

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School held at school on Thursday 12 February 2015 at 7.00pm

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

Visiting: Mrs Kidney and Mrs Marsters (Deputy Heads). In attendance: Miss Owen (Clerk)

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

1. Standing items

1.1 Apologies for absence

Mr Ferguson (abroad on business), Mrs Simoes (illness): Mr Saunders (out of Cambridge on business).

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

1.2 Declaration of Interests (standing item)

No direct or indirect interests were declared in items on this agenda.

1.3 The Register of Pecuniary Interests 2014 - 2015

The Register for the new academic year was presented. Governors, who are now in new categories, following reconstitution, will be asked to re-sign.

1.4 Annual Re-presentation of Declaration of Eligibility

Governors were asked to re-sign a declaration of eligibility.

2. Approval of a Co-opted Governor (Philip Henderson)

The Chair reported he and the Head had met with Mr Henderson when he visited the school. Mr Henderson had sent biographical information that had been circulated to Governors prior to this meeting. The meeting noted Mr Henderson's particular strengths with data analysis. The Chair noted he had confirmed with Mr Henderson that he would be available for attending Standards Committee meetings. The Chair said he would ask Mrs Simoes to act as mentor for Mr Henderson.

The Clerk confirmed Mr Henderson had completed his pre-appointment checks.

Mr Smith proposed, Ms Winsemann-Falghera seconded that the Governing Body approve Mr Henderson as a Co-opted Governor, with his term of office to start from today's date. All present agreed.

Mr Henderson was then invited by the Chair to join the meeting and introductions were made.

3. Minutes of the last meetings: Extraordinary Meeting and Governing Body meetings held on 11 December 2014

The Chair noted the minutes of the extraordinary meeting had been circulated to Governors for comments before submission to the LA. The Chair had approved the minutes to be sent to the LA, to expedite the GB's new Instrument of Government.

This new Instrument of Government, following the GB's reconstitution, was issued by the LA on 5 January 2015.

Revd Adams proposed, Ms Winsemann-Falghera seconded that the minutes should be approved. Agreed by all.

One typo was noted in the minutes of the GB meeting on 11 December 2014: (section 7 should read compliant, not complaint).

Mrs Cook proposed, Ms Fox seconded that with this one correction, the minutes should be approved. Agreed by all.

3.1 Matters Arising

- The Clerk has sent an Equality and Diversity Governor role descriptor to Revd Adams.

4. Headteacher's Report (verbal update)

The Head gave verbal updates to her Committee reports that were sent out with the papers.

- The SLT is working very effectively with the additional capacity of two Acting Assistant Headteachers.
- A further round of teacher observations is underway this term, from Nursery to Year 6. Eighteen lessons will be observed, with observations finishing after half term. Teachers will be observed teaching the core subject they were not observed teaching last term. Therefore, at the end of this second round of observations, all teachers will have been observed teaching the core subjects of Maths, English or Phonics. Some teachers will be observed twice. Following observations in the Autumn term, some teachers were offered programmes of support: all teachers have received support packages positively. **The Head will report a summary of the observations to Governors at the GB's March meeting.** The Head described the aspects of an observational visit; it is not a snapshot visit, the whole learning environment is assessed, from books to displays.
- The meeting discussed how teachers are supported. The Head noted her report to Standards contained much of this information, including training and mentoring from Mrs Kidney and other SLT members. The Head said there is considerable inhouse professional development that is of the highest quality.

