

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HANDSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 11th DECEMBER 2012 AT 7.00PM
AT THE SCHOOL**

Present: **Authority Governor**
 Ms Nadina Bailey
 Mr Malcolm Shykles

Community Governor
 Mrs Denise Whyman

Parent Governors
 Mr Tony Bell
 Mrs Christine Dean
 Ms Christine Rose
 Mrs Mary Wilson (Chair)

Staff Governors
 Ms Jill Augustin (Head Teacher)
 Ms Marianna Jordaan (Staff Teaching)
 Mrs Natalie McDermott (Staff Non-Teaching)

Also Attending: Mr Jon Bishop, Deputy Head Teacher
 Mr Steve Riches, Highams Park School

Clerk to the Governors: Mr Michael Andrews

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies Accepted

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Dodd and Ms Lincoln.

1.3 Apologies not accepted

None

1.4 Quorum

The meeting was quorate.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. DISCUSSION OF ACADEMIES

3.1 The Chair introduced and welcomed Steve Riches, the Head Teacher from Highams Park School, to the meeting. Mr Riches informed Governors that he was in attendance to discuss his experience of becoming an Academy, which Governors recognised as a good opportunity to consider the pros and cons.

- 3.1.1 Mr Riches noted that before Highams Park became an Academy, it was a Grant Maintained School making the School voluntary aided. Due to this, the School were required to set up a Trust. When the Government altered the criteria for good schools to become academies this gave the School an opportunity to continue to be a Grant Maintained School, but under an Academy umbrella. The way the school was able to maintain its autonomy and independence. The School was also able to retain its ethos.
- 3.1.2 With regards to the terms and conditions for staff, there is no difference to how the Local Authority pay their staff; the school has mirrored not only the terms and conditions, but also the pension scheme.
- 3.1.3 Mr Riches noted that due to some rules and regulations, when the School became an Academy, it also became liable for a large amount of money for the non-teaching pensions.
- 3.2 The Chair asked for Governors thoughts and questions.
- 3.2.1 Ms Whyman asked how long the process took. Mr Riches noted that it took Highams Park approximately 15 months due to the school's financial situation.
- 3.2.2 Mr Bell asked how much the process cost. Mr Riches responded that there were costs involved for such things as moving the ownership of land from the Local Authority to the School. Schools applying for academy status receive a grant of £25,000 to cover legal fees.
- 3.2.3 The Head Teacher noted that Handsworth school has Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for all services with different companies. The Local Authority still have a statutory responsibility to provide services for admissions and appeals. If Handsworth were to become an academy, this would be another service that the School would buy into.
- 3.2.4 It was asked if there were restrictions on choosing SLAs as an Academy. It was noted that the Local Authority procures the services currently.
- 3.2.5 Mr Bell asked if converting to an academy meant an increased work load for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Mr Riches has not found this to be the case noting that the workload was different, not necessarily more. Mr Bell expressed concern that there would be a higher work load for Primary Schools.
- 3.2.6 The Head Teacher noted that 5% of Primary Schools have converted to Academy status. It would not be financially beneficial for a One Form Entry Primary School to become an Academy, but converting a Two Form Entry School could be beneficial. The Head Teacher continued that she was getting increasingly frustrated by the budget that the Local Authority holds centrally. The School does not benefit from the centrally held funds, as it is not a priority school. Mr Riches added that the central funding is also used to fund Unions. Mr Bell felt that there was a good argument to have Union involvement in schools.
- 3.2.7 The Head Teacher noted that overall not as many Primary Schools have converted to Academy status. However, in the Borough a lot of schools have been forced to

Autumn Term 2012

convert due to them going in to an Ofsted category.

- 3.2.8 It was also noted that there was an opportunity to become part of an Academy Partnership and a lot of different models were available.
- 3.2.9 Mr Bishop asked if the £25,000 grant was only available until June 2013. Mr Riches confirmed that this was correct.
- 3.2.10 The Chair noted that whether the Governing Body decide to proceed or not, all must be reminded to have the best interests of the children of Handsworth at that forefront of their minds.
- 3.2.11 Ms Rose asked what would happen to the statutory services that the Local Authority supplies. The Head Teacher responded that the Local Authority will continue to supply.
- 3.2.12 It was asked what the central funding was used for by the Local Authority. The Head Teacher responded that central funding was used to fund Schools that have greater needs of SEN or underachieving, for example.
- 3.2.13 It was noted that OFSTED inspections still apply to academies and the academies are still accountable to their Governing Bodies.
- 3.2.14 It was asked if Academies can be forced to link with other Schools. The Head Teacher responded that this would not be the case. If a school is within an Academy Trust, school-to-school support is performed. The decision would remain with the academy, not the Local Authority.
- 3.2.15 Mr Riches noted that the academy chose how the school is run, along with the constitution of the Governing Body.
- 3.2.16 The Chair noted that the school must take into consideration its ethos, outlining it thoroughly should Governors decide to investigate academy status.
- 3.2.17 The Head Teacher noted that if Governors were to also explore the possibility of an Academy Trust, the experience of Highams Park School would be very beneficial.
- 3.2.18 Mr Riches noted that as an academy, a better financial deal is not received; the pupil premium formula remains the same.
- 3.2.19 Mr Bell asked if an Academy can change admissions. Mr Riches responded that it was its own admissions authority, but must still follow the admissions code.
- 3.3 The Chair asked Governors how they wished to proceed.
- 3.3.1 The Head Teacher suggested asking the Department for Education to visit the School to discuss Academy Status.
- 3.3.2 Ms Whyman asked when the next workshop on academies was and wondered if one of the Partners could come to the School to discuss the legalities. Mr Riches noted that he would be able to arrange for a Partner to come and explain the legalities to Governors, should they require it.

