

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School held at school on Thursday 19 September 2013 at 7pm

Present: Revd Adams, Mrs Cook, Mrs Fawcett, Mr Ferguson, Mrs Gale, Mr Grenz, Ms Kesteven, Mrs Leach (Head), Ms Meynell, Mr Smith, Mr Spencer, Ms Winsemann-Falgera.

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.

Introductions were made to Revd Adams who joins the Governing Body as a community governor.

Standing items

1.1 Apologies for absence

Mrs Morland (prior diary engagement)

The meeting agreed to accept the apologies.

1.2 Declaration of Interests (standing item)

No interests were declared.

1.3 The Register of Pecuniary Interests 2013 - 2014

The Register for the new academic year 2013- 2014 was distributed at this point for review and signing by Governors.

2. Procedural items for the academic year 2013 2014

- Approve length of term of office for Chair
The meeting unanimously agreed one year as the term of office for the office of Chair.
- Approve length of term of office for Vice Chair
- The meeting unanimously agreed one year as the term of office for the office of Vice Chair.

Election of the Chair and Vice Chair

Mrs Morland had sent a proposal, Ms Fawcett seconded, Mr Iain Smith as Chair for the forthcoming year. No other nominations were made. Mr Smith left the room whilst the vote took place. The meeting agreed unanimously to Mr Smith's election.

Mrs Morland had sent a proposal, Ms Kesteven seconded, Mrs Joan Fawcett as Vice Chair for the forthcoming year. No other nominations were made. Mrs Fawcett left the room whilst the vote took place. The meeting agreed unanimously to Mrs Fawcett's election. (Mrs Fawcett's term of office as a Governor is due to end in May 2014. Mrs Fawcett is undecided whether she will undertake a further term).

The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 (details of new regulations from 1 September 2013)

The Chair highlighted certain points in the new regulations, including remote participation at GB meetings. After discussion, the meeting agreed that as Governors live within a reasonable distance, remote participation was unlikely to be applicable, unless circumstances were exceptional. CGS are revising model Standing Orders that will include this point. Governors will formally decide if they wish this particular point to be agreed when the orders are presented at the next meeting.

The Chair noted Governing Bodies may determine the size and constitution of their membership. The meeting agreed to stay with its current constitution at present.

Instrument of Government

No changes have been made to the Instrument of Government.

Mr Grenz proposed, Ms Meynell seconded the Instrument is approved: unanimously agreed by the meeting. (The Clerk noted this is an annual statutory requirement).

Adopt Standing Orders

CGS are currently revising model Standing Orders for use by Governing Bodies. **The new Standing Orders will come to the next meeting (Clerk).**

Review and Readopt the NGA's (National Governors' Association) Code of Practice 2013 - 2014

The document outlines the purpose and key roles of Governance. The consensus of the meeting was that the NGA Code of Practice should be adopted and individually signed by all Governors.

Ms Winsemann-Falghera proposed, Mr Ferguson seconded that the NGA Code of Practice should be adopted. Unanimously agreed by the meeting.

Agree and Approve the Policy Review and Delegated Approval programme 2013 – 2014

The Chair noted the Terms of Reference and the membership of the Standards and Resources Committee were approved at the GB meeting on 18 July 2013 and the meeting is now asked to agree and approve the Policy Review and Delegated Approval Programme for 2013 – 2014.

After discussion, the meeting agreed the Positive Behaviour Policy should be approved by the GB. (This will be amended).

The Chair said this is a working document and useful for the GB and Committees to be aware of the timing of review of Policies under their remit, particularly those that are statutory.

The Chair proposed and Mrs Fawcett seconded that the Policy Review and Delegated Approval programme 2013 – 2014 be adopted. Agreed unanimously by the meeting.

Named Governors

The meeting approved the following Governors to be appointed as named Governors for 2013 2014:

Child Protection:	Mrs Fawcett
SEND:	Mrs Fawcett
Looked After Children:	Mrs Fawcett
Safeguarding:	Ms Kesteven
Equality and Diversity:	Mr Ferguson
Health and Safety:	Mrs Cook
Head's Performance Management*:	Ms Kesteven, Mrs Fawcett

*Mrs Fawcett's term of office is due to end in May 2014: Mrs Fawcett may or may not undertake a further term. After discussion, the meeting agreed the Chair, Mr Smith, and Revd Adams would undertake the Headteacher's Performance Management training.

The Clerk will book this training.

Adopt role descriptors for named Governor roles

The meeting discussed proposed role descriptors for Governors with specific roles: Safeguarding and Child Protection, SEND, Data (Mr Spencer) and Health and Safety. (The Equality and Diversity Governor role descriptor is yet to be finalised).

The meeting agreed these are helpful working documents. One change was agreed to the role of the Health and Safety Governor: that the third bullet point is changed to read 'works closely with the school's Business Manager'. (This will be amended).

The Head the responsibilities of the Safeguarding and Child Protection roles are already being performed. The meeting discussed the role of the Data Governor and agreed, as a new role, it will develop over time.

Mrs Cook proposed, Mrs Fawcett seconded the role descriptors should be adopted. Agreed by all.

Recommended Complaints Procedure and the Recommended Complaints Procedure and Harassment Policy (LA)

The recommended complaints policy was revised by the Local Authority (LA) in June 2012 and the GB had adopted option 1 in September 2012.

The Recommended Complaints Procedure and Harassment Policy (LA)

The Clerk reported Mr Meddle (LA Officer) had noted the LA has not made any updates this year to these policies and the versions on the school's website (i.e. those that had been adopted in September 2012) are the current versions. The LA is producing a toolkit later this term relating to these policies.

Agree schedule of meetings for 2013 - 2014

Ms Meynell proposed, Mrs Fawcett seconded the meeting approve the proposed schedule. Agreed by all.

3. Minutes of the last meeting (18 July 2013)

Ms Winsemann-Falghera proposed, Ms Kesteven seconded the minutes be approved as a correct record. Agreed by all.

3.1 Matters Arising

- The Clerk had submitted the annual monitoring Child Protection report to the LA.
- The Clerk had submitted the GB's self-audit to the LA.

4. Headteacher's Update (verbal)

The Head highlighted the following points:

It had been a very positive start to the term with new staff settling in very well: Joanne Fielder joins Year 6 and will support the ECO team, school council/PSHCE girls football team/ study support; Sarah Leeland joins Year 1 and will support ECO and lead Music from January; Alison McMinn is an NQT and joins Year 3; Caroline Bane joins Year 1 on a 60% appointment (50% teaching in 1HB, 10% to cover PPA). All the new teachers bring skills and prior experience to the school.

The school's Inclusion Coordinator left in July. Subsequently, the SLT reviewed this post and revised the job description to include more managerial responsibilities. The proposed role of Inclusion Support Manager was discussed in detail at the meeting of the Personnel Committee in June and was advertised as a full time post, with greater managerial responsibility. Lewis Kelsey-Foreman was appointed at the end of July. A hand over meeting took place in the summer holidays.

Three new TAs were appointed last term to cover staff leaving. Four new TAs have been appointed this term and will start at the end September/early October to support pupils who have recently been given statements or who have statements pending. The Head reported there are 12 pupils with statements, 4 have statements pending.

The Head noted the school has more male staff within its staffing profile: two male teachers, two male TAs, the Learning Mentor and Inclusion Manager, together with the Site Manager and Site Support staff.

Di Carreira, a part-time member of the admin staff, joined the school in September.

Colin Thompson joined the school in July as a part time member of the site services team. The duties of this role include overseeing deliveries, setting up rooms for meetings, cleaning facilities etc.

The school roll is currently 433. The Head said mobility remains an issue for the school, with 13 pupils leaving the school since July who were not in the Year 6 cohort. Three new pupils joined the school in September, with another fourteen pending. The Head is meeting the parents of six more new pupils next week. It has been a busier than usual start to the year. Reception is full. The Head has met the Head of the new Primary school in Chesterton, Bryony Surtees, and they have discussed preliminary ideas for the children of both schools meeting to take part in activities to enhance learning e.g. setting up visits for Chesterton Primary Reception children to meet with older children from Shirley.

The two training days at the start of term focussed on the school's main priority, to improve achievement in writing, with actions decided at raising the profile of writing. Outcomes from the Writing Audit report will come to Governors. A new approach has been made to handwriting this term, with the whole school now writing on plain paper with line guides. Assemblies will feature Writing; there will also be a handwriting week as part of the school's drive to improve Writing across the school. More resources to support improvement in Writing are being purchased. On one of the training days, teaching staff visited Milton Road Primary to have lunch with colleagues and spend some time in classrooms. There was also a visit from an IPC trainer on the second training day to introduce staff to the IPC assessment for learning tool.

