

## Castle Vale Nursery School Full Governing Body Meeting Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023



### **Present:**

Mark Phillips (MP) - Chair of Governors  
Sally Leese (SL) – Head Teacher  
Kate Bateman – Staff Governor  
Kirstie McElroy-Stringer (KMS) – Co-Opted Governor  
Sara Hartshorn – Co-Opted Governor  
Tracey Quirk (TQ) – Co-Opted Governor  
Anneka Anwar (AA) – Parent Governor  
Caroline Hopkins (CH) – Parent Governor  
Kirsty Harper (KH) – Community Governor

### **In Attendance:**

Christina Meakin (CM) – Deputy Head Teacher  
Jackie McCorrison (JAMC) - Clerk

### **Apologies**

None

### **1) Welcome, Introductions & Apologies**

MP welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

SL reported that since the last meeting, Sue Martin has resigned as a Governor, as has Kerri Treasure.

Kerri Treasure is willing to consider becoming a Community Governor and continue with her H&S link role and SL will follow this up.

SL introduced Anneka Anwar and Caroline Hopkins as our newly appointed Parent Governors.

Kirsty Harper works at the Children's Centre and would like to join the Board as a community Governor.

**Action:- The Governing Body unanimously agreed to appoint Kirsty Harper as a Community Governor**

### **3) Declaration of Pecuniary Interests**

It is important to establish a register of business and personal interests for Governors, and for all staff.

**Action:- New Governors to complete pecuniary interest declarations via GovernorHub.**

### **4) Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022 have been uploaded to the Portal and were approved.

### **Matters Arising not covered on the Agenda.**

#### **Reappointment of the LA Governor**

Mark's term of office as Local Authority Governor attended on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Mark has stated his willingness to serve a further term of office and it has been confirmed to the LA that Mark has the skills and experience required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school and the Governing Body is prepared to appoint him as the Local Authority representative governor.

The nomination of Mark to serve a further term as the Local Authority representative has been approved by the School Governor Nomination Committee.

**Action:- The Governing Body formally confirmed the appointment of Mark Phillips as the Local Authority representative as Castle Vale Nursery.**

### **Appointment of the Chair of Governors**

The Governing Body unanimously agreed to appoint Mark as Chair of Governors for the academic year.

### **Appointment of Mental Health Link Governor**

The Governing Body unanimously agreed to appoint Kate Bateman as Mental Health Link Governor. Caroline Hopkins will also support this role.

### **Staffing Proposal**

At the last meeting it was agreed to review the staffing in light of the decision regarding the new pilot project.

SL reported that there were 10 applicants for the Assistant Head Position and this was shortlisted to 5. Following a rigorous interview process, Dennis was appointed and he will join the team after Easter,

### **Approval of Policies**

The following Policies have been added to GovernorHub.

- Fire Evacuation Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Admissions Policy.

**The Governing Body formally approved the above policies.**

### **5) Feedback from Personnel & Finance committee**

The Committee have just met and the Minutes detail the discussion and recommendations.

Tracey Quirk fed back as follows:-

- It was reported that there are still ongoing issues with Oracle.
- The budget report was presented and things are on track with no surprises expected.
- Work is being done to look at the budget for next year and it is likely that the Nursery will be full for next year with a waiting list.

SL said that there is a concern that a lot of parents are applying for a place but school is turning children away most days. She has emailed the LA to see if there is any opportunity of expanding. Nursery will be full next term and are likely to be full in September. Every 3 year old is entitled to nursery education and some 2 year olds and we are the only maintained setting in the area taking 2 year olds. SL can get the ward data for Castle Vale will show those children not in setting are on our waiting list.

**Action:- SL to look at the waiting list and analyse the numbers and add the information to GovernorHub.**

The documentation relating to the SFVS was discussed by the Committee and recommended for approval.

***The Governing Body approved the feedback from the Finance Committee and agreed all of the recommendations made.***

#### **6) Wellbeing update**

This will be deferred to the next meeting

**Action:- To add Wellbeing Update to the Summer Term Agenda.**

#### **7) Head Teachers Report.**

The report has been added to GovernorHub.

As Governors are aware, the Nursery has offered to pilot a new way of working with children under 5 with SEND. The project is not a Resource Base and is about working with parents and professionals to identify and intervene earlier to support the children with additional needs rather than them going on a waiting list. This will also support the LA with knowing the children's needs before they get to statutory school age.

Sometimes there are children who could access mainstream with the right support.

SL gave a presentation to the senior team in the Council and also showed them a video. The proposal has gone to the team for approval and SL will get the outcome tomorrow.

**Action: - SL to let the Governors know the outcome of the decision.**

SL said that if the proposal is not approved then she will ask for a portacabin to be funded.

SL gave a DLP Update.

