

Sawston Village College
Local Governing Body Meeting
Minutes



Sawston
 Village College

28th March 2023

Governors Present:

Polly Stanton (PS), Jonathan Russell (JRU), Alan Sutton (ASU), Eleanor Clapp (EC), Gloria Reed (GR), Priya Schoenfelder (PSC), Sam Abbs (SA), Rachel Kerr (RK), Colin Sausman (CS), Isabel Thomas (IT), John Godwood (JG), Sophie Palmer (SP) (Clerk)

Others Present: Sue Gelder

Apologies Received: None. RK joined late due to AL SEND meeting

This meeting was organised using the Anglian Learning Planning Tool and was quorate throughout.

Item number	Paper number	Item	Action
1		Standing Items	
1.1		Welcome and apologies PS welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
1.2		Declaration of conflicts of interest - none	
1.3		Minutes of 31st January for approval Minutes of 31 st January 2022 were approved as a true and accurate record and will be signed by PS.	
1.4		Matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial action – there were 24 staff members who took action. What happened on the first industrial strike dates gave some indication on the numbers and enabled planning for the second set of dates. All lessons were covered by SLT and Cover Supervisors and no teachers were asked to cover or plan lessons for others. The school stayed open for year 11, children of critical workers and vulnerable children. Some teachers made the decision to come in rather than take action. The picket line was carried out in a respectful and collegiate way. All dates went smoothly and as planned. JR’s acknowledged that he had to ask a great deal of the SLT and 	

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		<p>year leads. Pupil feedback has been positive. The NEU is balloting members next week around the unfunded increases. This could result in 5 further days of strike.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent engage event was set for 15th March but due to the industrial action this was due to be reorganised for 24th April. Partly due to further planned industrial action in the summer term and to allow more time for planning and to not add extra pressure to the school, it has been decided to delay the event until the summer after the exams. 	
2		Chair / Clerks business	
2.1		<p>Feedback from AGF, DoE</p> <p>PSc attended the AGF meeting on PS behalf. The meeting focused on AL strategy and the blueprints which many chairs hadn't yet seen. PSc commented that SVC was ahead of the curve in the implementation of the blueprints. There was a separate discussion with Duncan Cooper on the blueprints where we can give feedback.</p> <p>SEND was a big focus of the meeting along with financial pressures and AL financial transformation. Here AL are working with external consultants to review finances and draft new financial models to consolidate and centralise finances across AL schools. Further details will be released soon and in particular what this means for LGB. All schools are in different financial positions with SVC in a relatively strong position.</p> <p>Other points raised included what standard training is needed for risk, issues with Connect and parental engagement – SVC is one of the groups already working on this area. A further point raised was changing the scheme of delegation. Duncan Cooper was very complimentary of how SVC operates as LGB.</p>	
2.2		<p>Artsmark School – we are pending a response. Update since LGB - SVC is a platinum Artsmark school once more. We can be very proud of this rare accolade.</p>	
2.3		<p>Sawston was listed in The Times Parent Power, which lists the names of outstanding schools, at a national level. LGB commented that we are incredibly grateful for all the hard work behind the scenes enabling this achievement. The thanks were extended to the pupils. who represent the school and work hard inspired by the staff.</p>	
3		College Improvement Plan: Respect	