- The meeting noted the Curriculum topics contained within the Head's report to the Standards Committee and agreed it had been a very busy term.
- Mrs Kidney has attended a conference about the new initiative of assessment without levels. Mrs Kidney and Mrs Marsters are investigating systems of tracking pupil progress. Further information will be needed to ensure the school purchases the best system. Mrs Kidney will keep Governors informed. Mrs Kidney said the new curriculum pushes to develop the breadth of application of skills and is focussed on end of year expectations. The Head said the proposed change is that there will be an initial assessment on entry into Year Reception and a final assessment at the end of Year 6: therefore, value added can be measured. A Governor asked how a teacher's input is measured: the Head said this is moderated in the same way. The Chair noted this is a big change; Mrs Kidney concurred with the Chair's comment, noting that changes are still in the early stages and knowledge has to be given to teachers. **After discussion, it was agreed that a presentation should be given to the Standards Committee in summer term B, so Governors can see how the new system will be used. The Chair asked that a presentation should be given to the GB in Spring term A 2016, so Governors can see how standards are improving.**
- The Head discussed the benefits of the recent approval of £5,000 by the Resources Committee to enable the school to buy in supply to release class teachers to carry out intensive interventions with groups of children in Years 3, 4 and 5. The children will work in small groups for several afternoons a week, concentrating on English and Maths. This intervention work will allow gaps in learning to be rectified and allow children to attain their potential. After half term, Mrs Kidney will teach interventions for 50% per week in Year 6. More able children will also be taught in group work, with Mrs Kidney teaching these groups too. The SLT will monitor the effectiveness of the intervention work. The Chair said the school has a healthy carry forward and the SLT were to request further assistance from Governors if required.
- The school will have a new website in the summer term. Mrs Kidney is heading this initiative.
- The Hilltop trip was thoroughly enjoyed by the 39 children who attended. Governors wished to record their thanks to the staff who facilitated this trip.
- The CB4 cluster of schools are concentrating on boys writing, with pleasing results. The school is contributing to a new writer's blog that will be launched on World Book Day.
- Mrs Bane starts her maternity leave tomorrow. A supply will cover this leave.
- Mrs Guy retires at Easter. This will be announced to the parent community after half term.
- The Head received the Business Manager's resignation this week. The school will review the situation and consider how best to move forward. Support for Mrs Bingham is being bought in from the ICT service and Randstad.
- Mrs Burt-Gray joins the office team on 23 February 2015.
- Teaching staff appraisals will be held shortly; these are mid-year appraisals and measure progress towards objectives.
- The Head and Deputies attended a Safeguarding Training Day (Level 3) on 11 February 2015. The day was hosted by the school; it was led by EPM and 18 Heads and senior leaders from other schools attended.
- The school has been selected to take part in a Safer Recruitment Audit in March. The LA has selected 10 schools at random. In answer to the Chair's question about what an audit involved, the Head said it is to judge how well schools are complying with statutory requirements. Governors will receive an independent report, following the Audit. The Head was thanked for her report.

5. SDIP (School Development and Improvement Plan) 2014-2015 and SEF (Self Evaluation Form)

The Head discussed updates:

- An important focus is Writing in Year 6. The Deputy Heads and Acting Assistant Headteachers are focussing on modelled and shared writing.
- Observations remain a high priority for assessing how Writing, Reading and Maths are being taught in the classrooms.
- Individual cohorts are linked to objectives set for teachers. Intervention maps document how well each group is progressing and can be revised if necessary.
- In answer to a Governor's question, the Head said, as outlined in her report to the Standards Committee, support has been put into place for teachers who were identified as needing mentoring and support to move onto the next Ofsted judgement i.e. from requires improvement to good, and good to outstanding.
- Attendance and punctuality are also main areas for the school to improve. The Chair asked the meeting if Governors felt the information they received from the school gives a clear overview of progress in all areas of the SDIP. Governors were asked if any additional information was needed to be assured progress is being made. One Governor offered to look at the SDIP in close detail and feedback to the Chair. Another Governor commented that it was clear reporting. One Governor suggested that visits should be added to the document. A Governor asked how often the SLT look at interventions, to assess progress. The Head said assessments are carried out three times a year, in December, March and June. Assessments give a clear indication of the success of particular interventions. Year 6 have additional assessments at the end of January in Reading and Maths. This particular assessment highlights pupils whose levels of learning may be vulnerable; ways of support to give the most effective outcomes for a pupil are then assessed. Mrs Kidney is leading the development on the tracking of interventions. A Governor noted that the 1:1 tutor would take assessment levels at the entry

and exit levels and at mid-point of working with a pupil to monitor 1:1 impact. ECaR (Every Child a Reader) meetings are held every half term to assess the impact of reading interventions. A Governor asked at what stage the school judges an intervention not be working. In reply, Mrs Kidney said this depended on a number of factors, including a pupil's attendance and application. The Head said an intervention lasts for one term. If it is judged to have had limited impact, it will not carry on, as the pupil would clearly not be ready for it. A Governor asked if the school had all the assessment tools it needed to judge the effectiveness of interventions. Mrs Kidney said Mrs Marsters has made significant changes to tracking TA interventions and these enable interventions to be assessed accurately.

The Chair said this is a discussion item that Governors will return to at their meetings.

