

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SAMWORTH CHURCH ACADEMY GOVERNING BODY HELD AT THE ACADEMY ON MONDAY 5th FEBRUARY 2024 AT 1.00 PM

PRESENT: Nick Linney (NL) (Chair), Lisa McVeigh (LM), Caroline Whitty (CW), Jo Hall (JH), Val Leivers (VL) and Mark Parkin-Coates (MP).

IN ATTENDANCE: Donna Barnes (DB)(Clerk), Ellie Slack (ES), Carl Bennett (CB), Evie Mason (EM) and Connor Summerell (CS). Chris Moodie (CM), Sarah Perry (SP) and Luke Braybrooke (LB) for part of meeting.

OUTSTANDINGS (In date order)

13/05/20	SCAOT Structure and Funds CW
19/07/22	Governor Benchmarking visit LM
28/11/23	Governor Training NL/DB
05/02/24	Management Accounts ES
05/02/24	Catering Review ES/LM

CONCLUDED Are listed on the last sheet (In alphabetical order)

- 1. Talk with Governors:** Mrs Dove, parent of a Year 10 student was in attendance for this item of the agenda. Mrs Dove explained she has another child who previously attended the Academy and commented both had different experiences. Mrs Dove commented on positive changes she has noticed in the last six months, particularly communication and wider curricular opportunities which she felt the pandemic had affected. Some concerns were shared about the timeframe for receiving SEND support. Feedback was also shared about transition, sensory issues (e.g., changes to menu), completion of the DofE award, consistency of feedback from staff and some disruption to lessons. LM responded briefly to some of the comments during the meeting and made notes so that a more detailed response could be shared by email following the meeting.

CM joined during item one at 1.08pm

SP joined during item one at 1.10pm

JH joined during item one at 1.15pm

The parent left the meeting at 1.25pm

ES joined the meeting at 1.25pm

- 2. Prayer:** CM led attendees in a prayer.
- 3. Apologies for Absence:** Jane Lewis (JL) and Jo Yardley (JY).
- 4. Declaration of Interest:** None.
- 5. Major Topics:**
 - a. Management Accounts** – SP and CM had requested to attend the meeting to present to governors on the presentation of management accounts to governors. NL referred to the financial review that SP carried out in the summer term last year, shared with governors in November. A benchmarking document was created following the review, this was referred to during the meeting with SP providing governors with further context about the measures set by the DfE, how the Academy measures against these, and when compared with other schools that have similar criteria. SP shared her experience as a School Resource Management Advisor and how this helps schools to benchmark themselves against other schools financially. SP referred to the curriculum financial planning tool used by the academy and a version available from ISBL which measures against revenue income rather than capital funds. NL confirmed food costs had been discussed by governors at the September meeting and that a second review is underway and will be discussed at the next governors meeting. Discussion took place around the importance of providing quality food to students and the amount the DfE allocate per student, per year. NL asked where the MAT

recharges sit within the costs and SP confirmed they are under admin costs. NL thanked SP for clarifying the information and that it would be a helpful steer for governors.

SP explained that the SNMAT Board of Directors had asked that all academies use the management accounts as generated by the financial management system, therefore she was here today to present and talk governors through the accounts, the benefits to using them and how they compare to the management accounts governors currently receive. SP talked governors through a presentation shared on screen 'MAT management Accounts Reports Presentation'. Profiling, or phasing as the Academy refers to in their accounts, was an issue and could not be changed previously, however SP confirmed that this can now be done in the software. SP explained that the board were concerned about the year to date deficit and how the academy would move from this to the predicted surplus. ES confirmed that she meets with SP monthly now to discuss so that this information can be relayed to the board. SP reported that the board use three year budget forecasts to look at how sustainable academies are and these are based on the management account information.

Governors agreed that what had been presented makes sense, especially now that the phasing can be adjusted. NL highlighted the issues and need to be cautious when looking at computer generated data. ES suggested that she share both versions of the accounts with governors for January. CW referred to the importance of the Academy's vision, in particular food and its DNA, and how reassurance was given prior to joining the trust about making sure this would be kept. CM confirmed that the Academy's unique nature was not under threat and was embraced by the trust. Governors thanked CM and SP for the presentation of information and attendance at the meeting. **OUTSTANDING as Management Accounts ES and Catering Review ES/LM.**

CM and SP left the meeting at 2.30pm

The review of catering was revisited and ES confirmed this was in hand and that a proposal would be ready to be shared with governors at the next meeting.

6. FINANCE REPORT:

- (a) Financial Statistics** – ES presented the December dashboard and explained it is normal for the Academy to spend more generally at the start of the year and that she remains confident the surplus will be as forecast. ES confirmed the catering review is in hand and that a proposal will be ready to share with governors at the next meeting. ES referred to a request to look at finances in terms of adding one or two behaviour mentors to the staffing budget, this is likely to cost in the region of £6-10k for the remainder of this year. The water bottle project which students are leading was discussed and the potential loss in revenue referred to, which is likely to be in the region of £42k. ES explained that she will be meeting with SP to resolve a discrepancy with the cash at bank figure but that there were no concerns.
- (b) Cash Flow** – As per the dashboard.
- (c) Capital Expenditure Requests and Pending** – DB talked governors through the IT capital expenditure request. ES confirmed the total request matches that within the budget. Governors approved the request.
- (d) Opportunity Trust Performance** – ES referred to the value of investments on the dashboard for December.
- (e) Academy+** - ES confirmed the funds raised are now included as part of the monthly dashboard. VL shared an update on the first donation received from the Samworth Foundation, which they have committed to for five years. The Tesco Stronger Starts scheme has now ended, results are due soon and will raise a further £500-£1,500. Plans are in place to push the £50 challenge with staff and students. VL advised she is meeting with one of the student leaders to prepare an article about the £50 challenge for the next student newsletter.
- (f) Net Zero Carbon 2030** – ES to provide an update at the next meeting.

