**Sheringham Woodfields School  
Full Governing Body Minutes  
03.02.2021 @4pm (Zoom meeting)**

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

**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

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| **Item** | **Minutes** | **Action Points** |
| 1. APOLOGIES | None |  |
| 1. NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS | ST added SFVS to Chair Items to be discussed. |  |
| 1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING | Minutes approved by all present and will be signed by the Chair. Proposed by DLL, Seconded by SD. Confidential minutes Proposed by DDL, Seconded by JM. |  |
| 1. MATTERS ARISING | None |  |
| 1. FINANCE & PERSONNEL   **(MS GAVE COMMENTARY)** | 3rd Budget Revision  Handouts were circulated before the meeting and MS gave a summary forecast of where we are in terms of income and expenditure in this additional budget.  Small changes in pupil funding following the therapy centre and pupil admissions. Additional grants received which are in connection with school to school support and a reduction in catering due to the fact we just don’t have the pupil numbers at present to bring in an income.  £2,300 has come in through the furlough scheme which we had for one of our shop members of staff back in the Spring. The DFE grant of £5,565 is money received from the COVID emergency fund and £7,800 is the first proportion of the COVID catch up fund. We have spent only a small proportion of this money. ***Has this money arrived with us?*** Yes.  Additional grant for schools is made up of Primary PE grant and universal free school meals (UFSM). A few small tweaks and changes resulting in a £31,000 improvement in our income position.  In terms of expenditure, E01 – E07, our staff lines show the nett change is minimal. A few changes to admin additional support which unfortunately did not pan out as expected. The cost of other staff relates to MSA’s. Small tweaks again in terms of where the rest of the budget is concerned, building and grounds show additional costs due to COVID and the final landscaping costs for in and around the therapy centre. Learning resources shows an increase for additional furniture, seating etc. Additional Bursary money for COVID PPE spending is understandably high and catering has seen an increase due to Norse being able to still claim 100% FSM even though our pupil numbers are down which is a travesty! Unfortunately, this cannot be challenged.  At this point in time we are showing a deficit in Year 3 of £45,963. ***Are we very different from other schools?*** No, this amount is tiny in comparison to some other schools.  COVID Testing Update  Mass testing has been rolled out successfully and we are in the region of administering 250-280 tests a week. Only 2 void tests but most importantly no positive results. With the falling infection rates in North Norfolk we have a low percentage rate receiving any positive test results. Our in house COVID team are providing excellent and thorough testing regimes by cleaning down stations, changing PPE frequently and following rules and regulations as well as making each member of staff feel as comfortable as possible. £4,000 was allocated and spent beforehand to buy additional PPE, screens, boxes for flow tests etc. We are confident that if we were to be inspected, all would be ok. All full time staff are tested twice a week and part-time where they have a day off between their working days are also tested twice.  ***Is there any news on receiving the vaccine?*** Yes, roughly 90% of staff have now had their first vaccine. A few have opted out for personal reasons. We also included transport staff, catering staff, therapists etc. in the invites as they are also in contact with a lot of our children.  As a thank you to our testing team, we have purchased the National COVID People’s badge (the people’s medal). This is for people that have gone above and beyond. We thought it would be a nice way of showing our appreciation and thanks for the great job they are doing.  COVID Spending  We will no doubt be audited at some point and MS is procuring what is needed when it is needed. A significant amount is being spent daily to make sure our staff and children are kept safe with no expense spared however, we are mindful of the cost and do our best to purchase PPE at the best price possible. |  |
| 1. THERAPY CENTRE UPDATE | A handout was circulated before the meeting and shows a forecast of the budget in place and actual spending. We have about £85,000 in the capital pot leaving us with roughly £65,000 left to spend. We have managed to come in under budget by approx. £7,000 and all in all have £20,000 left to re-invest in other projects.  We are happy with the end result although we would not use the same architect in the future and would certainly not recommend after numerous failings. Having said that, on the other hand we are satisfied our main contractor. The money in the capital pot we will look to use for updating the ICT across the school inc, laptops, iPads, desktops etc.  MS left at 16.42 hrs. |  |
| 1. DECLARATION OF BUSINESS / PECUNIARY INTERESTS & CONFLICTS OF   INTEREST | None |  |
