

St GILES C of E (Aided) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting

Held at school on Thursday, 25th June 2015 at 8:00 pm

- Present:** Mrs Marion Lott (Chair), Mrs Myra Boyce, Ms Katherine Brooke-Webb, Mrs Wendy Colville, Mrs Joanna Francis, Mr Paul French, Mrs Lynne Mulcare, Mrs Alison Nicholson (*arrived 8.20pm*), Ms Fiona Price, Canon John Twisleton and Mr Peter Whatling
- In attendance:** Mrs Kathy Jerbi (Clerk), Mr Scott Reece (Deputy Head Teacher), Mrs Claire Todd (Teaching Assistant)
- Apologies:** Mrs Amanda Clarke and Mrs Rachel Mackenzie

Thanks and congratulations were given to Mrs Todd for her fund-raising parachute jump, which in total has raised nearly £2,000 towards a defibrillator for the school.

The meeting was opened with prayer led by Mrs Lott.

1 APOLOGIES for ABSENCE

Apologies received as above – reasons accepted by the Governing Body.

2 URGENT MATTERS

None

3 DECLARATION of INTEREST (agenda items only)

None

4 MINUTES of the MEETING held on 7th May 2015

Were agreed as being a true record & signed by the Chair. Thanks were recorded to the Clerk for production of accurate minutes.

5 MATTERS ARISING from the MINUTES

- Further to item 9 'Ofsted update', Mrs Francis reported that she has since found out that if an inspector conducting a 1 day inspection feels that a school's judgement may have changed & calls for a full section 5 inspection, that full inspection will begin the very next day. Also that 70% of inspectors from September 2015 will be practising Head Teachers or Deputy Head Teachers.

6 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

(an update was included in the Head Teacher's report, circulated prior to the meeting)

Mrs Francis reported that staff have spent a lot of time developing an assessment method in line with the new curriculum. The system will be up & running for next term, although it is not yet perfect. Mrs Francis briefly explained the 'colour coding' system that they have devised. Annual reports to parents use the terminology 'on track', 'above' or 'below' expectation – they do not give the full detail. Governors asked will parents know what the expected achievement is. Staff still have to work on how to relay this to parents. This is an interim system until further advice is received from government, which is expected in September.

(Mrs Alison Nicholson arrived at this point, 8.20pm)

Mrs Francis stated that staff are not holding information back from parents. They are building a picture of the whole child with their assessment in order to plan for the next stage of each child's learning. Point scores are not relayed to parents as they are not helpful, & we can no longer relate to levels, but have to move on with the new requirements. Mrs Boyce added that embedded learning is difficult to quantify. Mrs Francis stated that it will be helpful once we know how the grading of KS1 & KS2 SAT's will look from next year – we currently have no indication of this from government.

(Mrs Todd, whose term of office as staff governor has ended, was presented with a 'Thank you' card for her time on the GB & left the meeting at this point, 8.30pm)

7 LOCALITY, INCLUDING ASCEND

Mrs Francis reported on a recent locality meeting, where an outline was given of the work of the locality SEN hub, ASCEND, in local schools this year. Support for schools has included staff CPD, support for SENCo's, a play therapist for year 6 children & a speech & language therapist for year 1 children working in schools, and links with a local special school providing training & support. As a locality we are well in advance of other areas of Sussex with the development of our SEN hub & hope to further extend the work of ASCEND next year, with the possible part-time employment of an educational psychologist. This will be a big advantage, in particular in helping with applying for EHC Plans for children.

The locality have also been doing a lot of moderating within schools. There is similar funding available for this next year, so this will continue.

8 COMPLAINTS POLICY

(A document entitled 'Complaints Policy – May 2015' was circulated to governors prior to the meeting)

The policy has been reviewed by the PPC Committee & modelled on the WS model policy. No questions.

The GB agreed to adopt the Complaints Policy, as reviewed in May 2015.

9 PREPARATION for the AUTUMN TERM

Nominations for Chair & Vice-Chair. Will be requested by the Clerk two weeks ahead of the first autumn term meeting & a blind ballot will be held at that meeting to elect both incumbents.

