

Sheringham Woodfields School
Full Governing Body Minutes
08.12.2021 – Zoom

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

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) Daphne Lucas-Lee (DLL)	
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 JM, Seconded by AD.	
4. MATTERS ARISING	None	

<p>5. DECLARATION OF BUSINESS / PECUNIARY INTERESTS & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST</p>	<p>None</p>	
<p>6. FINANCE & PERSONNEL</p> <p>(MS GAVE COMMENTARY)</p>	<p><u>Budget Revision 2 Summary</u></p> <p>This has been quite a tricky budget to compile, the headline incoming figure is £97,000 and we've got £64,000 going out of this revision. I01-I03 reflect changes that have actually occurred in an around school funding that we have received from tribunal admissions, plan submissions etc. The £4,800 on I02 is the additional 16-19 bursary that we have received. Pupil premium has seen an increase and additional funding for catering along with various payments for education grants. I18c shows our Covid catch up of £21,053 and I18d reflects the Covid funding which has been increased accordingly and also for the PE grant and FSM's. These are all routine and pretty standard changes.</p> <p>In Yr's 2&3, MS has done a piece of work around Ash class which we know will be needed for the next academic year. This money is sitting in I03 in Year 2022/23, the figure drops in Year 2023/24. The drop is because Ash class will no longer be in existence as it is and we will not require the additional money although we will still have staffing in the expenditure as they will be used elsewhere. <i>Is this because they are a Sixth Form class? Yes, 3 of the 4 pupils will be of leaving age.</i></p> <p>In terms of staffing, E01 includes SLT where changes to the budget have been recorded and teaching staff has seen a small reduction this year due to maternity leave and sickness pay. In Year's 2&3 the teaching line does however show a significant increase as teachers reach the top of their scale and also where SLT also reach the top of their scales. These are large increases that we need to be mindful of. The same goes for marked increases through E03 to E07. These increases in Years 2&3 are not funded in any way. We are hoping that the funding consultation for special schools will go through to help. E12 includes changes to the site and reflects the final tribunal costs which relate to Birch class. Other significant costs include learning resources totalling £54,000, the cost of catering has steadily increased due to a rise in costs and any child over 16 that was eligible for FSM's is no longer funded. In our case, we have 6 children that are eligible and at £2.30 a child every day for 190 days, this mounts up considerably. E27/28 shows a slight increase due to mediation in regards to the Charity Shop. This is our 3-year budget plan which outlines our income and expenditure as accurately as possible. The only major change to this would be growing the school which is on the horizon.</p> <p>The Capital pot is just shy of £60,000, once we've paid the retention figure to the builders this will fund the toilet renovation/extension that is needed. This will look to be completed next summer where MS will oversee and manage the site team to completion.</p> <p>Budget proposed and approved by AD and seconded by AW.</p>	

Staff Incident Reporting

Our current method for filing a report is quite long winded. If a staff member is physically or mentally hurt or is taken to hospital, we encourage them to fill out a form, same goes for a child. We use this form in its correct entirety but it does seem to flag up a follow up H&S visit due to the high volume of forms created. ***Is this a negative on our behalf? No, we use this form correctly and when needed as opposed to schools that simply do not use and report to the LA. So we are high, but true.*** We do just need to be careful when reporting such things that language and context are accurate as information can be misconstrued easily. MS is doing a piece of work around this and discussing it with the behaviour team so that forms are completed by teachers/ta's etc. in an informative correct manner. ***Jake, how do you and your fellow members of staff feel about reporting? We are generally quite good on the whole at accessing the necessary forms online and completing them usually at the end of the day. Staff are happy with the current forms that have been streamlined recently for easier completion and is probably why we have a high percentage of forms being completed due to ease of use.***

Site Team Update

We have recently appointed a new Site Manager (Mark) who started on 1st November. We also have a new Assistant Site Manager to fill the newly formed post (Nick) who starts on 20th December. Mark has been shadowing Simon these last few weeks and is gaining confidence and starting to run things on his own. Nick will also spend a lot of the Christmas holiday shadowing Simon to bring him up to speed and will be delivered training like Mark, around the pool handling/boiler etc. It is mandatory that they both complete the pool handling training as part of their probations. Mark has also undertaken his bus assessment and scaffold training which Nick will also complete in due course. ***Does Nick come from a school background? No, he is coming from Greater Anglia although he is a foster carer of children with special needs.*** It will inevitably look very different in January; we didn't rush either appointments but they have tough boots to fill so to speak but on paper it should work very well. A new site cleaner has also been appointed which will bring relief to the current cleaners and Marie and James have had their hours tweaked to compensate this change and offer better coverage throughout the school day.

