

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School held at school on Thursday 8 May 2014 at 7pm

Present: Revd Adams, Mrs Cook, Mrs Fawcett (Vice Chair), Mrs Gale, Mr Grenz, Mrs Leach (Head), Ms Meynell, Mr Smith (Chair), Mr Spencer, Ms Winsemann-Falghera.

Visiting: Mrs Kidney (Deputy Head). In attendance: Miss Owen (Clerk)

The Clerk advised the meeting was quorate, as more than 50% of the current membership, excluding vacancies, was present.

Standing items

1.1 Apologies for absence

Mr Ferguson (work commitment); Ms Kesteven (work commitment), Mr Saunders (work commitment); Mrs Simoes (family reason).

Ms Winsemann-Falghera proposed, Mr Grenz seconded the apologies should be accepted. Agreed by the meeting.

1.2 Declaration of Interests (standing item)

There were no declarations of direct or indirect pecuniary interest by members of the GB in respect of any item on the agenda.

1.3 The Register of Pecuniary Interests 2013 - 2014

The Register was presented: all present have signed.

2. Minutes of the last meeting (27 March 2014)

*typos: page 1:centering; page 4 wish.

Ms Meynell proposed, Mrs Cook seconded the minutes be approved as a correct record. Agreed by all.

2.1 Matters Arising

*The Chair noted this meeting had expected to ratify the appointment of a second Deputy Head. However, the selection panel, by unanimous agreement, had decided not to take the interview process into the second day.

The Action Points agreed at the last GB meeting were noted as completed, or for follow up:

- Mrs Marsters had met with a Parent Governor in early April 2014 regarding the attendance of GRT pupils.
- There are still some contributions to come from Governors for the website (outstanding).
- Data presentations will include the percentage of pupils achieving better than expected progress.
- The Head reported that Ms Kesteven has arranged a visit to Year 4.
- The in-house training on GB effectiveness was held on 30 April 2014.
- The Head noted the draft SEND post Ofsted Action Plan will be taken to the Standards Committee next week.
- The staff wellbeing surveyed has taken place. An analysis is expected shortly. This will be shared with Governors.
- A contingency plan (arising from the Statement of Internal Control) will go to the Resources Committee in the autumn.
- The GB Chair will prepare notes from the Chair's meetings he has attended.
- The Clerk emailed out the link regarding a new free school in Cambridge, proposed by the University.
- The Head has received one adverse comment from a parent about the school closing because of the Tour de France coming through Cambridge on 7 July. The meeting noted the GB had followed due process in reaching its decision. The meeting agreed that by taking the decision to close school for the day, any risk to children's safety arising from staff being unable to reach school, had been negated. The Chair said the decision was objective and was based on clear reasons. The Head noted many Cambridge schools had taken the decision to close for the day.
- The SFVS was submitted to the LA by 31 March 2014.
- The professional day dates were submitted to the LA on 28 March 2014.
- A thank you tea party is planned for volunteers and people who helped to restore the greenhouse and garden area. This will be held on 3 June at 3.30. All Governors are very welcome.

3. Presentation of the final 2013/14 outturn budget and proposed 2014/15 school budget

The Chair of the Resources Committee, Mr Grenz, led this item. The Resources Committee met on 6 May 2014 to finalise the 2014/15 budget, to ensure it is a budget fit for purpose to present to the GB for approval. Mr Grenz distributed a summary sheet showing the income, expenditure and carry forward and capital reserves in the 2014/15 budget and the actual outturn budget of 2013/14. Mr Grenz explained the funding streams that contribute to the income received in the budget. The basic entitlement is £961,140 that accounts for 45% of the total funding. Funding coming in under other headings gives the school a total income for 2014/15 of £2,138,162. Mr Grenz said the school relies on funding coming into the budget throughout the year, from the LA or ad hoc funding e.g. the use of the Shirley Centre. Mr Grenz said there is a discernible tightening of funding, with an overall drop in 2014/15 initial revenue funding of £56,958. However, last year revenue funding gained additional income from various funding streams and, whilst this is difficult to predict, some additional funding could be expected.

