

THE QUEEN'S SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THE QUEEN'S C of E SCHOOL
CUMBERLAND ROAD
KEW
SURREY
TW9 3HJ

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governors of The Queen's School
held at the school on Thursday 10th December 2015 at 7.30pm

Present: *Foundation Governors (5)*

(BV) Bonney Venning (<i>Chairman</i>)	(GH) Gail Hiscock
(DD) David Durie (<i>Vice Chairman</i>)	(KA) Kristen Anderson
(ER) Emma Roberts	(LMF) Luci Mitchell Fry

Non-Foundation Governors (5)

(KB) Katie Bentham	(VO) Vicky O'Neill
(LG) Lucy Gradillas	(LHB) Liz Bithell (<i>Local Auth.</i>)
(BB) Bernadette Bird	

Associate Members (1)

(PC) Phyllis Cunningham

Co-opted Governors (1)

(JU) Jean Utshudiema

Non-voting (2)

(PA2) Philippa Anderson (*Clerk*)
(VT) Vicki Trinder (*SENCO*)

Opening prayer (led by GH)

1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies were received and accepted from Noel Singh, Beth Simmons and Laura Coughtrie. BB and LG sent apologies for their late arrival. BV welcomed VT to the meeting and thanked her for attending to present the SEND Report for approval.

2. RATIFICATION OF NEWLY APPOINTED CO-OPTED GOVERNOR

The appointment of Jean Utshudiema as a Co-opted Governor was ratified.

Each governor then gave a brief introduction - name and type of governor and the committees on which they sit.

BV thanked everyone present for their time and commitment.

3. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL & OTHER MATERIAL INTERESTS

All Governors and Associate Members are reminded of the need to declare any direct or indirect pecuniary interest which might relate to any matter under discussion.

It was noted that henceforth (from 12th December 2015) the Register of Interests will be published on the school website. The governors all signed a document giving their agreement to this.

BB arrived at 7.40pm.

4. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

This is our Code of Conduct, the reading and signing of which was deferred to await the appointment of all new Governors and Associate Members. The Chair went through the document, highlighting important points and emphasising that the governors' role should remain at a strategic level.

It was agreed that the Statement of Commitment would be reviewed at a future date.

ACTION: BV to carry forward Statement of Commitment Review.

LG arrived at 7.45pm

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF FGB ON 5th OCTOBER 2015

The minutes of the last meeting were approved by the FGB and signed by the Chair.

STRATEGIC – LINKED TO VISION

6. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON LEARNING CERTAINTIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Jenny Stroud and this Item was moved to the next FGB meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to add to Agenda for FGB on 26th January 2016

It was proposed by the Chair to bring forward Item 8.iv so that VT could then leave the meeting.

8. iv. TO APPROVE THE SEND REPORT PRESENTED BY VT

Since having a SEND Policy in addition to a SEND Report is not statutory, C&S are recommending a single SEND Report rather than two separate documents. It was noted that VT is working on separate guidance for staff.

ACTION: VT to add further information on EHC Plan v Statementing.

It was agreed that:-

- a user-friendly version of the report, using drop-down menus, is desirable and VT/LHB will work towards this.
- an introduction be added to the web page in order to bring the report to life and highlight good practice/success stories.
- SEND Governor name to be added.

In the meantime, the Report is approved to go on the website in a downloadable version. It was agreed that, although the presentation of the report will be updated, the Report does not need to be brought back to FGB unless there are content changes.

Thanks were minuted to VT for the enormous task undertaken.

ACTION: VT to implement agreed amendments with Report to be on the website before Christmas.

VT left the meeting at 8.05pm.

7. UPDATE FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS ON AGREED FRAMEWORKS FOR MONITORING PROGRESS AGAINST VISION PRIORITIES

Matter arising from the last minutes. For the benefit of new governors, the Chair clarified that the governing body has 10 long term priorities and then every two year cycle identifies three or four very specific areas on which to focus. Vision Priorities, which drive everything - target setting; training needs; staff appraisals; the work of all the committees, are the school's equivalence of a School Development Plan. Underneath these sit the action plans in every subject area (including subjects like Teaching & Learning, English as an Additional Language) used by the Headteacher to run the school on a day-to-day basis. The governing body therefore has a Vision Control Document which identifies which of the action plans are pertinent to achieving our priorities for that year and furthermore, against each of our vision priorities is a committee which takes overall responsibility for each item. Committee Chairs were actioned at the last FGB to put a plan in place for reviewing our progress against vision priorities over the next year.

The Chair asked the committee chairs to give very brief feedback on how and what has been done within their committees.

Curriculum & Standards – KA reported that it has been determined that work needs to take place within phase meetings and to this end BV and KB have been sent an updated flow document, including governor visits, for them to input into and give their concurrence with. KA has also created a hierarchical flow chart giving clear phase meeting responsibilities, which stays very close to learning and teaching within phase groups. C&S is also being more rigorous in looking at themes across phase meetings and actioning them appropriately.

BV added that it has also been agreed at which meeting through the year C&S will review which action plan, so all documents and relevant teachers are scheduled in across the year.

Pay & Personnel – DD reported two areas of action, the first in which P&P are subsidiary in the effective assessment procedure being in place for all subjects by the end of the two year cycle and in the lead on 'subject leaders will demonstrate clear ownership of their subject area and lead it confidently and competently'. This was discussed in September's meeting and it was agreed to review a sample of staff objectives to ensure they are clearly linked to assessment. This was done last month with target setting reviews in November. A report will now be received from KB and committee has already received feedback from Jenny Stroud (JS) on the training and development relating to assessment broken down into plans already in place and, where there is sufficient budget, to proceed with this and when the new budget is set, at P&P meeting in March, to check that sufficient budget provision has been made for training and development relating to assessment.

Pastoral – NS absent. The Chair requested that NS is asked to provide a written update on how Pastoral committee are going to meet their vision objectives throughout the year.

ACTION: Clerk to email NS requesting written update.

Premises – LG reported that due to new build it was hard to make a concrete plan and it has therefore been agreed that ahead of every committee meeting LG and VON will meet with KB and then update the committee. Meeting will take place at end January 2016. Nothing to report at the current time. It is agreed meetings will have to happen on an ad hoc basis. This is with regard to maximising use of internal/external space. LG will proceed next term with involving the School Council. KB confirmed that three appointments are now booked with landscape architects, so the school can move forward with discussion around the external space. It was agreed that since the project is on schedule, meetings will inevitably take place very soon regarding the interior space; signage; colour; landscaping etc. KB will feedback to LG as soon as possible.

Admissions – PC reported that this was a Standing Item on the Admissions agenda. Since the key point is about influencing the key external parties – schools, SDBE, LA, the action is driven mainly by BV and KB, who will report back.

6. FOLLOWING OFSTED TRAINING, TO DISCUSS HOW TO ENSURE ALL GOVERNORS UNDERSTAND OFSTED'S EXPECTATIONS

Item carried forward from the last meeting. LC and BV have prepared a one page summary for all governors clarifying all the top line data and information that governors will be expected to know. Underneath this will be layers input by specific governors as not all governors are expected to know the finer points of all areas. Experts on different committees will be able to talk to Ofsted about each area. The final document will be brought to the next FGB meeting on 26th January. It was agreed that this was a feasible way forward in preparation for Ofsted.

ACTION: BV/LC to prepare document for FGB on 26th January 2016.

It was also noted that further Ofsted training will take place at the next governor INSET day when governors will be looking at their skills audit and the governor SEF. Our new SIP is being invited to input into the day, after which the governors should be OFSTED ready.

ACTION: LG & DD to plan the governor INSET day and set a date.

7. TO NOTE THE COMPLETED SEF IN ITS NEW FORMAT AND AGREE A TIMETABLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF EACH SECTION

KB clarified that this document is now in a new, succinct format, which, to avoid duplication, now incorporates information normally disseminated in the Headteacher's Report. The main part of the SEF (first two and a half pages and the box at the bottom) is essentially the Headteacher's Report. This has been brought into line with new OFSTED guidance brought into effect in September 2015. Progress since last inspection stays the same, with other information updated and moved around.

It was queried whether the Headteacher will highlight changes made from meeting to meeting and this was confirmed.

The Headteacher went through the SEF highlighting areas of particular interest e.g. Raise Online, Assessment, EYFS. The governors then raised various questions which KB responded to.

It was highlighted that the Assistant Head has handed her notice in and will not be returning from maternity leave.

ACTION: Clerk to schedule SEF and Headteacher's Report as one item on future agendas.

STATUTORY

8. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

i. To approve Terms of Reference for the Steering Group
Approved.

ii. To agree Standing Orders proposed by SDBE

Before comments were given, the Chair pointed out that meeting timings will need to reflect our Ways of Working decisions and asked governors for their views on whether timings should be set against agenda items, with meetings limited to two hours. Strong feelings have been expressed both for and against this and the Chair asked for comments prior to a vote. After some discussion, it was agreed that timings should be indicative.

ACTION: 'Indicative timings' to be added to Standing Orders.

The listing of Standing Items within the Standing Orders was then

discussed, with a view to various items e.g. Safeguarding, added to FGB Agenda as a standing item. Whilst this does not add value, a brief overview is a minimum requirement and it was agreed that there is great value in being very explicit. This will be presented as a separate, verbal Standing Item following on from the Headteacher's Report.

It was then agreed that no additional standing items to be included in the Standing Orders.

ACTION: Clerk to add Verbal Report on Safeguarding from the Headteacher as Standing Item on FGB Agenda.

Quoracy of committee meetings was then discussed and it was agreed that this should be at least three governors for each committee meeting, with FGB quoracy remaining as it is.

LMF agreed to redraft the Standing Orders for clarity without changing content.

The Standing Orders were then approved.

ACTION: LMF to redraft Standing Orders. BV to recirculate final version to all governors.

iii. Committee membership agreed now that all new governors appointed.

iv. To approve SEND Report – Done.

v. H&S Policy approved subject to typographical corrections.

vi. Action Plan on Policies

The Chair gave an overview on the current position on policies, which DD has reviewed. DD then noted that there are three main areas needing attention:

- Statutory policies which are reviewed more frequently than necessary, for which DD has made recommendations for longer review periods.
- Policies that are not the governors' responsibility and can be delegated to the Headteacher.
- Non-statutory policies, for which DD recommends committee chairs take a clear view of whether all the policies are actually needed and how often those that are needed should be reviewed. It was agreed that each committee will produce an Action Plan on policies for Summer 1 FGB, including recommendation for whether the policies should be on public or governor-only area of the school website.

There was some discussion regarding justifiable decisions being made around some policies potentially being Plans e.g. Bereavement and more appropriately done by Headteacher/staff. The Chair pointed out that this work is very timely given the sea change in brand new guidance, which states that governors should not be writing policies, but approving them. LHB queried the Disability Equality Scheme. Identified that BD is working on this and that they will liaise regarding related policies on SEND Report.

**ACTION: Clerk to add brief Policies Progress Report from each committee at next two FGB meetings.
Committees to produce comprehensive Action Plan on their policies for Summer 1 FGB.
LHB to liaise with BD regarding related policies on SEND Report.**

It was noted that Pay Policy should have been on the Agenda for approval.

ACTION: Clerk to recirculate Pay Policy for email approval followed by ratification at next FGB meeting on 26th January 2016.

