



**Minutes of Aston Rowant CE Primary School Extraordinary General Meeting**  
**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 6.15 pm**  
**via ZOOM**

	<p><b>Present:</b></p> <p>Steve Taylor (ST) Co-opted Governor and Chair          Alan Melady (AM) Parent Governor and Vice Chair          Helen France (HF) Headteacher          Des Foote (DF) Foundation Governor          Alexi Olsen (AO) Staff Governor          Tom Sowerby (TS) Local Authority Governor          Sam Goose (SG) Parent Governor          Sheila Reynolds (SR) Foundation Governor</p>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome, Apologies and Absences</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	<p><b>ST</b> welcomed everyone to the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children attending school during the pandemic lockdown;</li> <li>• Parent survey;</li> <li>• Communication to parents.</li> </ul> <p>The meeting was lead by the AM/TS/SR working party looking into the above issues.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Children attending school during the lockdown</b>	
	<p>Though Government guidelines have not changed, a number of parents have been contacting school to discuss the possibility of their child(ren) attending school during the lockdown. This has resulted in additional work and stress upon teaching staff already stretched in coping with the provision of both in school and home lessons.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed that future enquires from parents regarding attendance at school during the lockdown need to be routed through the governing body first.</p> <p>Contact to the FGB to be by <a href="mailto:Chair@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk">Chair@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk</a>, then shared with the FGB</p> <p>A paragraph (below) explaining this change will be included in the weekly newsletter for Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February.</p> <p><i>As a Governing Board we are aware that some parents/carers have been contacting the school asking for clarification over whether their child(ren) can attend school during the lockdown. Because of the pressures on school staff teaching remotely as well as educating children in school, all future queries will be reviewed by the Governing Body to help alleviate further pressure on the already stretched staff team at Aston Rowant. Our aim is to ensure a fair and equitable offer that ensures 'in school education' is available for those who need it most. We are determined to</i></p>	<p>ST HF</p>

	<i>get all of our pupils back into school as soon as we are allowed and can safely do so. We fully appreciate that virtual schooling is not as good as 'in person learning' and we know the effect that the social isolation of not being able to see friends is having on all children. As many of us are parents ourselves we also understand the challenges of trying to support our children with their learning whilst working from home ourselves.</i>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Parent Survey</b>	
	<p>Teaching staff have been provided with the results of the parent survey. Unfortunately, some of the negative comments have upset staff and exacerbated their already heightened levels of lockdown related stress. It was therefore thought that further explanation of the results was appropriate to ensure staff understand the positive aspects of the feedback.</p> <p>AM to further explain the parent survey results to teaching staff 9post meeting note – this has been arranged for Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February at 1:30pm). This will include a brief 'wellbeing' check-in.</p> <p>AM to complete the parent survey by following up by arranging a focus group discussion with parents.</p> <p>A letter (appendix 1) to parents will be sent to provide them with details of the parent survey results.</p> <p>It was thought that 'Parent view' could be utilized to gather parental feedback at the end of each term. This will enable any concerns to be addressed as they occur rather than waiting until the annual survey.</p>	<p>AM</p> <p>AM</p> <p>AM</p> <p>AM</p>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Communication to parents</b>	
	<p>It was agreed that the relationship between school and parents and communications between school and parents was improving. However, a small number of parents have been sometimes either thoughtless, vexatious or simply rude in their communications with school.</p> <p>Though teaching staff invest considerable effort into both responding to all parental enquiries and addressing any concerns this situation has yet to be sufficiently resolved.</p> <p>It was agreed that in future, the school will have the e mail address: feedback@astonrowantschool for parents to pass on their compliments, comments or criticism direct to the governing body. To be set up by HF and monitored by TS</p> <p>It was thought that we could include a statement in the home School agreement, such as:</p> <p><i>Parents will respect school staff and fellow parents by keeping discussions about concerns confidential and agree to raise concerns or complaints as soon as possible with the school by following the school's complaints policy but not to discuss any ongoing issues outside of that framework.</i></p> <p>AM/TS/SR to draft an amendment to the Home School Agreement to feedback to the FGB. Parents to be informed of the change by weekly</p>	<p>HF/TS</p> <p>AM/TS/SR</p> <p>ST</p>

	<p>newsletter and the school website.</p> <p>Agreed to monitor Parent Communications as a regular item on FGB meetings.</p> <p>HF added that the upcoming pupil lesson on internet safety will include appropriate e mail behaviours.</p>	
	<b>S L Taylor CoG</b>	

## Appendix 1

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to the annual parent survey last term. Below you will find a high-level summary of the results. We have included the tangible improvements made in the year and the issues you have highlighted for us to work on. Those of you that expressed an interest in taking part in a follow-up focus group will be contacted shortly, if you didn't provide your email address but would like to take part, please contact us via [Chair@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:Chair@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk)

### You said, we listened...and took action.

Starting with the actions that have been taken as a result of the 2019 survey. Needless to say, the pandemic has had a significant impact on some of the exciting plans that were in place but nonetheless, a lot has been done. Here are some of the changes we have made in response to your feedback:

1. **Pupil Numbers:** In the 2019 survey, the most common suggestion "to improve" was pupil numbers and retention. We have made this central to our school strategy. Since the previous survey we have created new marketing material, a new Facebook page, a new Google listing, actively worked with numerous local nurseries and playschools and increased the availability of open days and visits, even during COVID-19. This has resulted in us not only attracting 100% intake in Reception in September this year, but also increased numbers in other year groups.
2. **School Meals:** You raised a large number of issues with the quality of school meals in 2019. We responded by moving to a new provider. Whilst not perfect and with some compromises, it is an improvement and many of you are happier.
3. **TAs & Support Staff:** You also asked for more TAs & Support Staff. In the previous year, we have added three new employees to our support staff. Pre-COVID we also used volunteers (many of whom were parents or carers for which we are grateful) to provide additional support around reading. This will re-start once we are permitted to.
4. **Communications:** It was clear in the 2019 survey that communication was an issue for many parents. There has been considerable effort to ensure that parents are informed, starting a weekly newsletter, regular contact from Chair of Governors and responding to questions or concerns positively. The 2020 results showed marked improvements in satisfaction with school news and events communications, but we know there is more to be done and will continue to work on this (see below).

In the survey this year several of you told us you'd like the school to improve the following areas. Some are already in-

hand, others we will look to work further on:

1. **Facilities:** Governors are already looking into this with a working group set up to investigate options for overhauling and improving what we have.
2. **Teacher interactions:** Many of you took up the option of a phone call last term. We know the current pandemic makes it hard to have those quick, informal 'chats' in the playground and the additional workload currently experienced by staff means they have even less time available for this but we're hopeful this will improve further as restrictions ease and we are looking at options if this doesn't happen as quickly as we hope. In the meantime, if you need to speak to a teacher they can be contacted by email or please leave a telephone message.
3. **Child's progress:** We are aware that the survey went out before you had received the OTrack reports on progress. Hopefully this has solved this for you and will be useful for you to monitor your child(ren)'s progress moving forwards.
4. **Drop off / pick up arrangements:** Whilst we have to adhere to the guidance of OCC and the DfE our site presents some unique challenges and we appreciate it can get a little congested. We'll look to see if there are some alternative options for us to try that still meet our statutory guidance.
5. **Communication:** Whilst this was much more positive than last year, we appreciate that there is still room for improvement, particularly with general enquiries and 'responsiveness'. Additional workload and staff absence (due to self-isolation) has made this a challenge at times but we will try to improve the response time to telephone messages and emails.
6. **Music & PE provision:** Working within the financial restraints that we have we will commit to trying to improve these areas. Lockdown has obviously made this even more challenging but there are already some exciting plans in place - assuming we're allowed to bring all pupils back soon!

Finally we would like to reiterate our thanks to you for taking the time to talk to us. Feedback is really important. These are incredibly difficult times for us all and the staff team at Aston Rowant are working incredibly hard to deliver the best they can for all pupils. We would encourage all parents and carers to work proactively and positively with the school - your motivational feedback helps the school to celebrate what is done well and the constructive feedback helps drive the standards up even more.

Best wishes,

Dr. Steve Taylor

Chairman

On behalf of the Aston Rowant CofE Primary School Board of Governors