

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**GREENFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Ellesborough Close, South Oxhey, Watford WD19 6QH

**MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2017, 6.00PM**

Attendance:

**HEADTEACHER**

Helen Cook

**LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR (1):**

Emma Maitland-Gray, *Vice Chair*

**PARENT GOVERNORS (3):**

Nick Paul

Katie Tarrant

Jose Tamayo

**STAFF GOVERNORS (1):**

Kim May

**CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (4):**

~~Larry Bowerman~~

Michelle Cheetham

Carol Prior

David Ray, *Chair*

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (4):**

~~Lisa Hartley~~

Kate Shockley

Debbie Hartley

*Vacancy*

**OBSERVERS:**

John Burt, *Deputy Headteacher*

~~Joanne Evans, Deputy Headteacher~~

**CLERK:**

Liz Elgar

*Strikethrough denotes non-attendance*

**1. WELCOME / CONSIDER AND CONSENT TO ABSENCES**

**1.1 Apologies:** No apologies for absence were received

**2. DECLARATION BY GOVERNORS OF INTERESTS, PECUNIARY OR OTHERWISE, IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

**2.1** There were no declarations.

**3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

**3.1 Debbie Hartley**

**3.1.1** The Governing Body agreed for Debbie Hartley to become an Associate Member of Governing Body and Debbie accepted the role.

**3.1.2** The Chair agreed to arrange a DBS for Debbie and also obtain a reference from her current employer.

**ACTION: Chair**

*Michelle Cheetham arrived at this point*

### **3.2 Link Governor Roles**

- 3.2.1 The Chair asked governors to consider their current link roles in relation to the school's key areas for development as an Ofsted inspection could now be imminent.
- 3.2.2 The Headteacher agreed to arrange to meet with Carol Prior to discuss Early Years and with Nick Paul to discuss Maths.

**ACTION: Headteacher**

## **4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

- 4.1 **Safeguarding Working Party (Item 11.1):** It was noted that the correct name was the Safeguarding Working Party, and not the Child Protection Working Party.

*The minutes were otherwise agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair*

## **5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES**

### **5.1 Prospective governor from Northwood School (Item 5.2)**

- 5.1.1 The Chair reported that following his invitation, the Deputy Headteacher of Northwood School, Niall McManus, visited Greenfields on 17<sup>th</sup> November, and that he expressed enthusiasm about becoming involved with the Governing Body.
- 5.1.2 The Chair confirmed that Niall would attend the next full governing body meeting, to take place on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and he agreed to forward his contact details to the clerk.

**ACTION: Chair**

- 5.2 **Complaints Policy (Item 5.5):** The Headteacher confirmed that the school's Complaints Policy complied with the most up-to-date model Complaints Policy from Herts.

- 5.3 **Lighting (Item 7.5.2):** Emma Maitland-Gray reported that the Premises Manager at York House School, Jason, would be happy to assist in identifying options for improvements to the lighting at Greenfields.

- 5.4 **In-house training for governors (Item 8.1.2):** The Governing Body noted that the 'An Inspector Calls' training session would now take place on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018, not Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January (*see also Item 12.3*).

- 5.5 **Keeping Children Safe in Education (Item 10.1):** Those governors who had not previously done so gave the Chair their signed copies of Appendix 2 of the Department of Education "Keeping Children Safe in Education" document.

- 5.6 **Safeguarding Working Party (Item 11.3.2):** Emma Maitland-Gray reported that the Safeguarding Working Party had met once and would meet again on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November (*see also Item 13.1*).

- 5.7 **SEN Governor (Item 12.1):** Emma Maitland-Gray agreed to meet with Kate Shockley and the school's SEN team in order to plan the handover of the role of SEN Governor to Kate before the end of term, or in January 2018.

**ACTION: Emma Maitland-Gray; Kate Shockley**

**5.8 Governors' Cup (Item 12.5)**

5.8.1 The Headteacher agreed to ask staff to consider nominations for the Governors' Cup, to be presented on the last day of term.

5.8.2 Kim May agreed that staff would start submitting nominations on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**ACTION: Kim May**

*The Governing Body noted that all other points for action had been either fulfilled or would be covered within the agenda of this meeting*

**6. TO RECEIVE THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

*The Headteacher's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting*

*Hard copies were also circulated of the following documents:*

- Priority 4 – Improve attainment in Mathematics
- SDP Monitoring Calendar 2017-2018
- Nursery Admissions Criteria

**6.1 Nursery Admissions Criteria**

*The Headteacher talked through the Nursery Admissions Criteria 2018-19, which had been circulated prior to the meeting*

6.1.1 Emma Maitland-Gray asked if there was a requirement for children entering the Nursery to be toilet trained. The Headteacher replied that the Nursery advises that children are toilet trained however would not be able to state it as a condition of entry, as this would be discriminatory. The Chair added that Greenfields' policy on Nursery admissions was common with the other South Oxhey primary schools.

6.1.2 The Headteacher reported that information posters on the Nursery admissions process and deadline dates had been put up around the school and also in local public buildings such as libraries and doctor's surgeries.

6.1.3 Emma Maitland-Gray asked if it had been clarified to parents that the admissions procedures for Nursery and Reception were separate processes, admission into Reception is not automatic after Nursery. The Headteacher confirmed that the school contacts parents individually to ensure that they are aware.

6.1.4 The Nursery Admissions Criteria policy was ratified by the Governing Body and signed by the Chair.

**6.2 Herts for Learning MAT (Multi Academy Trust) and HCC's Offer to Schools**

6.2.1 The Headteacher explained that there appeared to be a slight change of emphasis and focus on forcing schools to become academies. Recognising this, Herts CC have made an offer to community schools to continue to provide support for a charge of £25 per pupil, versus the current charge of £15.85, the increase being largely due to the end of government funding.

6.2.2 Emma Maitland-Gray asked who within the school would be responsible for procuring support services if the school neither became an academy nor subscribed to the services provided by Herts for Learning. The Headteacher replied that this would constitute a full-time role however the school was in no position to afford a School Business Manager.

6.2.3 Recognising that there may not be sufficient opportunity to re-convene ahead of a decision deadline, the Governing Body agreed to the Headteacher's recommendation that

Greenfields opts to pay the charge of £25 per pupil per year to the Herts for Learning and agreed to support decisions made by the Headteacher and the Chair accordingly.

- 6.3 Camping:** Emma Maitland-Gray asked the Headteacher if the school would no longer be using Schools Force for its camping excursions. The Headteacher replied that she had decided that after this year's Year 6 had completed the award, the school would no longer use Schools Force. This decision is based on changes to their charging policy which adds 17.5% for afternoon sessions, making the scheme cost £7,800 per year. The school plans to run an in-house scheme allowing the children to gain similar experiences which would include the Y5 summer camp. EMG kindly offered York House as a venue.
- 6.4 Schools Direct Student teachers:** Emma Maitland-Gray asked for an update on how the student Schools Direct teacher at Greenfields was progressing. The Headteacher and Kim May both responded to say that the current student teacher had fed back that she was having a very positive experience at the school and would like to stay on if possible. The University of Hertfordshire mentor was extremely complimentary about the level and direction of mentoring that the school is offering and what a positive experience it was for the student.

## **7. EARLY YEARS STATUS**

### **7.1 Visits/observations**

- 7.1.1 Carol Prior reported that she had made two visits to Early Years since the previous meeting, one during the week beginning 13<sup>th</sup> November and one during the week beginning 20<sup>th</sup> November (*see also Item 12.1*) and that she was satisfied that areas for improvement as identified in the most recent Early Years Report were being addressed.
- 7.1.2 Carol reported how her lesson observations had focused on Independent Learning and Learning Through Play and that she had been "very impressed" by what she had seen.
- 7.1.3 In response to Carol's question as to whether external observation of Early Years lessons was taking place, the Headteacher confirmed that Early Years Advisors from Herts were also carrying out observations, and a return visit was expected in a few weeks.
- 7.2 The Headteacher explained that significant changes in staffing in Early Years over the last few years had made it difficult to establish and embed new practices. However Shelagh O'Shea, the Early Years Leader, has effectively taken the lead in implementing new strategies and Mrs Luts is now job sharing with Mrs Muresan in Reception.

## **8. GIAS (Getting Information about Schools)**

*A screenshot of Greenfields' GIAS entry was circulated prior to the meeting*

- 8.1 The Chair reported that the information website Edubase had been replaced by 'GIAS', or "Getting Information about Schools," where Governors' names now appear, along with their appointment and terms of office, however no personal or contact information is included.

- 9. GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)** *Information document circulated prior to meeting*

- 9.1 The Chair reported that new legislation in relation to data protection would require a member of staff or a governor to take the role of a Data Protection Officer.
- 9.2 The Chair pointed out that an eighth field had been added to the Compliance Tracker, headed "Data Protection", which listed the regulatory requirements, many of which are essentially the same as in the existing Data Protection Act
- 9.3 The Chair reported that the GDPR would become law in May 2018, therefore the Governing Body agreed that it should be an item on the agenda of the meeting to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018.  
**ACTION: Clerk [for agenda]**

## 10. REPORTBACK ON FINANCE

*The Governing Body was also referred to the 'Finance' section in the Headteacher's Report*

### 10.1 Staffing

- 10.1.1 The Headteacher reported that staff turnover and an increased number of job shares were putting a strain on the school budget and that costs must be reined in where possible to avoid having to use the School Fund.
- 10.1.2 The Headteacher explained that two members of staff had not been accounted for in the Revised Forecast and that Herts Finance had not been able to give a clear answer on how this has happened. She expressed her hope that it might transpire to be a double-entry made in error.
- 10.1.3 Emma Maitland-Gray asked the Headteacher how the Governing Body could be more than a "Critical Friend" to her and to support her in managing the school's finances. The Headteacher replied that it would be helpful if at least one governor could attend the next visit from Herts Finance on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017 in the morning. The Chair and Nick Paul agreed to attend and report back to the governing body.  
**ACTION: Chair; Nick Paul**
- 10.1.4 The Headteacher agreed to request additional funding for provision to be put in place for children with SEN on roll at Greenfields who are waiting to be allocated places at special schools, even those who do not have ECHPs. In the meantime she wished it to be noted that the SENCO, Nicola Weller, was doing "a marvellous job" of trying to ensure that the variety of needs of all the children are met alongside liaising with parents and arranging meetings.  
**ACTION: Headteacher**

## 11. REPORTBACK ON PREMISES (HEATING/WINDOWS/LIGHTING/FIRE PROTECTION)

- 11.1 **Heating:** The Chair reported that the bid for Capital Funding to replace the boiler and heating system had been submitted and registered. He explained that he would not expect the bid to be accepted within 1-2 years however it will now stay in the bidding system and be re-considered at regular intervals.
- 11.2 **Windows and doors**
  - 11.2.1 The Chair reported that Three Rivers District Council had given preliminary Listed Building Consent for the school's windows and doors to be replaced. He explained that the consent was currently only "preliminary" as the school had not submitted a "detailed design."

11.2.2 The Chair then reported that Herts CC had written to him to say that, as they recognised the urgency of replacing the windows and doors from a health and safety point of view, they would be willing to fund the development of a detailed design. It was therefore a point for action to consult with contractors in order to produce a detailed design for submission to Three Rivers DC to achieve full Listed Building Consent, and to obtain a more accurate cost estimate by putting the work out for tender. If achieved by the deadline for bids in October 2018, this would put the school in a stronger position to be awarded Capital Funding in the 2018-19 bid cycle.

11.2.3 The Chair agreed to carry out all necessary actions and report back.

**ACTION: Chair**

### **11.3 Lighting**

11.3.1 The Chair reported that throughout December and January the school was trialling LED lights with infra-red detectors which, when they dim due to lack of activity in the room, only use 3 watts of power.

11.3.2 The Chair explained that if this lighting system was found to be adequate for the school's needs, the existing 70 watt fluorescent tubes could be selectively replaced by LED bulbs, which the caretaker could install without the need for an electrician. The Chair proposed to develop an upgrading plan for further consideration by the GB. The payback is estimated at a little over one year.

**ACTION: Chair**

### **11.4 Fire protection**

11.4.1 John Burt reported that a fire drill at the school was carried out successfully two weeks ago, where, despite two doors being blocked, the building was evacuated in 45 seconds and all were assembled at the designated point outside within 3.5 minutes. He added that this was also an impressive achievement considering there were new staff at the school and an assembly had been taking place at the time.

11.4.2 There was some discussion about the Nursery building as its fire alarm system is separate from the main school. This system needs to be checked independently and Mr Burt and the Chair will undertake to do this, including training the nursery staff in its use.

**ACTION: Chair; John Burt**

11.4.3 The Headteacher clarified that it would be the responsibility of the SLT to make the Nursery aware of an emergency situation occurring elsewhere on the school premises and John Burt had done this previously. Currently the nursery are alerted to any drills by the staff and children passing to assemble on the infant playground.

**11.5 Lockdown:** Katie Tarrant asked if there had been a practice for a lockdown situation and the Headteacher replied that the school had experienced two real-life lockdown situations quite recently, all of which had been managed successfully and swiftly.

### **11.6 Security of School Office/Entrance**

11.6.1 Michelle Cheetham asked if there had been any further developments regarding alterations to the building to increase the security of the main entrance. The Chair replied that no capital funding would be made available by HCC to extend the school building. Therefore modifying the school office as described in the minutes of the last meeting and installing new doors would be the only feasible way to improve security at the entrance.

11.6.2 The Chair underlined that current HCC priorities regarding capital expenditure on its school buildings are replacing windows, doors, boilers and roofs, but not on building work specifically to improve security. With the current budget issues, which are likely to become

more acute, it is unlikely that the school will be able to raise sufficient funds to complete the proposed alterations in the near future.

- 11.7 Pathway alongside Reception playground:** The Headteacher reported that the pathway alongside the Reception playground had been re-laid, following an adult having tripped on it, however the unforeseen cost of £3,500 had been a further strain on the school's budget.

## **12. REPORTBACK ON GOVERNORS' TRAINING AND VISITS TO THE SCHOOL**

- 12.1** Both Carol Prior and the Chair reported that they had visited the school since the previous full governing body meeting (*see also Item 7.1*).
- 12.2** The Chair encouraged all governors to attend Christmas events taking place at the school.
- 12.3** The preparation for Ofsted training session 'An Inspector Calls' was scheduled to take place for all governors straight after the next full governing body meeting on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January (*see also Item 5.4*).
- 12.4** Michelle Cheetham agreed to arrange her induction training and Safer Recruitment training.  
**ACTION: Michelle Cheetham**

## **13. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE**

- 13.1** Emma Maitland-Gray: reported that the Safeguarding Working Party was now meeting regularly (*see also Item 5.6*) however certain content of the meetings could not be reported on in a non-confidential forum.
- 13.2 Compliance Tracker**
- 13.2.1** The Chair circulated hard copies of an updated Compliance Tracker, which Emma Maitland-Gray explained the Safeguarding Working Party was currently working through.
- 13.2.2** Emma Maitland-Gray asked whether there was a deadline for fulfilling all sections of the Compliance Tracker. The Headteacher explained that the Compliance Tracker was a tool and not a statutory requirement and that it is a live document that is monitored and updated on an ongoing basis and therefore could never be "completed."
- 13.2.3** Emma Maitland-Gray asked for clarification as to whether an item on the Compliance Tracker reached "green" status when all required documentation or certificates had been seen. The Chair confirmed that this was the intent.
- 13.3** Emma Maitland-Gray reported that she had added Michelle Cheetham as a member of the Safeguarding Working Party due to her experience as a doctor in a hospital A and E department.
- 13.4** Emma Maitland-Gray reminded all governors to pass on any concerns they had relating to safeguarding to the Headteacher, as reflected in the school's Child Protection Policy and suite of safeguarding policies.

## **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **14.1 Carol Prior**

- 14.1.1 The Chair announced that this would be the last meeting that Carol Prior would attend as a Governor, as she was resigning due to personal commitments. The Chair and all governors thanked Carol for her input and dedication during her years as a governor at Greenfields.
- 14.1.2 The Headteacher invited Carol to become an Associate Member of the Governing Body with a focus on Early Years, without any requirement to attend meetings. Carol agreed to consider this.

## **15. DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2018**

### **Spring term**

- Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018
- Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018

### **Summer term**

- Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018
- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018

*The Chair thanked all for attending and brought the meeting to a close at 7.50pm*

**Agreed as an accurate record of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017, on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**Signed:**

## **POST-MEETING ADDENDUM**

The following HR policies and procedures were reviewed and signed-off by the Headteacher and Chair on 04-12-17:

- Health and Attendance Policy and Procedure for Schools (HfL)
- “Whistleblowing” Policy and Procedure for Schools (HfL)
- Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling at Work Policy for Schools (HfL)
- Grievance Procedure for Schools (HfL)
- Code of Conduct for Employees in School (HfL)
- Leave of Absence Policy for Schools (HfL)
- Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedure for Schools (HfL)
- Anti-Bribery Policy for Schools (HCC)