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3.1	LGB3 3.1	<p>JRU and SGE provided an update on the Respect strand of the CIP.</p> <p>JRU - AL AL first priority is EDI. JRU co-chairs this group at the Trust level. This is a key strategic group which is driving AL to achieve EDI at Trust level.</p> <p>Much of what SVC has achieved is happening across AL and is focused on 4 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum ● Culture ● Leadership and governance ● HR <p>The AL EDI group is capturing 12 objectives divided across these 4 areas that we want to judge ourselves against. These will be presented to the AL Board in May. This will enable us to review what the gaps may be and how we plug these gaps. LGB to review these objectives at a later date.</p> <p>There is a movement now from equality to equity. This is a sensitive area. CS asked what the difficulties are within SVC. JRU commented that there is a wide range of sometimes emotive views on complex subjects such as identity and cancel culture. For all AL schools to agree on a position in these areas is difficult. At SVC, such discussions with pupils are handled fairly, sensitively, cautiously and pragmatically.</p> <p>Sue Gelder - SVC</p> <p>In the last 12 months, at SVC, there has been an improvement in the following identified key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) ● Behaviour, attitudes and language use ● Enhanced celebrations and awards <p>This has included assemblies with powerful messages such as during Black History month and Pride. These assemblies will continue.</p> <p>In Year 8 and 9 there has been some insensitive and inappropriate use of language. In response, pupils have been encouraged to think about actions rather than words. This has been actioned through a new PSHE model specifically around racism. This has included supporting and raising funding for the Wear Red charity.</p> <p>The BAME Society has a new year 11 head of senate. This is a passionate group who provide feedback to SVC.</p>	
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		<p>Sarah Jackson-Buckley is leading the 'broadening the narrative' project by providing teachers with resources for teaching sensitive subjects. This builds on the training by Bennie Kara who gave a Trust wide presentation on equality and diversity. Sarah will further develop resources in the summer term at subject meetings to give teachers resources to help with responding to sensitive comments; to educate and reframe so that pupils understand why a particular behaviour isn't supported.</p> <p>Sexism in School is addressed, among other things, through international women's day. This has included conversations around equality, equity and justice. There is a feminist group which provides feedback and has influenced change such as the introduction of period products in toilets for pupils and staff.</p> <p>In addition, the pupils' voice provides feedback to staff and the equality forum is working with staff members to look at a variety of projects.</p> <p>SVC achieved a Rainbow Flag award in May 2022.</p> <p>A new PSHE model has been introduced and this is going well. Ellie Hall led and took what we had and restructured the fortnightly PSHE lessons. This includes external visitors to present at assemblies. This was recently externally audited with some suggestions being made and the subject will be reviewed in May. As there is only 1 lesson per fortnight, quality assurance is more difficult to manage. The PSHE programme is available on the SVC website.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SLT has undertaken EDI and unconscious bias training with the national college and plan to roll this out more widely. - Further training with the Bennie Kara work - Pupil survey that went out today asking about behaviour, racism sexism and wellbeing and put into practice the feedback. - PSHE subject review. <p>LGB questions:</p> <p>EC asked if they have received feedback from parents on PSHE. SGE replied that they have received fewer queries this year than previous years.</p> <p>IT asked if there is a central role for libraries, if the library contains resources for specific up to date topics. JRU replied that there is a new librarian who does themes in the library (e.g. International Women's Week) and there is</p>	<p>JRU to consider how the library fits into the action plan and if a policy is required in regards to refreshment of stock addressing/providing</p>
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<p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p>		<p>a wide range of texts which represent all sorts of issues. JRU to consider how the library fits into the action plan and if a policy is required in regards to refreshment of stock addressing/providing information on equality and diversity.</p> <p>CS commented that this sounds ambitious and if pupils are more comfortable and aware of issues than teachers. CS was reassured that the school is ensuring teacher training is up to date.</p> <p>PSc noted at the last Governor day dignity at work and active bystander training was discussed. Has this been rolled out? JRU replied, this is to be rolled out.</p> <p>2. Improved behaviour, attitudes Last September, SVC introduced training around young people, attachment theory and resetting de-escalated behaviours. There are fortnightly behaviour meetings, standing items at SLT meeting and SGE reports to LGB termly. SVC is seeking additional support for complex individuals for teachers from the pastoral team.</p> <p>Like all schools nationally, SVC is still facing challenges with complex and defiant behaviour. Staff are never complacent and there are ongoing discussions with how to work together to improve behaviour and attitudes. SGE circulated to staff a survey on 7 proposals of how we could further make changes. Feedback has been received and will be reviewed.</p> <p>EC asked what drove the consultation. SGE replied this was driven by the SLT and the pastoral team feeling the grind. JRU added that this was also in response to one department in particular and with behaviours being seen in general, it was decided to review behaviour and look for trends in data.</p> <p>EC asked where in the school day changes of behaviour are seen. SGE replied that high level/time demand pupils are few and most behaviours are during social time where pupils are more boisterous and defiant of teachers than inside lessons.</p> <p>RK asked if it is possible to link up data from different sources, for example pastoral and SEND tracking. This isn't possible with the current Provision Map being used.</p> <p>3. Celebration and Art awards Lots of items linked to care values eg celebration assemblies and pledge passports - the first tranche of pupils are receiving their bronze awards for their achievements and are awarded in celebration assemblies.</p>	<p>information on equality and diversity</p>
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		<p>Club and activity leaders complete each half term which pupils have registered and attended clubs. This data is then held centrally by the school to see who is included/attended.</p> <p>In July 2022, there was a prize giving evening with pupils and parents in attendance. This was successful and positive feedback was received. This model will be used again in 2023.</p> <p>There is an attendance prize draw which raises awareness of good attendance.</p>	
4		Blueprint Review	Jonathan Russell
4.1	LGB4 4.1	<p>Review AL Inclusion Blueprint</p> <p>JRU took questions on the inclusion blueprint. This is the third blueprint to be rolled out which SVC has evaluated itself against. SVC is doing what it should be doing in regards to this blueprint.</p> <p>JRU will continue to report on the blueprints as they are further developed.</p> <p>PS commented that looking through the blueprint, where staff are doing things JRU can be confident they are happening but where JRU is looking for a response from pupils feedback can't be guaranteed. JRU agreed this was fair and is something which can be influenced but have no control over. The blueprints continue to be a 'work in progress' and are discussed by the central ELT.</p>	
5		Principal's Update	Jonathan Russell
5.1		<p>We received feedback via a peer review. This is an annual review where we were visited by Heads from Netherhall, Bottisham and James Woodcock (AL).</p> <p>This 360 review included deep dives on the curriculum and focused on history and MFL which SVC believes are amongst its strongest subjects. The aim was to reassure SVC that these lessons are as strong as we think they are (from our own quality assurance processes) and included speaking with teachers and pupils.</p> <p>The outcome was extremely positive in respect of curriculum design and content and pupils behaviour was 'impeccable and exemplary' in all lessons. There was 1 behaviour incident noted and this was corrected calmly straight away.</p>	

