

Sheringham Woodfields School
Full Governing Body Minutes
24.03.2021 @4pm (Zoom meeting)

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

Item	Minutes	Action Points
1. APOLOGIES	None	
2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS	Nothing to declare.	
3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING	Minutes approved by all present and will be signed by the Chair. Proposed by SD, Seconded by JM. Confidential minutes Proposed by SD, Seconded by JM .	
4. MATTERS ARISING	None	

5. FINANCE & PERSONNEL

(MS GAVE COMMENTARY)

Year End Projection:

Handouts were circulated before the meeting and MS gave a projection of where we are in terms of the Year-End Balance. Everything has been populated at best guess in terms of what we are expecting to see at the end of the year. The most important thing relates to the bottom figure and once we take our surplus of £197,000 which is what we have budgeted for, with all the extra expenditure then we think there will be an additional £17,000 on top of the £197,000. We can't budget for this at the moment but we are expecting to see the Year End figure surplus being closer to £220,000. This is within our allowed 8% and gives us a bit of flexibility in terms of some of the underspend on budgets this year and we will need to carry forward things such as the COVID catch up funding, and other small bits and pieces. There's an ongoing issue with our payroll provider at the moment, not having paid accrued holiday pay for supply or casual staff that have no contract with us. The agreement was their holiday pay would be monthly as they go along and work but that hasn't been happening. So there's a wage bill of about £3,000 there but at some point we'll need to define. But at the moment with that, it's comfortable. So this concludes the Year End Projection which Vicki Hatch went through in a finance meeting earlier this month with ST, JS and MS.

The FGB had no questions.

Summary Budget:

The Income section on the handout shows our income for the year at approximately £3,250,000. The income remains static in years 2 and 3, we're only gaining a little bit more in years 2, and 3 because we are expecting to make small gains in our lettings Income. It's not a great place to be but we have no say at the moment over the money we get per child.

So when will we be doing Revision 1? This will take place in the Summer term and will need to be with the local authority by the end of July. So looking at income, E01 – E07 show some big issues, looking at the teacher and support staff line in particular, these show some significant jumps as well as the teaching assistant and admin staff line. The only place we make a saving is on the premises line. So instead of going up that's gone down and starts to grow again with pay rises and that's because of the changes we propose as Simon's plans for Christmas is to retire and going forward the plan is to see more site hours for less money under a new structure.

The salary figures in years 1, 2, and 3 include public sector pay awards of approximately 2% on each line. There is obviously a lot of contention over where that will actually happen and it is probably safe to say that it's unlikely to see a pay award in year 1 but we'll get a saving

back at some point, but it would be quite reckless at the moment to assume years 2 and 3 would have no pay rise for the public sector. This is very much the worst case scenario but what we have to budget for. All the other costs are pretty much insignificant compared to the hefty sums we're looking at in E01-E07.

Our expenditure is going up significantly each year whereas our income is not going up and year 1 to year 3 figures show there is a £120,000 jump and no income to offset that. The year 1 budget is very healthy and the previously mentioned £197,000 is the worst case scenario in terms of service which is expected to be more, which leaves us a comfortable surplus to take us into year 2 but then we eat away at it quite heavily in year 2 and 3 and will enter a deficit position at this point in time.

The work MS is doing on the budget for revision 1 will increase that deficit in year 3, but will hopefully keep the deficit out of year two. The leadership team and school will need to be cautious as there are pockets of the school where additional staffing is going to be needed, and we are running light at the moment where we have just not replaced. But things like pupil premium and PE primary are going to be used in different ways in the future to try and plug some of this gap. Unfortunately, there is no more money available at the moment, there is a funding review taking place but this may not make any foreseeable changes.

Detailed Budget:

As shown in the handout, I06 shows that we sell Paul Guymer out each year in terms of a trading service and this shows some quite healthy figures which is in excess of his 50% salary costs and we keep him for 50% so that's a quite a positive arrangement.

We have S2S income at £22,000, which is offsetting Rebecca Tate's wage. ***What do those two people do for the school?*** Paul Guymer is the ICT Manager and Rebecca Tate is the S2S Coordinator for our school and this is where mainstream schools make referrals to a central service and then the referrals are discharged to different special schools.

