



Aston Rowant C+E Primary School
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 Headteacher: Mrs. Helen France

Minutes

**Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Aston Rowant CE Primary School
 Wednesday 12th May 2021 at Aston Rowant CE Primary School at 6.30pm Via Zoom**

Governors present:

Present:

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

In attendance:

Sheila Reynolds (SR) Foundation Governor
 Teresa Hudson (TH) Clerk

Apologies:

None

NB: Governors questions are in *red and italics* throughout as evidence of their “challenges”.

		Document ref.	Action owner
1.	Welcome		
	ST welcomed all to the meeting. DF gave a prayer.		ST
2.	Apologies, Absences, Quorum		ST
	No apologies were received. The meeting was quorate.		
3.	Declaration of any urgent additional items		
	ST – To be discussed at Agenda Item 18		

4.	Declarations of Business/Pecuniary Interests		ST
	None		
5.	Approval of FGB minutes dated 26th January 2021		ST
	The minutes were approved as being an accurate record and signed by ST for the school office.		
6.	Matters arising not covered on the agenda		
7.	Headteacher's report		HF
	<p>A report had been shared with governors.</p> <p>HF wanted to make governors aware of some operational issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HF informed governors of a pupil with complex medical needs who can have “episodes” which can last for up to an hour and can be as many as nine a day. HF has needed to take the child to hospital; putting pressure on staff. The situation is impacting on staff, the child and other pupils. • HF informed governors of a second child on a SEN Plan and with behavioural concerns. The issue has been raised in a parental survey. HF has been able to deal with some issues raised. There have been some sensible concerns raised, but also some unpleasant articles placed on social media platforms. A specific threat has been made to a member of staff, with abusive and unpleasant language. Another parent has stated she will raise a Safeguarding concern with Ofsted; who would most certainly immediately come into the school. HF stated the school are doing the best they can. • HF shared the same set of parents have made threats to neighbours in Plowden Drive resulting in challenging community relations. • HF shared one team member's performance is under review. Some issues have been raised. This post will be advertised. • HF informed governors Helen Thawley has handed in her resignation. • HF informed governors of the four classes at Aston Rowant; at a recent visit from Jane Ratcliffe, Lead Officer for Schools Improvement in OCC, and Kate McGill, Maths Consultant. OCC, Early Years was described as Outstanding, one class was average, one class requires improvement and one inadequate. • HF explained to governors she sees the current situation as an opportunity to make a fresh start in September 		

	<p>2021. OCC have indicated they may support a deficit budget in order to support recruitment of the right teaching staff. <i>Governors commented on the parental threat to contact Ofsted and stated knowledge of a prior similar incident where Ofsted contacted the school and asked for their position. Governors added the school should not be held to ransom. Governors stated Jane Ratcliffe and Kate McGill know the school well and will take a different perspective.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p><i>Governors commented the contract between the school and parents states what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Governors asked if the current threats represent vexatious behaviour, or are there core problems that need addressing?</i> HF agreed it is unacceptable to have this level of threat and shared a staff member has been threatened with losing her job. <i>Governors asked how to move forward with this situation.</i> HF agreed to look at other schools for benchmarking. <i>Governors asked if it would be pertinent for them to meet with parents?</i> TS stated such meetings have taken place in the past, but this is not considered a role for governors. However, if meeting with parents would relieve pressure on staff and helps the school, it should be a consideration. <i>Governors commented that school staff are fully aware of the situation and know the issues. Governors could inadvertently make the situation worse by becoming involved. Governors added the contract sets an expectation and queried if the family and child could be asked to leave the school?</i> HF agreed to explore this option but stated she is hoping to resolve the issue. HF thanked governors for their input and commented she is making strategic decisions and wanted governors to be aware of the issues. AO explained a similar situation arose in a school where she worked previously, and the parent was barred from entering the school premises. <i>Governors commented having a contract would be a good way to move forward and may cause discussion between parents.</i></p> <p><i>Governors asked if they can support staff in any way?</i> HF thanked governors and agreed staff wellbeing does need to be carefully monitored. The current situation needs managing professionally and consistently to minimise impact on staff. AO suggested a governor is present at the parent meeting. HF stated a designated governor is needed to handle any complaints. ST confirmed that person would need complaints training. <i>Governors asked if Jane Ratcliffe is aware of the current issues the school faces?</i> HF confirmed Jane Ratcliffe is aware of the challenges. A meeting will be held on May 26th 2021. Kate McGill will be looking specifically at Maths.</p> <p><i>Governors asked how AO achieved outstanding for Early Years?</i> HF acknowledged this achievement and stated this was the result of two year's hard work from Rachel</p> 		
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	<p>and Alexi, and the TA's who received training. HF acknowledged the decision to split Reception has paid dividends.</p> <p>Headteacher's Report HF shared she had shared the report with Jane Ratcliffe, who commented there is much to celebrate, and the school should be proud of how far we have come.</p> <p><i>Governors stated they are very impressed with how things have continued to move forward during the COVID19 lockdown.</i></p> <p><i>Governors thanked HF for providing the performance statistics and stated they are looking forward to seeing the Term 3 results, in order to monitor performance. HF would like a Teaching and Learning Committee for scrutiny of performance statistics and is exploring how to provide more data and information. <i>Governors commented it is evident how much hard work has been undertaken and how hard staff have worked under difficult circumstances.</i></i></p>		
8.	Update from the Chair		ST
	<p>ST discussed the actions from the External Governance Review (EGR)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Create a Learning and Teaching Committee at FGB with clear terms of reference in place (agreed and minuted by FGB). ST asked AM to Chair this Committee, and AM agreed to take on the role.</i> 2. <i>Use of updated agenda, minutes and action log templates for all FGB meetings and use of L.A. Governance Schedule to plan the work and agendas of the FGB. ST confirmed these are now in all place and being used. The Governance Schedule has been circulated.</i> 3. <i>Implement proformas for governing monitoring (different proforma depending on area monitoring) ST confirmed proformas are now available for governor monitoring.</i> 4. <i>List of documents to be scrutinized and put in place. ST requested governors share this task and ensure the Aston Rowant heading is on all documents. ST would like this task completed by the end of June 2021.</i> 5. <i>The Finance committee adopts a formal term of reference, including staffing (approved and minuted at FGB). A chair is appointed (and minuted in committee minutes). ST confirmed the Terms of Reference have been drafted; SG and HF have consulted with Jayne Usford.</i> 6. <i>Create a committee or formally appoint at FGB (and minute) a lead governor for H&S and Premises with clear terms of reference in place (agreed and minuted by FGB) HF confirmed she has obtained quotes for the school</i> 		

