

ELEANOR PALMER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting 11 October 2023

Absent / Apologies

Charlotte MacCormick - at CPD

Boris Telyatnikov - unable to connect via zoom

Jack Tinley- unable to connect via zoom

Gonzalo Coello De Portugal

In attendance:

Parent Governors

Andrea Bara Bara

Christophe Frèrebeau

Sei-Kee Maturine

Aoife Nolan

LA Governor

Staff

Natalie Stevenson - Co-Head

Sally Hill- Co-Head

Lacey Cousins – Associate Governor

Co-opted Governors

Jennifer Allan – Chair of Governors

Shanti Fricker

Also present:

Nanouche Umeadi - Associate Governor

Tania Voaden, Clerk

MATTERS ARISING

1.00 Start of year business completed

- Declarations of Business Interests were signed
- Committee membership was confirmed
- The Headteachers' appraisal panel was agreed upon and constitutes the Chair, Tim Peake and Jen Allan. The panel number was limited to three, as recommended by Prue Barnes Kemp (CPP).

1.1 Corrections and actions from July 2023 FGB Meeting Minutes

Actions

Item 5.1 SEN survey action noted for action in 2024 survey.

Item 6.0 Research School Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) confirmed. The MoU had been previously shared and then agreed without significant changes. There may be amendments made to enable a break clause and the Heads will share again if amendments are made.

No corrections were made.

2.00 Heads' Report

The Heads invited comments and questions on their report which was shared ahead of the meeting, along with the September 2023 Ofsted report.

2.1 Aoife Nolan asked whether parents should have been notified about the asbestos work that had taken place in the summer. Tim Peake commented that risk around asbestos is when it is disturbed, which is why works take place when the site is not in use. He explained that the work had involved encapsulating the asbestos in situ. Aoife Nolan responded that there may be parental concerns around the work. Natalie Stevenson said the works were managed by Camden and that pupil and staff safety was paramount. The work had been completed and she would give thought to whether parents are now informed.

2.2 Safeguarding.

Aoife Nolan asked whether the 2 instances of violence against staff were witnessed by children. Lacey Cousin said that one was not, the other was seen by children and involved an object thrown across the room. Jen Allan suggested that behaviour incidents were presented as a table in the Heads' report with a running total of incidents included.

- **Action** - a table of behaviour incidents added to Heads' report going forward - NS/SH
Done

2.2 Club EP

Governors asked how the school planned to manage Club EP, as interest was frequently exceeding places available. The Heads and the clerk explained that a third member of staff was engaged to support the club on the most popular days. Capacity was not simply about staffing, but also about space. The mixed age range of the club each day and across days also meant that it was challenging to arrange group activities. Governors asked how the school could support families who needed child care in the event of an emergency and were reassured that provision would always be arranged in these circumstances.

- **Action** PPC to further discuss the school's extended day offer. **Added to Spring agenda**

2.3 Keep it EP

The school had hosted a 'Welcome to EP...Keep it EP' session detailed in the Heads' report. Nine families attended and governors commented that the early timing may exclude some working parents. The Heads' acknowledged this and had previously run similar events in the evening, but were also aware of teatime and bedtime clashes. Timings of these events will continue to be considered and discussed.

2.3 Ofsted

The school's Ofsted report was shared with governors ahead of the meeting.

Natalie Stevenson explained that the published Ofsted report was written in summary and shared a more detailed report of notes taken by the Heads providing greater detail of feedback given at the end of the inspection. The feedback was extremely positive and Jen Allan acknowledged the effusive nature of this. Sally Hill added that the inspectors commented that the staff and parent responses were remarkably good.

It was noted that the school was consistently exceptional. Continuous improvement is held within the ethos of the school. Inspectors were impressed by children's knowledge, especially so early in the academic year. The exceptional level of enrichment was commented upon.

It was encouraging that the school's long-held topic-based approach was validated. Natalie Stevenson commented that this approach had been viewed with some negativity over the last decade. Seen as rather ill-defined by some, the inspection supported the school's conviction that teaching a term-long topic, at depth and taught well, enables children to learn and retain knowledge with profundity.

The Heads explained that on Day 2 of the inspection the school chose RE as an area of focus. They were able to choose any area and chose RE partly because it enabled another subject lead, Stefan Palejowski, to speak with inspectors. There was praise for the knowledge of the subject leads across the school.

Children's personal development and positive behaviour were commended. Natalie Stevenson said that school felt calm and collegiate on the day. Clearly there was a sense of pressure, but the inspection did not feel unduly stressful. She added that other Camden Heads had been generous with 'top tips' to help manage the inspection.

Sally Hill added that this was her 4th inspection. She commented that the inspection felt very respectful with no element of trying to 'catch out' the school. Natalie commented that she hoped that this was indicative of a change to how inspections were conducted.

The Heads reflected on how the Outstanding outcome would affect the school. It put the school in a strong position and with a good platform to consider 'what next?'. It may also influence how other professionals view the school.

Natalie Stevenson asked what preparation had been useful for governors. Sei-kee Maturine responded that the meeting with the CPP Prue Barnes Kemp had been positive. Nanouche Umeadi agreed, and said that she reminded them that they had a role to challenge the school and to provide examples of this. Christophe Frerebeau added that the work done at committee meant that governors had good knowledge and understanding of the school. Nanouche Umeadi said that it showed strength that so many governors were ready and keen to talk with the inspectors.

Natalie Stevenson noted that the inspectors did not ask anything about data. They had looked at outcomes, and so visited with that on their minds. Sally Hill added that they had looked at data in terms of monitoring.

