**Manor Hall Academy Trust**

**Springfield School and The Meadows School**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the LAB held at Springfield School, Thursday 27th February 2020 at 5.30pm**

**Present** Mr C Best (Executive Headteacher), Mr M Sproat (Chair), Mr S Wright (Vice Chair), Mr C Pearce, Mr D Davies, Mrs R Buckley, Mrs D Willshaw, Mrs A Whitfield, Miss A Chappell, Mr S Hambleton

**Also Present** Mrs D Finney (Associate Member (Head of School, Springfield), Mrs J Wright (Associate Member (Head of School, The Meadows), Mrs A Coates (Clerk Observer), Mrs M Smith (Clerk)

Otherwise these are an accurate and true reflection.

Governors were welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

Governors acknowledged receipt of the previously circulated Entrust Governor Information Pack.

1. **Apologies and Attendance**

Apology for non-attendance was received from Mr D Hilyer.

**Resolved**

**That the apology is received and accepted**

1. **Governing Board (GB) Matters**
   1. **Membership**

The Chair reported that Susan Green had stood down as Staff Governor. The Chair has written to thank Mrs Green for her work during her term as Governor of the school.

It was reported that Mr Sam Hambleton was elected as Springfield School staff member of the LAB for a term of four years effective 8th January 2020.

Mr Hambleton was welcomed to the Board.

* 1. **Confidentiality**

Governors were respectfully reminded that all discussions that take place during a GB meeting remain confidential to that meeting. In addition, minutes of this meeting do not become a public document until ratified at the next Full Local Academy Board meeting, after which they must be made available for inspection along with the agenda for that meeting and any report or other papers considered at the meeting.

The GB was requested to identify any items on this agenda which it requires to be recorded in the minutes as confidential matters.

noted

* 1. **Register of Business Interests**

Local governors and trustees were reminded of the requirement for them to update the register of business interests on an annual basis. This register should remain in school and will need to be included on the trust and school websites as appropriate.

It was reported that the Register is up to date with the exception of Mr Hambleton.

**Resolved**

**That Mr Hambleton would liaise with Mrs Smith in the school office in order to complete his declaration of business interest**

* 1. **Declaration of Interest in respect of Agenda**

Governors were reminded that anyone entitled to attend a meeting should declare an interest in respect of anything covered at that meeting if:

* There may be a conflict between their interests and those of the Trust / LGB / LAC.
* A fair hearing is required and there is reasonable doubt about their ability to act impartially.
* They have a pecuniary interest.

It may be appropriate that they withdraw from the meeting while the matter is considered and will not be able to vote.

No declarations were made.

**e) Link Governor Appointments**

Governors considered the appointment of Link Governor roles within the Board.

**Resolved**

**That the following Link Governor Roles are approved**

Safeguarding Darryl Davies

Pupil Premium/ Sports Premium Derek Hilyer

Child Protection & Prevent Darryl Davies

Looked After Children Steve Wright

Vulnerable Groups Darryl Davies

Progress Attainment

Health & Safety Colin Pearce

Reading & Phonics Debbie Wilshaw

It was agreed that Careers Education and Information Guidance be added the remit of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

The Board discussed H&S link governor role and current aspects in respect of safety elements within the Meadows school.

The clerk advised that link governors should report into termly meetings of the LAB. Guidance and templates for this can be found on The Key.

1. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 7th November 2019******

The Board acknowledged receipt of the previously circulated minutes from the LAB meeting held 7th November 2019 and considered the content of same.

**Resolved**

**That the minutes are approved as a true record to be signed by the Chair, archived and displayed as required**

1. **Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**

Governors considered the following actions listed at the end of the minutes.

