



**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNORS' MEETING  
HELD AT SOUTHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ON WEDNESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 6.30PM**

**Present:** Mrs Natalie Garrett (Chair) Mr Tim Hughes  
Mrs Louise Weaver Mr Simon Blackbond  
Mr Alan Eaton

**Apologies:** Mrs Kath Bonner-Dunham  
Mrs Sam Jarvis

**In Attendance:** Dr Annabel Kay (CEO Warriner MAT) (left at 8.45pm)  
Mr Matt Green (Headteacher)  
Mrs Heather Hughes (School Business Manager) (left at 7.15pm)  
Mrs Sally Perkins (External Consultant, National Leader of Governance) (left at 8.45pm)  
Mrs Wendy Willie (Clerk)

**ACTIONS**

1.	<b>All governors to complete Declaration section on GovernorHub</b>	<b>ALL</b>
2.	<b>PREVENT online training link to be sent to all governors</b>	<b>Mr Green</b>
3.	<b>PREVENT training certificates to be sent to Mr Green</b>	<b>ALL</b>
4.	<b>Reminder to be put into the newsletter re Parent Governor nominations</b>	<b>Mr Green</b>
5.	<b>Mr Green and Mrs Garrett to discuss the Risk Register with Mrs Perkins</b>	<b>Mr Green/ Mrs Garrett</b>
6.	<b>Alternative meeting dates to be scheduled</b>	<b>Mrs Willie</b>
7.	<b>MAT Governor Visit Form to be sent to Mrs Willie</b>	<b>Dr Kay</b>
8.	<b>Staff &amp; Volunteer Disqualification self-declaration form to be completed and submitted to school office</b>	<b>Mr Blackbond/ Mrs Bonner-Dunham</b>
9.	<b>Most recent draft of Lettings Policy to be obtained and sent to governors for review. To be on the next agenda.</b>	<b>Mrs Willie</b>
10.	<b>Mr Green to discuss Risk Management Policy and Finance Policy with Mrs Hughes</b>	<b>Mr Green</b>
11.	<b>Risk Management Policy and Finance Policy to be presented at the next meeting</b>	<b>Mrs Willie</b>
12.	<b>Whistleblowing Policy to be sent to all staff</b>	<b>Mr Green</b>
13.	<b>Mr Eaton to arrange to meet with Mrs Hughes re finance</b>	<b>Mr Eaton</b>
14.	<b>Sub Committee to meet to finalise Teachers' Pay Policy 2019-20. Policy to be presented for adoption at the next meeting</b>	<b>Mrs Willie</b>
15.	<b>Mrs Willie to establish if Mrs Perkins can be added to GovernorHub</b>	<b>Mrs Willie</b>
16.	<b>MAT Health &amp; Safety Policy to be circulated to governors</b>	<b>Mr Green</b>

## 1. Welcome & Apologies

Mrs Garrett welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mrs Heather Hughes and Mrs Sally Perkins. It was clarified that Mrs Perkins was observing the meeting to help identify training needs. Apologies as noted above, which were accepted. Mrs Sam Jarvis was appointed as a Staff Governor on 28 January 2020 but is unable to attend this evening.

It was stated that Mrs Garratt had contacted Miss Jayne Murphy after the meeting. Miss Murphy had officially resigned as a Member on 3 February 2020 with notification submitted to Companies House.

All documents were made available on GovernorHub prior to the meeting.

## 2. Declarations of Interest in respect of any items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest. Governors were asked to complete the Declarations section on GovernorHub with relevant information. **Action: ALL**

## 3. Minutes of the last meeting held 22 January 2020 & Review of Action Points

The minutes having been circulated and read were agreed as a true copy and signed by the Chair for filing.

### Review of Action Points

Please refer to table above for new/outstanding actions.

## 4. Confidential minutes of the meeting held 22 January 2020 & Matters Arising

Having been read the minutes were agreed as a true copy and signed by the Chair for filing. Confidential discussion held, please refer to confidential minute.

