



Aston Rowant C+E Primary School
School Lane, Aston Rowant, Oxon OX49 5SU
01844 351671 office@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk
 Headteacher: Mrs Helen France

Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Aston Rowant CE Primary School
Wednesday 16th November 2022- 6.30pm

Present:

Steve Taylor (ST) Co Opted Governor, Chair
 Helen France (HF) Headteacher Staff Governor
 Alan Melady (AM) Parent Governor
 Tom Sowerby (TS) LA Governor
 Gill Tyler (GT) Foundation Governor
 Alexi Olsen (AO) Staff Governor
 Zoe Batt (ZB) Co Opted Governor

In attendance – Penny Spencer (PS) LA Clerk

The meeting started at 18.35

		Action
1.	<u>Welcome and Prayer</u> ST welcomed everyone. The meeting was opened in prayer by GT.	
2.	<u>Apologies for absence</u> – Sam Goose The meeting was quorate.	
3.	<u>New Declarations of Interests</u> None. Everyone was asked to complete their declarations on Governor Hub	ALL
4.	<u>Minutes of meeting held on 21st of September 2022 and matters arising</u> The minutes were accepted as an accurate record and approved by the FGB; they will be signed by the Chair. Matters arising: HF to check with the office regarding a copy of the previous application to the Garfield Weston Foundation. ZB said she will liaise with the new Finance Officer, Jo Wootton, who is the Bursar at St Andrews regarding fundraising.	HF ZB



<p>ST said the Governing Board communication to staff is ongoing.</p> <p>GT said the date for the staff lunch is the 20th of December at 2pm. All Governors had been invited and had replied and most of them are able to make it. HF said the invitation had also been extended to the new staff joining in January.</p> <p>GT distributed a new draft update of the Strategy Pillars that were discussed at the last meeting as she and HF had looked at them again. There were originally five pillars, which included one for Governors but as Governors covered all of the pillars it was decided to take that one out and make four. She asked everyone for any comments.</p> <p><i>ST asked how was it done and how were the bible quotes decided for each subject?</i></p> <p>GT said that they had tried to use as much of what is part of the school now as they could and from that there are some bible verses that the children knew so the first two are verses the children know well. The other two GT & HF had chosen and put in. GT said she hoped that each pillar holder will remember their verse.</p> <p>GT then said that as part of the SIAMS update we need to develop an inset session for Governors. This is an overview for Governors of what goes on in the school and HF will lead that. HF said that SIAMS had radically changed from September, and it will become more essential that everyone knows their part. GT said that there will be an inset session in the spring and hopefully this will all make more sense.</p> <p>TS noted that it is a good thing that the pillars can read both from top to bottom and bottom to top.</p> <p><i>GT asked if we could leave it as it is for now and look at again after the inset session?</i></p> <p>Everyone agreed to do that. GT asked everyone to please look at this between now and then. HF said that SDP will also be slightly amended due to the SIAMS changes.</p> <p>The date for the inset meeting was agreed as Wednesday 11th January 2023 at 6pm.</p> <p>SG to meet with Val and Eva as soon as possible to look at budget monitoring.</p>	<p>SG</p>
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	<p>HF said that Mike Naylor had come into school on Friday and he and Eva had looked at the accounts. Mike is okay with them at the moment but thinks there are some difficult months ahead.</p> <p>HF said that the SDP had been sent out and people are working on their parts of it. She asked everyone to complete before the inset meeting in January and she will then pull together to present at FGB meeting on the 18th of January 2023.</p> <p>ST & ZB to meet to discuss key deliverables.</p> <p>Regarding the outstanding policies HF said that Eva in the office has access to the list which is in an excel spreadsheet. HF said that currently they all need reviewing at the beginning of the academic year which takes a lot of time, but it does work. She said she had looked at the list and they are all up to date as of today. TS asked everyone that when Eva sends out an email asking them to look at a policy can they please try and meet the deadline and if they are not able to please let Eva know.</p>	ST/ZB
5.	<p><u>Headteacher's Update - HF</u></p> <p>HFs report was sent out prior to the meeting.</p> <p>HF said that this has been the hardest term she has ever known, but we have also had some successes which was good. She also noted that we will shortly be taking an EAL language child who will be starting soon (English is not their first language). Recruitment has gone well and Val Coates the new Office Administrator has settled in really well and is fitting into the team.</p> <p>HF said the H&S audit had taken place and on the 19th of October and we passed with 100%. All the open days had been very positive, and we currently have fifteen places available.</p> <p>HF said that staffing is still a huge challenge. She noted that supply budget has now all been spent.</p> <p>HF said we have received no help with the exclusion and noted that it is not just us. This is a common problem across other schools, and we are still waiting for a response from County. Behaviour in Squirrel is still an issue.</p> <p>HF said there are some new recommendations on the facility for people to record low level concerns on staff and she had spoken with the company that provide My Concern as they have a program called Confide. It looks similar to My Concern with the same reporting etc. (anything regarding would HF go to ST). The cost is £500 per annum but if we sign up before November, we could have a reduced fee of £248 per annum for two years. If we signed up after that date the</p>	



reduction would be 25%. HF said she and AO had discussed it and agreed that we do need this facility, but funds are so tight, and we only have twelve staff.

