



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

**Thursday 25 January 2018 at 5.30 pm in Room 5**

**Present:** Dean Aspinall (DA); Marian Gamper (MG) (Chair); Win Nakayama (WN); Jesse Pattison (JP); Duncan Perks (DP); Kate Priddle (KP); Michaela Sharman (MS); and Mark Walker (MW) (Headteacher).

**In attendance:** Kate Murdoch (KM) Prospective Governor; Natalie Wainwright (NW) (Clerk to the Governing Body)

**SCS325 Apologies for Absence** were received and accepted from Val Keitch (VK); Mark Raven (MR); and Kirk Broome (KB) (Prospective Governor).

**SCS326 Governors to declare to the Committee any pecuniary interest in this meeting's agenda items** – none declared.

**SCS327 Minutes of the last meeting\***, held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017, were agreed and signed. The Confidential minute was reviewed by the Chair of Governors and, subject to one amendment regarding the individuals present, were agreed.

**SCS328 Matters Arising**

**SCS307a** – *A meeting of the Finance Working Party was scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> January 2018, although this will now be postponed until the Month 9 Report has been updated and is ready for review/discussion. Date to be advised.*

**SCS309** – *The Headteacher has drafted a Radicalisation Risk Assessment document, which has been shared with two Governors and the Chair of Governors for review. The next iteration of the document is to be shared with staff.*

**SCS329 Governor Business**

- a) Governors confirmed that they had received and reviewed the **draft 3-year Strategic Plan**. Comments will be collated and circulated for further discussion at the next meeting in February, when Governors intend to confirm its adoption.
- b) Governors had not completed any **training or development activities** since the last meeting. The Chair of Governors once more urged Governors to take up available training opportunities.

The Clerk provided an update from the most recent **Clerks' Briefing** session held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018. A copy of the full briefing accompanies these minutes.

- c) No **Link Visits** had been completed since the last meeting.

**SCS330 Finance and SFVS\* –**

The School Finance and Office Manager, Sue Spurway, will attend the next meeting in February to present the Month 9 Report; predictions for the end of year outturn position and financial planning for 2018/19. A number of changes to staffing and unanticipated outgoings in terms of teaching staff, have had a knock-on effect on the budget. The implications of this will be discussed and reviewed with the Finance Working Party prior to the presentation to the Full Governing Body.

Income has received a boost following receipt of the Sports Premium money, which has doubled, additional Pupil Premium funding, and Year 7 catch-up money. As one member of the SLT is an Ofsted Inspector this also generates income for the school.

The latest recruit to the Governing Body confirmed that she would be completing some finance training with the Finance and Office Manager on Friday 26 January 2018.

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Signed as being a true record ..... Chair

Date:.....

### **SCS331 Policy Review and Renewal**

The Finance Working Party had reviewed the Charging and Remissions and Lettings Policies and recommended them both for approval with no changes. The Governing Body were happy to accept the recommendations of the Finance Working Party in respect of these two policies.

The Headteacher provided an update on his recent meeting with the Clerk and confirmed the following:

- The Behaviour Policy will be recirculated to all Governors, since it was agreed that the rationale, set out in the first section of the document, will serve as the Governors' Statement of Behaviour Principles;
- All amendments, suggested and recorded at the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017, had been made, with the exception of:
- The Health and Safety Policy, which will be revisited by the Health and Safety Governor and responsible staff member to bring it more closely in line with the model policy;
- The new Pupil Premium Policy, the drafting of which remains an outstanding action for the Headteacher;
- The Data Protection Policy, which will be reviewed by the Headteacher alongside the model policy. The Clerk advised that the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into force in May 2018 and the school's policy would need to cover the requirements of this.

The Chair thanked all Governors for their work on reviewing the policies.

### **SCS332 Safeguarding\***

Since this is such an important area for Governors, a revised copy of the Safeguarding Policy was circulated to all Governors with the agenda for this meeting.

The Headteacher confirmed that, as per the request of Governors on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017, Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks had been completed for five long-standing staff members. There is no requirement, or recommended timescales, for reviewing staff DBS checks. Governors could request the inclusion of regular reviews within the school's safeguarding policy, but should be mindful of the financial implications of taking such a decision. The current cost of an Enhanced DBS check is £44 per individual. It was proposed that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) develop a system of annual self-declaration by staff, but ensure that next steps are clear should a declaration be made.

**Action: Headteacher and SLT to develop a system of annual self-declaration of offences by staff and report progress to the next meeting in February.**

The Headteacher advised that his and one other member of the SLT's Safeguarding Training certificates had expired. Steps have been taken to address this and the Headteacher is booked onto Safeguarding Training on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February. The other member of staff has completed additional training as part of his Ofsted role.

### **SCS333 Area Restructure**

Four Swanmead Governors had attended the meeting of Governors and Headteachers within the Crewkerne and Ilminster Schools Partnership (CISP) earlier in the month. Somerset County Council has confirmed their intention to move from a three tier to two tier education system within the CISP area. Mark tabled his notes, which had been circulated to Governors present at the meeting and shared with staff on 10th January.

Governors expressed concern that no financial information has been provided to show the costs of any of the options presented and feared a restructure would not only run into millions of pounds, but may not secure Wadham's future in the short or long term.

A further three meetings are planned before the end of July 2018 of Headteachers and Chair of Governors, although no dates have been provided to date and no follow-up responses received to any of the questions asked on the evening.

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Governors noted that parent opinion does not appear to have been sought but will be hugely influential in determining the future viability of the schools within a three-tier system.

Announcements have now been made and a Press Release has been issued by the Local Authority, published in the Chard and Ilminster. CISP Headteachers have agreed that: All communication will be issued only by the Headteacher and any press or individual enquirers will be referred to the statement by the Local Authority.

Governors' would like to await a formal proposal before becoming overly concerned with the implications of this, although it was proposed that a SWOT Analysis be completed. Meanwhile, the focus should remain on delivering a good quality education at Swanmead Community School.

**SCS334 Headteachers' Report – To include the following: School Structure\*, Attainment and Progress - English and Maths\*; School Development Plan\* (attached);**

The Headteacher presented his report, highlighting some challenges for the school in securing better **attendance**. Year 6 was the only year to exceed the target for attendance and pupils were demonstrating a fantastic work ethic. **Governors asked how Swanmead's attendance compared to national performance** and were advised by the Headteacher that this is usually reported by Primary and Secondary school level data. Swanmead exceeds the attendance figure for Secondary Schools (93%) but underperforms compared with Primary data (96%).

**Governors' asked how the school was targeting interventions to address attendance issues.** The Safeguarding Governor advised that Debbie Harvey in The Hub is making contact with individuals and their families and calls home are made on the same day as a registered absence.

The Headteacher advised that this week, every KS3 tutor had been given £10 and a list of 'target' children. Tutors have established a simple reward system to incentivise attendance. An example of a successful, tried and tested, class reward system was outlined by one Governor. Other options considered included reinstating the weekly attendance prize. **Governors felt that it was important for all attendance to be rewarded, not just the attendance of target students.**

**Action: Headteacher to review system of reward and encourage staff to share best practice in order to develop a 'whole school ethos'.**

There have been a number of **Personnel** changes and further changes to come, all of which will have financial implications, to be considered by the Finance Working Party prior to the next meeting.

**Governors asked why an English teacher vacancy was to be filled with a temporary contract only.**

This will allow the school to 'take stock' over the Spring/Summer Term and decide on the best way to replace Louisa Donkersley and the English teaching vacancy in the long term.

DP left  
the  
meeting –  
19:00

A member of staff has been identified to fill the SENCo role from September 2018.

The Headteacher explained the current **SATs projections** data and confirmed that this was whole school data – **Governors asked if this was based on last year's test papers, Yes, and why fewer pupils appeared to be assessed as 'Secure'?** The Headteacher explained that the data available at Easter is a better predictor of performance. The data presented relates to teacher assessment only, not test results.

**Governors questioned the data further and concluded that reporting whole school data was unhelpful. A breakdown by year and an understanding of what percentage of children are making below expected, or above expected, progress would be more informative. There also appears to be confusion among staff regarding the application of the current Emerging, Developing, Secure and Mastery (EDSM) classifications and Governors felt that the current system did not evidence the hard work of teachers and the achievement of pupils in terms of**

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progress. Whilst the EDSM approach may impress Ofsted, an alternative data capture and reporting system is needed to assist in communicating pupil progress with parents, which reflects performance below or above expected standards and is based on the curriculum each pupil is accessing, i.e. some pupils in Year 6 may be accessing a Year 4 curriculum but performing above expected for their ability.

**Action – Headteacher to consult staff on the proposed new system of recording for measuring pupil progress and assessment of individuals at the level at which they are working.**

The Headteacher explained the **Year 5 Baseline data**. This is based on the GL Assessment Test 9, which is the test pupils take in Year 4 in the summer prior to entry to Swanmead. Half of children who sat the test are below 100 for English and Maths. It was suggested by one Governor that this is not at all representative of the Maths situation and the Headteacher agreed that the test results should not be viewed in isolation. Noticeable differences in performance across the three main feeder schools were identified however.

Governors asked whether the school follows up with the feeder schools and can pressure be applied to Headteacher's in those schools to improve performance?

The Headteacher explained that Joint SMT Meetings occur regularly between Swanmead, Greenfylde and the Three Saints Federation. At the first one of these meetings in the Autumn Term, these figures are scrutinised and discussed.

The Headteacher advised that the framework for **Ofsted inspections** had changed and, although Swanmead still anticipated a visit in this academic year, as a 'Good' school, this would be a one day visit initially. Should inspectors agree that the school is still 'Good' they would return again in three years. If minor concerns are identified the school would retain its 'Good' rating but be issued with a set of targets and be revisited within eighteen months-two years. If serious concerns about safeguarding or behaviour are identified, inspectors would return for a second day to investigate further.

The Headteacher reminded Governors that the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) document (previously circulated) is what Governors should refer to, should questions be asked by Ofsted. The Chair stressed that there is no expectation that Governors will know the data without having such reference documents available to them.

**Action: Clerk to include the data pack/SWOT on the Governor Secure section of the website for future reference.**

The School **Self Evaluation Form** had been completed, circulated, and was deemed to be considerably improved from the version previously presented to Governors.

### **SCS335 Any Other Business**

A Governor alerted the Governing Body to the publication of The Real School Guides 2018 on the Somerset Live website. This covers the whole country and measures KS1-KS2 progress. Although Swanmead has been awarded one star, it was generally accepted that this guide was not a reliable data source and overlooked the significant differences between two and three tier education systems.

Governors congratulated the Headteacher on his recent engagement.

A confidential email, sent by one Governor and the Staff Governor to the Chair, was briefly mentioned. Procedure had already been clarified in an answering email.

### **SCS336 Date and Agenda for next Governing Body Meeting** – The next meeting will go ahead, as originally advised, on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 and will be chaired by the Vice-Chair.

In addition to the usual standing items the agenda will include: Adoption of the Governors' Three Year Strategic Plan, Policy Review and Renewal – Ratification of the revised SEND Policy and Impact of SEND changes; Finance and SFVS\* - Month 9 Report; Safeguarding Audit Report.

*The meeting closed at 19:38*

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Signed as being a true record ..... Chair

Date:.....