



**Minutes of the full governing board
Spaxton School CofE VC Primary School
Wednesday 9th January 2019 at 6.30pm**

Present: Andrew Watson, Luke Kelly (Head Teacher), Suzanne Traynor, Heidi Moule, Revd. Eleanor King, Dean Waghorn, Kerry Henderson and Becky Skews

In attendance: Helen Roper (Clerk)

1. Opening Prayer

1.1. Suzanne Traynor led the meeting in an opening prayer

2. Apologies and Declaration of Interests

- 2.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Chris Fairbrass who is working in Manchester today
- 2.2. There were no declarations of interests re: agenda items

3. Election of Chair

- 3.1. The clerk explained that Mike Hodson had resigned shortly before the end of the Christmas term because of a potential conflict of interest; he is a governor at a school within another local multi-academy trust.
- 3.2. The Clerk explained that all governing boards were required to elect a chair (and a vice-chair) and that as it would be extremely difficult to recruit an external candidate quickly, an internal candidate or candidates to co-chair needed to be elected from among the existing board members. It was noted that the current vice-chair had informed the board that due to work commitments he did not have the capacity to commit to the role of chair and would shortly be looking to stand down from the board.
- 3.3. Governors discussed the work of the chair and its responsibilities, particularly in light of the academisation process.
- 3.4. A nomination for chair was received from Suzanne Traynor. This was accepted unanimously by the board
- 3.5. A nomination for the role of vice-chair or if the board preferred, co-chair was received from Andrew Watson. **It was agreed that Suzanne and Andrew would explore the advantages and disadvantages of co-chairing compared with a chair/vice-chair arrangement and report back before any formal decision was made.**
- 3.6. Suzanne agreed to chair the remainder of the meeting

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 13th November and matters arising not covered by the agenda

- 4.1. The minutes of the 13th November were agreed to be an accurate record and were signed by the meeting chair
- 4.2. A number of items arising from the meeting had been actions for the Chair and therefore had not been completed. They were (5.8) Design governor link strategy for finance and standards and quality; (8.5) Investigate the potential impact of the cuts to level 2 and level 3 support services and (10.4) forward "Ofsted questions list for governors". The head reported on 8.5 and said that the Quantock cluster were currently just about able "to juggle the support" across the cluster. He also suggested that with the publication of the new Ofsted Framework imminent 10.4 could be held over a little longer.
- 4.3. (6.6) The head reported he had explored the practicalities of identifying free school meal entitlement through parent NI numbers but it was a time-consuming process and he would continue to make direct approaches to families he thought likely to be eligible. Pupil Premium numbers had risen in the school.
- 4.4. (10.50 forward eLIM documents to GDPR lead - actioned

5. Minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting held on 27th November and matters arising not covered by the agenda

- 5.1. The minutes of the 27th November were agreed to be an accurate record and were signed by the chair
- 5.2. There were no actions arising that are not covered by the agenda

6. Communication

- 6.1. The meeting chair explained she had asked for this item to be included in the agenda as there had been a recent occasion on which she had emailed the board explaining family illness prevented her from attending the school as planned and asking for a governor to take her place but she had received no responses at all. The head and other governors had had similar experiences. **It was agreed that all governors would check their educ accounts regularly and would acknowledge receipt of emails. ACTION: Clerk to update governors' contact details to include mobile numbers and post to Dropbox.**
- 6.2. The meeting discussed school/board communication. A number of governors did not have children attending the school and were not on the newsletter mailing list. **ACTION: add all governors to the newsletter list- Head**

7. School Development Plan

- 7.1. The head noted that a number of the actions previously RAG rated red were now amber and that the plan had more green than previously.
- 7.2. Priority 2- Ensuring excellent progress and attainment for all disadvantaged children. The head reported that the Reading Dog had been booked and that the parents and pupils had completed their reading trip to Waterstones to buy books for the home libraries. **The meeting chair reminded the meeting that the recent training had emphasised the importance of measuring impact – how will the board know that this strategy works? Could the resources have been used more widely?** The head

suggested that the board check that the attainment of the pupil premium children rises and that there was no evidence of a drop in the performance of non-pupil premium children.

