

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

GREENFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ellesborough Close, South Oxhey, Watford WD19 6QH

MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

WEDNESDAY 12TH JULY 2017, 6.00PM

Attendance:

HEADTEACHER

Helen Cook

LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR (1):

~~Emma Maitland-Gray, Vice Chair~~

PARENT GOVERNORS (3):

~~Manish Patel~~

Nick Paul

Katie Tarrant

STAFF GOVERNORS (1):

~~Kim May~~

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (4):

Larry Bowerman

~~Michelle Cheetham~~

Carol Prior

David Ray, *Chair*

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

~~Lisa Hartley~~

~~Kate Shockley~~

Vacancy

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 Welcome

1.1.1 Prospective Parent Governor Jose Tamayo was welcomed to the meeting.

1.1.2 The Governing Body noted that, as a Parent Governor election had recently been held according to due procedure with no nominations forthcoming, Jose could be considered for the role should he accept.

1.2 Apologies: Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Emma Maitland-Gray, Kate Shockley and Lisa Hartley.

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

2.1 There were no declarations.

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND GOVERNOR VACANCIES

3.1 Associate Members

- 3.1.1 It was reported that Ian McGowan had resigned as Associate Member of the Governing Body due to increased work commitments.
- 3.1.2 It was noted that Ricky Turner had now left the area and was no longer an Associate Member of the Governing Body.
- 3.1.3 The Chair asked governors to consider any suitable prospective Associate Members of the Governing Body that they might know (now that there were two vacancies for Associate Members.) particularly to fill any gaps that are identified through the Governors' skills audit.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3RD MAY 2017

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

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES

5.1 Governors' Award (Item 5.3)

- 5.1.1 The Chair reported that the Governors' Award cup had been purchased and it was passed around for all present to look at.
- 5.1.2 The Chair explained that all staff had been able to make nominations for the winner of the award and had to give reasons, and most nominations had now been received.

5.2 Compliance Tracker (Item 5.4)

- 5.2.1 The Headteacher reported that she had been unable to find the Compliance Tracker spreadsheet online.
- 5.2.2 The Chair agreed to look for it also and to contact Herts Governance if unable to find it.
ACTION: Chair

5.3 Multi Academy Trust – Northwood School (Item 5.6)

- 5.3.1 The Headteacher confirmed to the Governing Body that she had decided not to pursue joining Northwood School in a multi academy trust.
- 5.3.2 The Headteacher reported that she had asked the Headteacher at Northwood School to invite their staff to become governors or Associate Members at Greenfields however to no response yet. The Chair agreed to put this invitation in writing to the Headteacher at Northwood School.
ACTION: Chair

- 5.4 **Electronic payment system (Item 5.7):** The Headteacher reported that the electronic payments system 'Schoolcomms' would be in place by September. A training session for office staff is to take place on 7th September.

- 5.5 **Annual Energy Survey (Item 5.8):** David Ray explained that the ageing boiler and single glazed windows were probably the biggest factors affecting the school's energy consumption / efficiency.

- 5.6 Keeping Children Safe in Education (Item 5.9):** The Headteacher emphasised the importance of governors being familiar with this document and agreed to hold a 10 minute session at the beginning of the next full governing body meeting to go through its key points.
ACTION: Clerk [for agenda]
- 5.7 School Office (Item 5.10):** The Chair reported that the entry keypad code had been changed and that staff had been made aware to challenge anyone in the building who did not appear familiar.
- 5.8 Funding:** David Ray circulated the Schools Funding Mind Map for information and requested that governors to look at it and consider which funding sources the school could access.
- 5.9 Hints and Tips for Governors' Visits to the School (Item 8.1):** Carol Prior noted that compiling a list of Hints and Tips remained a point for action.
ACTION: Carol Prior
- 5.10 Fire drill with blockage (Item 9.4):** John Burt reported that although there had not yet been an appropriate time to hold a fire drill with blockage, and in answer to the Chair's question as to whether the Fire Risk Assessment up to date, he assured governors that it was.

