

Cavendish Community Primary School Resources Committee Meeting Minutes

School: Cavendish Community Primary School

Quorum: 3 (met at this meeting)

Chair: Sami Khan

Clerk: Jan Haslam

Date of meeting: 18 October 2023

Venue: Cavendish Community Primary School

Attendance

Name	Governor type	'End of Term of Office' date	(P)resent / (Ap)ologies / (A)bsent
Jo Taylor	Headteacher (HT)	N/A	P
Sami Khan (Chair)	Parent	09/12/25	P
Neil Todd	Co-opted	10/01/27	P
*Ciaron Wilkinson	Co-opted	19/09/27	P
Oliver Gibson	Co-opted	01/07/27	P
Thomas Johnson	Co-opted	25/01/26	Ap

Others present

Name	Role
Nicola Kennedy	School Business Manager (SBM)
Jan Haslam	Clerk, One Education

Agenda Items

1	Apologies and Welcome		
Apologies were received and accepted from Thomas Johnson			
2	Verbal declaration of interests		
No declarations of interest were received with regard to any items on the agenda.			
3	Notification of confidential items or items for AOB		
There is one item of AOB.			
4	Chair election		
Sami Khan was elected as Chair of the Resources Committee for a period of 1 year.			
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sami Khan elected as Chair of the Resources Committee 	Resources Committee	1 year

5	Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising		
<p>The governors approved the minutes of the meeting on 14.6.23 as an accurate record of the meeting. A copy was signed for retention on file.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>			
	Actions or decisions	Owner	Timescale
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous minutes (14.6.23) approved 	Resources Committee	

6	Finance Report
6.1 School Business Manager report including Premises, Health and Safety	
<p>The SBM presented her report, which was circulated in advance of the meeting for review, and asked if there were any questions arising.</p> <p><i>Q: The report states that there are currently 42 vacant places. This is equivalent to a classteacher. Is there likely to be a bigger cohort starting school in the future? Are there any mitigations, for example, losing a class?</i></p> <p>The vacant places are spread across the school so it would be difficult to consider losing a class, even with mixed-age classes. There is a similar picture of lower numbers in other schools.</p> <p><i>Q: Would it be possible to move to two and a half year groups?</i></p> <p>This would be very challenging. The HT would prefer to do have 2 if a reduction in classes was deemed necessary. However, this has to be agreed by the Local Authority.</p> <p><i>Q: What led to the prediction of 85 in Reception dropping to 77?</i></p> <p>85 offers were made but only 77 places have been taken for a variety of reasons.</p> <p><i>Q: Some children went to the school nursery but then to a different school. Is this common and is there anything that could be done to keep the children in the school?</i></p> <p>The school already holds open days and evenings but could consider more PR which has been done in the past. The school nursery is very good. The other local school does not have a nursery so it is difficult to get an idea of numbers who will be attending Cavendish in Reception.</p> <p>A governor commented that, as there are a number of teachers on temporary contracts, if the school were to lose a class, there may not have to be any redundancies.</p> <p>New teachers are now employed on a temporary contract. The school are reluctant to make the third nursery teacher permanent. There are 10 children on the waiting list for nursery for January. Linked to this, a 4% pay increase across the board had been reflected for teachers. This has now been agreed at 6.5%. The properly funded grant received was £28,521 but the cost to the school was £58,970 which is a shortfall of £30,449. Nursery staff have not been included in the calculations and therefore not funded. This anomaly is being looked at for maintained schools with nurseries by the government.</p> <p><i>Q: Is the school affected by the mistake made by the government for pupil funding?</i></p> <p>No, as the school has not yet been given the funding for 2024-25.</p>	

A governor made a comment about how much the school is having to pay towards EHCP funding.

There is a national funding crisis around SEND. The current demands outweigh the funding availability. There has not been an increase in EHCP funding for a number of years but there has been a huge increase in staffing costs. An EHCP should not be about staffing, it should be about meeting need and staffing should not be written into an EHCP. The school has to add an additional £6,000 out of the budget per EHCP.

A governor commented that it is unfair that different schools will have to pay different amounts out of their budget according to the number of children with EHCPs in the school.

There is a SEND finance allocation to schools, based on a formula which depends on a number of factors.

Q: At what point does funding for SEND become a crisis for the school?
It is currently a crisis for all schools.

Q: What is the shortfall for EHCP funding to the school?
It was £150,000 last year and is likely to be more next year.

Q: Is any more specialist provision being planned for Manchester?
No. Manchester LA are committed to keeping children in mainstream education as part of their Inclusion Strategy.

Q: Has the Catch-Up funding finished?
Yes.

Q: Is there any advantage to being part of an academy regarding children with EHCPs?
Not financially although some Academy Trusts may have specialist teachers available. The main difficulty for the school is financial. Provision in the school is good. The school wants to be an inclusive school but this is financially challenging.

Q: Would academisation help with the finances of the school in general?
In some areas, such as buildings.

Q: Does the school ever say to the LA that they are unable to fund an EHCP?
Only if there is a child with significant SEND who wants to join the school and has no funding.

