

## ASTON CLINTON SCHOOL

### MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

Date	Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Time	6pm
Place	At the school
Clerk	Emma Lad. <a href="mailto:Emma.lad@clerks.hertsforlearning.co.uk">Emma.lad@clerks.hertsforlearning.co.uk</a>

Name	Governor Type	Attended
Sue Bradshaw	Co-opted governor	Attended
Hannah Brunning	Parent governor	Attended
Katy Coats	Co-opted governor	Attended
Katherine Cole	Staff governor	Attended
Sean Hayward	Co-opted governor	Apologies
Emma Lad (Clerk)	Clerk	Attended
Carol Macdonald (HT)	Headteacher	Attended
Christine Moxham (Chair)	Co-opted governor	Attended
Sophie Roberts	Co-opted governor	Attended
Jenny Stark	Local Authority Governor	Attended
Rebecca Taylor	Parent governor	Attended

Governor challenge/questions will be marked in yellow.

Governor Actions are marked in *italic*.

Meeting started at 6.10pm

#### **Long term strategic aims for the school**

- To be the school of choice for the local community
- School is judged at least GOOD by Ofsted, **with elements that are judged OUTSTANDING.**
- The school is developing its own e.g., TAs to teachers to leaders.
- The school is outward looking:
  - Is a reference point for others and shares best practice.
  - looks to move forward and improve all the time.
  - Keeps up to date with current thinking.
  - Has a stable and committed staff team.

#### **1. Welcome, apologies and reminder of confidentiality.**

There were apologies sent by Sean Hayward. The meeting was quorate.

#### **2. Conflicts of interest**

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

### 3. Notification of any other business

There was no notification of any other business.

### 4. Board membership matters

- Note any new appointments, vacancies, and expiring terms of service. Agree actions that need to be taken. There are two vacancies for co-opted governors at present.
- Confirm governors have completed annual declarations via Governor Hub – completed by all governors.
- Confirm [skills audit responses](#) have been sent to the clerk – Sean, Katherine, and Carol to complete.
- The stage two complaint has been completed and the recommendations have been actioned.

**Clerk/ Sean/ Katherine/Carol**

### 5. [Minutes of the last meeting](#) to be approved and matters arising to be approved.

The minutes have been approved and will be signed by the Chair of governors via Governor Hub. All matters arising are completed or agenda items – see appendix A below.

### 6. [Science presentation](#) – Genie White

#### [Action to reflection planner](#)

The standards and the progress of the subject and teaching over the last few years were explained.

- Data is below national average but with proper assessment and tracking being put in place there should be a clearer picture for the school.
- The lessons observed have been good, but the retention of understanding needs to improve for children.
- Book observations have taken place, and the work is comparable with other age-related curriculum areas.
- The staff are explaining and utilising scientific language, for example, the five types of scientific enquiry.
- Standards have improved across the school.
- Engagement is good across the school and the children enjoy their classes.
- School is taking part in the Big Science Week and have female leaders in the area coming in to present.
- Parents have fed back that children are enjoying the subject.
- There are external groups offering after-school clubs in science which the children are very enthusiastic about.
- Children are now leading the classes.
- Staff training takes place for science every week. Science retrieval is key for the children and there continues to be training and support for staff.
- Future community work was discussed with governors including links with local secondary schools in a similar way to the sport links in place.
- Governors discussed the Aston Arrows and the impact it has had on the children.

G: Have you been able to visit other local schools?

GW: No, but I work with the local network.

G: As a parent governor the children are enjoying the Aston Arrows, and they enjoyed the environment week.

G: There are ex pupils who work in science fields. Could they be asked to come in and present?

GW: We have had previous students come back and talk about careers for year 6.

6.27pm Genie White left the meeting

G: How do we ensure teachers understand what they are teaching if their background is not science based?

DHT: GW sends training bite size modules to support staff and there is time allocated within staff meetings.

G: *We can pick up at the Middle leaders meeting to review.*

**Sue Bradshaw**

*Governors discussed how best to follow up the presentation and felt that it would be helpful to meet with the schools STEM ambassadors for them to explain about the science curriculum. Rebecca Taylor will follow up and report back.*

**Rebecca Taylor**

G: Can we ask subject leaders about cross curricular teaching?

HT: We are ensuring the curriculum is embedded and the children are all at age related expectations at present. There are teachers who will have considered and have in place but not all teachers are at that point yet. This is part of the next stage of curriculum development.

G: The curriculum is being mapped out for each subject but there are packages available which have already done this. Could they not be used?

HT: The issue with a prescribed curriculum means that teachers are not upskilled, and the curriculum would not be created for the school community. The school is monoethnic and so we need to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of the children.

DHT: The curriculum is continually developing and improving. We have 'buy in' from staff on the curriculum's being used which is important.

Governors discussed the development of curriculum within the school. There are packages utilised within the school where appropriate for RE, French, PSHE etc. but they are adapted to meet the needs of the school and ensure they meet legislation. The school can only move away from the national curriculum if it becomes an academy.

Governors discussed the impact of a possible change in government in the next year on education and teaching.