Blue Smile and Red Hen have started in school this term; referrals are underway and Blue Smile will be introduced to pupils in assembly.

The school will hold its third annual Environment Day on 26 September with the focus on sustainable travel. Cambridge's MP, Julian Huppert, will visit the school and talk to children about the benefits of cycling. The Travel Plan will include the benefits of walking and cycling and events held on Environment Day will highlight these activities.

The school entered two model scarecrows in a competition hosted at Anglesey Abbey. Mrs Chambers was commended for the work she and a group of children had taken on this project. A flier has been sent out around school about the project. The Head noted Governors were welcome to visit Anglesey Abbey to see the scarecrows. The scarecrows will be on display along with 19 scarecrows from other schools, from 20 September. Lord Fairhaven will judge the competition. There will be free entry for parents and children from the school.

The school's Reading Recovery teacher is currently looking for volunteers to be trained to help with the Better Reading Partnership. Ms Meynell (parent governor) has volunteered to train as a Better Reading Partnership volunteer. The Head is meeting with other potential volunteers.

In answer to a Governor's question, the Head said the school has not yet secured the £5,000 needed for sponsorship for Blue Smile. The school is owed £4,000 from the Red Hen project that will be put towards Blue Smile costs. The GB has committed £5,000 towards the project this year but next year, the full funding of £10,000 will need to be found. Governors agreed the need to use any possible contacts to source funding for this project.

The Chair thanked the Head for her update.

5. School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP) 2013 – 2014

The Head gave a verbal update on the 2013-2014 SIDP. The SIDP has been summarised for teaching staff and TAs with an emphasis on closing the gap in all areas. The Action Plans have now been finalised for Leadership, Attendance, ICT, Curriculum, the website and Gifted and Talented. The Writing and Maths RAPs are completed and the SEND RAP is being finalised. The School Improvement and Development Plan will be presented to the next GB meeting.

The Head said that staff responsible for whole school priority areas have worked very hard to produce action plans. The whole school priorities continue this year and focus on:

- Behaviour
- Improving writing and handwriting
- Attendance
- Anti bullying
- Anti racist and anti-homophobic awareness.

The meeting agreed the Governors monitoring groups should continue and noted these visits were a useful way in which to assess Governors' challenge and support for the school's aims.

6. Governor Monitoring Groups

The meeting discussed and agreed the membership of the monitoring groups:

Maths	SEND	Writing	IPC
Mr Spencer (Lead)	Mrs Fawcett (Lead)	Ms Meynell (Lead)	Mr Ferguson (Lead)
Mr Smith	Ms Kesteven	Mrs Gale	Revd Adams
Ms Winsemann-Falghera	Mrs Cook	(Lead staff: Miss Davies)	(Lead staff: Mrs Kidney)
(Lead staff: Miss Fonseca)	(Lead staff: Mr Horne)		

7. Parent Council

Ms Meynell reported the working group had met yesterday. The group comprises of: Ms Meynell, Ms Winsemann-Falghera, Mrs Fawcett, Mr Ferguson and Miss Swann (Year 5 teacher).

A provisional date had been discussed for the first meeting and details organised. There will be initially two meetings, with one meeting held in an afternoon and one in early evening, to try to facilitate as many parents attending as possible. Ms Meynell said it is hoped one of the initial outcomes would be the compilation of a list of particular topics parents wanted to discuss. The meeting discussed the need for parents to engage with the school and noted that despite various initiatives being set up e.g. a comments box for parents to use to contact Governors, and a feedback link on the school's website, there has been very little success with parental engagement. Not one comment has been left via the website link and only a very few number of comments (approximately five) have come through the comments box since it was set up in 2011. Governors noted their repeated efforts in this area and hoped the new parent group would be successful.

8. Policies to be adopted by the GB (not delegated to a Committee)

The following policies had originally been discussed and approved by Committees. However, they need adopting by the Governing Body.

Inclusion (SEND) Policy; Discipline Procedures relating to misconduct by Headteacher only; Discipline Procedures relating to misconduct all employees other than the Headteacher; Disciplinary Rules for all employees; Grievance Procedures were proposed for adoption by Mrs Smith and seconded by Ms Meynell. Agreed by all.