TS asked can we just set up a Gmail account which goes to ST and then TS will then review?

HF said yes that is what she and AO had thought but the concern would be that it stops people contacting us.

ST asked if the new programme would make things easier for HF?

HF said no and she and AO will look at again and come back to TS with a plan.

Everyone agreed we should set up the Gmail account and not spend the money.

ST noted that for the SEN pupils there is a very small budget and HF said that for private diagnosis children there is no budget at all as it's not formally recognised if the child is not on our SEN register. If we do add to the SEN register in Fox nearly 3/4 of the children will have a SEN plan.

ST asked if the person who gives the private diagnosis should also be asking County for the financial provision?

HF said no they only diagnose. TS said that we need to make sure that all parents are aware of this and that they need to go to County with their diagnosis. ST agreed and said going forward we need to push back. HF agreed but said we need to be very careful about how we are perceived by the parents. AM said I think we would rather take that risk than put the staff and children at the school at risk. HF asked that this is something we look at again when we have more time.

HF said that the Fox roof, the boy's toilets, and the leak in library all need doing urgently and she had been quoted £3,400 + VAT for this. There is also damp in the girl's toilets, in the staff toilets and in the main hall and the quote to do all roof repairs was £6,000 including VAT. She said there was £10,000 in the capex budget but this would mean that the fencing now won't be done. They also need to buy a new heater for one of the classrooms.

HF said that the new computer server that was installed in the summer is still not right, and it is preventing her from doing some things as she can't access what she needs.

AM asked if anywhere else can provide her with any support?

HF said no and there are things that she needs to get rid of but can't (lesson planning etc.)



	<p>HF said that attendance is still low, but she is not yet worried. AO said that Reception is particularly affected with illness. HF said the issue used to be unauthorised absence but now it's authorised absence that's the problem.</p> <p><i>TS asked if we take out a small number of families does that help the figures?</i></p> <p>HF said yes slightly.</p> <p>HF said as part of the support for one of our children OCC had planned to come in to school for a full morning to look at support but unfortunately, they were only here for an hour, and they didn't speak to anyone the class team, but fed back to OCC negatively about classroom management and safeguarding. HF said that she had fed this back to County and is trying to be as proactive as she can.</p> <p><i>TS asked HF after asking for support to resolve the Safeguarding issues did you receive any?</i></p> <p>HF said no there has been no contact from them.</p> <p>AM advised that there will be a T&L meeting at the beginning of January.</p> <p>GT noted to HF that they have all done amazingly well. ST agreed and said that HF's report was very good and gave a very clear picture of what is happening in school.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Safeguarding/Health and Safety update</u></p> <p>TS said that his report is from September as November's has not yet been done. His meeting is scheduled for the 1st of December 2022.</p> <p>As previously mentioned, we had passed the recent H&S audit with 100%. He noted that this was a huge amount of work and thanked everyone.</p> <p>He said there are currently five families with safeguarding concerns which the school is managing. He noted again the lack of support from external agencies meaning that this is still taking up lots of time.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Finance Committee Update</u></p> <p>TS gave the updates.</p> <p>Premises</p>	



	<p>TS said that he has been chasing County hard for money and has found one person who he thinks may be able to help. It means we will need help from SEN's, and we have this, so he is hopeful. He also managed to contact someone else who has a budget for emergency building works, and they have agreed to send out a surveyor to the school next Wednesday to look at the leaks, the fence, and the playground surface. TS has said that he has emphasised to them that under the H&S at Work Act these areas are not safe.</p> <p>He has also contacted someone else at County who will be sending a team of surveyors to do a condition report on the whole of the school. Once this is done, they will provide a report and give us some help interpreting it. He also noted that County is also currently looking at maintenance service contracts covering maintenance, heating, and lighting etc. for schools.</p> <p>TS said he will send out an email when he has more clarity, after the survey next week.</p> <p>Grant applications for funding</p> <p>TS said that the Shanly Foundation and the Garfield Western Foundation may be worth contacting but to do this we need a clear idea of what exactly we want.</p> <p>TS has already contacted Shanly to see if he can meet them prior to putting in a request for funds. ZB said that she would be happy to be involved with anyone that we talk to.</p>	TS
8.	<p><u>School Academy Update</u></p> <p>AM said that he and HF had recently attended a meeting at Lord Williams where there was a presentation by a company who helps with the setup of academies. The outcome was that all Headteachers will regroup in the new year. He said all schools are being encouraged to do this before end of decade and we need to look at all our options before we can make our decision.</p> <p>HF said that 80% of secondary and 39% of primary schools are academies already so we don't think the process of moving to an academy will change now.</p> <p>HF added that the Headteachers had met this morning and some schools within the Thame Partnership have already decided they are not keen on formi.</p> <p>She said that as an academy the CEO would be HF's employer and all schools pay the CEO's salary. All our money would go into the MAT, and they would also decide if you were viable to be a part of it. She said it is run just like a business</p>	