- 3.3.3 Mrs Dean suggested forming a working party to investigate the matter further. All were in agreement to form a working party. It was agreed that the following Governors would form the working party:

Denise Whyman
Christine Dean
Tony Bell
The Head Teacher
The Chair

The Chair thanked Mr Riches for attending and answering Governors' questions.

Mr Riches left at 20h10

4. GOVERNING BODY

- 4.1 The Clerk confirmed the current membership, noting that there was one Community Governor vacancy. There were no terms of office coming to their end.

- 4.2 There was no one to consider for disqualification due to non-attendance.

4.3 ISA Barred List

An ISA Barred List was not provided to update Governors on its status. Governor Services to provide an up to date ISA Barred List for the next meeting.

Action: Governor Services to provide an ISA Barred List for next meeting.

5 MINUTES

- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 25th September 2012 were received and agreed by the Governors as an accurate record of the meeting, with the following amendments;

- 5.1.1 Ms McDermott should read Mrs.

- 5.1.2 Under Link Governors on minute 7.2.2, two positions were recorded inaccurately and should read as follows:

Ms Bailey - Writing Link Governor
Mrs McDermott - Reading Link Governor

- 5.1.3 The Chair signed the minutes and they were retained by the Head Teacher for the School File.

5.2 Matters Arising

- 5.2.1 The action on minute 11.3.2 should be carried forward to the next meeting.

Action: Ms Jordaan to provide the Chair with further information on Evolve

- 5.2.2 The action on minute 13.3.1 should be carried forward to the next meeting.

Action: Head Teacher to write an invite letter to parents for involvement in the pre-OFSTED review

- 5.3 Minutes/Reports from Committees

Autumn Term 2012

- 5.3.1 The Resources Committee met on 26th June 2012. The minutes were received and signed at the following committee meeting on 20th November 2012.

To Note

- 5.3.2 The Teaching and Learning Committee met on 27th June 2012. The minutes were received and signed at the following committee meeting on 22nd November 2012.

To Note

- 5.4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6 CHAIR'S ACTION

- 6.1 It was noted that the Chair and Mr Bell attended the mock OFSTED day carried out by Havering.

7 LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS

- 7.1 Mr Shykles visited the School on 20th September and met with the Science Department Lead. He found the meeting to be constructive and was impressed by the work being done. Mr Shykles also saw teaching in practice and informed Governors that a report has been filed.

To Note

- 7.2 Ms Dean noted that she had visited the school and looked at the Central Record, which was found up to date. It was noted that this no longer requires updating every three years and it is now the individual's responsibility to update their checks. A letter has been sent out notifying of the change and a full report will be provided to Governors in due course.

- 7.2.1 The Head Teacher noted that in terms of Safeguarding, the School has a Student Social Worker who is very knowledgeable who Mrs Dean will follow up with.

To Note

- 7.3 Ms Rose informed Governors that she had met with Angela Struthers, the Inclusion Manager. A report will be provided and circulated in due course. Ms Rose reported that it was a positive meeting.

8 GOVERNOR MARK

- 8.1 The Chair thanked Governors for all their submissions. The Chair reported that she had compiled almost all evidence, which will be finished in the New Year and circulated to Governors for final comment before submission.

- 8.1.1 It was noted that very few parents had registered on the website in nursery and the Chair suggested highlighting this in the Newsletter to encourage more sign ups. It was also suggested that it could be promoted through the Class Representatives.

To Note

- 8.1.2 A follow up questionnaire to parents on the website was also suggested.

To Note

9 SCHOOL ITEMS

- 9.1 Freedom of Information Policy

This policy was reviewed at the Resources Committee. It was the Committee's

recommendation that Governors adopt the policy. All Governors were in agreement and adopted the policy.

To Note

9.2 Head Teacher's Report

The Head Teacher's Report was circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. The Chair asked Governors for their questions and comments.

9.2.1 Ms Dean referred to the Head Teacher's Report on performance management and requested a summary of what the cycle's process is for Governor Mark.

Action: Head Teacher to provide a Performance Management Summary

9.2.2 Ms Whyman referred to page two of the Head Teacher's Report and asked for percentage figures for authorised and non-authorised absences. It was noted that this information had been omitted and will be updated by the Head Teacher and will be circulated again.

Action: Head Teacher to update Page 2 of her report and circulate

9.2.3 The Head Teacher noted that attendance figures will be lower for the autumn term due to high illness across the school over the last two weeks.

9.2.4 The Chair referred to the section on Gifted and Talented on page 2 of the Head Teacher's Report and asked what the Classics Club was. The Head Teacher responded that the Club will look at Ancient Greek and will potentially look at teaching Latin.

9.2.5 Mrs Dean asked why the Chess Club was only being offered to those in Year 4. The Head Teacher responded that the Club had been offered to Year 4 as a trial, which has gone very well. It is the intention to start a lunchtime club that will be offered to other year groups. It was noted that Chess helps children with concentration.

9.2.6 Mrs Whyman asked if Governors can be emailed invites about any events being held at the School. The Chair noted that she would email Governors with information on forthcoming events. The Head Teacher added that Governors have an open invitation to all events at the School.

Action: Chair to email Governors with a list of forthcoming events at the School

9.2.7 It was noted that the Parents Choir have been meeting at the School and would be holding their first performance next Friday. It was also noted that there would be tea and cakes at the event also. All were welcome.

To Note

9.2.8 Mr Bishop noted that the Class Representatives have started to meet and the response has been very positive. There have been two meetings so far and common themes discussed have been placed on the School website for comment, which will assist the School in improving the School Development Plan (for example Homework Policy). The minutes of the meetings will be placed on the School website when completed.

To Note

9.2.9 It was noted that there were some new developments coming for the School website

and the next update will take place in the Summer, which will make it easier for the school to contact parents. Online payment systems for school dinners etc were being investigated. Governors then discussed the importance of parents registering for the website.

- 9.2.10 The Chair noted the importance of Governors familiarizing themselves with the RaiseOnline data and SES, which were both circulated in advance of the meeting. The Head Teacher noted that the SES was a working document and whilst thorough and accurate, comments were welcomed. These would be discussed further at the Teaching and Learning sub committee meeting.

Agenda Item: Teaching and Learning Sub Committee

- 9.2.11 The Head Teacher noted that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Away Day would take place on 18th January at the Prince Regent Hotel in Woodford. A large part of the day will be spent on looking at the RaiseOnline data. The Head Teacher noted that Governors were welcome to attend. Those that wish to attend were requested to notify the Chair.

To Note

- 9.3 Health & Safety Annual Report

It was noted that the Health & Safety Annual Report was agreed and signed by the Chair and the Head Teacher.

To Note

- 9.4 Agree Terms of Reference for Committees

- 9.4.1 It was noted that the Teaching and Learning Committee would be looking at their Terms of Reference at the next meeting.

Agenda Item

- 9.4.2 It was noted that the Resources Committee had reviewed their Terms of Reference and recommended that Governors agree them. All Governors considered their recommendation and agreed the Terms of Reference.

To Note

10 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEWS

- 10.1 It was noted that all teachers had received their review and observations had taken place. Non-teaching staff reviews would be completed next. Governors were advised that further information could be found in the SES.

- 10.2 It was noted that Mr Dodd and Mrs Dean had completed the Head Teacher's performance management review with the School Improvement Partner. Targets were agreed for last year and the forthcoming year. It was noted that this will now be discussed further at the Pay Review Committee (Resources sub committee).

To Note

11 SCHOOL POLICIES

- 11.1 The Chair noted that she had received an updated statutory policies list from Governor Services. It was noted that School have all policies in place, with most having been placed on the School website. The Chair noted that she would be meeting with the Head Teacher to ensure all policies that should be are on the website.

To Note

12 FEEDBACK FROM PRE OFSTED

- 12.1 It was noted that the School had taken part in a pre OFSTED inspection recently. Two trained inspectors observed 15 lessons and found that 80% were good or better with 20% being outstanding. The Head Teacher reported that the only disappointing aspect of the inspection was that inspectors would like to see good improvement over a period of three years on the RaiseOnline data; unfortunately the School were unable to display this for Key Stage 2 Maths. This means that the School would not be able to achieve an outstanding judgement at this time.
- 12.1.1 The School tracking system was found to be excellent, so the School will be able to continue to robustly show results and predictions. The Head Teacher also noted that some teachers were on the borderline of achieving an outstanding lesson grade. It is very clear that OFSTED are focused on the quality of teaching and the impact of learning.
- 12.1.2 A full summary will be shared at the SLT away day, which will be then fed to the rest of the Staff.
- 12.1.3 The Chair noted that the inspectors were keen to know what Governors had been contributing since the last inspection and were impressed to see that the Governing Body were working towards Governor Mark.

13 CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES

- 13.1 Governors noted the dates and times of the upcoming Christmas performances.

14 DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- 12.1 It was noted that the date of the next meeting would take place on 19th March 2013 at 7.00pm at the School.

The Academy Working Party agreed to meet on 16th January at 7.00pm.

- 12.2 Agenda Items
Teaching and Learning Terms of Reference

13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 13.1 There was no other business discussed.

The meeting ended at 21h10.