

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY – FOUNDRY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

TUESDAY 12th FEBRUARY 2019

Governors present: Sean Taylor [ST] Marie Loftus [ML]
 David Higlett [DH] Kathryn Lugg [KL] [6.38]
 Andrew Tindall [AT] Jack Davis [JD]
 Debbie Wyatt [DW] Liz Smith [LS]
 Cathy Baggott [CB] Jack Davis [JD]
 Emma Wareham [EW] Robbie Turkington [RT]
 Ben Penfold [BP] Sid Watson-Rose [SWR]
 Stephanie Crispin

Associate Governors: Helen Aldred [HA] Paul Candy [PC][6.35]

Other:

Clerk: Elisabeth Ruggles

01. WELCOMES AND APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared

03. AGREEMENT OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were a number of amendments:

(p4) Paragraph starting '2) Leadership Team' delete 'standards have been falling over the past three years'; insert 'the trend is that the average point score has been falling'.

(p7) Second sentence under Headteacher's report 'There is consistency of learning'. Delete 'learning' and insert 'teaching'.

(p8)– Paragraph starting 'On a strategic level... ; delete 'having more senior staff and introducing phonics' and insert 'introducing more senior staff and continuing to develop phonics'.

(p10) Under Staff Survey, paragraph 5, insert 'summary' before 'individual staff responses....'

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

04. MATTERS ARISING

- There are three new governors: Steph Crispin is the new staff governor, already elected by staff. Ben Penfold and Sid Watson-Rose attended the previous Governing Body meeting and would like to join the governing body. DH proposed their co-option and he was seconded by

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CB. Both left the room and a vote took place. They returned to the room and were told they had been successful.

- Action Sheet update:

Learning walks	RT circulated a pro-forma sheet. Governors to read and come back with any questions at the next meeting. He recommended that governors write a report as soon as possible after the learning walk had taken place.
Updated questions on the SIO report	Looked at by Teaching & Learning committee.
Full Governing Body learning walk	Taking place morning of 28.02 – a week before the next SIO visit.
JD meeting with English team 11.12.18	This took place with Jo and Karen and JD took notes. These will be put online. She has also met with Emily since then and will write up the notes from this meeting. They spoke about the subject leadership policy and the SIP. The SEF was also looked at to ensure all points were covered. The attainment data was scrutinised to decide where the priorities are. The English team has put together a new action plan and moved forward with it. She pointed out how hard the English team is working. Questions remain on how to achieve the goals (writing for example is such a big topic) but the responsibility is shared. The team has completed training and arranged training for staff. Please contact JD if there are any questions.
ARE data	This has been discussed with DW and she has looked at the support to be put in place. She has written up notes. Everyone involved was in the room, sharing best practice and she found it a very productive meeting. This will happen again in the next 2 terms.
HT report	No questions.
Staff survey	To be discussed under AOB. DH has looked at the raw data.
Safeguarding to be led by governors	6 th February RT and LS were in school and gave a presentation to staff on key policies. This also needs to go to support staff and

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	others working in the school. ML wanted it minuted that this governor input was very well received with staff.
SIO visit 08.03.	EW, SWR and RT can attend. DH is hoping to attend. DW is happy to act as a stand-in if necessary, but pointed out that she has already met the SIO three times.
Governor focus groups	Certain governors have been assigned to lead focus groups for English, Maths, Early Years and Vulnerable Groups, based on CP's experience at her children's school. LS was worried about a conflict of interest, but these groups are focussing on OFSTED, which she is happy to be involved with. JD felt little teams were better than having just one responsible person.

05. RATIFICATION OF POLICIES

Whistle Blowing policy: the layout has been changed to make it easier to follow. There were a number of changes to be made after governor input:

Paragraph 1: insert 'and integrity' after accountability.

KL quoted additional legislative wording to clearly lay out the school's reassurances on any person involved in whistle blowing – 'our assurances to you' etc

These changes will be made and sent to the Resources Committee by email.

Retention and Transfer of Child Protection Records: This is the SCC policy. It is worth noting that SCC has recently updated this policy due to GDPR which has seen many changes around the retention of records. It is now possible for a school to request records if necessary, but there should be only one set of notes. SCC will be arranging drop-ins in an advisory capacity to ensure the correct procedures are in place.

One small typo was pointed out – paragraph 5, line 3 'relating to' written twice, so one to be deleted.

HA proposed it be adopted and was seconded by KL. All governors were in favour.

Social Media: ML has shared some concerns about the wording. There are also concerns about the policing of this policy. If the word 'prohibit' or similar is used, then it needs to be policed and enforced. The school does not have the time or the resources to do this.