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5.2		<p>One minor point raised, and was discussed at length, was if there was less structure would this allow pupils to be more independent and creative?</p> <p>JRU has shared the report with JG.</p> <p>JG confirmed the report is entirely positive with a few suggestions for areas of consideration for improvement. This is an excellent outcome and confirms we have two strong subjects to put forward to OFSTED when visited.</p>	
5.3	LGB4 5.3	<p>Complaints & Whistleblowing reporting None to report.</p> <p>Premises Report JRU took questions on the premises report. GR was impressed with the report, it shows SVC is in a strong position with compliance and H&S and that the Premises Manager is working hard and doing a great job.</p> <p>The School rebuilding programme is pending sign off after April.</p>	
5.4	LGB4 5.4	<p>EC asked if pupils will be moved into temporary classrooms. JRU commented that, according to current plans, the rebuilding programme will be achieved without the need of temporary classrooms. The project has not been finalised or signed off by the DfE.</p> <p>Staff Report As for all schools nationally, recruitment and retention of staff is very challenging and there are a number of active vacancies and new staff starting.</p> <p>The admin and HR teams are in a strong position but the volume of recruitment is adding additional pressure.</p>	
6		Governance	Polly Stanton
6.1	LGB4 6.1	<p>Safeguarding link report - Sam Abbs It was noted that the HR team works well together and our SCR is strong.</p> <p>MyConcern is used to log safeguarding concerns. There are 2 strands of the safeguarding structure; core and wider team.</p> <p>There are currently 60 open safeguarding concerns and the core team is actively reviewing how these can be managed going forward to reduce the numbers. This includes linking in with the behaviour policy and staff</p>	