*Action Minute Action Responsibility Outcome*

*1 2 & 3 Inform Entrust that Mr M Sproat*

*elected as Chair and Mr S Wright*

*elected as Vice Chair for one year Clerk Completed*

*2 4a Inform Entrust that Mrs J Jenkins,*

*Mr J Harvey and Miss M Rothwell*

*had resigned as of 31st October 2019.*

*Miss A Chappell is the new staff Governor*

*as from 1st November 2019.*

*Mrs R Buckley and Mrs D Willshaw be*

*appointed as Co-opted Governors from*

*7th November 2019. Clerk Completed*

*3 4c Complete the Register of Business Interests.*

*Miss Chappell, Mrs Willshaw*

*and Mrs Buckley -End of Autumn Term Completed*

*4 4f Sign the Code of Conduct.*

*Mr Pearce and Mrs Green - End of autumn term Completed*

*5 6 Attend Governor Induction training.*

*Mrs Buckley, Mrs Willshaw and Miss Chappell*

*- When applicable. See below*

*6 9 Draw up a working paper on the working*

*methods for the Task & Finish Group by*

*end of term Chair See below*

*7 9 Discus how long service of staff be recognised.*

*- EHT and Chair by end of autumn term See below*

*8 9 Attend future Parent’s Evenings.*

*Governors - When applicable See below*

*9 11 Read KCSIE 2019 and sign to say they have done so.*

*Mr Wright to distribute/All to sign End of Autumn Term See below*

*10 17, i, a Email Governors with dates to meet and complete a*

*Skills Audit. EHT- by end of autumn term See below*

**Item 5 – Governor Induction Training**

Induction training has yet to take place and will include Mr Hambleton.

**Resolved**

**That the Headteacher would facilitate Induction Training for Governors and report on same at the next meeting of the LAB**

**Item 6 - Task and Finish Group - Working Methods.**

Mr Sproat reported that a Task & Finish Group/Working Party took a tour of The Meadows and could access every area of the school without any security/identification checks, challenge or intervention. The Chair speculated that this could potentially result in a fail in respect of Ofsted should they have encountered this at inspection. Recommendations are now being sought and received in respect of improving the safety and security of the site.

Mr Pearce reported that Jason Kingston and Gary Plimbley from Entrust are working with Louise Smith on options to address the security issues as a priority.

Governors discussed the instance reported above and acknowledged the importance of appropriate security within the schools.

Timescale for the project was discussed and it was reported that the information from Entrust should be received by the end of this term, following which the Task and Finish Group will reconvene along with appropriate personnel to address site security at The Meadows as a matter of urgency. Potential for the project to include structural changes were mooted. The importance of making the school as secure as possible without unnecessary access difficulty was acknowledged.

Mr Best reported that there are passcodes within the school at different levels depending on vulnerability of the children. The footprint of the school has had to be increased to accommodate the increased numbers. The most vulnerable classes are more tightly secured. The numbers in school has risen sharply in the last year from 115 to 124 currently on roll. The Meadows currently have the use of a classroom owned by Leek High School. This may become a long term requirement due to the rising numbers at the school. Governors acknowledged that the increase in mainstream schools identifying children with additional needs impacts the increasing numbers of pupils at the school.

It was reported that the Fire Alarm system at The Meadows is linked with that of Leek High School.

Governors discussed and acknowledged that any new school security needs to be future proofed in respect of current and potential pupil numbers. The importance of addressing the current situation whilst being mindful of possible changes was acknowledged.

**Item 7 – Long Service of Staff – Recognition**

**Resolved**

**That Mr Sproat will write to all staff to ascertain their length of service and secure appropriate recognition from the LAB for milestones achieved.**

**Item 8 – Governor Presence at Parents’ Evening**

Non-Staff Governors were asked to attend appropriate events, including parents’ evenings. This was done last year with great success. Dates will be circulated.

**Item 9 - KCSiE**

Governors acknowledged receipt of the previously circulated KCSiE document and duly signed the declaration that they have received, read and understood the document and agree to abide by same.

**Resolved**

**That Mr Hilyer would be contacted to sign KCSiE accordingly**

**Item 10 - Skills Audit and Evaluation****

Governors acknowledged receipt of the previously circulated Skills Audit and Evaluation documents; the Audit having been undertaking at the start of term. The high level of Governor skills evident from the audit was acknowledged.