	<p>and as a small school there would be benefits and issues. The feeling amongst Headteachers is why are we going towards it? We feel we need to be far enough in if it does happen, but the overall feeling is there is no appetite for it at the moment.</p> <p>HF said that the next meeting is on the 15th of March 2023 for Chairs and Headteachers. ST said he is unable to attend so AM & HF will attend.</p> <p>AM said that this approach made sense and perhaps the resistance is purely due to change. He said that we are only small, but we could be part of something that could be a lot better.</p> <p>HF said that if we decided to go ahead the process would be that we would join Lord William's current MAT, which would be amended, rather than setting up a completely new one.</p> <p><i>TS asked if there are any staff views on this yet?</i></p> <p>HF said there is some hesitancy and AO said that we don't really know enough yet.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Staff Wellbeing</u></p> <p>TS said he had met with HF, and they had agreed to send out a wellness action questionnaire to all staff which they had done. TS will add a copy to Governor Hub. Staff were asked various questions and they were given the option to share their responses. He said so far none had been received back.</p> <p>TS had then met with all staff to get some in person feedback (he had met with TA's and Teaching staff separately). He asked them to write comments on coloured post-its (different colours for different topics) and then took them away and collated the responses. He then met again with HF to discuss. He noted that communication was the common thread.</p> <p><i>ZB asked what types of communication?</i></p> <p>TS said everything. He said he will send an email to all staff to give them feedback and he will send it to the Governors for information before he sends it to the staff.</p> <p>TS said that everyone using Teams might address some of the communication issues and his wife Camilla is going to meet HF to help set things up and give advice on how it works that can be shared with everyone. ZB said if there is any other help needed, she uses Teams a lot.</p>	<p>TS</p> <p>TS</p>



	<p>AO noted that not everyone is on Teams and the TAs don't really use the computers. HF said that there are machines available that they can use.</p> <p>TS said that we need to at least try it and there can be one laptop per class that everyone can use. If it doesn't work, we will look at other options and if it does, we can then refine it.</p> <p>Everyone agreed.</p> <p>TS said that the annual staff stress survey had been sent out and everyone was given one week to respond. There had been four responses received which was the same as last year. The comments were mostly about resources and behaviour.</p>	
10.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>Comms and Marketing</p> <p>ZB said Peter Timpson was taking over as Liaison Officer until he stands down from the Parish Council in May and she will set up a meeting with him.</p> <p>ST said that the school poster had been put up in the cricket club grounds and that the Chair of cricket club was looking at improving contact with the school. ST said he is looking at how we can use the cricket club for our fete (which we had done in previous years).</p> <p>ZB said she will introduce herself to the PTA and we can add this to the agenda for our next meeting.</p> <p>TS asked about updating the Governors page on the website. AM said he had made the updates that were requested by ST. AM said that he will pass website updates over to ZB to do going forward.</p> <p>HF noted that we still need to improve our presence with parents.</p>	<p>ZB</p> <p>ZB/PS</p> <p>AM/ZB</p>
11.	<p><u>Next meeting date</u></p> <p>18 January 2023 – 6.30pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 21.10pm



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Action points

Item	Action	Responsible
3.	Everyone was asked to complete their declarations on Governor Hub	ALL
4.	HF to check with the office regarding a copy of the previous application to the Garfield Weston Foundation.	HF
4.	ZB said she will liaise with the new Finance Officer, Jo Wootton, who is the Bursar at St Andrews regarding fundraising.	ZB
4.	SG to meet with Val and Eva as soon as possible to look at budget monitoring.	SG
4.	ST & ZB to meet to discuss key deliverables.	ST/ZB
5.	Low level concerns on staff – HF and AO to look at again and come back to TS with a plan.	HF/AO
7.	TS said he will send out an email when he has more clarity, after the survey next week.	TS
9.	TS to add a copy of the wellness action questionnaire to Governor Hub	TS
9.	TS to send an email to all staff to give them feedback from their meetings and will send it to the Governors for information before he sends it to staff	TS
10.	ZB said Peter Timpson was taking over as Liaison Officer until he stands down from the Parish Council in May and she will set up a meeting with him.	ZB
10.	ZB said she will introduce herself to the PTA and we can add this to the agenda for our next meeting.	ZB/PS
10.	AM to pass website updates over to ZB to do going forward.	AM/ZB



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Attendance 2022-23

	21-9-22	16-11-22	18-01-23						Total
Zoe Batt	No	Yes							
Helen France	Yes	Yes							
Sam Goose	Yes	No							
Alan Melady	Yes	Yes							
Alexi Olsen	Yes	Yes							
Tom Sowerby	Yes	Yes							
Steve Taylor	Yes	Yes							
Gill Tyler	Yes	Yes							