



FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Minutes of the Meeting held on
Wednesday 30th September 2015 at 6pm

Present: Mr David Hare (Chair) Miss Jo Sawyer (Headteacher)
Ms Sheila Davitt-Betts Mrs Clare Davitt
Mr Alain Currie Mrs Kelly McDonald
Ms Hazel Colquhoun Ms Jane Golightly
Miss Heather Barden Mr Richard Romaniak

In Attendance: Mr Iain Tessier (Governor Support Officer and Clerk)

1. Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Tillmann Jacobi and Fleur Kennedy. Apologies had also been received from Adrian Fletcher and Vicky Hearson.
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

2. Membership Matters and Governor Development

- 2.1 The Chair noted that the biennial election of chair and vice chair positions would take place at the next meeting.
- 2.2 The Chair informed governors that Ian Yates had resigned from the governing body.
- 2.3 Governors were reminded to log any training attended with the training governors.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting – 15 July 2015

Previously distributed.

3.1 Resolved:

The minutes of meeting held on 15 July 2015 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of that meeting, subject to correcting the honorific for Heather Barden. The Chair was then authorised to sign the minutes.

4. Action Plan and Matters Arising (not on the agenda)

- 4.1 Action 1 – The SBM was not present so no update was possible.
Action 2 – Alain Currie had compiled a list of governor visits. Mr Currie noted that the governing body did need to complete more class visits. They were currently not hitting their own targets in this regard **Action ALL**.
Action 3 – Ongoing.

5. Register of Governors' Interests

- 5.1 The Clerk circulated the business interest declaration forms. The Clerk clarified the types of declarations that should be appearing on the forms. Governors signed their individual forms and returned these to the Clerk.

6. New OFSTED Framework – Key Points for Governors

- 6.1 The Chair directed governors to the new framework, which was widely accessible via the Internet and had been circulated. The Chair summarised the changes from the last framework. The Chair had found it useful to talk to his counterpart at another local primary,
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who had been recently inspected (under the old framework but it was clear the new framework was being referred to). The governing body had received some training in preparing for OFSTED and there was the offer of further preparation via Angela Shaw, an advisor to the school and lead OFSTED inspector. The Chair reiterated the likelihood of OFSTED posing the governing body some robust questions and therefore it was imperative that all governors look at the responses compiled by the group to the sample questions and take in the further commentary provided by the Headteacher, Chair and Vice Chair **Action ALL**. Governors were keen to receive additional support ahead of OFSTED and the Headteacher was asked to make the arrangements with Angela Shaw **Action JS**.

7. New Assessment and Reporting System – O Track

- 7.1 In the absence of Mrs Hearson, Mr Currie was invited to make the presentation to governors. Mr Currie began by providing some background to the current position and directed governors to the DfEs final report on assessing without levels, which did make some very valid points about why the system needed changing, a fact recognised by many teaching staff.
- 7.2 Mr Currie explained that pupils would now be assessed directly against the National Curriculum objectives relevant to their year group, with the exception of pupils regarded as operating either well above or well below the expected levels. Much of the assessment from now on would be formative but summative assessment would remain at the end of KS1 and KS2. Summative assessments were likely to be far more stretching for pupils given the extra demands outlined in the National Curriculum objectives.
- 7.3 Governors would be hearing a lot more about Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs were the benchmarks for each subject area that a child had to reach before it could be said that they had completed that area of the curriculum successfully. The system adopted by the school ran along the lines of the one developed by the NAHT. Governors were shown some examples of KPIs.
- 7.4 With the old assessment schemes now redundant, the school had needed to develop new tracking systems because the ability to monitor and evidence progress was still vital. The school had devised a system based on the National Curriculum statements, this was simple and unambiguous. There were now child friendly trackers in all the pupils' books and the teachers would be working with individual children directing them to their next steps. It was important that pupils also understood their next steps on their own and could take responsibility for their own development. Governors were shown examples of the trackers and the child friendly versions in the books.
- 7.4.1 The Headteacher noted that the staff at the school had worked tirelessly to get the assessment systems in to a workable and child friendly format and should be commended for their efforts. Governors indicated their appreciation for the work done and one governor said that they really liked the way the school had gone about this exercise – the system seemed workable and transparent and the governor loved the child friendly aspect to the trackers and the way the school had taken the opportunity to personalise learning.
- 7.5 Schools had to be mindful that when tracking pupils they didn't use a system that effectively superseded and yet mirrored the outgoing levels system. The idea was to get away from 'chasing' levels and rushing pupils through the programmes of study – the emphasis was very much on breadth and depth and enhancing understanding at all points. That said, schools did need to develop a tangible progress system, with clear marker points, that could be used both by staff and by governors and inspectors etc. The school would be adopting a 6-point scale and Mr Currie outlined how they envisaged it working:
- B – Beginning (some or no objectives met)
 - B+
 - D – Developing (50% of objectives met)
 - D+
 - S – Secure (all KPIs met)
 - S+ - deeper understanding of the year's objectives and working beyond them
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Mr Currie acknowledged that the next year would be a learning curve and no doubt refinements and alterations would need to be made as they went along.

