

WELLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dudley Hill Road

Eccleshill

Bradford

BD2 3DE

Head Teacher: Mrs Joy Wood

Minutes of the Governing Board meeting

held on Monday 21st January 2019 at 5.30pm

PRESENT: Mrs E Gooding-Brown (Chair) (EGB), Mr M Azum (MA), Mrs R Gray (RG), Mr J Parker (JP), Mr D Carey (DC), Mr A Senior (AS), Mrs Bryony Dolby (BD), Ms D Purewal (DP), Mrs N Rashid (NR), Mrs L Sheffield (LW) & Mrs J Wood (HT) (JW)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Smith PACT HR & Ms Joanne Holmes

Prior to the meeting commencing, Mr Nick Smith from PACT HR gave a presentation on HR procedures in schools

Areas which Governors may become involved in at the school such as recruitment were explained. Demands on budgets due to funding issues can lead to staff restructuring which does involve Governors.

The role of the GB was outlined by Nick.

What constitutes effective governance was also noted in detail.

Roles and procedures and what a Governor needs to know explained. Governors operate at a strategic level not operational.

Staffing was noted as the biggest cost in schools and if costs need to be reduced then staffing is generally the main area to be investigated.

The Governors' Handbook contains key questions which can be useful for Governors.

The level of scrutiny which an Ofsted inspector carries out was explained.

Areas where there is Governor involvement were detailed.

Forced academisation for failing schools was noted as a potential outcome if the GB is not functioning as it should.

Q – Is there a system where the LA carry out an audit on a school?

A – There is not an audit function at the LA. Bought in services can be used.

Q – Are there differing levels of scrutiny by Ofsted?

A – This is dependent on the inspector.

Governors discussed the level of authority and discretion that an inspector has.

Governor training was noted as an area where Ofsted may question Governors.

Nick detailed the main HR responsibilities where the GB could be involved. There are many restructuring exercises taking place in schools and he gave examples to Governors.

Headteacher recruitment can be one of the key responsibilities for a GB along with Pay policies.

Governor involvement in disciplinary/redundancy processes was noted.

Q – Disciplinary committees – There seem to be some practices that Governors are not aware of. Where can we go for advice?

A – If there is a disciplinary panel, a solicitor and a member of the HR team would be involved.

In terms of a restructure, one of the HR team would ensure the process was followed correctly.

There can be times when the subjects covered at disciplinary hearings can be sensitive such as CP issues.

Managing workforce change and Governor involvement was explained including the redundancy process. Succession planning was explained particularly when a Headteacher advises of an intention to leave/retire. The lack of numbers recently when a headteacher role is advertised, due to the pressures of the work, were noted.

Leadership in a MAT in relation to Headteachers was explained including the use of Exec Heads.

Q – Can an existing Head be involved in the process?

A – In terms of succession planning then yes, however they cannot be on the panel. Generally, it is better that they are not involved.

New models of leadership were explained by Nick.

Academisation was noted and this has now slowed down in Bradford. Forced academies due to being a failing school are still taking place.

KCSIE September 2018 and the expectation for training in Safer Recruitment was noted.

PACT do run Safer Recruitment training and he recommended the guidance document available.

There is no need for Governors to be involved in recruitment at lower levels in schools. Governor involvement in recruitment at Wellington was explained.

DBS renewals for Governors were also discussed including the statutory requirements.

Q - Are we wasting money running them every 4 years?

A – No, this seems a reasonable period.

The recruitment process was explained in relation to Governor involvement particularly Headteacher recruitment.

HT performance management is also a key area for Governors and pay progression is dependent on the perf management process.

Q – Appeals committee – would there be an external person such as the School Improvement Partner?

A – No. The process for an appeal hearing was detailed by Nick.

Capability issues and the formal process was outlined. For a teacher, this generally leads to a resignation. Medical capability dismissal was also discussed.

Nick recommended that where possible it is better to try and resolve these informally.

Details of training available through PACT were also circulated.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from Mr A Hussain.

Jo Holmes was welcomed as a potential Co-opted Gov. She is an Early Years practitioner in school and is observing today's meeting.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS & AGENDA VARIATIONS

There were no further items of any other business.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING 12.11.18

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2018 were unanimously accepted and signed as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed: DP Seconded: EGB

5. MATTERS ARISING

Agenda item 12 - Review of Governance is on today's agenda.