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6.2	LGB4 6.2	<p>having initial discussions. This will require the upskilling of staff through training.</p> <p>MyConcern can be used to task staff and set deadlines and can be used to view a child's journey (OFSTED requirement).</p> <p>Behaviour, Inclusion and welfare report - Sue Gelder There are no new areas of concern. Some pupils in Years 8 and 9 are being particularly challenging. There are a small number of pupils (approx 7%) who need high level sanctions. These repeated behaviours include defiance, physical behaviours and increased truancy. Sanctions make little difference to the behaviour of the most entrenched pupils.</p> <p>CS asked if the truancy increase is linked to COVID and the impact of not being in school. JRU and SGE commented that this is seen in all schools at a national level and believed to be a long term impact of COVID. SVC are thinking creatively and using different interventions such as modifying timetables to encourage pupils to attend school. Any concerns are raised with the safeguarding team but across the board the number of behaviour incidences is increasing monthly. This is difficult and challenging for all, especially the aim to minimise the impact of behaviour and to maintain the normality for the majority. As the number of cases is increasing, the resources available are decreasing and expectation on teachers is increasing. This in turn has an impact on recruitment and retention (a national picture as reported by ASCL and all other unions, CEOs and other national leaders).</p>	
6.3	LGB4 6.3	<p>SENDV/Pupil Premium/CIC link report - Rachel Kerr The need for SENDv/PP/CIC provision is going up and resources are stretched and creating difficulty as referrals go ahead. These will be dealt with at the school level as specialist provision is not available. These create enormous pressure.</p> <p>In spite of national pressures and local demands, there is a lot of positivity in the team and with what Natalie Morris (SENDco) is putting in place.</p> <p>A provision map is being implemented. This requires inputting data and is a lot of work upfront. In the long term it should help and is a useful process to go through. This is a Trust level evaluation process and tracking system which will help to show what is going on across the board.</p> <p>From a PP perspective, RK didn't get a chance to meet Dan Burgess.</p>	

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<p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p>	<p>LGB4 6.4</p> <p>LGB4 6.5</p>	<p>GR commented that PP looks to be a creative use of funding so that it is used for individuals and creatively across the school. ASU added that this includes a national tutoring programme and in school tutoring for year 9s.</p> <p>EC asked for feedback on providing children with breakfast. None received so far. To be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p>Children in care (CIC) is on the AL planning tool and is separate from pupil premium and SEND. SGE is designated teacher but is delegated to Martha. RK to link with and report to LGB5.</p> <p>Health and Safety link report – Priya Schoenfelder SVC received an incredible H&S audit report. It is very difficult to get a moderate score and we received substantial 97% assurance (an 18% increase since the last audit), which is unheard of. All actions are already being addressed. The Premises Manager, Aaron Hamlin (and his team), has put in an impressive amount of work and shown himself to be extremely capable and likeable.</p> <p>Quality Assurance – John Godwood JG picked out the highlights of his meeting with JRU. JG has been trying to understand what the quality assurance responsibilities of the LGB are and to make sure we are doing these.</p> <p>LGB is responsible for holding the leadership to account for standards, the quality of education and engagement with parents. OFSTED will want to meet someone from LGB who is responsible.</p> <p>JG said that he felt that QA is very well embedded into the culture and suggested that the best way to report this to LGB each half term via JG. This will ensure LGB are holding the school to account.</p> <p>JG recommends JRU/PS further clarify the QA link governor role and process.</p> <p>JG raised concerns about the amount of hard work and time it takes for the school to work at an extremely high standard. LGB to further discuss at LGB5.</p> <p>RK asked if the link governor report template should have further questions about what specifically link governors should look for to focus questions during a visit - What is good, what is not good, what are we doing and how do we know? Should we pull this information out more in the link governor visits and reports?</p>	<p>Feedback from providing children with breakfast to be brought to LGB5.</p> <p>CIC to be picked up at LGB5.</p> <p>SP to add QA report to LGB agenda each half term.</p> <p>To discuss how LGB can further support the school.</p> <p>JG and PS to further</p>
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6.6	LGB4 6.6	<p>IT raised triangulation of data. This is achieved through the executive summaries and link governor reports and own triangulation of what link governors have seen/sources of evidence. JG and PS to discuss.</p> <p>Finance including fraud prevention and misreporting There are multiple checking mechanisms in place. PS asked if staff might be out of pocket if there is no petty cash. Staff can use the school card or expense claim back. CS to follow up at some point to check the process is in line with AL checking procedures.</p> <p>Finance breakdown We are currently in a good position and should break even. There will be some variance due to staffing fluctuations.</p> <p>Budget process for 2023-4. The additional energy cost to school is £254K. We will be getting an income increase next year but the staff costs will wipe this out. We should have a balanced budget by the end of the financial year and we might be able to carry forward any saved budget. We will have a better sense of where we are in May and a 2023-24 recommended budget in June which will be built on assumptions.</p> <p>CS to go through finances with Hugo and feedback.</p>	<p>discuss if the link governor template needs amending and how data is triangulated.</p> <p>CS to go through finances with Hugo and feedback.</p>
6.7		<p>EC asked if the new building work will cost the school additional energy funding. JRU replied that the new building will be carbon neutral and energy efficient and the existing buildings will be made more efficient.</p>	
6.8		<p>Scheme of delegations - Polly Stanton Finances and responsibilities are changing and will be added to the LGB agenda when announced.</p> <p>Review key risks linked to agenda items ALT has said this can be on hold until September. CS commented that we have currently covered all risk areas at this meeting with recruitment and retention of staff and capacity being the main risks and that these are being mitigated the best they can. CS is happy to continue to monitor.</p>	
7		Policies	Polly Stanton
7.1	LGB4 7.1	Admissions Policy – noted the years are missing on the policy. Approved pending updating of dates.	
7.2	LGB4 7.2	Homework Policy – no changes. Approved.	
7.3	LGB4 7.3	Low level concern Policy – new AL policy. Approved.	