7.6 Mr Currie introduced governors to the new tracking terminology and how and when children would be categorised according to their achievements. He also informed governors of the five assessment points during the year. The new OTrack system would be used to record and analyse the data. The new terminology carried on through to the final end of year assessments, when pupils would be regarded as either 'Working Towards', 'Meeting' or 'Exceeding' the expected standard.

7.6.1 Some governors commented that the new system very much had the feel of pass or fail – in that you either met the standards or you didn't. Schools could do quite a bit of work encouraging and personalising learning but children could then get to the end of the year and feel disheartened by the 'label' they were given. Mr Currie said that he too had some reservations about the terminology being used, particularly at the end of the year and following summative assessments, however, schools just had to make the best of it as this was the situation. A full discussion followed.

7.7 Mr Currie concluded by talking briefly about the higher expectations within the new curricula. There would be changes to the way summative assessments would be delivered and marked but the details remained somewhat sketchy at this stage. Teachers had been given new guidance on assessment and the school had been mindful of this when developing its new systems.

Governors thanked Mr Currie for his presentation and his insights in to the new systems.

8. School to School Support – LA Proposals

8.1 The Headteacher began by summarising the LAs approach to supporting those schools locally identified as in need of support – typically those sitting on requiring improvement or inadequate OFSTED judgements. The school had its own school to school support advisors as part of this approach and governors had received the note of visit in respect of the recent visit in the meeting pack.

8.2 The Headteacher wanted to make clear from the outset that this support was being viewed by the school as an opportunity to attract additional resources for the school to further enhance its own schedule for school improvement – a schedule that was firmly being instigated and driven by the school itself. It needed to be documented that in their case the additional support was not being invested because the school required external partners in order to drive through school improvements – the school had been directing its own schemes for school improvement since the Headteacher had taken up post. This was understood by those external partners now working with the school. The school had been able to call on these advisors and other highly skilled practitioners within the teaching school alliance to verify the quality of the provision etc and to support the current middle leadership who were helping to drive through the necessary improvements. Governors understood the position and welcomed the update from the Headteacher.

9. Parents' Forum – Next Steps

9.1 Hazel Colquhoun asked governors for their views on how to progress with the parents' forum. There followed a full discussion on the scope, remit and future direction of the forum. All governors agreed that maintaining the direct link with the parent body was important.

9.2 Governors recognised that they needed to improve on the response rates thus far on Parent View. OFSTED would use this tool to gauge parental opinion. Governors liked the idea of having a presence at parents' evenings – making the group visible and allowing them to encourage parents directly to fill in Parent View.

10. Code of Conduct and Contact Details

- 10.1 **Resolved:**
Governors agreed to abide by the code of conduct as circulated prior to the meeting.
- 10.2 Governors' contact details had been circulated to all prior to the meeting. The Chair asked governors to indicate any changes as soon as possible.

