

ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, KENILWORTH

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

HELD ON TUESDAY 21ST MARCH 2017 AT 7.00PM

Present: Mr Trevor Martin, Mr Darren Barrow, Mrs Rebecca Augustus, Ms Ruth Cooper, Mrs Trisha Coopey, Mrs Beth Cordrey, Miss Katie Harrison, Mrs Rachel Killian, Mr Daryl Molyneux and Mr Richard Owen

In Attendance: Mrs Cathy Weir (Clerk to Governors)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Mary Baker (Deputy Head). No conflicts of interest were declared for the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 25TH JANUARY 2017

The minutes of the meeting of the full Governing Body held on 25th January 2017 were approved and signed as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Academy Conversion

The Academy Conversion Working Group had not met since the last full Governing Body meeting. A meeting will be scheduled once Mr Molyneux has completed his review of the financial model of alternative academy structures provided by the Local Authority.

Prevent Training

The Prevent training session was held on 14th March and was well attended. Governors commented that they had found the session very useful. Mr Barrow will send the slides to any governors who were unable to attend.

Action: Send Prevent training slides to governors who were unable to attend the training session (Mr Barrow)

Governor Monitoring Form

Mr Martin confirmed that the Governor Monitoring Form was now available on GovernorHub. He advised that the form refers to the Governor Monitoring Policy, so the policy will also be uploaded to GovernorHub. Mr Martin noted that the policy requires updating, for example to include diagnostic days.

Mr Martin suggested that it would be helpful to have copies of all policies available on GovernorHub. He reminded that Governors had been assigned specific policies to review, as follows:

Policy	Committee	Governor Lead	School Lead
Marking Policy	P&S	K Harrison	M Baker
Complaints Procedure	P&S	T Coopey	D Barrow
Continuing Professional Development & Communication	P&S	B Cordrey	D Barrow
Attendance	P&S	T Martin	L Morris
Charging and Remissions	Resources/FGB	D Molyneux	C Weir
Governor Visits	P&S	B Cordrey	D Barrow
Health and Safety	Resources	A Brough	D Barrow
Pay Policy & Teacher Appraisal Policy	Resources /FGB	Working Group	D Barrow
Social Networking and Internet Sites	P&S	T Martin	A Lee
Administration of Medicines and First Aid	P&S	A Brough	M Baker
Admissions and Appeals	P&S	T Martin	D Barrow
Curriculum Policy	P&S	T Coopey	M Baker
Equal Opportunities Policy	P&S	R Cooper	D Barrow
Fire & Evacuation	Resources	A Brough	D Barrow
On-Line Safety	P&S	R Owen	A Lee
Personal, Social Health Education and Citizenship Policy	P&S	R Augustus	D Barrow
Sex & Relationship Education Policy	P&S	R Augustus	D Barrow
Unofficial Fund Policy	Resources	D Molyneux	C Weir

Governors agreed that once the policy for which they were the Governor Lead had been approved, they would take responsibility for making any final amendments, inserting the approval date and removing any 'draft' watermark. The policy would then be sent to Mrs Weir for uploading to GovernorHub.

4. APPROVAL OF 3 YEAR BUDGET

Mr Barrow explained that the Resources Committee had reviewed the latest budget forecast at the meeting held on 7th March. However, there was uncertainty over the level of Early Years funding and the implications of the Fair Funding formula. Details of the Early Years funding have now been received but there are some anomalies that are being followed up with the Local Authority finance team. Given the level of uncertainty still remaining it would not be possible for governors to approve the budget at this stage. Governors agreed to hold an extraordinary meeting of the full Governing Body at 9.15am on Thursday 6th April 2017, by which point it was hoped the budget would be in a position to be approved.

Governors asked whether access to the school's Budget Planning System had been obtained and Mr Barrow confirmed that it had. A few teething problems were being experienced but these

should be sorted soon. Access to the system will enable the school to model more budget scenarios and have a faster turnaround on updates.

5. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT FOR THE SPRING 2017 TERM

The Head Teacher's Report for the Spring 2017 Term had been circulated to governors and questions submitted in advance of the meeting.

The first question related to the staff absence data, and asked Mr Barrow whether he felt these were high given that they related to a ten week period. Mr Barrow stated that he felt that Teaching Assistant absence was high, especially compared to other groups of staff. The school's absence policy for staff is very clear in terms of how many paid days off per year staff are allowed for funerals, dependent's illness and other circumstances. Some members of staff have absence for many of these reasons over the year. Mr Barrow noted that having looked in detail at the absence data it was apparent that their children's illness is high on the list of reasons for staff absence.

Mr Barrow explained that he had discussed the issue with Mrs Baker and they had also looked at Teaching Assistant punctuality. Mr Barrow will address both absence and punctuality at the Teaching Assistant meeting later in the week. He explained that he intended to present the total TA absence in terms of hours and days along with the associated cost to the school. Absence and punctuality will also be discussed in TA performance reviews.

Governors discussed the issue of staff absence and noted that the school needs to be mindful of the potential impact on staff morale when deciding its approach. Governors asked whether the school had to adopt the Local Authority policy on paid time off: Mr Barrow confirmed that it did unless the school converts to an academy. Mr Barrow agreed to update governors at the next meeting of the full Governing Body.

Action: Update governors on staff absence and punctuality at next FGB meeting (Mr Barrow)

The second question concerned Mrs Baker taking on two days teaching in Reception following Mrs Fenner's return from maternity leave, whether this means her overall teaching commitment will increase and if so, what the impact on the Senior Leadership Team would be. Mr Barrow explained that the decision that Mrs Baker would teach in Reception was taken in full consultation with her and the challenges of her current teaching commitment were considered. At the moment Mrs Baker's teaching commitment is time consuming in that it includes assisting with planning and providing support as well as teaching in Reception and Year 4 for two full days a week. This is requiring additional time due to the additional support required by an NQT teacher. There have also been a number of issues to resolve in Year 4 to ensure there is consistency in assessment and the teaching of maths. Mr Barrow explained that Mrs Baker will be job sharing with Mrs Fenner and it is expected that Mrs Fenner will take on much of the planning for Reception and need minimal support from Mrs Baker, as she is an experienced practitioner and the Early Years Phase Leader. Furthermore, teaching in one year group is more time efficient than covering two year groups, and therefore it is believed that the arrangement will in fact free up slightly more of Mrs Baker's time for leadership duties.

Mr Martin commented that he felt that the Head Teacher's Report had reinforced the fact that the reduced support from the Local Authority for high profile children and families, and the school's requirement for a Family Support Worker, were closely linked. There is greater pressure on schools to provide social services as LA funding is reduced and the LA responds by raising the threshold at which it will provide support for families in need.

Governors noted that the school is taking a multi-stranded approach with not only the appointment of the Family Support Worker but also nurture and early intervention strategies. Mr Barrow stated that he felt that early intervention was key, and tackling issues whilst children were in Nursery and Reception meant that they were less likely to become high profile further through the school.

Mr Barrow had included a new section at the start of his report which set out the key points that governors need to be aware of, and governors stated that they found this very helpful.

It was noted that the Head Teacher's mid-year performance review would be due shortly. It was agreed that this would be held on Wednesday 3rd May at 11.30am.

6. GOVERNORS SELF-ASSESSMENT SESSION

Mr Martin proposed that the Governing Body consider carrying out a self-assessment exercise. He noted that a self-assessment had been undertaken several years ago but the membership of the governing body was now substantially different. The self-assessment process is a good way of identifying the Governing Body's strengths and weaknesses, and Mr Martin suggested that the focus could be on what makes a governing body outstanding. It would be helpful to have a facilitator for the session and it was suggested that Mrs Killian might wish to consider this: Mrs Killian agreed talk to Mr Martin to understand more about the self-assessment process. Alternatively it might be that Mr Craig Rollason, a former governor who facilitated the last session, would be prepared to help. It was agreed that a date for a self-assessment session would be sought in the summer term.

Action: Agree a suitable date for a governor self-assessment session with governors (Mr Martin)

7. NURTURE

Mr Barrow informed governors that the Edwards Trust had raised a number of questions on the school's bid for funding for the nurture facility. Representatives of the Trustees had visited school the previous week and Mr Barrow had sought to address their concerns and queries. The issues raised by the Trustees were:

If the St John's application is approved, will other Kenilworth Schools bid for similar facilities?

Mr Barrow explained that the level of need at St John's was higher than other Kenilworth schools and other schools would be able to access the St John's nurture facility for support if they so wished, so there was no reason to assume that other bids would follow.

Could the facility be funded by the Local Authority?

Mr Barrow confirmed that the LA does not have funding for a facility of this sort.

The Trustees stated that they would prefer it if the facility was an adaptation of an existing space not a new building

Mr Barrow drew the Trustee's attention to the fact that the proposal was to adapt the existing Out of School Club and kitchen space, not construct a new building.

Does St John's have a reputation for attracting SEN pupils, and do they transfer to St John's from other schools?

Mr Barrow explained that this was not the case, and furthermore the nurture facility will provide support for all children not just those with SEN.

The next meeting of the Edward's Trustees is not until the 10th May so the school will not receive the Trustees' decision on the bid until after then. Governors debated whether lobbying the Trustees would improve the bid's chance of success, but concluded that this was unlikely to be effective. Governors asked whether the nurture initiative would continue if the Edward's bid was unsuccessful: Mr Barrow confirmed that it would. The intervention is up and running, albeit in a small room, and is already yielding results. However, if the school's bid is successful, it will enable the nurture facility to be implemented in its entirety.

8. RESOURCES COMMITTEE UPDATE

The minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 7th March 2017 had been circulated to governors. There were no questions arising from the minutes. Mr Molyneux noted that the Prevent training had highlighted the need for CCTV cameras and alarms for different emergencies than just fire, something which had already been discussed by the Resources Committee. Mr Barrow agreed to arrange quotes for this.

Action: arrange quotes for installation of CCTV and an upgrade to the alarm system to allow different emergency alarms (Mr Barrow)

Mr Martin noted that he had signed the Schools Financial Value Standard questionnaire but had added a caveat, namely that the governors were not confident that it was possible to reconcile funds that should be delegated from the LA and the funding actually received, for example funding for nursery places. He noted that Mr Molyneux is currently investigating this and will report his findings to governors.

Action: Reconcile nursery funding received with the school's entitlement (Mr Molyneux)

9. GOVERNOR MONITORING

Governors noted that the next governor monitoring events were the Diagnostic Day on Tuesday 4th April and Pupil Progress meetings on Thursday 25th May. Mr Barrow will circulate the timetables for both days so that governors can sign up for the sessions they would like to monitor.

Action: circulate timetables for the Diagnostic Day and Pupil Progress meetings (Mr Barrow) and sign up for sessions (All)

10. SAFEGUARDING

Mr Barrow noted that the number of families needing support and green concern forms received were included in his Head Teacher's Report. Governors asked whether the number of green forms raised was typical of that which Mr Barrow would expect. Mr Barrow agreed that it was: the school staff are diligent in completing forms and the issues raised range from small indicators to disclosures.

11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the full Governing Body will be held on Wednesday 17th May 2017, commencing 7.00pm at the school. There will be an extraordinary meeting of the full Governing Body on Thursday 6th April at 9.15am to approve the budget.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.