



## Alderman Jacobs Primary School (Academy Trust)

### Trustee Meeting

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022

### MINUTES

**Key:**

Trustee Questions

School Improvements

**Governors Present:** Cathy Carlisle (Head Teacher), Laura Holland (Chair), Elaine Crane (EC), Joel Combes (JC), Sadie Wiles (SW)

**In Attendance:** Jocelyn Sumner (Finance and Operations manager), Amy Ure (Governance Professional)

Meeting commenced at 6.04pm

1	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b> LHO welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Andrew Pattison (AP), Laura Hemmaway (LH), Lisa Hatfield (LHA)	All to note
2	<b>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cathy Carlisle (CC) - Husband has completed landscaping work. Daughter has a contract as a temporary midday supervisor / TA.</li> <li>• Laura Holland (LHO) - Trust Member of Alderman Jacobs School (Academy Trust) Director (Trustee) for another Academy Trust (OWN trust)</li> <li>• Joel Combes (JC) - Wife, Sarah Combes is a teacher in school.</li> <li>• Sadie Wiles (SW) - CFO of OWN Trust, Governor of Nene Valley Primary School.</li> </ul>	All to note
3	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting (8<sup>th</sup> December 2021)</b> The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record. Proposed by SW seconded by LHO.	All to note
4	<b>Agreed Actions Update</b> All completed. Trustees to email amendments to internal scrutiny report - this has been completed	All to note

	Wellbeing options - The meeting had been provided with a summary of good practice activities and current wellbeing activities undertaken by Alderman Jacobs School.	
5	<p><b>Budget to date - (See attached)</b></p> <p>The YTD budget report, data to end December was shared with the Trustees and a brief summary given. The KPIs regarding staff costs as a percentage of income and expenditure have been split between Government funded and self-funded staff costs and expenditure/income. Typically overall the staff % have been higher, we are aware and reviewing this. However, when just focusing on government funding and government funded staff costs the % remains higher than is typical in accordance to school strategic plans.</p> <p>CIF figures are not included in the budget. Further CIF funding is expected in March. Trustees asked if this includes catch up monies. No this is for building improvements.</p> <p>Income:</p> <p>Other DFE income is on track. Teacher pension employer contribution and Teachers pay grants were received that were not expected. Trustees questioned why it was unexpected income. From September 2021 this funding is included into the GAG and so was not expecting any funds outside of this. We have additional LAC money, compared to the budget. This is money that is bid for by the designated LAC teacher from virtual schools.</p> <p>We are low on some other income - mainly due to no longer selling breacktime snacks, reduced lettings for after school clubs and wraparound clubs bookings remain lower than before the pandemic. Trustees noted that although wraparound care is lower, it is still covering its costs itself and is something that a school should provide. Trustees thought lettings might pick up come Sept.</p> <p>Staff Expenditure:</p> <p>Support staff budget figures include a 2% increase each year to account for pay awards and so the actual figures are lower due to the support staff pay award 2021 still being undecided. The budget also includes an After School Club leader which has not been recruited for yet and no longer needed. Staffing expenditure also includes an increase in Employer NI costs due in April 2022, we have since been informed that we will get money to cover this. Trustees asked if this money comes from the Government. Yes and it's paid based on the number of pupils, not staff, so as we had budgeted for the increase this funding will create a surplus. Overall we are on track.</p> <p>Expenditure:</p> <p>This is pretty much on track, there are some areas where we have typically heavy spending at the beginning of the year, but this is the same as previous years for training/resources required early on to receive full benefit.</p>	All to note



	<p>Other expenditure is low - again not selling breaktime snacks and Nov &amp; Dec catering costs not included as invoices only received in Jan. This will put us over what was budgeted but this will be looked at in the mid-year review.</p> <p>Educational services have an overspend, again to purchase resources up front so an overspend for the year to date is not unusual. Trustees asked if JS is able to reprofile this area of the report to not create such a variance. JS confirmed that this can be done in the software.</p> <p>Trustees questioned why the education contracts figures in the report were still above the budgeted amount to date if they had been accrued when costing £1,000 or more. JS explained that a large proportion are paid in the early months of the academic year and a large proportion cost less than £1,000. Trustees referred to the Aged debtor report and asked if they were all being chased. Yes, One was not actually a dept, money was given to school towards transport for a trip. They needed us to raise an invoice which had to be done in the software for the formula budget school bank account and when the money came into the school fund bank account a credit note needed to be raised against the invoice, but it hadn't been. This has now been updated in the software. Pre-school is being dealt with.</p> <p>Trustees asked if the debtors include parental debts i.e. school dinners etc. We follow a debt management policy and will include any parent debts in management accounts going forward.</p> <p><b>ACTION: JS to pull out any parent debts and these are to be flagged to trustees.</b></p> <p>Trustees asked when the mid-year review will be done. Now, this will be shared at the Trustee meeting in March. Trustees asked if the electricity and water contracts are fixed with energy price rises, has this been planned in the budget. Yes this will be taken into account as part of the mid-year review.</p>	JS
6	<p><b>Site Report</b> (attached)</p> <p>The site report was shared with Trustees prior to the meeting. This includes ongoing maintenance inspection and repairs. The site report highlights things Trustees should be aware of.</p> <p>Trustees confirmed they had seen the report and approved the plans. Trustees asked if the pipe work investigations/leaks are incurring any extra costs. All costs are being recorded and will be met through the company or the insurance company. Trustees asked when the work would be completed. Initially we were told half term, they still haven't completed scanning so</p>	

	<p>Easter is more likely. Trustees asked if they will be on site during the half term. No, they wanted to but we already had contractors programmed in for asbestos removal. Trustees asked what issues they have identified. So far 36 joints on the ground floor have been replaced. Trustees asked if the replacement joints have been rescanned yet and who will sign this off. No not yet, the scanning will be done by the mechanic and engineer consultant. Trustees asked if we will be following up with a letter to the company after completion of the work as clearly there are issues and this has a big impact in terms of loss of learning. There was also a challenge on what would be achieved by writing to them.</p> <p>Agreed out of principle the company will be written to once work is completed.</p> <p>Trustees asked if the site manager is able to manage the workload and is he ok. Yes he is fine. He is not doing everything, he spends time speaking with contractors and getting quotes. We do have a little in the budget, should he need some help.</p> <p>Expenditure for garden gates was highlighted to the Trustees as this was not expected or budgeted for. The development of SHSCC means that we need to put in 3 gates joining the gardens between Pre-school, EY &amp; Y1 to enable them to evacuate the building and still access the school field and round to the front of the building. Trustees asked if we could claim the costs back to SHSCC. This is unlikely, they have given us land that we do not own.</p> <p>Trustees approved the work that needs to be done.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p><b>Policies to review ~ (attached)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging and Remissions</li> </ul> <p>Policy proposed by LHO and seconded by SW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints Procedure</li> </ul> <p>No changes to the policy. Proposed by LHO seconded by SW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict of Interest</li> </ul> <p>No changes to the policy. Proposed by LHO and seconded by SW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invacuation (deferred from Trustee mtg Dec 21)</li> </ul> <p>No changes to the policy. Proposed by LHO and seconded by JC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND Provision and Inclusive Education</li> </ul> <p>Changes clearly highlighted. Proposed by LHO and seconded by SW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming Pool Normal Operational Plan</li> </ul> <p>Policy is mostly taken from various sources. Proposed by LHO and seconded by SW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Menopause</li> </ul> <p>Trustees noted that it states 'role of the Governing Body', should this read <b>Trustee</b>. No, they are still the Governing Body so that is fine.</p> <p>Proposed by JC and seconded by LHO</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p><b>Raising Standards</b></p> <p>i) Strategic Plan for improvement (attached)</p> <p>The plan was shared with the Trustees prior to the meeting. The plan is evaluated and you can see the summary of actions against the impact so far. Everything RAG rated orange has been actioned but not completed as we</p>	



are looking for more evidence within the success criteria. Trustees noted that COVID is referred to a lot in terms of EY services, which is outside of the school control. This is alluded to in the report and as previously discussed the impact of COVID related staff absence and behavioral challenges has increased the pressure on the team, especially Leadership team to minimise the impact to children's learning. This last half term, in particular, has been much greater and has had an impact on the progress or at least the pace of the plan.

