

THE QUEEN'S SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THE QUEEN'S C OF E SCHOOL CUMBERLAND ROAD KEW SURREY TW9 4HF

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governors of The Queen's School
held at the school on Tuesday 13th December 2016 at 7.30pm.

- Present: *Foundation Governors (7)*
(LC) Laura Coughtrie (*Co-Chair*) (GH) Gail Hiscock
(DD) David Durie (*Co-Chair*) (ER) Emma Roberts
(KA) Kristen Anderson (*Co-Vice Chair*) (HC) Hatty Cadman
(IH) Inga Hall (*Co-Vice Chair*) (CR) Caroline Roberts
- Non-Foundation Governors (4)*
(KB) Katie Bentham (*Headteacher*) (VON) Vicky O'Neill
(LG) Lucy Gradillas (BB) Bernadette Bird
- Local Authority Governor (1)*
Liz Holden Bithell
- Co-Opted Governors (1)*
(JU) Jean Utshudiema
- Associate Governor (1)*
(LMF) Luci Mitchell Fry
- Non-Voting (1)*
Philippa Anderson (*Clerk*)

Opening Prayer (led by DD)

1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies were received from Mark Ollard and Bonney Venning. Caroline Roberts, Gail Hiscock and Lucy Gradillas sent apologies for late arrival.

LC opened the meeting by giving a brief update on the governing body. A foundation governor vacancy has received no applicants and will be advertised again in the New Year, as will a Parent Governor vacancy after BB's departure in mid-January. BB was thanked very much by the Co-Chairs for her contribution over the past four years.

2. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL AND 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.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 5th OCTOBER 2016

The minutes were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting and signed by DD.

4. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE QUIZ

The governors participated in the Quiz already undertaken by all staff members.

GH arrived at 19.52pm.

STRATEGIC – Linked to Vision

5. TO EVALUATE ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PAST ACADEMIC YEAR, INCLUDING OVERVIEW OF RAISEONLINE (KB).

KB gave a brief overview of RAISEonline and noted that much more detail will be given at the January training session. Five children in KS2 were classed as disadvantaged, however four of these children were in-year admissions and made very good progress during their time at the school and it was noted that this is not categorised as a trend from KS1 data.

LG arrived at 19.58pm.

Also noted is a differential between girls and boys in writing. However, when this is broken down the school finds no evidence to support this. KB noted that there are new ways of measuring progress and the school's progress in Reading is 4.6, in Maths 2.8 and in writing 0.8 – all positive, strong progress measures, although writing compared to reading raises questions. However, it was noted that this year in particular, writing expectations from the government were very unclear until very late – February. Also noted that writing is marked by a teacher and therefore subjective. However, as the school does a lot of moderation both internally and externally within the borough, it was noted that Richmond as a borough has not performed well in writing which raises questions about whether writing has been marked too strictly borough-wide. KB pointed out that next year Mark Samuel has been accepted as a KS2 borough moderator for writing, which should aid the school in gaining a broader understanding.

Q: Is action in hand to improve scores on the same basis for the current year?

Now have all KS1 results in and these are being tracked against end of Year 6 expectations and KB went into some depth explaining the difficulties in this, whilst noting that the school is trying to ensure that predictions are realistic. It was noted that RAISE have now lost the contract which could cause further difficulties in the future.

Q: Writing was discussed with rigour at C&S two years ago and there was a commitment to ensure children were not writing for the sake of it. How is balance now being struck in the classroom?

Looking at different opportunities for writing, in various contexts, so that not always an English focus. However, in years 6 and 2, there has to be enough evidence for each child if the school is moderated, which has a knock-on effect, and 'greater depth' has to be understood in all year groups, which is being worked on - an INSET planned on writing and writing moderation, and with strong professional dialogue taking place. This will be followed up by MS sharing his expertise once he has received training.

6. TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS/STAFF TO VISION SETTING WORKING GROUP AND RECEIVE UPDATE ON PROGRESS

LC gave a brief overview of the plans for the INSET on 3rd January 2017 and pointed out that this will be a very important strategic activity for the coming two years. Working Group comprises Voulla Demetriou and Fran West from the staff and LC, LG and KA from the governors. Questionnaires were sent out to all stakeholders, focus groups were held with children and the SLT and LC fed back on the response rate. An agenda has been prepared. LC asked governors to ensure their familiarity with the current Vision priorities.

7. TO RECEIVE A FINANCIAL UPDATE AGAINST THE BUDGET TO PERIOD 8

The Finance Chair clarified that in education, and particularly schools, results are not forecast until Period 9, pointing out that this is very different to the public sector in this regard, with an agreed budget not set until three months through the year. GH further noted that where there is currently a pressure on finances, it is possible to manage every line of the budget so that there is a sufficient degree of monitoring and comfort necessary. There should be a prediction for year-end by the next FGB meeting.

GH went through performance to date and gave clarity on the implications of the EHC Plans and further noted that Lettings are looking healthy, clubs are good, other than noting a shortfall for the Breakfast Club, which the school will endeavour to promote and focus on in the New Year.

With regard to costs, and in particular teaching staff costs, GH noted that a balance was having to be achieved and difficult judgements made between rewarding staff adequately with an ever-tightening budget, which explains why the school is over-budget on staffing. GH went on to point out that this pressure is unlikely to be eased, in particular when balanced around current recruitment difficulties. The school is endeavouring to reward and keep quality staff and is investing in 'grow your own', with three staff members currently interested in jobs as NQTs next September. It was agreed that a tight grip will have to be kept on staffing.

Other costs, e.g. cleaning, electricity, gas etc, in the new build have been uncertain, but the position is currently that £23,000 has come back from the builders. Following a question, it was noted that the Governors' Appeal funds are for use against maintenance costs and entirely separate. It was noted that stock overspends have been discussed with staff with a view to allocating this budget to a staff member to own and monitor going forward. The underspend on the new build is largely a matter of timing, so this is ring-fenced.

It was noted that the running deficit for the end of the year will be as budgeted, if not a little more.

The Finance Chair went on to point out the financial constraints within LBRuT, and that this will filter down to schools, the impact of which will be a financial hit of approximately £50 settlement per pupil i.e. £21/22k, which will negate the positive impact of the rise in pupil numbers on roll, currently at 409.

KB then reported on a letter sent from secondary and primary school Headteachers in Richmond and Kingston regarding concerns around lack of funding. KB pointed out that some Heads had passed this letter onto their parents and requested that this should be discussed at Finance Committee regarding the way in which the school communicates with parents about funding and the constraints placed upon the school.

8. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON CURRENT STATUS OF PLANNING CONSENT FOR THE 3G PITCH AND ON STATUS OF THE COMMUNITY USE AGREEMENT

IH confirmed that the planning application had been submitted in early November, with the eight-week process now drawing to an end. The community consultation phase finishes this Friday, with the school having hosted a well-attended community event to address key issues. There is now a workstream to communicate to the broader parent community via the PSA and the Newsletter. This process should come to an end by the end of December. There are currently 16 objections, with two in support. There is a meeting this week regarding the mimosa tree and ongoing communication with the council. The nature and the substance of the objections are not believed to be insurmountable and the size of the pitch probably hinges on the decision made about the tree. IH reported the hope that the external community use agreement could explore a position that everybody will be happy with, particularly with regard to out of hours usage. The Chair thanked IH for the huge amount of work done.

9. TO NOTE THAT THE SEN/PPG PROPOSAL AND SPEND IS UP TO DATE

LHB reported on this and it was noted – it is now on the school website.

10. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE NEW BUILD (KB)

The Headteacher gave a verbal report, noting that contract completion had taken place on time at the beginning of November. Snagging issues are still outstanding, particularly around the heating, which the contractors have monitored, but which still requires resolving. A further snagging meeting is arranged for January 2017.

Q: Are concerns being adequately documented?

Yes, every concern/communication is via email.

CR arrived at 20.40pm.

11. TO NOTE THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT (SEF UPDATE)

KB noted that following a meeting (Leaders in Partnership) attended by the Co-Chairs and KB, from now this item will alternate between the SEF and a Report and gave an overview of key items, including a staffing update and the Richmond Schools' Trust donation of £81,000. BB was thanked for putting in the bid for the latter.

Following a question, KB reported on the Racist Incident Form started in Summer 2011, which is sent to AfC when an incident occurs e.g. a recent very low level incident in Yr1.

Q: With regards to training, on what basis are the courses selected and also the individuals who go on them? Are the AfC courses covered by our subscription?
Selected on need, relevance, subject specialisms. The Deep Learning Conference was attended by KB/JS as this is the direction they want for the school. Outcomes of this will then be disseminated as relevant. The Headteacher clarified the costs involved.

Q: Are some of the courses driven by the outcomes of teacher's appraisals?

It does all triangulate within school so it marries up between appraisals, training and school development plans.

Q: With regard to intervention groups, should the difference between girls and boys be being discussed in Phase meetings?

KB gave clarification, noting that these are not trends as such, but that the gender will be monitored through Target Tracker.

Q: Do interventions cover EAL As, Bs and Cs?

Yes for As and Bs and possibly also for Cs, depending on how well they are progressing – KB gave detail on the progress made generally by EAL children.

A brief discussion took place regarding the staffing implications of current and forthcoming maternity cover and it was further noted that the long term staff sickness situation should be resolved very shortly.

This was noted as a very useful summary and KB was thanked. It was agreed this would be presented termly.

12. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING FROM THE HEADTEACHER (*Standing Item*)

The Headteacher covered this item within the Headteacher's Report (above).

13. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHAIRS, INCLUDING ITEMS OF GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE CONSIDERED BY THEIR COMMITTEES SHOULD BE DRAWN TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FGB AND TO NOTE THE MINUTES CIRCULATED.