Supplies staff costs have been frozen at the moment, we would usually see a rise on that so that's going to be a pressure point in terms of monitoring and then really the only other matter for consideration is E19 which is where all our educational equipment materials would come from and anything curriculum learning related. There looks to be a lot in there but actually, if you strip pupil premium out, which is £30,000 and therapy costs, which are committed to run the centre on the extra funding we've got for the children then there isn't a lot in there just lots of little bits. These have been streamlined this year as much as possible but they will be difficult budgets to maintain.

Going back to the summary, we have a balanced budget that will meet all the necessary requirements for the local authority but like every school there are in year overspends but we sit comfortably compared to most.

The original budget was proposed and agreed by all present. ST to sign.

Capital Budget:

So a few months ago MS was probably a little bit brave to say there'd be a surplus left on the build and that it would come in on time, but it did! There is a surplus of £27,600 therefore coming in under budget which is really good. This money has already been earmarked for future projects.

We expect to get about £7,000 in from the government again for capital this year. It's a drop in the ocean compared to what we need but actually there is furniture across the school looking very tired and in need of replacing.

The capital memo using the budget information, gives some statistics of what's been spent percentage wise. Basically a snapshot of the school.

Services 4 Schools:

The handout circulated shows everything that has been paid for. We have no choice in any of these but actually, you have to have decide you're moving away from something well before you know what the cost is from the counties provision, and the majority of it is fine, and the majority of it is sensible. But the one that's now starting to cause a little concern is HR and our HR package is at £17,300 which excludes payroll. Payroll is a separate service which we could buy in separately if we wish to take our HR contract administration elsewhere. It's the one single largest expense we have outside of wages on a specific item. The next would be electric, gas and our photocopying contract. Our energy contracts are good in terms of what's available on the market so may see no change. So HR will be the next one this year that we look at in terms of demonstrating more value for money and their worth to us.

Who is it with at the moment? Educator Solutions.

Some really deep analysis of what we would get elsewhere will be done in terms of value and the competency of other organisations delivering the same or better at a more cost effective price. Ian Cooper is the service lead and conversations are already in hand.

BMP Pot Update:

On the year end projections, we had some additional funding come in, which are budgeted for and we have moved £32,000 into a savings pot with the local authority. So that savings pot called the BMP pot will have £50,000 exactly in it at the close of this financial year, £50,000 that can be drawn on for any site improvements, one offs, or exceptional costs around the site, assets, buildings grounds etc. So that's off the budget and that's £50,000 that can be used to tighten the strings in the budget at any point to make things look better if need be.

Pre-Audit Questionnaire:

In the new financial pre audit which takes place every five years, a submission has been made that will now be virtually looked at by the auditing team on the week beginning the 19th. It looks like it could be quite a heavy week with what they require. We will probably need some form of Governor feedback on the Friday but they'll confirm on the Monday. We are in good shape though, there's nothing on this that can't be answered.

They will only be reviewing information from the last 12 months. We are not expecting them to find any major issues.

Policies:

All policies for renewal or in need of updating were circulated before the meeting.

A few points were raised in terms of errors found within the policies and are detailed below:

In the Data Protection Policy, it talks about the new legislation due to come into force in 2018 and it obviously is now in force. These two sentences are to be removed.

Who's responsibility is it to make the changes? Any raised errors or changes to be made are given to Leia in the office to update the policies.

In the Data Protection Policy where it talks about the file storage. **Where in the school are they kept?** Non-pupil records are stored in one of 607 archive boxes we now have upstairs in the loft, a lockable loft, with only three people who have access to it. Each box has got an index on the top and is numbered.

	<p>Another point raised was within the Data Protection Policy was that it talks about the Business Manager (MS) checks annually that they comply with this policy. How do we know MS has done that? The services of a company called the DPO centre are purchased and they come in annually and do an audit with us and then they leave us with an action plan.</p> <p>A question was raised about the exclusion policy, where governors would feel under equipped to deal with handling such a delicate matter if it were to arise. Fortunately, there has never been a case where we have excluded a pupil and hopefully never will be. If such a case was to arise then normal protocol would be to seek guidance through Governor Services who would ask fellow school governing bodies who have lots of experience to sit on the exclusions panel.</p>	
<p>6. THERAPY CENTRE UPDATE</p>	<p>All up and running nicely. There was an issue with the heating which has been resolved under warranty and a few snagging issues are currently being resolved, one being the transfer of sound between the two conference rooms which builders are looking in to.</p> <p>Matt left at 17.00 hrs.</p>	
<p>7. DECLARATION OF BUSINESS / PECUNIARY INTERESTS & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST</p>	<p>None</p>	
<p>8. HEAD TEACHER ITEMS</p>	<p>Staff Update:</p> <p>It continues to be a challenging term for staff, we have also had to change staffing in many classes to reduce mixing and make bubbles more secure.</p> <p>The last of these changes will be for April 12th and with a few exceptions all staff have responded well and understand the need for them.</p>	

What has been clear more recently is several classes saying they feel they need more staff in class, sadly this is not possible due to budget constraints and classes are returning to the levels they had in September.

