

**ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, KENILWORTH**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY**

**HELD ON TUESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2014 AT 7.00PM**

Present: Mr T Martin, Mr D Barrow, Rev A Attwood, Mrs A Brough, Mrs H Brown, Mrs T Coopey, Mrs S Darlington, Mr W Harris, Mrs S Kettle and Ms R Killian

In Attendance: Mrs C Weir (Clerk to Governors)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs A Derrick, Mr C Rollason and Mr J Whitehouse. No conflicts of interest were declared for the meeting.

**2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2014**

The minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Body held on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2014 were approved and signed as a true record.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**Governor Monitoring Schedule**

Mr Barrow confirmed that Governors had been allocated to specific year groups for monitoring purposes, and that a schedule of monitoring activities had been circulated. Governors have now signed up to the Autumn term monitoring events and these are underway.

**4. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT FOR THE AUTUMN 2014 TERM**

The Head Teacher's Report for the Autumn 2014 Term had been previously circulated to Governors. Mr Barrow presented a summary of the key points.

Mr Barrow began by noting an omission to the Staffing Structure, in that Mrs Carol Solloway provides PPA cover for Nursery. Moving on to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) pupil data, Mr Barrow explained that the SEND pupils at St John's had now been placed into the revised categories introduced in the new code of practice. Under parental concerns, Mr Barrow drew Governors' attention to the six complaints received about bullying. He explained that most of these related to friendship issues and five had been resolved and closed. The remaining case concerns a family that is moving under child protection, and for this reason has been kept as an ongoing issue. Mrs Coopey asked whether there were any trends emerging from the complaints: Mr

Barrow responded that there were no obvious trends, although the majority related to friendship issues they were all in different year groups. Mr Martin requested that in future the data on parental complaints be presented so as to include the number of resolved and open complaints in each category, and Mr Barrow undertook to do this.

Mr Barrow then went through the pupil progress data for the first half of the Autumn 2014 term. For Nursery, three sets of data were presented, according to when the children had started. By this point in the year the expectation is for the children to be Developing or Secure in the 30-50 month band. For those children who started Nursery in January 2014, and who therefore have had the benefit of an additional two terms in Nursery, all are at or above the age related expectation in all areas except Writing. Mr Barrow explained that writing and mark making is being given a high profile in Nursery. The April 2014 intake is mostly at or below age related expectations, but Mr Barrow did not feel that this was a major concern. Writing and Exploring & Using Media & Materials are the areas where a higher number of children have not reached age related expectations. The September 2014 intake has more children below age related expectations, with the highest number being below in the Reading and Being Imaginative categories. Mr Barrow explained that this was because they had had limited exposure to these areas having only been in Nursery for half a term, and he is confident that this will improve. Rev Attwood asked how this Nursery cohort compares to previous years: Mr Barrow stated that typically children entering Nursery are below age related expectations, especially in writing, so the performance of this year's cohort was not unusual.

In Reception, the expectation is that pupils should be Beginning or Developing in the 40-60 month band by the Autumn half term. All of the children are below or at age related expectations, with Shape, Space & Measures, People & Communities, The World, and Being Imaginative being the areas with the greatest proportion of pupils not achieving age related expectations. Mr Barrow explained that in Shape, Space & Measures the children had had some exposure but had not completed the required areas, therefore could not be assessed as being secure in their learning. People & Communities and The World were areas which had not been covered in the first half term but would be in the second. A lot of work is going in to developing the Being Imaginative area, with children having more exposure and different learning opportunities. Mrs Brown asked whether there was a noticeable difference in Reception between those children who had attended the St John's Nursery and those who had joined from other settings. Mr Barrow responded that there was a noticeable difference especially with those children who had previously attended private day care, as private day care does not provide as structured a curriculum as a nursery class within a school. Mr Martin asked whether this would be exacerbated by the change in OFSTED assessment criteria, whereby private

day care providers are no longer assessed on the impact of their provision on children's learning and development. Mr Barrow stated that he felt it would.

Mr Barrow then presented the pupil progress data for Key Stages 1 and 2. He explained that the first round of pupil progress meetings had been held, which had aimed to check that all necessary interventions were in place, and that the children were making progress. The main concern is one Year 2 class, whose attainment had fallen short of the expected level last year and therefore need to make accelerated progress this year in order to catch up. Writing is also a concern across the school, and lots of initiatives are planned for the spring term. Mr Barrow expressed his confidence that progress in writing will improve. Staff are looking closely at the curriculum and what children are being asked to do, for example the curriculum requires children to write across a range of genres, however this is not appropriate in Key Stage 1 until the children are confident in the basics of writing. New initiatives are planned which will help to develop the children's confidence, accuracy and stamina in writing.

