that was previously circulated. The Report was agreed by Governors and signed by the Chair

Where is the budget deficit shown? The breakdown of estimated balances shows that the deficit at the end of the year will be £73,551, not £95,000 as budgeted. This will be the case unless anything unforeseen happens e.g. Staffing or building issues. This is a positive position, which Governors celebrated, although recognising that there was six months of the budget to run. **Has the school received funding for the current pupil numbers?** No, this is due in April. Funding will be for 286 pupils, although actual roll is now 288, as two students joined the school after the School Census report in October 2017. **How do the figures in the Month 6 Report fit with the Audit report?** The audit report is a separate report covering 2016-17, although this does include expected figures for 2017-18 as included by the auditor.

Can Governors' anticipate any costs that would affect this position, particularly for building maintenance? Funds have been put within a Building Maintenance Fund and there are no major works expected to either the Girls' toilets or School Hall floor. The Headteacher indicated a possible requirement to upgrade ICT facilities, although there is the potential to use Devolved Formula Capital Grant (DFCG) funds for this. An in-class review would be conducted and spend likely within

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the next six months. Additional investment may also be desired in the lead up to SATs to allow for targeted interventions to achieve best results and staff returners will also have an impact on the budget.

As the next forecast is due in Month 9 Governors need to establish how much they wish to 'beat the budget' by. It was agreed that a Finance Working Party meeting be scheduled for the end of the Autumn Term. The Chair added that a report to the recent Chairs' Briefing specifically mentioned Finance Committees that did not have minutes of their meetings and the Finance Working Party should consider how it will maintain records of its meetings.

Action: Office and Finance Manager to convene meeting of the Finance Working Party.

The Staff Governor suggested including 'options for future spend' as an agenda item for the next staff meeting. **Action – Headteacher to include options for future spend as an agenda item for the next staff meeting.** Are staff aware of the current deficit? Yes, they have been advised.

- b) **SFVS Self-Evaluation** – Governors present had completed and returned their self-evaluation forms. **Action: Clerk to chase absent Governors for their completed forms.**
- c) **Financial Audit Report** – The Headteacher explained that this is a two-day intensive process whereby an auditor scrutinises Governors' minutes, spreadsheets, finance working practices and concludes with a report, which had been previously circulated to Governors. The actions identified have now been actioned. **Why is the auditor's estimated deficit figure worse than the actual position?** The two deficit figures for 2016/17 and 2017/18 were added together as a running total. The school's actual outturn position was better than that anticipated when the audit report was produced.
- d) **Pecuniary Interests of Staff** – Two declarations have been made by staff. Governors are happy for the Chair of Governors to accept and sign the Pecuniary Interests of Staff document.
- e) **Pension Deficit Charge** – The explanation was accepted by Governors.
- f) **Finance Policy** – see SCS308(a) below.

A Governor asked whether the way Swanmead's Special Needs Funding is assessed and awarded has now been changed, as there was a previous mention of increased funding via this route? No, and no additional funding is forthcoming at present. However, Swanmead can anticipate receiving more Pupil Premium Funding if more pupils are on roll. Eligibility for Free School Meals and the uptake of Free School Meals (FSM) varies. One possible reason for this is a misunderstanding on the part of parents whose children may be eligible for FSM but do not wish to take up an actual school meal.

SCS308 Policy Review and Renewal

- a) The revised Finance Policy had been reviewed by the Chair of Governors. Amendments include the addition of four mini clauses. Governors accepted the Chair's recommendation to approve and the updated policy was signed by the Chair of Governors.

The Clerk updated the position regarding the Policy Review Schedule, following a meeting with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors on 13.10.2017. Progress since the last meeting includes: Amendments to the schedule to identify lead staff members and Governors' for each policy; updates to the frequency of review where Governors have the right to determine this; production of a 'cover sheet' for all policies, identifying review schedule and most recent amendments. The Headteacher proposes to spend Thursday 9th November reviewing all outdated policies and will bring these to the next meeting.

Action – Headteacher to update priority policies for circulation and approval at November meeting of the Governing Body.

SCS309 Safeguarding

- a) **Presentation** – Governors were provided with a training sheet, which was also shared with staff. Governors can anticipate being asked questions by Ofsted about safeguarding, which may include

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questions regarding radicalisation and the Prevent Duty. **Governors suggested that 'radicalisation' be added to the Training Sheet as a form of abuse.**

Staff have read the Keeping Children Safe document, Prevent Duty and Whistleblowing Policy. Governors completed Prevent Duty training and printed certificates evidencing completion in 2016. This will be refreshed. **Has a risk assessment been done for Prevent, as specified in the Prevent Duty document?** No. **Governors stressed that the advantage of a risk assessment is to identify all sources of potential risk to radicalisation, e.g. after-school clubs, YouTube (not currently filtered). Why are YouTube and Google Images not filtered?** YouTube is now an important learning tool. **Action – Headteacher to follow-up with staff and prepare an appropriate risk assessment.**