Mr Grenz discussed the separate headings on the Budget summary sheet, noting that in 2013/14, the income coming into the final budget had increased by £106,714. Governors had previously agreed to support the aims of the school by using the majority of the 2013/14 carry forward. The meeting discussed the budget variances throughout the past year, noting income may diminish; however, Mrs Chiano is monitoring the carry forward closely, so any variances will be highlighted quickly.

The costs within the budget were discussed. In the 2014/15 budget, the total staff payroll is £1,856,381; this is 86.8% of the budget. Together with other staffing costs e.g. supply, agency, training and development and other staff-related costs, the total staff costs are £1,907,473 (89.2%). Mr Grenz said this is outside the LA's recommended zone of 80-85%; however, the LA had been informed this is for one year only. In 2013/14 the costs for this area were £1,738,612 (79.2%). Mr Grenz said Governors had agreed to commit and invest funding in staffing, to enable the SLT to raise attainment, as part of the strategy to move the school from good to outstanding. Governors recognise that some costs are short term only and cannot be sustained. Mr Grenz explained that top end figures had been used within the proposed budget: recruitment and staff changes may also mean additional funds come back into this area.

The meeting noted the 2013/14 budget showed premises, curriculum, supplies and maintenance costs had an overspend of £67,496. The Head said the school was always seeking to control costs and this area would be closely monitored.

The meeting discussed the use of the carry forward. Mr Grenz said the reserve brought forward from the 2013/14 budget is £194,020. This has accrued over time. The capital reserve brought forward is £6,927. The planned expenditure to support the school's priorities will mean the carry forward in the 2014/15 budget is reduced to £27,800. The meeting agreed the use of the majority of the carry forward is a considerable investment. Mr Grenz said it was helpful to have an early indication of the budgetary position over the next two years, which shows next year's budget with an overspend of -£81,000 and then the following year, an overspend of -£235,000. The Chair said that when looking at budgets going forward, this is not an unexpected scenario; however, it had never happened in reality, as additional funding has always come into the budget to correct any overspend. The Head is confident the school will not need to seek redundancies in the future, as some staff have fixed contracts.

The meeting asked questions arising from various budget areas. The Head explained that a budget is not set for agency staff as this year's costs for PPA and leadership time is budgeted under staff costs. The Head said the SLT is considering how to reduce the need to use supply teachers. Using in-house cover undoubtedly benefits the pupils, rather than using ad hoc cover from a supply agency. The Head said Fulbridge school, which she and a Deputy Head recently visited, do not use supply agency staff and described how Fulbridge manages the need for supply cover. The meeting agreed ways to reduce costs and benefit pupils' educational experience should be explored.

A Governor asked how the pupil premium is determined. The Head said funding is based on the pupil numbers in the January census. Ad hoc changes in pupil premium can occur through government criteria. Nursery pupils are included in the January census for funding purposes.

The meeting briefly discussed any possible impact on the budget of the government's decision to provide universal meals for pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2 from September 2014 e.g. enlargement of the kitchens etc. A Governor noted there is a significant rise in central government funding for the Cambridgeshire Authority and it has been suggested that an extra £255 per pupil may be allocated. Pupil premium has increased this year to £229,789 from £151,629 in the actual 2013/14 budget. A Governor said in her opinion there were many positive messages about funding to enable Governors to feel optimistic about the school's budgetary position. The Chair noted that the school had £67,000 less on deprivation in the 2014/15 budget, compared to the previous year. However, some other grants had increased. The GB, through the Business Manager, need to carefully monitor costs and how they affect the future carry forward.

Mr Grenz said the Resources Committee had approved the staffing structure for 2014/15, of one Head and three DHs, and had scrutinised the 2014/15 budget carefully. The Committee were satisfied to bring the 2014/15 to the GB for approval. The Chair of Resources said this is an aggressive use of the carry forward but necessary to enable the school to move forward to the next Ofsted level of outstanding. The meeting agreed that the school needs financial support from the GB to address its challenges and that the carry forward should be used to support the school's priorities.