*Next meeting there will be a presentation from the reception class teacher regarding new initiatives.*

**Clerk (Agenda)/ HT**

## **7. Chair's action/ update**

- Report on any action taken by the chair or vice-chair on behalf of the board since the last meeting – there have been no chairs' actions taken.
- The new parents tour was attended, and the year 6 children were very eloquent whilst carrying out the tour.
- Feedback on Inset day attended by five governors.
  - [Spelling – Chair](#) – the governors fed back that they enjoyed the session and could see the impact for children.
  - [OPAL – Sophie](#)

[Baseline audit record sheet](#) - This is a baseline from the OPAL audit.

The training was reimagining play times. The principles were amazing, and the programme is exciting.

The DHT explained the grounds inspection has taken place and there has been an advert for a play leader and interviews will take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2024.

G: If we took this on, how would it be kept effectively running year on year?

DHT: The SLT and play leader will need to lead and review regularly.

G: How can we ensure we are safeguarding leadership time on other subjects while initiating a new initiative?

HT: We need to ensure that we are focusing on areas which 'flag' themselves through data and assessment and we need to be adaptable. Within the school we need to ensure we have allocated time appropriately. OPAL is allocated for implementation next year on the School Improvement Plan but there has been an increase in violence in the playground. We have tried smaller improvements and

actions, but they have not had the required impact. We have had to reassess and ensure that we find the solution, so the OPAL project has been moved forward.

G: The OPAL programme will not happen overnight. The incidents in the playground need to be supported in the short term. Can we put things in place now?

HT: We have added resources in the playground but within four weeks they are all broken. We have started to allow children to go anywhere, which is impacting and part of the OPAL programme. We are now adding resources by area which will impact over time.

G: Do we have any opportunities for the older children to work with the smaller children?

HT: We are putting a leadership programme in place within the school. We will have peer buddies as part of the larger piece of work.

G: The internal applicants show that there is enthusiasm in the school for the implementation of the programme. The staff will hopefully start working with a new mindset. If children have the resources at playtime they will learn better when they return to class.

- *Link governor to be allocated for OPAL – Katy, Sophie, Sean, and Jenny volunteered to oversee as a group to ensure all areas are incorporated (H&S, Safeguarding, Early years, Sports premium)[Katy will check with Sean that he is happy to support]*

**OPAL monitoring group**

- [Chairs strategic briefing](#)

## 8. [Policy review](#)

The following policies were approved by governors for use:  
Antibullying policy

*Delegated to committees for review:*

*Policy review schedule – Curriculum*

*Policy review schedule – Finance*

*Policy review schedule –Personnel*

**Curriculum/ finance/ Personnel committee**

## 9. **Headteachers verbal report to governors**

- School Improvement plan
  - Quality of education: Writing  
A deep dive has taken place with year 2 and year 6. Writing is not improving at the pace expected. Staff have reviewed and writing across noncore subjects is not at the expected standard which is impacting on writing attainment overall.

G: What do we mean by writing?

HT: We are talking about the actual writing and composition.

The staff have now shared best practice. The staff are now also reducing the number of worksheets being used in the class which is hindering children's opportunity to write in other subjects.

G: For teaching staff, are they able to create the right environment for questions to be answered appropriately and fully?

DHT: We have worked with staff and the monitoring schedule is being adapted to allow for further best practice discussion and increased expectations.

G: There seems to have been no automaticity in the work being completed to a good standard.

HT: We need teachers to understand the standards and that the children should be aware of the standard. We have introduced that there is a gold standard piece of

work at the front of the children's books and all work completed should meet that standard for the child.

#### Spelling

Little Wandle has impacted year one and we have completed a gaps analysis for all the other year groups. There are new vocabulary lists on the website. The spelling lead has carried out coaching across the school. There has been ringfenced time allocated to the member of staff.

The use of pens has been reviewed.

- o Quality of education: reading

Heat maps are now being completed by the class teachers rather than the subject lead. Little Wandle has a system of creating heat maps where there are gaps in learning. After reviewing Little Wandle have been contacted to ensure children are accessing appropriate areas and not falling behind. The children must meet a certain level within Little Wandle before they can access 'The Bridge to Spelling'.

All ECT's have observed the lead teaching.

- o Behaviour and attitudes – the policy has been applied consistently.
- o Leadership and management – on track.
- o Governance – on track.
- o Early years – the external report has shown that the area has greatly improved.
- o The Pupils are developing a parliament and a set of criteria for skills children need to achieve in line with employers' expectations.

G: What was the feedback on the transition for children this year?

HT: The feedback was that the planning impacted greatly, and the team went above and beyond to support families. There will be feedback at the next meeting. The SLT praised the Early years team and the work being completed.

- HT to demonstrate how to access the shared area so that Governors can access the shared SWOT to complete.

Governors were given instructions to access:

Office – One drive – Governors working space – the files are available and live. SWOT analysis.

*All governors were asked to comment on the SWOT analysis before half term.*

**All governors**

- [SEND and alternative provision improvement plan](#)
- [Katherine Cole to present – Final Autumn data narrative 2023.](#)

*7.50pm Sophie left the meeting*

Governors discussed data for the year and felt that it reflected the information given to them by the SLT previously. They went on to discuss the support of SEN children with the school and the impact on the whole school community of the continued lack of LA and external support.

