

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HANDSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 19th MARCH 2013 AT 7.00PM
AT THE SCHOOL**

Present: Authority Governor

Ms Nadina Bailey
Mr Malcolm Shykles

Community Governor

Mrs Denise Whyman

Parent Governors

Mrs Christine Dean
Ms Christine Rose
Mrs Mary Wilson (Chair)

Staff Governors

Ms Jill Augustin (Head Teacher)

Also Attending: Mr Jon Bishop, Deputy Head Teacher

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, Mr Bell, Ms McDermott, Ms Jordaan and Ms Lincoln.

1.3 Apologies not accepted

None

1.4 Quorum

The meeting was quorate with seven Governors present.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. GOVERNING BODY

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

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

3.3 Vetting and Barring of Governors

The Clerk noted the new procedure for the vetting and barring of Governors that changed from 1st December 2012. Governors now complete a self-declaration form, which will form part of the single central record held at the School.

4 **MINUTES**

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 11th December 2012 were received and agreed by the Governors as an accurate record of the meeting.

4.2 Matters Arising

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

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

4.2.2 Further to minute 5.2.2, Mr Bishop noted that he had the results of the parents' questionnaire. It was noted that 61 responses were received and 70% use the website daily and all had regular access to the Internet. Lots of positive information and encouraging feedback had been received concerning online payments and the homework links. It was also noted that the blog was in progress and that the class representatives had been involved. The website has received up to one million hits over the last two years, and peak access has taken place when there are events held at the School and on snow days. Mr Bishop will compile something succinct with the Chair.

Action: JB to provide summary of questionnaire feedback

4.2.2.1 The Head Teacher noted that she hoped that the School Shop will be online after the Easter break. The provider is Atomwide, which was reviewed at the Resources Committee.

4.2.2.2 The Chair noted that she had emailed parents for Parent View, which has received 33 responses; the majority of views were positive and all that responded would recommend the School.

4.2.3 Further to minute 9.2.1, it was noted a comprehensive review was held at the Resources Committee.

4.2.4 Further to minute 9.2.6, the Chair noted that all information could be found on the website along with the Head Teacher's newsletters.

4.2.5 Further to minute 9.2.10, it was noted that the RaiseOnline data, along with the Dashboard, was reviewed at the Teaching and Learning Committee.

4.3 Minutes/Reports from Committees

4.3.1 It was noted that the minutes dated 22nd November 2012 of the Teaching and Learning Committee were agreed at the meeting held on 7th March 2013.

4.3.2 It was noted that the minutes dated 20th November 2012 of the Resources Committee were agreed at the meeting held on 22nd January 2013. The minutes of 22nd January 2013 were agreed at the meeting held on 5th March 2013.

4.4 Matters Arising

4.4.1 The Chair asked if the meeting times for the Teaching and Learning Committee were convenient for Governors. Governors agreed to keep the current dates and times for

the remainder of the academic year with a view to reviewing them from the Autumn Term.

- 4.4.2 It was noted that the June Resources committee was moved to 11th June 2013 at 8.00am at the School.

To Note

5 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

- 5.1 It was noted that the Head Teacher's Report was circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. The Head Teacher highlighted the following points from her report;

5.1.1 It was noted that five pupils had accessed funding from Pupil Premium for PGL residential. There were 30 Free School Meals (FSM) pupils; this was considered to be a low uptake, but the Head Teacher hopes that parents would see the benefits if their children were eligible. The Chair asked if it was possible to look at the comparison of those on pupil premium to the rest in order to look at the gap. The Head Teacher responded that she was currently revising this and would be basing it on the Spring Term data when it was available.

5.1.2 The Head Teacher then highlighted that attendance for the Autumn Term was 95.6%, which was due to sickness. In addition to this the School has received a lot of absence requests from parents, which has resulted in the School sending 76 letters in response to requests. Those pupils' attendance is being closely monitored. The Head Teacher noted that she would like to review authorised absence and holidays, but feels that this could cause problems. Penalty notices can be served by the Local Authority if absences are not authorised by the School; if parents refuse to pay this will appear on their CRBs.

5.1.3 Mrs Dean asked if the 76 letters that the School wrote referred to unauthorised absenteeism. The Head Teacher confirmed that they were and that they were all individual cases. Mrs Dean then asked if the impact to the School was explained in the letters. The Head Teacher responded that the impact was explained in follow up discussions with parents where their children's data was highlighted. Ms Rose wondered if the high amount of requests for absence in term time was due to the economic climate. The Head Teacher noted that this had always been the case as it was more expensive to go abroad during school holidays. The Head Teacher added that if the School is serious about improving attendance the option of penalty notices should be considered. The Chair asked how the Local Authority makes its decision on issuing penalty notices. The Head Teacher responded that the Local Authority base it on two periods of unauthorised absences per academic year. Ms Rose suggested that the School monitor and send a warning notice after one unauthorised absence. The Head Teacher responded that Ms Struthers was looking in to the matter further.