LB joined the meeting at 2.50pm

5. Major Topics continued:

b. Attendance – LM outlined the issue with governors referring to national context and the aspiration to achieve 96% attendance. LB talked governors through the strategy for improving attendance referring to a presentation ‘Attendance 2023/24’ shared on screen. Autumn term actions were outlined followed by the impact seen so far this term and comparison of attendance weekly against Fischer Family Trust (FFT) national, FSM quintile 3 and FSM quintile 5. LM explained the quintiles help to provide a comparison to schools that are similar to the Academy. LB outlined next steps which includes focus on mini targets which will be identified and set termly, as well as being involved with national projects to look at what other strategies may help to improve attendance.

VL left the meeting at 3.10pm

CW asked if LB meets with student leaders, he responded not yet but he does meet with a small number of attendance guardians who have provided him with feedback on what rewards they want to see.

LB left the meeting at 3.45pm

7. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING held on 28th November were accepted as a true record and were signed by NL.

8. MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING:

(a) SCAOT Structure and Funds: CW provided an update on the ongoing process to gain CIO accreditation with the Charities Commission. The suite of documents is now ready to be submitted following improved legal advice. **OUTSTANDING.**

(b) Governor Benchmarking Visit: LM explained a visit was arranged at quite short notice in December to Christ the King and suggested arranging a further visit to West Grantham Academy. LM to share the date with Governors. **OUTSTANDING.**

(c) Attendance Presentation: CONCLUDED.

(d) Academy+ Dashboard: CONCLUDED.

(e) Agenda Amendment – Academy Aspirations: CONCLUDED.

(f) Governor Training: The NGA skills audit was discussed, CW commented on its value to help provide an assessment of where we are. DB to make sure NL can access the information, completes the audit and to report back at the next meeting. **OUTSTANDING.**

9. LEGAL MATTERS: None.

10. SIGNING & SEALING: None.

11. STANDARD ITEMS:

(a) Academy Aspirations: Now included on the agenda.

(b) Principal’s Report: LM reported on some recruitment success in recent weeks for marketing and Team Leader of PE. Feedback following the tour of the Pavilion and Heatherdene was shared, the intervention is intense and LM explained the view is to reintegrate them as quickly as possible to then be able to offer help to someone else who needs it. January’s report would be shared later in the week with further updates.

(e) AAB: JH advised the group are due to meet tomorrow at 3.30pm with a curriculum focus on PE. There is a new AAB report format that will be worked through at the meeting and JH commented on the data being provided promptly. JH offered to share a quick update with governors following the meeting.

- (c) **IT Development:** DB noted that the priority now will be to carry out the improvements outlined on the capital expenditure request. NL asked student leaders what their perception of IT, the response was positive.

JH left the meeting at 4pm

- (d) **Policies:** The following policies were proposed by LM following their review, and were subsequently approved by Governors:

- Appraisal and People Development Policy
- Bring Your Own Device Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy (new)
- DBS Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- Great Citizen Policy
- ICT Policy
- Managing Safeguarding Allegations Policy (replaces Abuse Allegation Policy)
- Menopause Policy (new)
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Redundancy Policy and Procedure
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Staff Leave of Absence Policy
- Pay Policy
- Probation Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy

The Risk Register was also submitted for approval but following feedback about risk number one, further review was suggested with DB to share changes by email.

- (f) **Student Leadership Feedback:** LM reported that she continues to meet with student leaders fortnightly which is working well. A meeting is taking place to discuss a response to the DfE in relation to transgender. Citizen UK training has taken place – LM to confirm who attended. CW suggested gaining feedback about the training and if it is meeting the needs of students and if not what else can be offered. Student leaders are attending the Diocesan Conference to share what they are doing. Work also continues on the water bottle project with a date set for presentation to Linney. CW asked for feedback on any frustrations. EM responded that she was finding it difficult to run the student newsletter with few students, only 2 out of 15 attended the last meeting and this was similar for the eco group. LM to continue meeting with the group fortnightly to work through any issues.

- (g) **Link Governors Reports:**

- i. Christian Distinctiveness – JL not present.
- ii. Data Protection (GDPR) – JL not present.
- iii. Leadership/Management – NL had attended an Executive Team meeting recently. Team getting used to being challenge when things aren't working and emphasis on doing better with urgency. NL, JL and LM continue to meet monthly.
- iv. Health & Safety – JY not present but LM advised an audit had been carried out and was positive with many of the previous actions having been addressed and improvements made.
- v. Safeguarding – VL not present. Following receipt of a letter from SNMAT raising some concerns, a date is in the diary for NL, CM, LM and DB to meet and discuss.

12. MATTERS FOR THIS MEETING: None.

13. CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS: Governors deemed some of the discussion under item 5(b) confidential.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ MINOR TOPICS: None.

15. DATE, VENUE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday 19th March at 3pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Tuesday 14th May at 11am

Wednesday 12th June, 3.15 to 4.45pm – Strategy Event.

Tuesday 16th July at 3pm

The meeting closed at 4.30pm.