Policy for Intimate Care

The Head said this Policy has recently been updated by the Education Child Protection Services and this revised version is now presented for adoption. It is important in that it gives children guidance for independence. There are children, mainly in Nursery, that require basic care and the Policy and guidance contain elements of support and privacy which make care of this type safer for children and for staff. Mrs Cook was thanked for her input into this Policy; the Nursery and the Early Years Leader had also been consulted.

Mrs Fawcett proposed, Ms Winsemann-Falghera seconded that the Policy for Intimate Care be adopted. Agreed by all.

Behaviour principles written statement

The Clerk will enquire whether this is now a statutory requirement of a Governing Body. The school's Positive Behaviour Policy contains similar principles, which were adopted as part of the Policy.

9. Committee Reports

9.1 Curriculum and Inclusion

Mr Ferguson gave a verbal update from the meeting on 2 July which covered points highlighted at the GB on 18 July.

Blue Smile project workers have now started in school.

Attendance: the Head reported some targets will be met, some will be narrowly missed. (Full details are contained in the Head's Report to this Committee sent out with the GB papers for the meeting on 18 July and this meeting).

The Head reported the Writing Audit has been written for action by the SLT and staff received a presentation on the Audit on a training day at the beginning of term. Messages from the Audit will be shared with Governors, along with consequent actions.

In answer to a Governor's question, the Head reported £2,200 was spent for a Literacy Consultant to carry out an audit of writing over three days, in order to drive improvement in this area.

The Chair asked the Head to request funding, if it is required, for any additional resources that may be needed to support this priority.

The Parent Group will discuss the provision of clubs and any suggestions will be taken to the Head.

The Committee had approved the Forest Schools Handbook; the revised Positive Behaviour Policy and the revised Attendance Policy.

The school's bid to enter into a working partnership with the RHS had been successful. Mrs Fawcett was thanked for her input with this bid and meeting the RHS team, thereby demonstrating the GB's and whole school approach and commitment. Other schools will visit Shirley and the RHS work will fit into particular IPC topics. The meeting agreed positive publicity would be beneficial. The aim to improve the performance and attainment of FSM children remains a high priority for the school. A Governor asked the Head to note to Governors if additional funding was required in order to improve the attainment of this particular group and any targeted groups across the school. The Head thanked Governors for their support.

9.2 Personnel

Ms Kesteven reported the last Committee at the end of term had focussed on staffing issues; the new Pay Policy; and Mr Richardson's new role as a specialist PE teacher. The Head reported that pupils greatly enjoyed their PE lessons. Mr Richardson is also running hockey, rugby and fitness clubs. In answer to a Governor's question, the Head said the Government gives funding based on pupil numbers to improve the standards of teaching PE.

9.3 Property and Finance

Mr Grenz noted the business of this Committee will now be under the remit of the Resources Committee and expressed his hope that finance issues would be able to be taken forward satisfactorily under this new Committee structure. Mr Grenz said it is crucial to ensure the school's finances are used effectively to remove barriers to learning; the school has a good budget that must move towards addressing the school's needs. A Governor's asked if the plan put forward by the Lib Dem Leader, Nick Clegg, to introduce free school meals for the first three years of schooling, would affect the pupil premium. The Head said if this was introduced, it would impact on the school in many ways; lunchtime numbers would effectively double and the time needed for lunch would extend to two hours. The meeting agreed to see if it was introduced by the Government before addressing the logistics.

Mrs Fawcett proposed, Ms Meynell seconded Revd Adams to become a member of the Standards Committee. Agreed by all.

9.3 Development Group

Mr Smith reported the group had most recently discussed the pupil premium, the SEF and the impact of the SLT on the school improvement agenda. In answer to a Governor's question, Mr Smith said discussions and outcomes are reported back to the GB.

10. Training and Development

10.1 Feedback

No feedback was given.

10.2 Individual Governors training needs

The Chair asked that Governors book themselves onto training and copy bookings made to the Clerk. The Chair asked that Governors consider what training they have done and what training they still feel they need to do. **The Chair will bring outline thoughts to the next meeting.** A copy of the training booklet had been distributed with the papers for this meeting.

10.3 Training booked for GB or individual Governors

Ms Meynell and Ms Winsemann-Falghera are to book onto a finance course on 18 November at CPDC.

Ms Kesteven is to book onto esafety at Huntingdon on 23 October.

Mr Smith will book onto the new Chair's course.