| 1. HEAD TEACHER ITEMS | Staff Update  The past few weeks have been really hard for many staff, from the anxieties of coming to a workplace without social distancing to the many issues affecting them at home.  We are fortunate that all of our tests have been negative and we have had no further cases since January, other schools have not been so fortunate and three Norfolk special schools had staff testing positive last week.  The Leadership team have continued to support a high number of staff to reassure and give confidence around COVID but also signposting other services for them and their families and granting a number of compassionate and other leaves of absence to help them to manage these pressures.  Teachers & Class leads  No performance issues, all staff have responded well to the changes and are supporting remote learning and continuing the welfare calls to parents as well as face to face learning in school.  Class Leads continue to make welfare call to home, JS took part in an online webinar with an element around welfare calls and how they should present, which in all honesty was quite insulting by telling us what we should be doing with our families. We are more than happy with the way our staff conduct themselves and ask appropriate and well thought out questions and always with an element of empathy where needed. Our staff are particularly good at picking up on signs where they think could be a safeguarding issue and are quick to signpost resources and services available. The preparation and quality of the resources being sent home are second to none. All classes take time to think about each child’s individual needs and what they think they may like to do from home. The feedback from parents gives clear indication that our staff are doing a tremendous job.  We log the details of all these calls and have added a question: Are parents/carers happy with level of remote education provided? Yes/No  This is so we can build evidence should OFSTED visit to review our arrangements.  Teaching Assistants  Three new TAs started on January 4th and with the low number of pupils we have taken advantage to get their training completed quickly, including Norfolk Steps, Moving and Handling and Safeguarding.  Suzanne Mortlock in Dolphins.  Michelle Kerr in Pine.  Isobel Duckmanton in Chestnut.  They are also going through their regular induction briefings.  We have received the resignation of a TA for May half-term who has been accepted onto the TeachFirst programme which begins with 5 weeks of training in the Summer term and then will start class based training in September. She is a bright young person who we expect will thrive given this opportunity. She showed a lot of strength of character whilst working here and we wish her all the best.  [https://www.teachfirst.org.uk/training-programme](about:blank)  Support Staff  No new support staff have joined us, our MSAs have responded well to the change in arrangements and are being flexible in how they work.  Holly has resigned from her position in our admin team, she will initially move to 2 days per week from February 8th and then finish at the Easter holiday, this is so she can support her partner’s business. An advert has gone out for her replacement.  In the interim Leia and Emmie will work additional hours to pick up her roles.  Leadership team  From the last week of term until last week it has been quite tough, closing the last week of term was the right decision and JS is quite sure prevented more staff and pupils from being infected.  It was a worrying time, supporting staff and families, making sure all procedures for reporting and responding to cases were completed and the thought of could we have prevented these cases in any way.  As the cases continued to rise through the holiday, Christmas Day was first day JS did not need to report a case to the Outbreak Management Team and call staff and families and inform them to self-isolate.  Postal tests were also delivered to families during the holiday period.  As cases in the community were rising at a fast pace JS believed parents would be unwilling to send their children back to school for January, sending the survey out to parents and the many phone calls helped us to establish a strong understanding of the likely demand for places so when the belated call to close came we were partly prepared with a priority list of pupils.  Again, closing for the remainder of the week gave us time to engage with staff and families to prepare for the following week and also to plan and practise the COVID testing.  Unlike many other schools we had no complaints from families and received lots of sympathy!  As we are settling into the new routines things are calming down however we are having to catch up on things missed.  All the leadership team have been supporting our staff and families around COVID and the new arrangements as well as their “day jobs”  Catherine has continued to work on new provision in the Fields Centre with the first rebound sessions taking place and sensory processing disorder assessments and training starting this week. All are enjoying the new facility and especially the big window with views out into the green area; and the motion sensor camera is a hit!  Michael has had an enormous amount of Safeguarding work, some of this is triggered by lockdowns but is just an indicator of how many families we have who are struggling. A summary is below.  Annette has not had the start and induction we had planned, JS’s time has unfortunately been diverted to other priorities however, she has been a great support already, she has proven to be capable and confident and is always willing to take on tasks, including COVID testing and some of the tougher conversations with staff and families.  