Federation of Darley & Summerbridge Community Primary Schools

Governors’ Business Meeting at Summerbridge Community Primary School on

9 December 2020

Virtual Meeting opened at 4.00pm

**Present:** N. Coates (NC), Executive Headteacher

K. Milne (KM) Co-opted Governor

S. Mallendar (SM), Chair and Co-opted Governor

C. White (CW) Co-opted Governor

A. Howarth (AH) Staff Governor

E. Moore (EM) Co-Opted Governor

I**n attendance**: Chris Walker (CJW) Clerk

 Sharon Leighton (SL) SBM

**Governors Core Function:**

**a) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**

**b) Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and**

**c) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

1. **Welcome and Introductions –** SM welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies** were noted from Mike Poole , Lynne Bennion, Lucy Martin, Thomas Gant.
3. **Confidentiality**: SM reminded governors of the need to ensure confidentiality of all discussions in line with the Code of Conduct. Documentation also needed to be kept confidential and to ensure GDPR compliance all governors had been provided with a school-based email address.
4. **Minutes of previous meeting and review of actions:** The minutes from the meeting on 21 October 2020 were approved as an accurate record and would be signed by the Chair once face to face meetings resumed.

**Actions:**

* An SEA advisor had been sourced to support the Headteacher Performance Management Panel.
* No advice was required for the After School Club as it was now able to support itself financially.
* The Ofsted Healthcheck was deferred to the Spring Term.
* No comments had been received on the policies which were therefore adopted.
* Could governors please send pen portraits to NC for the school website.

All other actions had been completed or were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

1. **Declaration of Interest in any Agenda item –** no declarations were made.
2. **Reports**

**Finance**

Governors had been provided with the latest monitoring reports in advance of the meeting. SL talked through the key variances. Overall, the finances were in a health position currently and also the forecast position for the next three years. There was currently a c/f of £75k.

Governor question

Q: Could we use this surplus to enhance the education of the children?

A: As this is not capital funding it could not be used for any additional building. This money effectively safeguards the education of the children currently in the Federation. There are many unknown factors which can often be very costly, for example TA support for those children requiring it.

Governors approved the Revised Budget and thanked SL for her continued excellence in managing the finances so effectively.

Governors noted in the benchmarking that staffing costs were comparatively high. NC explained that many of the staff were highly experienced and therefore near the top of the pay scales.

**Action**: Governors agreed to review this at the next meeting.

**Action:** A volunteer governor was required to work with SL to complete the SFVS which had to be submitted by 31 March 2021.

**SDP/SEF**

NC reported that there had been no changes to the documents since they were discussed at the last meeting.

**Teaching and Learning**

AH reported that there had been a high turnover of TAs and proposed the introduction of an induction scheme to ensure a consistent level of training as well as support with ongoing training. There would be a cost of £500 to cover the administration. The Teaching and Learning Committee had already discussed the proposal and had recommended it to the FGB.

Governors agreed that such a scheme would have significant benefits and at £500 represented VFM. The proposal was approved.

AH reported that a new system of interventions had been put in place and this would help to roll out the system across both schools.

AH reported that following a premises meeting with the LA, consideration was being given to developing the room above the hall at Summerbridge for use as a classroom. The LA would report back its views to NC before 31 December 2020.

A further option would be to develop the Mezzanine on the 3rd floor. Both options would be long term projects if agreed by the LA. Funding arrangements would also need to be clarified in addition to any building requirements.

At the premises meeting it was agreed that a five-year maintenance plan would be developed.

**Pre-School**

Pre-school was currently at capacity and a waiting list was in place. The recruitment of a Level 3 practitioner was ongoing. All was going well, and preparations were being put in place of an Ofsted Inspection.

Governor question

Q: How can we expand capacity?

A: Whilst we are in a great position overall, we currently do not have the staff or space to be able to expand further.

In discussion, governors agreed that further consideration should be undertaken to explore ways in which to expand the provision. The demand was there and if further children could be supported this would bring additional income to the school and secure numbers of pupils moving into reception at both schools. A feasibility study into the use of the nursery area at Darley was one option. It was important to evidence the situation to the LA and to provide robust options for their consideration.

**Vulnerable pupils**

Teachers have been continuing to identify any learning gaps and to provide support as and when required. The plan to use a qualified tutor, using the Catch-Up funding was having a positive impact and there was clear evidence that these pupils were catching up with their learning. Our efforts do not just focus on the vulnerable children as defined by Covid but on all those pupils who are vulnerable, such as the SEN pupils. All pupils are well known by staff and support is extended to the family where required. The overall aim has been to provide a safe and happy environment first and then to support learning.

Most of the children were now where they would be expected to be in terms of learning. With regards to well-being the majority were coping well with the ongoing challenges. Support was being provided where any concerns had been identified. Routines were helping the vulnerable children.

**Communication**

Communication with parents and across the community continues to be strong. A pattern has emerged of parents increasingly choosing to move their children to different schools. For example, 5 new children had joined Summerbridge whilst a number of others were leaving. This can upset the stability of school and impact on classes.

Q: What is the position with regard to the new child joining in Reception at Summerbridge?

A: The detail has been set out in my HT Report. The current position is that following extensive discussions with the LA the school is having to admit this child. NC reported that he had spoken to the parent to explain the situation. The current process meant that the school could not begin to consider an EHCP application for two terms.

Governors were concerned at the potential impact that this pupil could have both on other pupils and on staff welfare. However, the position had been explained clearly and governors were assured that NC would provide whatever support was required for this pupil and staff mindful of the welfare of all.

Governor question

Q: Does he come with any funding?

A: No.

Q: Are staff sufficiently trained to be able to support this child’s behaviour?

A: Yes.

1. **Policies**

The Pay Policy to be reviewed by the Finance Committee prior to consideration by the Full Governing Body. All other policies had been delegated to NC for approval.

1. **Governor Visits**

Whilst governors agreed that it was essential to undertake monitoring visits to the school it would be very difficult to carry out at this time.

Governors agreed

* to defer a decision about monitoring visits until the next meeting in February.
* That a report should be completed after each visit and then shared at the next available meeting. The reports would be used as evidence of challenge for any future Ofsted inspections.

EM had been able to undertake a premise’s visit and write up a report. AH had also produced a Teaching and Learning Report.

1. **Governing Body**

An additional governing body meeting had taken place on 11 November. Link responsibilities had been assigned at this meeting. All governors were content with their roles.

**Action:** SM agreed to update the Action Plan to reflect these roles and to circulate in advance of the next meeting.

**Training**

CW had undertaken the Introduction to Governance training on 18 November.

**Action:** Governors were reminded that they were required to ensure that they had completed the online safeguarding and prevent training and should all have DBS clearance.

1. **Forthcoming events**

A Christmas live performance was to be shown live via Zoom on 16th December at both schools. Visits from Santa via Zoom were also being organised.

1. **AOB**

NC reported that he had nominated Mary Fisher for a New Year’s Honour in respect of her 45 years of service as the school lollipop lady. The nomination was supported by CW on behalf of the governing body.

Governors agreed to hold all future meetings at 6pm to improve attendance. The 4pm starts were difficult for a number of governors.

Meeting closed at 5.20pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Chair)