**Mrs Garratt asked how complaints are handled and if a record of the complaint would be kept.** It was clarified that complaints would be dealt with in line with the school's Complaint's Policy. The school would deal with complaints and these can be reported to the governing body at a meeting or within the Headteacher's Report. If a complaint is about the Headteacher it would be dealt with by the governing body.

## 5. Finance Update

Dr Kay reported that the audited accounts were submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) on 14 February 2020. As no one within the Academy Trust worked at the school during the accounting period, they have not been signed and Dr Kay expressed that no one should sign them due to the issues that were flagged up relating to invoices raised but not paid dating back to 2016-17. **Mrs Garratt asked if the invoices were ever resolved.** Dr Kay said no, as the invoices were so old. Dr Kay added that a budget and monthly management accounts have also been submitted to the DfE.

There was an in-year deficit of £114,000 which has written off any surplus. There will be a carry forward of approximately £21,000.

The budget does not reflect the emergency funding of £110,000 from the DfE. A conversion grant has also been agreed. **Mrs Perkins asked if the emergency funding is for the school and if it is a loan.** Dr Kay clarified that the emergency funds would be paid to the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and is not a loan. The conversion grant would be paid to the school. **Mr Hughes asked if the funding being paid to the MAT had been spent.** Dr Kay confirmed it had been spent and briefed on the various items paid for by the MAT.

Dr Kay informed governors that the Education, Skills & Funding Agency (ESFA) want to carry out another efficiency review.

## **Budget**

An Income/Expenditure Report had been circulated. Mrs Hughes advised that the increases in funding are reflected in the budget. Pay increases have been applied for teachers at 3% and support staff at 2%, which has been agreed from April 2020. **Mrs Garratt asked who agrees pay progression.** Dr Kay explained that performance management targets are set, which will be reviewed next September. Following performance management pay recommendations will be made which the governors will review. Pay recommendations will then be made by Dr Kay, on behalf of the school, to the MAT Trustees. **Mrs Garratt asked how staff felt about the performance management reviews.** Mr Green advised it is an ongoing review process and that staff are grateful there is now a structure and time being given to them which is relevant to their own professional development.

**Mrs Garratt asked about support for staff in Year 4.** Mr Green clarified there is support in place across the school, with some areas requiring more support than others.

Service Level Agreements (SLAs) have been reviewed and concluded. **Mrs Perkins asked if there are many more SLAs that may no longer be needed and would these impact on the budget.** Mrs Hughes confirmed that there would be further SLAs which would come up, although most have been dealt with. The SLAs which are now in place are those that are required to meet the needs of the school. Mr Green explained that previously there had been a lot of unnecessary expenditure.

**Mrs Perkins asked if the accounts are held within this school.** It was confirmed the accounts are held in school. Mrs Hughes confirmed that issues which arose have been addressed and briefed on some of the procedures now in place.

Dr Kay informed governors that there is a robust process in place that the Trustees go through when reviewing the budgets. Having that level of scrutiny and expertise is reassuring.

**Mr Eaton asked if the MAT had approved the budget.** Dr Kay clarified that the MAT is not required to approve the budget, the budget had to be submitted to the DfE. **Mr Hughes asked if the budget is flexible to change as the school's situation changes.** It was stated that the budget is flexible. Dr Kay explained that spending against the budget had been high, as they had to move forward and move the school in the right direction for the children and so did what needed to be done.

**Mr Hughes asked who monitors Mr Green's spending.** Mrs Hughes confirmed that she monitors Mr Green's spending and raises any issues with him. **Mr Hughes asked what is the governors responsibility in regard to finance.** Mrs Hughes explained that a Finance Governor would meet with her to review areas and could challenge her. Mr Eaton, Finance Governor, to arrange to meet with Mrs Hughes. **Action: Mr Eaton**

With regard to monitoring, Mrs Perkins stated that the governors should be scrutinising. Everything governors look at should be linked to the School Development Plan (SDP) priorities. The SDP should set the priorities for monitoring. Dr Kay added that at MAT level the Head and Chair would look at monitoring and evaluation against the SDP priorities. Governor visits would be agreed and mapped across the academic year.