- 7.3. The governors discussed other ways of making reading material more freely available such as a book swap on World Book Day or a book amnesty to allow all school books to be returned, no questions asked.
- 7.4. **The meeting discussed the** gap in monitoring practice between that outlined in recent training and current activity. It was agreed that governors should think back to the training and the notes, questions and discussion it prompted and ensure that they have questions or monitoring objectives by the next meeting. **ACTION: all governors.** It was agreed that the head would set objectives for monitoring days but if any governor has a specific question or area they wanted to further explore, they should put this forward.
- 7.5. A governor observed that a number of fellow students on her recent training had been identified as dyslexic and how the diagnosis had made a huge difference to them and their confidence in their own ability. **She asked what the school was doing to diagnose dyslexia early.** The SENDCo explained the school screens but does not diagnose. The screening allows the school to support the pupils to develop higher level skills across all subjects. If screening suggests that a formal diagnosis would be helpful, the SENDCo would talk to the parents about initiating this.
- 7.6. The SENDCo added that she was happy with the dyslexia screening materials but that the materials for assessing reading age were outdated and not as helpful for measuring progress as more modern ones. **A governor suggested that the head approached the PTFA for funds to purchase new schemes. ACTION head**

8. Financial Items

- 8.1. The Month 9 financial report which would be prepared by a member of the LA's financial team was not yet available
- 8.2. The meeting reviewed the actions from the 17/18 School Financial Value Standard. It was noted that the Finance Policy was due to be renewed in March and would be reviewed at the April meeting
- 8.3. It was not clear if the Benchmarking and Updating of the Asset Register had taken place. **ACTION: finance governor to follow up with head and extended services manager.**
- 8.4. **It was agreed that the 18/19 SFVS would be completed by the Finance Governor and Extended Services Manager**

9. Head Teacher's Report

- 9.1. The report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.
- 9.2. **Governors noted that with the exception of Y1 and Y5 attendance had dropped in the later half of the term.** The head explained that this was largely the result of the "seasonal" coughs and colds but in the case of reception, he thought it likely to be tiredness. The school had introduced a shorter transition to full time education and some of the youngest pupils had found the long term a struggle.

- 9.3. Term-time leave requests are higher than this time last year even though the head requests meetings with parents before he signs the request forms. **A governor asked the head why he thought parents whose leave request had been declined still went ahead.** The head suggested that holiday cost savings could be the main reason but many parents were simply confident that their child “would catch up”. He added that the requests included ones for Spring and Summer term leave so there was a chance that this would be all the ones for the year.
- 9.4. Pupils numbers are currently 79; the school had received 12 enquiries for places but unfortunately all were for Year groups that were already fully subscribed. The head attributed some of the calls to the favourable publicity in the local paper about the 2018 results following the publication of the national tables.
- 9.5. He reminded governors that next week was Learning Review Week and he would be conducting full lesson observations.
- 9.6. He outlined the data collected in the first of the 3 data-drops across the year. He explained the school operated an “end of year curriculum”. The curriculum had been broken down into a number of objectives which were taught across the year. The figures in his report represented the pupils who were working at age related expectations at that point of time. The numbers would increase across the year. **A governor asked if the data was on target.** The head said he was comfortable with the first set of data.
- 9.7. **A governor asked if the progress data was more important than attainment data for SEND pupils.** The head explained that SEND pupils were working below their age related expectations and that progress data showed how quickly they were catching up and was particularly important for children who may not achieve ARE
- 9.8. The head observed that the data for Pupil Premium Pupil writing was a legacy of their reading attainment but increased progress was being made.
- 9.9. Y6 attainment is good to outstanding but the cohort’s success at Key Stage 1 makes it very difficult to show progress

Heidi Moule and Becky Skews left the meeting at 8.40 pm

10. Policies and procedures

- 10.1. The governors approved and adopted the following policy which had been circulated in advance of the meeting
- Health and Safety
- 10.2. The Clerk advised that the complaints policy be held over until the new DfE guidance due shortly was published, **governors agreed but noted the current policy lacked timescales for responses etc.** Addendum – guidance published on 11th January

11. Governor responsibilities

- 11.1. The governors discussed who should attend the academisation working party planned for 10th January. **It was agreed that Suzanne, Andrew and Kerry would**

attend in the first instance. Suzanne agreed to be the contact for other school re: academisation matters.