Actions for each year groups in reading, writing and maths have been clearly identified. Mrs Coopey noted that many of the actions are directed at the children with SEND: Mr Barrow confirmed that much of the underachievement was amongst the SEND pupils, and whilst interventions are having a benefit the measurable steps are smaller amongst these children. Mrs Brown noted that daily guided reading was a key action but that guided reading is a difficult technique for staff to master, and asked whether training for staff was being provided. Mr Barrow confirmed that mentoring was in place for the NQTs, which would provide support in guided reading, and also a workshop on reading inference had been held for Teaching Assistants, which could be rolled out to teaching staff.

Mr Barrow went on to explain that the concerns over progress in writing had led to writing being included as a new priority in the Learning Improvement Plan, and that the details were attached to his Head Teachers report. Actions identified in the Learning Improvement Plan are: children having the opportunity to write every day; more opportunities to write for a purpose; whole school theme days linked to writing; pupils being secure in basic writing knowledge and skills; regular homework to support writing, including a homework project to be completed over half term; ensuring that texts used to support the curriculum are inspiring; quality writing interventions; ensuring children understand what is expected and have clear targets; and developing a love of writing and raising the profile of writing within the school, including the introduction of draft and published writing books to give pupils more freedom in their writing.

Mr Martin noted that the number of NQTs on the staff this year was a significant commitment, and asked how Mr Barrow felt they were getting on. Mr Barrow

confirmed that the staff includes five NQTs, and generally they are doing well. Most are proactive, positive and receptive to feedback. One is receiving support to improve their behaviour management skills, and another is proving less willing to take feedback on board and is being monitored, but overall Mr Barrow was pleased. Rev Atwood asked whether the staff were integrating well, given the number of changes in staff this year. Mr Barrow stated that he felt the staff were integrating well, and that the NQTs were supporting each other. Mrs Darlington added that the NQTs were not just going to their mentor for advice but were seeking support from the wider team.

## **5. RECONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

Mr Martin reminded Governors that under recent legislation all Governing Bodies of Local Authority maintained schools are required to reconstitute under the September 2012 regulations by September 2015. At the September 2014 meeting of the Full Governing Body Mr Barrow, Mr Martin and Mrs Weir were actioned to develop a recommendation on reconstitution. A paper setting out the proposals put forward by Mr Barrow, Mr Martin and Mrs Weir had been previously circulated to Governors, together with a draft Instrument of Governance. Mrs Coopey asked why it was proposed to reduce the number of parent governors from the current five to two. Mrs Weir replied that under the September 2012 regulations a minimum of two parent governors were required; however there was nothing to prevent additional parents being appointed as co-opted governors. The advantage of having parents as co-opted governors rather than parent governors is that whilst parent governors are elected by the parent body, co-opted governors could be appointed by the Governing Body based on the skills they could contribute. Governors noted that parents might be more prepared to get involved if they did not have to go through the election process.

Governors approved the draft Instrument of Governance and the proposed allocation of existing governors to the new categories, subject to the date that the order was made by Warwickshire County Council being corrected in the Instrument.

## **6. POLICIES**

### **Homework Policy**

The previous draft of the Homework Policy had been updated by Mrs Darlington to reflect the new resources acquired by the school, and a revised draft had been circulated to governors. Mrs Brown commented that the policy implied that the number of homework tasks set would depend on pupils' ability, and that this might be questioned by parents. It was agreed that the reference to ability would be removed. Mrs Brown also noted that spelling tests in Key Stage 1 are held on a Monday rather than Wednesday as stated in the policy: Mrs Darlington undertook to correct this.

Governors approved the Homework Policy subject to the amendments details above.

### **Admissions and Appeals Policy**

Mr Barrow, Mr Whitehouse and Mrs Weir had redrafted the Admissions and Appeals Policy in line with the Local Authority admissions guidance. Mr Barrow explained that the oversubscription criteria for both Nursery and school admissions had been taken from the Local Authority documents and therefore there should be no inconsistencies. Mrs Coopey asked what would happen to applicants for Nursery when the waiting list for their requested term of entry had been closed: Mr Barrow confirmed that, if a Nursery place was still required, they would be considered for the next term's intake as part of that group of admissions.

Governors approved the Admissions and Appeals Policy.

## **7. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **Performance and Standards Committee**

Minutes of the Performance and Standards Committee meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November are attached to these minutes. Mrs Coopey explained that the meeting had considered two main topics: the pupil progress data for the first half of the Autumn term, which had been summarised by Mr Barrow in his Head Teacher's Report, and Assessment without Levels. At the meeting Mr Barrow had outlined his strategy to move from the current system of assessment levels to assessment without levels by September 2015, and Governors supported his approach. Mr Barrow noted that his proposals were consistent with other schools in Kenilworth. The meeting had also considered progress in implementing the new SEND code of practice, and Mrs Coopey informed Governors that she would be meeting with Mrs Eastham to discuss SEND shortly.

### **Resources Committee**

The minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014 are attached to these minutes. Mr Martin noted that an overspend is forecast for the current financial year, but that the reasons for this had been clearly explained by Mr Barrow in the meeting. Future years are forecast to have a surplus due to additional funding being made available to Warwickshire schools. Mr Barrow reiterated that the overspend in the current year is mainly due to the costs of supporting the high profile SEND pupils which are not covered by the additional funding for those pupils, and the additional costs for year groups with pupil numbers over 30 only being met by the Local Authority during Key Stage 1.

