

	<p style="text-align: center;">Aston Rowant C+E Primary School School Lane, Aston Rowant, Oxon OX49 5SU</p> <p>01844 351671 office@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk <i>Headteacher: Mrs Helen France</i></p>
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Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Aston Rowant CE Primary School
Wednesday 20 November 2024 – 6:30pm

Present:

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

Apologies:

Jacky Barr (JB) Foundation Governor
 Sam Goose (SG)

In attendance:

Martin Pounce OCC Clerk

The meeting started at 6:30pm

		Action
1.	Welcome and Prayer ST welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting was opened in prayer.	
2.	Declarations of Interest The meeting was quorate. There were no declarations relating to items on the agenda. The clerk noted that all governors have now confirmed their declarations on Governor and he will be able to produce a summary for governors to publish on the school website.	Clerk summary of declarations
3.	Approval of the minutes of 2 October 2024 and any matters arising.	
3.1	Minutes were approved. A printed copy of the minutes was signed by the chair and will be held in the school office for public inspection.	
3.2	Review of actions arising:	
3.2.1	Declarations summary will be provided now that all information completed.	
3.2.2	Potential supply teachers have now been identified.	
3.2.3	SEF and SDP are now on One Drive.	
3.2.4	Gill Tyler and Tom Sowerby attended SIAMS Governance in Schools course on 16 October?	

GRATITUDE RESILIENCE OUTREACH WONDER TRUST HARMONY

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

3.2.5	Revised key dates had been shared in the 2 October folder on GovernorHub.	
4.	<p>Governance issues</p> <p>4.1 Election of chair and vice-chair There had been discussion in the previous meeting about the chair position as Steve Taylor will resign from the governing body at the end of the meeting. Tom Sowerby was nominated as the chair. He left the room and all governors were pleased to vote him in as the new chair. Tom Sowerby chaired the rest of the meeting.</p> <p>Gill Tyler was nominated as the vice-chair. She was unanimously elected.</p> <p>Steve Taylor will cease to be a governor from this date but he still has some work to hand over documentation to Tom Sowerby. Governors agreed to appoint Steve Taylor as Associate Member for a few months so that he can remain on GovernorHub.</p> <p>4.2 A decision about the chair handing over responsibilities for Safeguarding and Health & Safety was delayed until the next meeting.</p> <p>4.3 The Instrument of Government had been uploaded to GovernorHub. However, a new version would be considered under item 4.7 below.</p> <p>4.4 There are four vacancies for Foundation governors under the new Voluntary Aided designation. Governors had experienced difficulty in recruiting governors from the church. They hope that the Diocese will appoint Sam Goose to one of the vacancies. Governors asked the headteacher to approach two local secondary schools to offer the experience of governing as useful CPD for a future leader. Zoe Batt will work with the chair to approach local companies offering the same benefit to managers. If anyone comes forward, they will need to be acceptable to the Diocese.</p> <p>Governors are hoping to fill the parent governor vacancy soon.</p> <p>4.5 Governor visits</p> <p>4.5.1 • SEND Steve Taylor has visited and will complete his report.</p> <p>4.5.22 • Maths The Maths visit report had been shared in the meeting folder.</p> <p>4.5.3 • Early Years There had been some confusion over who now has lead responsibility for visiting so a visit had not been carried out.</p> <p>4.5.4 • Art Zoe Batt will visit before Christmas.</p> <p>4.5.5 • Health & Safety The H&S visit report had been shared in the meeting folder. Governors noted that the school again scored 100% in the local authority audit. This was the result of hard work by Eva French and Dawn King. Governors congratulated them and the headteacher on this achievement. The headteacher reported that she had asked for one issue to be flagged; namely, that the school does not have a fire alarm. This means that a hand bell must be rung in case of</p>	<p>Clerk agenda</p> <p>HF speak to colleague heads ZB & TS approach companies</p>

