**Sheringham Woodfields School
Full Governing Body Minutes
02.12.2020 @4pm (Face to Face)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Present** | James Stanbrook (Head), Matthew Smith (MS), Steve Thurlow (ST), Janet Farrow (JF), Sarah Dewhurst (SD), Daphne Lucas-Lee, Alison Williams & Anne Davies, Jake Millin (JM) |
| **Apologies** | Lisa Harvey (LH), Janet Terry (JT) |

 **Meeting Clerk:** Natasha Patterson (NP)

**All governors were reminded that they should declare at the beginning of the meeting any pecuniary interests in any agenda item. *Governor question and comments in Bold Italics.*** Actions in Red

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Minutes** | **Action Points** |
| 1. APOLOGIES
 | Lisa Harvey (LH), Janet Terry (JT) |  |
| 1. NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS
 | None |  |
| 1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
 | Minutes approved by all present and will be signed by the Chair. Proposed by DLL, Seconded by JS. Confidential minutes Proposed by JF and Seconded by JM. |  |
| 1. MATTERS ARISING
 | None |  |
| 1. FINANCE & PERSONNEL

**(MS GAVE COMMENTARY)** | Themed Audit FindingsNorfolk Audit Services carried out a thematic audit on the Pre-Employment Safer Recruitment checks conducted within maintained schools. A sample of 10 schools were visited and the audit findings were recorded.We as a school, are operating safer recruitment checks and all members of staff are subject to prohibition checks which are recorded on the central register. We have a recruitment policy in place which is circulated to all relevant individuals and approved by Governors to ensure that it is adhered to during the safer recruitment process. This all forms part of the data retention policies as per GDPR regulations that no personal data is kept longer than required. Health screening questionnaires are completed by all members of staff upon appointment. In terms of the recommendations we are in a good shape. RAG Rating (ensuring compliance with the SFVS)Our RAG rating report has seen a sudden change in appearance with a document which identifies any areas which may be perceived as areas of concern or heightened risk. It tells us about the original budget shares and analysis of balances although we feel that the previous reports which use the traffic light system is a much more user friendly, in depth report as appose to this rather useless document that governors are required to make a decision over. ***What does RAG stand for?*** Red, Amber and Green. SVFS SubmissionThe SFVS report shows that we are meeting standards necessary to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management. The checklist features a number of questions of governing bodies in six areas of resource management to help provide assurance that resources are being managed effectively. Once completed, this document is submitted to the LA. The report details comments, evidence and proposed actions which was shown in the handout. We have never been a school at risk and the report evidently shows that we are in a robust place. The SFVS dashboard shows spending on various staff inc, teaching staff, support staff, admin staff and premises staff across a number of East Anglian Schools and shows a percentage rating against thresholds in red, amber and green. It also benchmarks reserves/balances. The school’s data (shown in pink on the handout) is where we are now and we believe we are in a low risk bracket and compliant overall. After discussion, the document was signed and approved by ST.Benchmarking ReportAs part of our annual financial cycle and review process, we have reviewed our financial data in terms of benchmarking against other Special Schools in Norfolk and have shared key points. Page 1 shows other schools used in the benchmarking data. Page 2 shows all information on all budget areas and the favourable/negative variances when compared to the schools listed on page 1. Page 3 refers to teaching/supply staff in the form of a graph which shows a comparison against schools named on page 1. Page 4 through to page 9 refers to other areas of staff and where we sit amongst the other named schools. Our action points are to monitor in future years to ensure we see a reduction in spending across certain areas.Capital BCR ReviewOur report shows we have £178,000 left in the account to spend on the build and £158,000 less money left to spend on the project leaving a balance of £20,000 to spend on landscaping.  |  |
| 1. THERAPY CENTRE UPDATE
 | The handout shared shows the Therapy Centre’s budget and actual spending to date. The outstanding balances are to be paid at the very end for things such as fencing, an additional structural engineer site visit to sign off on the build and additional meetings with Create Consulting. We endeavour to come in on budget and to be finished on time. |  |
| 1. DECLARATION OF BUSINESS / PECUNIARY INTERESTS & CONFLICTS OF

