



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 10th July 2024 – 7:30pm

BUSINESS MEETING

Present:

Steve Taylor (ST) Co Opted Governor, Chair
 Alan Melady (AM) Parent Governor, Vice Chair
 Helen France (HF) Headteacher Staff Governor
 Alexi Olsen (AO) Staff Governor
 Sam Goose (SG) Parent Governor
 Tom Sowerby (TS) LA Governor
 Zoe Batt (ZB) Co-Opted Governor

Apologies:

Gill Tyler (GT) Foundation Governor

In the absence of clerk support ST took minutes of the meeting.

The meeting started at 7:30pm

| | | Action |
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| 1. | <u>Welcome and Prayer</u> ST welcomed everyone. The meeting was opened in prayer by the team. | |
| 2. | <u>Declarations of Interest</u> The meeting was quorate. Declarations via Governor Hub. | |
| 3. | <u>Approval of the minutes of 27th March 2024 Business Meeting and any matters arising.</u> Minutes of the 27 th March approved Review of actions arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm if insurance coverage includes Public Liability and Employer’s Liability. HF. Done – not required. • Budget to be approved by FGB before Friday 3rd May. SG Done, budget approved. • TS to share dates of OCC Safeguarding Training with FGB. Governors to book attendance by end of academic year. TS/ALL Completed in part. TS/ST/AO/GT completed the training. ZB & SG to do. • SG to schedule Finance Committee SG Done. Meeting held 5th July 2024. • HF to report back on Staff Wellbeing actions taken at next business meeting. HF Done. • GT agreed to remove the beginning of vision wording “We want our Aston Rowant community...” GT to circulate final wording but FGB in approval. GT Done. • Review how T&L embedded into FGB agendas. T&L Chair to review with FGB Chair. AM/ST Ongoing, ST to discuss with the new T&L governor September 2024. | |

GRATITUDE RESILIENCE OUTREACH WONDER TRUST HARMONY

'Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him.' Colossians 2:7



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGB to approve Instrument of Governance at next FGB meeting. ALL. Done. • Governor election. AM to follow-up with ST/AM. Ongoing, elections held, HF to notify the successful candidate with the most parent votes. HF noted the high turnout. • GT to liaise with HF on Church Governor recruitment. GT in conversation with Jackie Barr and Margaret Poole • Push governor recruitment with local organisations, employers, other schools, and in local newsletter. ZB to pick up as part of marketing responsibilities. ZB Ongoing. | |
| 4. | <p><u>Headteacher's Report</u></p> <p>Governors noted the list of 25 'successes' achieved since the Easter break. A fantastic achievement!</p> <p>TS commented that these achievements are huge for any school – and really amazing for such a small school.</p> <p>Governors also praised the school play, A Midsummer Night's Dream held in the school grounds earlier in the day. SG thought it was a flawless production. Congratulations and well done to all those involved - in particular Mrs Healy as play organiser and performance director.</p> <p>AM praised the continuing and consistent quality of the HT report. Challenges feature clearly as do any ongoing theme. The comprehensive and clear account of school activities and issues ensures the GB are fully informed, there being no need to debate each point</p> <p>Pupil numbers stand at 94/105 (90%) an ongoing success story.</p> <p>SATS results for the year were good – there is lots to celebrate. Well done the staff team and our pupils.</p> <p>Pupil attendance continues to be below the OCC target of 97%. Data is gathered to determine the reasons for the absence. Appropriate action is taken in compliance with the school absence policy and procedure. In addition, attendance performance features in every weekly school newsletter.</p> <p>HF attended a training course for 'the issue of notice' for the implementation of a revised pupil absence procedure from OCC. It is intended to send a 'Letter of Intent' in future to parents of pupils with a significant absence record.</p> <p>There continues to be a significant level of ongoing teacher sickness absence. A frustrating factor is that notice of absence is only required to be given at the start of the working day. As a consequence, the option to employ supply cover is compromised by the uncertainty of need.</p> <p>ST asked if teacher absence was of lesser concern at the end of the school year (post SATS, time spent on the school play etc.). Conversely, would there be periods in the school year where teacher absence could be critical for successful delivery of the curriculum? Would the latter situation require supply support regardless of the uncertainty of absence duration?</p> | |

