

INQUORATE MEETING

THE GOVERNING BODY OF FAIRFIELD SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at 6:00 pm at the school on Tuesday, 4th July 2017.

PRESENT

Mr A Pruchniewicz (Chair), Ms D Johns, Mr M Neild.

In Attendance

Mr D Rhodes (Minute Clerk)
Ms J Tate (National Leader in Education)
Ms B Brooks (Deputy Head Teacher)
Mr S Walsh (Business Manager)
Ms J Dawes (English Co-ordinator)

2348. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr G Denison, Ms K Jameson, Mr J Page and Ms J Thompson.

RESOLVED: That the apologies be received with consent.

There were no declarations of Interest.

2349. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

An e-mail received by Governors from Ms Griffiths, NUT representative regarding the financial position of the school, would be raised under any other business.

2350. PRESENTATION FROM THE ENGLISH CO-ORDINATOR

Judy Dawes, the English Co-ordinator, gave a detailed presentation concerning the focus on Reading and the implementation of various initiatives which included the introduction of new reading schemes, the introduction of a reading partnership with Spen Valley and the improvement of staff knowledge and understanding of phonics.

Illustrations were provided of the books and their relevance to particular ages and key stages. The Spen Valley initiative was particularly useful in the development of the children's reading.

The Library had proved difficult due to the lack of space in the school to accommodate such a facility, however a mobile alternative had been adopted with the use of trolleys, enhanced by books also being located in classrooms.

Q. How engaged are the staff with the new initiatives?

A. The staff are fully engaged, and have had the opportunity to get to know the pupils better. There have been distinct improvements when staff and pupils read together.

Details were provided of the World Book Day and Book Week, where staff dressed up as characters and read stories for the children. Donna Johns had also visited during World Book day and witnessed at first hand the valuable work being undertaken.

The importance of phonics was also highlighted, and how the pronunciation of letters has changed in recent years.

Q. Do you incorporate Jolly Phonics in the phonics exercises?

A. The Jolly Phonics methodology is not quite correct for our children and can also cause confusion with some of our Makaton work.

In conclusion, details were given of student progress in English (reading) and English (speaking and communication).

Ms Dawes was thanked for her comprehensive presentation and the great improvements in school in this area.

2351. REPRESENTATION

Nominations were still sought for an additional co-opted governor with the necessary attributes to offer to the Governing Body.

Concern was expressed regarding the attendance of the Co-opted staff member. The Chair would make enquiries whether she wished to continue in this role.

2352. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 MAY 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 May 2017 had been distributed to Governors prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 May 2017 be signed as a true and correct record subject to the following amendment:

Minute 239 Resources Committee: the date to be changed from 14 February to 2 May 2017.

2353. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

2354. REPORTS COMMITTEES

There were no reports from committees.

2355. ACTING HEAD TEACHER/SLT REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS

The Acting Head Teacher's written report was circulated to Governors. In accordance with the Governors' requests at their May meeting, elements of the report were presented by Jeanette Tate (NLE), Deputy Head Teacher (Bev Brooks) and the Business Manager (Steve Walsh).

(a) School Improvements

Work on the School Development Plan had commenced, and the middle leadership developments were also part of the focus on 'Everyone a Leader'. To this end, a

three-hour leadership workshop had been held on 4 July, with the opportunity for further workshops as part of the plan.

Q. Who ran these workshops and at what competency level?

A. We used two associate trainers, who are extremely good at people development and motivation.

Performance management reviews had been undertaken giving the opportunity to look at staff development initiatives.

Q. Have the reviews slipped out of sync? Should these be carried out in September/October at the start of the school year?

A. They are finished by October, followed by a mid-year review, then thresholds are established. Leadership Team measurable outcomes are considered and then focused on in the summer prior to the next cycle.

Q. Is there evidence of outcomes for all the staff?

A. All staff have performance related targets, which assist developing expertise in key areas.

In relation to the quality of teaching and learning, recent lesson observations had been undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team alongside Heads of Departments, where the focus for the observations correlated to individual teacher's performance management and teaching standards. Key areas of strengths were reported together with those areas requiring further development.

Details were provided of the improvements from November 2016 to May 2017 and the small percentage of those areas requiring further improvement.

Q. Have lessons been learnt, particularly in the case where improvements were required?

A. Yes, staff need to ensure they share concerns and involve others. On a recent occasion support staff were required to deal with an incident thus leaving inadequate staffing levels in the class; the Teacher in charge must ask for help, even if it is from the observers.

It was evident that staff were planning for known visits for observation, hence in future, this would be done weekly, on a drop-in random basis.

Developing roles and responsibilities are part of the Development Plan and talks will commence next week. Staff need to be clear about accountability and the SLT will be picking this up.

(b) Health and Safety

The Business Manager talked through his written report on Health and Safety. Governors noted recent training initiatives which had helped his understanding of health and safety responsibilities.

The report examined Risk Assessments, Fire, Accidents, H&S Action Plan and Road Safety.

Attention was drawn to the fire evacuation procedure and the practice drill on 22 June from the Secondary corridor.

Q. Prior to the current fire drill what was the procedure in the past?

A. A drill for the entire school was carried out every term. We have changed this by having marked points for evacuation, and working on a corridor by corridor evacuation plan. We have not undertaken a lunchtime evacuation and this needs to be planned.

