

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY – FOUNDRY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

TUESDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2015

Governors present: Tony Croft (Chair) [TC] Janet Taylor [JT]
 Marie Spencer [MS] Liz Smith [LS]
 David Higlett [DH] Andy Withers [Head] [AW]
 Claire Fyvie-Rae (CFR) Paul Candy [PC]
 Andrew Tindall [AW] *[arr'd 6.35]*

Associate Governors: Sean Taylor [ST]

Others: Jack Davis [JD]

Clerk: Elisabeth Ruggles

01. WELCOMES AND APOLOGIES

There were apologies from, Robbie Turkington, Kathryn Lugg, Neil Maddock and Anne Webster, which were accepted. Paul Candy was welcomed to the meeting as a new Associate Governor.

02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None. PC signed the Register of Business Interests.

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

- Staff Governor: Cathy Baggott will take on this role. She has sent her apologies for tonight. Paul Candy is an Associate Governor at the moment.

[6.35 AT arrived]

- Learning Walk 'Pupil Premium Children'. This took place in November and involved AW, ST and CFR. A report was handed out at the meeting. The walk was arranged to look at how the extra money for the PP children is spent. CFR is the PP governor. PP funding (2014/15 it amounted to £116,000) is used to close the gap between PP children and others in the school. The school currently has 61 PP children, eight of whom are in YrR.

A report from the Sutton Trust stated that having LSAs in the classroom did not benefit the children unless they had been specifically trained. This has been done at Foundry Lane and two-thirds of the PP money has been spent on the deployment of LSAs in the classroom.

Signed

Chair of Governors

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They are there for at least four mornings and one afternoon. However, the big question is whether this deployment works. The person delivering the intervention has a weekly report sheet, which is looked at termly by the phase leader. If the impact is not as wished, then the phase leader will meet with the class teacher and the LSAs to look at what else can be done to support the child. Data that was looked at for the current Yr6 shows that there has been a positive impact from Yr2 onwards.

Other PP money goes on the children directly, when the phase leader does targeted work with the PP children. Other expenditure is on speech and language support, an emotional support group and any additional educational psychologist reports.

As governors are aware, each Curriculum and Assessment meeting needs a PP point each time a year group report is given and PP should be minuted at each meeting. It is a WIP on all projects; next term a new system is being used. It might be a good idea to have a case study so governors can see a real life example.

Attendance was also discussed at the meeting. PP children can sometimes have issues with this, but the data shows attendance is satisfactory at the moment. It might be possible to add this to the data.

There was a learning walk around school and CFR saw very positive work in each class room. There are also a lot of volunteers working in the school. The work they do is all evidenced. The people she spoke to all knew who the PP and SEN children were. The phase leader receives a weekly report. There were a few occasions when a LSA did not have any interaction with a child, so this does need attention. Generally the walk was very positive.

Moving forward the following was suggested:

- Curriculum & Assessment meetings to have a PP point on the agenda at each meeting
- Case study (this is already in hand)
- Residential trips (yr4 and Yr6): to have 1 place free of charge for a PP child. Perhaps a certain amount of money can be kept back to cover all trips as some parents really struggle to pay for them.

ST spoke about the intervention tracking system.

There were no questions and CFR was thanked for the report. The money spent on PP children and the impact that has had needs to be on the web site and updated annually. It is there now.

- School Hall: this is carried forward to next meeting

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- Lift costs. A letter was enclosed with the agenda with information on this. The school wanted to know whether SCC would give extra money for the lift and the email confirms this to be the case. Foundry Lane owes SCC £75,000 for the new building and agreed to give back £35,000. The Council also agreed to give the school £30,000 for the new lift. Therefore the agreement is to give £35,000 back to SCC over a period of five years. DH asked whether £7,000 per year was manageable for the school to pay and AW confirmed that it was.

The agreement was signed by TC and AW.

05. CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

The Minutes were handed out at the meeting. MS said she also gave her apologies for not being able to attend.

The SEN report was postponed to the next meeting.

The 3 key English targets from the SDP are:

1) To focus on spelling (from the last OFSTED), which is ongoing and to look at writing as there has been a huge increase in L4 attainment from last year. This will continue to be tracked. Generally there has been an increase in the percentage of pupils reaching the year group expectations in writing.

New assessment criteria are being developed. The school is running a joint project with Banister Park School with Yrs 3 and 4. The children are working with the author Ali Sparkes and visits between schools are taking place. There is also lots of staff inset on writing. Perhaps this could be expanded across the Trust for staff and parents.

2) There has been an increase in the number of children reaching their year group expectations in reading. New assessment procedures are being developed based on the new national curriculum.

3) To encourage children to read for pleasure also comes from the new national curriculum. There is a lunch-time reading club for Yrs 3 and 4. The children in Key Stage 2 have a reading log, so they can see what they have read. The data from the library has been looked at to see which children are reading what. The KS1 'come read with me' scheme has been extended up to Yr4.

