Federation of Darley & Summerbridge Community Primary Schools

Governors’ Business Meeting at Summerbridge Community Primary School on

7 July 2021

Virtual Meeting opened at 6:00pm

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

S. Mallender (SM), Chair

C. White (CW)

A. Howarth (AH)

Lucy Martin (LM)

Lynne Bennion (LB)

Kate Milne (KM)

Thomas Gant

I**n attendance**: Chris Walker Clerk

Sharon Langton (SL) SBM

**Apologies**: Mike Poole

Eddie Moore

**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–** SM welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies** – Eddie Moore and Mike Poole had sent their apologies in advance of the meeting, which were consented to.
3. **Confidentiality and Declarations of Interest**: SM reminded governors of the need to ensure confidentiality of all discussions in line with the Code of Conduct. There were no declarations of interest.
4. **Minutes of previous meeting and review of actions:** The minutes from the meeting on 12th May 2021 were approved as an accurate record and would be signed by the Chair once able to do so.
5. **Matters Arising**

* LB informed governors that the LA had confirmed that the school was entitled to receive interest from the Norwood funding but that this would then have to be paid back.
* Last year the interest was zero and there was no clarification of what the total lump sum actually was.
* SL indicated that the school had received in the region of £150 in total over the last 5 years in interest payments from this funding.

**Action**: LB agreed to confirm the position with the LA and with Kettlesing if needed.

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

1. **Headteacher Report**

The Headteacher’s Report had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. Questions were invited.

Q: What is the state of staff enthusiasm?

A: It has been a challenging time for all staff. Enthusiasm has been up and down amongst staff. I expect it to be on track, as it has always been, by the end of the summer term.

Q: Has the behaviour of the pupils got worse during lockdown?

A: There has been impact with regard to the pupils’ behaviour for learning. Pupils appear to have a covid related apathetic approach to their learning and the enthusiasm and buzz that we should associate with new learning is not always evident in every lesson. This will have to improve in the autumn term. Pupil behaviour in the more general sense has been fine.

Q: There has been quite a lot of staff turnover; have you been able to identify any trends, particularly in terms of the setting?

A: The biggest impact has been at Darley. There have been no specific trends; it has largely been down to the impact of Covid – as people have changed the way they want to work.

NC explained that nationally it was evident that pupils’ attainment has dipped significantly this year. On average pupils were 2.6 months behind where they would have been in reading and 3 months behind where they would have been in maths. The latest data was set out in the Report.

Q: Why is the data better at Darley than Summerbridge?

A: We are currently analysing the data in greater depth. AH had shared his analysis of literacy at both schools which highlighted the significant impact of Covid on learning at both schools. Its hard to say at this stage why the outcomes were higher at Darley, it could potentially be down to increased levels of parental support during lockdown, but this is purely hypothetical.

Governors were pleased to see the high numbers of pupils achieving Greater Depth, particularly at Darley, where there were high numbers across all year groups in reading and maths. Furthermore, the Reading scores at Darley in Y2 and Y6 were higher than the previous year.

NC informed governors that he was concerned that the impact of covid had been greater on the disadvantaged pupils than at first anticipated. The loss of key knowledge was one key aspect of this widening of the gap. Maths outcomes at Summerbridge were a particular concern.

All pupils were being tracked and targeted support had been put in place for those pupils needing it. The challenge was to be able to give them all the support they would need to close the learning gaps, particularly in Maths and at Summerbridge.

NC informed governors that he had been able to obtain a discount on the Whiteboards. NC explained that there was no conflict of interest but that the only aim was to achieve a saving and VFM for the school.

**Finance**

SL reported that

* the cost of the kitchen provision (£13k) had not been included in the start budget and that this would impact on the carry forward.
* 44 children at Darley were now having a school meal, which was a significant increase and would hopefully generate income.
* Positive feedback had been received from parents regarding the new provision of school meals which were now being cooked on site at Darley.

Governors approved a price increase from £2.90 to £3 for staff meals – to cover costs. This price was also on a par with similar sized schools.

A number of budgetary changes would need to be factored into the revised budget, including:

* The loss of 5 pupils at Darley. (Impact of £20k)
* 6 pupils now joining reception at Summerbridge in September and not 7.
* Additional staffing costs (kitchen staff and the 1.1 FTE in Swale Class. The extra 0.1 reflected the additional time allotted to NQTs).
* An assumption of 1.1% had been included as the pay increase for support staff but the final figure was not yet known.
* The outcome of an EHCP application at Darley. If successful staff costs would increase.

Governor questions

Q: Are the kitchen costs £29k and have we got the cash in the bank?

A: Yes and yes – there is currently £130k in the bank but this is going down and will need review at the revised budget.

Q: Is expenditure currently exceeding income?

A: Yes.

Q: Where do the kitchen costs come from?

A: Replacement of essential equipment in both kitchens.

Q: Of the 44 children now taking meals how many are paying?

A: 20%. Hopefully once the other children see the improvement in the food numbers will pick up. Having an additional 14 pupils in reception should help too.

Q: Have staff costs fallen?

A: No. We are currently using supply to cover the vacant HLTA position – this has increased costs quite a bit.

Q: How many staff are employed across the Federation?

A: 28 (governors noted that 12 staff was a significant movement relative to the total)

KM confirmed that pre-school numbers continued to flourish and that this would mean that staff hours would not have to be reduced. There was also the possibility of generating income if lunches could be introduced to pre-school. A number of parents had inquired. Governors agreed that Amy could be approached once she had had time to settle into the new kitchen.