ii) Headteachers Report (attached)

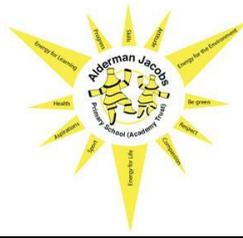
The Headteachers report was made available prior to the meeting. Attendance is good although it seems low, we are above Peterborough and Cambridgeshire levels. We have introduced a new process for soft letters to be sent for regular non-attendance, which is useful.

As asked at the last meeting staff absence has been included within the report. We are still populating the absence management information system, Every, to give us the level of data we want. Some absences are higher which would be due to compulsory isolation and do not count towards any triggers. Trustees asked if the software could analyse data by job role. Yes, we can break down by job role. TA absence is higher, which is expected. Trustees asked if there is anything we can do about this. No, not yet.

Trustees questioned if parent engagement is low. Yes, it's slightly lower. Trustees asked if this is because nothing is taking place in school. No, a recent online internet safety event was poorly attended. It was a live event. We have suggested that it would be better to offer a link that parents can watch when convenient. Trustees asked if it was the same '2 Johns'. Yes it is. It could possibly be monotonous for parents that have already seen them in previous years. Trustees still feel this should be provided and agree, a link to watch when convenient, would be a better option.

Trustees asked for clarification on how the next parents evening will be conducted. They will be virtual. Trustees asked for the reasoning, is this because it's easier or due to COVID. For both reasons. We are still being advised not to invite large groups into school. Locally COVID rates are high and they expect a peak again after half term. The virtual option works, it's more effective and efficient. Trustees asked if uptake from parents is good. Yes, the same parents who usually book in person are also the ones who are engaged and book virtual. Where there are concerns and no appointment is arranged the teacher will make contact, on the phone.

	<p>We review the uptake and reminder letters are sent.</p> <p>Trustees wanted clarification on the admission arrangements, is this different to previous years. No, consultation is done every 4 years - so this is not due yet. We still have to confirm the admission body (CCC) and arrangements.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p><b>Resources to Support Learning</b></p> <p>i) Management Accounts</p> <p>The management accounts are updated monthly and are available to all Trustees on the accounts drive for review.</p> <p>Adding additional debtor information has already been discussed in point 5. Trustees were invited to raise any questions.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p><b>School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool</b> (attached)</p> <p>A start has been made on completion of the self-assessment checklist but this needs to be a joint venture between Trustees and the School. It was agreed last year that the tool be brought to the meeting for everyone to review and have input.</p> <p>The following points of the checklist were flagged for consideration by the Trustees:</p> <p>Point 2 - Trustees agreed this is a Yes. Evidence is skills audit, school monitoring visits, Headteachers reports and data that is reviewed.</p> <p>Point 10 - Trustees agreed this is a Yes.</p> <p>Point 35 - Trustees were provided with a list of all contracts held in school, the costs and when renewal is due. This provides Trustees with detail of the type of arrangements in place academic, operation &amp; financial and how they are managed in school. We do not propose that Trustees need to be aware of every renewal but they may want to be informed of those contracts due renewal over the 'threshold'.</p> <p>Trustees agreed any contract due for renewal, over £10,000 should be brought to the Audit &amp; Risk Committee meeting beforehand for the proposed action to be approved.</p> <p>It was clarified with Trustees that pupil number assumptions are shared at various points with them including when presenting the draft budget to them and in the Headteachers' reports.</p> <p>Trustees asked what the school reception numbers are likely to be in September. We are at 89 as first choice, this is high as we are normally around 67-70 around this time of the process.</p> <p>Trustees were advised that currently in Whittlesey there are no spaces in year groups 1 or 2. New Road are not taking extra children but have recently increased the size of the school to accommodate an increased PAN.</p> <p>Trustees agreed they are happy with the SRMSAT to be submitted.</p>	



