

Academy	Salmestone Primary School
Chair of Governors	Roger Silk
Date	20 th October 2022

Governance at Salmestone Primary School within TKAT

Salmestone Primary School is part of TKAT, a Multi-academy Trust. The Trust is a charity and its board of trustees must ensure that it complies with its charitable objects, which relate to the provision of education in its schools. As such it is the Trust board, which is accountable for the performance of the Academies in the Trust, and in turn, it is held to account by the Department for Education. The Trust has chosen to appoint committees for each of its academies and these are known as local governing bodies (LGBs). The LGB's responsibilities are set out in a document known as the Scheme of Delegation which is available on TKAT's and Academy's website.

Roger Silk and David Cygan remained as Chair and Vice Chair of Governors respectively. Roger Silk also remained as Chair of the Joint Local Governing Body encompassing all five TKAT primary schools in Thanet until it was disbanded in the Spring Term. During the year, Ann Long resigned as an Appointed Governor for personal reasons; Dan Barham resigned as an Appointed governor due to a change in career and Lauren Farnell resigned as a Parent Governor. Vanessa May and Beth Pritchard joined as Appointed Governors; Vanessa is already a governor as Dame Janet/Newlands and Beth has extensive governor experience in a London school. With the four existing Appointed governors - Dave Cygan, Vanessa May, Beth Pritchard and Roger Silk plus Sarah Corcoran and Keena Entwistle-Lewis as Staff governors, the governing body maintained its numerical strength.

Governors are linked to different key aspects of the School Development Plan in order to monitor and report on the work being undertaken throughout the year, for analysis and comment by the whole Committee.

Vision

The LGB is responsible for ensuring that the Academy's long-term vision reflects the needs of its community beyond current post holders and in line with TKAT's vision and values.

Vision Statement

Salmestone Primary School's **ethos and values** are:

Community

We believe we are stronger when working together.

Inspiration

We believe igniting the passion inside leads to exciting opportunities.

Perseverance

We believe in trying new things and never giving up.

Achievement

We believe in personal, emotional and academic success.

Everyone at Salmestone has high aspirations for our pupils. It is our aim to engage all our children in

their learning, developing a love of learning and so creating a community of confident independent learners who are well prepared for secondary school and beyond.

Salmestone has an open door policy for current and prospective parents; we encourage strong links between home and school for all our children and their families. We believe in school and home working together effectively, for the benefit of all our children.

At the heart of this is the provision of a safe and happy learning environment for all our pupils. A sense of community and belonging, with pride in self and school is key to this.

At Salmestone Primary School, we **aim** for our children to grow and develop in an environment where they are cared for, listened to and respected as well as being given consistent, secure and firm boundaries. We aim for our children to develop lifelong learning skills, showing the ability to take responsibility for their own learning so that they can face future challenges with confidence. We aim to ensure each day presents exciting challenges so creating a joy and thirst for knowledge in each individual child. We celebrate diversity and respect all children regardless of ability, gender, ethnicity or religion. We encourage children to recognise and build on their strengths, extending and developing their potential. We provide a happy, caring, supportive and positive learning atmosphere in our school where each child can achieve success.

Salmestone Primary School's **vision** is to provide the foundations for outstanding outcomes through the key features of positivity - by finding solutions; respect - by valuing the feelings, wishes, rights and property of others; integrity - by being honest and having strong moral principles; diversity - by recognising that people have different ideas and opinions but that all are valued; and endeavour - by never giving up and striving to achieve our best.

Salmestone Primary School's **strategy** is built around three key features:

- a) nurturing a culture of high expectation, creativity, collaboration and values
- b) embedding pedagogy through lesson study and Philosophy for Children
- c) creating systems of improvement through communication/data

Organisation of LGB

Salmestone Primary's LGB has 9 Governors, consisting of 2 parents, 2 Staff (excluding Headteacher), 4 appointed, 1 Headteacher, 0 Foundation

There is currently one vacancy for a Parent Governor.

The Link Governors are:

English with a focus on Reading - Charlie Rockman-Friedlander

Families and Community - Ann Long

Health & Safety - Dave Cygan

Key Stage 1 Maths - Lauren Parnell

Key Stage 2 Maths - Dave Cygan

Leadership at all levels - Charlie Rockman-Friedlander

Safeguarding and Attendance - Dan Barham/Roger Silk

Priority matters identified by the Regional Director - Roger Silk

Progress of vulnerable children including SEND - Ann Long

The LGB is run without sub committees with the exception of a Pay Committee for staff annual reviews.

