



## Park Grove Primary School

### FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 6pm

**Present:**

|                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Mr David Hare (Chair) | Miss Jo Sawyer (Headteacher) |
| Ms Sheila Davitt      | Ms Hazel Colquhoun           |
| Mrs Vicky Hearson     | Mrs Jane Golightly           |
| Dr Tillmann Jacobi    | Mr Richard Romaniak          |
| Miss Heather Barden   | Mrs Kelly McDonald           |
| Mrs Catriona Martin   |                              |

**In Attendance:**

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| Mr Iain Tessier (Governor Support Officer and Clerk)     |
| Mr Adrian Fletcher (peripatetic School Business Manager) |

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#### 5. OFSTED Update

- 5.1 The Headteacher said that the school had received the draft report but the outcome remained confidential. The Chair said that the school had been on quite a journey from being a weak, requiring improvement school to a far stronger 'good' school.
- 5.1.1 The Headteacher said that, whilst the outcome was officially still pending, it had been indicated that the school was good for the following reasons:
- A strong improvement in overall standards, with clear progress being shown for individual cohorts of children (SEND, disadvantaged pupils, EAL);
  - The quality of teaching was much improved and overall at a good standard;
  - Pupils' attitude to learning was excellent and their behaviour around school and towards one another was also very good. Pupils clearly enjoyed coming to school and felt secure in the school environment;
  - The school's leadership had attended to the areas of concern outlined at last inspection – with EYFS now showing as one of the school's key strengths;
  - There had been noticeable improvement in overall governance and particularly in the area of challenge for the school's leadership.
- 5.1.2 The Headteacher added that it had been indicated that the school was not yet outstanding because:
- A minority of teaching was still not strong enough;
  - The impact of marking on progress was not sufficiently strong enough at present.

On this final point, the Headteacher said that she believed the marking policy and the way in which it was implemented by the teachers was actually very good and that any inspection of the books would show that marking was well attended to by teachers and that pupils clearly picked up on the feedback and used it positively to improve their work. However, the school would look to implement further improvements based on the recommendations, if any, in the final OFSTED report.

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#### 6. Academy Update

- 6.1 The Chair reported that meetings had taken place with representatives from EBOR Trust. The meetings had been positive and many of the initial questions had been answered. Interested partner schools had indicated some concerns around the Trust's governance structures and how schools were expected to report within the Trust mechanism. More clarity was needed on delegation of duties and levels of autonomy etc.

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6.2 The Chair asked governors how they wanted to proceed. Did the group want to proceed to consultation, pause the process or reject the move outright? There was some uncertainty now over formal government policy but what was clear was that the education environment still showed an emphasis on schools searching for viable partnerships. With EBOR the fundamental underpinnings of a MAT were already in place, which, from a logistical and time point of view, made joining that Trust an attractive proposition. The Chair welcomed governors to express their individual views, including the benefits and concerns they perceived from pursuing such a move.

*Sheila Davitt entered the meeting*

6.3 All governors gave their perspective. Full and frank exchanges were made.

Areas of consensus on the plus side included:

- EBOR currently offered the best local fit for the school in terms of vision and values and was primary rather than secondary led;
- The MAT, being established, meant that the school could retain 100% focus on provision for pupils and addressing outcomes;
- The retention of quality staff would be easier as part of a MAT that could offer enhanced professional training opportunities and, in time, possible career progression.
- The likely economies of scale and ability to garner additional incomes would contribute to a better budget position and therefore more money to invest in all areas of education provision – thus impacting positively on the curriculum and ultimately pupil outcomes.

Areas where governors had concerns included;

- Could long-term protection of autonomy really be maintained;
- The school had to retain the appropriate level of local governance and control;
- The MAT was likely to expand rapidly and the school needed to be assured that the right level of support could be given as needed and that the MAT could operate effectively.

6.4 The Clerk and SBM provided input based on their experiences of working with both Academies and schools in the process of conversion. The Clerk clarified the actual decision making process.

6.5 The Chair assured governors that EBOR would be made aware of the governors' concerns and that the group would receive suitable answers in relation to how governance and autonomy would be delivered within the MAT.

6.6 Governors reached a majority decision in respect of how to proceed on this matter.

**Resolved:**

Governors agreed to proceed to explore Academy status and to consult on such a move with stakeholders, including parents. Governors agreed as part of the process to explore and to consult upon joining the EBOR Trust (Multi-Academy Trust) from April 2017. The consultation period to run from 5 September 2016 until the end of November 2016. A final decision on whether to convert and to join the Trust to be made thereafter. The consultation documents to be approved by full governors at the July FGB. **Agenda.** The Chair and the Headteacher were authorised to contact the DfE to make the expression of interest and to receive their guidance accordingly. They were also authorised to discuss the consultation process and preparation of materials with EBOR.

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**Signed: (Chair)**

**Date:**