Premises, Health and Safety

Annexe - On arrival at school on Monday 9 October, staff found that some plaster had fallen off the inside of the roof and through the suspended ceiling. Although the damage was not considerable, the school put in an insurance claim to get the roof surveyed and the damage repaired. The annexe building was closed until the survey took place and the Out of School Club (OSC) took place in the dining hall. The surveyor came to the school today and declared that the other side of the annexe is safe to use so the OSC used it tonight. There are some remedial works to be completed on the roof and pointing to be done. The school will have to pay a £250 excess. Some of the repairs will hopefully take place over the October half term.

In the Cavendish Building, the two connected rooms used for Reception off the downstairs hall, have been separated by a stud wall to create two separate classrooms.

Q: Was there any feedback from parents about separating the connected rooms?

No.

The Cavendish building has been given Grade 2 listed status, including the annexe, wall and railings. These can be replaced if needed on a like-for-like basis.

Q: Does Grade 2 listed status bring any additional funding?

The school are waiting for a response to this question. The SBM is hoping that grants could be applied for.

In the grounds, the rat infestation has been resolved and the block paving for parents to congregate at the Year 5 and 6 gates has been extended along with some fencing and gates.

Q: has the school been asked to have a Sustainability Policy?

No but the SBM went on a 'Be Green' Summit which she found very informative.

The school had an unplanned fire drill which went smoothly.

All planned maintenance took place over the summer holidays.

Due to recent increases in food prices, the school meal provider, Aspens, have had to increase their price per meal. To cover this increase the school have increased the school meal prices from September to £2.50 per day. The school remains one of the lowest prices in the local cluster. Some schools are increasing school meal costs to £3.00 per day. Aspens have chosen to remove tuna and sandwiches from their menus due to cost. We have had some parental engagement around this decision and Aspens sent a letter to parents to explain the changes.

Q: What has tuna been replaced with?

There has been no replacement so the choices are now baked beans or cheese. The school continues to monitor the school meals.

It was decided by the Resources Committee to take Item 7, Staffing and HR update, at this time in the meeting.

The SBM presented the staff changes for September 2023. There were no matters arising.

The SBM presented the Staff Absence reports as at 6 October 2023 for discussion and questions.

Q: The average days lost per employee at the school is above the national average. What are the reasons for this?

The school and the governing body have been monitoring staff attendance as an on-going issue. The school are using the Staff Attendance Management (SAM) system from Fusion Education People Solutions, which is not a national system. Therefore, the average is taken from the schools using the SAM system and is not a true national average.

Q: Looking at the graph in Item 7a, Absence Summary Report: In January it appears that there were 100 sickness days lost. Is this correct?

Yes, due to both long-term sickness absence and general illness.

Q: Are the people who were on long-term sickness last year still at the school?

One has returned to work and one has retired on ill health grounds.

The HT explained the triggers for short and long term illness.

The school continue to use HR provided by One Education alongside Fusion. They will overlap until Easter with One Education dealing with on-going cases and Fusion dealing with new cases. The SBM is very happy with the services that Fusion provide as it is well-organised and timely. Some staff have found it difficult to adapt to the new system.

Q: What is the HTs opinion on Fusion?

The Fusion system is not the style that the HT would usually choose as it is more corporate. It has been purchased for one year and will be reviewed in April.

The governors agreed that it is a good idea to trial the Fusion system.

Q: Is it the same members of staff who are experiencing repeated illness?

No, it is different members of staff.

Q: Are they established members of staff?

Yes. The HT feels confident that the members of staff appointed in the last 3 years have a different set of values around absence, although some established members of staff are also very committed to reducing absence.

Q: Have the staff been presented with these figures?

Not yet, although the SLT has discussed staff absence with the staff. The teachers have access to their SAM information but most do not access it.

A governor commented on the effect that staff absence can have financially, on the children and on other staff members.

The HT commented that there are a lot of pressures and demands on staff and that the governors and the SLT need to be mindful and compassionate. The staff absence costs are going down, which is positive and staff attendance has gone up to pre-Covid levels.

Q: Can anything be done for staff wellbeing at no cost?

The school does small things towards staff wellbeing but this is difficult due to budget constraints.

A governor expressed a hope that, when staff absence reduces, it will become self-fulfilling for the staff.

Q: Are the staff close as a unit?

The school are using the class TA 3's for cover rather than supply and are hoping that this will have a positive effect on staff absence. There is a fair amount of union involvement in the school.

There will be a staff wellbeing survey when Ofsted inspect the school.

6.2 Period 6 Budget Monitoring

Income	£4,257,746.00
Expenditure	£4,438,013.00
In Year Surplus/Deficit	£ 180,267.00 deficit
Balance B/Fwd 2022-23	£ 67,177.00 surplus
Current Proposed C/fwd 2024/25	£ 112,823.00 surplus

The Period 6 Budget Monitoring was approved by the Resources Committee.

6.3 Budget Changes

These were presented on an itemised document including a commentary, sent to governors prior to the meeting.

The SBM explained the use of red and black font in the document and commented that the school are in a good position, with a difference of only £815.

The budget changes were approved by the Resources Committee.