Q. Were the issues in the Pinnacle report dealt with properly?

A. Any issues outstanding need to be raised with the contractor. We have also asked Kirklees to redo their assessment.

Q: In terms of accidents and those caused by pupil behaviour, are actions being taken to protect staff?

A: We do take precautions when appropriate, but obviously over protection and body armour would be inappropriate.

Q. Have the behaviour plans been modified and is all recorded electronically?

A. The CPOMS system is completed by key staff, and the paper system of blue slips is being continued as a backup and historical trace.

Q. What qualifies as a safeguarding incident and what is the threshold definition?

A. At present everything is recorded, and since the system is functioning well there is no plan to change.

A great deal had been achieved since December and the Business Manager was congratulated by the Governors for his achievements. Governors would also be carrying out their own H&S inspections in due course.

(c) Pupil Progress

Details of student progress was summarised. Presently, the data is limited and will continue to offer valued indicators as staff continue to use it and add more information. It was evident that teachers understood the new system and the need to input key information, thus giving better output at a later date.

Q. Are targets appropriate for all the children?

A. Perhaps not, and therefore it is important to develop properly and meet the needs of the students. It is also important to assess teachers and take ownership. Teachers also collect information on pupils, which is monitored by the SLT. There is still work to be done on making targets relevant and challenging to individual students and ensuring this is moderated throughout the school.

(d) Budget and Finance

The Business Manager tabled his written Financial report. The official Kirklees SAP profiled Budget Monitoring report was presented along with a new projected out turn figure. The report had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting and he stressed that this is an audit requirement and the minutes must specifically state this has been done.

A number of key items were referred to in discussion including the Internal Audit update, where the latest audit had an overall rating of good, with a number of areas being noted as outstanding. A full detailed report on the Audit will be sent to the Chair directly from Kirklees which in turn will be shared with the Governing body.

The report also examined the school's Virement Limits, financial forecasts, devolved formula capital, attendance management, fundraising and the effect on the financial situation by staff absences.

Q. Did the occurrence of long term sickness skew the attendance financial data?

A. Yes, it had an impact and it is now important that SLT monitor the situation.

RESOLVED: That the Budget Monitoring Information be formally noted, and that the Virement Limit be set at £10,000.

(e) Staffing

Governors were informed of staffing changes and developments, including the appointment of a new Deputy Head Teacher, the introduction of the MSI champion, (rather than buying in this resource), reduction of staff hours, part of which was that all requests for reduced hours had been accommodated. The development of HLTA's in the planning of lessons was also noted.

In terms of behavioural support two agency staff had been kept on in order to deal with a difficult situation.

Q. Are the agency Staff being paid for on a weekly basis?

A. Yes, but since we have them for the whole term there is an opportunity to negotiate for a reduced full-term fee.

Q. In terms of the child in question, is the requirement for the two-agency staff necessary.

A. The support is not only for behavioural and educational requirements, but individual needs are assessed and dignity of care is important.

All the timetables had been drawn up by the Deputy Head Teacher, giving her the opportunity to also ensure that staff were getting the correct levels of PPA time.

(f) Provision Development

Following SENACT consultations and negotiations on pupil admissions for next year, two pupils above the agreed admission level had been directed to the school by SENACT.

Governors felt that the two pupils were too able for Fairfield, and would also be using resources, equipment and staff the school had not planned for.

It was agreed that SENACT be informed that the two pupils would not be admitted to Fairfield School.

UPDATE: The two pupils in question had gone through consultation in February and school responded to their placement at Fairfield as inappropriate considering their needs after visits had been made to observe them in their mainstream placements. However, SENACT confirmed later that they were to be admitted although there was confusion over this being agreed. After talks with SENACT the Head Teacher agreed to the two pupils in question being admitted but any further referrals would be turned down as there were no more places available for September 2017. Any further proposed referrals would pose a Health & Safety issue through inadequate staffing to support a quality provision for the school's existing pupils on roll.

Other developments included transition, safeguarding referrals and staff training, meetings with parents, Core and Core+ funding, and updated progress on Post 16.

2356. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT/BUDGET/SAFEGUARDING

These agenda items were all dealt as part of the Acting Head Teacher's report, Minute 2355 above.

Authority Note: the governing body must record their approval of the school budget for 2017-2018.

2357. DEALING WITH CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

It was agreed that this item be deferred to the next meeting.

2358. SPENBOROUGH TRUST

There was nothing to report on this matter at present.

2359. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND VISITS

Donna Johns had attended safeguarding training and had visited the school to participate in World Book Day. The Chair Would be arranging future learning walks.

It was also important for any visits to school by Governors be appropriately logged, and such documentation to be made available for OFSTED inspection.

2360. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NUT Communication

The Chair read to Governors elements of an E-mail he had received from Ms Griffiths, an NUT representative. The content of the letter focused on concerns about possible cuts at the school in view of the current budget pressures.

After some discussion, it was agreed that the Chair write back to Ms Griffiths explaining that the pressure on the budget was not directly associated with cuts. The SLT were currently implementing changes following a restructure where the school was moving toward being rated outstanding by OFSTED, with the appropriate provision and resources, including the necessary staffing levels.

2361. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Governing Body be held on Tuesday, 19th September 2017, and that the setting of future dates be added as an agenda item.

2362. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That no part of the agenda, minutes or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the school, in accordance with the freedom of information act.

The meeting closed at 8:07 pm

Chair

Date

19/9/17