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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS OF UPLANDS INFANT SCHOOL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 5th DECEMBER 2018 AT 5.00PM**

PRESENT:

Mr S Aziz – Staff Governor
Mrs Z Alimohamed – Co-opted Governor
Mrs F Gelu – Parent Governor
Mrs S Kalra – Co-opted Governor
Miss P Keshav – Co-opted Governor
Mr K Mahmood – Chair of Governors, Co-opted Governor
Mrs F Mayat – Co-opted Governor
Mrs M Orton – Head Teacher
Mrs S Orton – Co-opted Governor
Mr Z Patel – Co-opted Governor
Mr N Sabir – LA Governor

In Attendance:

Miss J Marshall – Clerk to Governors
Mrs R Conway – Deputy Head Teacher
Mr D Nimmo – Director of Finance & Operations Designate, Attenborough Learning Trust
Ms S Taylor – Legal Advisor to Attenborough Learning Trust

Blue indicates comments, questions or challenge

Description
1. Governing Body Business
a. Apologies for Absence Mrs Rinde did not attend the meeting; the Chair said he would contact her. ACTION: KM
b. Governor Interests The Chair asked for any interests in the business to be discussed. There were none declared.
c. Any Other Business Notification None.
d. Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2018, having been previously circulated to all governors, were taken as read, confirmed and signed (copy filed herewith). Governors approved that a copy of the minutes be published on the website.

- Parent Governor Election – Mrs Gelu was welcomed to the governing body.
- Safeguarding Training – Mrs Orton read out a letter received from the Local Authority outlining the importance of safeguarding and governor involvement (copy filed herewith) and that local schools had failed Ofsted safeguarding requirements and invited schools to undergo a safeguarding health check. Mrs Orton confirmed that she had previously requested a health check but had received no response. Mrs Orton explained that Miss Keshav, Safeguarding Governor, had conducted a visit on safeguarding within the school. Mrs Orton expressed the critical importance of governors being aware of their duties and attending appropriate training. Mrs Gelu, Mr Mahmood, Mrs S Orton, Mrs Kalra and Mr Patel all confirmed they would be able to attend the safeguarding governor training twilight session on Wednesday 27th February 2019.
- Governor Visit Open Day – All governors attended the open day on 8th November 2018. [Mr Patel felt that it was a great visit and he was able to reconnect with the school and learn about middle leadership. Mr Mahmood found it very helpful to see the staff and practice in action. It was wonderful to hear the positive things said about leadership and management in the school. Mrs S Orton said she would recommend regular visits.](#) Governors therefore agreed the next open day would take place on **Tuesday 12th February 2019.**
- Committees – governors had agreed to continue with a flat structure in terms of committees.
- Self-evaluation forms – Mr Mahmood thanked governors for completing the forms; Mrs S Orton and Mr Mahmood were due to submit their forms.

ACTION: KM, SO

e. Policies

Governors approved the extension of the following policies (having previously been circulated) until 31st March 2019:

- Staff Induction
- Social Networking
- Health & Safety
- Financial Management

Governors approved the following policies (having previously been circulated):

- SEND
- Administration of Medicines/ Supporting Medical Conditions

Governors noted that the following policy had been approved by the Head Teacher (having previously been circulated):

- Charging & Remissions

2. Academisation

Mr Nimmo attended the governing body meeting to explain the new financial position now that the proposed MAT would progress with 4 founding schools. He explained the background of the work completed so far and that academy orders had been signed in July 2018. He explained the philosophy of the academy and that the model had been amended to reflect 4 founding schools. Mr Nimmo explained the purpose of the top slice and that this would cover centralised costs (CEO and DFO as well as Educational Psychology, Speech & Language and Behaviour support). The reduction of costs to match 4 schools meant that the top slice had been reduced. He explained that as the proposed MAT grew, other schools would contribute to that top slice. Mrs S Orton asked whether more schools joining would mean more money into the centralised function, surely this would be working on an economies of scale basis? Mr Nimmo explained that with more schools, there would be more money and so the proposed MAT could choose to reduce the top slice percentage. Ms Taylor explained that the proposed MAT could decide to reduce the top slice or invest more money into those services. Mrs S Orton asked if this was the reason the other 2 schools had withdrawn? Ms Taylor explained that the decision was not right for them at this moment in time but would consider joining in the future. Mrs Orton explained that other schools were already interested but for the moment the focus was on the founding 4 schools. Mr Mahmood confirmed that this was a MAT created by us, for us and for our school.

Mr Mahmood asked how much financially worse or better off the school would be? Mr Nimmo explained that it would cost the school around £10,000 more however much more than this was given to the Local Authority for those services that were then spread around many more schools; in reality the school would be much better off in terms of children's outcomes and support.

