



**SWANMEAD COMMUNITY SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING
HELD ON**

Thursday 23rd November 2017 at 5.30 pm in Room 5

Present: Dean Aspinall (DA); Marian Gamper (MG) (Chair); Val Keitch (VK); Jesse Pattisson (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).

SCS314 Apologies for Absence – Winifred Nakayama (WN), Michaela Sharman (MS) and Steve Sowden (SS) - who had tendered his resignation earlier in the day.

SCS315 Governors to declare to the Committee any pecuniary interest in this meeting’s agenda items – None declared.

SCS316 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 19th October 2017 (previously distributed) were agreed and signed.

SCS317 Matters Arising – (from the actions log)

Item reference	Action	Update
1	SWOT Data sheet	To be circulated.
22	Production of Governors’ Three-year Strategic Plan	More developed draft to be prepared in December 2017.
24	Governor Badges	All Governors now provided with new badges.
25	Headteachers of Swanmead and Wadham to provide evidence of further collaborative working.	Evidence to be provided to Pay Committee on Monday
SCS306	Skills Audit	Agreed to defer until all Governor vacancies are filled.
SCS306	Governor Interests document	All remaining signatures obtained
SCS307a	Next meeting of finance working party	Not yet arranged. To be dealt with Friday (24 th November).
SCS309	Radicalisation risk assessment	Draft 1 sent to Kate and Win, copied to Chair. In hand.
SCS310c	Termly meetings of Pay and Performance Committee	DP/KP and Kevin Freedman to complete appraisal on Monday. Interim date could be agreed then.

SCS318 Governor Business

- a) Governors present were all in favour of the **co-option of Michaela Sharman**, staff member, onto the Governing Body. Following the resignation of the Local Authority Governor, Steve Sowden there are now two vacancies on the Governing Body, including the co-opted Governor vacancy.
- b) Governors had reviewed the **Instrument of Government** (previously circulated) and agreed to retain it in its current form.
- c) Governors had not completed any **training** since the last meeting.
JP, Link Governor for the Arts, had conducted a **Link Visit** to Alison Rose in the Art Department on Tuesday 21st November 2017. A full report will be submitted. The Link Governor understood that evidencing progression of boys in Art has generally been more challenging. Alison had been in touch with young professional artists in London. Year 8 pupils were invited to send questions to one such artist and received a video link response. The Emerging, Mastery and Secure categorisations are also still quite difficult to apply in this subject area. Class time has been reduced, i.e. two year groups have lost 50% of timetable. Class size is also challenging. Years 6

Signed as being a true record Chair

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and 7 have class sizes of 30+ in a classroom that are not designed to accommodate so many pupils. This makes it difficult to complete all planned practical work. Alison feels that the above is leading to challenging behaviour during lessons. Alison is also delivering RE and is trying to combine art with the subject area to reduce the impact of lost teaching hours. Alison would like Governors to acknowledge the challenge of reduced teaching hours and larger class sizes. She welcomed the Link Governor visit, the first in five years.

Governors remarked on the creativity and dynamism of this long-serving teacher. Alison was also very quick to adopt the embedding of literacy across the curriculum. The Chair of Governors recommended that Governors take the opportunity to visit the art department if they can.

The Headteacher explained that pupils are often taken out of art lessons to receive other interventions, in efforts to address larger class sizes. In reality class sizes are closer to 27 pupils and do not exceed 30. The staff member concerned had reduced their working hours to four days per week but did not want to job-share. Middle Schools tend to deliver no more than one hour per week of art. Swanmead is unusual in that it provides two hours in Year 7 and 8.

SCS319 Single Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

No specific update on the SFVS was available. Only one outstanding Self-Evaluation Form is now sought?

The Headteacher reported that he had attended a consultation workshop regarding funding changes for 2018/19 and 2019/20. Governors should be aware that Somerset, of the 150 Local Education Authorities (LEA), has been one of the lowest funded counties. This has recently changed and the county is now 19th out of 150 gainers of additional funding. A decision is to be taken regarding whether Somerset adopts the national or a local funding formula. It is generally accepted that it would be in the interests of the county to adopt the national funding formula.

A Per pupil increase of a minimum of 0.5 % in 2018/19 and a minimum 1% in 2019/20 is anticipated. This could amount to some £180-£220 per pupil increase. The Headteacher further explained that the lowest funded schools will receive a minimum funding level, which equates to £4000 per pupil for Middle Schools in 2018/19 and £4200 in 2019/20. Swanmead Community School and the Governors' Finance Working Party will need to revisit the in-year budget and discuss at a future meeting of the Working Party.

The Headteacher circulated a separate document relating to the School Fund budget. This operates as a separate slush-fund account for items such as School Trips, Uniform, School Production, Lockers and other sundries. Governors reviewed the document, which was accepted and signed by the Chair of Governors.

SCS320 Policy Review and Renewal

Each of the following policies were reviewed by relevant Link Governors. Comments and recommendations were collated, prior to the meeting, by the Clerk and shared with all Governors, along with a copy of each of the policies.

- a) **Safeguarding** – Reviewed by Safeguarding Governor. Governors **approved, in principle**, the adoption of the updated policy, subject to answers to the following questions and amendments: **Have all staff, including long-standing staff, been DBS checked?** Two members of staff have not been. There is no statutory requirement to do so, but it would be good practice. **Governors recommend that updated DBS checks are undertaken for these members of staff.** Governors further requested that the Safeguarding Policy clearly states the intervals at which DBS checks will be repeated and that this should follow any DBS recommended review schedule.

Action: Headteacher to progress DBS checks for remaining two members of staff

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Action: *Headteacher to check DBS recommended review schedule and update policy accordingly.*

Are staff required within their contracts of employment to declare any convictions? Declarations are made at the point of application but not once employed.

Action: *Headteacher to confirm the dates at within the policy.*

Does the school have an audit trail/decision tree showing how the school determines which staff will, or will not, be DBS checked?

Action: *KP to share Somerset Skills and Learning Decision Tree example.*

18:01- Duncan Perks joined the meeting.

- b) **Data Protection** – Reviewed by Chair of Governors and one other Governor. The model policy was very different to the current school policy. Can the Headteacher review school policy? The member of staff responsible has not been clearly identified.
- c) **Health and Safety** – to be reviewed
- d) **School Behaviour Policy** – **Agreed in principle**, subject to review of DfE recommendations and revisions by Headteacher and Staff Governor. **Governors asked whether the current policy works. Is it implemented as written? E.g. Saturday detention not enforced therefore should not be included.** Some further revisions have been identified by the Headteacher and Staff Governor, which will be completed. The Clerk clarified the need for a separate Statement of Behaviour Principles document. Governors agreed that the first section of the policy i.e. rationale and five summary points satisfy this.

Action: *Clerk to circulate separately.*

- e) **SEN** – **Approved with amendments** proposed by SEN Governor.
- f) **Staff Development** – **Approved with suggested amendments.** To be determined at Pay Committee in July and discussed with Kevin Friedman on Monday.
- g) **Complaints** – **Agreed subject to proposed amendments.** If parent is not happy, a letter of complaint is usually sent to the Chair of Governors who acts as a mediator. The Headteacher is asked to clarify what has been done and a letter from the Chair of Governors is sent. This is usually effective. Governors recommend inclusion of a phase two before an appeal panel. Chair would not be involved in an appeal process. Governors agreed that they would trust the judgement of the Chair. Phase 2 written in.
- h) **Freedom of Information** – Pupil Premium information is hidden under Ofsted section of the school website and needs clearer signposting.

Action: *Headteacher to draft PP Policy, to be discussed with PP Link Governor tomorrow, and include statement on the website regarding position adopted re Governors’ allowances.*

- i) **Home School Agreement** - **No longer required.**
- j) **Whistleblowing** – **Approved subject to proposed amendments** to the layout.

SCS321 **Safeguarding** – The Safeguarding Policy has been updated and been reviewed as above. Further problems have been encountered with the online Safeguarding Audit software. The deadline for completion has subsequently been extended to 31st January 2018.

SCS322 **Headteacher’s Report**
 The Headteacher had submitted a full report to Governors at the September 2017 meeting. The following update was provided on:

- **School Structure** – An update from the recent meeting of Crewkerne and Ilminster Schools’ Partnership (CISP) Headteachers was provided and is minuted under **Section 2.**
- **School Development Plan** – The latest version of the SDP was tabled. Governing Body roles and responsibilities are clearly identified in column four. Governors may prefer to take the document away and review prior to asking questions. Governors

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proposed that the document be circulated electronically and comments collated as per the policy review.

Action : Include SDP / Strategic Plan Agenda item for January 2018

- **Maths** – Test data will be available in January 2018. Year 6 is a much larger year group of 91 pupils.

19:00 Jesse Pattison left the meeting

SCS323 Any Other Business

The following questions were raised on behalf of an absent Governor:

- 1. The government has recently confirmed the extra PE and Sports Premium that will be paid to schools - with conditions attached. Does the school have a plan in place for how this will be spent to maximise physical activity in children - particularly the least active?**

The Pupil Premium Plan is on the school website under the 'For Ofsted' tab. This could be made more prominent. As a Middle School, not a Primary School, the details of Sports Premium Funding are still awaited. However, a current plan relating to Sports Premium spending can also be found under the 'For Ofsted' tab.

- 2. What was the percentage turnout at the recent Key Stage 2 (KS2) 'show your work' session and what has feedback been like?**

88 families attended, approximately half of all parents. Positive feedback was received.

- 3. Do staff feel the recent shift to focus on English and Maths in KS2 has been beneficial? Does data show that this has been an effective use of time in increasing rates of progress and attainment?**

The Headteacher felt that the changes had been necessary and were broadly successful. Data shows Swanmead as one of the most improved in the country. Staff have generally been positive about the changes. The school's Teaching and Learning Policy stresses a full and balanced curriculum for all children. Despite an emphasis on English and Maths, i.e. 14 lessons out of 25, this does still represent a balanced curriculum offer with a wide range of other specialist subject areas taught. Parents have questioned the changes more than staff.

- 4. In regards to the recent bad publicity a small minority of pupils have given the school, is there any more that we can be doing to raise the positive profile of the school within the community?**

A small number of Swanmead pupils had caused disruption during the Remembrance Day Parade. Governor VK, in her role as Mayor, confirmed that she has had meetings with the Police, who have agreed to have a much greater presence in Ilminster over the coming weeks to deal with a number of incidents of anti-social behaviour not exclusively involving Swanmead pupils. The Headteacher and staff have responded to concerns raised by members of the community and other pupils within the school. **Governors expressed some concerns about the way pupils are being encouraged to 'stand up for themselves' and asked that approved restorative justice approaches be used where possible.** In terms of publicity, it is understood that staff who organise events and participation at Greenfyld First School, for example, are required to produce a press release to publicise this. Currently the school administrator sends a Press Release to the Chard and Ilminster News every two weeks. It was suggested that pupils could author some press releases. It also came to light that nobody within the school is specifically responsible for publicity so sharing the load across staff may be beneficial.

Action: Clerk to provide a list of local media contacts for future use.

19:21 Mark Raven left the meeting

A number of questions were posed following the recent Pay Appeal Committee Meeting. The questions and responses are minuted under **Section 2**.

Signed as being a true record Chair

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The Meeting closed at 19:29

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