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| | <p>HF In the majority of cases, use of a supply teacher for sickness absence would neither be effective (provide a seamless delivery of the curriculum) or necessary. AO suggested that employing a supply teacher privately, though this depends on being able to identify a suitable candidate. AM suggested contacting Thame Partnership for details of potential suitable candidates. HF to discuss Supply Teacher availability with Thame Partnership. HF noted in the report that governor presence in the school has been low during 2023/24. Staff have commented that requests for help via e mail has been frustratingly slow. ST stated that the comments made were fair and appropriate. ZB commented that it would be helpful to include in e mail requests exactly what the sender needs and by when. For example, recent requests for document reviews did not clarify what was required of the recipient. ST stated that the reasons for the governor absence were not trivial, that this absence be viewed with the same understanding and compassion as for staff absence. However, it is important the we as a team regroup and return in September refreshed, revitalised and ready for the new academic year.</p> <p>HF One parent family has raised a ‘Subject Access Request’ in a manner that HF has felt bullied. Responding to this request has caused a substantial amount of additional work. OCC have been informed of this situation and again have failed to respond or provide support for an urgent and important issue.</p> | HF |
| 5. | <p><u>SEF/SDP Update</u></p> <p>HF stated that further input from governors was still needed for the 2024/25 SEF/SDP.</p> <p>To summarise, the strengths and weaknesses from the strategy meetings, including the SWOT analysis should form the basis for the Self Evaluation of where the school needs to improve for the next academic year. As a suggestion, the themes for improvement should include findings from governor visits, Teaching and Learning minutes, Finance Committee minutes etc. Input is needed by the end of term.</p> <p>Action ALL. Provide input for the SEF/SDP before July 19th.</p> <p>TS asked that the SEF should be included in the Strategy Meeting in September 2024</p> | ALL ST |
| 6. | <p><u>Safeguarding/Health and Safety update</u></p> <p>TS the latest safeguarding reports are in the Hub. There are currently eight ongoing cases in MyConcern involving nine pupils. Issues include cyber bullying and family related issues. All of the cases have a negative impact on attendance. TS continues to oversee and support.</p> | |

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| | <p>TS commented that there is a limited amount that the school can do for the family related issues. Unfortunately, OCC help and support is non-existent.</p> <p>H&S H&S responsibility has been delegated to Dawn King. Appropriate training and support are being provided. The 2024/25 H&S audit will be done in the Autumn term by someone new to the school and may bring with it a new perspective on the school ST commented that from a H&S perspective this could be good for the school to ensure a continued high level of control.</p> | |
| 7. | <p><u>Staff Wellbeing</u> Staff wellbeing continues to be of concern for the school. TS continues to support.</p> | |
| 8. | <p><u>SIAMS</u></p> <p>HF reported that the overdue SIAMS audit will not be done in the next academic year.</p> <p>A course for 'SIAMS Governance in Schools' will be available on-line on 19th September 2024, 7- 8:30pm.</p> <p>HF to provide details. All encouraged to attend.</p> | HF |
| 9. | <p><u>Committee updates</u></p> <p><u>Finance</u> SG stated that the school is in a much better position thanks to the increase in pupil numbers. We now have approximate costs for ongoing maintenance and much needed minor improvement projects</p> <p>The expected expense for ceiling and fence replacement has been on hold until the VC to VA process is complete.</p> <p>It makes good financial sense to raise 90% of costs with the Diocese so that the school can address more of the maintenance needs. Currently, the priorities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School roof – there is ongoing rain water ingress; 2. Roof facias and cladding (Fox class); 3. Window lintels cracked; 4. Boundary fence. <p>The total cost of the above list exceeds the current budget surplus.</p> <p>OCC have obtained estimates for the above work. Urgent dialogue is needed with appropriate Diocese contacts to address financing the above. HF following up.</p> <p><u>T&L Committee</u></p> | HF |