6.4 New Proposed Budget

The budget to date is as follows:

Income	£4,432,727.00
Expenditure	£4,468,777.00
In Year Surplus/Deficit	£ 36,051.00 deficit
Balance B/Fwd 2022-23	£ 67,177.00 surplus
Current Proposed C/fwd 2024/25	£ 31,127.00 surplus

The £31,127.00 is money that is not yet allocated to be spent; the contingency figure.

The New Proposed Budget was approved by the Resources Committee.

6.5 3-year forecast

The SBM presented the 3-year forecast.

	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25
	£	£	£
Income	4,432,727	4,382,551	4,327,649
Expenditure	4,468,777	4,430,000	4,476,988
In Year surplus/deficit	36,051 deficit	47,449 deficit	149,338 deficit
B/fwd surplus/deficit	67,177 surplus	31,127 surplus	16,322 deficit
Cumulative C/fwd surplus/deficit	31,127 surplus	16,322 deficit	165,660 deficit

Q: Will the LA accept the school setting a deficit budget for future years?

The LA will contact the school if they have concerns and will ask the school what they propose to do to reduce the deficit.

Q: Why does expenditure go down next year then up the following year?

This is possibly due to PTA income and expenditure.

Q: Why do the costs for Educational Support Staff go up and then down?

This is due to temporary staff plus pay increases.

The 3-year forecast was approved by the Resources Committee.

6.6 Cash flow forecast

The SBM presented the Cash flow forecast

The cash flow forecast is in credit.

The cash flow forecast was approved by the Resources Committee.

6.7 Spending over £2,000

The SBM presented the spending over £2,000.

There were no matters arising.

6.8 Asset Register

The SBM presented the Asset Register which was completed at the start of the summer.

There were no matters arising.

	Actions or decisions	Owner	Timescale
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Period 6 Budget Monitoring approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Changes approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Proposed Budget approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-year forecast approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash Flow Forecast approved 	Resources Committee	

**Ciaron Wilkinson left the meeting.*

7	Appraisal report		
The HT shared the Appraisal report for 2022-23. It was noted that the appraisal targets are linked to the School Development Plan.			
	Actions or decisions	Owner	Timescale

8	General Data Protection Requirements (GDPR) update		
There have been no GDPR breaches.			
The school has gone through the retention schedule, which will be published.			

	Actions or decisions	Owner	Timescale

9 Policies for review

A number of policies had been circulated for review prior to the meeting.

9.1 Scheme of Financial Delegation

There were no changes to this policy. The name of the Chair of the Resources Committee was changed to Sami Khan.

The Scheme of Financial Delegation was approved by the Resources Committee.

9.2 Financial Procedures Manual

There were no changes to this policy.

The Financial Procedures Manual was approved by the Resources Committee.

9.3 Health and Safety Policy

There were no changes to this policy.

The Health and Safety Policy was approved by the Resources Committee.

9.4 Appraisal Policy

There were no changes to this policy.

The HT has attached the application form that staff have to complete if they wish to move to the Upper Pay Scale (UPS), to the Policy. Staff who wish to apply have until 31 October to do so and they have been informed of this.

The Appraisal Policy was approved by the Resources Committee.

9.5 Premises Management Policy

There were no changes to this policy.

The Premises Management Policy was approved by the Resources Committee.

9.6 Staff Attendance Policy and Procedures

There were no changes to this policy. The school are using the One Education Policy.

The Staff Attendance Policy and Procedures was approved by the Resources Committee.

9.7 Whistleblowing Policy

There were no changes to this Policy.

The Whistleblowing Policy was approved by the Resources Committee.

9.8 Restructure and Redundancy Policy

There were no changes to this Policy.

The Restructure and Redundancy Policy was approved by the Resources Committee.

9.9 Flexible Working Requests Policy and Procedure

This Policy may be amended in January. If this is the case, it will be brought back to the governors for approval.

Q: Are there any updates on Shared Parental Leave?

Not as yet. The SBM is unsure as to whether the school will get a pay out from the Maternity Cover insurance.

The Flexible Working Requests Policy and Procedure was approved by the Resources Committee.

	Actions or decisions	Owner	Timescale
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme of financial delegation approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Procedures Manual approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Policy approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraisal Policy approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premises Management Policy approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Attendance Policy & Procedures approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistleblowing Policy approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure and Redundancy Policy approved 	Resources Committee	
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible Working Request Policy approved 	Resources Committee	

10 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The SBM presented the SFVS.

The SFVS is due to be submitted by 31 March 2024.

There are two questions for action from the previous year's SFVS:

Does the school benchmark the size of its senior leadership team annually against that of similar schools? This is in the process of being organised.

And

Do you compare your non-staff expenditure against the DfE recommended national deals to ensure you are achieving best value? This is partly done and will remain as an action.

	Actions or decisions	Owner	Timescale

11 AOB

The recommended audit and fraud training for governors has not yet come through. It will go back onto the agenda when it is available.

	Actions or decisions	Owner	Timescale

Date and time of next meeting:	Wednesday 17th January 2024 @ 5.30pm
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