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<p>4.6</p> <p>4.7</p>	<p>fire, The headteacher hopes that as the deficiency has been reported three times, the LA may fund the fire alarm which the school cannot afford (£10k). Governors noted that a covenant prohibits the school from letting its site to outside organisations.</p> <p>Governors asked who is responsible for ensuring that governors have DBS checks. Dawn is responsible. The chair has met Dawn to discuss.</p> <p>Committee membership – Governors agreed that membership of the committees needed to be strengthened. Decisions about membership will be made in the next meeting, but in the meantime:</p> <p>Finance: <i>TS will join Finance with SG, Eva French, HF.</i></p> <p>T&L, <i>remains unchanged HF, AO, AT</i></p> <p>Governors asked that the committees be aligned with school strategy. Governors should set down some core principles to operate under.</p> <p>Governors agreed to set up a SIAMS committee.</p> <p>4.7 Change to Instrument of Government.</p> <p>TS advised that the Diocese have approved the proposed new Instrument of Government (IoG). The new IoG stipulates a total of 12 Governors made up as one LA, one staff, one headteacher, two parents and seven foundation governors. TS proposed to formally adopt the new Instrument of Government effective from 1st September 2024. Seconded by ST. Approved with unanimous support.</p> <p>There was further discussion about advertising governor vacancies. ZB offered to put a notice in The Chinnor Pump. Governors asked that there should be a discussion of what they are looking for at the next meeting</p>	<p>Clerk agenda</p>
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Committee reports</p> <p>Finance Committee met on 15 November. <i>I wanted to write Minutes had been shared on GovernorHub – because that’s what I heard - but I can’t find them.</i></p> <p>Governors noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of four children on roll will reduce income by £16k. • To avoid LA clawing back a surplus of more than 8%, the Diocese will bill the school before end March 2025 for work they will carry out in summer 2025. Three projects have been verbally agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hall roof repair£30k ○ Fence for improved safeguarding £30k ○ Resurfacing Early Years outdoor area £15k The school will transfer £9.3k to Diocese in December 2024. • Boys’ toilets are due to be repaired on 23 November • Eva French has managed the budget well and there will be a small in-year surplus. 	

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<p>5.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chair will complete SFVS supported by the ex-chair. <p>Dates of meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 January School Financial Value Statement needs to be submitted by 14 February • 20 March 2025 Budget recommendations to FGB • 5 July 2025 <p>Teaching & Learning Committee will meet on 20 January 2025 at 3.30pm</p> <p>This will discuss in depth the analysis of the data drop at end of autumn term. 'Growth meetings' to be held with staff on 8 January will feed into this analysis.</p> <p>Dates of future meetings are:</p> <p>Monday 20 January 2025 at 3.30pm</p> <p>Other dates pencilled in and subject to confirmation</p> <p>Monday 28 April 2025</p> <p>Monday 7 July 2025</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Head teacher report</p> <p>This had been uploaded to GovernorHub and governors had asked questions in advance. Governors praised the quality of the report.</p> <p>Governors were delighted to hear comments of Duncan Millard School Improvement Partner after visiting the school: 'What a very special school...opportunity to hear how they are providing a superb education...'</p> <p>Parents are working to promote a Smartphone free childhood, and the Thame partnership heads have invited a headteacher from Hitchin to tell them about best practice.</p> <p>Open Days have been very well attended – 30 parents on three days. Parents commented on the good behaviour of pupils.</p> <p>The headteacher had been able to work more strategically with fewer distractions.</p> <p>Governors thanked the headteacher for her report on SEN. <i>Does the 3% EHCP include any submissions that are awaiting an outcome?</i> No, we currently have 3 EHCPs in school. We have at least two pending. One child with a current EHCP may need Alternative Provision to meet need. <i>Given the higher than average number of pupils with SEN are there any specific additional resources that school needs or that would be helpful to support these children? E.g. Increased SENCO time, specialist therapist sessions etc.</i> Yes, the 5 hours we current pay our SENDCo does not cover it - so I currently have to do some of the SEN work. Also we have benefitted from Dawn Hayes, Play Therapist working at her trainee rate. She qualifies in May next year - so her costs will rise significantly. We also have three children who would ideally see an Ed Psych. But that is nearly £1,000 per review. <i>Governors asked: do we have sufficient funding to meet these needs? No. Is there any merit in approaching OCC for additional support given our high percentage of SEN pupils?</i> Absolutely, the headteacher has mentioned it to AO. A governor mentioned for new governors that the school has tried appealing for additional funding to OCC before at governor level</p>	