She has got a good understanding of how cover for staff works and has now taken this task from Michael.  She has now started to work on some of her more substantial roles, including Quality of Education, Curriculum Development and supporting Dolphins class in particular and TA appraisal.  She has a day planned with Bec to familiarise herself with our curriculum.  She is shadowing JS for TA induction and annual reviews over the coming weeks with a view to taking these on alone from half-term.  MS has led on the introduction of the testing in school, this has now settled into a good routine but is very labour intensive.  The team are working well together and are able to discuss problems that arise, expressing different views and being accepting of other’s viewpoint in a professional manner. Work has started on introducing them to larger scale tasks like admissions. This is always a good eye opener to really get to know the child and their needs and also the families so that they can show greater understanding in future reviews, CiN meets, etc.  They have all been very proactive in problem solving and showing initiative in dealing with situations as they arise.  JS has begun the work of preparing the school leadership team for the future, partly through sharing some of the ways he approaches tasks with them but also sharing roles JS has that they have not previously been involved in. This week included the admissions process and tribunals.  JS has started work on the Headship qualification with those who have expressed an interest. Annette has already enrolled and we are supporting her with this by building her evidence. Michael is also keen to enrol and we fully support him too and are in the motion of finding the right qualification to enrol on.  Pupils  We now have nearly 60 pupils in school, again they have coped well with the changes and the sight of staff wearing face coverings.  JS shared a statement from our website with all families about our “remote education” and made it very clear to families this is an offer and if it was proving difficult to do then feel free to adapt or drop things.  Many families are struggling to juggle meeting the needs of our pupils and the learning of peers and there seems to be a higher proportion struggling than in April.  For many pupils online learning is not appropriate, the majority is practical or paper based activities and some online work which is shared with families every week. Many classes are joining online with Zoom, again this this ranges from actual lessons, stories, songs, physical exercises or just chances to chat with friends and say hello.  New Pupils and Admissions  There will be only 4 leavers in July 2021 and two of these places have already been filled.  JS had an admissions meeting on Friday 29th January with 48 sets of papers and only two places available. Both places have now been filled, one to a family with a sibling already at the school and a child from the Norwich area where Mum struggled to find anywhere that would take a child with his needs.  Unfortunately, this left 46 unhappy families and JS has been made aware that there are 3 tribunals taking place so things could change again.  Safeguarding from Michael  Summary of cases:  Looked after Children (LAC) – 4.  Three are currently attending school and one the carers decided to not send the child in. The Independent Reviewing Officer is questioning this non-attendance so Supervising Social Worker (for foster carer) and Social Worker (for child) are meeting to review this decision not to send him in. If they change their mind we will offer a place and had initially planned for this.  Child in Need (CIN) – 27 We have continued to work productively with our partner agencies to close three cases since last Governor’s report and in the same time period have added two new students to CIN.  Family Support Plan (FSP) – One referral submitted, awaiting contact from Partner Focus Officer who will set up the plan but it will then be our responsibility to chair all future meetings.  Social Work assessments – three ongoing assessments that we have asked for in relation to families where we feel that social work input is required. All three highly likely to result in us having 3 additional Children in Need.  Child Protection (CP) - One ongoing child protection case (category; sexual abuse). JS has joined the multi-disciplinary team involved in this case for regular meetings, sharing of information and submitting regular reports to Children’s Services.  Also, as we are uniquely placed by having an established relationship with the parents we have been supporting the parents with the process and acting as a buffer to help prevent parents being overwhelmed by the amount of other professionals involved which includes 2 Social Workers, OT, Epilepsy nurse, Eating Disorder clinic, Respite provision, Short Breaks, Agency carers, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group.  Operation Encompass – One call (‘common domestic’) since last Governor’s report. Not considered to be an ongoing issue.  Other pressures - COVID continuing to increase workload for safeguarding as extra contact is required to assess safety of students who we no longer see. The majority of issues are raised by class leads from weekly contacts with home. On the plus side JS is happy as there is clear evidence from the content of the alerts from class leads that they understand their safeguarding roles/responsibilities and they are putting into action the aspects of safeguarding that we cover when we do our internal safeguarding training/briefings.  