06. COMMUNITY & FACILITIES COMMITTEE

JD mentioned that there has been a change of leadership at the Playgroup. Sue Mason was appointed on 06.02.15. She was the deputy for a while and is very experienced.

DH asked about co-operative partner links. WEA are offering courses, but there is a charge. He wondered if perhaps they could be offered at no cost. AW pointed out that the courses

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have run for a number of years, but this is the first time they have charged a cost. The WEA rely on money from central government and this has been cut. It is £165 for a 20 week course. Perhaps it will be free again next year. However, it was felt that it would be a good idea to look at funding so it could be offered across the Trust. It is an accredited course – equivalent to L3 teaching and learning in school. Some of the people who take part in the course come into school to get their experience.

07. FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

SFVS is signed off.

The Pay Policy was sent out with the agenda for all governors to look at. Compared with last year, it has been revised considerably.

(p3) the Governing Body will ensure that all mid-year reviews for all teachers and the leadership group are undertaken. This has already been completed. DH felt governors needed to be informed in some way that it had been done – usually this is reported through the Head Teacher’s report. ST suggested putting it onto the Governing Body cycles. THIS NEEDS TO BE ACTIONED (AW/ST)

(p4) No member of the Governing Body, who is employed at the school, can be a member of the Pay Committee. Therefore, some members of staff will be unable to take part in certain decisions.

(p5 - bottom) This sets out the recommended remit. The Finance & Personnel committee will agree the policy and then bring it back to the full Governing Body. Any comments, please advise AW.

JT is currently looking at the ‘Y’ Budget – income and expenditure (the community budget). At the moment it is in deficit. This will come to the next meeting (F&P). All the other budgets balance out overall apart from this one. It needs to be sorted out before the end of the next financial year.

The SLAs were looked at by the committee. Health & Safety was examined. It is managed by Capita, but the school manages all the statutory term-time servicing, therefore it was recommended to go for the Silver Level. There are no major changes to last year, but the school is looking at a better deal for the educational psychologists for the Trust as a whole as it wants to increase this service.

Trust Co-ordinator Role: AW declared an interest in this as he may possibly want to consider this job. The role would involve managing the Trust on a day to day basis (currently this falls on the head teachers so is an unsatisfactory arrangement). It is hoped that by having a co-ordinator, money could be saved as there would be a strategic overview, possibility for grant applications etc. The job description was included with the agenda. It

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has gone through evaluation, but a consideration is how much it would be. Each school would pay an amount for the salary, based on the amount of pupils. The head teachers will consider whether this is what is wanted and then move it forward.

MS asked whether the role would include trying to negotiate a better deal for the schools (point 6). Initially the post would be for one year, with a decision to be made on how many days per week etc. MS felt that is was an important role, particularly as the schools are increasing in size. DH asked if there was any experience on what is the optimum number of days for the job, but the schools have to be governed by what they can afford. The schools also do not know how much work there will be. The role will not start until September, but there is a head teachers meeting in March to discuss this matter further. There is of course an element of risk and JT suggested building in review dates throughout the year to check on whether the role is progressing as planned. CFR recommended speaking to the Trust to see if and how savings could be made.

TC asked the Governing Body if it agreed that the role could be explored – there was agreement on this with an abstention from AW. JT suggested the role be advertised for three days initially and there was agreement on this too with the abstention of AW.

08. PARTNERSHIPS

A sheet was handed out at the meeting. The first slide showed a model for the co-operative trust, with the four founding schools on the right. Since September, two other schools have joined the Trust as partner schools - they are both church schools (Freemantle is also an Academy) and the diocese holds their assets in trust. For any decision making to take place each of the four schools provides two trustees (the head teacher and chair of governors) and the other partners also provide trustees – the organisations have one each and St Marks and Freemantle have two. The only difference is that if there is any discussion on land and assets of the four founding schools, then the two church schools take no part in these.

The co-operative trust will always be looking at more trust involvement – 0.05% of the school budget goes into the trust from all schools. DH asked if the voting was equal. If there is a financial decision to be made, the trustees have to each go back to their governing bodies.

The partnership needs to be developed. What has not been done yet is to have an elected shareholder forum. AW has sent out a letter to parents to ask if they could offer a discount to trust members if they have a business. It is hoped that the Southern Co-operative group would give some money to set this up as badges and membership cards would obviously cost. All governors are aware of the practical benefits. The Trust has 2,400 children at the moment, rising to 3,000 when all schools are full. If families are added to this total, it makes

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up a huge community. It enables the Trust to offer many events together as enrichment activities. There is also shared expertise, which is an area for development as the more expertise trusts have, the higher the standards are. The best trusts have all sorts of people as additional resources.

Slide 3 shows that most of the projects have come out of discussions. For future development the key thing is to give everyone a voice. Whole Trust recruitment is preferred. MS pointed out that Portswood and St Marys have their students from Teaching Direct working in all the trust schools, which is a very good idea. The values underpin all the co-operative trust work.

09. SWOT ANALYSIS – GOVERNOR INPUT

This was put together by AW and ST and then added to by the management team and the SIP. Staff have also been consulted. All the Trust schools have done the same. It is a document that governors need to have ownership of. Governors made the following additions:

Strengths: parent partnership (LS), Trust membership (shared expertise etc) (CFR), early years and KS3 and 4 teachers (MS), ethos and values (CFR)

Weaknesses: GB review not been done recently and should be done as part of this

Opportunities: Trust Co-ordinator (ST)

Threat: head teacher leaving (MS), OFSTED (not supposed to be looking at levels anymore, although some recent visits have (AT)

DH pointed out that governors need to know how strengths and weaknesses are validated and underpinned. AW said they needed to be referenced and the evidence needs to be shown.

The document will be brought to the next full Governing Body meeting - AW will code it all.

10. DATA – PUPIL PREMIUM

The Minister of State for Schools (David Law) has sent a letter to the school congratulating it on the KS2 results for PP children since 2011.

The data systems are good, but time consuming and cumbersome. The school has therefore been looking at other systems – in particular one from Essex CC for schools, which uses the NEHT assessment criteria, used by the school, but it can also use levels, which is useful.

Sarah Clifford and Sean have been on a course and the school has bought into the system at a reduced rate for this financial year. It will be used again next year. Lots of people can be added to the system, including a governor portal if wished. Using the system, any group of

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children, any year group, any class can be looked at. It can also filter out children, such as PP, EAL, girls/boys etc.

The figures are shown in different colours - green (better than average progress), yellow (progress as expected), light pink (slow progress) and dark pink (no progress). Patterns can be looked at and the data has a summary at the bottom of each report. It is quick and flexible.

CFR asked how regularly assessments are entered. Teachers are carrying on as before entering marks half termly. The data shows when it is done and progress at any particular time. It will highlight those not making enough progress. CFR asked whether the targets were sent home to parents. In the past this has not been done, but perhaps could be now with the new curriculum and new criteria (six levels). Teachers are already using the new criteria when speaking to parents. CFR asked whether these could be used in reports and this is being done from this year.

[LS left the meeting 8.05]

11 SCHOOL VALUES – GOVERNOR INPUT

Some schools have a representation of their values using Wordle or suchlike. Foundry Lane wants to capture this in order to make the values more visible – both the school and the co-operative values. There might be other things that members of the school community think are important. The children have been asked for their thoughts as well as parents (through the newsletter). Governors were asked if they wanted to add anything. There is a values leaflet, which is detailed, but something day-to-day is required. Any thoughts or ideas are to be passed on to ST. DH suggested having weeks allocated to each value, or to the award system and the newsletter could also be used for this.

12. SPRING LEARNING WALK

This took place over two days, observing in class for 30 minute sessions, together with work monitoring. On the first day, Mike Thompson (SIP), Jonty Archibald (Head of School, Regents Park) and KL came in. Mike T showed the way OFSTED would do an observation, which was useful.

There were 23 observations in total, together with work sample monitoring. The overall profile was that 86% were good or above (21% outstanding), with 14% needing improvement. This was felt to be pretty good. The key thing however is not the percentages involved, but the issues that need to be worked on:

- 9 out of the 23 classes needed more challenge for the higher ability children
- 5 or 6 classes has issues with differentiation with clear enough criteria

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- In 4 lessons, the role of the LSA needed attention in particular parts of the lesson, if their allocated child was involved and fully engaged

There are learning walks in the autumn and spring. Now they will be linked to appraisals and referring back to previous walks. ST pointed out that it would be very good to have others involved. MS invited any governors to visit her class.

13 HEAD TEACHER APPOINTMENT

[ST left the room].

The advert for the job is live from 11.2.14. Application packs are being put together to send out. The week after half term will involve organising how the two days will be set out and Tony thanked governors for their many offers of help.

The first day will require governors in the afternoon and the second day for the interviewing process at the De Vere hotel. A task is needed for applicants to work on and Glenda Lane and AW will have an input in this. It needs to be something that will be useful for governors. TC will email governors again with the exact dates.

[ST returned to the room]

14. SAFEGUARDING

There are no issues.

15. TRAINING

12.2.15 at St Marks on 'governor challenge'

Training on March 11th and 18th

16. CHAIR

JD was congratulated on her birthday.

17. AOB

AT mentioned that a Schools Direct student he knew on secondment to the school had told him the school was very friendly and the behaviour of the children excellent.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.25.

Date of next meeting: 24th March 2015

Signed
Chair of Governors
Dated