

**MEADOW VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL
MEETING OF THE FINANCE PREMISES AND STAFFING
COMMITTEE
20th MARCH 2018 AT 4.45PM**



MINUTES

Present; - B Vickerage, K Smith, N Lee, J West, K Bromley, J Newbolt, A Boyle, D Everett

In Attendance: - A Blench, K Taylor, T Keenan, J Logan, D Sylvester (JMAT)

FPS33.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

33.1 To accept apologies for absence – apologies were received and accepted from T White.

FPS34.DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND BUSINESS INTEREST

34.1 Individual governors to declare any personal or business interests on any item on the agenda – none were declared.

FPS35.REVIEW OF POLICIES

35.1 Arrangements for complying with the GDPR – 25th May 2018 – K Taylor mentioned that she had been asked to sit on a GDPR group run by RMBC. Governor question – what is the GDPR? This stands for 'general data protection regulations' which schools must comply with by 25th May 2018. The group will be run by Sally Williams McGlone and 24th April will be the first meeting. The group will support other schools. K Taylor gave governors an update in terms of where we are with our preparations. A legal disclaimer has been added to our emails. Impelling Solutions are IT provider have added an extra level of encryption. Staff have been told to stop using pen drives and laptops have had another level of encryption installed. All anti-virus us up to date. Enquiries had been made with Engie relating to school CCTV cameras. 1 of the cameras is owned by school, but the others are owned by Engie. Each camera needs its own documentation which Engie will be supplying.

35.2 Arrangements for completing the School Financial Value Standard (SFVS) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-financial-value-standard-and-assurance-sfvs> T White has worked with K Taylor on getting our SFVS statement ready for approval by governors. The only difference from last year is that we now have a new chair of

the finance committee (T White). The statement was approved for submission to RMBC.

- 35.3 Reviewing the School's Letting Policy and Charges for 2018 19. Financial year. The previously circulated policy was approved for next year with no changes to lettings charges.

FPS36.CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION

- 36.1 David Sylvester (CEO, James Montgomery Multi Academy Trust (JMAT)) was welcomed to the meeting. David gave governors an overview of JMAT, its history, vision and ethos.

The key aspects that governors wanted to understand from the presentation was what would be the benefits from our school joining JMAT for teachers, parents, governors, pupils. Also what would the top slice paid from the school budget to JMAT amount to and what would it give us?

James Montgomery was someone who fought for the abolition of slavery and as a result spent a good amount of time in and out of prison. He was from Scotland, he established his own private school, newspaper. He was apprenticed in Rotherham. He was a person of morals, who built up something quite special.

JMAT schools are split into two groups, the north and the south. Following the granting of academy orders last Thursday there are now 14 schools in the North of Rotherham and 12 in the south. This takes in 3,500 pupils in total. There are a lot of strengths in the schools with 86% having been given a 'good or better' inspection outcome at their last Ofsted visit. When schools join the MAT they keep their own local identity. David stressed that this was very important to him as those values and brands had been built up over long periods of time and mean a lot to the local communities concerned. Meadow View Primary has a reputation for excellence which has also been developed over a long period of time. So in JMAT the following things do not change when a school joins the trust – Name, uniform, contract, logo, holidays, terms and conditions of employment, ethos, curriculum, behaviour, local governing body, staffing and community.

K Bromley left the meeting at 5.05pm for a parent meeting in school.