The project has established successful outreach work, with a range of Early Years provision, with the aim to support children with emerging SEND needs. The project supports the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector, as well as Childminders, Maintained Nursery Schools and Primary Schools with a Nursery class. School have forged close partnership working with other established services and are providing Outreach Support to 21 Sutton Coldfield based PVI settings and 7 Childminders. In Erdington, school is providing Outreach Support to 13 PVI settings and 3 Childminders. Uptake is increasing rapidly.

School is using the Birmingham Early Years Network events to share the key principles of the project and the outreach efforts have reached 492 children within Sutton Coldfield and 210 in Erdington.

Ellie is regularly out of school supporting other settings, the settings are very appreciative. This has all been funded through the DLP which ends in July.

#### ***Governors asked if this funding will continue?***

SL said it is unclear at the moment.

Census numbers were discussed, there is an increase in the number of 3 year olds as the children are getting older and are accessing their entitlement so there are less families paying.

There are 55 children on the SEND register.

***Governors noted that there is a lot of children with EHCP's.***

SL confirmed that there are 7 complete, 3 draft, 1 at the 2nd stage and 1 to submit and this reflects the needs of the children in Nursery.

***Governors noted that the Nursery is always looking outwards. The reason there are so many children with an EHCP/ SSPP is because staff work with external providers and show there is a graduated approach and staff work well with parents and carers. Parents seek places at the Nursery through word of mouth.***

SL gave an update on the Stronger Practice Hubs.

Nursery is part of the Midlands Early years Stronger Practice Hub along with a number of other settings, this will be funded for 2 years until late 2024. The hub will support other nurseries and childminders in their area to adopt evidence-based practice improvements, by:

- establishing local networks of early years educators to share knowledge and effective practice;
- proactively sharing information and advice on evidence-based approaches - for example, through newsletters, blogs and social media;
- acting as a point of contact for bespoke advice, and signposting to other funded support; and
- working with the Education Endowment Foundation to select evidence-based programmes to fund and make available to nurseries and childminders.

The evidence based programme we will be working with is Concept Cat and Tale Toolkit and SL explained each of the programmes.

***Governors asked if there will be a staffing implication?***

SL said that there are a number of Head Teachers involved and the EY network and DLP have 2 x central coordinators and who will be paid to support this project and possibly also oversee the social media aspect.

SL said that Nursery charge £350 per day for outreach support and nobody else offers this support at such a cheap rate and so this will be looked at and a comparison made with this and the cost of employing someone to coordinate the project.

Information about the project will be added to the EY network.

SL said that there will be a lot more information to share at the next meeting.

SL reported that Garden Club is a work in progress, there is some work that needs to be done to finish it and the gardening will start in spring.

Christina Meakin gave an update on her expert role.

She has supported 3 x settings with the curriculum and specific SEND support in the autumn.

This term she is working with 3 different settings based in Northfield, Stafford and Ladybird Montessori in Sutton.

All of the settings are appreciative of the support and having Ellie on board is positive because she has worked in the PVI sector and she knows Sutton very well.

Anneka spoke about her lived experience of having a child with SEND who was initially educated in the PVI sector and then at CVNS.

***Governors noted what is clear is that PVI's are a business and do not have the money or resources or the same access to the services maintained nurseries do. Children who attend our setting have access to an Educational Psychologist, CAT worker, PSS and a SENCO.***

***Governors how feedback from the settings after the support is recorded?***

SL said that the initial conversation is guided by Ellie on a proforma and at the end there is a questionnaire as to how the support has impacted.

CM said that there is also QA of the work she does. The next step is to benchmark before and after the support she gives.

### **8). Assessment to include impact of PIC assessments**

MP said he met with Kate and Helen yesterday and they looked at the SEND report (this has been added to GovernorHub) and how the Nursery shows that the children are making progress.

MP said that he saw evidence of progress in all of the assessments he saw.

The PIC profiles are used for children who struggle with play, integration and communication and MP saw examples of the case studies which show the small areas of progress and the spreadsheet that shows the little steps of progress. These are then used to inform targets and information is shared with parents so that they can support the children at home.

It is a new way of assessing the children and needs some small adjustments.

Kate explained that school also use SOGS and showed them an example of the spreadsheet that is used to show small steps of progress. The scoring system highlights developmental areas where children might potentially have a delay, indicating where referral might be necessary.

Another way of assessing is using the SCERTS profile, this came from the S&L therapist. An example of the assessments were shown to the Governors and the data clearly shows the little steps that the children make.

The outcomes from these assessments are fed back to the staff and are used to inform planning.

SL spoke about a child who came into Nursery who was non-verbal and not aware of other children and on the pathway for an EHCP, following support the child is speaking and is very observant, the child will be going to the school on an SSPP and this is huge progress.

**Action: - Governors recommended that staff keep case studies to show examples of real successes and progress, showing where the children came into the setting and where they left. It is also important to capture parent voice – would parents recommend Castle Vale Nursery to other parents etc. and get their feedback as to what could be done better / differently? Governors also suggested using MS forms and trying to capture feedback about the excellent culture and ethos.**