Mr Grenz proposed and Ms Winsemann-Falghera seconded that the Governing Body approves the School Budget Plan for the financial year 2014/15 total spend of £2,304,382. Agreed by all.

4. Headteacher's Update (verbal) including updated projections for Year 2 and Year 6

The Head discussed her report and updated Key Stage projections. Considerable pupil movement has taken place since the projections were updated on 23 April. The Head discussed the analysis of the autumn and spring term assessments for the KS1 cohort; the projections have been slightly revised to reflect the abilities within the KS1 cohort. Reading at Level 2C+ has been

revised slightly downwards. However, the previous projections are achievable, with the school building on last year's attainment, particularly in Writing. In answer to a Governor's question, the Head said 67% of last year's cohort achieved Level 2c+ in Reading, Writing and Maths combined. This year's projection is 74%. Year 2 teachers are confident about results being in the projected bands and reaching the projection of 74% in the combined subjects.

KS1 has been selected by the LA for moderation. The Head described this process to the meeting. LA moderators will visit the school in June. They will look at a range of evidence to support teachers' assessments in levelling children's work to levels that represent overall achievement. Samples of work from a group of children will be randomly selected by the moderators: the teacher assessments and test outcomes will be scrutinised for accuracy and discussed with the teachers and the Head. Year 2 teachers have attended moderation training and this visit is helpful for continuing professional development.

The **KS2 cohort** has seen significant changes in pupil movement recently; there has been a departure from Cambridge by the majority of Traveller children, which has taken place earlier in the academic year than in previous years. Consequently, the Year 6 cohort has decreased from 52 to 46. The Level 4+ projections have not been revised in Reading. For Writing, the Level 4+ projections have been revised upwards, and slightly downwards in Maths at Level 5. This year there are 44 pupils with KS1 data. The projection for making two levels of progress in Reading has not been altered but it has been revised downwards in Writing and Maths. The progress of girls in Maths will be an area to work on in next year's development plan. The Head discussed the preparations for SATs week, noting the input from teachers, the provision of free breakfasts and the conscientious approach by the Year 6 pupils. The floor target for children to achieve three subjects at Level 4 is 65%. The school's projection is 67.73%. In answer to questions from Governors, the Head said if a child was absent on the day that a SATs test was taken, they could not sit it when they returned to school. SATs results are used by secondary schools for target setting and to gauge pupils' progress in KS3 and KS4. The meeting discussed the projections and floor targets. The Head said, whilst the projections had been revised, she was confident that the school's results would be above the floor target of 65%.

The Head discussed changes to the September 2014 staffing profile. Mrs Sanders will return in June, after her maternity leave. A Deputy Head will take on the Inclusion Manager role in September and will increase her working time to 80%. The Head discussed other future staffing changes and the three new teaching appointments the school has made. A maternity leave post is currently being advertised.

The Head explained the selection panel's decision not to make an appointment to the second substantive Deputy Head post, following interviews this week. As it is now too late in the academic year to appoint a second substantive Deputy Head for September, the Head wished to recruit support for the SLT's aim to raise attainment, from within the current leadership team. The new role of Acting Assistant Head(s) will include developing and supporting teaching and also mentoring good teaching to become outstanding. Time will be given for AAH(s) to come out of a class teacher role to implement this support. The Head said the best way to cover classes would be sought, to avoid potential disruption to children's learning. The role(s) will be advertised internally and will be on a fixed term contract, for one year. The GB was in strong agreement with this proposal, recognising that there are currently outstanding teachers on the staff who could develop their skills and progress professionally with additional responsibilities. The meeting discussed the national difficulties in teacher recruitment and agreed this would be an ideal solution that would allow outstanding teachers to develop further their skills.

The meeting proposed that following difficulties in appointing a second substantive Deputy Head, the Head is to move ahead with plans to achieve results, similar to those that would have been achieved through the appointment of a second Deputy Head, by appointing an Acting Assistant Head or Acting Assistant Heads from within existing staff. Proposed by Mrs Fawcett, seconded by Revd Adams. Agreed by all.

