

ELEANOR PALMER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Held on 25 November 2015 at 6.00pm

LB Camden
Boris Telyatnikov

Apologies received: Tim Peake

Parent
Julia Hollis, Vice Chair
Kirsten Walton
Shanti Fricker
Vicky Starmer
Mark Peters

Staff
Kate Frood, Headteacher
Nancy Cumming

Co-opted
Jennifer Allan
Mark Pemberton
Alice Barling-Gasson, Chair.

Associate members
Fiona Crean
Natalie Stevenson

Also present:
Tania Voaden, Clerk

1.00 There were no declarations of interest.

2.00 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on Wednesday 8 July 2015.

2.1 Corrections

Minutes were reviewed and a correction was made in the attendees as Mark Pemberton was erroneously listed as LB Governor as opposed to Co-opted Governor.

2.2 Matters Arising

Items 5.5 Monitoring process for incidents in school. Julia Hollis confirmed that this had been reviewed at the last Safeguarding meeting and that it would be an on-going item on the agenda.

The Chair thanked Julia Hollis for chairing the September meeting in her absence.

3.00 CHAIR'S REPORT – the document 'Chair's Report 25th November 2015' was shared prior to the meeting.

3.1

The Chair summarised some key points from the Government's Autumn Statement released that day.

- The changes to the allocation of school funding will set a national rate for each pupil and reallocation of funding will mean a big loss for London boroughs. There will be cuts in educational support services.
- The National Funding formula will be scrapped to be replaced by the Fair Funding formula which is going out for consultation and in place by 2017-18. The Chair said that Camden are likely to provide a quick response to proposed changes.
- Local authorities will retain responsibility for Admissions and Safeguarding, but will be required to buy in many other services.
- 20% of top level jobs will be lost, not just in Camden but in other local authorities and Academy schools will also be affected.
- The Chair said that the overall view from experts was that cuts in education were not as bad as feared and that there had been powerful lobbying of Nicky Morgan. The department of Transport had seen 37% cuts.
- As a well-funded school within a well-funded authority the school would feel an impact of cuts. The Head stated that it costs more to educate a child in inner London in staffing costs alone and that the funding cannot be levelled across the country as the needs of children are so different nationally.
The Chair responded that there was not a suggestion that there would be a flat rate nationally, but that London would definitely feel a hit from a funding reduction. She anticipated that the cuts would be around 10-15% and that the school should maintain a 3 year budget plan for the worst case scenario. This would ensure the school is well prepared for any cuts and in a good position to manage change as necessary. She welcomed governor input into budget planning.
- Mark Pemberton noted that there were no announcements on the music education hubs and that Arts funding had not been cut.
- The Head noted that Teaching School was generating £100,000 a year and that this was primarily spent on staffing. There is also £90,000 in School Fund accounts.
- The Head flagged that year-end numbers will show a carry forward skewed by Science Lab funding. Monies will be allocated into the school accounts by Camden some time before the payment for works will be made.
- Jennifer Allan stated that the view in the Department of Education was that the cuts were not as severe as they might have been.
- The Head commented that education funding for age 16+ had been cut and she did not understand that rationale for this given that education was statutory until age 18.

3.2 Education News

The Chair was pleased to note that government was sticking to election promises. She noted that Year 7 re-sit tests would be introduced. She also stressed the importance of making it clear to Year 6 parents that the SATs are about accurately assessing a child's ability in their peer group to enable them to receive appropriate support at the start of secondary school.

The Head said that she and Natalie Stevenson had recently met with maths guru Lynn Churchman, Director of National Mathematics Partnership and dedicated to raising achievement in maths in schools. The focus in their meeting with Lynn Churchman had been developing core numeracy. The Head highlighted analysis showing that 75 % children achieving 2B in maths assessments at Key Stage 1 will achieve GCSE, whereas only 36%

of children attaining 2C will. This brought home to teachers the importance of secure foundations established in Infants. Developing core numeracy was essential.

The meeting with Lynn Churchman was hugely affirmative according to the Head, she felt it was important to have these meetings as it can seem as though the school is constantly giving to other schools and not having reciprocal input from anywhere.

The Head was keen to secure more CPD and looking not just to other schools, but having time to review practice with other adults perhaps through conferences. She is keen to pursue other opportunities.

- **ACTION** Julia Hollis to add Head and SLT CPD to Staffing agenda.

4.0 HEAD'S REPORT

The document 'Head's Report November 2015' had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

4.1 Admissions.

[REDACTED]

4.2 Staffing

The Head informed Governors that Natalie Stevenson was pregnant and congratulations were offered.

She also said that the new gardener, a parent, had started and was excellent.

Sarah Ewins is being supported by an intern enabling her to focus on more strategic work and on Teaching School. This is working well in spite of some hot desking challenges and intern. The intern is very strong and is now keen to become a teacher.

4.3 Finance

The Head said that she had met with the Chair and Sarah Ewins regarding the 3 year budget plan. She said that tough decisions must be made as to what the spending priorities are and that the budget plan was on the agenda for the March Governors' meetings.