	<p>fence and asked governors to authorise up to £14.5K to enable the work on the school fence to go ahead. <i>Governors approved this expenditure.</i> TS was appointed as Health and Safety and Premises governor and agreed to write the Terms of Reference for the Committee.</p> <p>7. <i>Advertise and fill governor vacancies and appoint a co-opted governor with governor learning and teaching experience.</i> HF stated she has knowledge of a parent who work in marketing and HF has suggested she may like to join the Board of Governors. Another possible Co-Opted governor, Robert Newton, is a retired teacher, and would be a useful contact and could help with the Action Plan. <i>Governors raised the issue that there would be three parent governors and asked when the recruitment process would start?</i> HF and ST explained the process can start immediately. <i>Governors suggested looking at the wider community and added there must be a transparent recruitment process.</i> SR confirmed she has reached the end of her term and therefore recruitment of a new Foundation Governor is needed. HF suggested a Governor Skills Audit. ACTION: TH to send a blank Skills Audit spreadsheet to ST. HF commented it would be pertinent to recruit governors who are not also on the Governing Board of another school. <i>DF/SR informed governors they are looking to recruit a governor from the church congregation. Governors suggested advertising the vacancy and exploring if the ODBE may have a list of who could be encouraged to join the Governing Board.</i></p> <p>8. <i>Training for the Learning and Teaching Committee in understanding and using pupil data.</i> ST suggested exploring Oxfordshire Partners in Learning (OPL) for available training.</p> <p>9. <i>High-level pupil data training for FGB.</i> ST stated the importance of all governors receiving external training in order to understand how to challenge data.</p> <p>10. <i>Set up a system to record any headteacher challenge outside of meetings so this can be shared with all governors at FGB (and minuted).</i> <i>Governors suggested a new email address governorchallenge@mail.com</i> ACTION: TS to set up this new account.</p> <p>11. <i>Clerk to clerk all FGB meetings.</i> ST commented this is a goal for the future which the school budget needs to be able to cover. SG agreed to explore availability of funds in the budget. ACTION: TH to request costing from Governor Services. ST proposed that in the next academic year Business and Strategy meetings are top and tailed to analyse the success. ST proposed the addition of a “How Did We Do” meeting at the end of an academic year.</p> <p>12. <i>Complete work to re-structure folders and documents on Governor Hub.</i> ST commented the issue is whether documents can be found on Governor Hub when needed. ST gave the example that reports on governor visits</p>		<p>TH</p> <p>TS</p> <p>TH</p>
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	should be placed in the Governor Visits folder and added to the folder for the next meeting.		
9.	School Self Evaluation Form		HF
	HF confirmed the SEF is an ongoing live document.		
10.	School Development Plan		HF
	HF confirmed she is currently collating ideas at staff meetings. HF confirmed she will speak to the School Council in order to obtain a pupil voice. HF asked governors to bring ideas to the next Strategy Meeting. HF stated the next SDP/SEF needs to be in place by September 2021 and added this is a good opportunity to start afresh.		
11.	Governor updates since last meeting:		ST
	a) Finance & Resources		
	SG confirmed there is nothing further to add following the EGM and Budget approval.		
	b) Staffing, HR, performance & development		
	Discussed earlier in this meeting. Middle Year performance has been completed. Jane Ratcliffe conveyed her congratulations that the school is working as one team.		
	c) Premises (excl. H&S)		
	To be discussed later in this meeting.		
	d) Children, Church & Community		
	DF explained the Church is unable to go into school; but have sent videos.		
	e) SEND & Inclusion		
	No updates. SR queried how governors will take the SEND plan forward. HF stated this will depend on staff recruitment and skills available going forward.		
	f) Learning & Teaching		
	Discussed earlier.		
12.	Safeguarding		TS
	A report had been shared with governors. There were no questions raised, but governors commented the extent of challenges from staff members cannot be explained in full but is concerning.		
13.	Health & Safety		TS
	A report had been shared with governors. The expenditure for the fence was agreed earlier in this meeting. <i>Governors suggested the resurrection of the premises group.</i> <i>There are several maintenance issues with buildings. Discussion needed on level of maintenance and a long-term plan on place.</i> TS confirmed annualised visits are in place for Health and Safety		

