

ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, KENILWORTH

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28TH JANUARY 2015 AT 7.00PM

Present: Mr T Martin, Mr D Barrow, Mrs A Brough, Mrs H Brown, Mrs T Coopey, Mrs A Derrick, Mr W Harris (from 7.20pm), Mrs S Kettle, Mrs R Killian and Mr J Whitehouse

In Attendance: Mrs M Baker (Deputy Head), Mrs C Weir (Clerk to Governors)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Rev Attwood. No conflicts of interest were declared for the meeting.

2. CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Governors noted that Mrs Sally Darlington had resigned as Staff Governor. Mrs Darlington had left St John's Primary School at the end of the Autumn term as she had accepted a promotion at another school. Governors thanked Mrs Darlington for her contribution both to the school and the work of the Governing body.

Governors also noted the resignation of Mr Craig Rollason from the role of Co-opted Governor due to pressures of work. Governors thanked Mr Rollason for his contribution, in particular leading the Governance Review work and facilitating the workshop.

Mrs Weir explained that nominations for the role of Staff Governor were being sought with a deadline of the 30th January, and Mr Barrow confirmed that one nomination had been received. Governors agreed that the vacancy for a Co-opted Governor should be advertised through the Governor On-Stop Shop, and that a candidate with financial skills would be preferred.

Action: advertise the Co-opted Governor vacancy with the Governor On-Stop Shop (Mrs Weir)

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 25TH NOVEMBER 2014

The minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Body held on the 25th November 2014 were approved and signed as a true record, subject to a correction to minute 9 'Appointment of Directors and Trustees of the Out of School Club' in which Mrs Rachel

Killian had been omitted from the list of Directors/Trustees appointed and Mr Wayne Harris included in error.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Meeting with the Local Authority regarding Pupil Admissions Numbers

Mrs Coopey explained that the meeting had not yet taken place. Mr Whitehouse supported the proposal to approach the Local Authority informally to discuss pupil admissions, especially as the LA had broken with precedent by stating that they will not fund an additional teacher for the current Reception year from September 2015 and the school would not want this situation to reoccur. Mr Barrow explained that he believed the issues to be with School Admissions, who appeared not to take into account sibling relationships when allocating Reception places. He supported taking a tactful approach to trying to avoid a similar situation arising in future. Mr Whitehouse and Mrs Coopey undertook to set up a meeting with the Local Authority.

Action: set up meeting with the Local Authority to discuss pupil admissions (Mr Whitehouse and Mrs Coopey)

Reconstitution of the Governing Body

Governors noted that the statutory Instrument of Government had been received from the Local Authority, with an effective date of 1st January 2015. All Governors had received a copy of the updated statutory instrument. Governors noted that with effect from the start of the year the incumbent Governors hold the following positions:

- Local Authority Governor: Mr Whitehouse
- Parent Governors: Mrs Derrick and Mrs Brown
- Head Teacher: Mr Barrow
- Co-opted Governors: Mr Martin, Mrs Coopey, Mr Harris, Mrs Kettle, Mrs Brough, Mrs Killian, Rev Attwood.

The Staff Governor and remaining Co-opted Governor positions are currently vacant. It was noted that those Governors who had moved category to fill the Co-opted Governor roles would commence a new four year term of office on the 1st January 2015.

5. REVIEW OF 2014 RAISEONLINE DATA

Mr Barrow explained that the RAISEOnline data related the 2014 end of key stage assessments, and compared these to previous years and to the 2014 national average. Mr Barrow also explained that the school has the data analysed externally, and his presentation would cover the main points from that analysis presented in graphical form together with some questions for Governors proposed by the third party.

Mr Barrow began with the Year 1 phonic screening. The proportion of children at St John's who had achieved the expected standards was below the national average, with boys and disadvantaged pupils (defined as pupil premium, looked after and forces children) showing the biggest gap. Mr Whitehouse noted that Warwickshire as a whole had also achieved below the national average. Mr Barrow explained that the current Year 1 are being taught by a strong NQT, who is being mentored by an experienced member of the senior leadership team and supported by a highly competent teaching assistant, and therefore he is confident of significantly better results this year based on current teacher assessment. In the Year 2 phonics retest, all those children who had failed to reach the required standard the previous year did so at the end of Year 2.