Q: Did you undertake the tasters?

A: No, we changed the menu and this had the desired impact. Amy had given children lots of tasters along the way however, and this has helped to increase numbers.

SL left the meeting at 6.52pm

Q: Was the purchase of the smartboards approved by governors?

A: The start budget was approved and within the start budget was an ICT budget. The purchased of the boards came from this budget. This figure is also within the delegated budget for the Headteacher.

Q: Are the new staff laptops ok?

A: Yes – all the staff laptops were purchased over the last few years and are fully updated. A further 6 laptops have been donated to the school from a parent at Summerbridge.

1. **Policies**

The following policies had all been reviewed by the Headteacher and circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. All were adopted.

Anti-Bullying

Collective Worship

Leave Policy

Promoting British Values

Pay Policy

Code of Conduct – Staff Behaviour Policy

NC confirmed that the leave policy had been amended to reflect that staff would now not be able to swap days. This had previously been possible, subject to the permission of the headteacher, but had not had a positive impact for the school overall and therefore the policy had been amended accordingly. In addition, authorised leave for special occasions (graduations etc) would now no longer be paid.

1. **Governance Action Plan Update.**

Governors agreed that it would be helpful to work with NC in developing the School Development Plan for 2021-22. The Governance Action Plan (GAP) would then be adjusted to align with the updated SDP.

Now that the Federation was in the Ofsted window governors agreed that it would be important to focus on the requirements of Ofsted. The School Education Advisor had provided training on the types of questions likely to be asked of governors - both CW and EM had attended on behalf of the governing body.

One immediate suggestion was to add a link governor for EYFS – potentially LM, to be confirmed at the September meeting.

Governors agreed that it was important that they were all knowledgeable in the key areas and able to answer questions from Ofsted.

SM agreed to ensure the GAP linked with the updated SDP and that it should form a standing agenda item at future meetings. An additional meeting in September would be considered at the business meeting.

**Action**: SM to recirculate the GAP.

1. **Governor**

**Monitoring Reports**

AH Literacy Report had been circulated to all governors in advance of the meeting.

**Training**

LB undertaken safeguarding training and confirmed that all governors must have read Keeping Children Safe in Education and that there should be a record to confirm this.

**Action:** Clerk to circulate the latest version of KCSIE and ask for governors to confirm that it had been read.

**Action:** All governors to ensure that they have completed all necessary online safeguarding and prevent training.

**Action:** To add both the above items to the September agenda.

1. **Forthcoming Events**

7th July – New parent meeting (D)

8th July – New parent meeting (SB)

5th July – Year 4 trip to HSG (SB)

16th July – Year 4 trip to HSG (D)

21st July – Y6 Leaver’s assembly (SB)

21st July – Summer fair (SB)

21st July – ‘Robin Hood’ (D)

22nd July – Y6 Leaver’s assembly (D)

22nd July – Y6 Leaver’s Picnic

NC informed governors that a number of trips had been undertaken and well-received by the children, staff and parents. Governors were invited to attend any of the listed events.

1. **AOB**

NC informed governors that a number of parents had asked whether blue polo shirts could be included as part of the school uniform, in addition to white ones. This was essentially because they were easier to keep clean.

Governor question

Q: Would there be any cost to the school?

A: No – the cost would be to the parents. Navy shirts were already part of the uniform at Summerbridge.

Governor approved the inclusion of navy polo shirts.

**Action**: NC agreed to speak to the uniform supplier to see if they made uniforms for the younger children to ascertain whether it would therefore be possible to have a uniform in Early Years.

LM provided an update on the funding for a log cabin:

* There were a number of different grants that could be applied for but none close to the £50k that was sought. The largest single amount was for £25k. The advice was that it was not possible to pool the funding from lots of different grants the amount had to be sources from one single grant.

In discussion, governors agreed that it would be helpful to know what might be available for £25k. If that was sufficient in the interim, then look to build upon it in the future.

NC confirmed that if the next two intakes were both 14 the current provision would be unsustainable. The process of creating a new classroom would take time and action was required now to begin the planning process. The current classrooms at Darley were not designed for 30 children.

**Action**: LM to seek advice re the £25k proposal.

NC informed governors that a number of parents had asked whether the school could extend the time of the day for pre-school by 15/20 minutes. There would be a cost impact as staff to pupil ratios would need to be applied.

**Action**: Governors agreed to survey existing parents in September and at the same time ask if they would also like school lunches. (NC)

A number of governors were concerned that the no parking lines outside the school were frequently being parked on. This was not technically a matter for the school to enforce but NC confirmed that he had been in regular contact with the appropriate authorities about this matter. There had not been much support so NC had spoken directly to one of the known offenders and a solution had been found. NC had additionally reminded all parents in newsletters.

Governors were concerned that this practice did present a safeguarding concern to the children.

**Action:** LB agreed to check if there was any support that could be provided by the police.

**Action**: Governors agreed to discuss at a future meeting, and to consider whether the issue of road safety could be actioned as a school project for the children.

1. **Dates of next meeting**

The provisional meeting schedule for 2021-22 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors agreed that meetings would be held either face to face or virtually and not blended. The dates were agreed. CW sent her apologies for the first meeting on 15th September.

SM thanked everyone for their support over the past 12 challenging months.

Meeting closed at 8.03 pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Chair)