5. Governor monitoring groups

**Lead Governors were asked to note that yearly overview reports would be required for the final GB meeting of the year on 17 July.*

- **SEND:** This group met on 28 April, to review and discuss the final stages of monitoring. Governors in the group will provide a report on pupil premium and a report on progress with Writing by Year 4 school action plus pupils. Mrs Fawcett will report on the progress of pupils with statements. Mrs Fawcett asked for her appreciation of the efforts made by the Inclusion Team to be minuted.
- **Writing:** The Lead Governor presented her reports on Writing and discussed a learning walk in April that members of the group had undertaken. Governors were impressed with exciting Writing displays and had noted multiple opportunities for writing in role-play areas. Governors in the group had seen Writing celebrated in many ways e.g. in corridor and hall displays, Writers of the week, the Writing Celebration book. Governors agreed the consistency of approach throughout the school is evident and highlighted the clear progression through the Rainbow Writer scheme. The IPC provides many opportunities and purposes for writing. Parent workshops are another successful way of encouraging parents to support their children's writing. A Governor noted the high standard and quality of Writing he had seen during a visit to Year 5 classrooms. The targets in the Writing RAP remain virtually unchanged. In reply to a Governor's question, The Head said

the new curriculum will be discussed with staff; the emphasis on SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) will remain. The new curriculum will offer new initiatives but will not change the school's approach; staff will continue to use texts to inspire and the ideas of Pie Corbett to allow children's' creative powers to soar.

- **Maths:** Richard Spencer met with the Maths Leader on 7 May to review progress on the Maths RAP and review projections. Year 6 pupils may fall short of their projections. He noted a clear focus on interventions for groups of children to achieve targets. A three-day Maths school took place in the Easter holidays for selected Year 6 children. A target group of KS1 children, with the potential to achieve Level 3, is now receiving special intervention. The Deputy Head noted the benefits of the Perse Maths enrichment programme and said the school was fortunate to share this partnership. Good year on year progress is being made by the KS1 cohort. The trend towards closing the gap between FSM and non-FSM children continues. Teacher-led initiatives are the most successful. The changes to teaching Maths in the new curriculum will be challenging and far-reaching. The Head said the new curriculum would mean training would be undertaken by teachers, next year, across all subjects. A Governor noted there is a clear focus on where individual groups can be extended further, including groups of lower ability and more able children. The Head said the school's analysis of data was used to identify and support particular groups. In answer to a Governor's question, the Head said there are six Year 6 children taking the Level 6 Maths SAT this year. Last year, one pupil achieved Level 6.
- **IPC:** The Lead Governor expressed concern that she is the only Governor on this group, although she had enjoyed the two meetings she has attended in school, including a learning walk. The Chair said that when the membership of groups is discussed at the Autumn A meeting, it is expected that other Governors will join. Mr Grenz offered to join any meetings after school. **The Chair thanked Mr Grenz and said he will ask Mrs Simoes if she would join this group in the interim.** The meeting agreed with the Chair's suggestion. Revd Adams will provide a written report for the summer term B GB meeting. The Chair thanked all Lead Governors for their reports.

6. SDIP 2014 2015

The Head said she is reviewing the 2013/14 objectives later this term. The Leadership Team are reviewing progress with the current RAPs and, together with subject leaders, are producing new RAP's for Writing, Maths, SEND and the IPC, to take the school forward. The school grounds are being discussed with the aim of improving the facilities and opportunities for play and outdoor learning.

The Head asked the Resources and Standards Committee to suggest areas Governors would like to include in the new SDIP. The Head said the priority areas would remain virtually unchanged for next year.

The meeting agreed the draft SDIP 2014/15 will be put on the Autumn Term B agenda.

7. Data Governor Report

The Data Governor discussed how parents, moving into the area, might look at local schools' Ofsted data dashboards and this may influence any choices about schools they might choose. Dashboards have superseded league tables. The Data Governor had undertaken an activity using this school's data and the data from two other Cambridge schools. The activity allowed comparisons to be made by looking specifically at certain aspects of attainment. The meeting discussed his conclusions. For example FSM children do better at Shirley (with the exception of Writing) than FSM children at two other local schools. Non-FSM children do equally as well at Shirley, as at either of the other two local schools. Careful examination of the data allows very positive comparisons to be drawn, despite the very different catchment areas of the comparator schools. The meeting agreed Shirley has enormous strengths and has made huge progress; however, this is not always easily communicated through dashboards. The Chair suggested publicity and communication should be undertaken to communicate the success of this school. The Deputy Head suggested a link to the dashboard could be put on the school's website to support and reinforce the school's assertions. More quotes from children and parents to verbalise the school's ethos were suggested for the website. Governors agreed the rate of progress at this school is impressive and dashboards do not always evidence this easily and first impressions matter. The Head noted the new Ofsted framework will focus on progress, pupil premium, and closing the gap. **The Chair will liaise with Carol Peel at CGS about data dashboards, using the Data Governor's exemplar exercise (anonymised), as CGS may find it of interest.**

8. Parent Council/Group

A Governor explained the most recent meetings had focused on the reward systems used in school, which were clearly explained by the facilitating teacher. Feedback from previous meetings is always given at the start of every meeting. Two separate meetings allowed very contrasting opinions to be discussed, with some parents supporting rewards and others expressing the view that rewards promote unhealthy competition and questioning whether praise in itself was not enough reward. Attendance awards were also discussed. The Head noted Attendance is just one of many areas celebrated by the school. The Head and Deputy Head discussed the rationale of attendance awards with the meeting, noting that gaining 100% is the key factor for an award and there cannot be any allowances for e.g. appointments taken in school time. The next Parents Group meeting will discuss views about the IPC. Issues raised at Parents Group meetings are brought to the attention of Head and Deputy Head for any appropriate action. The meeting discussed whether a Q and A section on the website would be helpful for parents e.g. in understanding how interventions work. From September, the number of meetings taking place may change, with perhaps one meeting taking place a

term, as opposed to one each half term. The Head said this would allow the school a reasonable time frame in which to respond to points raised by parents that are then feedback to the school to action. The Vice Chair noted the importance of listening to parents and ensuring explanatory and reasoned feedback is given. The Chair said the Parents Group provokes dialogue, encourages useful feedback and is a valuable contributor.

9. Policies to be adopted by the GB

No policies were put forward by the SLT or Committees.

10. Committee reports

10.1 Standards: the Chair of Standards noted the next meeting was on 13 May and updates from the Committee's previous meeting had been given at the GB on 27 March. The Local Offer is to be included on future agendas of this Committee.

10.2 Resources: the Chair of Resources reported the meeting on 6 May had focussed on the budget that had been approved by the GB earlier in this meeting. The Premises Management Policy had been reviewed and readopted at the meeting on 6 May. The ASC is doing well, with bookings increasing. The Head has just received the (113 page) analysis of the Staff Well Being questionnaire. Outcomes will be communicated to Governors in due course. Staff absence is less, compared to last year. The Best Value Statement and SIC will come to the GB for approval in July.

10.3 Development Group

The Chair reported that the most recent meetings had concentrated on the Deputy Head recruitment process.

11. GB Training and Development

11.1 Feedback on GB training sessions: the meeting agreed the GB in-house training on 30 April 'Effectiveness of the GB' had been informative and well-received. **The Chair said a more challenging training session in the future may be considered.**

11.2 Feedback on training by individual Governors: the Chair has attended the CGS termly briefing, Taking the Chair, Getting to Good (with Mr Grenz).

11.3 Training booked for GB or individual Governors: none reported.

11.4 Training needs for individual Governors and whole GB: the meeting agreed the need to have at least one more Governor trained for the Headteacher's Performance Management appraisal. After discussion about which Governors may be willing to undertake this training the Chair offered to approach Mrs Simoes.