Governors recognised that a recent turnover of Governors potentially reduces experience of governance within the Board. This risk is evident within the recent audit. However, it is acknowledged that new Governors bring fresh ideas.

Mr Sproat highlighted the importance of the role of the Governor as critical friend and the importance of appropriate and effective challenge through questions from the Board.

1. **Reports**
   1. **Chair’s and Vice Chair’s actions**

The chair and/or vice chair are required to report any actions taken on behalf of the trust board / LGB / LAC since the last full governing board meeting

No Chair Power to Act were reported.

* 1. **Committee Reports**

Governors acknowledged receipt of the following Committee Agenda/Reports which were considered alongside the relevant minutes for each as detailed within the EHT Report, each of which were comprehensively overviewed to the satisfaction of the Board.

* **Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment/Outcomes for Children and Learners**

**Thursday 6th February 2020**



Mr Sproat highlighted that he had attended two of the standing sub committees ex-officio and that this would not be a regular occurrence.

Mrs Whitfield gave an overview of the Quality Teaching and Learning Committee report previously circulated, highlighting the Ofsted observations which have been addressed across the whole school.

The prospectus curriculum for Springfield has been done. The increase to 60 in funded places from September 2020 was highlighted. Mrs Whitfield noted the potential effectiveness of the new leadership structure at Springfield with Anna Latos (Maths) and Helen Summers (English). Helen and Anna have been appropriately recognised with title of upper and lower school leads. The two schools continue to work very closely on their curriculars.

“Effective Teacher” brought in for the staff has gone well with very positive feedback. This gives teachers recognition of good practise. Previous concerns that this would be extra work for staff is presently found not to be the case.

The T & L Chair, Angela Whitfield, signed off the Marking Policy. The school is looking at ways to make the presentation of policies more parent friendly with fewer acronyms. Anna had reported new “Evidence for Learning” software is being used. Ofsted now do not look at performance data within their new framework.

“White Rose” maths is being used at Springfield – Mr Hambleton reported that whilst this is primarily a mainstream package, he uses it in the curriculum at Springfield and is able to challenge children appropriately, the scheme is currently free to download.

Governors thanked the PTFA for funding a Book Club Reading scheme.

Miss Chapell reported that Sports England funding has been secured for Special Schools in Staffordshire. Restriction on the use of the funds apply but should benefit The Meadows and Springfield to circa £2-3k.

Governors congratulated the school.

Mr Pearce reported that he felt the meeting was well chaired and had been very positive.

* **Well Being Committee - Wednesday5th February 2020**

**The Meadows** ****

**Springfield** 

Mr Davies gave a comprehensive overview of the meeting highlighting the positive elements and comments of the recent Ofsted reports**.**

The Chill Out room is well used. Behaviour welfare numbers and the range of extra-curricular activities reflects the continued commitment of the staff. The variety and depth of extra-curricular activities is reflected in the enjoyment of the children engaging in them. Ofsted’s positive comments regarding this was noted.

The School Councils regularly meet. Pupils are positive with constructive ideas confidently proposed.

Dates for future meetings are variable and often at short notice.

**Resolved**

**That Governors will be invited to diarised meetings of the School Councils.**

* **Leadership and Management Committee Agenda – Monday 10th February 2020**



The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Sarah Rubanski, reports in respect of Safeguarding and this is fed back into leadership and management. Focus on family support and safeguarding was acknowledged.

Student attendance levels generally are acceptable and absence issues relate to a small number of pupils. Governors acknowledged that school refusers and children with medical issues affect data in this respect. Current software identifies specific children and reasons for absences in detail which is a useful resource.

Governors recognised that the schools have appropriate monitoring and actions in place in respect of absenteeism.

There have been no exclusions or records of racist incidents or cyber bullying since the last meeting of the LAB.

Persistence interventions are low and centred on small number of pupils.

Ofsted considered parental views as good with good communication in both schools.

Staff wellbeing continues to be addressed with good support when required.

Staff Room improvements, including the new dishwasher, has increased staff morale at Springfield.