11.2. It was noted that there would be a lot of work to do around the transfer and additional meetings/working parties would be required. However, the 5.30 start was difficult for most governors with work commitments and a later start time would be appreciated

11.3. **ACTION: Feedback from MAT preparation meetings to be a standing item on all agendas until conversion is complete**

12. Governor Monitoring

12.1. The meeting chair explained that the monitoring reports had been written at the time of the visit rather than after a period of reflection and asked what the board thought of this approach. It was felt that writing when the visit was fresh in everyone's mind had been useful.

12.2. The head thanked the meeting chair for her reports and said that her suggestion for recording progress had already been adopted by staff

13. SMSC Report

13.1. This item was carried over to the next full governing board meeting.

14. Safeguarding Report

14.1. The head as DSL reported that one family was currently receiving Level 2 support

14.2. The head had completed his Prevent lead training and can now train staff within the school. A training session is planned shortly; the head encouraged governors to attend if possible. **ACTION: head to email governors with date and time**

14.3. Building work to erect new gates, including car park gates is due to begin soon. While the plans reduced the room for parents to wait for children, the gates would be visible from reception and fob -operated increasing the site's security

15. Governance business

15.1. The board discussed their next steps re: the recruitment of a head. Recruiting a head Teacher was a target within the SEP report but the report had been written before the academisation had been approved by the head teacher board. It was noted that the Haygrove trust was assisting other schools making the transfer to the multi-academy trust recruit heads of school rather than head teachers. However, Haygrove had indicated that it could not assist Spaxton's recruitment without the agreement of the local authority. **It was agreed that the meeting chair and the head would make contact with the local authority and ascertain if it would be happy for Haygrove to assist the recruitment process and for that recruitment process to be for a head of school rather than head teacher.**

16. Meeting review

16.1. The board reviewed the decisions and discussions within the meeting. It was agreed that most of the discussion had been about items such as chairs, MAT

working parties and future appointments which did not directly impact on the outcomes of pupils. However, the board had made further progress in addressing governance structures, preparing for academisation and had a better understanding of the school's assessment procedures which would have a longer term, indirect impact on pupils' education.

17. Date of next meeting

17.1. Thursday 28th February 2019 beginning at 6.30pm.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.15pm

These minutes were agreed as a true record

Signed

Date

Summary of Decisions

3.5	Suzanne and Andrew to explore co-chairing before a formal vote taken
6.1	Governors will check educ accounts regularly and acknowledge receipt of any emails
7.4	Head to set objectives for monitoring days but if any governor has a specific question or area they wanted to further explore, they should put this forward.
8.4	The 18/19 SFVS will be completed by the Finance Governor and Extended Services Manager
10.2	To retain existing complaints policy until DfE guidance update Addendum – guidance published on 11 th January
11.1	Suzanne, Andrew and Kerry to attend the academisation meeting. Suzanne to be the named point of contact for other schools
15.1	The meeting chair and the head will make contact with the local authority and ascertain if it would be happy for Haygrove to assist the recruitment process and for that recruitment process to be for a head of school rather than head teacher

Summary of actions

Minute	Action	Responsibility and time line
6.1	Update board contact details	Clerk ASAP
6.2	Add all governors to the newsletter mailing list	Head ASAP
7.4	Identify monitoring questions	All governors ASAP
7.6	Ask PTFA for assistance with the purchase of reading test materials	Head ASAP
8.3	Check benchmarking has been completed	Finance Governor ASAP
8.3	Check asset register and inventory have been updated	Finance Governor ASAP
11.3	Feedback from MAT preparation meetings to be a standing item on all agendas until conversion is complete	Clerk ongoing
14.2	Email governors with date and time of Prevent training	Head ASAP

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