

**THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHGATE SCHOOL**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held at 5.30pm via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 1st April 2020.

**PRESENT**

Mr R Baines (Chair), Mrs C Bent, Mrs K Emptage, Mr P Evans (Head Teacher), Mr M Holland, Mrs S Norman, Ms A Robinson.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Miss K George (Minute Clerk)

Mrs Josephine Hallas (School Business Manager)

Mrs R Perfitt (Deputy Head Teacher)

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>Action</b>
179.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Apologies for absence were received from Mrs J Berrett (consent) and Mrs A Marsland (consent).  There were no declarations of interest.	
180.	NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS	The following item was notified to be brought up under any other business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coronavirus.</li> </ul>	
181.	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 5 FEBRUARY 2020.	<b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendments:  <u>Minute 170</u>	

	Item	Minutes	Action
		<p>It was advised that the third bullet point refer to the sensory response to food rather than nutrition and the children would be introduced to different foods.</p> <p><u>Minute 171</u></p> <p>Replace 'register' with 'Child Protection Register'.</p>	
182.	MATTERS ARISING	<p>(a) <u>Staffing Changes (Minute 167 (c) refers)</u></p> <p>A second dismissal hearing had been held including 2 independent external Governors; the staff member had received a final written warning and was now back in work. There were conditions in place that the staff member had agreed to which included Safeguarding monitoring.</p> <p>(b) <u>Building and Premises (Minute 169 (d) refers)</u></p> <p>The new front door had now been installed. The School were awaiting the new hall door to also be installed.</p> <p>(c) <u>Enrichment Activities (Minute 172 (f) refers)</u></p> <p>The arranged cycling trip had been postponed until next year.</p>	
	<b><i>School Improvement</i></b>		
183.	PUPIL AND STAFF UPDATES	<p>(a) <u>Pupil Data</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that with the School closure in March there were no significant changes from the previous Governors' meeting. The latest data is currently being collected. Before closure, the overall School behaviour was positive and the School was in a strong, consolidated position:</p> <p>Mrs Perfitt advised that stage 1 anxiety was decreasing as was stage 2 and 3.</p>	

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		<p>There was a focus on tackling bullying including racism and homophobia. There had been some assemblies and events arranged to target this but these have had to be postponed. There was upskilling of staff in class by using data to intervene and a strategy finder had been developed by the intervention team.</p> <p>In Spring 2 there had been some increases in anxiety due to the recent situation with Coronavirus and changes made as a result. Overall the school had managed this very well.</p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that the School would put a plan in place for when the school re-opens. It is likely that a transition period will be needed.</p> <p>(b) <u>Staffing</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that the quality of the new appointments made at the beginning of the term was very encouraging. They had dealt with the current situation very well even though they had been in School less than a term. The-School are planning staffing for September and are working with SENDACT about proposed pupil numbers and needs. Recruitment will be difficult in the current climate. Fortunately, the School is well staffed and have some quality and familiar supply that can use if required.</p>	
184.	REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES	<p><u>Finance Committee</u></p> <p>Mrs Hallas had uploaded the budget reports onto Microsoft teams and Governors confirmed that they had read through these before the meeting.</p> <p>Mrs Hallas explained that the School's financial procedures had been audited in February. The judgement was equivalent to good which was a pleasing outcome following relocation and rapid expansion. The School had been advised that rather than giving a verbal budget report at Governor meetings, the Governors needed to have sight of the written report. There had also been some growth in the admin team and Mrs Hallas had managed this well. There had been some recommendations from the audit report and some of these actions had already been completed.</p>	

