

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

TUESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013

Governors present: Tony Croft (Chair) [TC] Janet Taylor [JT]  
 Marie Spencer [MS] Liz Smith [LS]  
 David Higlett [DH] Claire Fyvie-Rae [CFR]  
 Robbie Turkington [RT] James Caswell [JC]  
 Andy Withers [Head] [AW] Neil Maddock [NM]  
 Kathryn Lugg

Associate Governors: Sean Taylor [ST] Jack Davis [JD]

Clerk: Elisabeth Ruggles

## 01. APOLOGIES AND WELCOMES

There were apologies from Andrew Tindall, Maureen Kirkland and Anne Webster. Sam Barnes apologised for not attending this and other past meetings.

## 02. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS AND FORMATION OF COMMITTEES, INCL APPEALS COMMITTEE AND STANDING COMMITTEE

Chair Election 2013-14: There was one nomination for Chair, Tony Croft. He left the room and was unanimously voted in as Chair for the forthcoming year.

Vice Chair Election 2013-14: There was one nomination for Vice Chair, David Higlett. He left the room and was unanimously voted in as Vice Chair for the forthcoming year.

Details about committee membership had been sent out with the agenda and were handed to the clerk to collate. RT asked about the Standing and Appeals committees. These are disciplinary committees should there be issues surrounding a child or a member of staff. These committees meet only very rarely, but they are there to ensure governors are available should the need arise. The Standing Committee hears the initial issue and the Appeals Committee is there should the issue then go to appeal. It is important that the governors on this committee have not been contaminated by details or information from the Standing Committee. Some of the smaller schools in the family have asked if they can use Foundry Lane governors if necessary. JT asked if it followed that members of staff could not join either committee. They can, although in practice it can be difficult.

Committee meeting times:

Finance Committee: Wednesdays at 4pm

Community & Facilities Committee: Thursdays at 6pm

Curriculum & Assessment Committee: Wednesdays at 5pm

Signed  
 Chair of Governors  
 Dated

### 03. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None. The Register of Business Interests required each year by law, was passed around the room and completed by governors.

### 04. AGREEMENT OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Meeting 16.7.13

(p1) under those present - Jack Davis is an Associate Governor

(p1) Under Welcomes and Apologies; Delete 'Caldwell' and insert 'Caswell'.

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

Meeting 11.9.13

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

### 05. MATTERS ARISING

- Skills Audit: These have not yet been received from TC, CFR and SB. Kathryn told the meeting that the weak areas are health and social care and publicity, although RT has offered the services of his wife for the latter.

- Governor Situation: All governors were in agreement with JC changing to being a parent governor from a trust governor. Initially there was no space on the Governing Body for a parent governor, but a space has now become available with the resignation of Patrick Kennedy. This will mean that there is a possibility of a health professional joining the Governing Body due to the Solent NHS Trust joining the Trust. KL mentioned that AT had said he was aware of another parent interested in joining the Governing Body in some capacity and he needs to be asked about this at the next meeting.

- Numbers on Roll: 475 children out of a possible 480.

### 06. PARTNERSHIPS

#### Regents Park Learning Trust

The meeting held in September was not quorate, due to the new Head Teacher and Chair of Governors and the situation at Regents Park Community College. The Chair of the Trust was also the Chair of Governors there and has now resigned. TC is in the process of signing people up for a Trustees meeting.

Although attendees were aware that the meeting would not be quorate, the reason for it taking place was to discuss the situation at Regents Park Community College. The next meeting will take place on 11.11.13 and Jon O'Connor from the co-operative trust will be attending. There

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated

could have been a threat to the Trust arising from Regents Park Community College (hereafter RPCC), but the Trust was not mentioned in any publicity and coverage of the school. All the press reports related to Sarah Hill and the governors, so the Trust was either lucky or it did not have a high enough profile to feature. The article that appeared in the Echo was fairly well balanced as it referred to the timing of the inspection as well as the high results achieved by pupils at the school this year. Foundry Lane has offered as much practical support as possible; A parent partnership meeting was held at the school to speak to parents and there have been open evenings. However, its support will always be limited by the fact that it is not a secondary school – and with the Trust having so many primary schools, this presents difficulties when a secondary school goes into special measures.

As RPCC is part of the Trust, the LA has a responsibility to tell it what is going on. AW has contacted Graham Talbot, Head of Education, to this effect. At the moment the LA is offering advice and support. The RPCC Governing Body will be disbanded for some time and the Trust will form part of a new group. In theory the school could be out of special measures within 12 months, although it could take 18 months. There will be termly inspections from HMI and OFSTED. The next visit is on 16<sup>th</sup> October. They would then need a full inspection in order to come out of special measures.

