

ELEANOR PALMER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Held on 18 May 2016 at 6.00pm

Apologies received:

Julia Hollis
Mark Pemberton

LB Camden

Boris Telyatnikov

Parent

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

Staff

Kate Frood, Headteacher
Rosie Thomson
Nancy Cumming

Co-opted

Jennifer Allan
Mark Pemberton
Alice Barling-Gasson, Chair.
Tim Peake

Associate members

Fiona Crean

Also present:

Tania Voaden, Clerk

The Chair welcomed new Teacher Governor Rosie Thomson.

1.00 There were no declarations of interest.

2.00 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on Wednesday 23 March 2016.

2.1 Corrections

The guest Governors attending the meeting in March were not Chairs of Governors, but members of their schools' Governing Body.

Item 3.2 Vicky Starmer had not said that the CSLP negotiations appeared shambolic, but that it sounded like further organisation was needed.

2.2 Matters Arising

- **Item 4.4** The Chair to share Ofsted crib sheet. **Rollover action.**
- **Item 4.4** EHCP as mainstream admissions at Kentish Town Primary. Kate reported that the school was highly resourced and had two ASD children in each intake and may take other children with EHCP plans in general admissions.
- **Item 5.00** Governors to join staff in engaging with parents in response to the National Funding Formula. The Chair and Head thanked Governors for their support in this.
- **Item 7** Governors to be reminded of advocate groups. Completed as part of minutes. It was agreed that Rosie Thomson would act as advocate for high achievers, taking over from Nancy Cumming.

- **Item 9** Vicky Starmer to attend a Safer Governor Recruitment training. **Rollover action - Completed.**

3.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

The document 'Chair's Report 18 May 2016' had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

3.1 The Chair thanked everyone at the school for preparing Year 6 children for the SATs and for the great ethos and attitude at the school around these tests. She thanked Year 6 teacher Rosie Thomson for her work with the class.

Governors discussed the press attention on the SATs and reports of children and parents distressed by the process. The Head stated that the Year 6 children at the school were understandably nervous but positive throughout.

Rosie Thomson said that the actual papers were notably harder than the practice papers and that she felt the reading paper was particularly difficult and not accessible to all children. The grammar and arithmetic papers were fine, but the reasoning paper was hard. The Head said that she would be interested to see how the arithmetic and reasoning marks compared.

Kirsten Walton, a parent of a Year 6 child, said that the children had liked the structure around the test preparation, wanted to do well, but were now inevitably tired. They dealt with the experience well.

Nancy Cumming reported that Year 2 children taking the Key Stage 1 SATs did not demonstrate anxiety about the tests. The Head stated that there were no instances in school of parents wanting to take their children out of class in protest to testing and said that the preparation and language around testing was key.

3.2 The Chair is stepping down at the end of the academic year and reminded Governors of the need to appoint a new Chair. She invited interested Governors to get in touch to talk through the role and to ask any questions. There will be further discussion on a new Chair at the July meeting.

3.3 Camden Schools Led Partnership - CSLP

The Chair confirmed that the partnership was going ahead with a further meeting the following week. There were challenges in appointing a Chair to a tight deadline especially when the board had not determined what they were looking for in a Chair. There was good impetus, but more discussion was needed on the role of the Chair and this was now being resolved.



The Head had offered to run the NQT programme, but had not yet received an answer about the costs of this. The current structure in Camden is behemoth so there is substantial work to be done in building structure in the CSLP. The Head will be attending a consultative meeting the following day.

3.4 Academisation 'U-turn'. The Chair said that this was less a U-turn and more of a different path. Schools will not be made to convert by a deadline, but through cutting funds local authorities will not be able to 'meet the minimum performance thresholds across schools' and will be then forced to convert. As Camden is in a strong position the focus should be on the more immediate funding concerns and the Chair recommended watching what unfolds with regard to academisation.