In Key Stage 1, attainment over the last five years was broadly average and was marginally above the national average in 2014. Mr Barrow explained that the failure to show an upward trend in Key Stage 1 attainment would be a constraint on the school's ability to achieve outstanding. In reading, attainment over the last five years has been broadly average and rising, with attainment in 2014 just above national average. In writing, attainment has been broadly average with a spike in 2013 due to issues with data moderation and falling back in 2014 as these issues were addressed. In maths attainment over the last five years was again broadly average.

Mrs Brown queried whether it should be expected that the data would eventually plateau, as it was not realistic to expect year on year improvements ad infinitum. Mrs Baker noted that from next year there will be no assessment levels, which will make year on year data comparison very difficult. However, to achieve Outstanding the school needs to show that pupils are making more than the expected progress from their baseline.

Mr Harris joined the meeting at 7.20pm

Disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 1 had achieved above the national average in reading, but had not achieved as well as non-disadvantaged pupils at St John's. In maths they had achieved above the national average and higher than the non-disadvantaged pupils, but in writing they had achieved below the national average and non-disadvantaged children. It was noted that the number of disadvantaged pupils was small and therefore results were highly influenced by the individuals in the group. At Key Stage 1 the Special Educational Needs pupils had achieved above the national average in reading and maths, and in writing were at the national average.

The percentage of children achieving a Level 2b or more, and a Level 3 or more, was above the national average for reading and maths. However, the percentage achieving a Level 2b or higher in writing was below national average, with a similar picture for those achieving Level 3 or above. This is a key area of concern.

At Key Stage 2, the five year trend for overall attainment fluctuates year on year depending on the cohort, but is broadly average. The picture for maths and writing is largely similar to the overall trend, whereas for reading the 2014 attainment is above average. For Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) there is only two years of data as the test was only introduced in 2013: in 2013 St John's attained below the national average whereas in 2014 it was above. Mrs Baker commented that in 2013 the main issue was spelling, and as a result Mrs Benarous had introduced a new whole school spelling strategy to tackle this.

Disadvantaged pupils at Key Stage 2 had achieved similar results to non-disadvantaged pupils with no significant gaps in attainment. SEN pupils attained close to the national average in maths, reading and SPAG, but significantly above national average in reading which was in part influenced by one very strong reader.

The percentage of children at St John's achieving at or above Level 4 and Level 5 was at or above national average in all subjects. The proportion of children achieving a Level 5+ in maths and reading was significantly above the national average.

Progress made by pupils at Key Stage 2 has generally been good compared to other schools, but with a weak year in 2013. Progress made in Key Stage 2 in 2014 is good, placing St John's in the top 39% of schools nationally. Based on the data presented, the most likely outcome of an OFSTED inspection would be good.

Mrs Baker commented that initiatives such as regular guided reading and individual reading were well embedded at St John's, and this was reflected in the positive results for reading. The focus now is trying to embed initiatives to support writing in a similar way.

Mr Barrow then went through the list of questions for Governors recommended by the analysts, and addressed each in turn. The first question asked whether there is sufficient challenge in writing at Key Stage 1, especially for girls: Mr Barrow explained that a new strategy to support writing had been launched, with all children having journals and showcase books, and the school week being split into half literacy and half maths in Year 6 to promote continuity of teaching. The children have responded enthusiastically to the introduction of journals, enjoying the freedom to write what they want and hearing a selection of journals read out in assembly. They have also been keen to upgrade and improve their writing in their showcase books.

The next questions asked whether, in the light of the results, standards are high enough in Early Years and Key Stage 1: Mrs Baker stated that she believed the key to raising standards was the quality of teaching staff, but that this can take time to change. There have been lots of staff changes during the last couple of years, and the aim now is for a

period of stability. Mr Barrow added that having high expectations of children was also important, as the more children are stretched the more they will achieve. This is apparent in Nursery where children receive an excellent foundation to their school career.

The next question asked why there was a slight underachievement in maths at Key Stage 2, and what was the prognosis for maths in 2015: Mr Barrow explained that it had become apparent that there were gaps in the children's basic maths knowledge, and staff were needing to go back and reteach concepts which should have been covered further down the school. He highlighted that the Key Stage 2 teachers have the confidence and ability to modify their lessons to ensure that basic skills are in place before introducing higher level techniques.

The final question addressed the accuracy of pupil progress meetings, and whether issues identified are followed up on. Mr Barrow stated that he felt that pupil progress meetings do accurately identify which pupils need additional support or can be pushed further: these meetings are still being held half termly and teachers are well prepared for them. Mr Martin, Mr Whitehouse and Mrs Brough all agreed based on the meetings they had observed. Mr Whitehouse commented that teachers came to pupil progress meetings with clear views on which pupils were where, and what actions were needed to address the issues they identified. Mrs Baker went on to explain that all actions are reviewed at the next pupil progress meeting, and if pupils are not making the expected progress the quality of the interventions and their impact were reviewed. She commented that the Teaching Assistants were very positive about delivering interventions, but that not much training was available to support them.

Mr Harris asked Mr Barrow how confident he was that the culture in the school was a suitable platform for moving to Outstanding. Mr Barrow responded that he was confident that the school was in a good position to aim for Outstanding at the next OFSTED inspection. Mrs Baker added that key to achieving Outstanding was having the best quality teachers. Mr Whitehouse noted that having high quality Teaching Assistants to support the teachers was also important, and therefore providing TAs with appropriate training was important. Mr Martin also noted that around 10% of teaching was delivered by PPA cover teachers, and therefore ensuring that they were also of a high quality was essential. He asked Mr Barrow whether PPA teachers had opportunities for training: Mr Barrow responded that the PPA cover teachers had not been the priority to date, but that there was no reason why they should not receive training. He highlighted that PPA cover teachers are invited to attend all Inset training events and staff meetings.

6. SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION FORM AND LEARNING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A copy of the latest school Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and Learning Improvement Plan (LIP) had previously been circulated to Governors, together with a summary of changes to the SEF since the previous version. Mr Barrow noted that the actions in the LIP had been coded with the traffic light system to show their current status, with red indicating an action that had not started or not been achieved; amber indicating an ongoing action; and green indicating that an action that is fully embedded.

Mr Martin noted that the LIP indicated that the school would be seeking a maths specialist from September 2015, and asked whether there was enough budget to cover this. Mr Barrow responded that he was looking to train a member of the existing staff rather than appoint a new teacher, and that this was affordable. He noted that the focus for the next academic year would be to establish leaders in all subjects.

Mr Martin stated that he believed the main challenge currently was for the children to make the expected levels of progress, noting that in Year 6 in particular half of the pupils were below age related expectations in writing at the end of the autumn term, and some were also below age related expectations in reading and maths. Mrs Baker suggested that the performance data for the first half of the Spring term may show a more positive picture, as she feels that Year 6 have made rapid progress since Christmas. Mr Martin commented that he had some detailed comments on the SEF and LIP which he would feed back to Mr Barrow outside the meeting. Mr Barrow welcomed Governor feedback and questions on the SEF and LIP either via email or face to face.

7. POLICIES

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Mr Martin explained that the draft Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy had been reviewed by the Performance and Standards Committee at their January meeting. A couple of minor amendments had been recommended which had been included in the Policy. One of these amendments was to include the school's Code of Conduct for staff as an appendix to the Policy. Mr Martin noted that a new staff Behaviour Policy, subtitled Code of Conduct, had just been issued by Warwickshire County Council. As the document was lengthy, Mr Martin suggested that he and Mr Barrow review the LA Behaviour Policy and update the school's staff Code of Conduct as appropriate.

Governors approved the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, subject to any updates the appended Code of Conduct required in the light of the new LA Behaviour Policy being included.