Mr Smith will attend the East of England NGA regional meeting on 15 October.

Mrs Fawcett and Mr Smith are to attend the Governors termly briefing.

The Chair reminded the meeting of the in-house training session booked for Wednesday 25 September 7-9pm, Preparing for Ofsted. Preparatory notes and reading were distributed with the papers for this meeting.

11. Standing items

11.1 Staff Well Being

This area will now come under the Resources Committee. The next staff well being survey will be carried out in Spring 2014.

11.2 Equality and Diversity: Mr Ferguson has met with Mrs Taylor and will meet soon with the Head. Mr Ferguson will provide a report for the next GB meeting.

11.3 Membership of the Governing Body

An election for a Parent Governor is to commence shortly.

A proposed new Authority Governor will meet soon with the Head. A statement from this candidate had been distributed with the papers. Governors agreed they would welcome this appointment, depending upon the outcome of the Head's meeting with the prospective Governor next week.

12. Correspondence

The meeting noted a letter written by Mrs Morland and Mr Smith to Ofsted, registering the GB's disappointment at the news that Raiseonline will no longer accommodate schools making changes to cohort results to reflect latecomers into the cohort i.e. pupils who have entered since Year 5 and who are new to English.

13. Action Points

The new Standing Orders will come to the next meeting (Clerk).

The Clerk will book training for Revd Adams and Mr Smith for the HT's PM (Clerk).

The Clerk will find out if a Behaviour Principles written statement is now a statutory requirement of a Governing Body (Clerk).

The Chair will bring outline thoughts on training to the next meeting (Chair).

The Head will report back to Governors about which year groups they will be assigned to as 'buddies' (Head).

Governors are asked to copy the Head and Clerk into correspondence they have with teachers about informal visits (Governors).

The Clerk will send out an updated Governors contacts sheet (this is confidential and for Governors information only). (Clerk).

14. Any other business

The meeting discussed Governors becoming 'class buddies'. This is a newly-proposed initiative that Governors are very keen to support. It involves a Governor making informal and regular visits to a specific class, in order to build a long-term relationship with the children, teachers and TAs. It will benefit the Governor involved by becoming more aware of the nature of the school, the diversity, the issues, the workload, the topics and work being delivered. It will benefit the children and staff through feeling supported by Governors, and will offer an insight into some of the challenges faced - as well as the things to be celebrated. It is a different experience from the governor monitoring visits. It is expected that Governors would be emailed by teachers inviting them in to special events, such as IPC entry/exit points, class assemblies and visits. The following preferences were expressed:

Ms Meynell – Year 5

Mr Smith – Year 2

Mrs Fawcett – Year 1 (Mr Horne/Ms Bane)

Other governors did not express a chosen preference for placement. The Deputy Head suggested linking with a year group, not a class. This was agreed by Governors. The Head was asked to close the gap and agreed to report back to Governors about which year group they were assigned to when she had talked to teachers. The Head said she would ask teachers to invite Governors in to get to know the classes.

The Head asked that she and the Clerk are copied into correspondence Governors may have with teachers about informal visits.

Mrs Kidney discussed the ICT mark the school is undertaking. Mrs Kidney explained the rationale behind this award. It is important to find out parents use of ICT at home and about how parents use ICT beyond the school environment. Mrs Kidney explained the completion of a survey, through a survey monkey, would give a good idea of ICT use at home and said the forthcoming parent consultations give an excellent opportunity to canvass parents for their responses. The meeting discussed this suggestion; Ms Winsemann-Flaghera agreed to come in during parent consultation week and discuss ICT use with parents and complete online surveys with them.

A Governor asked if the school was providing enough ICT for parents and issues surrounding the monitoring of ICT safety in the home environment. Mrs Kidney said safety issues are addressed through the curriculum but it is a huge area and ICT use outside of school is left to parents to monitor. If survey results show there is a highlighted need for a Parent Workshop on ICT e.g. on safety, then the ICT service could be asked to provide this for parents.

The Chair, Mr Smith, paid tribute to the outstanding contribution of the outgoing Chair, Nicky Morland. Governors concurred with Mr Smith's comments and ideas to mark her end of office were discussed.

15. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 5 December 2013 at 7pm. Informal catch up 6.30pm.

In- house training on Wednesday 25 September 2013 at 7pm (preparing for Ofsted).

The meeting ended at 9.05pm.