11. Committee Structure, Membership and Ways of Working 2015/16

- 11.1 The Chair began by reminding governors of their core duties and that their focus should remain on strategic and not operational matters. This had all been outlined in two documents circulated to all prior to the meeting.
- 11.2 The Chair moved on to the committee structure and asked if any governors wanted to comment on document circulated in respect of this.
- 11.2.1 Several governors raised the issue of committee membership and how the current membership had been arrived at. They also wanted some clarification on how long a governor should serve on the particular committee they had been assigned to. Some governors were concerned about forward planning and that serving on just one committee prevented them from getting a full rounded view of the school's position.
- 11.2.2 The Chair noted that he had arranged the committees thus so as to take best advantage of governor skills as per their own experience/skill base. The Clerk made governors aware that ultimately the group made the final decision on committee membership but endorsed the rationale of the Chair. The Clerk noted that whilst individual governors could request to move on to a different committee, a governing body should consider whether granting a request would be of benefit to the group as a whole before approving it. The Chair invited all governors to email him if they felt that they wished to move committees. The governors that had raised the point indicated they were happy with their roles at present but wanted to better understand the processes if, in the future, they wanted to move.
- 11.2.3 A governor asked the Clerk how long a governor should serve on a particular committee; the governor was concerned about forward planning as already highlighted. The Clerk noted that time served was, in itself, not a deciding factor. It was actually beneficial to have several governors as long-standing members of a committee because such experience was invaluable to the group and allowed individuals to feel assured about taking on senior roles such as committee chair. However, succession planning was a vital part of the strategic process and governing bodies should have ongoing discussions about committee membership and where it would be useful to 'train' a governor up on a different committee. Further discussion followed.
- 11.2.4 The Chair noted that he had received correspondence from a governor around attending committee meetings where a governor was not a committee member. The Chair re-iterated the Governing Body's policy that any governor could attend any committee but could not vote if they were not a designated member of that committee. The only exceptions to this policy were:
- The Pay, Appraisal and Staffing committee's business was confidential and, in the event of an appeal against one of their decisions, the governing body needed members with no prior knowledge to hear the appeal. It was also better to try to avoid having parents attend/be part of this committee as it was often dealing with staffing issues and the school and the governing body could not put people in compromised positions
 - The Strategy Committee as this committee's terms of reference included reviewing and agreeing the annual School Development Plan (SDP) with the HT and her SLT and that this could only be effectively accomplished with a small group of experienced governors

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- 11.3 **Resolved:**
Governors agreed the committee structure and membership as circulated in the relevant document prior to the meeting. It was agreed that Heather Barden would replace Ian Yates on the Pay, Appraisal and Staffing committee.
- 11.4 There was a brief discussion about additional monitoring roles and assigned classes. The temporary absence of Fleur Kennedy due to injury meant that the Safeguarding monitoring brief needed covering. Jane Golightly agreed to step in to that role temporarily. The resignation of Ian Yates meant that the ICT/website monitoring brief was now vacant. The Chair said he would have conversations with governors about the potential to take this on **Action DH**. Ian Yates' resignation also meant there was no governor assigned to class 5. Jane Golightly agreed to cover the class temporarily, leaving Ms Davitt-Betts to be the link for EYFS. The Chair would be the sole link for class 9 whilst Mrs Kennedy was recovering.
- 11.5 **Resolved:**
Governors agreed the additional roles and monitoring responsibilities and class links as outlined in the relevant document circulated prior to the meeting, subject to the changes as outlined in the minute above.

12. Committee Terms of Reference

- 12.1 The Raising Achievement and Finance committees had met and agreed their terms of reference. These had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Governors were satisfied with the terms as they stood. The Pay, Appraisal and Staffing committee had not yet met to agree its terms of reference.

13. Committee Reports

Minutes of the recent committee meetings had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors noted any decisions taken under delegated powers.