How many incidents of abuse and/or radicalisation in the past 12 months, where action has been required? 30+ **How has this been recognised, i.e. how do you know a child is at risk?** The Headteacher explained that where safeguarding concerns exist, a file is opened on the affected child. The incident may be identified by a professional/referral or self-disclosure by the affected individual. Governors found the flow diagram at the back of the Keeping Children Safe document helpful in illustrating this. **Are you happy that the outlined procedure is in place and the process followed?** The Hub, Tutor system and staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities. The school has reviewed its effectiveness in dealing with incidents following a significant safeguarding incident in the past academic year. However, the school was able to respond quickly. Staff representatives agreed that the current systems appear to work. **Should the Governing Body have known that this incident occurred?** The Link Governor was informed of the incident and the support that the school put in place. Since the school had done all it could, it was not felt that it was an issue to bring to the Governing Body meeting. If Governors are aware of issues within the community questions could be brought to Governors meetings to 'test' policies and procedures. A previous reference to 'no safeguarding issues in the school' was clarified. The school has the necessary policies and procedures in place to deal with safeguarding issues, that is not to say there are no incidents.

Governors were advised that some teaching staff within the local community are now required to record issues that may become a safeguarding issue. At Swanmead, The Hub creates an 'Open file' on pupils where there are concerns, to which individual staff members can add noteworthy comments. Often this can confirm staff suspicions that there may be issues. **How many open files does the school currently have?** – approximately 20 and the Open files close when the child leaves the school.

- b) **Impact of Safeguarding Audit 2016** – The Safeguarding Governor and Headteacher has reviewed the previous audit and actions. The new audit for 2017 has now been released. This will be reported with the revised policy at the November meeting of the Governing Body.
- c) **Maintaining the Single Central Record (SCR)** – This was last reviewed by Deb Wring, School Improvement Partner (SIP), in February 2017. Any action points identified have now been addressed. **What process is in place to review the SCR on an ongoing basis?** The next review is due on February 2018. The Safeguarding Governor is happy with this arrangement.
- d) **Keeping Children Safe in Education and The Prevent Duty documents** – These documents had been read and understood by all Governors present. Governors present signed confirming as such, a copy of which has been retained by the Clerk.

SCS310 Governor Business

a) Three-year Strategic Plan- The Chair invited Governors to join a working party to develop this further. Governors were once more reminded that they need to show evidence of an agreed strategic plan. The Plan should include some general targets, which may be evidenced by the SDP. Governors would like it to be a brief headline document that acts as an umbrella for the SDP/Success Plan, Headteacher's 2020 Vision and existing Finance work. It should also have a view to the future school structure, i.e. MAT. The Vice-Chair agreed to support the Chair in the development of this document. The Staff Governor also expressed a desire to be involved – **Action – Chair of Governors to coordinate a working party.**

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- b) **Governor Handbook/Induction Booklet** - This document was well received by Governors and no amendments were proposed. The Clerk will issue a password for the Governor Secure section of the website to enable access to key documents.
- c) **Update on any Training and Professional Development undertaken, including Clerk and Chair Briefings** – The Chair had attended the recent Chairs’ Briefing and advised that Succession Planning and Premises Management training is coming up, which would be of most relevance to the Health and Safety Governor.

The Schools’ Forum is also seeking Governor representation. The forum meets once a term in County Hall. Governors have the opportunity to influence how the DfE Funding Formula is applied in Somerset. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-funding-formula-tables-for-schools-and-high-needs>.

Governing Bodies should also ensure that there are termly performance management meetings in place for Headteachers and that targets are reported to Governors meetings. **Action - Termly meetings of the Pay and Performance Management Committee to be put in place.**

- d) **Agree Link Governor Protocol and Link Governors for 2017/18** – The protocol was approved by Governors. The Headteacher requested a number of changes to the school contacts and the removal of the ICT Link Governor from Appendix 1, since there is no longer an ICT staff lead.
Action: Clerk to make changes and reissue document.

e) **Summary of Link Visits/Reports**

SEN Link Governor – 03.10.2017 – School SENCO - New funding discussed. All staff had training at the end of the last academic year on the new core standards, which was attended by the SEN Governor. The SEN Report is now on the website. The school SEN staff lead has met with the SLT. Five children were receiving funds. One has been reduced to SEN support and four applications will now go forward for modification in November. It is not yet clear how much money is to be received. Funds were granted on appeal for one application. New Year 5s are settling well, which could be a reflection of the good transition arrangements with feeder schools. One of the new Year 5s, who was identified as requiring intensive support during transition, will be awarded the half termly Success Shield in tomorrow’s final assembly.

