

ASTON CLINTON SCHOOL

MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

Date	Wednesday 26 th April 2023
Time	6pm
Place	At the school
Clerk	Emma Lad. Emma.lad@clerks.hertsforlearning.co.uk

Name	Governor Type	Attended
Keith Armstrong	Co-opted governor	Apologies
Sue Bradshaw	Associate Member	Attended
Hannah Brunning	Parent governor	Attended
Katy Coats	Co-opted governor	Attended
Katherine Cole	Staff governor	Attended
Sophie Fanshawe	Co-opted governor	Attended
Carole Green (Chair)	Co-opted governor	Attended
Sean Hayward	Co-opted governor	Apologies
Emma Lad (Clerk)	Clerk	Attended
Carol Macdonald (HT)	Headteacher	Attended
Christine Moxham	Co-opted governor	Attended
Louis Redding	Co-opted governor	Apologies
Jenny Stark	Local Authority Governor	Attended
Rebecca Taylor	Parent governor	Attended
In attendance		
Becky Hall	History lead	Attended

Governor challenge/questions will be marked in bold and italic

Governor Actions are marked in italic

Meeting started at 6.00pm

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

Action

1. Welcome, apologies and reminder of confidentiality

The meeting was quorate.
The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting
Apologies were sent by Keith, Sean and Louis.

2. Notification of any other business (At least 48 hours before the meeting to the Chair and Clerk)

Budget 2023/24 approval

3. Conflict of interest with agenda items

There were no conflicts of interest with agenda items declared.

4. [Minutes of the full governing body meetings on the 8th March 2023](#) for approval and matters arising.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and will be signed by the chair. All matters arising are agenda items or completed – see appendix A.

PART 1 - Curriculum & Standards

5. Curriculum presentation - [History presentation](#) – Becky Hall

A power point presentation was shown to governors at the meeting. Becky explained the slides and the teaching intent, implementation and impact for children within the History curriculum.

G: Are the threshold concepts something in the curriculum?

Becky: We have taken them from the Chris Quigley scheme but these are mentioned in the national curriculum. The key concepts are built on over the children's time in the school.

G: How do you decide whether a child is at age related?

Becky: We have knowledge organisers specifying the expectations for ARE. There are no level descriptors as part of the national curriculum.

HT: The argument is that the scheme is based on a two year programme and assessments look at whether they are at Age Related Expectations ('ARE') or not. The evidence needs to prove that they are able to apply their knowledge in year 2.

G: If you are saying you are at 'ARE' in year four, how do you judge?

Becky: We have a milestones document which shows the threshold concept and the evidence required to prove they have understood.

HT: To ensure there is no ambiguity we have linked this to the learning sequences for teaching the lessons.

G: How do they get to be 'above ARE'?

HT: They need to show that they are able to apply the learning and enquiring more.

G: So in the spring reports to parents if you have a parent whose child is above ARE for maths, English etc why are they told for everything else they are just saying at age related?

HT: We have reviewed what is reported with parents and they requested the grading being added. Parents need to understand that for the untested subjects the children can only be graded as at age related or not at age related.

G: Is there something which can be sent to parents to explain there is no formal testing?

HT: The report does say that it is teacher assessed.

G: You have explained that the knowledge organisers are in the planning sequence so reflect the key learning outcomes and key questions.

Becky showed and explained the knowledge organisers to governors

G: The books the children are reading are history based and when I am reading with the children they are enquiring a lot. It is good that the books are giving the opportunity to ask these questions.

G: How are the days planned, such as the Roman day?

Becky: We have utilised different companies to come in and it has worked very well with the children to bring the subject alive for them.

G: Do you feel you have sufficient support for your role?

Becky: The support is good. Time for curriculum leaders is an issue which the school is aware of.

G: Do you think the staff have a good understanding of the subject?

Becky: Yes, the knowledge organisers have really helped. The teachers can sometimes have knowledge specific to their year group only which we are working on.

G: The Knowledge planners are helping us to understand clearly what is needed.

6.36pm Becky was thanked and left the meeting

G: How much time do subject leads need?

HT: We try to make it equitable. The core subjects are dealt with differently.

G: What will happen next year?

HT: We will prioritise the areas which need further support. We need to ensure we are confident in children being at age related first across the board.

6. School Improvement Plan progress update including latest data

Visit from Director of Children's Services today

The Director of children's services visited the school today. The Chair had invited him to attend. He met with children including the Aston Arrows team. The challenges for SEND provision and finances were explained to him. The Chair also explained that employing an ECT has become more expensive than an experienced teacher as a result of the training required. He is aware and the LA is planning initiatives and he is planning to take the feedback to the relevant parties. He was aware there are issues in Buckinghamshire but also clear that there are no quick fixes. He has asked for the Aston Arrows to write to him to let him know how they get on.

The chair hopes that the information will help form better decisions for the schools in Buckinghamshire.

AC SIP SEF

There was a strategy meeting for governors last week and the priorities were reviewed. The Chair explained the priorities which will be carried forward into next year and the reasoning.

HT report to governors

- Pupil numbers are beginning to stabilise and this is supporting the wellbeing of everyone in the school. There are two families who were recommended to keep their children in the reception for the next year but the parents have not agreed.
- The reception numbers for September 2023 are at 56, 2 spaces had been kept to offset 2 children.
- SEND is at 20% at present and EHCP's are at 6% which is above the local and national averages. Governors questioned whether there could be further support put in place as there are such high needs. There is concern that even with the high level of support being offered for families there are still more requests from families.

G: Could we be looking at what is happening strategically in other schools to manage the SEND support required and replicating?

HT: We are aware that the required level of support is above the national and local and supporting where ever possible as a SLT.