I am not sure if this is a combination of pupils coming back to school after many disruptions and struggling with the demands and expectations of school as well as staff having got used to having full teams of staff with lower number of pupils.

There are three staff pregnant, at the moment we are unaware if they will be asking to be removed from roles where social distancing is not possible and therefore not being able to work in classes as current guidance for third trimester recommends.

We are also expecting this guidance to be changed soon.

Teachers & Class leads:

No performance issues with staff.

We will return to all our usual monitoring of plans, work files etc. after Easter. JS will be doing this with Annette as part of her induction before she takes over this role.

Annette and JS are supporting Tara in her first term, all her work has been of a high standard.

Nikki Thornton, class lead from Ash is planning to return from maternity on 19th July and has made a flex request to reduce her number of working days.

Cate Sadler-Barker has completed her Norfolk Steps tutor training and will be able to support Vicki and Grace in providing training.

By the date of this meeting JS will have had all of the well-being meets with class leads, we discuss:

- Workload.
- Any pressures within their class team.
- Concerns about their pupils.
- How has communication been, are they being informed in a timely manner.
- Anything else we can help with.

Teaching Assistants:

2 resignations this term -

- Theresa Gilly
- Drew Playford

Support Staff:

No new support staff have joined us.

Holly has resigned from her position and will finish work at the Easter holiday, we are recruiting for a replacement.

In the interim Leia and Emmie will work additional hours to pick up her roles and we will be advertising for a full time replacement.

We are planning to hold Caretaker interviews on 24th March

Leadership team:

Nic Stewart will be returning from maternity leave on July 12th for two days per week, Monday and Tuesday.

We will be meeting to refine her job description to reflect the changes in leadership roles since last year but it will be very much built around MSI teaching and EHCP monitoring. **Will two days be enough?** Yes, with some of her workload being re-directed to other members of the LT for e.g. a large portion of Safeguarding has been taken on by Michael which gives her more time to concentrate on her allocated role within the two days.

Catherine has continued to work on new provision in the Fields Centre, the rebound timetable is slowly building given the constraints of Covid precautions.

The Sensory qualified OT, Mary Hamilton has started the first of her 15 days we have contracted her for.

She is providing a mix of:

- Staff training
- Individual pupil assessments which involves parents and the production of a sensory enrichment plan for us to use.
- Working in selected classes to review their provision and offer ideas to meet sensory needs within the class as an everyday experience.

Catherine will be providing a more detailed report with photos for our next meeting.

Michael continues to have enormous amount of Safeguarding work, some of this is triggered by lockdowns but is just an indicator of how many families we have who struggle.

Michael has completed his Norfolk Steps tutor training and will now be able to support Grace and Vicki in delivering our training and providing ongoing support and guidance to classes.

Michael will be enrolling on an NPQH starting in September.

Annette has settled well into school. She has led on many of the staff changes we have had to make which has enabled her to spend time with many staff to develop relationships.

After Easter she will be returning to the planned induction programme of shadowing me do all the monitoring of teacher's standards.

She has already started an NPQH and I know has included some of you in her recent project.

Matthew continues to lead on the testing in school, this will now be wound down as we move to home testing for all staff, however, we will still maintain the ability to test visitors.

This will free his time to work on replacing Holly and our future plans for the site team.

Pupils:

No complaints from parents. All pupils were offered a school place from March 9th, 9 have not taken these places due to shielding or other health issues in the home.

We anticipate all will return to school after Easter.

New Pupils and Admissions:

We have confirmed the four new pupils joining us in September.

A tribunal has taken place which went well and two further ones are to take place in the summer term. A further one was cancelled as the child has been offered a place in another special school. If we are directed to take any of these children it will put huge pressure on class sizes.

As the number of these are only likely to increase this will likely be a growing part of my role this year and intend to start including the rest of the team in the process.

Safeguarding from Michael:

Updated information for Governors meeting on 24th March 2021;

Looked after children (LAC) – 4 students.