Agenda item 7 - Multiple vulnerability data is still being worked upon. This will be brought to the next meeting

Agenda item 6 – Parental complaint has been resolved following an investigation carried out by JW.

An action log is to be included on future minutes.

There were no other matters arising that are not covered by today's agenda.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Leave of absence requests have been received.

Electricity contract details which will be considered at Resources.

7. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Much of the report including data will be covered in detail in the committees.

There will be a report from the Teaching & Learning committee at next meeting.

JW advised that the second ICT suite needs to be upgraded and 4 quotes have been obtained and circulated.

The ballpark is £12k which is within the amount allocated by the Government.

Primary Technology are minimally higher than others however it was recommended to go with a trusted supplier.

The £18k allowance from the Government is coming in and will go into the capital budget.

Q – Is maintenance included?

A – The company already provide technical support to the school.

Q – What are they offering that a cheaper provider doesn't?

A – The existing nature of the relationship was explained including the service provided.

The cost is £500 more than the cheapest.

The assurance that the money will come in by the end of the financial year was noted by JW.

Governors unanimously approved the purchase from Primary Technology.

Proposed: AS Seconded: EGB.

Q – The TA in Reception has left – any plan to recruit a permanent staff member?

A – JW explained the cover person in place at present and hopefully she will be recruited to the substantive post. Any contract will be for 12 months in the first instance.

The appointment of the lead on Growth Mindset was queried by MA and JP detailed the role and his work on the project.

Q – Does it cut into your teaching time?

A – Minimally.

Growth Mindset will be an agenda item at next T & L meeting.
JW advised that all staff are very positive about the initiative.

EGB queried the cost of the cover for the TA who left and JW advised that as this is covered by a TA, there is no extra cost.

Q – How has the new leader of PE settled in?

A – This has gone very well and has been a positive start.

The Attainment & Progress data, the KIT visit and Colleen Jackson's report plus the Reading committee minutes had all been circulated prior to the meeting. These will be covered at the T & L meeting in detail. The positive suggestions in Early Years particularly around Phonics from Colleen were noted. There was an emphasis on Maths and numbers.
The change in demographic at school was also a factor when looking at the curriculum and recommendations have been made.

The KIT visit by Yasmin Umarji was also very positive.

JW advised that the targets have been reviewed based on the data to date.
Reading is an area of concern and this is being reviewed at present.
She advised that she was pleased with Yr6 particularly in the use of Inspire Maths.
JW noted how Yr6 have progressed very well using the initiative.
AS recognised the difficulties for children when moving from KS1 to KS2 and JW explained that this is a national issue and is recognised.
Parental involvement in education was discussed.

Q – Do we carry out meetings with parents re homework?

A – Yes. The meetings which have been planned, including bilingual provision were detailed.

Better attendance than previously experienced is expected.
Governors discussed the change in curriculum and the difficulties for parents.

Q - Would it be worth trialling resources for parents on the website re spelling and Maths?

A – The national curriculum spelling tests are already on the website.

The timing of the parental meetings to promote homework initiatives was discussed.

Q – Are homework clubs in place?

A – Yes for Yr5 and 6.

Q – What about 3 and 4?

A – This will be investigated.

EGB asked which recommendations from Colleen are being implemented and JW noted that all recommendations from the 2017 report have been put in place. Early Essence is still to be implemented. The new recommendations have been embraced by all.
Early Years team have drawn up an action plan to implement her latest recommendations.

JH advised that Colleens visit advice has been taken on board particularly in the use of outside and inside sessions.

Classroom displays are also being made more interactive for the children.
Toning down colours in the classroom is also taking place.
Overall, the visit was very useful.

The numbers of children coming into Early Years who are not toilet trained was noted.
JW advised of the training pack which was introduced as result of this.
Colleen was commissioned due to her Early Years' experience.
There is a life-skills grant which is to be used for an outside experience for the children.

Q – Boys' and girls' social skills in Early Years?

A – Girls are more aware of what is expected. Boys seem to be more mollycoddled by parents and girls do follow instruction in a better way.

Jo advised of the things learnt as a result of Colleen's learning walk.

Nell Bank – Yr6

The 2 Residential visits to Ingleborough Hall for Yr5 and Nell Bank for Yr6 were both unanimously approved.

Proposed: EGB Seconded: DP

Finance

Q – It is noted that pay awards will be in excess of inflation and the employer's contribution could go as high as 23% in respect of superannuation?

