

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY – FOUNDRY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

TUESDAY 17th JULY 2012

Governors present:	Andrew Tindall [AT]	Tony Croft (Chair) [TC]
	Andy Withers [AW]	Marie Spencer [MS]
	Anne Webster [AWe]	Claire Fyvie-Rae [CFR]
	Neil Maddock [NM]	David Higlett [DH]
	Katherine Witt [KW]	Maureen Kirkland [MK]
	Clare Satterly [CS]	Robbie Turkington [RT]

Associate Governors: Sean Taylor [ST]

Others: Jack Davis [JD]

Clerk: Elisabeth Ruggles

01. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

There were no introductions or welcomes of new governors. Apologies had been received and accepted by Janet Taylor.

02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

03. MATTERS ARISING

None

04. OFSTED – REPORT / KEY ISSUES

TC congratulated everyone at the school for the recent OFSTED inspection outcome. The school graded itself as good and was graded as such by OFSTED. CFR and CS were thanked for helping TC answer the inspector's questions. TC hopes to be more confident next time. Governance was also graded as good. The school is aiming at outstanding so it will hopefully get its chance next time. TC said that the inspector said that governors should monitor teachers and their teaching, which he found very strange. Governors feel that their role has to stop somewhere and monitoring lessons is not part of their remit, unless they felt it was something that needed to be done or had been specifically requested. MK said in this case governors would have to know the situation better than the teacher, but how? AW made the point that governors might want to come in as an observer to see good practice, but MK said that governors would have to be told that it was. Governors agreed that there could be some value in this. Governors' impact is on monitoring the school, which is done through sub

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committees and the monitoring of the senior management in the school. It was good that there was one representative from each subcommittee at the meeting with the inspector. ST said that the inspector made provoking statements such as the one TC mentioned all week. For example he claimed that the school's marking was not good enough, which the school argued against using examples and in the report, marking came out as 'consistently good'.

AT did not realise that the goalposts have changed, i.e. that the current 'good' is equal to what was 'outstanding' previously. CFR made the valid point that a school is unlikely to be graded 'outstanding' by OFSTED if it doesn't grade itself as 'outstanding'. In today's climate 'good' is actually very good. ST told the meeting that the inspector had given pointers on how to achieve 'outstanding' next time. AT said that speaking to parents, OFSTED is not a factor in parents choosing the school – they want their children to come to Foundry Lane because of the ethos and vales etc. RT echoed this – OFSTED confirms what parents knew about the school anyway. KW said that parents value the pastoral care such as parenting classes. TC felt that the inspector was not very interested in these additional services or the community aspect of the school. ST said that what was different this time was that the inspector went in to look at quality of teaching and only then looked at other things. There is however a specific mention on the parenting classes the school offers in the report. AW thought the inspector missed a lot, such as the nurture groups because he would not let the senior management team take him on a tour of the school at the beginning of his visit. DH proposed that these additional services the school offers are mentioned in the initial report the school prepares for a visit, so the inspectors see it.

Again all those involved were congratulated. RT wondered what was being done for the staff in recognition of their hard work. CFR felt a letter should be written on behalf of the Governing Body and in particular to those teachers whose lessons were considered to be outstanding. There was also a need to acknowledge the motivation, involvement and hard work put in by AW and ST.

SDP2012/2013

A sheet was handed out at the meeting – key areas from the OFSTED report have been taken from it and will be dealt with in next year's SDP report.

With regard to the quality of teaching, teachers are sharing their expertise. There is some coaching booked for next term and this will be good opportunity to share good practice. There is a training day on 21.09 with Nigel Ash, who has done some work on leadership throughout the school. There is a need with all this to look at models. The school has within it all elements of outstanding teaching, so use needs to be made of this. Staff are given freedom to teach in their preferred way, but perhaps the school now needs to focus on best practice and make a whole school agreement on the way forward. AT pointed out that teachers have a set time each week for preparation, so could there be something arranged where newly qualified teachers can see teaching by more experienced teachers. MS said this was happening already. The NQTs get 10% extra time and a lot if that involves observation. This also comes under performance development when teachers liaise with ST. Peer coaching is

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already undertaken, but it is very teacher driven. Now there is a need to know where improvement is needed. Yrs 3 and 4 maths is an area that data analysis has shown needs attention, so coaching would be ideal here. ST told the meeting that one of the things that has changed is that OFSTED is now focussing on the professional development of staff. In September they want to see targets for staff improvement.

JD added that the Family of Schools brings extra expertise, such as in reading.

4a AGREEMENT OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

There are two occasions where the initial 'AS' needs to be amended to 'AWe':

-p5: under training (4th line)

- p6 under Safeguarding (last line)

With these two amendments the Minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting by the Chair.

5. END OF KEY STAGE ASSESSMENTS YEAR 1 PHONICS – UPDATE

All assessments have now been completed for the year. There are improvements over last year and OFSTED looked at this to see if the teacher assessments were correct for L3 (Yr2 and L5 (Yr6).

The Yr1 phonics screening has been done. The test involved 40 words, 50% of which were pseudo words. This went very well. It was monitored by OFSTED and the school is awaiting the results from across the city and the country. 32 out of 40 is considered to be the 'pass mark' and 60% of the children met this. Lots of children were very close and will be re-screened next year. It will be used as a diagnostic tool for other children further up the school next year to help them with phonics.

06. TRAINING

As she is resigning from the Governing Body, CS needs to hand over training to another governor. The role involves co-ordinating governors' training needs and pass on training opportunities. Every governor can make their own booking. The school has an ongoing subscription to Newport Educational, so every governor can do as much training as they like. However it is important that use is made of it. The induction training is recommended for new governors.

CS has also produced a booklet with an overview of the Governing Body and the activities in any particular year. This can be updated as required. TC thanked CS for fulfilling the role for the past three years. KW asked whether governors fed back at meetings on training they had been on. Yes. AWe went on child protection training on 26.06. JD asked whether the subscription covered full Governing Body training – it does and an area for training needs to be decided in September. Timing is more flexible than the old system.

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Training is also covered at every full Governing Body meeting. TC confirmed that in the past training has been very good.

It is important to keep a log of who has been on which course.

07. 3FE PRIMARY SCHOOL CHANGES FOR SEPTEMBER

The staffing is all in place and the children have started to move to their new rooms.

The new building is up and running. There are one or two minor issues (the locks are not right, for example) and some major issues; the fire escape may not be wide enough (AW has a meeting about this next Tuesday) and there are drainage issues, which were supposed to have been sorted out at half term, were not and now there is no money in the budget for them.

ST is arranging the ICT network, which is due to be put in in the summer for the whole school.

The YrR toilets in the main building are not quite ready and the toilets in the new building are being done. The management of the movement around the building as well as whole school events is being planned now. There is a meeting on Monday evening for views to be put forward.

JD stated that being able to work in the building with the children has given teachers a good trial run for September and given an opportunity to iron out any problems. MS said it was a lovely learning environment.

08. SAFEGUARDING

The school is fully compliant.

09. FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

A meeting has taken place. Discussion on toilets was the main point. To have similar toilets in both buildings would cost significantly more and after much debate it was agreed to go ahead and pay the extra.

The next project is the funding of the hall. KW is researching this. TC is looking to set up the Trust as a charity, which should help in accessing funding. The ball park price for the hall is £400,000 and KW is looking at a number of different options, each of which has different limits.

DH pointed out that the school will probably have to fund some of the hall too. TC said that once the Trust has been set up as a charity, this will open access to different funds. Parents are aware of the situation – some YrR parents have already approached TC and are enthusiastic to help.

Security gates at the front of the school were also discussed, but management of the system is difficult, so this was carried forward to next year. AT asked about the SCC concierge service that could be used. But all options require two sets of buzzers to get access to the school, and

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this is difficult to manage. RT asked that when this is discussed again, is there anything that can be looked at in advance. KW suggested a pager or wireless phone system. It needs to be discussed initially at an administration meeting before being brought to a Community and Facilities meeting in order to see where the issues are. It would be good for security and the money is available, but the way in which it works is important. Springhill has been visited to see their system. Once the situation has been discussed at both these meetings it will come back to the Finance Committee.

The staff absence policy was also discussed with the definition of a 'close relative'.

10. GOVERNOR CHANGES

CS is resigning and she was thanked for her service. This means there is a vacancy for a parent governor.

There was a ten minute break.

11. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

DH asked whether many local residents had been to look at the new building. There were about twenty, all of whom were very interested.

The fact that 95% of all parents attend parents' evening is very good; it is traditionally well attended.

In addition to the awards listed in the report there were a few more to add to the list:

- Gold Award – South East in Bloom
- National Award from Rock Challenge for the best drama skills
- Amazing people Award for Enterprise Week

CFR said that news of the awards should go out locally, requiring a press release. AW said he needs to find time to do so. Susie Hoskins works part-time and it is hoped that she can be thanked on Friday for her hard work and enthusiasm in the garden.

DH remarked on attendance being above 95% - the school has been aiming for this for some time. Nigel Ash has been asked to look at the OFSTED reports within the family of schools and bring out the key issues from all of them. Four out of the six schools have been inspected since January and two will be inspected in 2013. Attendance at Foundry Lane is much better than at other schools within the family.

A key issue for the school is to challenge the more able students. Planning from the top down is needed, which is quite difficult to do. KW wanted to know if this comment applied only to Yr6 or across the school. It was across all year groups. The percentage of able students is around 20-30%, Children now need to have a completely different task to complete rather than be expected to do more from the same task as the other children.

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There were no further comments or questions.

12. COMMUNITY AND FACILITIES

A meeting was held 21st June.

The playgroup partnership is moving along. The Breakfast Club (Tiger Club) is oversubscribed. The administration of chasing payment was discussed and there will be a £20 administration charge for persistent late payers. AWe felt that the wording was a bit fluid and needs to be more substantial. She has suggestions for additions to the policy. KW asked whether on-line payment could be arranged – she has sent details to TC. MK has looked at a system called ‘Parent Pay’, which will be discussed in September. She made governors aware of the need to look at the amounts of money coming into the school as the amounts are very large and security is an issue.

Repairs and Maintenance: It will cost approx. £2,000 – 3,000 as a result of lead being stolen from the roof of the toilets. It caused considerable damage and an electrical blackout.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding issues: CRB checks need to be checked. There is an occasional problem with mice and ants and the meeting looked at the possibility of a pest control contract, which would be less expensive than calling someone out each time. It would also cover wasps’ nests. Nigel is taking care of this.

CFR asked if it could be considered to send out newsletters by e-mail as it would the school a bit greener.

CS was thanked again for all her hard work.

13. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

A meeting was scheduled during OFSTED week and so this did not take place.

14. PARTNERSHIP UPDATES

Regents Park Learning Trust

The Trust is planning a meeting with WEA for adult learning courses. Meetings happen termly. The school has asked whether parenting courses can be linked with WEA.

Regents Park Family of Schools

The development of this is continuing. There have been English, Maths, SEN and Foundation groups. There will be Science and ICT groups from September. The Family is looking for the shared learning project to go on for a third year, which will be looking at outstanding teaching.

The staffing structure at playgroup was looked at. At the moment consultants are in place. This was temporary so now a more permanent solution is being considered.

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TC asked if there was any news on St Marks joining the Trust. They are very keen and AW has done a PowerPoint presentation for them. The Family is waiting for John O'Connor from the Co-Operative Trust to come back with the correct wording.

AW also did a presentation for the Polygon School, but the special schools are in the process of setting up their own Trust.

15. AOB

Dates for next year's meetings were handed out.

If anyone wants anything to go out on an agenda, please e-mail TC.

CS thanked all governors for her time on the Governing Body – she enjoyed her time as a governor and wished everyone well for the future.

AW thanked all governors for their support this year.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8pm.

Date of next meeting: 9th October 2012.

Signed
Chair of Governors
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