**Mrs Garratt asked about the Headteacher's Board, who are to agree the conversion.** Dr Kay explained that the approval for re-brokering is going to the Headteacher's Board next month for initial approval. The MAT Trustees agreed in principle to take on the school, with two provisos. Firstly, that a conversion grant would be received from the DfE and, secondly, that there is capital funding to maintain the building as the MAT is concerned about the ongoing maintenance of the building. The MAT is linked to the Oxfordshire Diocese and a representative from the Diocese, who deals with land and buildings, is visiting the site to establish costs for maintaining the school. Dr Kay explained that academies have to submit Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bids for work required on the premises to the DfE. The MAT has successfully bid for funding in the past.

Dr Kay raised the issue of increasing lettings to help generate additional income and this was discussed. It was also noted that community bids could also be made to, for example, the National Lottery.

### **Capital Grant**

It was stated that the Capital funding received for the upkeep of the premises is just over £6,000. **Mrs Perkins asked what the Published Admissions Number (PAN) is.** Mr Green confirmed that the PAN is 440 with currently 181 pupils on roll, which had increased from 160 in September 2019. Mrs Hughes commented that the school has to fund these additional pupils with the current budget, as funding for these additional pupils will be allocated in next year's budget.

Intake into Reception is 60 pupils and should be two-form entry. Eleven children joined Reception in September 2019. The Local Authority (LA) wants the school to reduce the admission number to 30 pupils. It was clarified that no year group has two classes and that Key Stage 2 (KS2) is capped at 35 pupils. Mrs Perkins highlighted that this is an area of risk which governors need to monitor and discuss.

*(Mrs Hughes left the meeting)*

### **6. Risk Register**

Mrs Garratt, Mr Green and Mrs Perkins are to meet to reformat the Risk Register so it is a workable document. **Mr Hughes asked if a new risk is identified, should this be added.** It was confirmed that new risks identified should be included. **Action: Mr Green/Mrs Garrett**

Mr Hughes had met with Mr Green prior to the February half term as Health & Safety Governor and advised there was no Health & Safety Policy in place. Mr Hughes believes this is a compliance risk which should be added to the register. Mr Green clarified that there is a Health & Safety Policy which was adopted in 2016. The MAT has provided an up to date policy which will be circulated to governors once finalised by Mr Green. Mrs Perkins stated that until a new policy is adopted the existing policy would have to be used. Dr Kay added that going forward the MAT Clerk would oversee all policies and raise them when required. **Action: Mr Green**

**Mr Hughes asked if all the required policies are in place.** Dr Kay and Mr Green confirmed that all statutory policies are live on the website or at draft. **Mr Eaton asked if governors should follow up on policies.** Mrs Perkins confirmed it is the governors' responsibility to ensure policies are in place.

**Mrs Garratt asked what the governors' position is if someone letting the premises injures themselves, for example, due to the pathways being poorly lit.** Mrs Perkins clarified that if someone is injured on site it is the governors' responsibility. Dr Kay suggested that Mrs Hughes be asked to look at the contracts in place for those organisations hiring the premises. **Mrs Garratt asked if someone injures themselves and a health and safety check hasn't been done will the insurance still be valid.** Mrs Perkins advised that this would be questioned. Mr Green confirmed that risk assessments for the site are in place.