AW also asked Graham Talbot about the future of the Trust as sometimes schools in this situation can be forced to become academies. But this is not something that is being considered at the moment as the GCSE results were so high. AW has also been in touch with the community college as RPCC could be put in a chain of schools (such as Oasis); if it comes to this, schools from the co-operative society would become involved.

The profile of the Trust and its future development will be discussed at a senior management meeting on 6.11. The capacity within the trust is not big enough to support (particularly the secondary) schools in a situation such as this one. At the moment RPCC is relying on the LA for support, but this support is not particularly good at inspection level. There is support coming from teaching schools. Points to be discussed include:

- Development of Maureen Good, the retired head teacher of St John's, who is remaining as a co-opted trustee
- The overall business management to chase funds the school cannot access now
- The partnership side is still developing – Solent NHS and SCA are still to be engaged. Southern Co-operative is also going to provide a trustee.

Another area is the Family and Trust situation. Perhaps the time has now come for the Family to be dissolved and all efforts directed towards the Trust. St Mark's is close to joining the Trust. The strength of the soft federation is the curriculum groups and this may be better held within the Trust as it builds strength. AW would like to bring this topic up at the senior management meeting on 6.11.13. If the soft federation continues, one meeting per year will suffice. CFR felt that if there were only a Trust, this would raise its profile. MS asked what would happen to Freemantle School. It has already been invited to join as a partner and

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated

comes to meetings in an observational role. It could join the curriculum groups as a partner. It has, however, always been a separate entity and will continue to be so. On another note, it is also now looking to provide secondary education up to the age of 16.

JD felt that if the school was a member only of the Trust, it makes this a positive selling point. AW felt that part of the vision of the Trust is to improve the quality of learning within the group and this makes it more obvious. ST said that when meetings of the Family happen, all the schools have different agendas specific to their school, but in the Trust there is a shared identity. Whilst DH agreed with this, he pointed out that it was important to have had the federation in order to get the Trust to the position it is on now.

All governors were in agreement that AW could pursue this line of enquiry at the next meeting. MS asked whether St Mark's would be involved and they probably will be. In the longer term it may be time to change the name of the Trust; the name Regents Park Learning Trust has unfortunate connotations at the moment. The suggestion Southampton Cooperative Trust was mentioned – which implies a bigger capacity, which could move things forward. A lot of schools are looking for partnerships. JD said it would be important to introduce a new name as early as possible, which would also create an opportunity to get some positive publicity.

In terms of identity ST felt that the co-operative was a good identity to promote. Foundry Lane wants to expand the Trust and not just focus on Regents Park. If the Trust wants to have sufficient funds to work on its behalf, then there need to be enough schools involved behind this drive.

MS asked whether the Trust could include another secondary school; this might make the move to secondary school more threatening for more vulnerable children, who see it as a benefit to have the 'trust' secondary school so close by. It is unlikely that another secondary school would be involved. It was agreed that there is a lot to debate. JD asked whether nurseries could be another possibility. LS pointed out that there is a co-operative nursery in Shirley Warren, called 'The Co-Op'. The Polygon as a special school is also interested.

AW told the meeting that any ideas arising from the senior management meeting would be brought back to the governors.

### Regents Park Family

The project for this academic year is moderation, with an intensive programme at Foundation, KS1 and KS2 levels. The first meetings have been positive.

The University of Winchester is involved in teacher training and a teacher from there started at the school in September on the schools direct programme.

### 07. FINANCE

There is a revision to the budget. TC proposed governors accept a loss because the school did not receive as much funding as was expected now that it has become a bigger school. It was

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated

expecting funding in the region of £70,000, but in actual effect received nearer to £30,000. On the basis of this, TC proposed a revised budget plan with an expenditure of £1,836,126 against an income of £1,807,596. The balance brought forward is £34,380 with the surplus ongoing balance of £5,850. He was seconded by MS and all governors were in favour.

The Y budget (community budget) has seen a decrease as the school has lost the Weight Watchers contract. It now needs to keep a close eye on this budget. It is still healthy, but the school will advertise in the Newsletter for new hirers. KL suggested increasing the rent for the karate club.

#### 08. APPRAISAL POLICY

This was sent out to governors with the agenda. Staff have seen it too, and have not made any comments or raised any objections. The governor appraisal part of the document is important for governors. With regard to AW's performance, TC has done this in the past, but it would be good if another governor had this experience too. It will take place on 19.11.13 in the afternoon. Any interested governors, please speak to Tony.