As part of the discussion the governors moved on to talk about their understanding and the schools understanding of how suspensions and exclusions should be used to support the school community.

The clerk explained the guidance in place which governors should have a sound understanding of whilst strategically leading the school.

This is by no means an exhaustive list; however, the main guidance/ documents are:

## DFE GUIDANCE

1. [School suspensions and permanent exclusions](#)
2. [Behaviour and discipline in schools: guide for governing bodies](#)

If the child has SEND, then the following will also have to be considered:

3. [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#)

In particular, governors should note:

*9.93 There may be a range of reasons why it may not always be possible to take reasonable steps to prevent a mainstream place from being incompatible with the efficient education of others – for example, where the child or young person’s behaviour systematically, persistently or significantly threatens the safety and/or impedes the learning of others.*

OTHER VERSIONS OF THE DOCUMENT:

[SEND: guide for schools and alternative provision settings](#)

[SEND support: easy-read guide for parents](#)

[SEND: guide for early years settings](#)

**The DFE guidance has been used to inform the [Bucks guidance available](#) on Governor Hub Bucks tab.**

**The guidance from the DFE has been used to inform the school policies listed below:**

[Link to website for school policies](#)

Behaviour policy

If the child has SEND, then the following policies will also have to be considered:

SEND policy.

## **Governance Leadership Forum - Exclusions: present & future**

[Governance Leadership Forum - Exclusions: present & future | National Governance Association](#)

NGAs senior leadership team invites you to discuss and explore the current and future position of exclusion panels. [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

**30/1/24 16:30 - 18:00 via Zoom.**

NGA’s recent project on governance workload found that exclusion panels are a huge drain on volunteers, both in terms of time and the emotion, and risk damaging the relationships built up with school leaders over time. NGA is proposing that this activity is removed from governors and trustees, who would retain oversight for the exclusions policy as a board, but not get involved in cases of individual pupils. Come and tell us what you think of this proposal. We will be trying to convince the DfE of the need for change, but have we convinced you?

In the meantime, there is still the task of sitting on exclusions panels: we will spend the first hour considering the board’s role with behaviour policies and looking at good practice of preparing for and making decisions in these difficult cases.

*8.03pm Katy left the meeting*

## **10. Committee reports**

None to be presented.

## **11. Safeguarding**

[SCR checklist template/ Termly safeguarding report Autumn 23](#)

*Clerk to email Katy to check if boxes should be completed.*

**Clerk/Katy**

## **12. [Reports from governor monitoring visits](#)**

- Receive and evaluate reports from governors who have carried out monitoring visits.

[H&S Sean Hayward November 23](#)

- *Book future visits – reminder for governors*

**All governors**

### 13. Governor development

- Report on any training undertaken and training needs still to be addressed.
- Safeguarding – NGA/ NSPCC – clerk and HT to research appropriate training.

HT/ Clerk

- [Prevent training](#) to be completed by all governors. Clerk to send links.

All governors/ Clerk

### 14. Clerks update

Covered under previous agenda items.

Governor visit proforma:

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/63c849ae585212bc98ea5c4a/view>

Governors reviewed the governor visit form and did not feel it was easy to use. The proforma was created to ensure governors remained strategic in their reporting but is overly onerous.

*The clerk was asked to send examples from the Key and HFL/ Bucks. This will be an agenda item at the next meeting.*

Clerk

### 15. Any other urgent business

None requested at the beginning of the meeting.

### 16. Future dates

Date	Start	Committee	Location
Wed 27 Mar 2024	18:00	FGB	Online
Wed 24 Apr 2024	18:00	FGB	School
Wed 26 Jun 2024	18:00	FGB	online

**Meeting ended: 8.25pm**

### **Appendix A: Full governing body Matters arising.**

**Item 4:** *Confirm governors have completed annual declarations via Governor Hub – clerk to confirm via email.*

**Clerk – agenda item 4**

**Item 5:** *Children Looked After to come under Pupil premium – the clerk will amend on Governor Hub for Rebecca Taylor to monitor.*

**Clerk – completed.**

**Item 7: Science presentation** – postponed to next meeting.

**Clerk – agenda item 6**

**Item 10:** *The SWOT analysis will be added to the Office 365 governors working area for comment ahead of review at the next meeting.*

**Chair/ Clerk (Agenda) – agenda item 7**

**Item 12:** *Safeguarding Report to be uploaded in the next couple of weeks to Governor Hub*

**Katy Coats/ Sean Hayward – completed.**

**Item 12:** *Governors asked that the sign in system be updated to have a governor section which will allow for more accurate recording of visits to the school by governors.*

**HT – completed.**

**Item 13:** *SEND meeting to be booked before the end of term.*

**Rebecca Taylor – agenda item 13**

**Item 13:** *Christmas events will be shared with governors via Governor Hub.*

**HT – completed.**

**Item 15:** *Website review completed by Sophie Roberts and to be shared with the HT.*

**Sophie Roberts – completed.**