We are jointly leading on the establishing of a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Safeguarding Network for the Cromer, Wells and Sheringham area. All schools, whether mainstream or special, in this area have been invited to join a local group where we will discuss local themes, address training gaps, establish supportive relationships for DSL’s, share information and develop relationships with key partners e.g. Police, Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CADS), social workers etc.  MS attended a workshop on Domestic Abuse (DA) as part of a national campaign where victims can go into pharmacies and use a code word “Ask for Ani” (Ani is an acronym for ‘Action Needed Immediately’) and be immediately taken to a safe place within the pharmacy where police can be contacted. The idea is to extend to other workplaces. As 1 in 4 women are affected by DA it is highly likely that we will have many past, present and unfortunately future victims within our workforce. There is a two day (free) training course to become a ‘Domestic Abuse Change Champion’ which JS has expressed an interest in but Norfolk do not have any current dates for this training.  Review of COVID Arrangements  During the first week of term we decided the four-day week was the best way to stop the mixing off staff across classes, largely by giving Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time to class leads on the Monday and so not needing an HLTA to lead in their class.  We re-staffed many classes to prevent swaps and then re-assigned staff to new classes for the four days.  One class had a number of absences last week, we decided if this gets to a point we would need to move a member of staff to that class then we would reduce the number of pupils instead and so avoid needing to replace staff.  Staff are wearing face coverings around the school when not directly working with pupils and the testing is adding an extra layer of re-assurance to staff.  Many staff have already had their first vaccine doses, there is a clear message that this changes none of our protective measures. We were very quick as a school to act fast and produce the whole school list of staff details so that they could book their vaccine quickly which most did over the first weekend.  Though we are asking staff to try and book them in their own time due to the difficulty of us managing their absence, we are lucky that those getting vaccinations this week will have their second doses in the Easter holidays. For some later vaccinations we may need to be a little more flexible around this.  The vast majority have taken up the offer.  We chose to include all our transport staff in the vaccinations which earned us a thank you from Passenger Transport Unit at NCC!  We have no plan to increase numbers of pupils before half-term unless it is absolutely essential to support the family. Our next official review date is 22nd February. We will make our own review nearer half term but at the moment infection rates are still considerably higher than last Spring and Summer and so will be very cautious.  COVID catch-up funds  We 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.  Due to the costs of providing testing and remote education we are now using these funds to for these activities.  Money should be paid to us for the testing, possibly as much as £12,000 for the first half term.  Pupils not attending who are entitled to FSM are receiving vouchers through the national scheme. |  |
| 1. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN | The communication audit is one of the first key areas which Iwona has been working hard on although her time has been diverted away from that due to the class pressures and resources being sent home. Saying this, Iwona has managed to produce a booklet for new staff detailing the key areas of communication inc SALT and other methods of communication. She has also delivered a briefing to all new staff too.  Catherine is heavily involved with Therapy Centre work; it’s been a slower start than expected due to the H&S aspects attached to it. Her priority has been to get the rebound element up and running for which she has succeeded and we now have children in the facility on a regular basis. She has also been working on the way we make referrals and been implementing staff training sessions. |  |
| 1. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS | None |  |
| 1. CHAIR ITEMS | A brief discussion within the meeting about the LA Governor and Vice Chair position. Before leaving, JF did put forward a potential candidate which was explored further by ST but the response he received was not very positive so we shall look to hopefully appoint someone in-house where we have already had interest from one member. ST will make contact to discuss the position further and give information about the role.  In regards to the Vice Chair position, we have interest from one member of the Governing Board which will be discussed in more depth.  SFVS  The LA and Audit Committee have responded in regards to the submission made and have awarded us with a green RAG rating for the year. |  |
| 1. CLERK ITEMS | Next meeting 24th March 2021 @4pm (Face to Face or Zoom tbc). |  |
| 1. AOB |  |  |

**Meeting closed 17.41 hrs.**

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