Impact of Covid on the work of the LGB

Describe how the LGB functioned remotely, meetings and contact with the school

The Governing Body meetings were held both remotely first half of the year and in person from the March meeting. Our Clerk very efficiently kept minutes despite the governors not meeting in person for part of the year. The Chair maintained contact with the Headteacher, Executive Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher via technology; meetings were not as frequent as in a normal year because the Chair made a conscious decision to step back and allow the school to operate under very difficult circumstances. The expectation of detail within the Headteacher's Report was scaled back to the essentials but key items such as the well-being of staff and children plus the response to remote learning were central to meetings. Other governors made contact with members of staff if essential for their role, i.e. checking the Single Central Record and Safeguarding updates. Thanks to the dedication of staff colleagues, this was dealt with successfully.

Represent the Academy's local community and stakeholders by ensuring that the Academy's policies and practice meet the community's needs.

Throughout the year governors have been ratifying both new and revised policy documents, particularly those relating to Covid-19. Although unable to be present in school for much of the year, the governors responsible for Safeguarding had been informed of individual cases in process and had online meetings with appropriate members of staff.

The governors were regularly updated on the ways that the School was engaging with parents and carers throughout the year, in particular the successful application of online learning, which needed a great deal of hard work and application by staff. There were some problems but the governors are confident that all that could be done to support the children was achieved.

The School has been actively trying to recruit parent governors. To promote parental interest in joining the SLGC, after each meeting the key points discussed are included in a governors' report to parents within the next School newsletter. During the year we were successful in recruiting two parents but, unfortunately, one had to resign. We will relaunch our search at the start of the new academic year but, more importantly, continue to use technology to inform parents of our work.

The level of parental engagement by the school was probably greater than it might have been pre-Covid; this now needs to be maintained.

Senior staff from the five schools in Thanet East met remotely endeavouring to maintain a shared interest in the progress, attainment and well-being of the children. This may not have been as frequent or successful as in pre-Covid times. The work of TKAT to support the school, whether it be at local Director level or centrally, was appreciated because key senior TKAT staff provided updated templates, saving Senior leadership colleagues considerable time. The governors recognised this collaboration as being very successful in difficult times.

TKAT had set up the A Champion for Every Child (ACE) project last year. The aim was for every child on Pupil Premium funding to be given a mentor within the school. This began with Year 4. Tutors undertook training in September and the first sessions with the children would take place in the week beginning September 27th. At the end of Term 4, the EHT stated that the school was struggling to recruit ACE tutors. There had been no further applicants. Where it was being applied, it was having an impact, but there were financial constraints on its further rollout.

Support Directors of Education to improve Academy outcomes

During this year we worked with our Director of Education for TKAT East - Jenni Richards. The Chair held regular virtual meetings with her to discuss the challenges and successes at the school.

Although there has been no external data in recent years, the School has provided internal data to inform governors of the level of improvement for each governors meeting. There has been robust discussion on these matters during the Headteacher's report, which enabled the governors to be fully aware of pupil progress. The main behaviour issues tended to be related to behaviour for learning and the ability to be fully engaged in class. This was a key focus in the RED Recovery plan and was due to sub-par planning, preparation and delivery. This affected two year groups mainly. At the end of Term 2, the EHT believed that with a renewed focus on the curriculum, and improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, this would improve quickly. At the end of Term 4, there had been improvements in the three key areas of the quality of Teaching and Learning, curriculum and writing. A new curriculum had been introduced before Christmas. This was a big task, but there had already been improvements in the Behaviour for Learning, and the children were enjoying the new curriculum. It was hoped that the impact would be seen in 12 to 18 months time.

At the end of the school year, the EHT had reported that a lot of improvement had taken place since the start of the year, and the Regional Director had been very positive. The school was expected to move to AMBER by next Spring. The EHT reminded the governors that an AMBER RAG rating was TKAT's equivalent to a GOOD rating from Ofsted. The end of year Key Stage 2 outcomes were very good: Reading 61%; Writing 61%; Maths 64%; Combined 56% against National figures of 59% reaching expected standards. The governors congratulated the Year 6 children and staff on this achievement.

Despite the remote nature of the meetings, the governors have been keen to challenge key matters in terms of levels of pupil engagement and finance, including the impact of Covid in both cases. This was successfully achieved, albeit in a different way to pre-Covid because learning had not been possible under normal conditions and there had been additional expenditure due to the pandemic. The governors were grateful to the Business Manager for providing them with regular financial spreadsheets offering the opportunity to scrutinise the figures. There was robust questioning on the difference between the pre-Covid financial picture and the reality of life under Covid.