The therapy dog is relocating so ~~the school~~ Springfield may be looking for a replacement.

TA attendance continues to be monitored at Springfield.

The annual Staff Survey will be undertaken in April. Governors discussed the possibility of incentives for staff to complete the survey along with the importance of trying to find out the questions that they, the Staff, want to be asked. The possibility of Mr Hambleton identifying this was mooted.

Governors acknowledged the importance of getting the views of staff and identifying ways to increase staff morale. Ways to celebrate success were discussed.

Governors discussed the use of mobile phones in contravention of school policy. The difficulty in policing and managing the use of phones on the school sites was acknowledged.

Mrs Wright highlighted the importance of ensuring that children know there is a time and place to use their phones and the difficulty with this in respect of the variety of children at The Meadows.

Mobile Phones policy is on the Executive Leadership agenda for review.

* 1. **Nominated/Link Governors reports**

There were no Link Governor Reports.

1. **Executive Headteacher’s Report******

***SDP December 2019 Springfield*** ******

***SDP January 2020 The Meadows*********

Governors acknowledged receipt of the previously circulated Executive Headteacher Report including the SDP for both schools.

Mr Best gave a comprehensive overview of the Report as follows –

The School Development Plans are progressing as expected.

Leadership and management structures at both schools now with senior leadership having responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning is felt to be successful, the meetings of the Executive Leadership Team are effective and reporting through the Heads of school is working much better.

Mr Sproat asked if both Heads of School are happy with the new arrangement and both replied in the affirmative.

Phonics and reading are high priority at both schools following the recent Ofsteds.

Debbie Wilshaw and Helen Summers (Upper School and English Lead) are working closely in this area for phonics at Springfield.

Springfield’s tracking of skills and progress are starting to be implemented. Each subject lead will now check descriptors with focus throughout the schools on phonics.

**Finance**

The year-end financial positions were reported to the Leadership and Management sub-committee as was the current financial position for both schools. Governors noted the overspend at The Meadows last year. The principle cause of this was due to the floods filling the cellar of The Meadows. Both The Meadows and Leek High were liable for these costs and two insurance companies were therefore involved. The Meadows paid the whole cost to the contractors amounting to some £79K. Negotiations continue with Leek high as to the appropriate apportionment of the liability. The sub-committee reasoned that a 50-50 split was proportionate to the liability in this instance. £4K is expected to be classed at betterment because it was deemed prudent to move the power switches out of the cellar to a safer location, so we are currently expecting a reimbursement from Leek High of £37.5k.

Open discussion ensued during which Governors acknowledged that the finances of both The Meadows and Springfield schools seem to be in a good position.

**MAT Update**

Mr Best reported that the new ARBOR information system by which all schools within the Trust are able to report behaviour and progress direct to the Trust is being rolled out.

There is potential for Governors to observe data through this system at meetings. The Trust are working on this along with a dashboard for each school. This will be reported further in due course.

**Funding**

New additional monies for higher needs schools reported by central government to circa £11.2m for Staffordshire is unlikely to enhance the budget at the two schools. It is anticipated that this allocation will merely plug the gap of LA deficit and increased need already evident within the county. There is a possibility that the local authority may find money to support higher needs schools whose budgets have seen no increase in base funding for the past 7-8 years. The Executive Headteacher, in his role as Chair of the Special Schools Forum will be writing to parents advising them of the facts regarding funding allocation and availability. The school will also be meeting with local cabinet members to discuss the matter further as the public perception is that there are additional monies available.

Open discussion ensued during which Governors acknowledged that mainstream schools increasingly identify children with additional needs which potentially increases the pupil numbers within the Trust. The MAT will continue to work towards improved funding, using its influence as a MAT accordingly.

**MAT Expansion Update**

Options to bring in additional schools to enhance the MAT continue to be considered including schools in Stoke on Trent, Sandwell and Stockport. This will be reported further in due course.

Governors discussed the implication of top-slicing moving forward.

