

ELEANOR PALMER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Held on 17 May 2017 at 6.00pm

Apologies received:

Kirsten Walton
Mark Pemberton
Matthew Lawrence
Julia Hollis, Vice Chair
Natalie Stevenson

LB Camden

Boris Telyatnikov

Parent

Shanti Fricker
Vicky Starmer
Mark Peters

Staff

Kate Frood, Head teacher
Rosie Thomson

Co-opted

Jennifer Allan
Tim Peake

Associate members

Fiona Crean

Also present:

Tania Voaden, Clerk
Josh Franks, guest

1.00 Josh Franks, Lecturer at UCL IOE, was welcomed to the meeting as a guest and introductions were made.
There were no declarations of interest.

2.00 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 22 March 2017.

2.1 Corrections of previous minutes

5.5 Error in the spelling of Fiona Crean.

2.2 Actions

- **ACTION** Resources Committee to revisit modelling covenants.
Fiona Crean noted that there was an increased public awareness of the need for additional financial support for schools from parents and through fundraising. The Head said that the school had asked parents for monetary support for specific projects e.g. solar panels, but had not yet found it necessary to generally request financial assistance. Tim Peake said that there was an expectation that core services were funded and that requests for financial assistance from parents and through covenants were for additional projects.

[REDACTED]

Governors discussed the necessity of asking parents for financial support at this point in time and it was agreed that it was not yet necessary. Should it become so, the action point could be easily reviewed and therefore no immediate action is necessary.

- **ACTION** To add school dinners to the PPC agenda. Vicky Starmer joined school dinners and will discuss with committee. Done
- **ACTION** PPC Committee to review the Mental Health Policy. KF and PPC committee to add a school summary page to front of the Camden policy. **ROLLOVER.** The Head has the first draft of the policy and will share and progress through committee. The Head informed Governors that schools were entitled to a ½ day per fortnight of support from counsellors and that she had been in touch with Camden to set up regular access to Camden's mental health service. The Head said that the school was looking more into the needs of and support for SEN children transitioning to secondary school. She noted that there was an entitlement to support for special needs children beyond schooling age until they were 25.
- **ACTION** Fiona Crean to review Science policy again and re-present. **ROLLOVER** Fiona Crean and Mark Peters to discuss and agree changes.
- **ACTION** Head to review Camden's Governor Service membership and if buying in training sessions is a better option. Reviewed and decided not cost effective.
- **ACTION** Kate Frod to research a speaker to come and discuss secondary transition with parents of SEN children. Rosie Thomson had been talking to Robson House about their transition programme.

3.00 HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

The Headteacher's report 17/5/17 was shared with Governors in advance of the meeting. The Head noted that the Special Item on the agenda had been set in September as Science, but given the delay in the building of the new lab this would sit as a future Special Item.

3.1 Admissions

The Head updated Governors on admissions and said that 7 Nursery children had not been offered places, 4 were happy with alternative offers and she was hopeful that 2 others would gain places from the waiting list. There was 1 appeal and 1 deferral. The Head noted that Camden had not been able to fully scrutinize some applicants as their data was 'shielded' and asked whether Governors with legal knowledge could provide clarity on this. Boris Telyatnikov said that Camden should be probed further for the reason for this.

- **ACTION** Ask for more information regarding causes for data 'shielding'. Done. Camden explained that an individual cannot request information to be shielded, but that the decision could be made by any department within the local authority who would to ask Camden IT to impose a shield. This could be due to child protection concerns, but the most usual reason is that the individual is a Camden employee.

The Head noted that in talking with other schools many had gone beyond their usual distances to fill places and the view was shared that it was a low birth year.

3.2 Nursery Admissions and Funding

The Head informed Governors that the school was in a good position with regard to Nursery places and funding. The school had offered places applying the usual criteria and had asked parents for details of their financial circumstances to inform planning on costings. Camden recommend charging £6.50 per hour for Nursery, but the school had decided that any fees should be cost covering and would charge £45 a week to those parents who did not qualify for free childcare. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Camden had decided that they would cover the funding for Nursery for disadvantaged children, though Islington would not. It is anticipated this will affect 3 children.

Schools were determining their own charges for Nursery with considerable variance. Some schools had moved to offering part-time places only for non-eligible parents, some had changed their admissions criteria and some schools were funding many places.

The Governors had a discussion around the model for bursaries, eligibility and the process of application. Camden had only committed to fund places for disadvantaged children for one year, so there may be greater need going forward for more bursary places. The Governors agreed that there should be a hardship fund established and a model for application determined.

- **ACTION** Bursary application template created for review. Tania Voaden

3.3 Curriculum Development

Since the Head's report was written KS2 SATs had been completed. The Head reported that the reading paper was not as challenging as in 2016, that the arithmetic paper was not hard, but that the reasoning paper was more difficult, with very few entry level reasoning questions which proved dispiriting for children less able in reasoning.

The Head shared the papers with governors and asked them to review for comment. Josh Franks said that the reading paper did not test grammatical understanding, that learning to use terminology did not result in a greater understanding of the language used. The Head said that the children had learned to contextualise the use of grammar. The Head and Rosie Thomson also commented on the benefits of whole class reading which gave all children exposure to a greater vocabulary.