- 13.1 Finance
The committee chair noted that the committee had received a budget monitoring update from the SBM. The committee had been made aware that systems issues still prevailed and as such the monitoring report should not be regarded as a definitive representation of the school's financial position. The report was however, correct in total and indicated that the school was on track to deliver an on budget result for the year. The other main item of business was going through the recent health and safety audit report findings and receiving an update on progress from the site manager.
- 13.2 Raising Achievement
The committee chair noted that the committee had received a briefing on the assessment mechanisms as outlined to governors this evening. They had challenged the school around its 2015 data and how it was going to improve outcomes in the areas highlighted as requiring development. In particular, the committee would be receiving ongoing updates about Phonics and the actions being taken there. There had been a comprehensive SEND update and the committee had been assured that SEND pupils were in a far better position in terms of their provision than they had been previously. There had also been an update from the disadvantaged pupils working group, which would continue its work across the year.

14. New Governor Feedback

- 14.1 Those governors that had joined during the past year were invited to feedback on their experiences.
- 14.1.1 Mrs McDonald and Ms Colquhoun said that the internal induction process had been really useful and wondered whether it could be enhanced further by having a buddying system, whereby when new governors joined they could have a designated support governor to help them cope with all the information that arrived in those first few months. Governors liked this idea. The Chair agreed that this would be useful. The relatively short tenures of nearly all the
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current governors had prevented this being a viable exercise previously but it was certainly something to be worked into the induction process. In terms of advising other governors, Mrs McDonald and Ms Colquhoun said that whilst the LA run governance courses had been useful to a point, they couldn't provide the individual context a governor would need for their particular school and therefore they would advise new governors staggering their training attendance so that they could apply their own context more readily in the training. It also meant absorbing a little less information all at once, information that could then easily be forgotten. The Chair echoed these sentiments. The governors felt they would benefit from getting more information fed down to them from the Strategy committee. It was important to understand some of the bigger strategic matters the school faced. The Chair assured governors that most of the documents that were formulated and discussed in this committee were passed on to governors – for example the school's development plan and school self assessment. The Chair added that the Strategy Committee worked on behalf of the full Governing Body. Recently it had supported the Headteacher in reviewing options for the school's leadership post retirement of the deputy head. The committee had reviewed options and new ways of thinking before bringing a final set of options to the full governing body.

- 14.1.2 Miss Barden recognised what her colleagues were talking about in terms of the amount of information to be digested. Having just joined the governing body it was quite a daunting prospect getting up to speed with everything. Mr Romaniak commented that the information seemed daunting and complex, mostly because it related to the education sphere that many individuals were not familiar with in their day-to-day business. All the governors possessed the skills to understand the data given time – it was about having that confidence to trust in ones own abilities.

15. Policy Reviews

15.1 Resolved:

Governors approved the following policies:

- SEN
- Pay
- Appraisal

- 15.2 The SBM was not present and the Budget Management policy had not been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors were not in a position to approve the policy. Approval was deferred until the next meeting in December **Action AF**.

16. Any Other Business

- 16.1 There was a brief discussion about the arrangements for the upcoming governor monitoring visits and how best to proceed in the interests of both the school and the governors.

17. Confirmation of Future Meeting Dates

- 17.1 The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 15th December 2015 at 6pm. Other meetings to proceed as per the schedule circulated prior to the meeting.
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The meeting ended at 8:35pm.

Signed: (Chair)

Date:

Park Grove Primary School**Actions from the Governing Body meeting on 30 September 2015:**

| <i>ACTION</i> | <i>Item no on minutes</i> | <i>WHO</i> | <i>WHEN</i> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Amend Photographic Images of Children protocols | 4.1 | SBM | Carried over from previous |
| 2) Increase the number of class visits | 4.1 | All governors | Ongoing |
| 3) Governors to familiarise themselves with the answers to sample OFSTED questions as worked through previously | 6.1 | All governors | ASAP |
| 4) Arrange Angela Shaw to visit governors to help prepare for OFSTED | 6.1 | Jo Sawyer | ASAP |
| 5) Seek out new monitoring governor for ICT/website | 11.4 | David Hare | ASAP |
| 6) Address governors request for more information from Strategy group | 14.1.1 | David Hare | ASAP |
| 7) Budget Management policy approval | 15.2 | Adrian Fletcher | By next meeting |