INTEREST | Nothing to declare. |  |
| 1. HEAD TEACHER ITEMS
 | **Policies**Out of the 7 policies for review, there were no major changes to report. ***In regards to the Early Years Policy, it refers to Tapestry, what is this?*** Tapestry is an EYFS assessment system which allows staff and parents to upload photos and data on an ipad via the cloud, showing the pupil in a home/school environment and enable both staff and parents to view achievements and to mirror the same actions. The E-Safety policy has been updated for classes to be more vigilant on pupils accessing apps/web pages. Posters are up in all classrooms. The Pay Policy changes every year to reflect the new pay scales from the LA. The Sex and Relationship Policy is relatively new and has been under development for a while. It was previously known as the RSE policy but is now called the SRE policy. A few minor discrepancies were found within a couple of the policies by Governors which will be edited and updated by JS. All policies have been approved pending changes.**Proposed Leadership Team**Handout shared showing the new proposed LT from January 2021. It relates to each members’ roles and duties. A couple of minor changes are to be made to the layout but otherwise all members of the governing board are happy with the structure.**Head Teacher Report**Staff UpdateNo staff have been advised to shield.Leadership team have been doing a lot of checking in with staff to reassure and give confidence around covid, no recent concerns have been raised directly with us but we continue to adapt and support staff.AbsenceThis has been a challenging half term due to absence which has been compounded by the number of staff awaiting covid-19 tests.For e.g. on Friday 13th we have had:1 TA compassionate leave for husband’s funeral1 teacher leave to attend and support at the above funeral3 TAs following surgical procedures, all long term1 TA self-isolating due to contact with a positive case outside the school5 TAs ill2 teachers illDuring that week there have been 5 staff absences related to waiting for covid tests and one of these lives with her Mother who works with us so she also had to self-isolate.All these tests have been returned negative. Michael has done a sterling job keeping classes covered. Annette will take on this role come January and will shadow Michael in the first instance. Her first transition visit will be on the 9th December. ***Do we use an outside agency for staff cover?*** No we don’t as we are fortunate enough to have good relations with our own pool of supply TA’s and also MSA’s who help out when needed.TeachersAll teacher appraisals have taken place as well as the half termly well-being check-up.All staff continue to meet teachers’ standards and there are no capability issues.Teaching AssistantsOur two new TAs Emma Warren and Claire Buxton are working through their induction programme and have completed all their core training.They have settled in very well and have clearly been a support to Jen in Shells class. Both are competent in signing and have made a good impact so far.Sue Barrel who had been off following surgery and returned on 15th November, initially part time to support with her return.Support StaffWe have appointed two new MSAs, Becci Flook and Joffe Lowe, they are also working as supply TAs in classes.Leadership teamBec is increasing her commitment to the S2S outreach work this term and has less of a presence in school in preparation for being our co-coordinator from January.Michael’s Norfolk Steps training has been postponed until next term due to covid restrictions.JS is looking forward to Annette taking his role of organising cover to free him up to respond to behaviour and safeguarding work each morning.JS’s priority task is preparing for Annette’s arrival and her ongoing induction. A positive zoom call to agree short, medium and long term priorities around understanding our school and the specifics of her new role.Much of her induction will be done by JS leading activities and her shadowing me for the first half term and then with less support for the second half term with the intention of leading from Easter with just my usual oversight.The other piece of work will be preparing the school leadership team for the future, this includes possibly re-introducing the Deputy Head role and developing the team’s skills and experience to be able to lead in my absence.These last two are likely to be the basis of my appraisal targets for the year.As requested JS has included a draft model of the future leadership structure.New Pupils and AdmissionsPreviously I reported a pupil due to start in April had still not started due to shielding initially and then parents’ anxieties about covid from September. This child has now been advised to shield. One other child has received a shielding letter. Classes are sending work home and sharing zoom sessions.Two other pupils were advised to shield, however, parents felt the benefits of coming to school far outweighed the risk due to covid which JS feels speaks volumes about the work we have done to put protective systems in place and give parents this confidence. JS previously mentioned a new starter in Sycamore class, his place at his previous school broke down and he is in care. Since September there have been only two behaviour incidents and he is coping well a 1:1 basis as appose to 3:1 in his previous setting. This is a massive reduction and he has not required any physical intervention. Christmas also has presented itself to him as a challenging time of year due to the death of his Mother and has never been an enjoyable experience and would lead to negative behavioural issues but lately we have managed to turn this around and show him that Christmas can be a pleasurable time of year. A professional from CAMHs has been close to tears seeing the difference in his presentation and the positive experiences he is getting.There will be only 4 leavers in July 2021, 2 places have been offered already and so there are two places left. ***Are you holding them for the outcome of tribunals?