The support to schools from the LA was shrinking and as a result the LA did not now always have the capacity to support schools. JMAT offers that support to its schools. JMAT also has some interesting research projects under the umbrella of the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) with 3 currently ongoing. Shining Stars, which involves disadvantaged pupils and is sponsored by NEXT plc. A director from NEXT is now on the JMAT Board. JMAT run a local Food Bank and have a direct link to obtain support for their families when needed. JMAT has started a Teaching School, which creates links with 8 Sheffield Teaching Schools. Tapton School for example who are running 'train the trainer' events in Child Mental Health. We link with Wath C of E for moderation of writing. We encourage peer assessment between pupils of neighbouring schools. We have strong systems, such as termly audits on a theme of standards in schools. There is a regular JMAT DEP Meeting where each school reports back on where they are with their priorities, what is the impact and what do we need from the wider trust. Directors when they meet discuss what has come from this meeting and decide what they will do to support. JMAT employs 3 dedicated teaching and learning consultants, who are deployed according to need/priority. JMAT accountability structure was outlined. The intention isn't to remove the local governing body from decision making. The LGB is at the core and then JMAT provides rings of support around them. For example our 14 head teachers are meeting together this Friday. We have 7 directors who lead in different areas e.g. Governance, HR, Legal, Finance, Education, Business and Emergency Planning,

Safeguarding. The LGB can ask for help from the relevant directors as required. The LGB decide if they want the help from directors this is optional. The safeguarding lead will audit each school from a safeguarding perspective. They then share the findings with the LGBs and ask for a plan for improvement with a time line. The LGBs have challenge and support from JMAT. The directors are volunteers and are not paid. The 'members' of JMAT are drawn from the Sheffield Dioceses and educationalists. They are 2 retired head teachers and the Bishop of Sheffield. Local community is very important. There is a scheme of delegation document which outlines what is left to the discretion of the school and LGB and what is done centrally. The only time JMAT would step in and take control is when it receives a bad Ofsted inspection e.g. special measures. Then the decision making and governance would come back into the central team. This is the same as it would be in LA control.

Member schools contribute 3.5% of their DSG (excluding PP and SEN funding) to the central fund for provision of central services. As a result of joining JMAT schools will find savings on their budget of a similar amount of not higher due to joint procurement. This may be more challenging to achieve as a PFI school but there will still be savings that can be made. An example of what can be done is that JMAT are in negotiations with RMBC educational psychology about a JMAT contract which will save money and be tailored to our needs. The Times Educational Supplement we now advertise in for £695 per school per year which is a huge saving.

There are also funding opportunities which we can take advantage of and through the Teaching School we will benefit from brokered support. There are trust wide grant bids. There are shared systems e.g. pupil tracking systems, unity across the MAT. There are professional networks covering reading, curriculum, finance, SIP, safeguarding, staffing.

There are two people employed to support and mentor trainees. We have a partnership with The Forge at Sheffield Hallam University. All schools use 'safeguard' which is a system similar to CPOMS.

IT support is given around the ICT Infrastructure. We have moved away from RGfL. We have 2 project managers, one of which is a health & safety inspector. We have a project manager over governance. Governor question- would the IT team have the capacity to expand with new schools coming online? Yes, they can according to need.

Inclusion offer – There is a standard provision in each school as a baseline around this which is commissioned by the MAT e.g. CAMHS, Early Help etc.

We are planning to engage a Mental Health and Speech and Language specialists for next year. Governor question – we use Rotherham and Barnsley Mind for counselling is that what you have in mind? Yes, but it could be another provider.

Pubble project- we encourage children to write and publish their own work.

Active Phonics – we combine PE and phonics and this provision is based in Barnsley Vex-IQ – is a robotics project

Career pathways – if they want to become a teacher the trust can provide the pathway. We now have a new system of performance management which is based upon professional dialogue. NQTs access their support through RSiS. Ellis House is the JMAT base. We do 1-2-1 Leadership mentoring. In the UK there are now 35% less applications for teaching courses at our universities. We need to change the perception of teaching as a career option and be proactive. We have trained 17 people. Governor question – some parents are very anti academisation, why is that?