The rest of the appraisal procedure is delegated to AW by the Governing Body. AW reports back to governors through his Head Teacher's report as OFSTED will look at teachers' performance targets.

CFR brought up the subject of lesson observations, as something governors ought to be involved in. The object would not be to make a decision on whether the teaching was 'good' or not, but perhaps look at the class with some sort of checklist (e.g. were the children involved?). These observations could then be filed for OFSTED as evidence. She realised that this is a difficult area as staff could get annoyed. Learning walks were suggested as a possibility.

The OFSTED document was handed out at the meeting. Governors are not expected to do lesson observations unless clear protocols are laid out. CFR wondered whether governors could tag along with a formal observation, but as these are already done in pairs, the addition of a third person was discouraged. ST could show some examples to governors on what is good; OFSTED now want examples that underline this as well.

Learning walks were felt to be a good opportunity. Governors could see examples of working with able children for example. They would then also be able to pick up on other things such as uniform and lateness. It shows that governors are interested and would also raise their profile in school.

The formal side of monitoring is a rigorous procedure and takes place this term. Next term external people come to the school. Governors could perhaps be present when judgements are handed back. RT suggested also sharing parts of the appraisal policy with governors. An anonymised sample could be given in the Finance and Personnel committee meetings.

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated

ST pointed out that the curriculum and assessment subject reports could also include some examples of what has been done to improve learning. JD suggested that the subject leader could also answer governor questions.

**All governors are to give AW dates of availability for a learning walk.**

AW proposed to accept the Appraisal Policy; he was seconded by CFR and all governors were in favour.

*[JC left the meeting at 7.30]*

#### 09. CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

DH said he was at this meeting and would like to be included under those present on the Minutes.

The meeting looked at its remit as well as the need to include Pupil Premium children. OFSTED is particularly interested in them as they get weighted funding, which needs to be justified.

There was an initial look at KS1 and KS2 results. The KS1 results are positive. They are in line with the rising national attainment. There has been an increase in the number of Level 2B children, showing the positive impact of the development work done here.

At KS2, the children achieving level 4 exceeded the targets and expectations set. However, the high attainment hoped for at Level 5 did not materialise. The children underperformed slightly. CFR asked whether the children could be put into categories to show which particular children did or did not do well, but this is not possible as it was a real mixture. The cohort itself was low ability and also complex. An additional issue was that whereas previously 32-33 marks had given a Level 5 result, this year children needed to get 36 marks to get a Level 5. The school did have a large number of scripts re-marked. Four children missed a Level 5 in Maths by 1 mark. KL asked whether other schools had the same issues, which they did. CFR said that this has a knock-on effect at secondary school as children are set according to these results.

The school matched national results on grammar marks. There was a big increase in the attainment in writing this year; this was both in school and nationally. The performance of able children now includes a Level 6.

The school web site was also discussed; the Pupil Premium statement is now on it.

#### 10. COMMUNITY & FACILITIES COMMITTEE

A new Chair is required.

Thorn lights; the diffusers have fallen off. The company is coming in at half term to sort the problem out, acting on a suggestion from Nigel on how to remedy the problem.

The Polish School is a third bigger than last year.

Signed

Chair of Governors

Dated

With regard to getting new hirers to use the school, an advert in the Echo was deemed to be too expensive. A mention in the newsletter had already been suggested earlier in the meeting, but also a banner to go at the front of the school is a good idea. It will also be advertised on the web site.

## 11. PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Comments and their percentages were given. Some things have already been shared in the newsletter and some changes made; for example, there are now altered timings for parents evenings (first one November instead of January and the second one is now in March / April).

The questionnaire shows a mixture of comments. With regard to pupil welfare, comments are generally very positive and it is good to find out which means of communication are preferred. Parents like the newsletter and hopefully the web site will prove to be a good resource. Text messaging is something parents appreciate as they do on-line payments. There is also lots of support for Jackie Dowdell's work in school.

The issue of homework has not yet been addressed. There were extremes of opinions received, from children receiving not enough to much too much. This will be reviewed, but not all parents will be happy. Consistency is important. KL felt there was a big disparity between years.

Parent partnership meetings: the first one of these was held last week. There were about 16-18 parents present. The secondary school issue needed to be discussed, so some parents may have come just for that. LS represented governors at this meeting. It will be reported on in the newsletter of 16.10.

Feedback on other issues was mainly positive. Some parents were critical, but these are individual issues, which need individual attention. The questionnaire did not get the usual number of responses this year (69 as opposed to an average usually of between 100 and 120). AW thought this was because it had come too late in the term. May is a better time for it, so the results can be analysed before the summer holidays.