G: Are we aware before children join the school if they have SEND?

HT: We have started home visits, Early 4s, where we are identifying need as parents are not declaring needs when they apply for the school.

- The new performance management system has been trialled with five members of staff and is being rolled out to all staff.
- The wellbeing days are working for staff and supporting their work-life balance.
- Covid catch-up to be removed from the HT report as there is no longer any funding attached.

[Spring data narrative](#)

G: How do you feel about the progress being made?

HT: The new Ofsted inspection framework has given us the ability to put children at the heart of what we do but we need children to be ready to learn. The extra needs of a small group of children have been met but it has been detrimental to SLT focus on other areas of school life. We work well as a team but as staff were unaware of the needs of the children joining the school we have had to be reactive which has been unhelpful.

G: We must not lose sight of the whole cohort of children who are progressing well within the school. We need to keep them in mind as well.

DHT: The staff have worked very hard to get children into school and ensure they are settled. We are now able to fully concentrate on educating the children which is the schools core purpose. A child who has really struggled started reading recently which was a really positive moment.

G: Are we recording these successes anywhere?

DHT: We could look into how it is captured in future.

G: The aspirations for the school are clear.

G: How are Pupil premium children progressing?

HT: There is a significant gap for writing but in reading there is no gap in year 2,3 or 4. In maths there is no gap for years 3 and 4. We have considered how we have had this success and it is the targeted catch up intervention which has closed the gap. If we can continue to provide that catch up we can level the playing field for the children.

DHT: The reading to volunteers on a regular basis is having a positive impact.

G: Could we look at recruiting more volunteers?

HT: This can be investigated.

HT: The data for EYFS shows that the gap has closed. There is a clear impact of Little Wandle on this cohort.

G: We need to reinforce what is going well and ensure that the positive narrative is clear for all the staff.

HT: Maths and English are now doing very well due to the support put in place.

G: In year 2, writing is 29%, what is the reason?

DHT: We are moving to a new system as we need more evidence in books. There is now a trainee teacher in the classroom supporting. This has started recently so we are not able to see the impact as yet. Writing is being reviewed as well.

[Parent reporting and communication strategy](#)

[Spring WOW work questionnaire](#)

7. [External reviews update](#) – none have taken place
8. **Pupil premium grant impact review** – covered under the HT report

9. [Governor monitoring reports & programme](#)

The governors reviewed the actions on the Governors SIP action plan and their progress against those targets. There was clear progress against all actions. The governor visits are more strategic and meeting the needs of the governors monitoring role.

PART 2 – Other FGB Business

10. [Industrial action](#): risk assessment and arrangements for staying open

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – See part two minutes

11. [Chairs update](#)

Governors discussed the rise across the county in parental complaints and the knock on effect for schools.

12. **Cleaning contract**

Finance Committee to review quotes when available and present for recommendation to FGB

Finance Committee

13. [Data protection](#): DPO Audit report on GovernorHub

- The school was 100% compliant which was a real positive. This included the cybersecurity essentials. The governors thanked Alison Finden for leading on this area and all her work.
- There have been two SAR requests.

Standing items

14. **Safeguarding**

Covered under the HT report and there have been updates to the safeguarding link governor. The chair explained that she witnessed the HT and DHT following up a concern for a child who had not come into school and visiting the home to check the child was okay and brought them to school.

15. **Governor training**

Governors were encouraged to complete their training through Modern Governor or Bucks Governor services.

16. **Policy review** – There were no policies presented.

17. **Any other business**

Budget 2023/24 approval

At the last meeting the chair explained that the income for the school doesn't match the expenditure as it is increasing at a lower rate. The draft, realistic plan sent to the LA in February showed the school would be in deficit at the end of next year by £130,000 approximately. The main increase in expenditure is staff salaries and the energy costs with no significant change in income to cover these costs. Nothing has changed since then and no feedback or updates received from the LA.

Governors discussed the implications of trying to reduce the budget and the need to maintain the good levels of education in the school for all children whilst supporting their individual needs.

The final budget has to be submitted by 19 May and the Finance Committee is meeting on 18 May at 9.00am. All governors are welcome to that meeting. The governors delegated authority for approval of the budget to the Finance Committee.

Finance Committee

The funding for the ARP is a concern moving forward and it may be that the school cannot continue to run the provision. The school budget cannot subsidise the ARP. There is around £18,000 shortfall per child. The provision will also be reviewed at the meeting on the 18th May 2023

Finance Committee

18.Future Meeting Dates

The following full governing body dates were approved for 2023/24:

27/9/23
 15/11/23 (online)
 17/1/24
 6/3/24 (online)
 24/4/24
 26/6/24 (online)

The clerk will update Governor Hub with the new dates

Clerk

Date	Start	Meeting	
Thurs 18 May 2023	09:00	Finance, Premises, Health & safety	Face to Face
Fri 19 May 2023	16:00	Personnel, Admissions and Pay Review Committee	Face to Face
Mon 5 Jun 2023	All day	Inset day - Step On training (governors welcome to observe)	Face to Face
Wed 28 Jun 2023	18:00	Full Governing Board	Virtual

The meeting ended: 8.10pm

Appendix A: Full governing body Matters arising

Item 8: *The school calendar has been reviewed and the Chair will send the possible dates to governors to request attendance.*

Chair – agenda item 11

Item 9: *The school has had difficulty recruiting cleaners and so the school has investigated a cleaning contractor. There is £30,000 allocated for the cost in house and the quotes are around £33,000. Due diligence will need to be carried out for the staff already in place and how they would be TUPE'd over to the new contract. The contracts will then be sent via Governor Hub for approval or brought to the next meeting. Governors agreed in principle to moving to a contractor.*

Clerk (Agenda) – agenda item 12