



## Aldermaston CE Primary School

### Minutes of Meeting (FGB 3) – Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021- 7pm

**Present:** Mel Higgs – MH (Headteacher), Sam Chaventre – SC (Chair), Dave Shirt – DS, Cathy Jones – CJ, Thomasina Ward – TW, Charlotte Watchorn – CW, Revd Jane Manley – JM, Patricia Boud – PB, Chris Laney – CL, Solvej Biddle – SB, Elizabeth JeffCoate – EJC, Gayle Bonner - GB (Clerk)

**Observing:**

**Cynthia Newman (potential LA Governor)**

**Mr Iain Gunn (Deputy Head)**

**This meeting was held via Zoom.**

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome, Introductions &amp; Opening prayer</b>
	<p>SC welcomed everyone to the meeting, there were no apologies, and the meeting was quorate. SC handed over to JM to conduct the opening prayer.</p> <p>JM wanted to share a card that she received today from the children. The illustrations were lovely as was the bookmark. MH said the children will be so proud that JM had shared this with the Governors. JM said she would be emailing the children to thank them.</p> <p>SC welcomed Mr Gunn the new Deputy Head, he had recently attended a Finance meeting so had met some of the Governors already. SC asked Mr Gunn to introduce himself. Mr Gunn said he had a good start at the school with good mentorship from MH. Mr Gunn said it was lovely to be in a small community and he felt he was part of the community already. SC welcomed Mr Gunn and said it was lovely to have him onboard.</p> <p>SC welcomed Cynthia Newman to the meeting. Cynthia introduced herself and talked about her history with the school and attending events as a local resident. Cynthia was previously a Brimpton Primary School Governor and served 12 years. SC said that the Governors had previously discussed putting Cynthia forward for the LA Governor vacancy.</p> <p>SC welcomed Solvej to the meeting and briefed that she would be Co-Opted onto the board this evening. Solvej observed the previous meeting and introduced herself to everybody and talked about her extensive law and business background. Solvej is looking forward to working with the board.</p> <p>The Governors talked through their roles for the benefit of everybody present.</p> <p>SC discussed the meeting focus being around progress and updates.</p>
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
	There were none declared.
<b>3</b>	<b>Any other business</b>
	GB – Clerking Laptop
<b>4</b>	<b>Co-Opted Governor Vote/Vacancies</b>
	The Governors APPROVED voting Solvej Biddle onto the board as a Co-Opted Governor. The clerk reported the term of office would be 4 years and would commence from this evening. The clerk would now inform the LA of Solvej's appointment and undertake the necessary induction work.

	The clerk briefed the Governors there was now a staff vacancy following Mrs Burrige's departure. GB to send MH the Staff Governor nomination letter to review. <b>4.1 – GB.</b> The clerk also informed the Governors that PB was at the end of her term. SC asked PB to consider undertaking another term and report back once she had given it some thought.
<b>5</b>	<b>Any other urgent business</b>
	GB raised her laptop.
<b>6</b>	<b>Agree and approve previous minutes</b>
	The minutes of FGB2 11/11/20 were distributed in advance for review.  <b>Matters Arising:</b> DS raised that his comments were not incorporated. GB apologised and said this was her mistake. GB asked DS to resend so she could make the amendments.  <b>Open Actions:</b> <b>14.1 – JM/CJ to write in the newsletter regarding Lark's club – MH said this had passed – Closed.</b> <b>5.1 – GB to remove TW from Curriculum Committee – Completed, Closed.</b> <b>5.2 - GB to revise and publish the HTPM ToR – Completed, Closed.</b> <b>9.1 - JM to send GB the wording for the agendas – Completed, Closed.</b> <b>15.1 - GB to amend the pay policy into the standard format – Completed, Closed.</b> <b>17.1 - GB to send Solvej the Governor application forms – Completed, Closed.</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Policies</b>
	CJ briefed the Governors on the policies up for review. JM asked for the school vision and ethos to be added to the policies.  <b>Whistleblowing</b> – All approved by the Community Committee. The policy is based on standard policies and was recommended for FGB approval. DS queried as the FMP also incorporates Whistleblowing. CJ/MH confirmed this was required and was a separate policy.  <b>EYFS</b> - All approved by the Community Committed. The policy is based on standard policies and was recommended for FGB approval.  <b>Covid Safeguarding</b> - All approved by the Community Committee. The policy is based on standard policies and was recommended for FGB approval.  <b>Complaints</b> – SC briefed Governors that the school had received a complaint at Christmas where the complaints policy had been referred to. When the complaint was being dealt with the panel Chair found that a review was required. SC said there had not been time for the policy to go through CJ's committee. SC said the Community Committee should review and then ask FGB to ratify at the next meeting. <b>7.1 – CJ to note for the Community Committee.</b> SC reported that the complaint was not yet fully resolved. Therefore, she would not be able to discuss the detail of the complaint until the process was completed.  <b>Financial Management Policy</b> – DS reported that one member of the Finance had not reviewed the policy. MH asked if it was still possible to ratify the policy. DS said he was happy to recommend the policy for approval, he would be covering the FMP in his update.  All of the Governors APPROVED the policies. <b>7.2 - GB to amend, format and publish the approved policies.</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>SEND Update/Review</b>
	The SEND update/review was distributed in advance of the meeting. MH invited questions in advance of the meeting. There were no questions submitted in advance.  MH said the school were very proactive in seeking support for the children. Trying to get the provision correct for the children on the SEN register was currently a priority. DS said he did not fully understand

the report as it was full of acronyms. MH said this was a fair point and would feed this back to the SENCO. CW agreed and said she had to google lots of the acronyms. CW also said she had nothing to benchmark the report against. MH asked what could have helped? MH said originally the SENCO was due to present to Governors. PB said that as a teacher, having had a history of teaching children with special needs and having a grandchild with special needs, the report was very comprehensive. PB assured Governors that anything stated by the SENCO was always professional and best practice. PB praised the SENCO's work that was always of an excellent standard. MH said it would probably be useful to give some background to a SENCO's role. CW said she did not want to create work for MH. SC suggested setting expectations of what the Governors want to see. The Governors talked about how the needs of children constantly evolve. CW would welcome some KPI's around the reporting.

CJ said that the SDP drove all the actions across the school including SEN provision. CJ suggested taking this to the Curriculum Committee for discussion. **8.1 – GB to note SEN provision/role for discussion at the Curriculum Committee.**

DS said that any papers presented to Governors should be in laymen terms to ensure everybody can understand them. SC agreed. SC asked for MH to express thanks to the SENCO from the Governors. The information required by the Governors is an action on the governors, not a criticism of the SENCO and the comprehensive report she provided.

**9 Headteacher Update**

MH distributed her report in advance of the meeting for review.

MH wanted to give an update on the following:

MH invited questions from governors.

DS queried the projected NOR for census day in Oct 2021. This forms the basis of the calculations for the formula funding grant for 2022/23. FC-95 projected this would be 161.

MH responded giving the Projected NOR – 131. DS observed this reduction of 30 children would lead to a reduction in 2022/23 Budget of over £60k

25 Year 6 children will move on to secondary school. Approximately 15 will arrive in EYFS (obviously we don't have confirmation of these figures yet.)

The Finance Manager had now received indicative figures to produce the draft 2021/22 budget.

**Complaints/Praise**

As discussed earlier there had been a complaint going through the Governor complaints panel. MH said it was interesting looking at the issues raised by parents. There had been lots of common sense and maturity around dealing with the rules. There have been lots of positive comments from parents.

**Safeguarding**

MH/CL circulated the annual safeguarding audit action plan in advance of the meeting for review.

MH said that the Safeguarding audit was completed and filed with the LA. MH said there were some very valuable actions that came out of the audit. CL said that Anti bullying would run through curriculum and some policies would be updated. An SCR check was completed. CL said he would circulate his report.

For information, CL and MH completed the audit on the 5th and 12th November - there did not seem to be anywhere to record this on the actual document and we can't change the 'created date'.

SENCO has received updated safeguarding lead training, new deputy head also scheduled for training. MH said that when the school returns there will be undoubtedly be safeguarding issues to deal with so having 3 safeguarding leads would assist with that.

Therapeutic Thinking Team - MH attended some training and undertook some training with staff on the Inset Day. There has also been a staff meeting to build on the training.

MH reported good progress in safeguarding in terms of provision. There are attendance registers being used to track children and get in touch with families that need support.

**Attendance** – a little lower than usual, there were two positive cases of Covid on the last couple of days before Christmas. MH said that the closure of the two bubbles had actually allowed the school to trial out the remote learning provision.

GRT children were impacted upon greatly during lockdown. The school contacted the EWO who gave reassurance to the school that they were doing everything they could. There was no action being taken around attendance at present by the EWO. There is a good relationship between these families and the school. The school are reaching out to engage with the families and assist them with any IT requirements.

### **School Improvement**

Working with LA regarding objectives for the SDP. MH met with the SIP and has added some additional dates to support the school with the subject leader interviews. MH said she had included some data but had mixed feelings about presenting it. The data is only from 1 term and may have no value. MH said she would accept questions if there were any. There were no questions raised. MH said that the school would be using the existing assessment materials to allow for benchmarking. Phonics will be a focus area. The school are trying very hard to work with families to support their child's learning. CW said that as a parent, it was nice to know that her daughter was still given her phonics test and feedback. This would have been appreciated by the parents. Ian talked about the phonics moving forward. MH said there had been more catch-up funding to support the interventions. MH said the school had sent out an IT survey to parents and had received a good response so far. 80% of respondents said the amount of work was just right – 2 responses said there was not enough work and 2 people said there was too much. MH talked about having extra live sessions which are proving difficult to timetable. MH is still reviewing this along with safeguarding rules.

MH talked about the quality of learning dialogue that had improved immensely in the remote live lessons. Ian said it was a positive picture. He had spent time looking at engagement this week, the attendance has been excellent. Ian talked about weekly phone calls with parents for the children. It is maintaining the level of engagement and encouraging further engagement. MH said that SLT were reviewing the quality of teaching and the impact on children. MH reviewed the remote learning tool provided by the DfE. MH said that herself and Ian do spot checks on lessons to monitor the quality of the provision. Staff meeting this week on Writing to audit examples of writing in lockdown and onsite to compare. The SIP will be attending the staff meeting next week to give further training to staff.

SC asked about students who received 1:1 support normally. Is there anything additional for these children? If the children are in school, they have their 1:1 support, as do the children with health plans.

SC asked what support Governors could give to support SLT around wellbeing. MH said the school had looked at how staff were allocated. There is a high ratio of staff to the numbers of children. MH said she was nervous about asking staff to come back in. The staff have been wonderful and had the preference of being in school to support each other. During the last lockdown the staff found it very isolating at home. Working together as a team, even though it is socially distanced, has been wonderful for socialisation and morale.

MH said 43 children in school provision, mixture of full time and part time hours.

EHCP – 2 – 1 full time 1 part time

No children in need

Children of critical workers 31

Otherwise Vulnerable – identified by the school – 9

	<p>MH briefed Governors that there was a bomb hoax on the school answering machine, left Saturday evening, MH described them as drunken teenagers. MH said the critical incident plan was followed by contacting the LA and the Police. MH undertook a risk assessment and there was no threat to the school. The staff were alerted to raise anything suspicious. DS asked if the police were MOD or TVP and if there would be feedback. MH said they were TVP and were excellent and will be in touch if needed.</p>
<b>10</b>	<b>Chairs' Update</b>
	<p>PB raised the individual visits with staff and Governors. The Governors want to feel supportive but not put additional pressure on staff. PB said she felt the staff were coping with enough at present. The Governors had previously discussed the visits being put on hold. MH asked Mr Gunn to talk to staff to gauge their response. MH said the staff expressed they were happy but asked for this to be after half term. MH requested the five questions be set for staff to ensure consistent reporting and a clear focus. MH asked the Governors to be mindful of staff who have multiple areas of responsibilities. SC/MH to look at when visits could commence again. <b>10.1 SC/MH</b>. SC asked PB if she was happy with the decision. PB was happy and felt reassured about postponing them for now. SC asked what areas of responsibility Mr Gunn had taken over. Mr Gunn said his areas were, PPG, Maths Lead (Maths Lead would now link with RE).</p> <p>SC talked about future planning and training. The more Governors that have experience of leadership forums and training the better. SC asked Governors to come forward if they were willing to attend any of the training outlined.</p>
<b>11</b>	<b>Finance</b>
	<p>FC-97 took place on the 19.1.21.</p> <p>DS had welcomed Mr Gunn who was attending as an observer</p> <p><b>5.3</b> – DS asked the FGB whether SB could join the Finance Committee as a replacement for James Spackman. This was AGREED</p> <p><b>6.1.5</b> – Main school budget for 2020/21 looked healthy with a projected surplus of £46k but forecasted future spends are very volatile.</p> <p>WB 2021/22 budget approval, end of April – DS asked Governors to agree on how the budget would be agreed as the next FGB was not until May. It was decided that after the FC-98 meeting of 23/3/21, a draft budget would be submitted to Governors for approval by email.</p> <p><b>SFVS</b> – 20/21 return WB have still not said if this would be required. The Governors would like to proceed with a draft submission. The clerk agreed and said the LA would probably expect a statement at the very least. <i>[post meeting note: WBC had confirmed an SFVS return would be required but the deadline for submission had been delayed by 2 months till end May 2021]</i></p> <p><b>9.3</b> – Premises – DS queried the Office Manager role as the Finance Committee was finding it difficult to report on Premises when she was not a member of FC. DS said it had since been agreed that the Office Manager would submit reports to the Finance Committee.</p> <p><b>11.1.2</b> – FMP ratified and checked – file as Issue 14.2. It was decided that the Annexes ( signing limits) would not be incorporated in the FMP. MH said the limits were agreed through the Finance Committee.</p> <p>School fund policy – DS confirmed this would be a stand-alone policy, Finance Officer contacting CJ.</p> <p>ACTION ???</p> <p>Next meeting FC-98 - 23/3/21.</p>
<b>12</b>	<b>Community Committee</b>
	<p>Met on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The committee were pleased to welcome Mr Gunn and TW. CJ discussed the Therapeutic Thinking Team initiative that would inform the behaviour policy going forward. The committee also discussed wellbeing of the staff and offered support.</p> <p>Next Meeting 16/3/21.</p>
<b>13</b>	<b>Curriculum Committee</b>
	The Committee had not met.

	Next meeting C3 - 10/3/21
<b>14</b>	<b>Safeguarding</b>
	Discussed above in Headteacher report.
<b>15</b>	<b>H&amp;S/Premises</b>
	<p>An updated school risk assessment was shared with the Governors.</p> <p>It was updated based on recent government guidance, a new model RA provided by the local authority and input of staff members provided at the start of the term. All staff have been sent a copy and the school are collecting their signatures to confirm they have read and understood the document. The school have also provided the local authority with a copy too.</p> <p>CL asked about the transition back into school. MH said there were still lots of questions behind the scenes. There was not enough information at present. MH suspects it would be a phased return from the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. MH said the LA had been excellent in supporting the school with the risk assessments. Until the latest guidance is released, there cannot be speculation. CL agreed and said that once more solid information had been given, then himself, MH and SC could sense check the risk assessments.</p> <p>CL reported he would plan his next H&amp;S visit with the Office Manager prior to the next FGB.</p>
<b>16</b>	<b>Church School Matters</b>
	<p>JM talked about the <i>Spreading God's Love</i> project. There are currently lots of talented people in the village who are making hearts to distribute to children and staff before Easter. If the children are not back, after Easter. The hearts are Covid safe and being stored correctly. JM said the children had been hero's in terms of their resilience. JM is hoping to do something for Ash Wednesday. JM reported that the church magazine was now online for viewing. JM is in discussions with DS about linking in with his distribution list. JM said she did not know when the churches would re-open at the moment.</p>
<b>17</b>	<b>AOB</b>
	<p>GB raised her laptop that keeps crashing. GB contacted Thomas Ng at West Berkshire who advised that each school that GB clerks for should come up with a solution to provide a machine. GB currently uses her personal machine. GB will be contacting each of her schools for a resolution, where possible this would be cost neutral. GB agreed to report back at the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>SC discussed the 5 questions for the structure of the Governor visits. <b>17.1 - SC to set the 5 questions for Governor visits.</b></p> <p>SC asked the Governors to reflect on the meeting, did the Governors feel the focus of the meeting was met. EJC talked about training, could we arrange something on Therapeutic Thinking for the Governors, the ethos would be useful to have. <b>17.2 - GB to note for the next FGB meeting.</b> JM said the school were encouraging the children to flourish in very difficult circumstances. SC said the kindness amongst the school community was prevalent. SC thanked everybody for their time. Sincere thanks to SLT and the staff for their hard work.</p>
	<p><b>Actions</b></p> <p>4.1 – GB to send MH Staff Governor nomination letter</p> <p>7.1 – CJ to note the Complaints Policy for the Community Committee to review</p> <p>7.2 - GB to amend, format and publish the approved policies</p> <p>8.1 – GB to note SEN provision/role for discussion at the Curriculum Committee meeting</p> <p>10.1 - SC/MH to review when visits could commence again</p> <p>17.1 - SC to set the 5 questions for Governor visits</p> <p>17.2 - GB to note Therapeutic Thinking for the next FGB meeting agenda</p>

Meeting closed 9pm