In conclusion, Ms Winsemann-Falghera proposed, Mr Grenz seconded that if Mrs Simoes was willing to undertake the training and be a participant, the GB agreed she should be appointed as a designated Governor for the HTPM process. Agreed by all.

The Clerk will find and send details of training courses to Mrs Simoes.

12. Standing items

12.1 Staff Well Being: this item has been discussed earlier in the meeting.

12.2 Equality and Diversity: the Equality and Diversity Governor will present the updated objectives from the Equality Statement for approval at the summer term B GB meeting.

12.3 Membership of the GB: a nomination has been received from the LA, for an existing Local Authority vacancy on this GB. The Chair and Head have met the potential candidate. **Following discussion, Ms Winsemann-Falghera proposed and Mr Grenz seconded that this candidate should be nominated as a Local Authority Governor on this GB and that this decision by the GB should be communicated to the LA. Agreed by all. The Clerk will inform the LA of the GB's decision.** **Name of candidate held on a confidential note.*

- Mrs Fawcett's term of office ends this month. The Chair said that as the Vice Chair has held statutory posts of GB responsibility, the GB needs to have named Governors in these posts until the first meeting of the academic year when Governors are appointed to these roles. **After discussion, Mrs Gale proposed and Mrs Cook seconded that Mr Grenz will be the named Governor for Child Protection, SEND and Looked After Children upon the end of Mrs Fawcett's term of office and until the elections are held for these posts at the first GB meeting in the academic year. Agreed by all. The Chair led the meeting's thanks to Mr Grenz.**
- **An election for a Vice Chair will be held at the next meeting.** This will be an interim appointment to cover the Vice Chair's office until the first GB meeting of the academic year when annual elections are held.
- OSGS are continuing to look for a candidate for the LA Governor vacancy left by Mrs Fawcett's departure.
- The terms of office of two parent Governors ends in November 2014.
- Mr Grenz indicated his willingness to remain as a community Governor when his term of office ends on 1 September. This decision was welcomed by the meeting. The Chair thanked Mr Grenz for his commitment. The Chair's comments were endorsed by the meeting.
- Ms Kesteven is leaving the GB on 31 August 2014 as she is moving away from Cambridge. **A Safeguarding Governor will need to be elected at the next meeting,** to cover the interim period from Ms Kesteven's resignation (31 August 2014), until the first GB meeting of the academic year when annual elections are held. This will leave a vacancy for a community Governor.

13. Correspondence

No items received.

14. Action Points

These will be highlighted in the minutes of this meeting.

15. Any other business

The meeting discussed ways in which meaningful and informative communication could take place between the GB and parents, staff and pupils. This was a point that had arisen during the GB in-house training last week. In conclusion, a Governor offered to draft, for the next meeting, a selection of information/news for discussion. Governors are asked to send any ideas/contributions to Ms Meynell.

16. Audit of GB effectiveness from CGS

The Chair has drafted a response to the questions in this year's audit. The draft will be discussed at the next GB and must be submitted to the LA after the July GB meeting.

17. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 17 July 2014 at 7pm (to include SATS results).

*Mr Grenz gave advance apologies.

The Chair led tributes to Mrs Fawcett, at this, her final meeting in her role as an LA Governor and Vice Chair.

Mrs Fawcett has given eight dedicated years to being a Governor to Shirley school, much of this period as Vice Chair. Governors thanked her for her loyalty to the school, her commitment to the children, her strong support for the staff and her dedication to her Governor role. Mrs Fawcett will remain a friend of the school and maintain informal links, through continuing to deliver her much admired assemblies, supporting the Eco team and the Parents Group. The Chair said the ways in which Mrs Fawcett had contributed so much to the school, were immeasurable. The Head and meeting echoed the Chair's comments and expressed regret that Mrs Fawcett was leaving for personal reasons, whilst noting her colleagues had been fortunate to have enjoyed her friendship and support for eight years.

In reply, Mrs Fawcett paid tribute to those she has encountered during her Governor role at the school and said she would look forward to remaining a friend of the school. The Head said she would always be a most welcome visitor to the school.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.