The Chair congratulated the Heads on the Outstanding Ofsted outcome. Natalie Stevenson thanked the governors for their contribution to the inspection and also the Chair for his letter to parents.

3.00 SPECIAL ITEM School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Committee Meetings

Curriculum

3.1 Key area is developing teaching team knowledge and strategies to improve pupils' metacognition and self-regulated learning across the curriculum.

Using EEF summary of recommendations the headlines included-

- Children understand how they learn and what success looks like.
- The appropriate level of challenge to develop pupils' self-regulation.
- To support pupils to think about their own learning and develop independent learning skills and self-motivation.

Natalie Stevenson explained that this looks different at different ages e.g. In EYFS this may be about perseverance, in Year 1 being on the carpet and ready to learn and in Year 6 taking notes from the whiteboard and ready for secondary transition. She explained that the work looked at challenging whether pupils looked like they were learning, or were actually learning. There is evidence of significant benefit to disadvantaged pupils.

Tim Peake asked whether this work was driven by the Research School tie-in and Sally Hill responded that the school was already on this journey, looking at attention ratios and looking at the work of the EEF, so this was a good alignment. Torriano School are also looking at EEF recommendations closely.

3.2 Another Curriculum Committee SIP objective was to improve teaching and learning of mathematical problem solving, leading to improved pupil outcomes.

Sally Hill said that the school had done a great deal of work on this in the past, but with staff changes they needed to make sure that all staff have had maths CPD. The 3 elements were fluency, reasoning and problem solving. The most challenging area was problem solving and CPD in this area will ensure children's confidence and attainment remain a consistent strength.

3.3 A spring term focus is around science. Natalie Stevenson explained year groups have a term long science-based topic and in addition have smaller science topics through the year. The SIP focus will look at what it is to be a scientist and evaluate whether the current approach to science learning is effective.

3.4 Jen Allan said that the committee also discussed the relationship between the curriculum and staffing committees in light of the Research School. They also discussed the Music Policy, due for review in the year ahead, but in the context of the retirement of the music teacher and the appointment of a new music lead.

Staffing

3.5 The Leadership team to ensure that CPD is evidence informed, uses EEF toolkits and is driven by the school's needs. This will balance what the EEF recommends and what the school needs. Tim Peake asked whether there was a national approach from the EEF. Natalie Stevenson affirmed that there was, that participating schools had interaction with the recommendations and research, but that different schools chose different foci. Sally Hill added that there is an EEF portal accessible to all Research Schools, this includes national data and outcomes which the EEF use to identify where to target support. Lacey Cousins added that the EEF had wanted a North London Research School, including a secondary school and with a focus on 3 key big areas -literacy, metacognition and behaviours for learning. Natalie Stevenson said that the schools would be training and disseminating the recommendations. Mainly led by the Research Directors; Parliament Hill and Torriano, and Eleanor Palmer would gauge engagement.

[REDACTED]

The committee reviewed the updated Child Protection policy and this was ratified by the Governing Body.

As Charlie MacCormick is joining the Staffing Committee the Term of Reference needs to be amended to reflect this.

- **Action** TV to update Terms of Reference. **Done**

PPC

3.7 Following on from feedback in the SEN survey, an objective is to develop consistency in communication with SEN pupils and their families. Lacey Cousins said that the committee would look at consistency across the school in communication year to year.

3.8 Audit and improving practice with an anti-racist lens that challenges bias. The committee was working on an anti-racist policy and practice. Rather than a policy however it would be termed an anti-racist strategy which can adapt and evolve. It was important to have a clear written protocol of response.

- **Action** After further work, the Anti-Racism Strategy to be shared with all governors along with a plan of implementation. **Due end of Spring Term**

3.9 The committee also discussed the change of my Plans for children with SEN to a more numerical system. The committee are reviewing the new Camden model policy for Screening and Searching. The model policy has a secondary school focus and needs revision to suit primary schools.

- **Action** SH to take policy to Camden for suggested revisions. PPC Committee to work on adapting so appropriate for the school. **Review in Spring Term**

3.10 Objectives include the development of an asset management plan to include strategic priorities and premises maintenance.

Tim Peake said that this objective would be discussed at each meeting as a committee priority. The investment plan would keep standards high. The plan would look at the more mundane maintenance work and more ambitious projects. Sally Hill said that the school welcomed help from parents with grant applications and the asset management plan could be used in this to target

Tim Peake said that the school had always made amazing site investment in change and creativity with year on year investment. Sally Hill thanked Tim Peake for all his contributions in this.

3.11 Tim Peake said that the committee meeting also looked at the financial carryforward which was [REDACTED], whilst a higher carryforward than anticipated the school was still eating into reserve finances. The Keep it EP fund would supplement, but not fill, the gap. The committee will continue to review future funding opportunities.

4.00 AOB

4.1 It was agreed that the Governing Body transitions to use Governor Hub.

- **Action** TV to add documents to Governor Hub. **Done**

4.2 Governors present signed the ICT user agreement and acknowledgement of Pt 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

4.3 Governors agreed that there would be no committee meetings in Spring 1 and that this time would be used for monitoring.

Governors discussed possible agenda items for the year. The Chair suggested that someone from the EEF and Jen Allan said that Research Director Hannah Blausten would be a welcome speaker.

4.4 Natalie Stevenson said that there would be a Research Steering group, similar to the GB committee, Jen Allan suggested that she is a member.

4.5 Committee membership was verified.

4.6 No additional training to record

- **Action** for TV to share upcoming Governor Training links. **Done.**

There was no other governor training to record.