	<p>The meeting reviewed the SRMSAT Dashboard and JS explained that the same format is used for the monthly Management Accounts KPIs. They are reviewed each month and repeatedly reflect strategic decisions regarding recruitment and retention as well the Trust Estate Vision and Strategy. Should there be a change in the KPIs it would be quickly picked up through the internal finance management process so that it could be effectively addressed.</p> <p>Trustees asked who provides Benchmarking data. The auditor, Azets, provide data when they have fully completed their annual audit work for academies. They use their clients - so local schools - to produce the benchmarking. Trustees were also reminded of the DfE benchmarking resources online and that school characteristics are used to identify comparable establishments.</p> <p><b>ACTION: The Trustees agreed the SRMSAT checklist for online submission by the deadline of 15 March 2022</b></p>	<p>JS</p>
<p>11</p>	<p><b>Trustee Visits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PP visit 13/12/21</li> <li>• Math's &amp; English visit 9/12/21</li> </ul> <p>Monitoring visit reports were made available to all Trustees prior to the meeting, for discussion/questions.</p> <p>SW completed EY visit in November- this has been listed for March Trustee Meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION: JC to arrange leadership &amp; management visit, after the holidays.</b></p>	<p>JC</p>
<p>12</p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Trustees were advised that My Concern data will be a standing item. This shows recent Safeguarding concerns, exclusions and referrals made over 365 days. There was discussion around the external exclusions data, the figures could be based on one pupil with multiple exclusions in the time period. The impact of therapeutic approach through the nurture room has brought this number down. Concerns breakdown - wellbeing is quite significant. Trustees asked if the data works the same in that one child could have multiple concerns raised, in the period. Yes. The reported number of referrals to other services data show several to the Early Help. Trustees asked what the Early Help was for and if it was local. Yes it is local (CCC) it's the first step to take if a family needs support i.e. family support worker for mid/low parenting issues, or ADHD or Autism Assessments. Trustees asked who flags and makes the referrals, do you</p>	

	<p>receive feedback from the referral. The referral is usually made by SENCO or the Safeguarding leads. Everything is logged on a regional system so you do hear back. Currently there is a long waiting list for Neuro assessments and we will start to see the impact from this. We are already exploring options and seeking quotes to bring in a private Occupational Therapist and we may also consider looking for a private Speech &amp; Language services. Trustees asked whether we are looking at individuals or companies. Yes, we are seeking quotes for both options.</p> <p>Trustees were informed that a number of senior leaders have recently completed the Safer Recruitment training.</p>	
13	<p><b>Trustee Training</b> Feedback on any training undertaken since previous meeting</p> <p><b>ACTION: JC reminded to complete outstanding Safeguarding training on NC website.</b> <b>ACTION: EC to resend the training link.</b></p>	JC EC
14	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LHA Terms expire March 22</li> </ul> <p>Trustees wanted to extend their thanks for all the work she has done. We were working towards a reduction in staff trustees, in line with EFSA preference that you should not have staff members as Trustees. We will not recruit for a replacement.</p> <p>Trustees confirmed that they have a potential co-opted trustee.</p> <p>The Chair has been in contact with the parent Trustees. They have been asked to return in March. They have asked if they are entitled to 12months maternity leave. Having checked various sources, we have been unable to find any guidance, hence being brought to the meeting.</p> <p>Trustees all in agreement that it's a volunteer role, so those rights do not apply.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LHO to advise parent trustees that if they are unable to return in March we will have to look at recruitment</b></p> <p>Trustees confirmed that an External Governance/Trustee telephone review is taking place tomorrow morning. The likelihood is they will want to attend a meeting, if so they will be invited to the March meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LHO/CC to arrange a review date.</b></p>	LHO  LHO/CC
15	<p><b>Summary of meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trustee contributed to the SRMSC</li> <li>Reviewed Site Plan</li> <li>Agreed plan agreed for contracts</li> </ul>	

The meeting closed at 7.07pm

Signed as a true record: ..... Date: .....

Laura Holland (Chair)

Date of next Trustee Meeting: Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March

2022 @ 6pm