The Head anticipates a drop in standards in 2017 results as there is a broad range of abilities within the cohort, with some exceptionally able children and a group of children not securely at expected levels. The Head predicted around 85% will achieve expected levels in contrast to 97% last year. The incoming Year 6 (current Year 5) were a very able cohort and had benefitted from the teaching of the new curriculum a year earlier.

Boris Telyatnikov asked what it was about the 2016 Year 6 that made it a stronger ability class and the Head countered that the cohort was stronger overall with fewer children of outlying ability.

Jen Allan noted that there were proposals to consider the results on a three year rolling average.

The Head commended Rosie Thomson and the class team for their work, the class were very well -prepared for the SATs. The children approached them with a positive attitude and parents were supportive.

3.4 Teaching School

The Head informed Governors that Jon Abbey had been appointed as the managing director of Camden Learning having moved from his role as Director of Education in Haringey.

The Chair commented on the success of the School Direct programme with 16 out of 20 students in the 16-17 cohort having secured jobs. Josh Franks noted that the quality and number of applicants to the IOE were down. The Head commented that the allocation of places had increased so the school now had 15 places and with only 3 remaining places to

fill. She values the academic link to UCL IOE. Fiona Crean stated that the programme delivered a fantastic offer; training, school experience and a great opportunity for employment locally at the end.

3.5



3.6 Premises Development

The science lab building works are now 11 weeks behind schedule with further delay caused by the need to dig down to virgin clay. The deep excavations caused further destabilisation of the perimeter wall and Camden has agreed to pay for this unforeseen spend. The location of a very deep drain has resulted in the further redesign of the foundations.

Tim Peake said that the surveyors were liable, so were very cautious. Modern methods of calculations assume very secure footings.

Governors discussed the merits of the materials to be used for the fence and planting plans to conceal the fence.

3.7 SDP

The Head stated that the SDP should communicate more clearly what the school does. At the Curriculum Committee Matthew Lawrence had said that school was good at 'challenging norms'. The Head wanted to capture that within the SDP to enshrine how teachers creatively work.

- **ACTION** Head to draft a revised SDP to present at the July meeting.

4.00 PPC COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes dated May 6 were shared in advance of the meeting.

4.1 Vicky Starmer said the Parent Questionnaire would be shared with parents in June. Mark Peters agreed to compile the data and create a report.

4.2 Vicky Starmer informed Governors of the Great Get Together community event in memory of Jo Cox that would be taking place in the Home Zone on 18th June.

4.3 Josh Franks asked that the term 'less able' was amended to 'prior low attainers' in the PPC meeting minutes.

5.00 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes dated 10 May 2017 were shared in advance of the meeting. Also shared: Pupil Premium tracking report and Governor monitoring report.

5.1 Boris Telyatnikov discussed the Pupil Premium tracking report. It was noted that there was no clear pattern from the tracking regarding Pupil Premium and that scores were very cohort specific. SLT were reviewing how to best focus on Year 4, end of year maths testing indicating that only 43% of children were secure. Amongst other strategies consideration was being given to after school sessions to support children not meeting expected standards. There was also discussion on early identification of issues in Year 1 as this had benefits down the line. It was noted that Year 5 was a strong cohort in terms on attainment.

It was noted that Year 4 and 3 attainment would remain as an agenda item in committee.

5.2 A Key Stage 2 writing consultant had drawn attention to spelling and the Head said that whilst there was a balance to be had between encouraging writing and correcting spelling, there would be greater focus on it. The Chair noted that writing usually runs ahead on competence on spelling. Governors then discussed phonics and achieving the correct balance between correct spelling and encouraging writing.

5.3 Science monitoring

Fiona Crean stated that overall the response was very positive but with some 'even better points' noted. Mark Peters asked what the expectation of 'how much' science there was in school. Fiona Crean replied that there expectation is one afternoon a week with one term of a science led topic. The Chair commented that the current DFE focus is the knowledge based curriculum which emphasised acquiring knowledge (rather than skills). The Head said that the school would maintain an enquiry led approach to science teaching. Fiona Crean stated that there was a balance to achieve between enquiry based learning and understanding the purpose of the task or experiment being executed.

6.00 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes dated 4 May 2017 were shared prior to the meeting

6.1 The minutes were summarised by Shanti Fricker. It was noted that the Learning Study triads had been a positive experience of support staff and the next step would be sharing feedback with the school staff prior to sharing with Governors.

7.00 RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

Minutes dated 27 April 2017 were shared prior to the meeting

7.1 Tim Peake drew Governors attention to the committee minutes stating that Teaching School had brought in a significant income over the course of the year and commented that this was outstanding. Governors had requested a governors' session on Teaching School and its benefits and costs. There was discussion as to whether parents should also have greater information about Teaching School and its contribution to the school. Tim Peake noted that there was not just financial gain, but that Teaching School contributed to staff retention. Jen Allan challenged how Teaching School sat within the SDP. The Head commented that the school's commitment to supporting Camden imposed some limits to the further development of Teaching School.

9.00 AOB

The Chair thanked Josh Franks for attending the meeting.

Shanti Fricker said that having the parent Stay and Play with spelling games this month had worked well.

The Head asked whether Governors from Brecknock School could attend the next Governors meeting as observers. This was agreed.

The meeting ended at 7.50pm