

Academy	Salmestone Primary School
Chair of Governors	Roger Silk
Date	20 th October 2021

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, Chair of Governors, also remains Chair of the Joint Local Governing Body encompassing all five TKAT primary schools in Thanet. During the year, George Kup resigned from the SLGC because of increased work commitments; his contributions will be greatly missed. Dan Barham joined in the summer as an Appointed governor. He has been serving as an Appointed governor at Northdown and on the Joint Local Governing Body and brings that experience to our meetings. We welcomed two new Parent governors: Lauren Farnell and Charlie Rickman-Friedlander. With the three existing Appointed governors – Dave Cygan, Ann Long and Roger Silk plus Sarah Burbridge and Keena Entwistle-Lewis as new Staff governors, the governing body returned to a numerical strength not seen in recent years.

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 are currently no vacancies, although additional Appointed governors would always be welcomed.

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

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 remotely throughout the year and our Clerk very efficiently kept minutes despite the governors not meeting in person. The Chair maintained contact with the 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. The Chair and governors were fully involved in the planning and approval process supporting staff restructures. 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, the governor responsible for Safeguarding has 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 will, more importantly, continue to use technology to inform parents of our work. Because all parents meetings and other activities have been remote this year, we have been unable to attend any such sessions to discuss matters with our parents and carers. However, this will be resumed in 2021-22.

The level of parental engagement by the school was probably greater than it might have been at times 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.

Support Directors of Education to improve Academy outcomes

During this year we worked with two Directors of Education for TKAT East – Nicola Furneaux for the first part of the year and Jenni Richards subsequently. The Chair held regular virtual meetings with both to discuss the challenges and successes at the school.

Although there has been no external data this year, 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. 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 were kept fully informed of the potential staffing and financial issues and the need for a staff restructure. Governors questioned the reasons for the proposals and full answers were provided. The process was introduced reluctantly but it would have been irresponsible to do otherwise, therefore, the governors acted responsibly in approving the restructure proposals.

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The Academy Trust informed the school of revised performance management arrangements for this year in the light of the extraordinary times. The process was on track as per the revised arrangements.

The Chair and the TKAT East Director Of Education completed the Headteacher's Performance Management at the start of the academic year.

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.

Other areas of Impact

2020-21 has been an extraordinary year 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 second half of the year when the effects of COVID-19 had to be dealt with. The governors also wish to express their thanks for the support of parents and carers during this difficult year.

LGB Priorities for 2021-22

1. **Teaching & Learning and Attainment:** Governors will be monitoring the School's plan to develop a stable, consistent and highly effective team of classroom practitioners. This 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.
2. **Provision:** One of the governors has a specific remit to monitor and report on the targeted provision that is to be implemented to accelerate progress in all subjects for all pupils with a specific focus on the most able, SEND and disadvantaged. This, and the Headteacher's reports will enable the governors to be aware of the work being undertaken and enable robust questioning at full governors meetings.
3. **Reading:** One of the governors has a specific remit to monitor and report on all aspects of learning related to reading acquisition, widening experiences and reading for pleasure that should be embedded, reviewed and enhanced so that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, could access all areas of learning. Schemes such as Accelerated Reader are being used to develop reading in school and the governor will be able to see this work in action and the full governors meeting will receive and question of the appropriate data during the year.
4. **Maths:** Two of the governors have a specific remit to monitor and report on all aspects of Maths delivery and learning: one for Key Stage 1 and one for Key Stage 2. The HT reported that Maths was very strong in the school. Maths Mastery was fully embedded in the school and a positive impact had been seen. However, there were some weaker areas, such as computing, and the HT was looking at other schools to improve this. Governors will receive feedback on this action.
5. Leaders to take swift and prompt action to address the **under-performance** of colleagues. This would both challenge and support the staff and would include regular feedback with key actions to follow-up. CPD would include the TKAT Teaching School Alliance to develop understanding of the process and the use of modelling.
6. **Staffing:** The governors will be questioning the Senior Leadership regarding the progress of the restructuring process and whether an decisions reached are in the best interests of the children's future learning. Once the process is completed, the governors will be tracking the consequences of the decisions made on the quality of teaching and learning; the progress of the children's attainment and the school's financial position in respect of the changes.
7. **Progress against the School Development Plan:** This will be is a critical year for the school and the governors will be tracking progress against the SDP 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.
8. **Data:** With no externally assessed data for the last two academic years, with reliance on internal data, the forthcoming year should be back to normal in terms on assessments and data. However, before then, there is a great deal of "catch-up" work to be done and interventions will need to be carefully evaluated by both the Senior Leadership Team and the governing body.
9. **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. One governor has a special remit to monitor and report back on Attendance.
10. **Well-being of staff and children:** This was a critical element this year 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.