However, schools are charged with protecting their staff. Some work has been done by a charity looking at the harassment of staff through social media. ML pointed out how careful staff have to be about sharing information and 'friends' on social media. HA shared that she was contacted by a parent at 22.30 on Christmas Eve even though her settings were secure.

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SCC uses the wording ‘strongly discourages’ in its mobile phone policy, but how can such things as Apple watches be monitored, without increasing workload.

ST pointed out that some staff have used social media inappropriately and brought the school into disrepute. Some staff have used phones during the day in view of the children so some middle ground needs to be found. EW proposed that the policy concentrate more on expectations and possible consequences if these are not adhered to, including possible disciplinary action. SWR felt that policing was virtually impossible, but it is important that staff know what to do. KL pointed out that it is difficult if a member of staff works in the school but also has children attending it. ML said that even if you had two separate social media accounts, it would be very difficult to differentiate where the boundaries between the two were.

EW asked where the wording came from. It is from a policy that a lot of schools use. Union advice is not to be friends with parents on Facebook. PC felt that the wording ‘strongly discouraged’ should be used and then each case be looked at individually as the need arises. ML felt that ‘friends’ as well as watches are the issues. The policy also needs to state ‘no phones’ in school due to safeguarding (pictures) or messaging in school time. LS pointed out that most early years settings do not allow phones – she has to surrender hers on arrival here. At the moment phones stay in lockers and bags. Emergencies should go via the office, but some staff do not have the confidence to do this.

AT pointed out that children are not allowed phones in school – they need to be left in the office. This applies also to tablets and laptops and all social media. SWR asked whether the policy should apply to the school premises, or during working hours – in which case what should happen at lunchtime. HA felt it would be unfair to disallow staff from using their phones etc in the staffroom during their lunch hour, although phones cannot be used when looking after children.

There were questions on the wording with regard to social networking, social media and ‘friends’ - SWR felt that the wording KL has from SCC ‘strongly advising against.... however there may be exceptions’ was strong enough. If inappropriate behaviour is clearly defined (unprofessional behaviour), then there can be consequences if the advice is ignored. If the wording ‘prohibitive’ is used, it needs to be policed. The policy also has to involve support staff – the code of conduct is in the job descriptions of all staff.

DH pointed out that the policy was originally drafted on advice from Karen Grove using information from some teaching union websites. The Governing Body needs to be clear why changes to the policy are required. KL said that SCC work with the unions all the time and if there were any problems the SCC legal team would be there to help, giving an extra layer of support.

JD felt everyone needed to be clear that all of the policy also applies to governors and governors need to know where the exceptions are to be found so that it can be implemented. Job descriptions also need to be followed up. This will be done by the Resources Committee.

The following was agreed:

- Policy reworded using the SCC wording ‘strongly advise against’

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- Actions need to happen to back it all up; review of the code of conduct policy; review of job descriptions to include professional expectations with regard to adherence to the school's social networking policy.

RT asked if changes to job descriptions might pose a problem – no, not if it remained largely unchanged other than this. AT asked what the school intends to do if a parent ‘found’ a member of staff on social networks. He felt there needs to be a clear message to parents on what is / is not appropriate regarding contact. Parents need to be made aware of the avenues of communication. He spoke of the situation in the NHS where incidents of harassment are now low after warnings had been issued. Everyone is now fully aware of the expectations.

The Respect & Dignity Charter would be a good way of addressing this situation. The Social Media policy could be published in the Newsletter, showing the lines of communication. Once parents are made aware that all other means of communication will be ignored, any ill use could be reported to the school by staff.

The situation regarding phones will have to go back to Resources Committee. KL can investigate phone lockers. ML will put up signs stating phones cannot be used in the classroom. The Art Club could design these.

The Child Protection Policy: HA voiced her appreciation of the time DH and AT spent looking at this with her as it was a hugely demanding task. AT brought Appendix 9 to the attention of the Governing Body. This is the Brook Sexual Behaviour Traffic Light Tool, and without reading this in context, the contents can be alarming. AT pointed out that children are banded together in age groups: 0-5, 5-9, 9-13 and 13-17. Behaviour is listed under green, amber and red types of behaviour. In the age group for 13 year olds, in the green band sexual consent is listed. AT pointed out that this is in fact illegal and wondered whether the school should be supporting such an appendix. He felt that if the school used this as a tool, it was sending out a terrible message. Other pointers also seem a bit dubious.

ML asked when this tool is used and where it is referenced in the policy. CB pointed out that the model is used quite widely and is used as a guide as to whether the behaviour a child exhibits needs to be recorded or not. All behaviours need attention or a response ML felt that AT had a valid point and asked who would refer to it. It is not part of the SRE policy, but is kept separate as a DSLO resource.