Dr Kay suggested that if a governor visits the school and there is anything they see that they feel needs to be considered by the governing body, that it be recorded on a governor visit form and raised at a meeting. Mrs Perkins explained that following a governor visit, governors should complete a visit report form to evidence their visit. A visit form should be agreed with the school prior to publication. Dr Kay to send Mrs Willie the MAT governor visit form for governors to use following visits. **Action: Dr Kay/Mrs Willie**

**Mr Hughes asked about the use of email and WhatsApp.** It was stated that all official governor communication should go through GovernorHub, which has the facility for governors to reply to notifications on the noticeboard by using the 'Comment' button. Governors should not need a school email address as GovernorHub should be used. No official governor business should be discussed on social media platforms such as WhatsApp. Governors discussed having a Chair@ email address for parents, etc, to contact the governing body directly.

**Mrs Garratt asked if any health and safety audits are carried out.** Mr Green said in terms of Northants County Council (NCC) providing audits, there are two packages the school could buy into. One package covers all the work the MAT does relating to looking after the site and so would not be required. The other package relates to risk assessments, etc, which is part of what is required.

## **7. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Data**

Governors were provided with two documents, 'Reception Class Tracker' and 'Reception Data 2019-20'.

### **Reception Class Tracker**

It was stated this document provides an overview of attainment for the cohort. Mr Green briefed on the document with the following noted and questions raised:

- The Early Years (EY) assessment works on the month of the age of the child.
- Most children in all areas of learning are below Age Related Expectations (ARE). A few children are in line or above.
- To achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG) children must achieve ARE in all areas.
- Data on page 2 shows that children have made good progress, moving from below ARE to being in line or above ARE. Mrs Perkins said it appeared that some children had gone backwards and Mr Green clarified that this data relates to different children. It was added that a child who joined the school in November 2019 was working significantly below and this has affected the data.
- **Mrs Perkins asked, bearing in mind there haven't been any changes in staffing, how is the school sure these judgements are valid.** Mr Green said he had completed learning walks, looked at the quality of the provision and quality of planning. When Ofsted visited the EYFS team could not demonstrate pupil progress, they could only demonstrate attainment. **Mrs Perkins asked if this had been a leadership issue as opposed to a teacher issue.** Mr Green confirmed this was correct. Mr Eaton added that previously EYFS had always been judged as good, with only the last inspection judging it as not good. Mr Green stated that the challenge for the team will be replicating the data in the April data set. **Mr Hughes asked if the data is showing improvement or is it just that the data is now being tracked.** Mr Green confirmed the data is showing improvement and showed an example of this within the document.

### **Reception Data 2019-20**

**Mrs Garratt asked about those pupils identified with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).** Mr Green explained that the document contains anonymised individual pupil data, with each box relating to a pupil, and highlighted a pupil with SEND. **Mrs Garratt asked if this pupil would have support in school.** Mr Green confirmed this child had worked extensively with Mrs Rachel Cosgrove, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), as well as involvement from other medical professionals. Progress for this pupil can be seen, although progress is small, it is progress. Dr Kay added that the SEND Governor would meet with the SENCo and ask for evidence of the support in place for the child. **Mr Blackbond asked about the fact that pupil 2 is SEND and pupils 5 and 8 have medical needs but are not SEND.** Dr Kay explained that a medical need is not a learning need. **Mr Hughes asked how learning is evidenced.** Mr Green explained that Tapestry, an online system which tracks a child's learning, is used and gave examples of the evidence recorded on the system.

Mr Green stated that there is now data to prove that pupils attain well and that they make good or accelerated progress. **Mr Eaton asked if it would now be easy to maintain the data.** Mr Green said yes it will be. **Mr Eaton asked if the data is available in this form for all year groups.** Mr Green clarified data in this format is only available for EYFS and nursery. Mr Green added that the data supports what was stated at the last meeting, that children join the school below and make accelerated progress. **Mr Eaton asked if the data moves with the child through the school.** Mr Green confirmed it does.

Mr Green explained that the nursery and reception classes are benefiting from working together. There is also now a lot more adult supervision and those children working above in nursery can 'dip' into Reception. **Mrs Weaver asked what provision is in place for those children who exceed in their learning.** Mr Green explained that these children will have a deeper, more meaningful curriculum. **Mr Eaton asked if information is received from other pre-schools.** Mr Green confirmed that some information is received but the school carries out its own assessments when children join Reception.