	and Safeguarding. ST thanked TS for raising the profile of Safeguarding issues.		
14.	Governor Business & Communications		ST
	No updates. A suggestion was made for a letter at the end of term be sent to staff and parents from the Chair of Governors on behalf of the Board of Governors.		
15.	Governor Training update		ST
	ACTION:ST to circulate training updates.		ST
16.	Policies review / For approval		
	HF confirmed she has written the RSE Policy which needs to go out to parents and governors as a legal document and requires parental engagement. Other policies will be updated throughout the year.		
	<p>Helen Thawley, Year 5/6 Teacher and Maths Subject Lead joined the Meeting.</p> <p>Helen Thawley stated the effect of COVID 19, and children were assessed upon their return to school to identify where they were in their learning. This will enable gaps in learning to be identified, and to inform the teacher for the next academic year. Interventions are taking place with individual children.</p> <p>Helen shared White Rose Maths has been introduced, and the children are becoming more familiar with this way of working. White Rose encourages the children to take small steps. Kate McGill, Maths Consultant, OCC recently visited the school and noted an improvement.</p> <p>Helen informed governors there are lots of “numbers” around the school, which was also noted by Kate McGill, and also “working walls” are consistent throughout the classrooms. Children are now more able to move freely around the classroom. Maths is being used purposefully throughout KS1 and KS2.</p> <p>Helen shared the children are participating well with their learning and responding to the Bronze, Silver and Gold scheme currently in place. Helen advised subject monitoring is taking place and learning walks and book scrutiny undertaken. Helen would like to leave the school in a good position for the new staff member to take on. <i>Governors asked if Helen has seen progress in small groups where gaps have been identified?</i> Helen confirmed progress is being seen and interventions by TA’s are taking place. Helen stated it will not be possible to close the gaps in learning by the end of this academic year but should be fully closed by the end of year 2021-2022. HF agreed and shared she had attended a Headteachers Briefing, where DfE have said it may take 3 or 4 years for a full recovery following the pandemic. HF shared all Headteachers agreed but stated Ofsted must work to the same timeframe. <i>Governors asked if the Bronze, Silver and Gold Scheme is set up to challenge the</i></p>		

	<p><i>children?</i> Helen confirmed it is set up to challenge the children, and the school will not allow the children just to “coast” along.</p> <p><i>Governors thanked Helen Thawley for a very good summary, which was fluid and succinct.</i></p> <p><i>Governors asked if governor visits to school are now permitted?</i></p> <p>HF confirmed the current advice is if there is a targeted reason for a visit, this is permitted. HF also thanked Helen for her summary and commented Maths will be central to the SDP. HF informed Kate McGill is returning to the school on Tuesday 22nd June and invited AM to join the meeting.</p> <p>HF commented regarding general governor visits and explained a Support Programme is currently in place, therefore it would be more beneficial for governors to resume visits at the end of the programme. HF confirmed the English visit by ST with AO could go ahead. ACTION: ST to liaise with AO to arrange English visit.</p> <p>ST asked that all staff are made familiar with the latest governor visit form.</p>		ST/AO
17.	GDPR		ST
	No issues to report.		
18.	Any Other Urgent Business		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ST informed governors he has been contacted by a Parish Councillor who lives near Brook Street who raised an issue with parking. Governors held a discussion and AM suggested he could speak with parents who are parking there, or the issue could be mentioned in a newsletter. HF agreed she could put in a newsletter and give a gentle reminder to park responsibly. • HF advised governors the school website will be updated before the next Ofsted visit. <p><i>Governors thanked HF and staff for their ongoing hard work and wished them well in resolving the current issues.</i></p>		
19.	Items for next agenda		
20.	Date and time of next meetings		
	Wednesday 7 th July 2021 at 6.30pm via Zoom (Strategy)		

Action Log:

Item	Action	Owner	Completion date	Completed
8.	ACTION: TH to send a blank Skills Audit spreadsheet to ST .	TH		
8.	ACTION: TH to request costing from Governor Services.	TH		
8.	ACTION: TS to set up a new email account.	TS		
15.	ACTION:ST to circulate training updates.	ST		
	ACTION: ST to liaise with AO to arrange English visit.	ST/AO		