



**Minutes of Cromwell Academy Local Governing Committee
held on 7 December 2022, 4.30pm**

Present

Governors:

Rebecca Bierton (REB), Chair of Governor
Angela Moore (AM), Parent Governor
Roger Worgan (RW), Co-opted Governor
Hannah Connor-James (HCJ), Headteacher & Governor
David Sykes (DS), Staff Governor

Clerk:

Debbie Warner

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| 1. | Apologies for absence |
| | There were no apologies for absence. The Clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate. |
| 2. | Declaration of interests |
| | The Chair is an employee of Ormiston Academies. |
| 3. | Elections – Co-opted governor |
| | <p>The Chair raised a previous discussion regarding Carla Parker’s attendance at governing body meetings and whether it is appropriate as part of her own professional development. Governors thought it was a good idea for CP to attend the meetings in the future. The Chair agreed but recommended that she should attend after further governors had been appointed to represent an even ratio of governors to staff.</p> <p>The Headteacher was also aware that a previous governor, Linda Corral, had indicated her interest to return as a co-opted governor. The appointment of a further staff governor was discussed. The clerk pointed out that under the scheme of delegation, the governing body could have 2 staff governors appointable by staff should a ballot be held. The Chair recommended that another recruitment drive for governors should take place after Christmas. All governors were in agreement with this. A governor thought that parent governors represented the governing body well and reach out to parents effectively.</p> <p>The Chair added that Jacqui Harris, who worked as a SENDCo until recently, is keen to join as a co-opted governor. The Chair provided governors with details of her background in education (SEND). Governors thought JH’s skills and experience would be beneficial to the governing body and asked that she attends the next meeting with a view of being considered for appointment.</p> <p>ACTION: CHAIR TO INVITE JACQUI HARRIS TO NEXT MEETING</p> |
| 4. | To approve Minutes of meeting held 22 September 2022 |
| | The minutes of meeting of 22 September 2022 were deemed to be an accurate account of proceedings and signed off by the outgoing Chair. |
| 5. | Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda |
| | The Chair recommended the governing body prepare a plan of when governor visits take place. All agreed that 1 per term would be appropriate and is manageable to the school. The Headteacher informed governors that the school has been requested, by the Trust, to provide a number of audits and it would be helpful to have governor input for a proportion of the audits. The Chair reminded governors to write up a report after each visit or meeting. |

Signed:

Date:

6. Educational performance of the school

To receive Headteacher’s Report

Governors confirmed they had received and read the report prior to the meeting. The Headteacher highlighted key points contained in the report:

School profiles show a changing profile and seem to be increasing in SEND areas, particularly this term. Currently there are 54 pupils on the SEND support register, representing 25% of the school. The school is finding it harder to support parents to access things at home due to the continuing decline in external services. The school is spending more time putting initiatives in place to enable parents to access appropriate services.

Attendance is lower than normal but it is slowly getting better and is marginally above national averages; this has been the profile since the pandemic. Persistent absence figures have come down since the last meeting.

The Headteacher was pleased to point out to governors that the school continues to score highly on staff PULSE surveys and was pleased that this was still the case despite the Headteacher continuing to cover large areas of SEND and being less visible to staff. There had been a small restructure of staff due to financial constraints, which may be reflected in the next survey. The Headteacher is trying to find ways to balance pay awards for staff and not cut roles but this has meant no recruitment until additional funding can be identified. The Chair noted the academic progress at 20 per cent of Reception Class at baseline compared to 40 per cent last year. The Headteacher acknowledged that data on entry is becoming more challenging and a significant increase of pupils joining the school with EAL impacts on entry data. It is expected that EAL pupils make rapid progress later on in the year groups.

The Headteacher referred to the large number of pupils who have joined the school since September and reported mobility continues to be high. Additionally, a significant number of these pupils have joined from overseas and assessment analysis of this data will follow.

The Headteacher was pleased to report that numbers at the school continue to rise.

Questioning/challenge:

Q: A governor asked about the impact on staff if the funding model stays the same

A: The Headteacher is hoping to manage but is having to target staffing to the greatest need and is being creative with redeployment of staff to optimise efficiency

The Chair was pleased to note that unauthorised absence remains low.

To receive Safeguarding update

The Headteacher reported no areas of significance. Categorisation on MyConcern can be tricky as there are limited section headings to log a concern.

The Chair noted 4 exclusions which was high. The Headteacher confirmed that these exclusions relate to one child.

Staffing

A governor referred to discussion at previous meetings highlighting the amount of time the Headteacher was spending on SEND. The Headteacher said the school had received some support from the Trust but this has not continued. In the absence of the caretaker, the Headteacher is also carrying out some of these duties. Governors remain concerned and questioned whether the Trust should be providing more support in these areas. The Chair referred to a letter from the former Chair to the Trust addressing issues of the lack of caretaker support and that the school is in the same situation, again. Governors stressed their concern that the Headteacher continues to spend time on non-strategic activities. They also expressed concern over health and safety issues if areas of maintenance are not being addressed. The Governors are concerned for the Headteacher’s wellbeing.

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| | <p>ACTION: CHAIR TO WRITE TO THE TRUST EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER SITE ISSUES AND SEND ISSUES AT THE SCHOOL.</p> <p>SDP Governors confirmed they had read the document prior to the meeting. The Headteacher highlighted that Maths is strong and DS is doing a good job on training staff. CPD in English and distributed leadership is in a good position and can evidence that progress has been made.</p> <p><u>Questioning/challenge:</u> The Chair said that it will be important to see the progress at a future meeting.</p> <p>Q: A governor asked what progress has been made in vocabulary A: The Headteacher reported lots of work is going on to ensure vocabulary is apparent in classrooms and is part of all lessons. The NELI programme for language has helped our EAL pupils. EYFS is based around sharing of good practice and sharing with other Trust schools.</p> <p>Safeguarding report – SCR check AM confirmed that an SCR check has been carried out. There is some training to complete.</p> <p>EYFS visit The Chair reported good improvement in this area. Outside areas have been transformed and inside areas are being used effectively. There are clear plans on where to prioritise. The Chair was satisfied that the needs of SEND pupils were being well met. A very positive visit. The Chair will return in the summer term for a further visit in this area.</p> |
| 7. | AOB |
| | <p>A governor enquired whether the current financial situation is impacting pupils. The Headteacher is hopeful that by careful budgeting will not be detrimental to the school. There is an expectation that financial support will come at some point. Governors urged the Headteacher to request support from the Trust for a caretaker.</p> <p>RW would like to carry out a PP visit soon and this will take place in the New Year.</p> <p>ACTION: HEADTEACHER TO SEND DATES TO RW FOR PP VISIT REB TO SEND RW VISIT REPORT FORM</p> <p>The Headteacher informed Governors that the SCR needs to be carried out termly but a governor is not required at every check-up. AM to attend school for the Local Authority audit which will provide an opportunity for Learning Walks.</p> <p>ACTION: HEADTEACHER TO SUGGEST NEW APPROACH TO VISITS</p> <p>Governors thought it would be useful to receive a finance update from the Trust’s Finance Director and it was decided to invite him to a future meeting this academic year.</p> <p>ACTION: HEADTEACHER TO INVITE FINANCE DIRECTOR TO LGB MEETING</p> |
| 8. | Date of next meeting |
| | 21 March 2023, 4pm |

Signed:
Date: