



**Alderman Jacobs Primary School (Academy Trust)**

**\*\*Trustee Meeting\*\***

**Wednesday 7th December 2022**

**MINUTES**

**Key:**

**Trustee Questions**

**School Improvements**

**Governors Present:** Cathy Carlisle (Headteacher), Laura Holland (Chair), Elaine Crane (EC), Andrew Pattison (AP), Tom Claxton (TC),

**In Attendance:** Jocelyn Sumner (Finance and Operations Manager), Amy Ure (Governance professional)

Meeting commenced at 6.20pm

1	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b>          Laura Holland (LHO) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Joel Combes (JC), Eleanor Gunn (EG), Sadie Wiles (SW)          We have not heard from Laura Hemmaway (LH)  <b>ACTION: LHO to contact LH</b></p>	<p><b>All to note</b>          <b>LHO</b></p>
2	<p><b>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cathy Carlisle (CC) - Secondment to SOKE education Trust as CEO. Husband provides Landscaping services. Daughter has a temporary contract for Midday Supervisor</li> <li>• Laura Holland (LHO) - I am a Trustee of another Trust (OWN Trust) in Peterborough. I am also an associate Trustee for SOKE Trust but have no voting rights.</li> <li>• Elaine Crane (EC) - Oldest son works for MaCintyre Hudson, who audit our school accounts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>All to note</b></p>
3	<p><b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting (12th October 2022)</b>          All happy with the minutes. Proposed by LHO, seconded by AP.</p>	<p><b>All to note</b></p>
4	<p><b>Agreed Actions Updated</b>          TC to complete cyber training - TC had already completed.          All other actions completed  <b>ACTION: TC to email over cyber training certificate</b></p>	<p><b>TC</b></p>
5	<p><b>Financial Management</b>          i) 5 Year Financial Forecast          This was discussed at the AGM and was briefly summarised for trustees. Although the budget is balanced, the 'nice to have' /larger projects have been pared back. Over recent days there have been announcements of</p>	<p><b>All to note</b></p>

additional funding for schools. So things keep changing and budgets will be reviewed more frequently.

Trustees wanted to thank JS and CC for all the hard work done for the auditors and feel that the finances are looking positive.

Trustees agreed that as the reserves policy was decided back in 2014 this should be taken to the next Audit & Risk Meeting for discussion/review.

**ACTION: List reserves policy for A&R meeting**

AU

One trustee noted from experience that additional funding may be available from the LA for children with an EHCP. It may be worth reviewing provisions for those pupils. The LA has a duty to fund, and those funds go towards the children. It was agreed that although there is a robust process in place it certainly is a good idea to systematically review each EHCP child. Trustees asked if the pared back budget affected staffing. No, not teaching staff. It will affect TAs who are on fixed term contracts to support challenging behavior. We are currently funding as many support staff to support children with EHCPs as we are those with behavior issues.

Trustees asked if there are any further cost implications with regards to the ongoing heating/water project. Invoices have been paid but some money is being held back. Any repairs are not a cost to the school. There is a further meeting tomorrow with those companies involved, if they fail to agree they could be in breach of contract. The companies are aware that legal advice has been sought - at a cost.

ii) Audit & Risk Committee Minutes (12th October 22) for reference  
No issues raised.

iii) Management Accounts

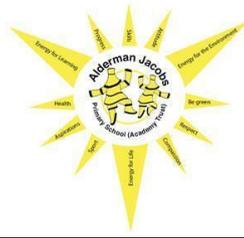
September and October management accounts were shared prior to the meeting. Novembers are currently being worked on.

Trustees were advised that in certain areas there is a higher spend at this time of year which is to be expected. Income is coming in as expected.

Aged debtors/creditors - are all cleared and have been dealt with.

Trustees asked if having cash in the bank was a risk and should we be using it. There is currently an unusually high level of cash in the bank that is unspent CIF funding, it is ring fenced to be spent on CIF projects. JS had previously found data that showed other school reserves levels and in comparison, ours is not high even though it is well above the reserves policy amount. Although JS agrees that it shouldn't be left to keep growing and that its spend should benefit the children in school, it gives school financial security in the current financial climate.

KPIs plans are followed and so remain fairly steady. Trustees asked if Breakfast/After School Clubs have picked up. Yes, they have picked up, not back to pre-covid numbers but are steady and bring in a consistent income. Catering numbers have risen. Trustees asked what is happening with the catering contracts, who is the current provider and are we happy with the service. We are happy with the service provided by ABM, it's good value and JS has worked hard to get where it's at but it's good practice to tender.



<p><b>JS Left</b></p>	<p>Trustees asked if preschool is still making a profit. Yes, all places are filled and there is a waiting list. Trustees asked if it was something we could expand. No, we are in a good position. To expand we would need additional space, additional staff ratio/cost and admin. Trustees agree it's great to see that all spaces are full and it is making money.</p> <p>JS asked if everyone was happy with the additional column on the management reports and welcomed feedback. All trustees thanked JS for the management accounts</p> <p><b>JS left 6.44pm</b></p>	
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Educational Standards</b> i) Headteacher's Report The headteachers report was shared prior to the meeting and was summarised for the trustees.</p> <p>Trustees asked how staff feel about the STEPs approach to behavior. Overall most are on board, open and learning. The behavior lead has attended training and been able to share that in school. Short training sessions have been delivered for TAs. Trustees noted that the aim of STEPs is to reduce exclusions but we may not have seen the impact yet. STEP has been in place for 3 years. There were further discussions regarding current pupils with complex needs/behavior issues and how this is managed to enable the teacher to teach, for the pupil and class pupils to learn/be successful, safe and move forward. Trustees asked if behavior is still an issue. For the size of school and number of children, it is probably similar issue to many other schools but there is an increase, particularly in years 2/3/4 who are struggling. Trustees noted an increase in suspensions. Yes, the decision is not made lightly and, in some incidents, it has been due to staff being hurt by children. The suspensions have prompted specialist teacher involvement. It's trying to get a balance of what is right for everyone. Trustees asked how staff are feeling, how they are working with those children. The right staff are in the right place, they are involved in enabling them to move forward and be successful. Risk reduction plans are reviewed and talks take place with staff. Broadly all OK.</p> <p>Trustees noted that it was good to see the school have signed up to the Primary Science Quality Mark. Yes, this will support the new science leader to move science forward. Trustees asked who conducted the school improvement deep dive. This was Patrick Shevlin, the appointed advisor, art and design was chosen as a</p>	<p><b>All to note</b></p>

	<p>subject that has been in development. All found it very useful, interesting and positive.</p> <p>Trustees asked if uptake on parent engagement events have been good. Yes, uptake has been really positive.</p> <p>Trustees asked what the Specialist Advisor was looking at when visiting EYFS. They look at provision in general and any recommendations they can make.</p> <p>Trustees noted that attendance is broadly inline nationally. Trustees asked if we are seeing more fixed penalties and requests for leave in term time. There were a lot of requests last year with exceptional circumstance reasons being COVID, which could not be authorised. It is still winter so it is hard to tell yet if we will see similar numbers this year.</p> <p>Trustees noted that the report demonstrates that the school is doing a lot of positive things. Including CPD which is great for staff wellbeing and to ensure staff feel valued.</p>	
7	<p><b>Policies to Ratify</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banning Persons from School Premises Proposed by AP, seconded by LHO</li> <li>• GDPR Data Protection</li> <li>• GDPR Privacy &amp; Fair Processing - Visitors</li> <li>• GDPR Privacy &amp; Fair Processing - Employees</li> <li>• GDPR Privacy &amp; Fair Processing - Pupils, Parents, Carers</li> <li>• GDPR Privacy &amp; Fair Processing - Trustees</li> </ul> <p>Proposed LHO, seconded by TC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grievance Policy and Procedures Proposed by LHO, seconded by AP</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety Proposed by LH, seconded by TC.</li> <li>• Pay Policy Proposed by AP, seconded by LHO.</li> <li>• Trustee Roles &amp; Responsibilities</li> </ul> <p>Additional section added regarding 'link governor' to clarify the role purpose. Also noted it's a non-statutory policy but on annual review. Suggestion made that the review period be 3-4 years. Trustees agreed that a 3 year review would be in line with SIP. If no other reason/guidance then agreed to change to 3 year review. Proposed by LHO, seconded by AP.</p> <p><b>ACTION: AU to check for guidance on review period and update policy time scale accordingly.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistle Blowing Proposed by AP, seconded by LHO.</li> <li>• Responding to Prejudice Related Incidents</li> </ul> <p>Only thing trustees should be aware of is that the LA has a system for logging prejudice related incidents, this is not statutory. We have decided to continue to log on 'My concern'. We can track and analyse the data from 'My concern'. Proposed by LHO, seconded by TC.</p>	<p>All to note</p> <p>AU</p>
8	<p><b>Trustee Monitoring Visits</b></p> <p>The following reports were shared prior to the meeting</p> <p>PP Oct 2022</p> <p>LAC Nov 2022</p> <p>Safeguarding Nov 2022</p>	<p>All to note</p>



	EY visit will be booked after Christmas. TC has a virtual monitoring call next week with SEN lead, with a plan to visit school in January.	
9	<p><b>Safeguarding &amp; Equality</b> Annual safeguarding report shared prior to the meeting. Nothing major or any concerns to note. Trustees said it is a good idea to include a safeguarding update in the parent newsletter.</p>	All to note
10	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b> Standing agenda item. The Health &amp; Safety November update was shared with trustees prior to the meeting. Points to highlight are the number of staff injured by pupils and the ongoing Heating/water project. The risk management plans for pupils and the risk assessment has been updated to reflect this.</p> <p>Trustees were advised of the steps being taken and the proposed plans for temporary heating in school. Trustees asked if there had been any staff/parent complaints. No, the heating is on in the morning and steps are being taken to keep school warm and class rooms at the recommended temperature of 18 degrees. Trustees asked if the generators would be a noise concern for neighbours? They will have acoustic covering. Trustees are confident all options/ risks have been assessed but resolution is needed.</p> <p>Trustees asked, in terms of staff being injured - is there anything that the school needs in terms of support from other authorities. Most staff working in nurture are on board with the processes, they are disappointed incidents happen - but some of these pupils need alternative provision. In some cases we are very close to permanent exclusion.</p>	All to note
11	<p><b>Estate Management</b> Estate management report was shared. Nothing additional to add.</p>	
12	<p><b>HR</b> Personnel and Wellbeing supporting notes shared prior to the meeting. Trustees were made aware that one of the HLTAs that left was a qualified teacher, she came to AJS lacking confidence but has left confident to take on a teacher role. Which is positive feedback.</p>	
13	<p><b>Wellbeing/Personnel</b> Wellbeing/Personnel notes shared with trustees prior to the meeting. This was summarised for the Trustees.</p>	
14	<p><b>Trustee Training</b> LHO noted that she needs to book on a Governor briefing update as these are useful. <b>ACTION: LHO to remind trustees re training.</b></p>	LHO

15	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Trustees were asked to consider the purchase of bow top fencing. A quote with 3 options was shared with trustees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Option 1 - fencing to KS1 playground</li> <li>• Option 2 - fencing to KS2 playground</li> <li>• Option 3 - fencing to KS1, KS2 and round library</li> </ul> <p>Some of the H&amp;S reasons for the bow top fencing were that the current barrier is not sufficient to stop dysregulated children absconding. To prevent parents/children cutting across the staff car park. The gates would be closed (not locked because of fire requirements) but it would mean a child making a 'conscious decision' to open the gates and leave the site in addition to climbing under or over the perimeter gates/barriers.</p> <p>The suggestion is that although it is not budgeted for based on the current financial position, we could take from money carried forward which can be offset by the income we were not expecting.</p> <p>Trustees asked if we were looking to expand the front of the building how would this impact having the gates? They bolt together so the gates would still be usable. Trustees agree that you could argue the barrier is not adequate and there are risks. For the reasons given all agree to purchase option 3 using carry forward money.</p>	
16	<p><b>Summary of meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratified policies</li> <li>• Agreed to purchased gates</li> <li>• Reviewed headteachers report</li> </ul>	

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

Signed as a true record: ..... Date: .....  
 Laura Holland (Chair)

**Date of next Trustee meeting, Wednesday 11th January 2023 6.15pm**