Camden is looking how to save money and prevent an academy chain closing in on any RI (Ofsted Requires Improvement) schools. There is a lot of research taking place, but consideration is for a group of schools to come together to support an RI school. The Chair asked what would happen if the school did not want to buy in to this and where would it leave the school within the local authority. The Head said that schools would still retain their own governance and budget.

Camden have arranged for independent consultants to look at 3 year budget plans.

4.4 Extended Schools

The Head informed Governors that the new PTA had run a very successful disco. The Chair passed on thanks to the PTA for their work in this.

4.5 Premises

Governors discussed the progression of the Science Lab in brief. The Head said that it was moving ahead and at the pre-planning stage. There were plenty of ideas being incorporated including a dark room, sinks, and collapsible tables. The Science Lab team had enthused

about the project and the Head said that 3D models of the building would be made and shared with the children.

The Head wanted to highlight to Governors the wonderful success of the link with the International Space Station and how it had been an inspiring event for both children and adults!

5.00 SPECIAL ITEM

RAISE Online (Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through school Self-Evaluation) and Inspection Dashboard review.

The Head had shared the 60 page RAISE Online and Ofsted Inspection Dashboard documents with Governors in advance of the meeting and had asked them to review these prior to the meeting to inform the review.

During the meeting she drew attention to key points to note and discuss.

5.1 RAISE Online

- In the last 2 years the balance has tipped slightly towards an increased % of boys in the school. Girls make up 47.9% of children having been in a slight majority 2 years ago. The outgoing Year 6 was imbalanced in gender with a cohort of 70% boys.
- The % of children eligible for pupil premium continues to diminish and was 20% in 2015 against 23.8% in 2013. The national % in 2015 was 26%
- The data reflects the increased number of children in the school with an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan). Eleanor Palmer is 2.5% children vs. 1.4 nationally.
- The school remains very stable with few children leaving. 95.6% stability vs. 85.9% nationally.
- 44.6% children come from minority ethnic groups vs. 30.7% nationally.
- 53.9% of children are classed as White British; this figure is 70.4% nationally. 74.4% of children have English as a first language against 82.5% nationally.
- On the deprivation measure the school measures 0.30%, higher than the national figure of 0.24%. The Head stated that measure did not accurately reflect the wealth of inner London.
- Table 3.1.1 in the report shows prior attainment in terms of Key Stage 1 average point score. The Head noted the strength of the current Year 4 cohort (Year 3 on report) with average point scores significantly higher than the national average. No children sit within the 'low attainment' band. This contrasts to an 11.8% national average and to 20% of Eleanor Palmer children in this band the preceding year and so reflecting the big variations between year group ability.
- Table 5.1.1 illustrates Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 value added scores. The Head drew Governors attention to the significant progression scores across all subjects and the percentile rank of 15th for 2015.

5.2 Ofsted Inspection Dashboards

The Inspection Dashboard summary front page outlines the school's strengths and weaknesses identified. Whilst pleased with the acknowledged strengths, within the 'Weaknesses in 2015' section none were identified. The Head commented that whilst there were not significant variances to note between cohort performances, there were some areas that required focus and that there was still a pronounced gap in performance of FSM children in some areas.

In reviewing the report the Head advised the Governors to look at attainment and progress of the school in relation to the pink lines that illustrate the national picture. If the school graph

columns go over the pink line this was a simple indication of a good performance in comparison to the national results.

- Reading -page 2. The data reflects success in reading with a high number of children exceeding expected progress and a positive reduction in the gap with disadvantaged children performing above other pupils nationally.
- Writing - page 3. The Head noted that the writing results show that the schools disadvantaged pupils did not make more than expected progress and were below other pupils nationally in 2015.
Mark Peters challenged that whilst the absolute numbers were fine, it appeared as though the school was falling behind the national cohort in writing. The Head countered that the high number of ethnic minority children in school and in London impacted on the figures when compared nationally.
- Maths - page 4. The maths report shows that whilst the school's non-disadvantaged children did better than the non-disadvantaged nationally there was a big gap between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged.
- Value Added -page 5. This page illustrates value added showing a confidence interval as a bar stretching above and below the plotted value added score. The Head drew attention to the upward trajectory of reading results for disadvantaged children and that the value added is significantly above average.
Mark Peters asked why the writing results had improved so significantly from 2013. The Head said that this was because writing had been teacher assessed in 2013 and that the school had been too tough in these assessments in the first year, something that the school had subsequently recognised. Since writing had been externally moderated by the Local Authority, the results had improved.
- Value added and Key Stage 2 threshold - page 6. This page shows value added and Key Stage 2 thresholds and the Head noted that this was the first time in the report where the school had not hit the 'pink' national line in maths and writing. For disadvantaged children the school was just below the national position for '% attaining level 4+' and was significantly short in maths and writing for level 5+. The Head commented that she was not concerned that this was a trend but a reflection of the cohort. The Chair stated that this showed attainment not progress of this group.
- Average point score - page 7. The report shows a high average point score above the national average. The Head stated that this class had a very wide range of ability with some very able children aggregating the results of lower ability so the average point score masks some of the lower attainment.
- Key Stage 1 thresholds - page 9. The % attaining level 2B in Maths sits below the national line. Notably in all areas there are no disadvantaged children attaining level 3+. The Head said that book scrutiny going forward will focus on disadvantaged children.
- Context in 2015- page 12. The Head commented that the only consistent pattern from the report was that children are less likely to do well if they are FSM. Whilst the gap continues to be narrow, these children are still less likely to do well.

5.3 The Head had also shared the CFR 2014-2015 report in advance of the meeting. The Head noted that highest spend is on teacher staff and whilst this cost is higher than in other schools, Teaching School draws in income to support this cost. The school is noticeably lower in cost of supply staff than other schools. The Chair stressed that teachers are still the school's priority.

6.0 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes dated 12 November 2015 and Safeguarding Meeting Report dated 12.10.15 were shared in advance of the meeting.

6.1 Camden Model Pay Policy. Governors had been asked to decide between pay Option A and Option B in the Camden Model Pay Policy.

[REDACTED]

Julia Hollis will contact Camden for more information and the policy would be reviewed again at the January staffing meeting.

7.0 PPC COMMITTEE REPORT

The minutes of the meeting November 2015 were shared in advance of the meeting.

7.1 Vicky Starmer summarised the report and highlighted the Shed talks for increasing parental engagement. By 'targeting and tapping' parents the committee hoped to reach a wider group.

The first Stay and Play event had been a success, the Head reported that 103 parents had attended the October session with fewer parents attending the older class groups. Homework Club was going from strength to strength and attracted a diverse group of families with new families coming each week. Some families attended weekly and some occasionally but there was consistently strong uptake.

8.0 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT

The minutes of the meeting November 2015 and Governor Monitoring - Attitudes to Learning 1.10.15 report were shared in advance of the meeting.

8.1 Jennifer Allan informed Governors that the committee had reviewed the data monitoring tool to be used to track and record the progress of pupils and groups against agreed indicators since the removal of the national system of 'levels'. More detail of what the tool looks like and its flexibilities will be shared with all Governors in the January meeting.

The Head said that with levels removed it was harder for governors to review progress. Natalie Stevenson commented that Lynn Churchman had said that formative assessment is more important than summative assessment.

8.2 Governors discussed assessment without levels and preparing Year 6 for testing. The Head said that questions were being trialled at the moment. It seems that there would be no ramping into the test and that speed and accuracy were needed to achieve results. Natalie Stevenson said that more questions are likely to be set in the middle rather than at differing levels of difficulty and that they did not seem to be testing for competency.

8.3 Jennifer Allan referenced the report on Governor Monitoring of Attitudes to Learning. Fiona Crean, Shanti Fricker and Boris Telyatnikov had met with a group of children from Years 3 and 5. The purpose was to study children's attitude to learning and how any 'fixed mindset' can hinder attainment. The outcome of these meetings overall was positive with children welcoming challenge, though it was hard to make generalisations. Further work will be done next term to follow up.

Nancy Cumming said she was amazed at how self-reflective children are and how comfortable they were with reflection.

Kirsten Walton asked in what context the term 'growth mindset' was being used as children seemed to be picking it up as another way they were being measured. Natalie Stevenson said that teachers may say 'I like your attitude' or 'I like your mindset' rather than as any form of label or goal. Kirsten Walton said the thought the nuance was better understood by parents than by children.

Mark Peters challenged why and how mindset was being measured and the core purpose of the study. Fiona Crean and Natalie Stevenson said this was qualitative research to gain an understanding of underlying attitudes and motivations. This may provide insights into how attitudes can create barriers to learning.

9.0 RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee minutes dated 5 November 2015, the Works Plan 3.11.15, the Risk Determination Matrix and the budget summary report were shared in advance of the meeting.

9.1 Boris Telyatnikov informed Governors that service from the contractor BAM FM has been a disappointment and that the contracts with Camden will be terminated. Going forward the school will probably use internal know-how or play a flat fee for services. This matter will have further discussion at committee meetings. The Risk Matrix has been updated to reflect the breakdown of the BAM contract and this item upgraded to a moderate risk.

The Chair asked whether Item 4. 'Failure to retain Ofsted outstanding grade at next inspection' should be moved to low risk. Boris Telyatnikov countered that keeping it with a 'moderate likelihood' helped keep it as a focus.

9.2 Solar

Boris Telyatnikov updated Governors on the progression of the Solar Panels project. The school had reached £2940 through fundraising, a strong start and plenty of local initiatives were in place to generate more funds. There was also a need to start targeting larger organisations.

10.00 AOB

The Chair and Vicky Starmer raised the discussion of the necessity to find a replacement Governor. Vicky Starmer said that she thought it was important to have a representative from the neighbourhood on the Governing Body. She thought that this should not be a parent nor an appointment made for the sake of it, but that some effort should be made in finding a suitable Governor from the local community.

- **ACTION** The Chair would review the Governor pool and see if there were good candidates.

The meeting ended at 8pm.

The next full Governing Body Meeting is at 6pm on Wednesday 27th January.