**Mrs Perkins asked why pupil 7 is still rated 'red'.** Mr Green explained this is because the pupil is the oldest pupil in the class and below ARE, but confirmed that the child will meet their ELG.

## **8. Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)**

Mrs Perkins stated that governors need to be sure that the school is statutorily compliant. **Mrs Perkins asked if there are any Looked After Children (LAC) on roll.** Mr Green confirmed there is one LAC child in school who is making good progress. Mrs Perkins stated that there should be a LAC Governor. As Inclusion and Safeguarding Governor, it was suggested that Mrs Bonner-Dunham undertakes this role.

Mr Green confirmed there is one pupil with an Educational, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). An emergency review was carried out for this pupil on 14 February, as the child has complex and changing needs.

**Mr Hughes asked if the Headteacher or the SENCo is responsible for SEND.** It was confirmed that the SENCo is contracted to the school and would be responsible for SEND. Mrs Cosgrove is the named SENCo in the policy. Dr Kay recommended that Mrs Cosgrove attends a future governor meeting to brief on SEND.

Dr Kay reported that a child has been permanently excluded and a governor is required to make up the panel to review the case and agree whether or not to uphold the exclusion. The MAT Clerk will provide guidance on the exclusion hearing process. Mrs Garratt offered to be part of the panel. It was stated that once the exclusion process is finalised the outcome can be fed back to the governing body.

Mrs Perkins advised that governors need to keep an open mind when dealing with exclusions or grievances. Details of cases cannot be discussed outside of the panel in case, for example for a staff grievance, a further appeal may need to be heard by another panel of governors.

## **9. Safeguarding**

Mr Green reported there had been a change to the morning routine. It was brought to Mr Green's attention that the gate had not been locked and, therefore, Mr Green now locks the gate every morning. **Mrs Garratt asked if there is a designated member of staff to lock the gate when Mr Green is not on site.** Mr Green confirmed this would be Mrs Jarvis or Mrs Metcalfe. **Mr Hughes asked who is responsible for the whole school when Mr Green is not on site.** Mr Green confirmed it would be the most senior teacher, Mrs Jarvis or Mrs Meadows, as there is no Deputy Head.

Mrs Garratt raised the issue of Mr Green becoming the permanent Head. It was confirmed that Mr Green is employed by the MAT and is contracted until Easter 2020. This will be extended until September 2020. When the school converts to the MAT, Mr Green would need to be interviewed by the MAT's governing body for the post. Dr Kay stated that nothing can be done until the conversion is completed.

Governors discussed whether the post would need to be advertised and the exceptional circumstances the school is in with regards to recruitment of a Headteacher. Mrs Perkins clarified that a MAT can choose not to advertise a post. Dr Kay expressed that stability is needed and ideally the same leadership will continue. Mrs Perkins highlighted the need to communicate regularly with parents. Dr Kay said that once the Headteacher's Board agrees to the conversion parents can be informed. It was added that there would be no change for parents as the leadership team are already in place. **Mr Blackbond asked why the conversion wouldn't be completed until September.** Dr Kay explained

that the MAT Trustees have to consider the impact on the other schools in the MAT and ensure there is no financial burden. The Trustees want to know if the school can be run on the allocated budget, as well as knowing if the Capital Grant is available to maintain the premises. Dr Kay advised that one question discussed with the DfE was whether the school was viable, and it was agreed it is. Mrs Perkins added that the TUPE process for staff will also take time to finalise.