All four students have returned to school, all up to date with their LAC & PEP meetings, no outstanding issues.

For one of our LAC students we have offered to host contact visits in school to maintain familial contact with his birth Father.

Child in Need (CIN) – 29 students.

We have added two further students to our CIN group since January. These were proactive referrals initiated by school to provide the families in question with a social worker and additional support to prevent the families going into crisis at a future date should their needs go unrecognised/unsupported.

Family Support Plan (FSP) – 1 student
More are in the process of being organised.
This FSP is generating a lot of staff time and has uncovered ‘hidden’ need including a serious safeguarding risk to the children from a family member with historical child abuse convictions.

This safeguarding risk was not known within the family and therefore our exposure of the threat has led to some difficult conversations with the family (and within the family) in which they have to make some big changes to the way they live but ultimately by undertaking this work we have enabled protective measures to keep two young children safe.

Social Work

Two ongoing assessments that we have generated in response to identified need. We are confident that both will result in the appointment of social workers for these families and a likelihood that the children will become CIN.

Child Protection (CP) - 1 student

Ongoing case (category; sexual abuse). We continue to have regular meetings with the multi-disciplinary team (social workers x 2, OT, Epilepsy nurse, Eating Disorder clinic, Respite provision, Short Breaks, agency carers, Police and Clinical Care Commissioning Group) involved in this case and we monitor the student’s wellbeing in school daily.

We report any concerns to social workers and we maintain supportive relationships with the parents whilst they navigate this incredibly complex case.

As said previously we are uniquely placed by having an established relationship with the parents.

This has enabled us to skilfully navigate between representing the concerns of all the professionals and maintaining the student’s safety whilst acting in an advocacy and supportive role for the parents.

Operation Encompass – No calls since last Governors meeting.

Other –

Anecdotally aware from families of the returning children that there are some underlying concerns that we hope will, in the majority of cases, be resolved by the return to the regular and predictable routines of school. For those other families where more support will be needed we are in contact and monitoring and ready to support as required.

We are supporting two families who need their children to move into residential care. Both are quite pressing and the complexities of the children's needs are putting an immense strain on the families who both are at risk of going into crisis/family breakdown.

Once again our unique position affords us the ability to support families with challenging the Local Authority to address the needs of these children while at the same time offering support to our professional colleagues by helping the families to understand the scarcity of available provision and the constraints that the Local Authority has to work within.

In one case we are hopeful of a move before the end of the Summer Term, in the other it is very difficult to predict what will happen and my instinct is that the LA/Children's Services will oppose the request but we remain supportive of the family's decision and so will continue to support and advocate for them.

JS previously shared information about setting up a Designated Safeguarding Lead Network for all schools (SEN and mainstream) in North Norfolk which JS did in partnership with the Head at Alderman Peel School in Wells.

Twenty schools have joined the network and we had our first meeting on 10th Feb.

JS is the Chair of the group which adds to workload but also enhances our schools profile and reputation, and in terms of improving safeguarding for children across North Norfolk it has been a really positive start with lots of encouraging feedback and ideas for training, guest speakers, partnership working etc.

We plan to meet 6 weekly and although we have agreed our 'principles' and our 'aims and objectives' we will develop and refine our purpose in response to emerging need.

Review of Covid Arrangements:

The four day week has been really useful in supporting staff this term, many have said this has given them quality time to plan for learning as well as being able to offer the much needed support to families.

At the moment we have no staff mixing across classes, however with opening 5 days per week after Easter there will inevitably be some mixing, however, we have worked hard to keep this to a minimum.

Staff will continue to wear face coverings around the school when not directly working with pupils and the home testing will hopefully be an additional layer of protection.

Many staff will have had their second vaccine by the time we return after Easter.

Future Plans:

As a leadership team we have had a range of discussions about leading on a project to provide residential provision.

We have had a number of pupils who have needed to leave our school to go to residential schools as their home situation becomes unsafe and will undoubtedly have more in the future.

There are many ways of doing this and it will be a focus from September to look at the feasibility of this.

Though the LA knows there is huge need for this although there seems to be no appetite or capacity to do anything, our feeling is it may be we need to take a similar approach to us offering to increase school places by building the Fields Centre and offering them a workable proposition which they just need to fund.

9. SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT
PLAN (SIP)

School Improvement Updates March 2021:

1. All pupils will be supported to communicate effectively in school and in the home.

Identification of needs of new pupils

(i) SALT observation of all new pupils to lead to writing of communication plans for classes. Follow up will include advice and support to staff in implementing the plans.

(ii) Identify existing pupils who would benefit from using an iPad for communication. SALT/Iwona met 4 class leads to assess pupils.

Trial iPads with Proloquo2go software given to 4 pupils.

See: <https://www.assistiveware.com/products/proloquo2go>

To review success in 2nd half of summer term and if successful make applications to Access Through Technology for school/home iPads.

Identification of support required by family unit and providing support

(i) Core vocabulary symbol mats shared with families of pupils using symbols in school.

To seek feedback from parents on their usefulness and any similar resources we can support with.

(ii) Body sign videos produced and shared with Elm and Rowan parents.

(iii) Key rings with key symbols sent to parents of pupils in Dolphins class.

(iv) Communication information has been sent in school newsletter.

(v) PDF communication mats

Identify the needs of class based staff

(i) Total communication booklet produced for new TAs and introduced as part of their induction programme. This has also been shared with other staff.

(ii) Augmentative and Assistive communication training delivered

- (iii) Blanks level training (see separate document)
- (iv) Body Signs training for Elm and Rowan
- (v) Signalong workshop with 2 classes (Dolphins and Shells)
- (vi) Signalong workshop with new staff
- (vii) PECS and using symbols with 2 classes (Dolphins and Shells)
- (viii) Updated symbol key rings and shared with classes and transport staff
- (ix) core vocabulary symbol mats in all classes
- (x) Hydrotherapy pool: symbols displayed for key objects around the room.

Intervention and support for individuals

- (i) attention Autism workshop for 4 classes

See <https://best-practice.middletonautism.com/approaches-of-intervention/attention-autism/>

2. To ensure the new therapy centre is achieving its potential in improving current provision as well as introducing new ones.

- (i) SI Level 1 training delivered to 30 staff on Sept PD days.

January 15th SI Level 2 delivered to 11 staff identified who are best placed to meet current and future need of classes.

- (ii) 18 staff complete Rebound Level 2 training on Oct PD days

(iii) 2 reviews completed with SI therapist to look at needs of our pupils and plan the 15 days provision for the year.

	<p>(iv) Neen and Catherine completed work on ensuring health and safety plans were in place for all equipment including regular condition checks of equipment.</p> <p>(v) Staff referral form created to support identifying and prioritising provision as well as booking rooms.</p> <p>(vi) First class based work undertaken by OT in Ash, Chestnut and Sycamore which included in class support to identify difficulties in the environment as well as strategies that can be used to support the pupils within the class and with non-specialist equipment.</p> <p>Classes then remained after school for further training around their pupils.</p> <p>(vii) 1 individual assessment and report completed for a child in Dolphins class with three follow up clinics. One of which included a parent.</p> <p>3. Improve assessment reporting to better inform parents of what a child has experienced, achieved and mastered in a year.</p> <p>The nature of the raw data is proving difficult to present in the style JS wished so we are seeking advice from Jarrold training as to whether what we want is actually feasible.</p> <p>4. Develop a robust system of TA appraisal to recognise their strengths and to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding.</p> <p>(i) James and Annette met to share ideas and review examples of appraisal documents, agreed a clear description for staff on what the process is for and built in self-review at half termly intervals.</p> <p>(ii) Annette/Emmie are producing a draft template to circulate with TAs for feedback.</p> <p>(iii) We are updating the TA skills and knowledge matrix which will support them to identify their strengths and gaps.</p>	
10. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS	2 confidential items captured in a separate document.	

11. CHAIR ITEMS	AD has kindly volunteered to step up and take on the role as Vice Chair. Proposed and the FGB all in favour. NP to update records on Governors Hub.	Actioned 26.03.2021
12. CLERK ITEMS	DLL has agreed to change her role to become an LA appointed Governor. NP to update records on Governor Hub. Next meeting 19 th May 2021 @4pm (Face to Face or Zoom tbc).	Actioned 26.03.2021
13. AOB	Sheringham Academy Trust has joined a new multi academy trust called Synergy. Synergy Multi-Academy Trust comprises of ten Norfolk schools serving children between the ages of 2 and 18. We are not sure what impact this will have on us as a school but we wait for the stakeholder questionnaire.	

Meeting closed 18.07 hrs.

SIGNED..... Date.....