6. Safeguarding

The Governor for Safeguarding gave updates to the meeting:

- The Safeguarding Governor met with the Head on 9 February to review progress made, following the Head's meeting with the SLT on 11 December to discuss actions arising from the Safer Recruitment Audit. Due to the absence of the Business Manager, some actions have been taken on by other members of staff. When auditing the school's recruitment processes, areas for improvement had been noted; these follow appointments being made. The Safeguarding Governor noted a training session she had attended had particularly noted the importance of obtaining two references for successful candidates. The Head said the absence of a key member of staff had meant many such duties had devolved onto Mrs Bingham and Miss Owen. The Head said the Audit in March would see a comprehensive self-audit produced by the school and an effective action plan. The school had good compliance with its self-audit and the action plan highlights further areas to action.
- A copy of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' was distributed to Governors, with a request for Governors to return the sign-off sheet to the Clerk; the sign off sheet states Governors have read this document and had a copy for their information.

7. Parent Council

Governors who had attended the two recent meetings of this Group reported the 12-15 parents who had come to the afternoon meeting and the 3-6 parents who had come to the evening meeting, had welcomed being able to directly discuss school lunches with Steve Salter, ABM's Catering Contracts Manager. The Head and Midday Co-ordinator had also attended. Mr Salter equally enjoyed meeting parents, hearing their views and discussing aspects of the school's lunches. Parents said they appreciated being given the opportunity to come into school and have a cooked lunch with their child. Mr Salter had given parents his contact details, so they could him directly if they had any comments. Governors agreed the Parent Group provides a good forum for parents' views to be heard.

The school's liaison teachers for the Group are Miss Kurc and Mrs Stant. Parents had suggested curriculum topics as a possible topic for discussion at the next meeting. Mrs Kidney asked if the parent group could be canvassed for its views on what parents would like to see on the school's new website, facebook page and twitter account. The new website is being developed next term, so suggestions this term would be welcomed. The Chair noted the important role that parent and other Governors have in ensuring that the views of the parent body are listened to and responded to by the school. The Chair said the free-flow of dialogue that is happening with parents must be encouraged within the parent group forum and then results demonstrated. In answer to a question from a Governor about how pupils' views are sought, Mrs Kidney said two Governors are visiting school tomorrow and will meet with a large group of children, gather their views and then this will feed into the Curriculum monitoring group. Reports from the monitoring groups come the GB on a regular basis. Mrs Kidney said internet safety week also gives pupil led views. A Governor suggested the School Council should send a report to the GB. This idea was welcomed by the meeting.

The Safeguarding Governor is to visit school and talk to pupils to how they safe at school.

The Chair asked for thanks to be minuted to all those who give valuable time and input to the Parent Group.

8. Governor newsletter

The meeting agreed the first newsletter, issued last term, had been a success. After discussion, it was agreed the newsletter should be a termly publication. The second newsletter will go out after this half term. The Chair thanked Ms Meynell for her work in producing this newsletter, as engagement with parents is a priority for the GB.

9. Policies to be adopted by the GB (not taken through a Committee).

Appendix 7 of the Pay Policy needs to come to Governors. It is with the Resources Committee for consideration and will come to the GB.

10. Reports from Lead Governors (verbal)

Writing: the Lead Governor had circulated a report in advance for the meeting. Governors discussed points within the report.

Writing projections remain unchanged but remain closely monitored. Visits to increase Governor knowledge would be welcomed.

After half term, the Lead Governor will visit KS1 to see the work of Writing Wizards. In the summer term a visit will be made to KS2 spelling sessions.

SEND: the Lead Governor was not present to deliver a report. Another member of the group noted a report is in progress. A member of this monitoring group reported that Pupil Tracker had been discussed with Mrs Marsters in detail. This is a tracking system that measures the progress of pupils with SEND. The group noted it wished to support this area as effectively as possible and Mrs Marsters is to arrange dates for the monitoring group to visit to see SEND interventions being undertaken. The group noted that tracking data would help to inform future decisions by the Resources Committee regarding financial support.

Curriculum: A visit is to be made tomorrow by this group to look at exit points and talk to children.

Maths: The Lead Governor met with the Maths Leader and projections had been discussed. KS1 projections are 85-90% at Level 2c or above. The November assessments show that 57% had already reached this level.

KS2 projections for SEND pupils in Year 5 show intervention work would benefit pupil progress. Twice weekly interventions have been put into place. The progress of EAL and SEND pupils in other year groups remain on track. Closing the Gap targets for pupils on FSM and non-FSM remain on track in Years 4, 5, and 6. The next round of assessments will be held in March.

The Chair thanked the groups for their work and reports, noting that monitoring visits are very important to inform Governors that the school is making the best possible progress for its pupils.