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	<p>based on SEN numbers and received a flat 'no'. Of course, this doesn't mean that we shouldn't ask again, particularly if we have alternative routes/contacts.</p> <p>Governors noted a lot of CPD but there is no mention of the development work for SEN. It is a summary of the CPD that we have completed in the Autumn term. We have some SEN CPD booked in for Spring- as highlighted in the Headteachers Executive Summary. All our CPD is targeted and so we will only complete courses and training that add value.</p> <p>Governors asked whether, in the Admissions section of the report, the reasons for leavers has a flavour of 'good riddance' re attendance records. Although we are now 90 rather than 94 as thought when we broke up - those that have left have all gone for the right reasons.</p> <p>Governors questioned the headteacher's statement that Attendance is now a priority (taking the government stance). Wasn't the school doing all it could before this announcement? What has changed? We are definitely doing all that we can, and more than many schools. Governors asked whether Covid was still affecting some absences. Yes, we don't test children for Covid but it is undoubtedly still around and some spikes in absence make us confident that some children had covid. The other effect is that parents tend to keep their children away when they have colds. We have to reassure them that this is not a good reason for children to be absent..</p> <p>In the Health & Safety section governors asked whether the emergency lighting faults were identified by an election. Should the faults have been identified by routine checks in the school? As per the H&S audit our routine checks are thorough and detailed. The emergency lights failed as they did not stay on for the full three hours. This is not something that can be checked within a normal working week - hence the regular hard wire inspections to test it for us. The hard wire inspection alone took three days of the summer holiday and the repair a Saturday - all of non-working time.</p> <p>Governors wondered whether, given the past significant challenges have been largely addressed, there a need to 'lower the bar' to include 'less troublesome' issues? There will always be challenges - as in any job. But these have been the day-to-day issues.</p> <p>The clerk suggested that in the future, all questions about the headteacher's report should be posted on GovernorHub Noticeboard. This would enable governors to see the questions posed by their colleagues so they can avoid duplication. The headteacher's answers will also be seen by all governors there.</p> <p>Governors noted that the school's vision of 'fullness of life' informs all that the school does. It is summarised at the foot of the page.</p>	
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p>	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Governors noted the information about Safeguarding contained in the headteacher's report. Governors asked, do we actually have a TAF in place or is this just you as per previous cases? We have a Team around the Family in place.</p>	

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	<p>Governors asked whether there had been a noticeable impact having Jacky Barr on the governing body. It is too soon to tell. Governors noted that there is a weekly Open the Book assembly which children enjoy.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Monitoring the impact of our Christian Vision.</p> <p>Governors were reminded that a document produced last year had not succeeded in capturing the many examples of student and staff growth. Governors agreed that retrospectively it would be useful to go through headteacher’s report in the past year to pull out evidence of impact of Christian vision.</p> <p>Governors hope that a conversation with Toby Long will also provide ideas of what governors might look for on their monitoring visits, and how staff may be encouraged to identify how they have grown and how they would like to grow in future. This may result in inset.</p> <p>Governors also reflected on how they have grown in line with the vision. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful discussion with AO about the way Aston Rowant has changed • Understanding through reading the safeguarding report • A whole day visit showed how much has been achieved. • Trust between governors has developed well. • Discussion of finances and building trust with Finance Officer, Mark Naylor • Parent governor had developed a different perspective • Questions from new governors have been really helpful in challenging assumptions • Attending training including on health & safety will enable the new chair to grow into Steve Taylor’s shoes. • Having a whole day with a governor to explain what the school does. • Having uninterrupted headship time working away from school has been a joy. • Governors would like more time in school – especially useful for new governors. 	
<p>9.</p>	<p>FGB Meeting dates for 2024/25</p> <p>The next meeting was changed to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday 10 February 2025 at 6.30 check this start please</p> <p>Other dates already agreed are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 26 March 2025 • Wednesday 30 April 2025 • Wednesday 16 July 2025 	

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10.	<p>Any other business and items for the next agenda</p> <p>Governors confirmed that the school's admission policy should remain unchanged. This decision will be sent to the Diocese.</p> <p>Governors noted the huge improvements that had been achieved in the school since Steve Taylor became chair. He had started at the same time that Helen France took over the headship. Between them they had encouraged governors and staff to grow together. Governors are massively grateful for his contribution.</p> <p>Steve Taylor acknowledged the praise and declared himself to be proud of Aston Rowant governors.</p> <p>Governors presented Steve with a card and small token of their appreciation.</p>	
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The meeting closed at 20.40

Martin Pounce
27 November 2024

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Action points

Item	Action	Responsible
1	Clerk summary of declarations for school website	MP
2	Governor responsibility for Safeguarding and Health & Safety will be on 10 February meeting agenda	MP
3	HF speak to colleague heads about member of their staff becoming a governor at AR.	HF
4	ZB & TS approach companies to ask about member of their staff becoming a governor at AR.	ZB & TS
5	What governors are looking for in a new governor to be discussed at the next meeting. Clerk agenda	MP
6	Book Toby Long for SIAMS training	HF

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Attendance 2024-25

	02/10/2024						
Zoe Batt	No						
Helen France	Yes						
Sam Goose	Yes						
Abi Tindall	Yes						
Alexi Olsen	Yes						
Tom Sowerby	Yes						
Steve Taylor	Yes						
Gill Tyler	Yes						
Jacky Barr	Yes						
Martin Pounce	No						

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