Agreed Actions – Need to assess children who are significantly below expectations but still evidence their progress within the appropriate curriculum. **How would special schools measure this?** They currently make their own set of judgements. It is possible to break down levels within the curriculum but the application of a different curriculum i.e. 4, rather than 6 may be more effective. Evidence of personal development/other measures can show progress in non-curricular areas.

SEN Link Governor 03.10.2017 – Visit to the Hub – Full timetable of support with quite a number of Year 5 pupils amongst them. Preparing for new round of the Behaviour and Vulnerability Profile Tool (BPVT), which will identify new pupils requiring support and offer advice to teaching staff. Requests for annual leave for holiday has increased. A small number of pupils are having a significant impact on overall pupil attendance statistics. There is regular contact with parents to evidence need for absence in the case of medical needs. One child on the register with medical needs has now left the school. Ensuring consistency of communication with other schools in the area is important. Intensive work is ongoing with Year 8 pupils to reduce likelihood of exclusion and currently working to integrate a new pupil who has a negative relationship with school.

Safeguarding Link Governor – 03.10.2017 - Meeting with Headteacher – As mentioned above, the SIP will review the SCR at least annually. All staff have completed safeguarding and Prevent training. Last year’s Audit was reviewed and actions implemented.

Whole School Literacy Link Governor – Meeting with Charlotte Kirk - Discussed three targets within the School Development Plan (SDP). (1) Numeracy - Maths Day activities included:

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Junior Scrabble, Code Cracking, Dictionary work and Maths vocabulary. (2) KS2 English Attainment - The current year group are weaker than last year. The staff member's own target for writing is 70%. Moderation work books have been developed from Year 5, which will be carried through to Year 8. Boys are making slower progress than girls in Reading, but smaller group work has increased their enthusiasm. Progress is regularly measured through Pyra and other tests and can promptly identify pupils needing extra support. More able pupils are being worked with and individuals advised of their reading ages as an incentive and encouragement. (3) Achievement for All – Just introduced so nothing to report yet.

SCS311 Pupil Premium

The Headteacher drew Governors' attention to the headlines on the first page; essentially children in receipt of Pupil Premium (PP) do not achieve as highly as All Pupils in SATs. The 2017 expected standard for writing was 75% All Pupils v 53% PP and reading 106.7 v 102.2. The disadvantaged children within the school are almost in line with the national average for reading. Maths is proving more difficult to make progress in for children in receipt of PP however, although this could be due to a change to the curriculum.

The school's Year 8 leavers in receipt of PP outperformed all pupils in English GL tests. Maths performance for children in receipt of PP was also not much lower.

Over the past three years PP progress has been above the national average but, compared to All pupils, still remains lower. **How do you target those children? Is there anything concrete in place specifically for them?** Identification, more 1-2-1, marking books first, strategy for overcoming barriers, opportunities for children to attend trips, have uniform, etc. Ultimately the disadvantaged children are making the same level of progress as All pupils. A focus on instilling fundamental basics in term one and filling gaps in mastery sets them on the right course. **Is there a different approach for less able children and children in receipt of PP?** No, this is essentially the same, although admittedly there is some overlap between less able and children in receipt of PP.

The Headteacher introduced the Achievement for All programme, which has had a 96% success rate elsewhere in the country. The focus is on the most disadvantaged young people and is a two-year project, worth £20k, funded by the Somerset Challenge. Every Somerset Middle School is participating and Swanmead has already begun some positive shared work, e.g. September inset day with Maiden Beech School. Achievement for All is based on four modules. Core modules, which will be completed by all, and a selection of tailored modules. Swanmead has completed a needs analysis and will work with Maiden Beech on a number of the modules. A list of the 20 most vulnerable children has already been drawn up. Baseline data will be collected and progress of these children monitored throughout the programme. The Parent Engagement module has proven to be most effective in other areas. At Swanmead this will involve termly meetings (structured conversations) between a nominated member of staff (professional friend) and parents, to include tour of the school and focused dialogue on securing improvements in learning. Targets will be set in conjunction with parents and shared with pupils. PP Link Governors of both schools are to embark on looking at the Effective Use of the Pupil Premium Funding Model. Governors are excited by the potential of this programme. **When will this be rolled out to staff officially?** This week. **How will you pick the professional friend?** These will be selected following discussion by the Head, Senior Teachers and subject leaders. Some positive relationships have already been established and it will make sense for some these to continue and be developed. Parental engagement may be a challenge, but creative approaches to meeting location, etc. may be required.

SCS312 Any Other Business - There were no further items for discussion.

SCS313 Date and Agenda for next Governing Body Meeting – Thursday, 23rd November 2017 at 5.30pm in Room 5, to include: **Safeguarding** –Updated Safeguarding Policy, Safeguarding Audit 2017; **Governor Business; Policy Review and Renewal** – Various, tbc; **Headteacher's Report** - Monitoring of SDP

The Meeting closed at 19:46

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Chair

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