To Note

5.1.4 The Chair asked if the Head Teacher's Report referred to 12 level 6 children per year 6 class. The Head Teacher responded that this was the total number Level 6 children for the cohort; there are five for Writing at Level 6 and there are ten for Maths at Level 6.

5.1.5 The Chair asked if a pupil's predicted performance levels were to be shared with parents at parents' evening. The Head Teacher responded that this information was

available if requested. The Head Teacher then noted that the terminology was changing to expected age range, but had not received full advice yet from the DfE. In terms of tracking, the School will continue to use level descriptors.

5.1.6 The Chair asked who moderated the Year 2 and Year 6 Writing. The Head Teacher responded that we had set up moderation meetings with approximately 17 schools in the borough to agree levelling standards.

5.1.7 The Chair noted that Performance Management had been completed with the Resources Committee and not the Teaching and Learning Committee.

To Note

5.1.8 Mrs Dean asked what the concerns were regarding SEN. The Head Teacher responded that with effect from 31st March 2013, statements were being stopped and that funding arrangements will be changed. However, there was uncertainty on what the impact will be going forward as there were children in need of statements. Mrs Struthers is investigating.

5.1.9 Ms Rose asked if the School would be able to look into and access Speech and Language provision at Oakhill. The Head Teacher noted that she had not asked yet, but will approach them and ask.

Governors recorded their thanks to the Head Teacher for her report.

6 GOVERNORS' TRAINING

6.1 It was noted that Mr Bell, Ms Rose and the Chair had attended the Governors' Briefing on 5th March 2013. Ms Rose found it to be an interesting session, yet the Chair found it to be disappointing that Good and Outstanding schools were not highlighted sufficiently. Whilst they were touched on briefly, no advice was given as to what was being done to support them. It was noted that schools in the Borough have been BRAG rated and Handsworth has been given a Green rating.

To Note

7 CHAIR'S ACTION

7.1 Academy Update

7.1.1 The Chair reported that in terms of Academy Status, she had circulated a brief on what the Working Party had been working on so far in advance of the meeting. The Working Party were now at the point where they have discussed various different models including joining an Academy Trust. It has been found that Trusts only seem to be sponsoring failing schools.

7.1.2 The Working Party has also discussed commitment between two schools, including economy of scale regarding teachers' skills development. It is possible for the School to look at someone that could deliver Level 6 subjects where necessary, which would help with children's transition into secondary education. Mr Shykles noted that the School could take advantage of the empty laboratories at Highams Park Secondary School after their exams had finished for this purpose.

7.1.3 It was noted that the Governing Body were now left with the decision whether to apply for academy status or not. It was asked when parents would be consulted and the Chair responded that the process would be for the School to apply first and if it was to be accepted, a consultation would follow. It was also noted that the £25,000 grant

from central government would be a one off payment.

- 7.1.4 The Head Teacher reported that she had met with Roger Ascham, an outstanding school who have converted to a Single Academy and are now looking to sponsor another school. It was found that there was only positive findings from the experience of converting, but it was also noted that there would be more work required in terms of financial auditing. Schools converting to academy status must consider factoring in costs for accountancy and solicitors. There would be a financial benefit to the School and there would more freedom in the curriculum and autonomy within the School.
- 7.1.5 The Chair suggested speaking to other Governing Bodies who had gone though the conversion process and their experience of consulting with parents.
- 7.1.6 Mr Bishop noted that there would be big changes coming to the curriculum with the introduction of the new Primary Curriculum, which would only have an impact to non-academies.
- 7.1.7 The Head Teacher noted that the School does not buy into any of the Local Authority's services and is already self-sufficient.
- 7.1.8 The Chair proposed that the Governing Body makes an application to convert to academy status and Mrs Dean seconded this proposal. Governors unanimously agreed and delegated the responsibility to the Working Party.
To Note
- 7.1.9 It was noted that the next Working Party meeting would take place on 16th April 2013 at 6:30pm at the School.
To Note

8 LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS

- 8.1 It was noted that the Link Governor reports were circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that Ms McDermott had reported on Reading, the Chair had reported on Attendance and Ms Rose had reported on SEN/Inclusion. All reports have been added to the School File. In addition to this Mrs Whyman has met with Ms Jordaan and will provide her report before the next meeting.
To Note

9 SAFEGUARDING

- 9.1 There were no safeguarding issues to report. Mrs Dean noted that she would be arranging a safeguarding link visit before the next meeting.
To Note

10 GOVERNING BODY RECONSTITUTION

- 10.1 It was noted that recent advice recommends that some Governors can be co-opted on to the Governing Body through a skills audit without going through the process of election.
- 10.1.1 The Chair recommended that the Governing Body adopt this advice noting that the two upcoming Parent Governor vacancies be converted to Co-opted Governor positions. All were in agreement. It was requested that Governor Services could confirm and advise on how the Instrument of Government would need to be changed to accommodate this change.