It was reported that, historically, the funding formula has been equitable, however, it is possible that this may move to a flat rate which could negatively impact some schools more than others. Further information and clarity will be available in the summer term.

Governors informed the new Chair of *The Manor Hall Trust* is John Alexander, a former governor of the partnership, and opined favourably to same.

Mr Best gave an overview of key developments at other schools within the Trust, commending staff at Merryfields following their recent Ofsted.

The Trust now operates a peer review system throughout the schools whereby mock Ofsted’s are undertaken. Mr Best has met with another Head and undertaken a ‘Mocksted’ at Cicely Haughton to date. Other schools will follow.

**Wellbeing and Policies**

Mr Sproat referred to the content of the February Wellbeing Sub Committee meeting as detailed in the previously circulated minutes.

Concern regarding the recording of incidents which happened on transport is being addressed.

Governors noted the following Policies which are currently under review

Admissions

Attendance

Careers

Careers Providers Access

Charging & Remissions

Complaints Procedure

Equal Opportunities

Exams

Freedom of Information

PREVENT

Mr Sproat is currently reviewing the above Policies. The Trust is supporting the schools with appropriate policies for them within the Trust. It was acknowledged that some policy content will be directed by the Trust where others will be more open. Timeline for review of the policies was discussed.

**Resolved**

**That the Policies currently in place are approved**

**All required Policies will be reviewed at sub-committee level where appropriate, with changes reported back to the LAB for their approval in due course**

**That presentation of Policies will be addressed by Mr Sproat**

**That Mr Sproat and Mrs Whitfield are thanked for their work on Policies**

**School Trips**

Open discussion ensued regarding school trips for the students. Voluntary contributions are requested from parents/carers. It was acknowledged that some parents are less able to contribute to school trips. Shortfalls are currently met by the school budget. Trips to date have not needed to be cancelled due to funding.

1. **Code of Conduct **

The new spring 2020 Code of Conduct was commended to the LAB for consideration. Governors were requested to sign that they have read, understood and agree to abide by the Code. A signatory sheet to that effect was circulated at the meeting and duly signed.

**Resolved**

**That Mr Hilyer will be contacted to sign off this document**

1. **Safeguarding Updates** (Section 6.7 of Governance handbook and Section 8 of the Entrust Governor Information Pack)

**Governors noted the content of the previously circulated GIP.**

The Governing Board is advised to note the information in the Entrust GIP: 8v)

a) Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – This document was received and duly signed off

b) S128 regulations

c) DBS for Chairs of Trustees

d) Tackling Criminal Exploitation County Lines

e) Parent online Toolkit

1. **Strategic Leadership** (Section 2 of the Governance handbook and Section 4 of the Entrust Governor Information Pack)
2. Being Strategic -School Vision
3. Parental Engagement
   * + - 1. Financial accountability (Section 3.4 of the Governance Handbook and Section 5 of the Entrust

Governor Information Pack) - if relevant, see Scheme of Delegation

1. SMRSA
2. DfE – Key Metric Calculations
3. DfE - Related Party Transactions
4. National Funding Formula
5. Early Years Provisional Allocations
6. Suppliers- Financial advice
7. PE and Sports Premium Funding
8. Pupil Premium Funding
9. Pupil Premium Funding Reports and Research
10. Increase in Teachers Pay
11. Model Whole School Pay
12. **People** (Section 4 of the Governance Handbook and Section 6 of the Entrust Governor Information Pack)

i) Educators on Board….. What GBs and School Leaders Should Expect from Each Other

ii) Training and Development

a) GovernorSpace

1. **Structures** (Section 5 of the Governance Handbook and Section 7 of the Entrust Governor Information

Pack)

a) NGA – MAT – Establishing and Developing

**Compliance** (Section 6 of the Governance Handbook and Section 8 of the Entrust Governor

Information Pack)

**(i) Religious Education**

a) Explore, Engage, Reflect

b) MEAS Team support (RE)

c) Holocaust Memorial Day

d) RE Ofsted reports

**(ii) SEND- review**

**(iii) Statutory policy update**

1. Whistle Blowing

It was reported that a Whistle Blowing Policy is in place.