BP also agreed with AT that some people might find it alarming that the school appears to be condoning underage sex in some instances and asked whether it had to be in the policy at all. It could be used for child protection, but does not necessarily need to form part of the policy. If the right professionals use it, they would use it correctly. The wording ‘Foundry Lane uses recommended tools in school’ could be inserted. HA asked whether governors wanted to see this wording in the policy.

RT asked whether governors were happy for staff to be using this tool. ST said it was useful when communicating with other professionals as it is a common language. It informs decision making if MASH needs to be contacted. Some green behaviours would lead to MASH being contacted.

HA said that no comments had been received from other governors regarding the Child Protection or Safeguarding policies. ML proposed that these be accepted and was seconded

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by CB. There was unanimous agreement. RT pointed out that all staff and support staff will receive these; they will sign the policies to confirm they have understood them.

The other three policies will go out to governors separately.

The Whistle Blowing policy was accepted with the changes discussed (above) ST proposed and was seconded by RT. There was unanimous agreement.

06. QUALITY OF TEACHING & LEARNING AND EXPECTATIONS

Governors' questions were looked at; these cover key issues which should be addressed regularly.

At the last SIO visit, an issue was raised when lower ability children had gone to a separate space to work with an LSA. This raised the issue across the school how these children are supported. What the SIO saw was not indicative of class practice, but how it is addressed in school is to be looked at. Quality first teaching is necessary, particularly for those children who are SEN or lower ability. Ten years ago, such a child would have been taught by an LSA outside the classroom, but now inclusion is key with quality first teaching. Training in school this week looks at quality of teaching with effective questioning etc. CB will have a meeting with LSAs on Friday 15 February and four LSAs are currently training with the Portswood Teaching Alliance. LR felt it would be a good idea to show the school's response to the SIO on her next visit as well as the challenge from governors once it was brought up.

Other issues surrounding SEN pupils were considered. Attendance is a huge issue, so the school is working with EWOs to reduce persistent absence. 20% of children in school have SEN, but they make up 40% of those children who are persistently absent. EW asked if there comes a point when SEN children, who do not attend, should be at school. This is a very difficult question. KL pointed out that this trend of absenteeism runs across the city. CB pointed out that some of these children also have health issues, so there are lots of different reasons why they might be absent.

The SEND report has been sent to governors. As there were no comments, it will now be uploaded onto the school website.

Inconsistencies in the quality of Teaching & Learning

Each of the Phase Leaders brought their plans on what was being done to combat this. Link governor and phase leader visits have taken place – EW has spoken with ML and DW with Maths. EW said it was very interesting to see the data and the tracking of children. DW spoke about the Maths mastery approach, conferencing with all children, and when looking at intervention, the discussion which takes place on which child needs which intervention. Barriers to learning are discussed and books are being looked at during these visits. A key action is that governors look at consistency across the school. KL would like to see governors visit the school for one afternoon each term.

There have been targeted visits to other schools - a YR1 lesson in one school for example. The Maths Hub has had an impact. An English Hub has been set up at Springhill, including an audit on early phonics etc.

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The English teams have been running training sessions to get consistency in writing. They have been pushing hard to introduce a set format in teaching that is used from Yr1 through to Yr6. PC showed governors an English book to illustrate the learning journey. ML will make sure governors can see books from Yrs 4, 5 and 6 to show the Phase 3 journey. JD told governors that the English team's visit to Ludlow School was excellent and made in response to their action plan. All books and learning environments have also been checked.

Coaching: there is support in school. Releasing Sarah Clifford was difficult to resource at the beginning of the year. ATM is having a real impact with some staff. The school is trying to build capacity into the leadership structure; due to the budget deficit, there has not been enough resources to support people. The school is looking at funding for next year. Governors suggested that this needed to be looked at sooner rather than later, requiring proper discussions, looking at different models and roles. Springhill for examples has four non-teaching heads. This could be added on to the meeting on 28.02 so that the SLT can discuss it in the afternoon.

Expectations: It is important to see what other schools are doing in this regard, including all schools in the Trust as well (all rated 'good' by OFSTED). There are still some concerns about some teachers, but clear plans are in place.

Training / Networking: Every opportunity offered by SCC is used. On-line training is also used.

Kinetic Letters: This had impacted on initial funding. But handwriting is now significantly better than in other schools. The school's view is that this has been really effective and now the school is focussing on non-consistency of teaching kinetics.

KS1: Key areas have been looked at. PC covered the main phase plan in December.