Organisation of Meetings & Committees. Mrs Lott made two suggestions for re-organisation:

1) to reduce the number of annual full GB meetings from six to four: after discussion, the GB rejected this suggestion & agreed to continue with six meetings per academic year, one in each half term.

2) to disband the Curriculum Committee: a lot of the work of this committee has been assumed by the PPC Committee. Now that the new curriculum is in place, the main work of the Curriculum Committee is information, which can be reported, and the SIP. It is crucial that governors remain involved in setting the SIP, which they are invited to do at the SIP Inset Day each year, and in monitoring it, which they do at full GB level via the Head Teacher's report, as the SIP remains an FGB agenda item. Mrs Francis agreed that the Curriculum Committee is not required; any major items that arise can be handled by working parties. **The GB agreed to disband the Curriculum Committee.**

Suggestions were also considered to combine the ICT Committee with either Finance or Premises. It was agreed to keep the ICT Committee in place until the current broadband issue has been resolved; thereafter, ICT to be a working party as & when required, reporting to the Premises Committee.

Ethos & Worship Committee to remain unchanged.

The membership of committees to be reviewed in September 2015.

Mrs Lott thanked Governors for their continued commitment. She stated that she is willing to stand again for Chair of the GB until the end of her term of office, December 2016, when she currently intends to retire.

Governors asked will conversion to Academy come back on the agenda & is there currently any timeframe in place. Mrs Lott & Mrs Francis stated that indications from the government & the LA seem to be that our viability will be based much on our financial stability. We are already low on pupil numbers, with only 2 pupils generating Pupil Premium funding. There may have to be redundancies. The budgetary advantages of academisation are potentially sharing back office staff & leadership staff. We don't want to be told we have to join an academy; we want to decide for ourselves. In a MAT, pupils could be divided between fewer schools, therefore meaning school closures. We have very experienced staff, which is a big factor in our budget. We are already drawing from our reserve fund. Finance is a big part of the decision whether to convert or not. Governors would like to understand the academy model & financial impact. Mrs Mulcare asked to see the draft structure of the proposed potential NEARS locality MAT to look at the financial implications. Mrs Lott suggested that academisation be an agenda item in September, then she can take our findings/concerns to the following NEARS Chairs meeting in November. Governors would like to meet with Mrs Ann Holt, Diocesan Director of Education, perhaps at NEARS level, to ask what are the financial implications of us joining an academy. In the meantime, Mrs Lott to write to Mrs Holt to ask her for a response to that question.

Action: ML/LM

Mrs Francis concluded by saying that governors should consider that the alternative to academisation may be that we are forced to reorganise the school, as our class sizes are small.

Proposed Dates of Meeting: Mrs Lott to schedule six full GB meetings for 2015/16 & propose in September.

Action: ML

New Instrument of Government: *(circulated prior to the meeting & attached to minutes)* this has been approved by the Diocese & WSCC, and will take effect from 1st September 2015.

10 REPORTING to the GOVERNING BODY

a) Head Teacher's Report *(circulated prior to the meeting & attached to minutes)*

Pupil numbers. Concern was raised over future pupil numbers. We know that there are only 5 children in the village pre-school of school starting age for September 2016. The swell we were expecting for September 2015 admissions has not happened. Expansion of other schools in the area has had an impact.

Class Observations. A lot of good practice was observed. Governors asked for an explanation of 'class toolkits', which Mrs Francis & Mrs Boyce provided.

Comparative Report. Mrs Francis tabled a report of KS1 SATs results. Our results are very good. Level 3 results are above national average. The cohort has 17 children, 4 boys & 13 girls; 2 pupils have SEN; 1 pupil joined us from abroad at the start of the year.

KS2 results will not be available until 7th July.

Y1 phonics tests have been completed. The pass mark has not yet been published by the government.

However, 6 pupils achieved 100%. Mrs Francis is fairly confident that the results are an improvement on last year. All Year 2 children who re-took the test have passed (except 1 with SEN). This is the 4th year of the phonics test; we have improved practice of teaching phonics in school.

School Website. Mr Reece has been working very hard on the new school website, which is nearly ready to be launched, hopefully by the end of this term. Mrs Francis asked governors, if willing, to have their photograph taken at the end of the meeting to be placed on the 'Governors' page of the site. Different staff within school will be responsible for up-dating certain pages of the site. Mr Reece & Ms Denise Westlake, School Secretary, have received training on up-dating from the contractor. We have paid for set-up only; up-dating is down to us. Mr Reece has sought advice on statutory items that need to be included & has researched how other schools present this information.

b) Performance Management

Have not met.

c) Committee Reports (*minutes previously circulated where applicable*)

i) Curriculum - have not met

ii) Staffing - have not met

iii) Premises and Health & Safety – minutes of meetings held on 15th April 2015 & 10th June 2015 have been circulated. Main items arising:

- The new Premises Officer has been highly praised by staff;
- Solar panel installation – Repower Balcombe have suggested 3 alternative schemes. They are yet to conduct an on-site survey to advise which plan will be the most cost effective. They first want information about accessing our electricity on-line – the Bursar is looking into this.
- Health & Safety Policy – there are outstanding queries. Mr Whatling is waiting for a WSGfL password to access the WS model policy.

iv) PPC – minutes of a meeting held on 3rd June have been circulated. Main items arising:

- Raising school profile – there is an action plan to step up presenting the school in the best light. During enrichment week the children were out & about in the village & were the best advertisement for the school that we could wish for. Therefore, we plan to further develop our participation in events in & around the village. A good article appeared in the Mid Sussex Times re our 'election'. We plan to establish a system of getting regular monthly articles in the village magazine, P&P. We are starting to establish links with local estate agents. Large 'walk to school' posters were put up in the village. This will remain an item on the PPC Agenda.

v) Finance – have met, but minutes not yet produced. Main items arising:

- Budget running to plan
- Looking forward at the funding expectation for next year
- Ways to generate income, i.e. letting the school hall & field to more public users, e.g. sports groups. We plan to advertise the facilities for hire.

vi) Worship & Ethos – have not met. Canon Twisleton reported the following:

- The committee will be meeting imminently with a focus on spirituality.
- The Deacon is a school manager & will be on the assembly rota next year.
- The Bishop of Guyana, a friend of the school, passed away recently.
- The Dean of Duke Edwards Anglican School in Guyana will be staying with Canon Twisleton in October & will visit the school. Canon Twisleton played a short video clip with messages from 2 pupils of Duke Edwards to St Giles School.

vii) ICT – have not met.

d) Link Governor Report

Nothing to report.

e) Treasurer's Report

Nothing to report.

f) PTA Link Report

Mrs Mulcare reported that the Fun Run raised £1,000 & the May Fayre raised £2,000. There is to be a parent's 'School Disco' at the end of term and 'Ice Lolly Fridays' for further fund-raising.

g) Governor's Visits

Nothing to report.

h) Complaints received under Section 409 of the Education Act / Racist Incidents

Nothing to report.

11 CHAIR'S ACTIONS

None

12 AOB

Walk to school banners are still up – they are being taken down imminently.

DATE and TIME of NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 24th September 2015 at 8.00pm

The meeting closed at 10 p.m. with a prayer led by Canon Twisleton.

ACTION POINTS:

ITEM NUMBER:	DETAILS OF ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
9	Provide draft structure of proposed potential NEARS locality academy to Mrs Mulcare	Mrs Lott	22 nd July 2015
9	Consider financial implications for our school of above proposed draft academy	Mrs Mulcare	FGB mtg 24 Sep 2015
9	Write to Mrs Ann Holt with the question 'what are the financial implications for our school in joining an academy?'	Mrs Lott	22 nd July 2015
9	Schedule 6 FGB meetings for 2015/16 for proposal to governors	Mrs Lott	FGB 24Sep 2015