**(iv) Staffing**

1. EYFS Staff: Child ratios
2. Teacher Mental Health and Well-Being – It was reported that a Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy is in place and that this covers all employees at the schools.
3. Tips for promoting Positive attitudes
4. Reducing Teacher Workload

**(v) Safeguarding and Pupil Welfare** **–** See above

**(vi) Pupil Well-Being** **(6.8 Pupil Well-Being)**

1. Statutory Relationships and Sex Education
2. Behaviour Support
3. Character Education
4. MEAS support
5. STEM
6. School Governors and Looked after Children
7. Trauma Informed
8. Healthy Schools Rating Scheme
9. School Sport and Activity Action Plan
10. SEL
11. School Food Standards
12. First Aid

**vii) School Premises (6.10 School Premises)**

a) CIF grant – not applying at present

1. **Evaluation** (Section 7 of the Governance Handbook and Section 9 of the Entrust Governor Information Pack)

a) Integrated Financial Planning

b) Effectiveness of Peer to Peer Support

c) NAHT report on Middle Leaders

1. **Inspections (7.3 Inspections)**

a) Ofsted Update 1

b) Ofsted Update 2

c) Report – initial experiences

d) Early Reading Ofsted Update

e) Ofsted Parent Questionnaire

f) Watchsted

1. **Additional Information** (Section 10 of the Entrust Governor Information Pack)

**i)** Funding Streams – It was reported that no further additional funding streams are currently being considered for the schools at this time.

**ii)** Inter Faith Resources

**iii)** Cultural Education Guidance

1. **AOB**

**i) Corona Virus**

Mr Best reported that a member of staff due to take a recent visit to Japan did not go in consideration of the Corona Virus situation.

DfE guidance in this respect continues to be closely monitored and acted on accordingly.

**ii) Membership of the Wellbeing Committee**

**Resolved**

**That Sam Hambleton would replace Susan Green on the Wellbeing Committee and Debbie Wilshaw will stand down as a member.**

1. **Confidentiality**

No items were identified to be minuted as a confidential appendix to the main minute.

1. **Date and Time of Future Meetings including Committee meetings where known**

The next meeting of the LAB was confirmed as 4th June at 5.30pm at The Meadows.

The date of the next meeting of the Wellbeing Committee was confirmed as Tuesday 12th May at 5.30pm

***ACTIONS***

**Resolved**

**That the following Link Governor Roles are approved**

Safeguarding Darryl Davies

Pupil Premium/ Sports Premium Derek Hilyer

Child Protection & Prevent Darryl Davies

SEND & Looked After Children Steve Wright

Vulnerable Groups Darryl Davies

Progress Attainment Debbie Wilshaw

Health & Safety Colin Pearce

*School Office and website to be updated*

**Resolved**

**That the Headteacher would facilitate Induction Training for Governors and report on same at the next meeting of the LAB**

*EHT*

**Long Service of Staff – Recognition**

**Resolved**

**That Mr Sproat will write to all staff to ascertain their length of service and secure appropriate recognition from the LAB for milestones achieved**

*MJS*

**KCSiE Document**

**Resolved**

**That Mr Hilyer would be contacted to sign KCSiE accordingly**

*School Office*

**Policies**

**Resolved**

**That the Policies currently in place are approved**

**All required Policies will be reviewed at sub-committee level where appropriate, with changes reported back to the LAB for their approval in due course**

**That presentation of Policies will be addressed by Mr Sproat**

*School Office and website to be updated*

**Code of Conduct (Spring 2020)**

**Resolved**

**That Mr Hilyer will be contacted to sign off this document**

*School Office*

**Resolved**

**That Sam Hambleton be appointed to the Wellbeing Committee and Debbie Wilshaw will stand down**

*School Office and website to be updated*

**Resolved**

**That Mr Hambleton would liaise with Mrs Smith in the school office in order to complete his declaration of business interest in respect of his role as Governor**

*Mr Hambleton/School Office*

*The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.40pm.*