A – JW advised of the budget pressures and that pay rises are likely to be above inflation.

High needs funding by top slicing of budgets is also taking place.

There will be an in-year surplus this year and JW advised that a TA still in place in each class which is not the case in many other schools in Bradford.

The efforts made not to use supply staff was also noted by JW.

The Q3 detail will be scrutinised by the Resources committee.

MA queried the cashless system to be brought in which was explained by JW.

Premises

Q – How did the Fire evacuation go?

A – This went reasonably well but issues were seen which are being addressed.

Dates for the diaries

The school production of Alice in Wonderland is on 10th and 11th July.

Sat 29th June – Summer Fayre – an alternative arrangement needs to be found due to the premises manager's reluctance to accept the letting.

DP requested that Governors attend the Easter Fayre where possible.

8. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

This was an element of the Ofsted report.

Safeguarding issues with children going abroad were particularly noted.

Fining of families does not take place at present in school.

It was proposed that fining for unauthorised absence be introduced.

Exceptional circumstances are the only reason to authorise absence.

The potential for radicalisation by going abroad was noted.

LW advised that this needs to be communicated properly to parents.

MA noted that he would feel better supported as a teacher if the fining was in place.

Governors discussed this issue in detail.

Attendance is an issue along with unauthorised absence and the school needs to be seen to act on this. Difficulties for working families in getting quality time together where no other options are available were also discussed and recognised.

The proposal to introduce fining for unauthorised absence was approved by a majority vote.

11 for, 3 against & 1 abstention. This will be reviewed in September 2020 following implementation in September 2019

The Attendance Policy will be updated accordingly.

It was noted that travel documents are also needed to be seen from a safeguarding point of view.

9. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE – including Ofsted inspection outcome

The Ofsted outcome has been read by all.

EGB noted that a review has been recommended by the LA however the Ofsted inspection was satisfactory. She advised that there would be no cost implications for an independent person to be brought in.

This was discussed in detail and it was agreed that Yasmin Umarji will be contacted to initiate a meeting with the independent reviewer who is a previous Chair of Governors elsewhere.

Following the review an action plan will be created by a working party. MA, EGB and DP volunteered to be involved in the working party.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Teaching & Learning 16.11.18 & 14.12.18

A verbal summary of the meeting content was given to Governors.

The minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Future meeting dates will be circulated via the website.

The next Teaching & Learning meeting date is Tuesday 26th February at 6pm.

11. GOVERNOR VISITS/TRAINING

The new SGS training programme for the Spring term was noted by EGB.

She part noted the course on effective questioning which is planned.

Details of The Governor Forum attended by DP along with the Headteachers perf management course were circulated.

BD visited KS1 on 3/01 and looked at the diff between girls and boys.

The excellent teaching seen was noted.

Her involvement in the day was explained.

NR and BD attended the Governor Induction training in Bradford.

12. GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT

Joanne Holmes left the meeting.

Joanne's current position in school was explained by JW.

It was unanimously agreed that Joanne Holmes be appointed as a Co-opted Governor.

Proposed: AS Seconded: MA

Joanne returned to the meeting.

All were introduced were introduced and the committee structure was explained by EBG and AS.

EBG advised of someone else who has expressed an interest in becoming a Governor and he will be invited to next GB meeting.

13. PERMANENT EXCLUSION OUTCOME

EBG explained that the permanent exclusion had been reviewed by an independent panel and had been returned to the GB for review.

The offer by the committee to reinstate the pupil was noted however the child has not returned to the school.

Potential training issues on exclusions and disciplinaries were discussed.

14. RESIDENTIAL VISITS

The residential trips were approved in agenda item 7.

15. POLICIES

None for this meeting.

AS advised that Behaviour and the Safeguarding policies are due to be reviewed and it was agreed that a policy schedule will be created and reviewed.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None for this meeting.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Monday 4th March 2019 at 6.00pm

EBG thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.30pm

Action Points

Action Number	By Whom	Action	Timescale
1	JW	Multiple vulnerability data	Next meeting
2	Clerk	Create action log	ASAP
3	Clerk	Growth Mindset – agenda item at T & L meeting.	Next meeting
4	Clerk	T & L meeting dates to be placed on website	ASAP
5	Clerk	Governor training Prospectus to be emailed to all.	ASAP
6	Chair	Policy review schedule to be created	ASAP