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8		Any other business	Polly Stanton
8.1	LGB4 8.1	<p>Staff Survey analysis – JG JG went through the staff survey analysis which was carried out by Philip Church (AL). This compares SVC outcomes with all AL schools and then with secondary schools and central teams.</p> <p>SVC comes out in general very positively in comparison to the whole AL. We are down on staff-student connections – these are stronger in primary school most likely due to pupils having the same teacher all the time.</p> <p>SVC did very well compared to all secondary schools. In particular we stand out in the area of manager support at 89% with no other school coming close. Trust in leadership is 78% and we are head and shoulders above others. The staff survey suggests that in general staff feel well supported and confident. SVC came out very positive which is testament to the hard work of all staff and the supportive culture created by the leadership team.</p>	John Godwood

Agreements/Approvals

Agenda Item	Item approved/agreed
1.3	Minutes from 31st January 2023 approved.
7.1	Admissions Policy – noted the years are missing on the policy. Approved pending updating of dates.
7.2	Homework Policy – no changes. Approved.
7.3	Low level concern Policy – new AL policy. Approved.

Actions

Agenda Item	Item	Responsibility
3.1	JRU to consider how the library fits into the action plan and if a policy is required in regards to refreshment of stock addressing/providing information on equality and diversity	JRU
6.3	Feedback from providing children with breakfast to be brought to LGB5.	JRU

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6.3	CIC to be picked up at LGB5.	RK
6.5	SP to add QA report to LGB agenda each half term.	SP
6.5	To discuss how LGB can support the school.	LGB
6.5	JG and PS to further discuss if the link governor template needs amending and how data is triangulated.	JG and PS
6.6	CS to go through finances with Hugo and feedback.	LGB 6

Future Agenda Items

Agenda Item	Future LGB	Responsibility
Feedback from providing children with breakfast to be brought to LGB5.	LGB 5	JRU
CIC rolled forward to LGB5	LGB 5	RK
SP to add QA report to LGB agenda each half term.	LGB 5 or 6	SP
To discuss how LGB can support the school.	LGB 5	LGB
CS to go through finances with Hugo and feedback.	LGB 6	CS

Dates of 2022-23 meetings

Autumn 1 ————— Tuesday 20th September (in-person)
Autumn 2 ————— Tuesday 8th November (virtual)
Governors' Day 1 — Friday 2nd December
Spring 1 ————— Tuesday 31st January (virtual)
Spring 2 ————— Tuesday 28th March (in-person)
Summer 1 ————— Tuesday 2nd May (in-person)
Summer 2 ————— Tuesday 20th June (in-person)
Governors' Day Monday 3rd July

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