Action: Governor Services to advise

11 SKILLS AUDIT

11.1 It was noted that this would be a useful exercise for the Governing Body to perform. The Chair noted that she had circulated a pro forma in advance of the meeting and requested that Governors complete and return to her by the end of April.

Action: Governors to complete and return skills audit pro forma to Chair

12 SCHOOL POLICIES

12.1 Allocation of Policies to Governors for Annual Review

12.1.1 The Chair noted that she had emailed a schedule of policies for review in advance of the meeting to Governors, which included an updated list of statutory policies and others held by the School. All policies were reviewed last year and the Chair noted that she had allocated three policies to each Governor to review.

12.1.2 Mrs Dean noted that when she had previously reviewed policies, she had ensured that they were compliant and then double-checked any changes by using the Internet.

12.1.3 The Head Teacher noted that all policies could be found on the School website. If there are any small changes to be made, it was requested that Governors email them to the Chair who will collate them. It was noted that the deadline to review all policies would be 16th July 2013.

Action: Governors to review policies allocated to them by 16th July 2013

12.2 Social Media Policy and e-Safety Policy

12.2.1 It was noted that Mr Bishop had recently re written the Social Media Policy to include advice on twitter usage. It was also noted that all other social media advice was included in the e-safety Policy.

12.3 Lettings Policy

12.3.1 Further to discussions at the Resources Committee, there have been requests to provide a wider range of after school clubs from external providers, class reps, parents and staff. The committee proposed that, with the exception of the YMCA, no same club runs for more than two nights per week. The School would like to introduce a new timetable of extra curricular provision from Sept 2013. The School does not charge providers for room hire.

12.3.2 It was also noted that the partnership with the London Borough of Havering for Continued Professional Development (CPD) and training for teachers was going well and it is hoped that additional afternoon sessions can be offered. From Sept 2013 these would be run in the small hall.

12.3.3 Governors agreed unanimously to this proposal. The Chair and Head Teacher were actioned to write to Act 2 (as this club currently has hall availability over four nights) confirming from Sept 2013 the club could have hall availability for two evenings, with the addition of a Friday after school if requested. The Head Teacher would then be required to re-arrange uniform shop to an alternative time.

To Note

12.3.4 Mrs Dean asked how staff will be approached to be asked to run an After School Club. The Head Teacher responded that it would be done through rotation and Staff will be given the opportunity to put themselves forward and feedback will be sought

from parents.

13 DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

13.1 It was noted that the date of the next meeting would take place on 14th May 2013 at 7.00pm at the School. This is an extra-ordinary full governing body meeting for budget ratification.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 Governor Mark

14.1.1 The Chair thanked all Governors that were interviewed by Governor Mark and noted that she had submitted the report. It is hoped that a response will be received by the end of March.

14.1.2 Governors recorded their thanks to the Chair for collating and putting together the report. It was also noted that Governor Mark were impressed at how well the report had been put together.

14.2 Class Representatives

14.2.1 Mr Bishop reported that he had been working with the Parent Class Representatives recently on the Homework Policy. It has been useful to receive their feedback and staff have also been consulted.

14.2.2 Some of the other suggestions by the Parent Class Representatives have also been implemented, such as a curriculum overview, class newsletters and consistency on the School website.

14.2.3 The Head Teacher reported that a letter had been sent out on upcoming School visits.

14.3 School Shop

14.3.1 It was noted that the online School Shop will be available to use after the Easter break, where parents will be able to use it to pay for School meals, uniforms and After School Clubs. Mr Bishop showed Governors how the website would look. It was noted that the admin costs of transactions on the website will be very transparent. The School's ultimate aim is to be cashless.

14.4 PGL

14.4.1 It was noted that PGL went well; 57 out of 60 pupils attended this residential. The intention is to make it as inclusive and as affordable as possible. The current Year 5 parents have been sent a letter for the next visit to take place week commencing 7th October 2013. Costs will be kept low at £215 per child, with access to pupil premium if required.

14.5 School Website

14.5.1 It is hoped that a Handsworth App will be made available in the Summer Term for use on both Apple and Android.

14.6 School Playground

14.6.1 It was noted that refurbishment works were underway.

14.7 **Confidential Item**

The meeting ended at 20h45