	<p><u>Policies</u></p> <p>All policies were circulated before the meeting. In regards to the Behaviour policy, <i>should there be a reference to parents? Yes, all parents upon joining the school are given a copy of the policy so that they are aware of everything we as a school should be doing and complying with as well as what they need to be aware of and comply to.</i> The absence and Management policy merely needs some punctuation tweaking and the timescale in which a staff absence is recorded needs to met daily. Covid is not mentioned in the policy as this does not affect a member of staff and this is what we have been advised. P6 the definition of low level concerns was raised and later in the document it does explain in more detail. Clarification will be made more clear. Safeguarding policy just has some wording to change. <i>Are the links up to date? Some are regularly used and others are checked through various means.</i> All policies proposed by AW and seconded by JM.</p> <p>MS left @17.00hrs.</p>	
<p>7. HEAD TEACHER ITEMS</p>	<p><u>New Pupils</u></p> <p>The pupil mentioned in the last report who has been unable to attend school is still unwell and parents have taken the decision to home educate again. An annual review will be held in January where parents will have to demonstrate they can meet her needs to the EHCP coordinator. This will create a space for us and we have 3 currently on our admissions list, one being a tribunal case where that pupil would be most suitable.</p> <p><u>Staff Update</u></p> <p>Staff absence has been a real challenge and staff have done a fantastic job in covering for each other and being flexible with their plans. We have been fortunate in having many pupils absent too which has reduced some of the pressure.</p> <p>The majority of the absences are not Covid related but just the particularly bad colds doing the rounds as well as a high number of leave of absence requests for medical appointments.</p> <p>Several staff have also had bad reactions to their Covid-19 booster vaccinations.</p>	

Updated Covid-19 advice for pregnant staff are going to be very challenging, up to 28 weeks staff are not allowed to be in classes where pupils are unable to communicate if they have Covid-19 symptoms. This severely limits where we can place pregnant staff and since the advice was issued have already had to move one TA.

Teachers & Class leads

Alex Allen has confirmed she will be returning from maternity in late summer and so I have informed Tara Todd in Willow class that her contract will be ending, we are giving her as much notice as possible as she will need to find a job elsewhere.

Vicki Gotts continues her apprenticeship, which will lead to her achieving qualified teacher Status with Nic as her mentor.

She will have a placement in a primary school for the first spring half term, we have made plans so this will be covered with existing school staff but will reduce the amount of rebound therapy for the 5 weeks as Neen takes on this role. Vicki has done a great job and will be able to smoothly handover to Neen in January.

Teaching Assistants

We have taken on a number of new TAs as well as some offering just supply.

Joanne Parker works two days per week in Chestnut class
Chelsea Pegg in Oak class
Sarah Hall in Beech class

Supply TAs are:
Kelly Spanton
Roxanne Demmen
Sue Saunders

Sam Gould (Ash class) will be leaving us at the end of term to take up a role at the new special school in Fakenham.

Haley Griggs left in November to take up a job at Sidestrand Hall School which helps her child care issues as she her child attends this school.

MSAs

Bethany Holmes-Redgrave has already started and is getting on really well.

Site team

Our new site manager Mark Byers has started and is working alongside Simon until the end of term when he retires.

We have appointed an assistant site manager, Nick Russell starting 20th December.

We have also appointed a new cleaner, Lin Pateman

Office/Admin team

Rebecca Woodhouse started in November and is already providing great support to the SLT and is accurate and reliable in her work. She will help to alleviate some of MS's workload.

Leadership team

Though Covid-19 and covering staff is taking up considerable amounts of our time in the evenings and at the weekend, we continue to work on our areas of responsibility. We will be implementing a Covid rota so it is equally shared amongst the full-time SLT.

We have continued with self-evaluations which will help us to identify areas for improvement but also prepare us for our next OFSTED.

New Pupils and Admissions

There will be only 9 leavers in July 2022 and we have given one place to a local year 6 child who will not be able to manage in a secondary school.

We are still waiting for the outcome of a tribunal and have 2 more coming in the New Year.

Both are appropriate for us but as you are all aware there is no space.

My next admissions meet is February 4th, JS intends to give places to three local children with significant needs and leave the remaining ones until the summer to absorb possible tribunal cases.

The rest of the leadership team have begun to join me in reviewing the pupils' paperwork to help them get a picture of the pupils to join us in the future.

Review of Covid Arrangements

Our decisions to keep staff and pupils off when there are cases in the home have been successful in preventing the spread of Covid-19.

We have had a lot of goodwill in this area from parents who are supportive of our approach.

What is becoming more and more difficult is the daily questions as to whether a child has symptoms or not. Not one child we have sent home has actually had covid-19 but we continue to be cautious.

The LAMP (saliva) test has been a huge bonus as we get the results back so quickly it helps identify cases quickly or give reassurance and reduces anxiety as staff and pupils do not need to wait long for the result. This has proved to be very successful so far and offers much reassurance.

We await further advice from the DfE in light of the new omicron strain.

School Expansion Update

MS and JS met with various LA officers in October and were given the impression they were less than supportive of the plans, JS followed the meet up later to clarify and have been given reassurance that they support our plans for the expansion but are not currently looking at residential spaces.

We are unaware of how the negotiations are going regarding purchasing the land but the LA has started the process to remove it from playing field status so it can be built on.

MS and JS also met with NPS on December 9th to look at the site and begin discussions, however, our preference is to manage the project ourselves with other providers as we feel it will be more cost efficient and better quality.