Mrs S Orton asked how many hours would be allocated to the school? Would it be an equal share? Mrs Orton explained that at present the school received 6 hours of support. If it required more, a further payment would need to be made. Mrs Orton explained that the detail had not been finalised but an equitable system would be implemented.

Mr Mahmood asked if governors had any further questions? None were presented.

Mr Nimmo explained that the budget submitted (copy filed herewith) represented the worst case scenario and cost savings would be found. The schools would look to share resources and providers and they were already starting to do this.

Mrs Orton explained that as a charitable trust, more bidding opportunities would be available to the proposed MAT. Mr Mahmood also explained that if a new school were required in the area, there would be opportunities for the school to reach even more children as the proposed MAT would be able to open schools; this option was unavailable to the Local Authority. He expressed that there were a multitude of opportunities. Mrs Orton explained that the support already given by the school would not cease.

Mr Nimmo confirmed that the model was financially viable and had been approved by the RSC. As a proposed MAT, there was a £1m surplus which therefore meant limited risk and it was clear that the governing body operated with prudence.

Mrs S Orton asked what the financial risks were? And were these factored into the model? Mr Nimmo explained that these risks remained the same as a maintained school; falling roll,

reputation. Mrs Orton explained that should those risks materialise, the school would have additional security within the proposed MAT. She also explained that for the moment the school would use the admissions policy of the Local Authority but could adopt its own. [Mr Mahmood asked if the school had to pay for admission services at present?](#) Mrs Orton confirmed it did not. Ms Taylor added that the school could adopt its own admissions policy for in-year transfers which meant that parents could apply directly to the proposed MAT for places. [Mr Patel asked if admissions would still come from the Local Authority?](#) It was confirmed that the proposed MAT would continue to follow this policy.

[Mr Sabir asked about results. Would this affect funding?](#) Ms Taylor explained that if the proposed MAT was struggling, the RSC would intervene. She explained that the Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors of all 4 schools had produced the scheme of delegation which identified triggers where the proposed MAT would intervene and support. This was because the proposed MAT was responsible for all schools within its purview. As a maintained school, the Local Authority could only advise or remove the governing body; there was no intermediate ground. The idea therefore was to provide a supportive mechanism and there would also be an additional layer of support.

Mr Nimmo explained that the National Funding Formula which was still to be implemented recognised the importance of Early Years and schools would receive more funding based on this area. The new funding formula would try to look at needs. Mr Nimmo confirmed that all schools would keep their own funding through conversion.

Mrs Orton added that schools were currently RAG-rated and explained that the proposed MAT would work in the same way.

Mr Nimmo explained that sometimes the proposed MAT would be asked to take on struggling schools; this would be agreed only if there was capacity.

Ms Taylor explained the purpose of the scheme of delegation to governors. She explained that its purpose was to set out how governance would work and the relationship between the proposed MAT and the school. [Mr Patel asked if, on a controversial issue, the Trustees would have the final say?](#) Ms Taylor confirmed that they would but this would be part of the triggers set out in the scheme of delegation. She explained how the accountability and obligations of the proposed MAT were set out and that it must act in the best interests of the school.

Mr Mahmood explained that once the school left Local Authority control, the school could not return. The RSC would ask the school to join a different MAT.

[Mr Patel asked if local school governance would remain the same?](#) Ms Taylor explained it would be similar but the local governing body would have to spend less time on policies, premises etc. but would have more time to focus on the core purpose; strategic direction, financial prudence and holding the Head Teacher to account.

Mr Mahmood explained that governors could email any further questions.

Mrs Orton explained that the consultation period was nearly complete and that any major concerns should be expressed now. [Governors confirmed that they were happy to move forward. Mr Aziz felt the scheme was very clear. Miss Keshav felt that it covered all key areas. Mrs](#)

Alimohamed felt that the trigger points were really clear. Ms Taylor confirmed that these had been drawn directly from the schools.

Mr Nimmo explained that from this point it was 'full steam ahead' with the preparation of land leasing, transfer of property and completing contractual arrangements. He confirmed that a summary of the work would be provided to governors.

Mrs S Orton asked if new contracts would be issued to staff? Ms Taylor explained that all staff would transfer under TUPE regulations and the children on roll would also transfer over upon conversion.

Mrs Kalra asked how long the process took? Ms Taylor explained that the actual conversion was from 00:00AM to 00:01AM but the practicalities were in progress. Mrs Orton clarified that the day-to-day operations of the school would not change; the school would retain its own identity.

Mrs S Orton asked if governors would be able to view supplier contracts? Ms Taylor said this would not be automatic but governors would be given this information on request.

Governors noted that the All Governing Body Ratification Meeting would take place on Monday 28th January 2019 at 4pm at Highfields Primary School to which all governors should attend.

Governors thanked Mr Nimmo and Ms Taylor for attending who then left the meeting.

