

ELEANOR PALMER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Held on 23 March 2016 at 6.00pm

Apologies received:

Tim Peake

LB Camden

Boris Telyatnikov

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.

Tim Peake

Associate members

Fiona Crean

Natalie Stevenson

Also present:

Tania Voaden, Clerk

Yvette Mahony -Brookfield School

Elizabeth Dormandy –Brookfield School

The Chair welcomed guest Chairs of Governors from Brookfield School attending the meeting.

1.00 There were no declarations of interest.

2.00 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on Wednesday 27 January 2016.

2.1 Corrections

The Head was listed in attendees, but was at a Challenge Partner review and therefore absent for the meeting.

Item 5 Edit to remove the words 'which would share profit' from the sentence 'Mark Pemberton suggested a not for profit by guarantee option'.

2.2 MATTERS ARISING

Item 10.00 The Chair to review the Governor pool for possible candidates.

The Chair had received some CVs from potential Governors. Governors discussed reviewing skills and behaviours and plugging any gaps. The Head mentioned that Gospel Oak Primary had halved their Governing Body to eight Governors. Fiona Crean said that some Governing Bodies now had working parties rather than committees.

Item 3.11 Science Lab designs shared with Governors. To table in meeting.

Item 3.12 The Chair commented that it was a shame that no Governors had volunteered to engage with parents at the Parents' Evening.

Item 4.1 Admissions Consultation. The Chair had shared the consultation with Governors. She reported that she was still awaiting a response from Camden.

Item 4.4 The Chair to share Ofsted crib sheet. **Rollover action.**

Item 4.5 Fiona Crean had shared the information about Ofsted obtained at a Governor Conference.

Item 5 The Chair had shared CSLP consultation document.

3.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

The document 'Chair's Report 23 March 2016' had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

3.1 The Chair's report provided some detail on the highlights of the recent Challenge Partners review. She stressed thanks and congratulations to everyone at the school.

3.2 The Chair highlighted that her comments in her report were written before the white paper. She noted that inner city schools would be likely to lose funding, whilst non-urban schools gain.

The view held by Camden was that whilst acknowledging other areas may need increased funding, it should be recognised that London and urban areas have other issues to add into consideration such as the cost of living and housing.

Governors discussed academisation. The Chair said that the school should not rush into any action, but equally not bury heads and should remain informed. She said that the White Paper had many references to Teaching Schools and many of these were positive.

Governors commented that the petition opposing academisation had gained a massive response and that there was clearly widespread opposition. Mark Pemberton asked whether academisation was in the Government's manifesto and

whether the House of Lords could hold it back. The Chair responded that it was not in the manifesto, but the omission did not provide legal grounds to hold it back. The Head stated that academisation would have no impact on teaching and learning nor impact on a poor school leader.

[REDACTED]

The Chair said that there was no clear steer yet on what the CSLP was looking to achieve and further meetings and discussions were needed. The Head stated that whilst she had total support for the CSLP and she wants to see it work collaboratively, it requires a dynamic leader to provide vision and clarity.

4.0 HEAD'S REPORT – the document 'Heads' Report 23 March 2016' was shared prior to the meeting.

4.1 Admissions.

The Head shared the secondary transfer results in her report. Julia Hollis noted the increase in popularity of William Ellis and wondered whether it was being chosen over Acland Burghley. The Head commented that Acland Burghley would have a full intake of Year 7 children this year.

The Chair noted again that in spite of having requested a response to the Admissions Consultation, had not been received

4.2 Staffing

The Head referenced the staffing changes from her report and said that parents would be informed of changes after half term.

Since the report, the Head and Vicky Starmer had interviewed five candidates for the position of new Key Stage 2 teacher. They had appointed an exceptionally talented teacher and in illustration the Head said she had researched that the class had studied Macbeth. Referencing Shakespearean quotes she had taught them how to make fake blood and led an inspired, fun and creative lesson.

The Head commented in her report about being open to part-time work from experienced teachers with secure London housing in the acceptance that younger teachers may not stay in London for long. Mark Peters challenged whether this created a much smaller pool to select from, the Head countered that there was a stark decline in available teachers anyway and that there was now no NQT pool in Camden.

4.3 Curriculum Development.

The Chair asked about professional development and Natalie Stevenson commented on her recent Challenge Partners review in St Ives [REDACTED]

Fiona Crean had reviewed a school in Frinton.

The Head had shared the criteria for meeting 'expected levels' in Year 2 in her report. Julia Hollis asked how teachers were finding this. Nancy Cumming said that teachers were doing what they always do, not dull drilling but teaching grammar linked to all areas. Natalie Stevenson said that whilst it was not wrong to teach this

detail of grammar and spelling, it was also important to stress the importance of content.

The Chair asked who would replace Nancy Cumming as Literacy Co-ordinator and the Head said that there were plans to be finalised.

4.4 Special Needs (SEN)

The Head had shared a table detailing the % of children with 'statements' in some other Camden schools. The % at our school is significantly higher than in many other schools and with planned cuts to additional needs funding this will have significant financial impact. The Head detailed likely changes in SEN funding.

The Head noted that Kentish Town Church of England school has a specialist SEN unit yet only takes two children into this each year. Jennifer Allan asked whether the school also took any children with 'statements' as mainstream admissions.

