

St GILES C of E (Aided) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting

Held at school on Wednesday, 18th November 2015 at 8:10 pm

Present: Mrs Marion Lott (Chair), Mrs Myra Boyce, Ms Katherine Brooke-Webb, Mrs Joanna Francis, Mrs Rachel Mackenzie, Mrs Lynne Mulcare, Mrs Alison Nicholson, Canon John Twisleton and Mr Peter Whatling

In attendance: Mrs Kathy Jerbi (Clerk) and Mr Scott Reece (Deputy Head Teacher)

Apologies: Mrs Amanda Clarke, Mr Paul French and Ms Fiona Price

The meeting was opened with prayer led by Mrs Lott.

1 **APOLOGIES for ABSENCE**

Apologies received as above – reasons accepted by Governing Body.

2 **URGENT MATTERS**

None

3 **DECLARATION of INTEREST (agenda items only)**

None

4 **MINUTES of the MEETING HELD on 24th September 2015**

Were agreed as being a true record & signed by the Chair.

5 **MATTERS ARISING from the MINUTES**

Mrs Lott has not completed actions 2 & 4, & therefore Mrs Mulcare has not been able to complete action 3. Mrs Lott has spoken with the Chairs of other NEARS schools re the pressure felt if not to form an academy then to form some kind of collaboration/federation. WSCC are pushing for this, as is the Diocese. There is already natural collaboration between the NEARS schools, we need to find a way to formalise this. Mrs Lott attended a Diocesan training session on 'Why Become An Academy?' which was poorly attended. There is an expectation for most schools to academise within the next 5 to 10 years. Mrs Francis expressed a feeling of inevitability – we cannot sit back & assume that it won't happen. For the sake of the village we must work on our NEARS connections; it would be damaging to the village to lose the school. However, it is not necessarily about having a school in every village, but an educational establishment of some kind in every village, e.g. KS1 in one village, KS2 in another. Questions from governors:

Q. have we been given tangible steps to follow to set the ball rolling?

A. if we went to the Diocese & said we are x number of small schools looking to form an academy/federation, they would support us

Q. can we look for partners outside of the NEARS locality schools?

A. yes, & even if they fall under another county council that is not a problem

Q. do we know what the practical advantages of a collaboration are?

A. primarily cost sharing, e.g. sharing a head teacher, but also practicalities

The NEARS Chairs are meeting again in January & hope to set up a meeting with the head teachers to discuss this further. Governors feel it would be advantageous to seize any opportunity soonest while we still have experienced governors & Chair. They feel it is important to consult as many people as possible. There is the threat that in time a collaboration may be forced upon us, not of our choice. Mrs Francis pointed out crucially that conversations about a collaboration usually begin when a head teacher leaves post. We should have the conversations now, but choose the right moment to act.

Other matters arising: Mrs Francis has published the governor attendance record for 2014-15 meetings on the school website. Mrs Jerbi has yet to provide other governor information required for the website. **Action: KJ**

6 **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

(report included in the HT report)

The Inset Day training on developing the role of Curriculum Coordinator was very good, led by a very experienced speaker. Ideas will be followed up in staff meetings.

Canon Twisleton is very encouraged & excited by the work on meditation being conducted in the school. He feels it will have a ripple effect in the wider community as the children take home what they've learnt.

Governors commented that meditation instils positive belief in children &, when conducted at the beginning of their day, focuses their minds on the tasks ahead.

7 SAFEGUARDING

Annual Safeguarding Report (*Mrs Francis circulated this report to governors prior to the meeting*). This is a statutory requirement & has been sent to County. Some policies that fall under safeguarding are due for review, i.e. the Acceptable Use Policy & Educational Visits Policy. **Action: ICT & Premises Committees**

Governors discussed briefly the preference for at least 1 further governor to receive child protection training and at least 1 further governor to receive safer recruiting training. **Action: Staffing Sub-Committee**

Child Protection Policy (*circulated prior to the meeting*). The proposed revised policy is the WS model policy & includes everything that is statutory. The major change is the inclusion of the 'Prevent Duty'. All staff are required to have annual CP training, which they will attend on 2nd December at Handcross School – governors are welcome to attend. **The policy was adopted by the GB.**

Ofsted Safeguarding Document (*entitled 'Inspecting safeguarding in EY, education & skills settings' was circulated prior to the meeting*). Mrs Francis highlighted areas from the document:

- a close record of staff training in safeguarding issues is kept to ensure always up-to-date
- pupil absence is always followed up
- appropriate actions are taken when a child leaves the school
- a 'cyber safety' workshop has been held for the children, bringing out a lot of valuable conversation. As a school there is only so much we can do with regards to the safe use of social media, but it is important to keep educating children of safety issues & we will keep it high profile.

8 APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

The Instrument of Government states that "There is a trust related to the school of which the trustees are the Rector and Church Wardens of St. Giles Church, Horsted Keynes, and one Nominative Trustee appointed by the foundation governors of the school and one Nominative Trustee appointed by the governors of the school." The term of office of both the Nominative Trustees have come to an end, but both are willing to stand again. **The Foundation Governors agreed to appoint Mr Phil Miles & the GB agreed to appoint Ms Becky George for a new term of 4 years with immediate effect.** Mrs Mulcare was asked to convey the thanks of the GB to both Trustees.

9 REPORTING to the GOVERNING BODY

a) Head Teacher's Report (*previously circulated*)

Mrs Francis added the following comments to her report:

- an additional pupil is joining the roll in year 4 with effect from 19th November, coming from a local independent school recently closed.
- A teaching assistant is leaving at the beginning of December. We are currently advertising a part-time position to replace her from January 2016.
- The locality CIC has appointed a new admin assistant & is about to appoint a new business manager.
- The locality Gifted & Talented Festival is to go ahead once again next year – full details will be available to the school by the end of this term.
- ASCEND now employ 3 professionals working in the locality schools. Funding is in place to maintain these for another year.

Mr Reece gave a short presentation to the GB on the Sports Premium Action Plan for 2015-16 (*print out of his PowerPoint presentation attached to minutes*). Mr Reece highlighted the key objectives, target groups, key personnel, cost & impact. He stated that the action plan is a working document & may change as the year progresses. Governor questions & responses from Mr Reece:

Q. are those children who do not have the correct PE kit children who are disadvantaged?

A. sometimes, but there are also children who purposely avoid having their kit in school to try to avoid physical activity.

Governors suggested putting a request in the newsletter asking for donations of outgrown kit.

Q. are there any elements that we could ask the PTA to help fund? This would release Sports Premium funding for other purposes.

A. the PTA have funded PE kit in the past. Mr Reece will gratefully receive any donation that the PTA wish to make to sports.

This led to a discussion about retained funds that the PTA hold &, as a charity, need to be spending. Mrs Francis & Mrs Boyce regularly attend PTA Committee meetings & discuss school 'wish list' items. They have also discussed bigger projects that the PTA might help to fund, such as a soft play area & refurbishment of the trim trail.

Q. Is there any Sports Premium funding set aside for teacher training?

A. yes, teachers of certain year groups will receive CPD training from the dance, fitness & Pilates coaches being bought in for those specific year groups. The staff were consulted in the preparation of the action plan; they felt more resources were required rather than staff CPD.

Q. as we understand that this is the final year of Sports Premium funding, would it not be wise to invest more in staff training, to stand us in good stead for the future?

A. we already have a staff trained to a good standard in PE & they are confident in their ability to teach PE. Mr Reece added that the breadth of activities will be difficult to maintain without the funding.

Governors noted that the village recently lost its football club & that sport is in a precarious position in the village. Sport is strong at the school & links between the school & local sports clubs are important. Mr Reece would be open to hearing from any local clubs.

The GB thanked Mr Reece for his report & his extensive work as sports coordinator.

b) Performance Management

Have not met.

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

i) Pay Policy (*previously circulated*) – met & reviewed the policy. Main changes: identifying the Deputy Head Teacher position & the GB responsibility for pay progression. **The GB adopted the revised Pay Policy as circulated.**

(Mr Reece, Mrs Boyce & Mrs Brooke-Webb, all staff members, withdrew from the meeting at this point, 9.25pm)

ii) Staffing – have met:

- ratified recommendations & pay changes as suggested by Mrs Francis.
- *See Part II minutes*
- discussed vacant TA position & agreed advertisement

(Mr Reece, Mrs Boyce & Mrs Brooke-Webb, returned to the meeting at this point, 9.30pm)

(Mrs Nicholson left the meeting at this point, 9.30pm)

iii) Premises and Health & Safety – have met, minutes to be circulated. Main items discussed:

- Health & Safety Policy – item deferred to next meeting as policy yet to be circulated

Action: JF/KJ

- **Accessibility Plan** – (*previously circulated*) – **approved by the GB.**

iv) PPC – have met twice. Spent a long time looking at the school prospectus & adjusting it for September 2016 entry. They also developed the Communications Policy (*circulated prior to the meeting*). There are some minor amendments to be made to this & then it will be re-circulated. This is a useful guide & will be published on the school website. The Committee used the experience of the recent complaint hearing to develop this. It is to appear on the next meeting agenda for ratification.

Action: MB/KJ/JF

v) Finance – have met. Reviewed the Committee terms of reference & made minor changes – to be circulated to governors.

Action: LM

The Committee looked at the budget for 2015-16, a total of £505,000, & expect to have £2,000 in hand at the end of the year. They also looked at the budget prediction for 2016-17, where they anticipate a reduction of £18,000 due to reduced pupil numbers. They have planned a dedicated meeting to look in more detail at that budget. It will be challenging.

vi) ICT - have met with JSPC, who expect to install the new hardware during the first half of the spring term ready to transfer services from Capita as planned from 1st April.

vii) Worship & Ethos – have not met

d) Treasurer's Report

Nothing to report

e) PTA Link Report

PTA Christmas Fair is to be held on 5th December 11am – 1pm. Raffle prizes for the governor raffle & help on the day from governors is required. Please let Mrs Lott know availability.

f) Governor's Visits

Visits to be organised around the SIP as last year. As 'assessment without levels' is a priority, the PPC Committee suggest that governors meet with Mrs Francis at 9.15am on 26th November, when she will talk them through the new assessment system. Governors are encouraged to then spend time in their allocated year groups. Mrs Francis will contact those governors not present at this meeting.

Action: JF/all

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

One formal complaint was received by the GB. A Complaint Appeal Panel was convened to hear the

complaint, who carefully & fully investigated the complaint & gave their recommendations. The complaint was multi-stranded: each strand was upheld in part. The GB thanked the members of the Panel for the vast amount of time that this took.

No other incidents to report.

10 CHAIR'S ACTIONS

None

11 AOB

None

DATE and TIME of NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 20th January 2016 at 8.00pm

The meeting closed at 9.50 p.m. with a prayer led by Canon Twisleton.

ACTION POINTS:

ITEM NUMBER:	DETAILS OF ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
5	Provide Mrs Francis with details of governor appointment dates etc. & register of pecuniary interests for publication.	Mrs Jerbi	FGB mtg 20Jan
7	Review Acceptable Use Policy	ICT Committee	FGB mtg 20Jan
7	Review Educational Visits Policy	Premises and H & S Committee	FGB mtg 20Jan
7	Child Protection training & Safer Recruiting training	Staffing Sub-Committee	asap
9c (iii)	Health & Safety Policy to be circulated to governors	Mrs Francis	FGB mtg 20Jan
9c (iii)	Health & Safety Policy to be an agenda item next meeting	Mrs Jerbi	FGB mtg 20Jan
9c (iv)	Communication Policy to be recirculated to Governors once minor amendments made	Mrs Boyce	FGB mtg 20Jan
9c (iv)	Communication policy to appear on next meeting agenda	Mrs Jerbi	FGB mtg 20Jan
9c (iv)	Communication policy to be published on school website once ratified	Mrs Francis	After FGB mtg 20Jan
9c (v)	Amended Finance Committee terms of reference to be circulated to governors	Mrs Mulcare	immediately
9f	Invite governors not present to visit school on 26 th November	Mrs Francis	Immediately
9f	Governors to participate in school visit	All	26Nov