## 10. Policies for Adoption

### a) Teachers' Pay Policy 2019-20

The NCC model policy had been circulated. Mrs Willie clarified that as detailed in section d) on page 1, a number of options have to be chosen by the governing body when adopting the policy. It was agreed that a sub-committee meets to choose the options to be recommended to the governing body at the next meeting. Mr Hughes and Mr Eaton agreed to be part of the sub-committee, together with Mr Green, with the meeting to be clerked. Mrs Willie to arrange a meeting date prior to the next full governors' meeting.

**Action: Mrs Willie**

### b) Risk Management Policy & Strategy

### c) Finance Policy

Mr Green had not reviewed these policies and asked that he discusses these with Mrs Hughes and that they be presented to governors at the next meeting.

**Action: Mr Green**

### d) Lettings Policy

Mr Green advised that the policy which had been circulated was not the most recent version. Mrs Willie to obtain the latest draft from Mrs Hughes and send to governors. To be on the next agenda.

**Action: Mrs Willie**

Mr Hughes referred back to the audited accounts and the issues identified relating to the 2016-17 accounts and whether the issues had been picked up by the accountants who audited the accounts at the time. Mr Green confirmed that the auditors had not picked up the issue relating to invoices and this was discussed.

## 11. Governance

Mrs Perkins advised that she would be able to chair a future meeting, although was not able to attend in March. Mrs Willie to establish if Mrs Perkins can be added to GovernorHub.

**Action: Mrs Willie**

*(Mrs Perkins & Dr Kay left the meeting)*

### Staff & Volunteer Disqualification Self Declaration – for completion by all governors

Completed forms were given to Mr Green to pass to the school office. Mr Blackbond and Mrs Bonner-Dunham to complete and return a self-declaration form.

**Action: Mr Blackbond/Mrs Bonner-Dunham**

## 12. Any Other Business

### a) Documents for Meetings

Mrs Garratt asked that documents be made available earlier for meetings, in order that they can be reviewed. This was agreed.

### b) Whistleblowing Policy

**Mrs Garratt asked if a Whistleblowing Policy is in place and if staff are aware of the policy.** Mrs Willie confirmed that the NCC Whistleblowing Policy had been adopted. A copy of the policy is available in the staff room. Mr Green to send all staff a copy of the policy to raise awareness.

**Action: Mr Green**

**c) Interviews**

**Mr Blackbond asked about the teacher interviews.** Mr Green advised that one application was received, however, the person decided not to move forward with an interview. **Mr Blackbond asked where adverts were placed** and was informed they were placed in the Times Educational Supplement, on the NCC jobs' board and on social media. Mr Green is currently in discussions with someone who is interested in the post. It was added that there is capacity within the MAT to help with a solution until the end of the academic year.

Mr Green briefed on the arrangements for teaching in Year 3. **Mrs Garratt asked if the teacher covering for Mrs Jarvis is temporary.** Mr Green confirmed that a supply teacher is providing cover. **Mrs Garratt asked if the supply teacher would be considered for a permanent role** and was advised that the teacher was due to start a permanent role at another school. Mrs Jarvis is expected back in school next week. **Mr Blackbond asked about the impact on the budget.** Mr Green advised that maternity insurance is being received and money has been saved with Miss Green leaving.

**Mr Hughes asked about teaching.** Mr Green advised he is covering Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time across the school, which was being done by Miss Green. With his teaching commitments, Mr Green said it is not sustainable for him to continue covering PPA for the rest of the academic year.

**d) Coronavirus**

**Mr Eaton asked if procedures were in place to deal with the Coronavirus.** Mr Green confirmed procedures are in place. **Mr Hughes asked if the Chair of Governors would be informed if the school were to be closed.** Mr Green confirmed the Chair of Governors would be informed. The school had been closed on Friday as a precaution against legionella and it had been important that the parents were informed as soon as possible. Mrs Garratt highlighted that a comment had been made on social media about why the school had closed prior to an official statement being released. Mr Green said he was not aware of the comment.

**13. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 19 March 2020 6.30pm**

Mrs Willie to redraft meeting dates for the remainder of the academic year.

**Action: Mrs Willie**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_