Phonics: This has really been scrutinised. PC looked at the way monitoring is done at the English Hub. He has made charts for all the children in his phase so he can see which words present a problem. This gives an immediate picture and facilitates interventions. This is also used for PP children

[JD/PC left meeting 8.37]

The Yr3 children listed are now in Yr4. A couple of the teaching units in Yr4 have been changed. Work is also being done to ensure Yr4 curriculum is taught precisely and key vocabulary is embedded early on. There is a strong emphasis on the purpose of writing. There is focussed support with a part-time teacher with children who left Yr3 not on track. Some of these children have already closed the gap. Governors asked ST to include time frames in the SIP, which he will do.

07. MEASURING PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT

The data now available dates from November 2018. A lot has changed since then, so governors felt it would make more sense to have the Governing Body meetings earlier on in the term so that they drive the actions for that term. The Head Teacher's reports can then focus on other points in the second half of the term.

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Looking at the attainment data for Yr3, it can be seen how many pupils achieve the ARE (age related expectations). Progress is measured in a different way – ‘typical’ ARE (the progress a child is expected to make typically, i.e. the national average – ideally this is 100% of all children) and also ‘better than typical’, GDS. If there are children making more progress than expected, then the progress figures should add up to more than 100%, which is what the school is aiming at. Nationally there tends to be a lower proportion of children making ARE in YrR than in Yr2.

In Yr3, looking at the data, 82% of the children are achieving the ARE, which is good for that cohort. For Reading 25% have achieved greater depth, which is an improvement from KS1. For writing, the figures are 77% ARE (better than national average), but only 11% GDS, so the children have not yet made the accelerated progress for KS2. The greater depth children are not making the progress they need.

In Maths 76% are ARE, which is approximately what would be expected, but KS1 is not being built on. The GDS figure of 17% is below the national average.

This information allows the school to highlight areas which need to be targeted. Yr1 has not seen a dip from YrR. EW pointed out that writing does not show greater depth across any year group so this needs a focus; this is already being done. EW would also like to see the national averages for ARE and GDS, so this will be included in future data.

In Yr4 there has already been a concern for writing. But the data shows that the children are on track to make the right progress. ML pointed out that she is tracking the same children’s books in order to see the progress being made.

In Yr5 there is a lack of consistency. There is a lot of NEST provision there.

Yr6 are on track to complete the Fischer Family Trust targets, which ST will send out to governors. This data is based on the prior attainment of the children.

At all times the aim of the school is to get GDS figures rather than ARE progress.

[LS left the meeting 8.55]

08. Lower Attaining Children and SEN

This had already been discussed earlier in the meeting.

09. EARLY YEARS UPDATE

A document from CP was handed out, which outlines all the issues raised during the most recent SIO visit. It includes what has been done as well as new targets.

10. LEARNING BEHAVIOUR

This is very important in school and for the school as it is a key OFSTED judgement. The inspectors will look not just at bad behaviour, but disengaged behaviour as well. The general behaviour around school is also important. HA and ST implemented a ten week plan and have been monitoring its impact. They have spoken to staff and discussed what has/has not improved after this period of time. There have been lots of positives as well as things for further improvement. Detentions were looked at (CPOMS). In July there were 29 lunch-time

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detentions in one week, 14 in September and 7 in January. The number of incidents being recorded on CPOMS has not fallen, but more serious incidents have decreased.

Respect is a key focus in school. The Reward Systems has been discussed as to whether it is still effective. The behaviour in the toilets still needs to be improved.

Violence towards staff, although seeing a decrease, is still a major issue. Some of the children lash out in their relationships with adults outside of school if there is an issue and continue this in school. For some children Foundry Lane may not be considered to be the best option for their education but the LA are believed to have a lack of resources for alternative provision. The school does its best to try to get these children taught in an appropriate setting. The services of the EP are used to try to support these children, as normal behaviour systems do not work with them. The school tends to have lots of reviews looking at the environment, the attitudes towards staff and changing behaviour around the child. ST said it would be great to have a governor to attend a meeting like this to support the school and make the case to SCC to place the child elsewhere. ST now sits on the FIG group, which is discussing six children. Behaviour is a very complex situation but the approach to dealing with it can have divided opinions. These children are very complex and the situation is reflected across the city and the country. Even though some staff feel that they are not being supported, the school is doing the best it can. DH pointed out that there is evidence of what the school is doing, but there is often a big perception gap on what the school does and what (some) staff thinks it does.

ML pointed out that a lot of the children have attachment issues so the Compass School as a halfway solution will not work. However, one governor pointed out that these children teach the other children a lot and will make them more empathetic and understanding of needs.