*** No, we are not giving them out at the moment as there are families that we know of moving to the area who have children with quite significant difficulties. The two places that have been offered for September already; one child is currently out of school and therefore considered a priority and the other is year 6 in a primary school and will not be able to cope with a mainstream secondary school.We have two outstanding tribunals before January.SafeguardingSummary of cases:Child in Need – 27Looked after Children – 4Child Protection– 1Family Support Plan – NoneEarly Help Team – 1Operation Encompass – 1 call this half term Awaiting social work assessment-1Review of Covid ArrangementsNo major changes since our last meeting other than entering tier 2.Additional guidance around visitors and face masks has already been shared.Weekly updates to staff continue, often to share information about what is happening and why.Covid catch-up fundsWe will be expecting £31,200 to support pupils to catch up on learning lost during lockdown.For many pupils this is an unrealistic ambition and many pupils continued to attend and learn.At the end of this term staff will be completing their summative assessments and this will give us a clearer picture of how pupils’ learning has been impacted and how we can support them.Pupil Premium GrantTotal for the period April 2020 to March 21 is £53,000.So far we have committed to:Transition co-ordinator £18,000Additional MSAs £4,000Time for you counselling from Benjamin Foundation £3,000Yoga Therapy £6,000The Patch £2,500This leaves approximately £19,500, at the moment I feel it is wise to not commit this until our new pupils have settled in and we have an idea of future funding following the pupil audit.There may also be spending opportunities through the Fields Centre too.**New Pupil Survey Results**Surveys were sent to 9 sets of parents and we received 5 responses. The survey was shared with all members of the governing board and all were in agreement that it showed some very positive comments. | Actioned 03.12.2020. |
| 1. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
 | There is still some work to do on this but some of the key areas are that we continue to act on the outcomes in the communication audit. Our inspection was in 2018 where it was mentioned if we were using the best ICT methods for communication and if we were receiving an adequate service from SaLT. We feel that the service provided by SaLT is unfortunately quite poor. We have since commissioned an outside organisation to go through our communications in school and have now an action plan in place. Developing Therapeutic Provisions This was supposed to be started back in March when the Centre looked like it was going to be opening sooner and Nic was going to do a lot of the prep work involved for Catherine to then take over but due to covid and Nic not being in school this has been delayed. It’s a lot bigger project now than first anticipated by Catherine and it’s all about developing Catherine’s skills now to take on the role which she is more than capable of.Improving AssessmentWe currently provide parents with end of year reports and EHCP reviews take place six monthly to a year. The assessment data within the documents does not provide parents with anything more than a p-level and is therefore quite meaningless. We are looking at going back to our software designer and developing a new way of recording data in a more meaningful and understandable way which reflects and tracks the child’s educational growth perhaps pictorially or through some kind of graph/chart. It will feature 3 stages (engaged, achieved, mastered). We hope that the science and technology will manage to cross paths and create a new way of recording data very soon.TA AppraisalGiven the high number of Ta’s we have and limited leadership capacity to complete appraisal interviews this is something we need to re-instate. We plan that we will use the national standards for teaching assistants as a guide and include elements of self-assessment where staff can recognise their own strengths and areas to develop, this will be a challenge for some as some staff members will naturally under value themselves. Also to set any goals or training they may see beneficial to their role. Teachers will also be included in evaluating the performance of their TAs. Governors have suggested that staff keep a diary to record key info/what went well/achievements can be recorded to aid in their appraisal. How the appraisal is presented is also key to receiving meaningful feedback without offending and to remain diplomatic.A form of training will be delivered to staff leads and members of the LT to execute this. |  |
| 1. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS
 | All matters discussed and minuted in separate confidential minutes.  |  |
| 1. CHAIR ITEMS
 | Sadly, Sarah Dewhurst’s Term of Office finishes next week after a successful 12 years as a Parent Governor. We are statutory obliged to send out nomination papers to parents to recruit a new Parent Governor. ***Do we have an outside agency who deals with this process?*** No, this is the job of the Clerk to Governors (NP). If no candidates come forward, then essentially Sarah has the option to stay on for the remainder of Alice’s time left at Woodfields which is approximately 18 months. NP to start the ball rolling. |  |
| 1. CLERK ITEMS
 | Next meeting 3rd February 2021 |  |
| 1. AOB
 | Last day of term there is a Father Christmas and Mrs Christmas story performance outside on a sleigh. Each child will receive a gift picked by class team for each child. All Governors welcome. |  |

**Meeting closed 17.45 hrs.**

SIGNED………………………………………………………………………… Date……………………….