KL suggested governors could have a termly update on the web site. CFR suggested some of the questionnaire comments could also go on the web site and/or comments from parents or children about the school.

Some parents would like to be able to e-mail teachers direct. JD felt that whilst this could be an advantage, teachers do not always have time to respond. JT referred to the threshold of sending children home sick – were they kept at school for too long or not long enough? AW felt it was difficult to keep people happy as everyone has a different opinion on this.

CFR asked whether staff had seen the analysis of the questionnaires. They saw it on the induction day. She felt it was good for them to see so many positive comments.

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated

## 12. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN INCL. PUPIL PREMIUM

The plan has been divided into 6 different sections, two of which are school specific; school values and community.

### 1. To strengthen the cooperative identity of the school

Next week the school is holding a co-operative week, which promises to be fun. The aim is to bring the co-operative values to life and to incorporate them into the school values.

### 2. Achievement of Pupils

There have been a number of success criteria, with action steps to achieve them. The teachers' appraisal targets are based on the whole school targets. It is also linked to quality of teaching and leadership and management.

### 3. Quality of Teaching

The school aims to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to 40% (It was 14% at OFSTED and 19% last year). In order to achieve this, outstanding features of teaching are to be shared with other teachers (coaching). MS has already been videoed as part of this.

3.13: Training Sessions. Videos are shared to discuss the quality of teaching. This is very useful as teachers can pick up on a number of different things. Other training sessions are planned, such as SEN, writing. Able children have already been addressed.

A lot of work is based on new teacher standards. Work is based on challenging data and looking at weaknesses to improve those areas.

3.18: This came from the governor curriculum and assessment meetings.

3.2: The CPD model with a monitoring and evaluation cycle. There is an annual cycle of observations of class teaching. At CPD day staff development was discussed, particularly performance related pay.

3.21: LSA training sessions. A speech and language session was held a few weeks ago with another session planned. These take place during the day to allow all LSAs to take part. Peer support is also important and has been included this year.

3.4: Homework: already discussed, but consistency important.

### 4. Behaviour and Safety of the Pupils in School

Foundry Lane wants to adopt the Attendance Policy from SCC. There are also new national guidelines on bullying and the school needs to compare these with the school's policy to make sure the latter is up to date.

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated



The school code was revised last year and the aim is for it to be really embedded. Central behaviour records were introduced last year. In order to achieve consistency, LSAs and midday supervisors now also add information.

## 5. Leadership and Management

5.1: The vision for the school.

5.2: Staffing structure and the induction of new staff to their new roles.

5.3: The use of data to support vulnerable groups (2 teachers and 2 LSAs are looking at Pupil premium children). There is a problem in the future on how to use the information now that all infant school children are to receive free school meals.

The national curriculum has been revised and implemented for most pupils, apart from Yr2 and Yr6. Progress updates are given through the Head Teacher reports.

## Attendance Policy

The main thrust of government policy is that no absence will be authorised unless the circumstances are exceptional (Head Teacher's decision). No holidays are to be taken in term time. MS wanted to be able to make it clear to parents that this was government and not school policy. ST felt the mindset of parents needed to be changed. TC said it would not matter what was said, it would not make an impression on people.

CFR asked how many absences are needed before the fine situation arises. This is 10 unauthorised sessions, i.e. 5 days. RT felt that some parents almost expect to be allowed this if other absences throughout the year are low. Others will pay the fine as it is still cheaper than taking a holiday in holiday time.

Policy is a little unclear, governors pointed out. Point 6 opens stating that holidays are possible, but the next page says that September, May and June are not allowed for holidays, implying that other times are. Point 6 then says that no holidays are authorised.

It was therefore agreed to make some changes:

Point 1: ok in its entirety

Point 2: delete last paragraph (As we believe....child's education)

Point 3: delete 'not authorised' after 'day trips and holidays'. Otherwise ok.

Point 4: ok in its entirety

Point 5: ok in its entirety

Point 6: delete what is there and add 'The Head Teacher will only authorise absences in exceptional circumstances and parents must apply for permission in advance'.

Signed

Chair of Governors

Dated

AW will make these adjustments and email the policy to governors.

13. OFSTED UPDATE

This had been dealt with earlier in the meeting. On 7.11.13 the Trust Governing Body will look at the new pay policy. RAISEonline will be dealt with when available.

14. SAFEGUARDING

This is discussed at every committee meeting and also at meetings between the Head Teacher and Chair.

15. CHAIR

He wanted to bring up lesson observation, but this was dealt with earlier in the meeting.

16. AOB

A governor asked if it were possible for agendas for all committee meetings to be e-mailed to governors prior to the meetings.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8.33.

Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 6.30