11. Committee Reports

Ms Meynell proposed, Ms Fox seconded that Mr Henderson take the role of Data Governor and become a member of the Standards Committee. Agreed by all.

11.1 Standards

The Committee Chair gave an update from the meeting held on 27 January 2015.

- Mrs Kidney will meet with Revd Adams after half term to discuss the Behaviour Statement of Principles. This had been initially discussed by the Committee and now needs finalising before going to the GB.
- A new web site is being overseen by Mrs Kidney: a main aim is to make it more engaging for parents. A facebook and twitter feed will intercommunicate with the new website so the most up to date communication is available.
- The school had received many visitors during Diversity Week, including a visit to an assembly by the Mayor of Cambridge.
- The School's Partnership is increasing.
- A Governor noted it would be helpful to have an accompanying narrative to data analysis. The meeting agreed that many respond more easily to visuals. Mr Henderson said graphs and charts would be incorporated.

11.2 Resources

The Committee Chair gave an update from the meeting held on 21 January 2015.

- The Chair noted Mrs Bingham had produced reports for the meeting. As at the end of December 2014, the brought forward revenue funds were approximately £199,000. There is still work to do on future costs and these will be monitored closely as budget timings begin to unwind. The Centre reached its target for income in the autumn term ahead of expectation but this was mainly attributable to one group's booking that is now discontinued.
- The GB Chair reported ongoing premises problems. The cause of the problems with the taps in the school are being investigated by Blue Flame. The school's Property Manager (PCM) is working on a rolling programme of change/replacement with Blue Flame. There is concern about possible damage to the surface of the MUGA that a group uses on a weekly basis. The meeting agreed groups must have appropriate insurance when hiring the Centre's facilities. The Head said Mrs Bingham now ensures that this criteria is applied. PCM will also manage the landscaping project of the Nursery and Reception outdoor areas and the sensory garden. The GB Chair explained that a specification had never been produced to enable the school to obtain quotes to ensure best value was obtained. Whilst one quote had been received, there had been no specification to quote against. The Resources Committee had discussed this at length and agreed PCM should manage the process. The GB Chair asked Governors if they had any objections to this route of action: the consensus of the meeting was that the projects should go ahead and be managed by PCM.
- The Head explained Cambridgeshire had been chosen as a pilot authority for Early Years Pupil Premium funding. Every eligible pupil is awarded £300 a year, spread over the year at £100 a term. This is for Nursery pupils only. Information has been collected from Nursery parents and the school will be informed of successful applications. In answer to a Governor's question, the Head said funding would support the high staff ratios needed in Nursery, support speech therapy, and input from Blue Smile.

11.3 Development Group

- The GB Chair reported the Development Group, comprising the Head, GB Chair, and Chairs of Committees, are to meet on 5 March 2015. The group is due to discuss recent staff changes and how to prepare for Ofsted. The Group will report to the next GB.

8.25pm Mrs Kidney and Mrs Marsters left the meeting at this point.

12. Report of a Governors Appeal Panel meeting

This is held as a confidential item.

8.30 Mrs Kidney and Mrs Marsters returned to the meeting after agenda item 12.

13. Training and Development

- Governors discussed bookings they have made for forthcoming training sessions.
- The Chair asked Governors to look at the training that is offered and to attend any sessions that would be beneficial.
- Governors are asked to consider what areas they would like to have as an in-house training session.

14. Membership of the Governing Body

The Clerk reported the closing date for nominations for a parent Governor is 23 February. To date, no nominations have been received; however, there is still time for nominations to be made.

The GB Chair noted that if no parents stood for election, the GB may approach a parent to fill the Parent Governor vacancy. The GB will know the outcome of the election process by its next meeting. The meeting agreed some parents may not wish to stand for election but may be willing to become a Governor if approached. The Chair noted there is also one vacancy remaining for a Co-opted Governor. This has been notified in school newsletters; however, to date, no parents have come forward. The GB Chair noted the need to fill vacancies as soon as possible.

15. Correspondence

The meeting was read a letter from a parent who had written to the GB and school, thanking all for the wonderful experience her child had enjoyed at Hilltop.

16. Any other business

Electronic storage: the Chair noted that as Mrs Simoes is unable to be at this meeting, this particular item will be held over.

Mrs Kidney asked the Behaviour Statement of Principles be an agenda item at the next meeting.

The Clerk will send the Pecuniary Interest and Eligibility forms to the appropriate Governors to bring to the next meeting.

17. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 19 March 2015 at 7.00pm.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm. The Chair thanked all for attending.