Support the Senior Leadership Team to ensure staffing is efficient and effective

The governors had previously been fully informed of the potential staffing and financial issues and the need for a staff restructure. Governors had questioned the reasons for the proposals and full answers were provided. The process had been introduced reluctantly but it would have been irresponsible to do otherwise, therefore, the governors feel that they acted responsibly in approving the restructure proposals, which come into force this year.

The governors were grateful to the Business Manager for providing them with regular financial spreadsheets offering the opportunity to scrutinise the figures. There was robust questioning on all finance matters.

The Academy Trust informed the school of revised performance management arrangements for this year in the light of the extraordinary times. The revised process was on course for completion. The Chair and the TKAT East Director Of Education were unable to complete the Headteacher's Performance Management due to his extended absence. The Headteacher resigned at Christmas after a long period of ill health and the governors expressed their best wishes and thanks to Mr Pantling for his commitment to the school over the previous five years.

In December, the EHT informed the governors that the school had successfully argued for extra teaching staff following the restructure, in order to move forward quickly. One teacher had been

recruited and another would be recruited. These would be on fixed-term contracts until the end of the year and would support key year groups, most likely Years 5 and 6. A new SENCo would be hired to relieve some of the pressure on the DHT, who was the SENCo, DSL and Acting HT. This should enable the DHT to focus on curriculum and Teaching and Learning.

The extended absence of the Headteacher during the Autumn terms put added responsibility on to our Deputy Headteacher, who coped with the situation admirably. Once the situation was clear regarding the long-term absence of the Headteacher, we welcomed the arrival of Sam Atkinson as Executive Headteacher, which enabled the Deputy Headteacher to maintain her role successfully.

Following the resignation of the Headteacher, we were successful in recruiting Tom Platten as our new Headteacher from September 2022. He attended our July 2022 meeting outlining his thoughts for the school.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

The EDI priority agreed by the governors is:

Every leader must seek out and understand their local challenges, looking for risk not comfort. They must be familiar with Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies. Those challenges include staff, pupil and community experience.

Equality is a Standing Item on the agenda of all governors meetings, enabling the Headteacher to keep the governors fully up to date regularly with any equality issues and the appropriate questions to be asked by them.

In September, a governor had raised a concern that a parent of a Year 6 child could claim that their child was not being treated equally because the teacher's time was being split between 36 children, instead of 30, and asked how the school would handle this concern. The teacher would look at the progress and attainment of that child, and explain to the parent that each child doesn't have an equal amount of the teacher's time, but this depended on the level of need.

Other areas of Impact

2021-22 was a very difficult year once again and the governing body continues to be very grateful to the hard-working team of teachers and support staff who are ensuring that the children are kept safe, enjoy school and have enabled the excellent progress in their learning, particularly in the first half of the year when the effects of COVID-19 still had to be dealt with and the absence of the Headteacher. The impact of Covid was the biggest factor in recent years. The EHT believed that the Trust responded quickly and very well to the pandemic, offering live lessons to pupils. However, participation had varied between the year groups.

In July it was reported that some parents were still anxious about Covid, and it was a big problem locally. Some parents had become accustomed to not sending their children to school during the lockdowns and this had impacted on attendance figures.

The governors also wish to express their thanks for the support of parents and carers during this difficult year.

LGB Priorities for 2022-23

The School Development Plan will be presented to the LGB at the first meeting of the 2022-23 year. The LGB will allocate link governors to the key elements of the Plan. The governors were told that the main areas would be:

- Continued focus on classroom practice, especially the provision of RWI.
- Review of the pedagogy model
- Acceleration of progress of vulnerable groups, including PP, SEND and the more able.
- Development of a broad, balanced curriculum, following the changes to the Ofsted inspection framework. There had been a lot of hard work this year and improvements had been seen, especially in writing.
- Teaching of Reading. The school is currently using Destination Reader.

Governing Body monitoring will be achieved by visits to the school observing the practice the Headteacher has presented to the governors. The Headteacher's Report will inform the governors about the outcome which should be that all children are making good progress and meeting national standards. The governors will be tracking progress against the RED Recovery Plan and SDP as appropriate, not only at full governors meetings but also in their individual link roles where appropriate. The difficult questions will need to be asked and the answers evaluated.

Attendance: The governors are aware of the issues that impinge on attendance data. However, governors will need to be informed of the causes of problems in the attendance data and evaluate the actions being taken by the school to improve the figures.

Well-being of staff and children: This has been a critical element for the last two years and, although it is hoped that the most difficult Covid-related times are now in the past, the importance of everyone's well-being is still a vital part of school life and the governors will need to monitor this carefully.