Mr Barrow informed Governors that the school had been advised by the LA that Reception 2014 admissions would be over 40, whereas in reality they were 32. The LA

have funded an additional teacher this year but have stated that no additional funding will be available for future years, and therefore the school will have to manage this situation. In light of this situation, the Resources Committee had recommended that the Full Governing Body consider issuing a statement that Governors are not minded to agree to future requests from the LA to accommodate additional Reception children without an appropriate guarantee on funding. Mrs Coopey noted that June Maw, Interim Service Manager School Organisation and Planning, had addressed the recent Patch meeting, and suggested that Governors could try to meet with her to discuss what had happened and how it could be avoided in future. Governors agreed that an informal approach to making the Local Authority aware of St John's position was preferable, and Mrs Coopey volunteered to liaise with Mr Whitehouse regarding approaching the Local Authority.

***Action: Seek a meeting with the Local Authority to discuss future requests to admit over the school's stated Pupil Admissions Number (Mrs Coopey and Mr Whitehouse)***

Mr Martin asked whether there would be any consequences arising from the overspend this year. Mr Barrow explained that overspends in excess of £10,000 require permission from the Local Authority, but as Mr Barrow had been liaising closely with the LA throughout the year they were fully appraised of the situation.

### **Out of School Club Working Group**

The notes of the meeting of the Out of School Club Working Group held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October had been previously circulated, and the Financial Report as at the end of October was circulated during the meeting. Mr Martin stated that a new invoicing system had been developed and implemented, and financial administration procedures had been compiled. Governors expressed their thanks to Mrs Weir for her work on streamlining the administration. Mr Martin highlighted that the financial position of the club was looking positive, with total funds at the end of October of around £26k. The performance indicators show that the average daily income has increased significantly since September 2014, due to a higher number of children attending the Club. Mr Barrow is consulting with the OOSC staff and the children on how best to invest the surplus funds for the benefit of the club and children. Mr Martin went on to note that parental feedback on the Club has been positive, especially the flexibility of service provision.

*Mr Barrow left the room*

## **8. HEAD TEACHER'S PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

*Mr Barrow rejoined the meeting*

## **9. APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES OF THE OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB**

Mr Martin reminded Governors that they were requested to take on the roles of Director of the Out of School Club limited company and Trustee of the charity. Governors who had joined the Governing Body in the last couple of years had not yet been appointed to these roles.

Mr Craig Rollason, Mrs Anne Brough, Mrs Rachel Killian, Mrs Antonia Derrick, Mrs Helen Brown and Mrs Sally Darlington were duly appointed as Directors of the Out of School Club limited company and Trustees of the charity. These Governors were requested to return their appointment form to Mrs Weir as soon as possible, so that the necessary updates to the Companies House and Charity Commission records could be made.

***Action: Complete and return Appointment of Director form (Mr Rollason, Mrs Brough, Mrs Killian, Mrs Derrick, Mrs Brown and Mrs Darlington)***

## **10. AUTHORISATION OF DEBIT CARD ON OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB ACCOUNT**

Mrs Weir explained that as a consequence of the recent change of authorised signatories on the Out of School Club bank account, the debit card had been cancelled. The debit card is used by the OOSC staff to make small purchases such as groceries, and therefore a replacement card was required.

Governors approved the application for a debit card on the Out of School Club bank account, and recognised that the card will be issued in the name of a single signatory although the signing arrangements on the account requires two signatures.

## **11. FEEDBACK FROM PATCH MEETING**

Mrs Killian and Mrs Coopey had attended the Central Area Patch Meeting held in October. Two key areas were covered at the meeting. Firstly there had been a presentation on future pupil numbers and demographics within Warwickshire, which indicated that the key area of pressure is expected to be North Warwickshire. Central Warwickshire is not forecast to be a particular concern. June Maw had recently been appointed as Interim Service Manager School Organisation and Planning, and is developing a strategy to approach the issues identified. The second area covered at the meeting was the SEND reforms, with the new code of practice being gone through in some detail. Mrs Coopey noted that the presentation had failed to address the implications of the code for Governors.

## **12. CHILDREN'S CENTRE UPDATE**

Miss Dyer had provided a written update on the Children's Centre. The staff structure has now been agreed by Barnardos, and informal interviews with existing staff are underway to inform the slotting process. The main Children's Centre services are now

being delivered from the St John's location, with just outreach work being based at Bertie Road. Parental feedback has been positive, with parents not noticing any difference in service level since the transfer to Barnardos. The programme of services has largely remained the same. Mr Barrow commented that the school still had close links with the Children's Centre, and he was in regular dialogue with Miss Dyer.

### **13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the FGB will be held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015, commencing 7pm at the school.