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

Circulated prior to the meeting

- 6.1 Staffing:** The Headteacher reported that all new appointments should be confirmed by the end of the summer term.
- 6.2 30 Hours Free Childcare:** The Headteacher explained that eligible parents were not able to register their children for 30 hours' free childcare until the day of their third birthday, which caused interim funding discrepancies that childcarers were expected to cover themselves, a situation they were understandably unhappy about.
- 6.3 2017 Headline Attainment Figures**
Joanne Evans circulated and talked through this document
- 6.3.1** The Headteacher reported that all children with EAL (English as an Additional Language) made Expected Progress in SPAG (Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation), which she felt demonstrated the school's success in teaching the technicalities of the English language.
- 6.3.2** The Headteacher explained that the school was aware of the need to keep working to improve its below national average Maths score and noted that children whose arithmetic and times tables recall were strong, performed well.
- 6.3.3** Nick Paul requested clarification on the apparent inconsistency between the averages and percentages. Joanne Evans and John Burt explained that some children had attained borderline marks, only just missing out on higher ones. Joanne Evans also explained that the national averages scores had increased.
- 6.3.4** The Chair asked what could be done differently to improve results. The Headteacher explained that although the children were well-prepared for exam and test conditions, Mr Pople would be focusing on the following in order to improve their performance:

- Quick recall of times tables and measurements, which allow children to use time more efficiently in a test situation
 - Fractions, as these feature often in the tests
 - “Number awareness”, i.e. the ability to distinguish between smaller and larger numbers
 - Literacy, for a clear understanding of the reasoning questions (EAL children struggle more with this element)
- 6.3.5 The Chair asked whether the performance of next year’s cohort was expected to be stronger than that of this year. Joanne Evans replied that although she expected that it would be stronger overall, there remained a significant proportion who would struggle. The Headteacher added that not only were expected levels now higher, there were certain children, particularly those with SEN, for whom they would always be difficult to reach in any case.

7. EARLY YEARS: POINTS FOR ACTION FROM REPORTS (REVIEW AND MODERATION)

The Headteacher also referred governors to Priority 3 in the Headteacher’s Report

- 7.1** The Headteacher informed the governing body that Herts for Learning Teaching and Learning Advisor Sue Tanton had complimented the school on the quality and accuracy of its assessments.
- 7.2** The Headteacher reported that certain points for action identified within the reports had already been raised in the Early Years Review and were being addressed.
- 7.3** David Ray asked whether staffing changes and shortages had had an adverse impact on the children. The Headteacher replied that the children appeared to have adapted well to staff changes, the crucial factor being that staff are working together well.

8. POINTS FOR ACTION IDENTIFIED IN APRIL 2017 JARV REPORT

- 8.1 Re-moderation of data:** Joanne Evans reported that she had spent time re-moderating data to make it more accurate.
- 8.2 Assessment feedback and assessment cycle:** The Headteacher reported that the Senior Leadership Team would look again at assessment feedback and work on the assessment cycle in staff meetings from the autumn.
- 8.3 Induction:** John Burt reported that he had drafted a new Induction Policy, which he was willing to trial from September, especially as there would be new members of staff in every team.
- 8.4 Herts Improvement Partner:** Headteacher reported that the school’s new Herts Improvement Partner from the autumn would be Sarah Hinckley.

9. REPORTBACK ON FINANCE AND PREMISES

- 9.1 ICT:** In response to the Chair’s request for an update on ICT resources, Joanne Evans reported that she had ordered 15 new laptops and a new interactive TV in Reception and

that two teacher computers were being replaced, which would eventually replace whiteboards.

9.2 Modifying the School Office and Main Entry

- 9.2.1 The Chair reported that he had written to James Ottery, explaining the situation and complications regarding modifying the School's main entry to a more secure design. James Ottery had responded and his response letter had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting, in which he had stated that he had no funding available for such modifications and that, in his opinion, the risks could be managed while the entry remained as it is.
- 9.2.2 The Chair reported that he had then contacted the Building Management team at Herts, as advised by James Ottery, and they had deemed that security modifications were not normally considered to be a high priority, unlike replacing or maintaining roofs, boilers and windows.
- 9.2.3 The Chair concluded that all avenues had been exhausted for the time being regarding the main entry, however next year modifications would be possible to the School Office, which would also provide some improvement to entry security.

9.3 School boiler

- 9.3.1 The Chair reported that he had been informed that the school's boiler had been installed in 1978 and that although it had been reliable thus far, its age made it a potential liability due to it being obsolete and difficult to repair in the event of a major failure. He reported that he would bid for Capital Funding to replace the boiler, piping and associated equipment in October.
- 9.3.2 The Chair had been made aware that there are other ageing boilers in Herts schools however he explained that entering into the Capital Funding bidding system, where bids were invited three times per year, could only be worthwhile and that the bids remained in the system for each subsequent bid award.
- 9.3.3 The Chair had already obtained quotations for the necessary engineering survey report for the funding bid, which would incur a cost, however this was a mandatory requirement for the bid process.

9.4 Windows

- 9.4.1 The Chair explained that replacing the windows was likely to be more complicated than replacing the boiler, as they were protected by the English Heritage grade II listed building status of the school. Work on the windows could be phased however, unlike with the boiler.
- 9.4.2 The Chair reported that he had written to the Building Management team at Herts regarding the school's deteriorating window frames and doors, which are a safety hazard and inefficient for energy consumption. The Building Management team referred the Chair to Bob Chapman at Herts Development Services in the first instance for advice on how to proceed with obtaining the necessary permissions and surveys in order to submit another capital bid to Herts CC.
- 9.4.3 The Chair explained that a Five Year School Asset Management Plan must be submitted with a Capital Funding bid and he circulated and talked through one that he had drafted.

9.5 Bio-dome

- 9.5.1 The Headteacher reported that the Bio-dome was now installed and operating and that the children had been learning how to care for plants.
- 9.5.2 John Burt reported that some rainwater had seeped into the dome, which had had to be re-sealed as a result.

- 9.5.3 The Chair suggested looking into forming links with Carpenders Park Garden Centre and/or Eastbury Horticultural Society so that they could be involved with the Bio-dome and possibly provide learning resources or visit the school.

ACTION: Chair

10. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Headteacher had circulated the Social Media Policy prior to the meeting

10.1 Confidentiality and Social Media

- 10.1.1 The Chair suggested adding a section about confidentiality and social media to the existing Complaints Policy.
- 10.1.2 The Headteacher advised that Herts be consulted for guidance on this, particularly regarding sanctions if confidentiality is broken. She agreed to investigate this during the summer and also check if the school's Complaints Policy was up to date according to the latest Herts model.

ACTION: Headteacher

11. REPORTBACK ON GOVERNORS' TRAINING AND VISITS TO THE SCHOOL

- 11.1 **Governor Day, 25th May:** All who attended Governor Day on 25th May had given very positive feedback and agreed that it had been a success.

11.2 Skills Audit

- 11.2.1 The Chair circulated copies of the Governor Day report and the Governing Body Skills Audit carried out at Governor Day.
- 11.2.2 The Chair talked through the Skills Audit, on which he had highlighted the following lower-scoring areas:
- Financial planning/management (e.g. as part of your job)
 - Experience of procurement/purchasing
 - Experience of premises and facilities management
 - Links with local businesses

Those governors who were unable to attend Governors' Day were asked to complete the same skills audit form which the Chair would then incorporate into the overall scores

- 11.3 **Choir:** Larry Bowerman reported that he had been very impressed when he had recently heard the school choir (Years 4, 5 and 6) rehearse at All Saints' and at a concert event.
- 11.4 **Governors' Action Plan:** The Chair circulated and talked through the document Governors' Action Plan.

12. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

- 12.1 **Safeguarding Working Party:** The Chair highlighted within the Governors' Action Plan (*See Item 12.1*) the forming of a Safeguarding Working Party, as Emma Maitland-Gray was no longer able to carry out the role of Safeguarding Governor alone.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Newsletter *A draft's of the Chair's first newsletter had been circulated prior to the meeting*

13.1.1 Governors gave positive feedback on the format and content of the letter and did not think that revisions were necessary to the wording but that the formatting could be improved, and appropriate photos added, e.g. of the Governors' Cup winner.

13.1.2 The Chair agreed to update the newsletter as necessary in time for it to be circulated in September.

ACTION: Chair

13.2 Spot Check Survey Analysis, March – April 2017

13.2.1 The Headteacher circulated copies of the Spot Check Survey Analysis, March – April 2017.

13.2.2 The Chair asked if there were any particular issues arising from the survey. The Headteacher replied that parents had requested more private time with teachers however she believed it important to develop the children's reflection on their own learning, which was part of the school philosophy and its "Learning Conversation" interaction with parents, who have more access to teachers than before. She added that there was also the need to encourage children to ask for help when necessary and for parents to work with their children and teachers.

14. DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2017 - 2018

Autumn term

- Thursday 21st September 2017
- Wednesday 22nd November 2017

Spring term

- Wednesday 17th January 2018
- Wednesday 14th March 2018

Summer term

- Wednesday 9th May 2018
- Wednesday 11th July 2018

The Chair thanked all for attending and brought the meeting to a close at 8.15pm

Agreed as an accurate record of the meeting held on 12th July 2017, on 21st September 2017

Signed: