

ELEANOR PALMER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Held on 6 July 2016 at 6.00pm

Apologies received:

Kirsten Walton

LB Camden

Boris Telyatnikov

Parent

Julia Hollis, Vice Chair

Kirsten Walton

Shanti Fricker

Vicky Starmer

Mark Peters

Staff

Kate Froom, Headteacher

Rosie Thomson

Co-opted

Jennifer Allan

Mark Pemberton

Alice Barling-Gasson, Chair.

Tim Peake

Associate members

Fiona Crean

Also present:

Tania Voaden, Clerk

1.00 There were no declarations of interest.

2.00 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on Wednesday 18 May 2016.

Corrections

No corrections were made to the minutes.

3.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

The document 'Chair's Report 6 July 2016' had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

3.1 The Chair noted that this was her final meeting thanked Governors for the support and commitment given during her term in office as a governor and Chair. The Head thanked the Chair for her contribution and Governors also expressed their thanks and best wishes.

The Chair said that she had been in contact with Camden regarding a new Chair and stressed that there was a solid framework with supporting documentation to hand over. She asked once again whether any existing Governors would step forward to become Chair. The Head asked if it would be possible for a teacher governor to become Chair, the Chair stated that they could not.

3.2 Referendum implications.

The Chair had highlighted the implication of the Brexit referendum outcome in her report. She stated that the result may hinder or alter some planned education policies, but that it made sense to still plan for cuts in the school budget.

3.3 The Chair had referenced CSLP in her report and the Head updated the Governors that there were 8 schools in the partnership and now the partnership had been set up, other schools could join. At this point in time she stressed that what the CSLP was still in development and that the partnership would create the model.

Boris Telyanikov joined meeting at 6:20pm

4.0 HEAD'S REPORT – the document 'Head's Report 6 July 2016' was shared prior to the meeting.

End of Year results and data

4.1 Foundation Stage

The Head reported that the results at Foundation Stage assessments were good with 83% of pupils achieving 'expected levels' at the end of Reception. Results across Camden averaged at around 60% and the school had achieved 77% in the previous year. The Head noted that the cohort was strong with the majority of children working within a manageable range of ability. She anticipated that most would achieve 'expected levels' at the end of Year 2. The Head commended class teacher Sara Stokes on her work with the class.

4.2 Year 1 phonics check

The pass mark was 32/40 and 27 of the 30 children passed; a 90% pass rate up on the pass rate of 80% in the previous year.

The check was moderated this year and the moderator was satisfied with the execution of the assessment.

4.2 Year 2 re-test

5 of the 6 children who sat the phonics retest passed, 4 with strong scores. The child who did not pass has documented SEN and will receive ongoing support.

4.3 Key Stage 1 results

The Head updated Governors on the results as shared in her report. These tests were new for 2016 and provide raw test scores which are then converted into a scaled score. The Head said that these scaled scores provide a much clearer picture of attainment than the broad brush results provided by 'levels' used previously.

The Key Stage 1 results were not strong overall, but the Head informed Governors that they provided a good picture of the cohort with a number of children not yet secure. 9 children had not achieved the pass score in reading, but the Head said that 4 of these children should achieve the pass standard soon and would have some targeted intervention. Their mechanics of reading were fine with these children, but scores weakened currently by comprehension. The 3 children with the lowest scores had more complex special needs.

In maths 8 children had not achieved the pass mark. The Head was confident that 5 of these children could achieve the required standard, with 3 children with greater cognitive challenges.

The tests were new this year and informed the final teacher assessments shared with parents. The teacher's assessment in maths had fully aligned with the test results with some small variation in reading. The Head's report summarised the results and compared to 2015. The Head acknowledged that the results were relatively poor and had outlined some contributory factors for this in her report.

4.4 Key Stage 2

At the time of the Head's report the official test results had not been received. The results and analysis were tabled at the meeting. This included summary graphs showing the % of children in the school 'reaching expected levels', scaled score results for each of the tested subject areas with further detail of scores for SEN (special educational needs), EAL (English as an additional language) and PP (pupil premium). Discussions arising from these reports:

- The summary of % of children 'reaching expected levels' in the SATs tests showed that 93% of children did so in all three areas assessed. This compared to 80% in reading and 80% in maths in the teacher assessments. The Head had indicated in her report that the teacher assessments would err on the harsh and this had transpired.
- One child with SEN was well below expected levels and had not taken the tests.

- The graphs illustrated that the results were strong in the context of Camden results which in turn were ahead of national results. The combined Eleanor Palmer results (including the teacher assessed writing assessment) showed 87% of children reaching 'expected standard' compared to 59% across Camden and 53% nationally.
- In discussing the reading assessment results, the Head talked positively about whole class reading in school, engendering a reading habit, a culture of encouraging children to talk a lot, have discussions and to actively listen. She thought that this had a very positive impact on reading scores.
- The Head stated that there was a definite challenge for bilingual children in both reading and SPAG tests. She highlighted the clustered number of pupil premium children towards the lower end of the SPAG results indicating the impact of deprivation in these subjects. EAL and poverty had a far lesser impact on maths, made evident by first and third highest scores in the maths tests achieved by an EAL and FSM child respectively. 30% of the cohort were pupil premium.
- The Head said that class teacher Rosie Thomson had done fantastic work with the class and should be very proud. The Chair concurred.
- Parents would be given their child's scaled score and the teacher assessment score.
- Governors talked about adding value and how these scores could be measured against the KS1 results. The Head explained a complex new system of relating scaled score to national averages at KS1; that an individual child's progress would be scored as + or – relative to their scaled score compared to national scores for those with the same KS1 level.

4.5 Reading test

The Head's report shared the detail of the Suffolk reading test which determines a child's reading age in relation to their chronological age and also puts it in the national context. The report demonstrates that school has a high percentage of high ability readers.

These tests are done three times a year and triangulate a teacher assessment.

The school is also running an NFER comprehension test trial in Years 3-5 which the Head reported seems to be an accurate tool on comprehension.

On page 8 of the Head's report there is a summary table of the percentage of children meeting expected levels in all subject areas, which highlights the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium children.

It was noted that the writing scores in the infant year groups are low, but that this was attributed to the fact that the children are still young and emerging writers.

The Governors then broadly discussed the points raised by the Head in her report with the regard to the move from old assessment levels to teacher assessments as to whether a child had met 'end of year expected levels'. The prevailing view in the school is that the new assessments provide a much clearer view of attainment, better inform and provide focus on the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium children. With the new curriculum and assessments the Head reported a huge growth in learning and understanding of the objectives and outcomes, and a clear direction to focus on the children who were not yet on track. Having completed the first year of new monitoring and assessments there was also a better understanding of where the attainment bar is set.

- **ACTION** Head to find out how scaled scores are handed over to secondary schools.

4.6 Admissions

The school was oversubscribed for Reception, but not to previous levels. The Head summarised the admissions detail in her report.

4.7 The Head drew Governor's attention to the challenges ahead regarding Early Years funding. The government pledged to give working parents 30 hours free childcare if both parents are working for over 16 hours (or one in a lone parent family) and neither earns more than £100,000. Families not working are only entitled to 15 hours of free childcare. This incentivises schools to prioritise those families earning under £200,000 over those families not working in order to secure funding. The Head said that this does not align well with getting children who may have greatest social and language need into Nursery. The Head noted that, some early modelling showed that if we secured 13 families who would qualify for the 30 hour funding that would cover the cost of running Nursery.

4.8 Engagement

The Head reported that there remained only one member of the PTA Committee and asked Governors for suggestions of how to ensure that there was a stable and effective PTA going forward. Governors considered asking about the PTA in the Governor questionnaire and there was discussion about the annual PTA meeting. The Head said that this meeting was useful and attracted a core of parents but did not usually succeed in a wider engagement.

Discussion moved to how to improve Governor visibility and engagement and ensure that under-represented groups had their views heard. The Chair proposed a meeting to discuss this with greater focus.

- **Action** Add Governor engagement as an agenda item in January meeting.

4.9 Premises

Solar panels will be installed in the summer holidays.

The Head reported that the treehouse structure looked fantastic and that it had been a great project which had involved Year 4 in the design and building process. There was an agreement that there was a correlation between the provision of an exciting playground and playtime and positive behaviour in school.

4.10 NUT strike

A parent had written to the Chair about the strike and its impact and requested that the letter was passed to teaching staff. NUT rep Craig Cairns was responding.

4.11 Teaching School

The Head summarised the achievements of Teaching School over the last year in her report. The Chair commended the achievements.

4.12 The Chair asked about priorities for the year ahead and referenced the SDP 2015-2016 and template for SDP 2016-17 shared with the Head's papers.

The Head had detailed the evaluation column in the 2015-16 SDP and asked for comments. She highlighted that whole class reading as an area that needed embedding further. Within Teaching and Learning Aims, the professional development model had had excellent feedback from staff and should be embedded and extended further in the year ahead.

5.00 PPC COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes dated 22 June 2016 and results of the Parent Questionnaire were shared in advance of the meeting.

5.1 Mark Peters presented the findings of the questionnaire.

- The response rate was approximately 40%, with a 10% increase on the previous year. Very few questions had been left blank by respondents.
- 92% of questions had a response of 'I agree' or 'I strongly agree' with a move towards strongly agree
- In 2015 the biggest concern was the response to the question 'school deals well with unacceptable behaviour' when 25% of respondents did not agree. In 2016 survey 3 respondents disagreed so a significant change to the positive.
- There was deterioration in the response to the question 'school makes sure my child has a healthy lifestyle' from 'strongly agree' to 'agree'.
- With regard to improvements, two recurrent comments in the questionnaire concerned a greater provision of clubs and a review of school dinners.

The summary of responses would be shared with parents with the weekly newsletter along with the end of year letter from the Chair highlighting and responding to the key points from the survey.

- **ACTION** PPC to discuss school dinners at committee.

6.00 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes of the committee meeting and detail of the Staff Survey had been shared with Governors in advance of the meeting.

6.1 Staff Survey

Julia Hollis summarised the key findings of the Staff Survey to Governors. The year on year trend is positive with improvements in some key areas.

The question 'The feedback I receive helps me to improve my performance' has dropped slightly over the last three years down from 100% to 97% to 94%. This will be discussed at committee to see what can be offered.

- **ACTION** Letter from Julia Hollis and A4 summary sheet of findings to share with staff. **Done**

6.2 The committee reviewed and approved the Complaints Policy.

7.0 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT

The minutes of the meeting 15 June 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting.

7.1 Jennifer Allan summarised minutes of the meeting.

Boris Telyatnikov had attended a coding lesson and the committee had reviewed his report. A 'growth mindset' monitoring visit had also taken place.

Jennifer Allan talked about the positive benefits of having Governor monitoring on a regular basis and that Governors got a lot from this experience. Fiona Crean responded that teachers also found it very useful. There was a discussion about a greater level of Governor presence in school and whether there should be a 'Governors' Day' when they all visited. It was felt that rather than a special day for visiting, a more informal visit structure would be preferable to gain a greater 'day to day' sense of school. How this was presented to teachers was also important, avoiding the term 'observe' and with more of an open invitation for Governors to 'join in'.

8.0 RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee minutes dated 16 June 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting.

8.1 Governors were updated on the Science Lab plans. Progress was slow and but moving ahead after planning was approved with a 30cm external modification. Parents (and The Junction pub) had provided 79 responses to Camden planning. There were plenty of ideas around the lab and Sarah Ewins and the Head had met with Electric Pedals to discuss ideas to generate energy from stationary bicycles and with a company providing anamorphic mirrors. The timing for building completion was currently February 2017, but this could move back.

8.2 Tim Peake highlighted that the key discussions in committee concerned funding. The Head reported that lots of schools would be making staff redundant. The school continues to bring in extra income through Teaching School. As discussed at the last Governing Body meeting the school had a large carry forward with a large portion of this fund retained for the Science Lab.

8.2 Solar panel installation would take place in the summer break and discussion would take place regarding a 'grand opening'.

9.00 AOB Governors discussed meeting dates for the forthcoming year.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm.

POLICIES APPROVED

- **Complaints Policy approved by the Staffing Committee.**