

Minutes for FBG meeting 02/07/14

6.00pm

ATTENDEES: Katie Smith (KS), Peter Izard (PI), Peter Newbold (PN), Paul Cartin (PC), Damon Wright (DW), Laura Carter (LC), Cath Beckett (CB), Chris Mendez (CM), Kim Turner (KT), Nigel Stevens (NS), Sasha O'Conner (SOC), Michael Dewey (MD), Jacqui Sims(JS), Candice Newey

ABSENCES: No apologies for absence recorded. **Jason Bailey noted as absent.**

WELCOMES: A warm welcome back to Sasha O Conner and welcome to Candice Newey (observing with the possibility of becoming teacher governor in the future)

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: it was noted that no-one had any pecuniary interests.

HEAD AND DEPUTY REPORT: P N presented the Headteacher's report to the governors for Summer Term 2014. Key points highlighted by PN and discussed were around staffing changes and their potential impact.

- Angie Bower is to return to teach one day a week from September with a focus on the more able in reading and writing across all year groups. Richard Cowle will teach one day a week with a focus on the more able in maths across all year groups.
- Alison Green appointed the new SENCO from an outstanding school
- Caroline Arnold to take on Learning Mentor role and has already received training
- 4 HLTAs now trained (Higher Level Teaching Assistants) 1 per year group
- From September there will be an emphasis on year 'teams' consisting of a year group leader, an HLTA and 2 TAs. This model will ensure distributed leadership and allow for effective interventions for groups and individuals and sharper focus on learning.
- PN commented that although staff movements this year have been significant, this can be viewed positively. Maria Robert's report commented positively on the schools movement of staff through upward promotion and sensible recruitment ensuring a strengthened middle leadership team.
- New recruits update: new teachers appointed are Laura Whitman, Kimberly Harris (NQT) and Alison Green (SENCO). 3 TAs have been appointed with further interviews to be held to appoint 2 more TA positions.
- PI questioned the difference between a TA and an HLTA: HLTAs can provide class and PPA cover which is more effective financially for the school and they provide continuity in the classroom as well as providing good quality teaching.
- Nigel Stevens questioned a note on exclusion in Maria Roberts report. It was explained by Michael Dewey that although one exclusion is still unfavourable, it is considered to be a one-off incident that will not be repeated. The correct authorities are involved and the child was due to leave school by September. MD also commented that one racist incident this term was recognised as a positive.

It was agreed the Head's report was detailed enough and provided the necessary information to the GB.

MARIA ROBERT'S REPORT: The GB were updated with a summary of the day's visit (one day which is part of an ongoing support).

- PN highlighted the comments 'good and strengthening' were used to describe the school and was delighted with the recognition of the school's improvement. He personally praised staff for all their efforts.

- PN commented on the return of SATS papers. Although thresholds are unknown for this year, if last year's boundaries remained it would provide a positive data picture. MD elaborated and commented that writing paper tends to hold more bearing on the school:
- **Level 4 +** were at 85% which is down on last year's but still positive and important ie. is still above national averages
- Cath Beckett commented positively on the great reflection this has along with Maria Roberts report showing the progress of the school. CB asked when the SATS were to be published. PN confirmed this to be 8th July and will discuss with PI and PC as to when and how to share the information with the GB and different audiences once the results are known.
- It was questioned whether the GB could find out before parents on feedback from such positive visits as it appears mention was made on the parents newsletter before the GB. It was agreed this is possible and that the GB should know before the parents. CB asked why it couldn't be shared with the GB straight away, and it was agreed information should be shared with the GB and staff sooner but also sensitively taken.
- Paul Cartin commented on the great results and good comments from Maria's report, but wished to emphasise that until data is good too the school needs to keep pushing forward. Appreciation was shown for everyone's fantastic work but we must not become complaisant.
- Laura Carter commented that recognition of baseline year 3 data, which is robust and well evidenced in school will make a huge difference to junior schools. CB asked whether retrospective baselines will be taken into consideration for the future. PN confirmed that this was explicitly stated by Ofsted to be the case and that it is an expectation that this would be taken into account when forming a final judgment on a school. This is particularly important for us as a junior school as we historically receive well above national average data.

STAFF SURVEY: Paul Cartin reported on the staff survey results.

- It was run in 2014 before half term as this seemed appropriate
- It was an anonymous survey and results showed that 29 members of staff responded. This would be considered a good level of input. The survey showed an average score of 4.31 out of 5 which is upper quartile levels of staff engagement. This is a great outcome.
- There was a 10% improvement on previous results which is positive.
- Strengths identified were clarity of purpose, performance management process, leadership and the use of feedback.
- 'Providing the right materials to do your job' always comes bottom so was not really a concern.
- Actions from survey: **PC and PN to compile report and PC with office admin team to discuss actions to move forward.**

GOVERNOR NEW APPOINTMENTS: Elections were held for positions of **Chair of Governors, Vice Chair of Governors, Chair of teaching and learning** and **Chair of Finance and Staffing.**

- **Chair of governors** (one nominee, Peter Iazard, left the room). It was unanimously agreed that Peter should be re-elected. (PI re-entered the room)
- **Vice Chair of Governors** (one nominee Paul Cartin (PC), left the room). As Nigel Stevens stepped down due to end of tenure, PC offered to take the position. It was unanimously agreed that he should take the position. (PC re-entered the room)
- **Michael Dewey** for Full governor (MD left the room). It was unanimously agreed that MD should be upgraded from associate to full governor. (MD re-entered the room)
- **Chair of Finance and Premises**, (one nomination; PC) As NS to step-down, PC as vice chair nominated himself. (PC left the room) Unanimously agreed. (PC re-entered the room)

- **Chair of Teaching and Learning** (one nomination; PI, left the room). CB questioned the work-load being a chair of governors and chair of teaching and learning. Various options were debated including CB nominating herself, Sharing responsibilities with PI in the short-term with a look to take over in the future, creating two roles that will work together (chair and vice or Joint chairs). Guidance was sought from PI, (PI re-entered the room), CB nominated herself and left the room with PI. Much discussion followed on possible outcomes. Clarification of the role was noted; 'to liaise with the SLT to set the strategic geared agenda to ensure the focus of a meeting aligned with the school and moving it forward'. Lack of experience was questioned and noted as not necessarily important. Eventually, without a clear path, it was agreed to defer the vote in the knowledge that **PI and CB were to work together for 2-3 months to consider their options and for them to collaborate and set the agenda for the next Teaching and Learning meeting next academic year**, as long as PN has a clear contact to work with. (unanimously agreed, PI and CB re-entered the room)

POLICY UPDATES AND REVIEWS: Hayley Pettitt provided the GB with updates on her policy documents.

- It was agreed that the spreadsheets provided good clarity.
- Alison is to take over Jacqui's polices as SENCO
- CB nominated herself to take responsibility for 'single equality Policy', for review in October **to be discussed in the next meeting :**
- **Admissions Arrangements policy**
- **PI to check Instrument of Government**
- **Data Protection (Sharon Carter to own)**

BEHAVIOUR POLICY: PN provided the GB with a proposed new behaviour policy for approval.

- SLT have already reviewed the policy.
- It was agreed by MD that the new policy provided clarity and consistency and this was agreed by Jacqui Sims as a good way to be working. PI voted to adopt the policy which was unanimously agreed.

To be put onto the school website and sent to parents and staff.

QUALITY OF GOVERNANCE REPORT: PC presented to the GB the document for approval and feedback/comments.

- It was agreed that it was clear and simple and helpful on the role of the governors and school.
- PC to bring back to FGB meetings and keep the document rolling.
- PN noted that with monthly GB meetings reports definitely a week in advance may be less realistic as is sometime difficult but should remain the AIM. MD added clearer schedules should help communication. It was agreed that it has been a challenging year and some things have been let slip but the \GB must remain aspirational.
- DM agreed the document was a good way to measure accountability and to refresh aims and goals. NS questioned the interpretation of categories, and it was agreed it could be clearer.

GOVERNING BODY STRATEGY UPDATE: Damon Wright presented a rough draft of strategy document for constructive feedback. (To be finalised next academic year)

- The comments section was questioned and what the section means and how to test for next year.
- PC added 'outstanding' is a long-term aspiration which will take time, questioned whether any circles were missing.

- MD questioned how it mapped on the key OFSTED areas. Behaviour and Safety maybe covered by T & L?
- PC commented that it needs to be clear and it will take time.
- It was suggested that one person owns strategies linked to governor's roles.
- PC raised a question of timescale.
- **Comments to be collated by Katie Smith by the end of the school year for final draft to FGB at next meeting for approval.**

TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS: It was reminded that dates are available for meetings and encouraging everyone to get them in their diary.

- A September get-together with the staff is still to be arranged, **KS to provide PN with 3 Fridays (Not inset days) for PN to discuss with staff.**

MINUTES FROM LAST FGB 21/05/14: minutes provided for sign-off. PC proposer, CB seconded. It was agreed unanimously that the minutes were accurate and were signed off by PI

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING: Teaching and Learning agenda, and 'Deep dive on data'

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Jacqui Sims reported good news from the visiting assessor for Rights Respecting Schools. Southway has been awarded level 1. A thank you to governors, staff and children.
- CB commented that within the GB lots of individuals have different skill sets which could potentially be shared within the new teaching staff in the form of mentors for example, which would provide governing body support to teachers which would benefit governors and the school. Concerns were raised that the idea of a 'mentor' could be difficult to realise and a bit vague. PN commented that highly effective support for new teachers is already in place and should not conflict with the staff's professional development. It was agreed that better mechanisms to get a more productive relationship between the staff and governors are needed.
- MD enquired about the plans for the school entrance and it was noted that the school entrance building work is due to go-ahead over the summer.

MEETING REVIEW TO BE JUDGED AGAINST THE NEW OFSTED FRAMEWORK:

- Strategy presentation confirmed the school is working inwards, outwards and forwards demonstrating an ambitious vision and willingness to evaluate strengths and weaknesses.
- Adoption of a new behaviour policy provides consistency and clarity
- Policies organisation and simplifying information shows good governance.
- The new leadership structure of teaching teams with shared accountability and more control should show further improvements in teaching and learning and develop wider leadership capacity.

Farewells to Jacqui Sims and Laura Carter, and possible welcome to Candice.

NEXT FGB MEETING 24th Sept

8.30pm