9. TO DISCUSS AND AGREE WAYS OF WORKING/PRINCIPLES FOR GOVERNORS

- Indicative timings agreed.
- After considerable discussion regarding Minutes of committee meetings v chair's reports, it was agreed that each Chair will give very brief summary highlighting salient points as necessary (1 minute maximum) and giving opportunity for carefully considered, brief questions or points. If extensive discussion required this can happen outside of FGB meeting.
- Contributions to be clear and concise.
- All views encouraged and must be respected and members prepared to concede if weight of opinion is on the other side.
- Administrative decisions to be taken outside of FGB.
- Frame all comments in a positive way.
- Offer solutions rather than simply highlighting issues (within the governor domain).
- Collective role, blame not being apportioned and should not be perceived as such, if issues arise.
- Positive about our contributions.
- Use knowledge from other committees to avoid duplication of effort.
- Summary reports to be more fully utilised to avoid wasting time.
- Agenda items specific and clear about action required.
- Spread workload more evenly by doing work outside of meetings.
- Limit FGB to two hours.
- Think carefully about what needs to go to FGB.
- Papers not distributed far enough in advance should go to next meeting or approved by email before being ratified at next meeting.
- Agenda must go out on time (7 days in advance), even if relevant chair has not yet reviewed them.
- When questions sent out for feedback, deadline should be given.
- Do not 'reply all' unless necessary.
- Queen's email addresses for all governors who want one.
- Governor welcome pack needs updating and circulating.
- Phase visits and communication through phase leaders needs to be reviewed.
- Formal feedback should go to relevant people.

ACTION: Clerk to schedule Steering Committee for next term.

10. For Noting

- iv. GH Annual Schedule of Work – thanked chairs, only one report outstanding, from Pastoral committee chair, so will be meeting with BV to decide a format.

ACTION: Clerk to request Pastoral committee report from NS.

- v. It was noted that Governance Overview was covered in Item 6. Ofsted training.

11. Governors' Training

It was agreed that all governors will let Clerk know of any training undertaken and that Clerk will produce a Training spreadsheet for distribution.

ACTION: Clerk to produce up to date training spreadsheet in due course.

Governors gave feedback on training they have undertaken. Prevent training has been completed by all governors.

The Chair asked all governors to ensure they have completed the GEL module on Governor Visits prior to undertaking their visits at school and a governor also highlighted the value of the LA course on Visits. The Chair asked governors to make this training a priority.

12. For noting Committee and Phase Reports

12.4 C&S chair highlighted the document giving clarity on the process for Governor visits, which has been updated. It was pointed out that FW has only had four responses to her Christian Distinctiveness form.

12.5 Inconclusive discussion on Recruitment Strategy – difficult issue last year and likely to be difficult this year. This has been referred to P&P committee.

12.6 Admissions are in consultation period for proposed Admissions Policy.

12.10 It was noted that once Visit Reports are agreed with the visit hosts (teachers), they should be sent to the Headteacher, copying the Clerk. Once agreed by the Headteacher, it would be helpful if governors could circulate their report to all governors; this will avoid excessive reading prior to FGB.

13. AOB

- Following a period of high governor turnover, the Chair highlighted the challenges associated with building an effective new governor team. She outlined the 'Tuckman model' and will forward this to all governors.

- The Vice Chair informed governors that a revised Skills Audit will be carried out in the first half of Spring 1, prior to the governor away day.
- The Headteacher highlighted success in latest published league tables. The governors congratulated the staff.

The meeting concluded at 9.45pm.

FGB Meeting, 10th December 2015

ACTIONS:

BV

To carry forward Statement of Commitment Review.

To prepare Governance Overview document for FGB on 26th January 2016 (with LC).

To recirculate final version of Standing Orders (following redraft by LMF) to all governors.

VT

To add further information on EHC v Statementing to SEND Report and to implement agreed amendments to Report prior to going on website.

LC

To prepare Governance Overview document for FGB on 26th January 2016 (with BV).

LG

To plan governor INSET day and set a date (with DD).

DD

To plan governor INSET day and set a date (with LG).

LMF

To redraft Standing Orders and send to BV for circulation.

LHB

To liaise with BD regarding related policies on SEND Report.

Committees

To produce comprehensive Action Plan on their policies for Summer 1 FGB.

Clerk

To add Learning Certainties to FGB Agenda on 26th January 2016 (DONE).

To email NS requesting written update on monitoring against Vision Priorities and Pastoral report on Annual Schedule of Work (LC DONE).

To add indicative timings to Standing Orders (DONE.)

To add Verbal Report on Safeguarding by Headteacher as Standing Item to FGB Agenda (DONE).

To add Policies Progress Report from each committee to next two FGB meetings (DONE).

To recirculate Pay Policy for email approval followed by ratification at FGB meeting on 26th January 2016 (DONE).

To schedule Steering Committee meeting for next term.

To produce up to date training spreadsheet.