

FOWLMERE PRIMARY SCHOOL
MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Monday 5 February 2018
7.00pm in School

MINUTES

Present:

Sarah Burge (SB), Chair
Philip Atkin (PA), Head Teacher
Bruce Gilliam (BG)
Gill Heathcote (GH) (from 7.30pm)
Chris Martin (CM)
Andrew Page (AP)
Nico Schonken (NS)
Hayley Woods (HW)

Ashley Meggitt (AM) – observer

Lisa White (Camclerk) in attendance.

1. Apologies for absence

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.00pm. Apologies were received and accepted from Gill Heathcote (GH) for her late arrival. SR was not present but no apologies were received.

2. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations on interest in relation to the agenda.

3. Welcome of New Governors

The Chair introduced Chris Martin (CM), new staff governor.

It was noted that a new governor form and Annual Declaration of Pecuniary Interest form needs to be forwarded to CM for completion. ACTION LW

It was noted that Ashley Meggitt (AM) was attending the meeting as an observer at this point, as his appointment as governor was not yet approved by the Governing Body. The Chair therefore asked AM and all governors to introduce themselves.

Following this, AM was asked to leave the meeting while the Governing Body discussed his application. **It was noted that AM's application was unanimously approved by the Governing Body.**

The Chair invited AM back to the meeting and advised him that governors had unanimously approved his appointment to the Governing Body. The Chair explained that the current vacancy is for a Local Authority governor and AM agreed to take on this role.

It was noted that the relevant paperwork needs to be forwarded by the Clerk to AM for this role. ACTION LW

Signed  Date 14/3/2018

The Chair explained the structure of the Governing Body Committees and advised that each governor sits on two of the three Committees. It was noted that as CM is a member of staff he is ineligible to sit on the Personnel Committee and will therefore be a member of the Finance and Premises Committee and the Standards Committee. The Chair advised AM that he is able to choose any two of the committees to sit on and asked him to confirm his decision to her once made.

Confirm the two committees that he would like to be a member of. ACTION AM

4. Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2017 were circulated prior to the meeting and were approved by the Governing Body and signed by the Chair as a true record.

A governor asked for the Confidential Minutes from this meeting to be circulated to the Governing Body. **It was noted that the Head agreed to circulate these minutes. ACTION PA**

It was noted that the Confidential Minutes will therefore be approved at the next FGB meeting in March. ACTION Governing Body

Matters arising from the meeting held on 20 September 2017

Item 3 Governor Appointments

Include an article in the Fowlmere and Thriplow News regarding governor vacancies. **ACTION COMPLETE**

It was noted that nothing had been received from the LA regarding candidates for the LA governor vacancy and it was agreed that the Clerk chase Governor Services. ACTION COMPLETE

Report to be uploaded to the governors' section of the school website. ACTION PA OUTSTANDING

Item 13 Governor Training

BG and HW to attend Prevent Training with PA. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Matters arising from the meeting held on 6 December 2017

Item 3 Welcome of New Governors

Due to a lack of volunteers for the staff governor role, the following actions were agreed:

- i. **Clerk to contact Governor Services to ascertain what the school needs to do in this situation. ACTION COMPLETE**
- ii. **Ask new staff member in January, if she would like to take on the role of Staff Governor. ACTION COMPLETE**
- iii. **Revisit the situation in a few months if position has not been filled. ACTION Governing Body. CM agreed to be the staff governor. ACTION COMPLETE**

Item 5 Safeguarding

The Head to remind staff of the requirements to ensure parents do not enter the changing rooms when pupils are present. **ACTION COMPLETE**

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Item 6 Head Teacher's Report

a. Governor Monitoring Visits

Email dates for Half-termly Operational Plan meetings to HW. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Liaise with other local schools to discuss what they do with regards to governor visit reports, consider sharing governor visits and observe how they operate as a Governing Body. **ACTION SB OUTSTANDING**

Ask Naomi Whitworth for her input when she starts in January. **ACTION SB OUTSTANDING**

Establish if there is a governor visits policy and update in necessary. **Governor Visits Protocol circulated for review by governors at this meeting. ACTION COMPLETE**

Item 9 Governor Training and Committee Membership

AP to attend next Termly Briefing. **To attend on 6 February. ACTION COMPLETE**

SB to email BG and inform him of his move to the Personnel Committee. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Item 11 Any Other Business

Chair to provide attendance information to the Clerk for the Autumn Term Committee meetings so that the termly governor attendance information can be updated. **ACTION SB OUTSTANDING (PERSONNEL COMMITTEE ONLY)**

5. Safeguarding

A governor asked:

Q: Other than the information provided on the Head Teacher's report, is there any further information that the Governing Body should be made aware of?

A: No. There is nothing further.

It was noted that the Safeguarding governor visit has been postponed until later in February due to staff illness.

6. Head Teacher's Report and School Improvement Plan

A Head Teacher's report, School Self-Evaluation and Improvement Planning and Governor Monitoring and Visits for 2017-18 were all shared with governors prior to the meeting.

During the meeting, the main points of discussion were as follows:

i. Admissions

It was noted that the latest information from the Admissions Portal for September 2018 is that there are 13 first choice applications. The Head explained that with 16 Year 6 pupils leaving at the end of July, there will be a potential net loss of around 3 or 4 pupils. It was noted that this will therefore have a financial impact on the school's budget.

ii. Attendance

It was noted that the attendance rate to date at 97.5% is good with attendance of AFA pupils, pupil premium and SEND children also all above National. The Head explained that there have been a couple of cases of lateness (classed as unauthorised absence) that are being dealt with by staff.

iii. Staffing

The report included an update on staffing including a current staff list.

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iv. Pupil Behaviour

The Head explained that the school is still pushing for increased reporting of behavioural incidents, therefore the number of behaviour incidents logged is high.

Governors asked:

Q: How does the chart showing the breakdown of incident types relate to the behaviour traffic light system in place?

A: The 52% shown are generally incidents that have occurred outside during break times. It is worth noting that we are recording every incident, including minor ones, in order to build up a picture of which pupils may have behavioural issues.

Q: Are you able to provide us with a breakdown of the fighting incidents?

A: I am not able to share in-depth detail with you. It is mainly play fights with KS1 pupils (boys) that escalate and end up with someone getting hurt.

Q: Are these pupils monitored with regards anti-bullying?

A: It is important to note that incidents from both perpetrators and victims of any bullying that occurs are recorded. The system involves children recording what happens over a two week period. This provides a clear pattern of behaviour that the school can address, and also serves to focus a pupil's mind on their behaviour. Any anti-bullying monitoring will be undertaken where the school thinks it is necessary but there are currently no concerns, which is why the number of incidents logged is zero.

The Head explained that there is a set of criteria when classifying a bullying incident and some of the behaviour incidents that have been logged do not meet those criteria.

It was noted that GH joined the meeting at 7.30pm.

The Head further explained that the behaviour at the school is not bad, however he would like it to be better than it currently is, which is why he is pushing the reporting of all behavioural incidents.

A governor asked:

Q: Will we as governors see what has been done with regards the couple of pupils who have been identified with behaviour issues or will it be part of a global picture?

A: It will be part of a global picture.

It was noted that information on first aid, accidents and training and professional development was also included in the Head Teacher's report.

The Head then drew governors' attention to part two of the Head Teacher's report – the School Self-Evaluation (SEF) and Improvement Planning (SIP) document and advised that the SEF is as per the last meeting, but that the SIP has been updated. The Head explained that there are areas that have not been started and that these are coloured in red.

- a) Governor Monitoring Visits
A Governor Monitoring and Visits 2017-18 document was shared with governors prior to the meeting.

Governors asked:

Q: Are we sure that the cultural enrichment experiences are spread across the whole school?

A: Class 4 is the only class where this could potentially be an issue as parents are not always able to fund additional activities when they are already paying for a residential trip in that school year.

Q: Has the English Policy been finalised?

A: This will be circulated at the next Standards Committee meeting.

Q: Are we waiting for a TOP monitoring visit report and has the TOP Standards visit taken place?

A: Everything that needs to be done has been timetabled.

A governor queried what constitutes a cultural experience and the Head explained that this covers the Arts, Music and History.

7. Subcommittee minutes

It was noted that minutes of the Finance and Premises and Standards sub committee meetings were shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting. It was noted that the Personnel sub committee minutes were not circulated as they are confidential. Governors noted and accepted the sub committee minutes.

8. Policies

- a) Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- b) Policy for Outdoor Learning, Off-Site Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom.

The above policies were circulated to governors for their review prior to the meeting.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

A governor queried Item 4.4 of this policy where it states that a list of children in Key Stage 2 who walk to school by themselves will be kept and asked whether such a register for these children is kept. In response to this query, the Head confirmed that this section needs rephrasing as it is not quite accurate. Amend policy to reflect what happens regarding a pupil not arriving at school. ACTION PA

A governor asked:

Q: How far down the contact list does the office call in the case of an absent pupil?

A: Resident adults are contacted initially who are given an amount of time to respond. If there is no response, we escalate it.

A governor asked for clarification on the penalty notices that can be implemented and the Head explained that the charge is per period of unauthorised absence not per session.

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Policy for Outdoor Learning, Off-Site Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom

The Head explained that this policy has been updated in line with training that he has undertaken as well as new guidance. The Head advised that some training has taken place with staff in respect of national guidance for school trip planning, disaster and emergency planning.

During a discussion with regards to parental consent for school trips, it was noted that for complex trips, i.e. outside of the school day, the school needs to gain consent from parents. Any trips that take place during the school day do not require parental consent.

A governor asked:

Q: Who is the school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator?

A: Philip.

It was noted that both policies were approved by the Governing Body subject to the minor amendment noted above in respect of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

Protocol for Governor Visits

In addition to the above two policies, a draft Protocol for Governor Visits was circulated to governors for their review prior to the meeting. The Chair stated that it would be useful to include an example of a 'good' governor visit report within the protocol.

A governor asked for a word version of the report template to be provided so that governors can edit it when they carry out a visit. ACTION PA

It was noted that the Protocol for Governor Visits was approved by all governors present.

9. Parent Questionnaire

The Chair explained that the intention is to use the previous questionnaire but adapt it slightly. The Chair advised that at the latest Standards Committee meeting, a question was raised as to whether the school day should be extended as the timings to cover all areas of the curriculum adequately are tight. The suggestion at the meeting therefore was to include a question on this matter in the questionnaire. The Chair explained that Fowlmere Primary has a relatively short school day in comparison with other Cambridgeshire schools at 23.5 teaching hours per week.

On this basis, the school intends to consult with parents although the Head explained that this is not mandatory, but that he wishes to gauge opinion from parents. It was noted that if a change is made it will be implemented from September 2018.

Governors asked:

Q: Do teachers want to extend the school day?

A: I have not had any in-depth conversations with them as yet.

Q: Will increasing the school day have an impact on After School Club staff's pay?

A: It may do, although, they do often work after 6pm anyway, so it may be that it is fairer. It would affect Teaching Assistants and Office staff which will have a financial impact.

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Q: Will increasing the school day cause issues for parents collecting children from the playgroup?

A: It may do so we will need to consult with playgroup parents as well.

During the discussion, the following actions were proposed and agreed:

- Consult with both school and playgroup parents; ACTION PA
- Carry out a formal consultation with staff; ACTION PA
- Include a specific question in the parent questionnaire regarding extending the school day; ACTION PA/SB
- An electronic version of the questionnaire to be forwarded to PA/SB. ACTION GH
- Include data to explain why the school is proposing to extend the school day; ACTION PA
- In addition, it was noted that a question on the new homework policy should be included in the questionnaire and for the Homework Policy to be added to the school website. ACTION PA

It was noted that the parent questionnaire will be circulated in Spring 2.

Finally, it was noted that the Pupil Voice needs to be repeated. ACTION PA to follow up.

10. Governor Training

It was noted that the following governor training will take place over the rest of the term:

Finance – AP

Induction – CM and AM

A discussion followed regarding the current training offered by the Local Authority and whether or not the school should explore alternative training providers. **It was proposed and agreed that the Head look in to this. ACTION PA**

11. Any Other Business

There were two items of other business to be discussed:

- i. Academisation
A governor asked for an agenda item on Academisation to be added to the agenda for the next FGB meeting. A discussion followed regarding academisation and the options available. **It was proposed and agreed that an agenda item on this matter be added to the next FGB meeting. ACTION PA/SB**
- ii. Values Week
The Chair wished to congratulate the school on the recent Values Week that took place.

12. Time/date of next meeting:

7.00pm, Wednesday 14 March 2018.

It was noted that AM is unable to attend this meeting and therefore offered his apologies.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed Date 14/3/2018