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	<p>The School have worked closely with SENDACT to secure additional. This includes additional funding for a pupil on top of banding A so this would be seen in the budget later in the year. This covers off site costs and increased staffing.</p> <p>The budget for 2019/20 started at £2.8m. This has increased for 2020/21 to £3.2m reflecting the increase in pupil numbers.</p> <p>There had been an underspend in staffing due to a staff member not being replaced after they left. The School used the opportunity to explore best options rather than replacing like for like.</p> <p>There was an overspend in premises as the School were getting used to the new PPP contract. One of the toilets had been changed into a breakout room for a new child in the class.</p> <p>There was an overspend in transport due to buying a new electric car, but this was getting well used. It was always charged up and didn't cost anything to run. There was an overspend in IT equipment as the older equipment needed to be replaced.</p> <p>Agency staff were being used to cover long term sickness absence. Mrs Hallas advised that at the end of the year they would have underspent on the budget, in line with school development plans. Now many of the key areas for development have been consolidated, the school can use the budget to look at the curriculum and creating a more specialist environment.</p> <p>The Governors thanked Mrs Hallas, The Head Teacher and Mrs Perfitt for their work on managing the budget.</p> <p>The SFVS had a new format and the Chair would read through this after the meeting.</p> <p><i>Mrs Hallas left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	

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185.	GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS TO SCHOOL	<p>The School was looking at updating safeguarding training for all Governors as required, it was noted that this could be booked online through Kirklees Business Solutions.</p> <p>It was advised that all Governors should tell Mrs Hallas what training/courses they had undertaken so she can update the Single Central Record. It was advised that Governors could email their certificates to the School.</p>	
186.	SAFEGUARDING	<p>Mrs Perfitt has done a lot of work in Safeguarding and there was now a new electronic signing system that staff could use for safeguarding documents, policies and risk assessments. This new system would put on the staff's electronic signature and date on policies, key risk assessments and other critical items.</p> <p>Mrs Perfitt advised that Staff Safe has been established to log and follow up any Safeguarding issues in relation to staff members, if they arise. New badges are now being used for visitors, visitors with a green badge had a DBS check and visitors with a red badge did not have a DBS check. This was a better system than before, as visitors used to receive the blue staff badge which had caused some confusion.</p> <p>During the staff induction it was made clear that staff had to take responsibility for their personal safeguarding issues by informing Senior Leaders if appropriate. The new safeguarding structure had been completed and had been sent out, it was more comprehensive than before.</p> <p>The Governors discussed Children Looked After and Post Children Looked After. The School were raising the profile of Post Looked After Children and were making use of the funding available. Staff were made aware of the data and Ms Hoffman was tracking the outcomes. The pupils were monitored closely, especially around their social and emotional development.</p> <p>It was noted that there needed to be more progress in using and applying but the number of pupils making expected and higher than expected progress was very positive. Post Looked After Children were making slower progress and remain a priority group.</p>	

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		<p>Orchard were looking at independent life skills and Forest were looking at greater independence and there was some additional funding for this.</p> <p>The development points were reading, listening and using and applying.</p>	
187.	SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN	<p>The updates given in the previous Governors meeting and Head Teachers report still stand. The year has focussed on the consolidation of key areas and the School is in a strong position to prepare for the second year of the current School development plan. Some updates since the last meeting include:</p> <p>(a) <u>Performance Management</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that all mid-year reviews had been done, this included support staff and teachers and they were building on last year. Support staff were involved in leadership and there had been positive feedback from the people they have been managing.</p> <p>(b) <u>Curriculum</u></p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that the curriculum plans were looking very positive. The School are able to focus on this due to their advantageous financial position.</p> <p>(c) <u>Increase in Leadership</u></p> <p>The development of support staff leadership has been very positive over the last 2 years and works well for the School. Plans to potentially expand senior leadership are currently on hold. There were also plans to expand middle leadership with TLR positions for English and maths. It is likely that we will be able to advertise these internally after Easter.</p> <p>(d) <u>Coaching</u></p> <p>Ms Hoffman had launched coaching for all support staff, they had had one coaching session before the school closed. The Head Teacher presented</p>	

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		at the Town Hall to new Head teachers on the benefits of creating a coaching culture in Schools.	
	<b>Governing Body Matters and Statutory Responsibilities</b>		
188.	REPRESENTATION	The Governors noted the current vacancies. The Head Teacher advised that he had been trying to find parents who may be interested in being a Governor, but some parents had already taken a Governor role at another School or they had child care issues and could not commit to the role. Governors advised that holding some of their meetings remotely could solve this issue.	
189.	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING	This item was covered in Minute 184.	
190.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<p><u>Coronavirus</u></p> <p>The school closed on Friday, 20 March which was unsettling and upsetting for all involved. Awareness was raised by the second week of March that this would have a big impact on Schools. Guidance came out about the symptoms and self-isolation at this time. One staff member and a couple of pupils were self-isolating and the 16 to 20 March was a challenging week. The Head Teacher thanked the Chair of Governors for his support during this time, as he had been speaking to him every day and Governors were also sending emails of support which was greatly appreciated. There had been difficulty managing the anxiety of pupils and staff as they were anticipating the school closure and catching up with communications from Government and the LA.</p> <p>On 16 March the Government changed the guidance about family members and self-isolation and there was a fear of not being able to maintain safe pupil: staff ratios the following day. Fortunately, this didn't impact on us the way it could have and at this point the pupil numbers were slowly falling as more children stayed at home. By the end of the week the school was below 60% pupil attendance.</p>	

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	<p>On 18 March the Government announced that Schools would close on Friday, but key workers, vulnerable children and those with an EHCP were to stay in School. This was confusing for the School, parents and carers, as all of the pupils have an EHCP. The guidance has since changed.</p> <p>The Chair had attended the farewell assembly which was very emotional for staff and pupils, but the assembly was uplifting, and every child received a certificate.</p> <p>The School was closed on the following Monday and Tuesday to put the plans in place. The Head Teacher advised that most of the staff were asked to stay at home on the Monday, which was very much deserved after the challenges of the previous week. The whole staff team had been incredible with how they kept going to put the children first. The Head Teacher found their support incredible. The 5 senior leaders met up in Maple class (socially distancing) to plan for the weeks ahead. It was arranged to split the staff into 3 groups, any vulnerable staff were not included in the groups. The School planned to remain open over the Easter holidays for the children of key workers and the most vulnerable children. It was worked out that there would be 6 – 8 children per day so they could rotate staff.</p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that they would also be bringing in some vulnerable children over the Easter holidays for respite and there were around 25 children who would receive work drop off checks and to check on the welfare of the child. The Head Teacher informed Governors that he had been informed that Southgate would be the only Kirklees Special School open over this period and they would be running a continuous leadership team, safeguarding team and admin to support families.</p> <p>There was a safeguarding action plan in place for the children which was categorised into three areas:</p> <p>Low risk – The children were safe at home but may have increased screen time so needed to ensure they were safe online.</p> <p>It was noted that the School website had been developed further and now had resources and support available for families including information about online safety.</p>	



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	<p>Medium risk – The children were safe at home, but parents may encounter challenging situations, such as mental health problems, which may make it harder for them to cope, particularly if there was a lack of respite.</p> <p>It was noted that Angela, the family support worker, was calling more families to check on their welfare.</p> <p>High risk – These were the children with social workers, child in need plans and child protection plans, along with other pupils the school has risk assessed and identified as being more vulnerable. Some of the children could not access school due to health needs. Some of the children were having face to face contact each week and some were coming into School.</p> <p>The risk assessment was reviewed each week, and everything was logged on CPOMS. It was shared that a comprehensive risk assessment had been done for the staff in School and the staff who were doing home visits and work drop offs.</p> <p><b>Q: How many staff are in School?</b>  <b>A:</b> At the moment we have more staff than children as our most vulnerable pupils are often the most complex. 2 pupils have a 2:1 staff: pupil ratio.</p> <p>The Head Teacher advised that they made sure there was a leader in School each day and there was always a first aider/ DSL available.</p> <p><b>Q: Are social care still doing CIN meetings?</b>  <b>A:</b> Yes, they are doing them remotely. It does depend on the families being able to join the meeting as well. Statutory visits are still being done, a lot of social workers are working from home now.</p> <p>Ms Robinson stated that the way the School were supporting families was great. The Head Teacher stated that the support received from families was also very positive as was the support from staff.</p>	

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		The Chair stated that all the planning and attention to detail that the School had put in continually amazed him and stated that The Head Teacher and leadership team had done a great job; he couldn't be prouder of everyone involved.	
191.	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the next meeting would be held via Microsoft Teams at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, 6 May 2020.</p> <p>It was noted that the agenda for this meeting would be based around what the School was doing in the current situation.</p>	
192.	AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That no part of these minutes, agenda or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the School, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.</p>	

The meeting closed at 7:30 pm.