Safeguarding Update from Michael

Looked After Children – No change, still 4 students. All four students up to date with their Looked After Child (LAC) & Personal Education Plans (PEP) meetings. One LAC student due to move home in January as they transfer from Children’s to Adult Services but he can continue to attend our school.

Child In Need – 18 students. Some cases closed recently but new referrals underway.

One significant case worth highlighting - social worker wanted to end the child’s CIN status but we disagreed and now have had confirmation that children’s services agree with our professional challenge and will not be closing the case.

EHAP’s (Early Help Assessments & Plans) – 5 families. Increase of one since previous report. We hold lead practitioner responsibility for four of these families which creates a considerable workload organising, chairing meetings, accessing support and chasing up other professionals/agencies. Also supporting one additional family through this process but we are not providing the lead practitioner function.

Social Work Assessments – Two ongoing assessments, hoping to be completed this side of Xmas but timescales are outside of our control.

Child Protection – Following the recent closure of the one active case we have no children in Child Protection.

Operation Encompass – Only aware of one family where the police have visited since last safeguarding report. We still have not had the Op Encompass official report into this incident (something I have raised with CADS) but I have spoken to both parents and a member of the CADS team. Police visit was as a result of physical altercation/assault between biological dad and mums new partner. (CADS=Children’s Advice and Duty Service)

North Norfolk DSL Network – I am continuing as co-chair of this group, membership from 27 schools across North Norfolk. No new update. As previously described we discuss issues of local need, identify common safeguarding concerns, identify training/practice gaps, organise training and guest speakers, act as a critical friend to each other to progress difficult cases and offer a coordinated mechanism for sharing concerns with the Local Authority.

Training – Since the last report our newest cohort of staff have had their Safeguarding training. **Janet Terry would also like some further training with MS to strengthen her knowledge in her Safeguarding role as Governor.**

Safeguarding reporting system – We are about to launch a new system for recording safeguarding concerns in school. ‘My Concern’ is an online platform where we can record concerns and log actions in a more streamlined way. Our current system is very effective but very labour intensive. This new system should reduce the overall workload whilst not compromising on student safety. All staff will receive training before we break up for Xmas and we will begin to use the system as of 4th January. I’m sure we will have some teething problems but overall feel very confident that this is the right way to go for the school and our students. Safeguarding governor will be offered training but if any other governors wish to see the new system and how it works please let us know.

Appraisal Report

Shared with Governors prior to the meeting and explains the aims of an appraisal for all teaching staff including SLT. It outlines how teachers’ objectives are all clearly linked to pupil progress or school improvement targets and identifies any professional development needs. Interim meetings are held to review and ensure progress is being made towards their objectives. All teacher’s performance is reviewed against the National Teachers’ Standards.

School Improvement Plan

Shared with Governors prior to the meeting, this document explains and identifies the key areas of what we are working towards. The past two years of school improvement plans have been significantly disrupted by resources and attention being diverted as we respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and attention turns to supporting pupils, their families and staff. The 4 key areas mentioned in the document are linked to the Quality of Education and the impact on pupils and are assigned to a member of the SLT. It provides information on when it is to be undertaken ie, Autumn/Spring/Summer term and what actions, success criteria are needed to fulfil. Monitoring and feedback is considered throughout and any costs involved.

We would like to appoint a Governor to lead on each area and be a point of contact for SLT to share and discuss things with.

- **Janet Terry – Therapy Centre**
- **Anne Davies – Quality of Education & Intent**
- **Alison Williams – Wellbeing**
- **Daphne Lucas Lee – New software assessment (tbc)**

Succession Planning

Shared with Governors prior to the meeting. This document outlines the plans for JS's successor where he has made the decision to leave either by July (notice April 30th) or December (notice September 30th). Solid plans for an interim period have been made so that we can continue to be led and managed to the present high standard yet still continue with our ambitious plans for the future and prepare for Ofsted. This forward planning with help provide the new head teacher with the best possible start. A full summary of attributes and essential strategic leadership methods are within the report circulated.

	<p><u>Appointing a Deputy</u></p> <p>Shared with Governors prior to the meeting, the proposal came from both our assistant heads who are considering the future leadership needs of the school and have expressed their views on sharing the role until the new head teacher is appointed and subsequently a deputy head appointment.</p> <p>The Governing Board were all in agreement that two full-time deputies from the SLT will be appointed in the short term (Annette & Michael). The business case plan (circulated) shows the considerations of staff development, succession planning and staff retention. Additional considerations are if one deputy is appointed as head (or as acting head for a limited time) then the other one remains as deputy. If an external candidate is appointed as head, both deputies could be interviewed at that stage for the permanent deputy role.</p> <p>Governors approved the proposal with no need for any application process with roles to start in Jan 2022.</p>	
8. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS	Recorded in a separate document.	
9. CHAIR ITEMS	Following the results of a recent Governor Skills Audit, the results show a good measure of knowledge, understanding and experience across the 6 key areas of maintaining a happy, healthy and successful running of our school. We are mindful and aware of certain areas that may need some consideration in regards to further training and advice to bring our skills up to date.	
10. CLERK ITEMS	None	
11. AOB		

Meeting closed 18.15 hrs.

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