4.0 HEAD'S REPORT – the document 'Head's Report 18 May 2016' was shared prior to the meeting.

4.1 Admissions.

The Head shared Reception 2016 allocation of places by admissions criteria. She noted the high number of siblings in the cohort resulting in very few places offered on distance and a very small distance cut-off. She expressed concerns over the application of 'social and medical' criteria and how judgements are made with regard to these places. A letter of response from Pete Dudley to the school's admission concerns had been shared with Governors prior to the meeting.

4.2 Staffing

The Head briefly updated Governors in staffing changes outlined in her report and noted that staff sickness remains low, but not regaining 'top-spot' in the borough.

4.3 Curriculum Development

The Chair asked the Head what constitutes 'end of year expected levels'.

The Head responded that the old grading of level 4A was between 70-79% and she thought now that a score over 70% would achieve 'at' though there may well be a lower threshold.

4.4 Special Needs

The Head highlighted the detail in her report regarding the high needs funding formula and the huge anticipated cut in funding for SEN children. The impact of this will influence the staffing structure review for 2016-17. The Head said that the Staffing Committee will review the staff structure and that she is mindful that a number of the support staff are over 60 which will factor into planning considerations.

4.5 Safeguarding



The Head and Sarah Ewins attended an emergency planning training and were putting together an 'invacuation' plan. Staff would be briefed on this at the June INSET day.

4.6 Finance

The Head said that she was delighted to have achieved the solar panel target, the final target reached with a donation secured by Julia Hollis through her company. The school would also benefit from £995 through Gift Aid. Having achieved in excess of the planned £14,000 more money could be spent on the exciting new treehouse project. The total cost for the solar panels would be £36,000, this would be recouped in energy savings within 5 years and then the panels would earn money for the school. Tim Peake added the environmental benefits too; the carbon dioxide and pollution reduction. He said that the school went for the maximum amount of panels in order to secure the best tariff and that it would have the largest number of panels in Camden.

The Governors briefly discussed a 'grand opening' for September or October and how best to involve the children.

The Chair thanked Tim Peake and Sarah Ewins for their work in the solar project.

4.7 Equalities

The PPC Committee focussed their last meeting on a review of the Equalities Policy. At this Governing Body meeting the agenda included a review of the two year targets and consider new targets to set for 2016-2017.

2014-2016 two year objectives-

To 'narrow the gap' sooner between pupil premium children and non-pupil premium children so that the gap is narrowed at Key Stage 1.

To build stronger learning partnerships between home and school at an early stage, ensuring that our efforts reach out to all our parents, particularly those that are less confident.

Summary points from resultant discussion:

- The Head asked Governors to consider if there was a group who didn't have a voice or were underachieving. She reminded them to consider this in their roles as advocates.
- The Head informed Governors that the % gap between PP and non-PP was reducing and that lots of work had been done around language models and early intervention.
- The Chair said that she was pleased with the progress on objectives but there was still a gap. The Governors discussed how best to engage parents and it was felt that a lot had been learnt about engagement and not asking parents to commit for the longer term to courses or meetings. The Shed talks and Parent Group meetings had been successful.
- Homework Club had been a slow-burner but was now embedded and invaluable support to a core group of families.
- Vicky Starmer said that sometimes 1:1 work best, the Head agreed that 'shoulder-tapping' often seemed to work best for engagement.

- Shanti Fricker proposed friendship groups for classes with gender imbalance eg. small number of girls in Year 1.
- Parents of looked after children would be meeting soon – Governors should consider any suggestions arising from that meeting.
- The Head was delighted that of the 10 UKMT Maths Challenge medals, 3 were won by pupil premium children.
- Coach Martin had done a lot to create inclusive teams with extra events and links with Brookfield school.
- Vicky Starmer stressed the success of building personal relationships. CBC Night had come from small group meetings, building relationships and strong engagement.
- It was noted that there was a number of less confident families with English as an additional language (EAL). The Head said that there was an evident gap in achievement in reading and writing for EAL children and that the lack of exposure to language became evident in reading comprehension tests.
- Kirsten Walton questioned how best to support language for EAL parents to then in turn support their children. She also challenged whether there was more that could be done in early intervention for EAL children.
- Governors discussed the importance of reading. Kirsten Walton suggested a greater focus on volunteer readers for EAL children. The Head talked about how the school uses whole class reading, the importance of this in reading stamina and if children are not reading or being read to at home. Nancy Cumming talked about the imbalance of social language and academic language. Jennifer Allan said that some people work well with grammar rules and there was discussion amongst Governors about whether the focus on grammar can detract from creative writing or if they did not need to be mutually exclusive.

4.8 Attendance

The Head had summarised the year to date attendance %s in her report. She said that attendance below 90% was considered poor. With requests for days off and holidays the Head said she considers each case separately, mindful of patterns of attendance, parental and child attitude and whether the child can afford time away from learning.

5.00 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes dated 5 May 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting.

Julia Hollis thanked Rosie Thomson for agreeing to take on the role of Teacher Governor. She also thanked Nancy Cumming for her invaluable contribution as governor and shared best wishes for her forthcoming maternity leave.

Julia Hollis reported that the school was well-set for staffing changes resulting from maternity leave and that teacher recruitment was complete.

The staff survey was ready to give to staff on the June Inset day with the same questions as last year for consistency.

Julia Hollis talked about the Study Triads meetings – teachers working in 3s in close observation in lessons and then working together in reflection and follow up. It was felt that these meetings were very informative.

6.0 PPC COMMITTEE REPORT

The minutes of 4 May 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting.

6.1 Parental engagement

Vicky Starmer reported that the Parent Group meeting in April had discussed combining the CBC Night with an International Evening to encompass all community groups in school. The response from the group was that these events should not join together and that the CBC night should be held again in October with an International event added into the Summer calendar for 2017. The committee had discussed how to fund the evening and agreed that money raised from the event should go towards the costs rather than donating to Sierra Leone. It was agreed that the band was integral to the success of the night.

The continued success of Homework Club was highlighted both in supporting children and families in structuring learning and also in building relationships.

Vicky Starmer also referenced the forthcoming SENDIAS and LAC (looked after children) meetings with Sally Hill.

6.2 Governor Questionnaire

The Governor Questionnaire to parents at the end of June would remain unchanged with regard to questions allowing data comparison.

- **ACTION** Vicky Starmer and the Head to email for volunteers to distribute questionnaires at start and end of the school day. **Done.**

7.0 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT

The minutes of the meeting 27 April 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting.

7.1 Pupil Premium (PP) tracking

Boris Telyatnikov reported that the committee had reviewed this year's PP tracking. This had been a useful exercise in determining what to do when with regard to teaching across the whole year. It also enabled teachers to drill down on the items of focus and understand where the children are. It is less useful for measuring and tracking depth. The plan going forward was for teaching staff to fully review results and either drop the tracking completely, look into another system or play around with the current system and drop some statements to manipulate and improve for the next year.

7.2 The Teaching and Learning policy and the Planning and Assessment policy had been reviewed, updated and approved. These had been added to the website.

7.3 Three monitoring sessions are planned before the term ends - a coding lesson observation and growth mindset monitoring in June and a grammar check and book look (date tbc).

8.0 RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee minutes dated 28 April 2016 were shared in advance of the meeting.

8.1 Tim Peake updated the Governors on the science lab plans. Camden planners had some objections to the current plans with regard to their view that the height was not justified and the view above the existing wall changed the character of the street. There was concern that the North view was too bulky and planners wanted the building to lose height and bulk. Tim Peake said that local counsellors were on-side and ready to lend their support.

8.2 Solar panel installation plans were being finalised. Tim Peake commended the work of Sarah Ewins in achieving the solar panels goal and for driving the project with great tenacity.

8.3 2015-2016 Carry forward

Governors ratified the approval of Resources Committee agreement to the carry forward of £192,276 with a large portion of these funds retained specifically for the construction of the Science building which has been delayed due to planning issues.

9.00 AOB None.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm.

POLICIES APPROVED

- **Teaching and Learning approved by the Curriculum Committee.**
- **Planning and Assessment policy approved by the Curriculum Committee.**