Violence towards staff was also a question on the staff survey, so staff need to know that the school takes this matter seriously.

11. RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Notes will be sent out to governors to read and ask questions if necessary.

12. TEACHING & LEARNING COMMITTEE

A review of the learning environments has taken place.

RT/LS gave feedback to staff in the week before the Governing Body meeting.

Minutes of the most recent meeting have gone out.

13. PARTNERSHIPS & TRUST UPDATE

ST has been to a Trust meeting, which was very positive. It discussed the expansion of St Marks.

There is a new Chair, who is the Vice Chancellor of Solent University. There are also three new trustees – from Off Limits, and the creative community.

All the schools joined together to bid for a £35,000 grant for a writing project (poetry etc), which will be used across all schools.

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14. SAFEGUARDING

Nothing to report. Anything is discussed with DH in the one-to-ones with ST.

15. TRAINING

The recent disciplinary training was attended by some governors.

16. AOB

The lunch-time situation needs to be reviewed. DH has been in school in the past week and took the opportunity to look round the school at lunchtime. It was also noted that fewer children need to come to the office at lunchtime, due to greater vigilance on the playground.

The new lunch times work well for most year groups. Yr3 has a few issues with it as they are right in the middle of the timings and the school needs to be more creative in timetabling for them.

Some staff feel that they do not have enough time. KL/ST are having a meeting with the lunch-time team to talk about the impact on the changes on their team and KL will feedback to governors. There has not been any negative feedback from parents this term. RT asked to see feedback from parents and children too. Comments could be asked through the Newsletter .SWR asked if staff had put forward any suggestions. DH and ST to email all staff as well to ask what has gone well and what could be improved. ML suggested a governor speak to the Tiger Club children. It is important that all views are balanced out.

ML pointed out that teaching staff will not be happy as they have a shorter lunch. They also do not see each other across different phases. However the children are happier – she can see this in the community room and magic playground. Some children need longer to eat; all of YrR has a longer time now. When the good weather comes, sandwiches can be eaten outside on the field.

It was agreed to review the changes at this Governing Body meeting and a final decision will be made at the next.

STAFF SURVEY

There was a summary at the last meeting and DH reviewed individual responses. Key themes were: learning behaviour and communication.

There have been a couple of responses which were particularly personal which need to be reviewed by ST.

There were a couple of issues which were not common relating to the recording of accidents and safeguarding. As a result, a governor needs to look at the recording of accidents. Also questioned were: the role of the SLT, resources, workload and the funding for books. Some of these are already being addressed.

A subcommittee could be formed to look at all the individual responses. RT said governors had discussed, at length, the responsibilities the SLT and the Governing Body had in relation to the survey as being one concentrating on staff wellbeing. In the Minutes of two meetings

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ago it was stated clearly what was going to happen; however he felt it was vital to plan on how to take this forward. If not, it could all go wrong and end up being a negative experience. EW and RT offered to go through the responses – not to present a challenge or because of mistrust but about promoting staff wellbeing. RT felt disappointed – he had wanted to draw everything together and form a plan. DH pointed out that a small group of staff had already written to him asking if there was going to be a response. EW echoed RT – she was concerned that staff were under the impression that governors were looking at ‘issues’, whereas it was about health and wellbeing, i.e. a much wider holistic project.

She felt an outcome that was tangible was necessary and therefore actions have to be taken. RT pointed out that if one of the issues was around communication, then governors need to go back to staff and update them on progress. ML wondered whether some of the SLT and other governors needed to join EW/RT. She felt that some staff used the survey to air their views, which should have been discussed with their line managers or a governor. She wanted to support ST with his vision. This is possibly where the survey has taken a wrong turn – staff see governors and the SLT as two different bodies and it will be important to show governors as being integral to the leadership of the school. All criticism is aimed at both.

Governors who are not part of the SLT will need to be involved. ST felt that staff conversations were much more productive than anonymous complaints which were not part of the survey. He will discuss this with the SLT to see how they would like to be involved.

The working team will consist of: ST, EW, RT and possibly JD. They will bring a plan back to governors and then to staff. The key point to bring across is that governors are involved in big decisions with ST and the SLT (such as lunchtimes).

There should be a meeting early next term – staff might have to be informed about this.

SIGN TO SING: RT/DH to write to Hannah Lush to thank her for her hard work in organising this. ML to remind DH.

Resources Committee to look at the Disciplinary and Grievances Procedure.

EW: Thursday 4 April – quiz?

KL asked that with regard to the timings of Governing Body meetings – might it be possible to have governors in for the afternoon to talk with parents and teachers. Then the meeting could start earlier.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 9.50.

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Chair of Governors
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