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| | <p>T&L Committee reviewed OTrack and SATs data combined with teacher comments to capture key Strengths and Weaknesses in T&L at end of academic year.</p> <p><u>Strengths</u></p> <p>Reading performance has responded well after dip last year with high levels of WA in most year groups.</p> <p>Writing is strong in Years 1 & 6, showing improvement in Years 3 & 4 with high levels of SEN, hence attainment lower than expected.</p> <p>Maths overall reasonable levels of attainment, average approx. 64% WA except Year 1 which is at 93%. Strong performance in arithmetic SATs.</p> <p>SEND performance in SATS – strong progress. Delivered through considerable focus on Year 6 children to get ready for SATs. <i>This presents challenge in mixed-years classroom to ensure equal attention to Year 5s.</i></p> <p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <p>Phonics in KS2 still has some issues.</p> <p>Writing attainment in Years 3, 4 & 5. Lack of progress, feedback and development, especially as year 4 moves up to Owl class.</p> <p>Maths problem solving shows some weakness, evidences in SATs results</p> <p>Other topics need similar level of focus as Reading, Writing & Maths.</p> <p>Gap in assessment across all subject areas.</p> <p>Pupil Premium (PP) attendance very low and correlates with poor attainment. One pupil at 69%.</p> <p>Governor Monitoring</p> <p>Lack of Governor monitoring in 2023-24 year has resulted in minimal levels of governor oversight in T&L.</p> | |
| 10. | <p><u>VC to VA</u></p> <p>Covered under item 9. Finance Committee report above.</p> | |
| 11. | <p><u>Governor / Clerk Recruitment</u></p> | |



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| | <p>ST reviewed the governor skills audit feedback for insight into identifying skills needed for the incoming new governor/s.</p> <p>There is good cover for most of the skills listed. However, the knowledge of school finance and teaching curriculum scores are low. In addition, recognising when independent, expert advice is required (i.e. support from a professional Clerk) is also low.</p> <p>If, more than one candidate applies, parents must vote for their preferred choice. Two parents have put their names forward and voting is ongoing, to be completed at the end of the week. HF will notify the winner.</p> | ST |
| 12. | <p><u>Growth</u></p> <p>TS invited opinion of as to if and how we may have grown in 2023/24 – as teachers, pupils and governors.</p> <p>As the school performance results reported above demonstrate the growth achieved by both pupils and staff, the conversation focussed on governor related growth.</p> <p>It was recognised and accepted that though governor attendance and commitment to board meetings continued to be high, governor presence in the school was well below the norm and of concern. As such, governor development and understanding of staff, pupil and school activities and performance must by definition, have suffered as a result.</p> <p>However, to finish the year on a good note, there is much and maybe more to learn when things don't go as well as planned.</p> <p>From a governor perspective, the day-to-day pupil and school performance is influenced by the efforts of the staff team alone, not the governing body. From the discussion, governors had not known of, nor realised their potential to create a negative impact on staff morale and workload by their lack of availability.</p> <p>Governors need to ensure the 2024/25 schedule of work is completed in full. All meetings, actions, visits, document reviews etc. in full.</p> | |
| 13. | <p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>None</p> | |
| 14. | <p><u>FGB Meeting dates for 2024/25</u></p> <p>A table of proposed dates have been filed in the Hub with the minutes. Feedback on dates required.</p> | ALL |

The meeting closed at 21:30

S L Taylor

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Action points

| Item | Action | Responsible |
|---------|---|--------------|
| ongoing | Complete on-line OCC Safeguarding Training. | ZB/SG |
| ongoing | Review how T&L embedded into FGB agendas. T&L Chair to review with FGB Chair. Ongoing, ST to discuss with the new T&L governor September 2024. | ST |
| ongoing | Push governor recruitment with local organisations, employers, other schools, and in local newsletter. ZB to pick up as part of marketing responsibilities. | ZB |
| 4.1 | HF to discuss Supply Teacher availability with Thame Partnership. | HF |
| 5.1 | Provide input for the SEF/SDP before July 19 th . | ALL |
| 5.2 | SEF should be included in the Strategy Meeting in September 2024 | ST |
| 8 | Provide details of 'SIAMS Governance in Schools' on-line course available on 19 th September 2024, 7- 8:30pm | HF |
| 9 | Obtain support from the Diocese to address priority maintenance projects. | HF |
| 14 | A table of proposed dates have been filed in the Hub with the minutes. Feedback on dates required | ALL |

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Attendance 2023-24

| | 20/09/23 | 01/11/23 | 29/11/23 | 31/01/24 | 27/03/24 | 01/05/24 | 10/07/24 |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Zoe Batt | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| Helen France | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Sam Goose | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Alan Melady | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| Alexi Olsen | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Tom Sowerby | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Steve Taylor | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| Gill Tyler | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |

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