3. Spelling Update Presentation

Mrs Conway provided an update on the spelling strategy. Spelling strategies were now taught every morning during Early Bird. This had created more consistency across the school. The children were spelling better than this time last year. It was also noted that children had begun with 0-1 words spelt correctly and after 6 weeks of the programme were spelling most of the words correctly which meant they were meeting age-related expectations. If children reached 85% this meant they were working at greater depth. Children were embedding spelling rules into their writing independently. Mrs Conway explained that the next steps were increasing parental input which had proved tricky. The programme was so valuable and it was essential that parents were able to attend on Mondays when strategies were taught; children were then tested on Thursday afternoons and the results were marked with their parents on Friday mornings. Mrs Conway confirmed the school was reviewing rewards/ incentives.

Mr Sabir asked what the parent perception was? Did they feel they were coming in for a good reason? Mrs Conway explained that she had spoken to parents about why it was so important and had led two workshops. Mr Sabir agreed that it was important for parents to participate and would the school continue to encourage parents? Mrs Conway explained it was a year-long initiative, children wanted their parents to take part and so were also encouraging them to attend.

Miss Keshav asked about working parents who could not attend or who had more than one child? Mrs Conway explained that parents who could attend would buddy up to support solo children which was really helpful.

Mrs Conway expressed that the key was that parents understood the spelling rule. Mr Aziz commented that it had made a big difference as actually teaching the rules gave confidence to the parents to support their children.

Governors thanked Mrs Conway for the update.

4. School Improvement Plan/ Head Teacher's Report

Governors received a copy of the SIP/ Head Teacher's Report having previously been circulated. Governors were pleased with the progress made and had witnessed this progress during their governor visit open day on 8th November 2018. Mrs Orton confirmed that she would provide an update on Maths in the spring meeting and Oracy in the summer meeting.

Mr Aziz commented that he was impressed with the depth and analysis and the proactive changes taken in relation to phonics. Mrs Orton explained that Mrs Odedra, Assistant Head Teacher had visited Highfields Primary and had tweaked the provision to ensure that phonics was on track to improvement. She had also been asked to work with Ann Smalberger on phonics nationally.

5. Sports Premium/ Pupil Premium Update

Mrs Orton confirmed that she had only just received the national disadvantaged results and circulated a copy to governors (copy filed herewith). Mrs Orton explained that formulating targets for Pupil Premium had been difficult as they were outperforming in all areas. The school had decided to focus on health and wellbeing. Since the national release, the school noted that in comparison to their national counterparts, Pupil Premium children were 4% below national in age-related expectations in Writing and 2% below national in age-related expectations in maths. However, in greater depth, our Pupil Premium children were significantly higher than national in all areas. Mrs Orton confirmed that last year, boys outperformed girls by 12-18% but greater depth for girls was higher. Mrs Orton confirmed that the new Pupil Premium plan was being finalised and would be published on the website next week.

Mrs Orton provided a pupil premium case study for governors as requested during the previous meeting about how the school had supported a family. Mrs Orton explained that whole school targets were set but a bespoke service was provided to pupils and needs were covered in pupil progress meetings each half-term. Miss Keshav commented that during her safeguarding visit, she found that Mrs Ibraimo was clearly dealing with many issues and supporting children, attending case conferences etc. Mr Mahmood agreed that he was aware of the great work Mrs Ibraimo was carrying out and governors agreed to send a letter of commendation.

ACTION: KM

6. Information Security Review (ISO27001) and Audit Information (including January renewal)

Miss Marshall explained that following a change to the accreditation process; the ISO27001 surveillance audit (an annual check that the school was compliant) had now increased to 3 full days with a corresponding increase in charges to £3,000 per annum. This was double the original quote that the governing body proceeded with. Governors discussed what the best option would be. It was agreed that Miss Marshall would investigate whether another company could carry out the surveillance audit for a lower fee. The alternative was that the school would cease the accreditation but continue with the good practice via a programme of internal audit. Miss Marshall would make contact with other companies and governors agreed that a decision via email would be acceptable as the existing company were phoning back on the following Monday.

ACTION: SBM

7. Finance – Current Position & Budget Report

Governors noted the latest budget report and movement (copies filed herewith). Miss Marshall explained the increased areas of spend and reasons and confirmed that the school was expecting a healthy carry forward. [Mrs S Orton asked if inflation was included?](#) Miss Marshall confirmed that inflation on staffing was included but not on non-staffing budgets. Governors were satisfied with the financial report and approved the latest budget position.

8. Peer Challenge Review

This item was deferred.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 13th March 2019 at 5.00pm. The meeting closed at 7.00pm.

Summary of Actions	
Chair to contact Mrs Rinde	KM
Publish minutes on website	Clerk
SO & KM to complete self-evaluation forms	KM, SO
Letter of commendation for Mrs Ibraimo	KM
ISO27001 audit research and email for decision	JMM

Signed as accurate:(Chair of Governors)

Date: