

## MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY – FOUNDRY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JULY 2013

Governors present:            Tony Croft (Chair) [TC]            Janet Taylor [JT]  
    Marie Spencer [MS]                Liz Smith [LS]  
    Andrew Tindall [AT]                David Higlett [DH]  
    Anne Webster [AWe]                Robbie Turkington [RT]  
    Kathryn Lugg                        Neil Maddock  
    Andy Withers [Head] [AW]

Associate Governors:        Sean Taylor [ST]

Others:                         Jack Davis [JD]

Clerk:                         Elisabeth Ruggles

## 01. WELCOMES AND APOLOGIES

There were apologies from Claire Fyvie-Rae, James Caldwell and Maureen Kirkland. Apologies had not been received from Sam Barnes. Pat Kennedy has offered his resignation due to work commitments. He was thanked for all his hard work on behalf of the Governing Body.

## 02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

AT asked whether there was an issue with the teacher governors as performance related pay was being discussed. MP said she was the NUT representative and a teacher.

## 03. AGREEMENT OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were no amendments and the Minutes were signed by the Chair as being a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

## 04. MATTERS ARISING

- Skills Audit: Kathryn has received 13 responses, so any governors who have not yet completed the audit, please do so. Weakest areas appear to be: health and social care; publicity and media (RT says he is able to help here); arts and creativity (NM is able to help here) and in the area of selection and appointment of staff. It would also be good to have someone with knowledge of health and social care on the Governing Body. At the moment James Caldwell is a trust governor, but he is also a parent of children in the school (he applied at the same time as Kathryn and Robbie), so he could be moved about. AT knows of a parent who is interested in becoming a governor. This will be re-visited in September.

- Admissions Forum: The questions regarding to in-year transfers and getting children off waiting lists and into a school were taken to this extraordinary meeting. The meeting was told that Tim Davies is in charge of this now and it is his intention to train up some of his staff (he has 90 in total) so that at times of hot spots he can use these to take care of in-year

Signed

Chair of Governors

Dated

admissions. This sounds positive and will be key next term as the census for the budget is in October.

Next year there are 474 on roll at the moment, so there will be 5-6 spare places.

## 05. PARTNERSHIPS

### REGENTS PARK FAMILY

Under the SLA the Family – with the exception of Freemantle - has bought in Education Welfare Services, so the school is working with Nicky Weir, who is at the school for half a day per fortnight. She arranged a meeting with representatives from all schools to look at absence and attendance. A city-wide attendance policy is due shortly, but in the meantime there is zero tolerance for in-term absence. All schools in the Family will have the same policy on attendance.

Nicky Weir and the service she provides is very useful to the school. She has gone and knocked on peoples' doors if attendance is an issue and parents can find this less intimidating. The service cost a couple of thousand pounds, so needs to be used. Regents Park put in the bulk of the funding for it. JT felt that the school is already benefitting – Nicky is putting in various steps and approaches if a child is missing a lot of school. MS asked how often the Education Welfare officer was involved before – this was once every half term, so the fact that she is in school more often is a big help.

### TRUST

There was a Trust meeting in June, which looked at new trust partners. Solent NHS Trust (Eileen McPherson) was there and it is hoped that they will become a partner. They are involved in emotional first aid and can put on courses for parents to help them support their children.

The second potential trust partner was the Southern Co-operative Group (funeral services, supermarkets etc). They would be very happy to provide a trustee and join the Trust. They sponsor the schools co-operative society and have been key in starting up a south west group.

SCA (Social Care in Action) were also due to make a presentation, but were called away at the last minute to a meeting. This is the second time this has happened, so AW intends to have a frank discussion with them to see if they have the capacity to take this on.

City Catering has been asked to look at other models as well as this Trust, so they were not at the meeting. They will decide on their way forward in January.

It is interesting to note that the number of co-operative schools has risen to 450. When Foundry Lane started the process there were 130. AW and ST found this out at a recent conference in Birmingham. 70% of the 450 are Trust schools and the other 30% are Trust academies (e.g. USH). These have more autonomy, but still hold the co-operative values.

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated

Both AW and ST attended lots of workshops at the conference and now have lots of ideas to put in place. AW looked at membership. Someone has written a book on the first two years of being a Trust and it would be a good idea to get a copy. Co-operative values are key and are currently not exploited enough in publicity and marketing. It is also probably confusing to have both school values *and* co-operative values. Discussions have taken place as to how to make them come alive for all the different partners so that they become embedded. The plan is to hold a co-operative workshop next term, e.g. fair-trade etc, in order to raise the profile.

ST then went to a school in Bristol the following week so see how co-operative values were embedded in teaching and learning. There were some fantastic ideas. Co-dependence is an important aspect of this. Foundry Lane has looked at a couple of models to see how it can work in the school. The children's ability to work together is becoming weaker and weaker (social skills are lacking), so it would be a good idea to investigate further. A training day is planned for November to look at group skills. It is hoped that other schools will join this.

Other highlights in the Trust are:

St John's: The current Head Teacher is retiring and there will be a new Head Teacher (Lisa Nicolson) from September. AW will be her mentor.

- Banister Park: Their new Head Teacher will have been in place for a year in September. Their most recent OFSTED inspection was good with outstanding features.

- Regents Park: They had an OFSTED inspection last week; the result is, as yet, unknown.

TC pointed out that he recently went to St Mark's to speak to their Governing Body about Trust membership. The Head Teacher had lots of questions, but there were very few governors there. There seems to be an issue as they have a number of vacancies. The school will make its decision early in September. They can come on line as a trust partner, like the Solent NHS Trust. It would be good if this did happen, so that five out of the six schools in the Family would also be in the Trust.

## 06. COMMUNITY & FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Foundry Lane has done very well again in this year's Southampton in Bloom competition. It won a gold award and 'best in class' for the wildlife garden'; a silver award for the fashion garden (Mary Poppins); a silver award for the learning garden and a silver gilt award from South East in Bloom for a primary school garden. Susie and the children are very pleased. The school now has some vouchers to spend.

During the holidays the play group is being re-furbished – the playgroup is paying for this and it will improve the school's assets. The main office is also being re-decorated and the main building is having all the lights replaced with LED ones. In addition to this the fire escape is being widened.

The wall, which is an original 18m long Victorian wall, is moving and becoming an H&S hazard. The initial quote to remove it and replace it with a fence came to around £9-14,000.

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Nigel however contacted Romsey Reclamation, who will take it away for the cost of the skips (approx. 5 skips will be needed). They will also give the school 10p for every brick sold, so this will probably balance out the cost of the skips. RT has also spoken to community payback; however, nothing can be done until October/November time, which is probably too late as it needs to be done as soon as possible. Nigel has also spoken with them, but was worried about insurance issues; although it was pointed out that the school's public liability insurance covers this. The Project Manager is speaking to Susie next week and the wall will be one of the items discussed. A governor advised looking at the probation services web site, as this might speed things up if this is a route the school wants to take.

#### 07. FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The budget was monitored. One of the new pupils is Russian and his extra support will probably take up the contingency that is left. There is also a child with behavioural issues - the support for him has worked this year, but it cannot be taken away completely yet. September and October will be interesting as there is now not much money left in the budget. The biggest issue is the £33,000 for a new class. Last year the school received £45,000, so this represents a big shortfall.

#### Performance Related Pay

This is due to come into effect in September 2014, but it needs to be in place in September 2013 so there are parameters by which to judge teachers. There is still no agreement between the government, the unions and everyone else, but it is important for the school to agree something now, even if the political arena is unclear.

AW has given a presentation to teachers, which brought up some issues. It was looked at through the Finance and Personnel Committee so that something could be brought to the full Governing Body meeting. MS said that the general feeling amongst staff is minimal as many are on the upper pay scale already. The biggest issue is the 'good' and 'outstanding' point pay increase. Generally speaking staff are happy for AW to decide as long as he is the Head Teacher as he is deemed to be fair and staff trust him. However, to cover the event that he should leave, there needs to be a clause in the policy to make sure fairness is guaranteed. RT asked whether a grievance procedure or a way to appeal is necessary. AW and ST said there is a lengthy statutory process with governor involvement. The 'steps' (reference points) proposed by Hampshire is popular.

The pay spine will have an upper and a lower limit and staff are happy for AW to decide on their progress. AW told the meeting that when monitoring is done, set criteria are used. He is also not the only one making the decision. It is necessary to decide whether to link the criteria to OFSTED criteria or targets based on pupil performance. JD felt that if it is broad enough (ie. based on class observation, pupil progress and standards set) then any judgement will be fairer. OFSTED criteria are unpopular as teachers have only a very short period to prove themselves. Achievement is an option as it is then clear what progress has been made. Self evaluation is probably a key thing.

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TC said that OFSTED will judge Foundry Lane on its performance, so the Governing Body will have to justify any increase in pay given. OFSTED will look at value for money.

MS felt that the only benefit of this new approach is that people at the top of the pay scale will have to keep on performing and not just rest on their laurels. Generally speaking teachers and the unions are against performance related pay. AW and ST have had performance related pay for years.

KL asked what the biggest issue was for teachers. It relates to the school catchment. Some teachers have classes that are small with no behavioural etc. issues and others have a whole range of issues to deal with. No child is the same and no school is the same, so it is hard to make comparisons. MS made the point that no teacher works solely for the money, but more for the love of the job. There will not be parity across the profession in years to come and it will also impact on recruitment. It was pointed out that there is already a lack of parity – Oasis Academy, for example, pays its teachers more as it has a bigger budget. However, it will make the profession more fragmented, which seems to be what the government wants.

AT felt that whenever pay and working conditions are changed, it is never for the benefit of the employees. DH could not see how the budget initially could be tied in with this. All increments and reference points would have to fit within the budget and it would be imperative to make sure that these are affordable.

Whilst there are lots of negatives, the governors asked how Foundry Lane would look to implement it. AW felt that with the way the budget is, it might be necessary to start with a single increment and then look at it year on year. AW was hoping to get some guidance from SCC policy, which was published earlier this week, as it is important to consult with the unions. Reference points were to be determined on 01.08.13. However, AW has since heard that it has been taken back to be looked at again, as there were claims that some parts of it were illegal.

Governors felt it would be helpful to look at this again in September. The NUT is advocating strike action, although MS said that many staff will not strike over pay. It was agreed to have a separate meeting to look at the Pay and Appraisal Policy – RT asked if there was any work that could be done on this in the meantime. There is a SCC policy that covers this, so governors need to look at pay first. There is a training day planned with staff on 27<sup>th</sup> September to look at the Appraisal Policy.

There followed a ten minute break.

## 08. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Two topics were discussed at the meeting:

1. ICT spending in line with the school's vision. Due to budgetary restraints, it has been difficult to keep to the £15,000 which was earmarked to renew ICT each year. This sum has now been halved as the capital budget has been slashed. However, projectors and whiteboards are being upgraded in all classrooms.

Signed

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Dated

In order to save money, the school will be using a new school web-site, rather than Studywizz from September.

All teachers have laptops, some of which need to be upgraded.

2. From September 2014 the SEN Code of Practice will change. Cathy Baggott came and spoke at the meeting about the key changes, which are built around young children and their families, rather than the providers. The hope is that this will create greater collaboration between the providers and it should give parents greater control over and encourage more transparency within services in the area. Southampton has been a pathfinder authority.

Currently there are three groups of children that need extra help – school action, school action plus and, finally, statemented children. From September 2014 there will only be two groups – children with additional educational needs and children with more complex needs (with an educational healthcare plan). JD asked about how early children would be identified – preschool or earlier / later, but this is unclear. The idea is that the LA will hand over the control for the spending of budgets to certain families for the use of their child. This is a contentious issue. LS cited an example of a family using their budget to buy the whole family season tickets for Paultons Park – their argument being that the autistic friendly area there was the only place they could go to as a family to enjoy quality time. How the money has to be spent has to be accountable, but there is still some work to be done.

#### 09. SCHOOL VALUES

These were handed out at the meeting.

The school values were put together about ten years ago. If the school now wants to amalgamate them with the co-operative values, everyone will have to be given a voice. They need to be looked at in detail.

The co-operative values are SEEDS (self help and (self) responsibility; equality; equity; democracy and solidarity). ST wanted the children to have a clear picture – the bigger the school gets, the harder this will be. MS felt it was important not to lose sight of the school values are the children know these very well. Each one has been developed separately over a period of time.

The language and wording was considered to be difficult for younger children to grasp. It needs to be made more child friendly. DH felt that they could be tied in together as both speak of working together. JD suggested the co-operative values could be used as umbrella values, which then feed down to the school values.

More work will be done on this.

#### 10. HEAD TEACHER REPORT

School reports went out last Thursday.

KL remarked that the KS1 S-ATS results were very good and above the national average.

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The school is in the process of implementing the new staffing structure.

The School Code has been revised this year and is in the process of being taught. The children now have more ownership of it.

The central behaviour record is very useful as more and more people are adding to it. It is useful for secondary school transfers and when speaking with outside agencies.

There have been single subject day monitoring sessions, which subject teachers have enjoyed.

The Regents Park Family moderation, which started this year, will see maximum input next year for all schools as dates have been put in diaries already.

Three-form entry primary school: There have been a few changes in the staffing structure and the subject leader teams. Assemblies have been changed – the children now sit lengthways to maximise the space.

Funding of the new school hall: A meeting with local surveyors and architects has taken place. The school is now waiting for a visual proposal. Capita came in with a quote of £400,-500,000, whereas this last meeting discussed a quote of around £150,000, which although still a lot, is more realistic. This is very good news. KL asked for any more interested governors to join the fund raising committee. The next meeting is in September.

#### Parental Involvement and Friends.

Jackie ran a new course for 11+ year old children – ‘Strengthening Families’. This was very well attended. KL said it was appreciated that some teachers gave up their time to cook dinner. Jackie has been running the ‘Incredible years’ for three years now. LS pointed out that coffee mornings are very well attended and Jackie offers very individual and tailored support, which many parents find less daunting than a more formal setting. Jackie’s role is being looked at. At the moment she works specifically with parents, but the school needs to see if she can also work with the children as a family support worker. Her time however, is very tight.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory was fantastic. Next year’s project is being considered. The bigger the school gets, the harder it is to find something.

## 11. TRAINING

LS has been on induction training. Please let KL know if you go on any training, so the records can be kept up to date. The Autumn timetable was handed out to governors.

Newport has developed a governors’ handbook, which offers a very good overview. It could be used in the induction pack.

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7.11.13: whole Governing Body training with Cambridge Educational Association, looking at pay policy and appraisal. It will probably be held at Regents Park.

12. SAFEGUARDING

This has been discussed at all meetings and also at one to ones with Chair and Head Teacher.

13. DATES

A draft was handed out at the meeting.

14. CHAIR

Governors were thanked for their work during the year. LS, RT and KL have all completed their first year. The next school year is earmarked for fundraising. TC asked all governors to keep him up to speed, if they feel he has missed something. DH was happy to carry on being a governor, although his initial four year period has come to an end.

15. AOB

Special Governors meeting on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 6pm to look at pay Policy.

KL asked what the response to the parents questionnaire had been – so far 50/60 responses have been received; normally it is more in the region of 110. KL proposed putting it on the web site. An initial look at responses indicated that a small number of parents wanted parents evening brought forward.

AW thanked TC for chairing the meetings.