- **ACTION** The Head to find out whether children with EHCP plans are part of mainstream admissions at Kentish Town Primary.

4.5 Safeguarding

Julia Hollis raised the recent training completed by Sarah Ewins for an emergency lock-down or invacuation situation and said that some tangible suggestions had been made. Mark Peters referenced the Paris attacks and how parents need to be taught not to run to schools and create a rolling incident. Discussion was had on how best to practice an invacuation. Kirsten Walton suggested a simple cartoon instruction of 'what to do if'. Nancy Cumming said that children would look to an adult and follow their lead. The Head said that the fire alarm system was being updated and would include and separate alarm for invacuation.

The Head asked for Governors' thoughts on the need for a 'Staff Code of Conduct Policy'. This had been discussed at the Staffing Committee and there was an agreement amongst Governors that a separate policy was not needed as a code of conduct was implicit within the ethos of the school.

4.6 Finance

The Head stressed the future difficulties that will be caused by funding reductions. Whilst Teaching School provided some cushion through income, there were challenging times ahead. She listed some positives with regard to the school's expenditure in her report. Mark Peters commented that looking at the table in the Head's report which detailed funding per pupil, he could see why schools outside London would want a funding formula.

4.7 Teaching School

Mark Peters asked about Mastery as referenced in the Head's report under the Joint Practice Development groups. There was some discussion on mastery and differentiation. The Head talked about mastery as acquiring a set of skills and the ability to apply them with consistency of application. Jennifer Allan said mastery is also the belief that 'everyone can do it' and persistence until this is achieved rather than moving on. Natalie Stevenson said that in the mastery approach, differentiation occurs in the support and intervention provided to different pupils. Mastery can help close the attainment gap but may limit high attainers.

5.00 SPECIAL ITEM – FINANCE

The Head presented a PowerPoint presentation on the school budget and finance. Some key points raised in the presentation were:

- 55% of the school's expenditure is on teaching staff.
- The increase % spent on non-teaching staff reflects the increase in SEN needs and support.
- Very little money is spent on supply and agency staffing.
- The 'Ever 6' formula; funding for free school meal children for 6 years is historically high, but will decline.
- The school is teacher heavy (a good thing); high functioning and SEN heavy.

National Funding Formula

- The move to a national funding formula will potentially see a real term loss of 10% funding to London schools.
- This may mean a loss of £120,000 to Eleanor Palmer.
- Top slice Early Years funding will end.
- Higher Needs funding will be cut.
- De-delegation will end.
- Minimal funding guarantee to 4 'blocks' – per pupil, AEN, school costs and geographic.
- Schools with poor KS1 attainment scores will receive more money. The Head noted that this was a perverse incentive.
- There is little subtlety in targeting deprivation within the formula and no recognition of the 'double deprivation' in urban schools as identified by The Sutton Trust.
- Some of the positives for the school are that it is oversubscribed and that Teaching School provides a financial cushion.
- Governors discussed how the school could manage a £100,000 funding cut.

The Head stressed the importance of responding to the consultation on the White Paper.

The Chair asked how best to encourage and ensure parental responses. After discussion it was agreed that the school would include a call to action in the newsletter, would text and tweet to request response and that Governors and staff would share a response letter for parents to sign at pick-up and drop off.

- **ACTION** Governors to join school staff in engaging with parents to provide a response to the consultation. Planned for the first week after the Spring break.

6.0 RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

The minutes of the 3 March 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting.

6.1 The plans of the proposed Science Lab were shared. It was noted that the building was long and narrow which created challenges in fitting the 'wish list' of everything to include.

The proposals were now within budget, but the provisional date of completion had slipped to February 2017.

7.0 PPC COMMITTEE REPORT

The minutes of the 9 March 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting

Vicky Starmer reported that the Parent Group would regroup to discuss future plans following the success of CBC night.

She highlighted the success of Homework Club in reaching the right people and thanked the school staff for their support in running.

There was some discussion amongst Governors about the increase in requests for summer deferment.

Governors were reminded that they had taken on the role of advocate for the needs of particular groups of children.

- **ACTION** Tania Voaden to send the Governors a reminder of the advocate groups and Governors to remember to proactively consider these groups.
 - SEND (special educational needs and disability) - Jen Allan
 - Girls - Shanti Fricker and Mark Peters
 - Boys - Tim Peake and Kirsten Walton
 - Pupil Premium - Alice Barling-Gasson and Vicky Starmer
 - EAL (English as an additional language) - Boris Telyatnikov and Julia Hollis
 - High achievers - Nancy Cumming and Mark Pemberton
 - LAC - Mark Peters

8.00 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the 2 March 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting

Jennifer Allan highlighted that the pupil premium children reading re-test showed progress.

9.0 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes dated 10 March 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting.

Julia Hollis summarised the minutes. She suggested that another Governor should attend a Safer Recruitment training.

- **ACTION** Vicky Starmer to attend Safer Governor Recruitment training.

10.0 AOB

Governors noted that it was Natalie Stevenson's last meeting before starting her maternity leave and shared their best wishes.

The meeting ended at 8pm.

The next full Governing Body Meeting is at 6pm on Wednesday 18 May 2016.