David said that he believes this is because some MATS rub out the schools local identity. Some stand down the LGBs. They change the name of the school and the uniform. The logo changes and they become very corporate. Some MATs have

expanded very rapidly and not had a considered approach. Parents might be reacting against this. Governor question – do you have common policies which all of your schools use? Yes we do for this like finance. We use something called The Vault which is a Google tool for storing documents. Schools take and amend from this documents for their own school. Governor question – will there be a maximum number of schools that you would want in JMAT? We have said we would go to having 3 groups with 9 in each. We do need some schools who are not doing well so that we can fulfil our moral purpose. Governor question – will staff be able to move work location between the groups of schools? Yes there will be movement and it doesn't have to be restricted to the same group. Governor question – how long has JMAT existed? 2 and a half years. We started with a co-operative trust of 5 schools with me as the CEO. Our structures and systems didn't allow us to respond to a neighbouring school which had gone into special measures. That school is not SM now. It took a good year to get JMAT set up. Governor question – if the structure doesn't step in until one of your schools gets into special measures, why would it be allowed to get to that point? It wouldn't be allowed to get to that point. This is what the termly DEP audit is for. LGBs are challenged to develop plans for improvement and present these to the directors of JMAT. The support from the directors, the DPE meetings working with LGBS is a strength. Directors would ensure that the school gets nowhere near special measures.

Governor question – why would we need to change if our school is working ok now?

Because schools need to stand in partnership. In the past this has been the LA, school and its local community. This has all changed over the last few years. There are now only 20 schools left in Rotherham who are still under the LA control. The rest are academies. So it's a case of when not why. The government stepped back from making academisation compulsory for all schools, but it has still left some legislation which makes it possible to enforce academisation when the majority of schools in an area are academies. Governor question – has school looked at other MATs? Yes, we have been looking at this for 7 years.

Governor question – if teachers were to move around within your MAT would TUPE still apply? No TUPE still applies. However there is a JMAT contract available. No one would be forced to accept a JMAT contract. This would be used for new recruits and new positions coming up. So for example we will be employing floating teachers on JMAT contracts. As a MAT we have adopted national pay terms and conditions of employment. Governor question – if there is a national strike how will this affect staff on different contracts? It's up to each member of staff whether they go on strike, just as is the case now.

Governor question – who will get the staff pension contributions, do you get them? No JMAT is a member of the teachers' pension scheme and the Local Government Scheme and all staff payments would continue as before. Governor question – do you continue pay progression decisions above the national pay scales? Each LGB will have an ISR Band for senior salaries and this will remain. Schools have the discretion to vary this banding as is the case as an LA school. Governor question – could we question salary increase decisions? Yes, you could because this is a local matter anyway.

Governor question – will the schools lettings income be taken away from us? No it will be retained by the school. As mentioned before the only thing taken is the MAT levy payment at 3.5% of DSG. Governor question – do your schools have joint CPD sessions and how? Yes we do and we are open to different ways of doing this. So things like fire training and first aid training could be pooled.

Governor question – some MATS don't like their schools to interact with local schools which aren't part of the same MAT. How would that work with JMAT? This isn't an issue we still work together with schools which aren't a part of JMAT. Governors expressed the desire to still maintain good links with the Winterhill, Wingfield

Learning Communities. Governor question – if the school name and brand doesn't change how do you promote the JMAT name? There will be a link on each schools website to JMAT. But this isn't about making a name for JMAT, it's about each school thriving. We don't add the JMAT logo to each schools sign or letterhead. The JMAT logo does appear on Ellis House, on my presentation and on external events where we are representing all of the schools. Governor question – have you found that parents are worried about becoming an academy in your schools that have joined you? Yes and that's understandable. We always hold consultation meetings with parents which David attends as the CEO. It's important to get to the heart of the parents concerns. Governor question – is the consultation about asking the parents permission to convert to academy? No it isn't, as this isn't a parental decision it's for the governing body. It's important to listen to parents concerns, address these and get them on board with the changes. DfE want to know that we have done this as well.

FPS37.CONFIDENTIALITY

37.1 To determine any confidential items – agenda item 36.1 is confidential.

N.B. It was agreed that the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting of 24th April would be moved to the 17th April. The 24th April meeting would now be an Academy Feedback Meeting open to all governors and SLT. It was also agreed that A Blench would post on the secure governor pages some documents which would help new governors to understand how the governing body had got to this stage in its academy journey. K Smith also agreed to meet with new governors.