Action: Review LA Behaviour Policy and update school's Code of Conduct for staff as appropriate (Mr Martin and Mr Barrow)

8. COMMITTEE UPDATES

Performance and Standards Committee

Minutes of the Performance and Standards Committee meeting held on the 8th January are attached to these minutes. Mrs Coopey stated that the meeting had reviewed the performance data for the second half of the Autumn 2014 Term, and had highlighted the innovative and creative approaches that the school was taking to address the issues identified. She also noted that the school is putting a significant amount of effort into producing and understanding the performance data.

Mr Whitehouse noted that the minutes of the meeting stated that at the next committee meeting Mr Barrow would be presenting the performance data benchmarked against the other Kenilworth schools, and asked whether this would also include benchmarking against Warwickshire as a whole. Mr Barrow confirmed that it would include a comparison to average Warwickshire performance data. Mr Martin asked whether the benchmarking data was from July 2014, and Mr Barrow confirmed that this was the case. Mr Whitehouse noted that a similar benchmarking report was being produced by the Local Authority, and that it might be interesting as a comparison.

Out of School Club Working Group

A meeting of the Out of School Club Working Group had been held on the 23rd January 2015 but notes of the meeting were not yet available. Mr Martin circulated a draft set of accounts for the year to 31st December 2014. He noted that the Club was doing well, with the 2014 income 27% up on 2013 and the profit 36% up on 2013. The Club's assets base was looking healthy. Feedback from the children and parents using the Club was positive, and the financial surplus was being used to ensure that the children had a wide choice of play equipment.

Mr Martin explained that he and Mr Barrow had discussed ways of expanding the Club, in particular offering wrap around care for Nursery children who only attend for three hours per day. This would be a significant step, involving many compliance issues and associated costs. It was felt that such a change would be a distraction for the school at a time when it needs to focus on moving towards Outstanding, so the decision had been taken to postpone serious consideration of expansion until 2016. Mr Whitehouse asked whether the lack of wrap around care was putting St John's Nursery at a competitive disadvantage, and Mr Barrow responded that he did not feel this to be the case.

9. GOVERNOR MONITORING

A schedule of Governor monitoring activities undertaken since September had been circulated to Governors, and Mr Martin stated that he was happy with the way the Governor monitoring programme was working. Mrs Brown noted that there were some

inaccuracies on the schedule circulated, in particular she had not attended the book trawl as stated but had undertaken a learning walk and follow up visit instead. Mr Martin asked Governors to let Mrs Weir know of any other inaccuracies, so that a correct schedule could be filed with the minutes.

Mr Whitehouse asked whether there were any concerns regarding monitoring of Year 6, as following Mrs Darlington's resignation he was the only Governor assigned to that year group. Mr Barrow stated that he was happy with just Mr Whitehouse, and that Mrs Baker could support the monitoring activities. Mr Barrow went on to remind Governors that the Governor monitoring schedule for the Spring 2015 term had been circulated and Governors should notify him of the monitoring activities they wished to undertake. Mr Barrow agreed to recirculate the schedule to ensure all Governors had a copy

Action: recirculate Governor monitoring schedule for the Spring 2015 term (Mr Barrow) and sign up for monitoring activities (All)

10. CORRESPONDENCE

Miss Dyer had provided a written update on the Children's Centre, and Mr Barrow confirmed that it was Miss Dyer's intention to provide a written update on a termly basis going forwards. Mr Whitehouse asked whether a Children's Centre Advisory Board was now in place, and Mr Barrow responded that work on this was still ongoing.

11. GOVERNOR TRAINING

It was noted that a whole Governing Body training course had not been arranged for the current financial year, and that this was an entitlement under the Local Authority Governor training package that the school subscribes to. Mr Martin asked Governors to think about whether there were any of the Warwickshire Governor Services training packages that they felt would be beneficial for the whole Governing Body to receive.

Mrs Baker explained that she had recently attended a training course which covered what outstanding Governance looks like, and she was happy to share this information with Governors. It was agreed that Mrs Baker would let Mr Martin know some suitable dates for this.

Action: agree dates for training session on Outstanding Governance (Mrs Baker and Mr Martin)

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the FGB will be held on Tuesday 24th March 2015, commencing 7pm at the school.