It was noted that governors should read all the minutes circulated but that any governor can attend any committee meeting should they so wish. DD elucidated on the reporting expected from each committee chair in the future.

i. Premises – a considerable amount to consider with the new build, plus an extraordinary meeting to discuss the 2017 Year 6 school journey at which a unanimous decision to proceed was reached. LHB queried the Accessibility Plan, which needs updating to reflect the new building. KB confirmed that BD is working on this.

ii. Pastoral – Paul Adams attended the last meeting and gave a very useful presentation on E-safety and will do this each academic year and LG noted this should be shared more broadly with FGB, specifically with regard to progressing an E-Safety Charter.

ACTION: Co-Chairs to consider how to follow up on E-Safety at FGB.

iii. C&S – JU invited all staff to attend Target Tracker training with JS if possible.

iv. P&P – HC noted that although the school is over budget on staffing, FGB should be reassured that P&P are looking very closely at all decisions and tough decisions have been made as appropriate and further drew attention to the confidential Pay Committee meeting at which pay and recruitment decisions were moderated and scrutinised. The possibilities of a 'shadow' staffing structure, as disseminated at LIP training, was discussed for the future.

v. Admissions – a possible change to the admissions arrangements has been discussed, a working group has been formed and meetings have taken place with stakeholders including Father Peter and Father Nigel and a working group meeting has taken place to scope out an action plan. LMF gave clarification on the drive for this change and the position to date.

STATUTORY

14. TO RATIFY UPDATED AND APPROVED CHILD PROTECTION POLICY.

Ratified and approved.

15. TO APPROVE PAY POLICY

HC gave background and noted that it was decided at P&P to add in a sentence to make clear that the annual 1% increase for teachers that is broadly anticipated and which was this year awarded, is in fact at the governors' discretion. This does not apply to support staff for whom increases are decided by the LA. The Pay Policy has been out for staff consultation and is now ready for approval, with minor changes highlighted in red. Policy approved and signed by the Co-Chairs. HC then went on to inform governors that P&P would be considering differentiating grade boundaries more finely in the policy for next year following investigation within the borough regarding what other schools are doing.

16. TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATION/PRESENTATION ON SHARED DRIVE OPTIONS

LG noted that it would be useful to have a facility to share documents and had emailed all governors inviting them to access Dropbox (although it was noted that this cannot be done whilst in school) in order to share access, in the first instance, to the Governors' Training Log. The Clerk noted the possibility of using the AfC facility for file sharing and will investigate.

ACTION: Clerk to investigate usage of AfC file sharing facility.

17. FOR NOTING:

i. Chair's Report, including correspondence (circulated at the start of the meeting). DD highlighted the change in admissions arrangements proposed by Christ's School and currently out for consultation, which LC and KB are investigating and will respond to, as can any parent – LC will supply wording for the Newsletter to assist parents. LC will circulate response to the governors in due course.

ACTION: LC to circulate response to all governors in due course.

ii. Outcomes Report – *c/f to Spring 2 FGB following C&S meeting.*

iii. Revised and finalised Staff Code of Conduct as approved by SLT. KB to amend item regarding wearing a hat in school.

ACTION: KB to action amendment to Code of Conduct regarding wearing hats.

iv. To note verbal policy progress report from LHB (*Standing Item*) – minor amendments made to various policies (details given), which have been approved:

- Recruitment
- Anti-Bullying
- Positive Handling
- Attendance

KB noted that these amendments are the outcome of a recent Safeguarding Audit.

- Volunteers Policy – now due for reviewing at next Pastoral Committee, with date changes made in the meantime.
- Assessment Policy – completed and approved by C&S.
- Exclusion Policy – approved by email subject to review date change.
- SEND Report – substantive changes agreed and is now on the website – header and footer to be changed by Vicki Trinder.
- E-safety Policy – due for review in January. KB to follow up with Paul Adams.

ACTION: KB to follow up with PA on E-Safety Policy review.

v. Importance of the Annual Schedule of Work in Agenda setting (now on Governors' Only area of website). DD noted that LIP training highlighted the necessity of an Annual Schedule of Work and asked that it was referred to during agenda setting.

18. GOVERNORS' TRAINING (*Standing Item*)

- i. Shared Drive proposal noted.
 - ii. RAISEonline training on 10th January noted.
- IH further minuted thanks to JS for extremely useful Target Tracker training, well attended by governors. Further, that New Governor Induction Pack is now on governor only area of the website, providing guidance for new and prospective governors.

OTHER

19. AOB
None.

20. Date of next meeting: Monday 27th February 2017, 7.30pm (date change).

The meeting concluded at 21.45pm.

FGB Meeting, 13th December 2016

ACTIONS:

Co-Chairs

To consider how to follow up on E-Safety at FGB.

LC

To circulate to all governors the response to Christ's School regarding the proposed change to their admissions arrangements.

KB

**To action amendment to the Code of Conduct regarding the wearing of hats.
To follow up with Paul Adams on E-Safety Policy review.**

Clerk

To investigate usage of AfC file sharing facility.