

THURROCK BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE SPRING TERM MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF ORSETT C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Date and Venue: Monday 4th February 2013 at the School

Present: Mrs D Barrick (Vice Chair), Mrs L Eve, Mrs R Popoola, Rev E Hanson, Mr C Coles (Chair), Mrs W Willett, Mrs J Wood, Mrs J Pritchard, Mrs E Godfrey (Headteacher) and Mr R Meleady.

Also in Attendance – Ms F Chissim (Clerk) and Miss S Jones (DHT)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs K Collier.
2. **MEMBERSHIP:**
 - a) **Changes –** Governors noted that Mrs D Barrick had been re-appointed as a Foundation Governor. Due to the break in her term of office, the Vice Chair election must be repeated. They welcomed Mrs Popoola (newly appointed LA Governor) to her first meeting.
 - b) **Election of Vice Chair –** Governors duly elected Mrs D Barrick as Vice Chair of the Governing Body.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF BUSINESS/ PECUNIARY INTERESTS:** There were none declared in relation to any of the agenda items.
4. **AGREE ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** Governors agreed the following items:
 - a) Holding the School to Account.
 - b) Academy Status.
5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**
 - a) Governors agreed that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 1-10-12 were an accurate account and they were signed by the Chairman.
 - b) Governors agreed that the minutes of the special 'admissions' GB meeting held on 14-11-12 were an accurate account and they were signed by the Chairman.
6. **MATTERS ARISING:** Governors noted that there were no matters arising.
7. **HEADTEACHER'S REPORT:** Governors noted/discussed the Headteacher's Report and were invited to ask questions.
 - a) **Ofsted Inspection -** The Headteacher updated Governors on the recent Ofsted inspection and said they were pleased with the outcome. The School was graded a '1' for 'behaviour and safety' and 'leadership and management'. It was graded a '2' for 'progress' and 'quality of teaching/learning'. The Headteacher said that the focus and momentum towards becoming an 'outstanding' school had not slowed since the inspection. She commented that this would not become a 'coasting school'. A major focus now is for teaching to move from 'interesting' to 'inspiring'. Governors noted the recent inset at Lakeside Shopping Centre and how

it had inspired teachers to be more creative and enabled them to plan inspiring lessons.

Governors asked what the key recommendations were for raising achievement. The Headteacher said that the main focus is to increase the amount of outstanding teaching. Governors noted that good/outstanding schools are expected to deliver 3 levels of progress. The Headteacher said that they have set themselves a challenge with achieving such high KS1 levels. She said it was important not to become complacent as there was still a lot of work to do. She said it was important for the GB to be aware that there may not always be this level of rapid progress. Governors noted that a number of children are already doing L6 work in Year 6.

- b) **Admissions** – Noted. Governors discussed the open afternoons for new parents. The Headteacher explained the induction process for new pupils.
- c) **Attendance** – Governors noted the data. They noted that there has been a recent increase in absence, including one child who was in hospital for some time. This child is now back in school. The Headteacher confirmed that she meets with all parents who request time off during term time.
- d) **Staff Absence** – Governors noted the long term absences, which are being managed under the Sickness Absence HR procedures. The Headteacher said that staff absence figures are not published and therefore not available for schools to benchmark themselves against.
- e) **Behaviour** – Governors asked how ‘successful behaviour management’ is measured. The Headteacher said that there are a number of indicators such as behaviour during lesson observations, the number of letters/meetings with parents, behaviour displayed around the school and at lunchtimes, the view of external visitors (including Ofsted), behaviour records and the number of times children are sent to the SLT. The number of Headteacher Awards is on the increase, and this indicates that pupils respond well to positive rewards. The Headteacher said that the pupils have commented that behaviour within the school has improved. The information in the report was noted. There have been no exclusions and no racist incidents.
- f) **Accidents** – These were noted. The Chair asked about the seriousness of these accidents. Mrs Pritchard said that none were reported through RIDDOR (which is only required if an H&S issue was responsible for the accident). She confirmed that significant accidents are recorded in a book. There were no accidents involving staff.
- g) **Staffing** – noted.
- h) **CPD** – noted.
- i) **Quality of Teaching and Learning** – Governors received details of the grades of recent observations (conducted last week). There were no inadequate

lessons, 11% were grades 'requires improvement', 89% were good or better and 14% were outstanding. Many 'good' lessons had elements of 'outstanding', which is a positive sign. Governors asked how often the observations take place. The Headteacher said they were done every half term, but more if necessary. There are also informal drop ins. One formal lesson observation takes place every term. The Headteacher said the NQT was doing well, and this was testament to the high quality support/mentoring being provided by Ms Jones.

- j) **Attainment & Progress** – Governors noted the range of data provided on attainment and progress (analysis of Autumn Term data).
- k) **Curriculum and Assessment** – Noted. The Headteacher also referred Governors to the Minutes of the Curriculum Committee meetings for more details.
- l) **SEN, Vulnerable Groups and Safeguarding** – Noted. The Headteacher explained what 'school action' and 'school action plus' means.
- m) **Premises** – The Headteacher reported that the hall refurbishment is on hold for the moment. She said that she was sent an email to say that some LCVAP money has become available and that the school could put in a bid for it. Governors discussed the possibility of using the money to improve the car-park. They agreed that the Headteacher should get some costings for the project.
- n) **SEF** – Governors received and approved the three updated sections of the SEF. They noted that the section on progress/attainment will be updated following the next data drop.
- o) **Sports Xtra** – The Headteacher reported that John Selby no longer works with the school. Following the earlier problems, the school now works with Andy Goldsmith who is far more proactive. There are now breakfast and after school clubs in place providing a range of extra curriculum experiences for the children.
- p) **Thefts and Illegal Entries** – There were no thefts or break ins to report.
- q) **Fire Drills** – A fire drill is carried out every half term. The last drill occurred last week, and the building was successfully evacuated in 2 minutes 37 seconds.
- r) **Extra Activities** – Governors noted the information on curriculum development and extra-curricular activities.
- s) **Links with Parents** – The information was noted. The Headteacher reported that the comments made by parents during the inspection were positive (both on Parent View and to inspectors in person). There are more parents attending school events which is really positive.
- t) **Links with the Community/Horndon Partnership** – The information was noted. The Headteacher said that the changes within the Leadership team at Horndon was having an impact on the partnership. The three schools are trying to keep things on track as best they

can. Links are being developed with Grays Convent and Gable Hall.

- u) **Governors within the School** – Governors acknowledged the importance of visiting the school in order to carry out their roles effectively. The Headteacher thanked them for their visits to the school last term.

8. **RECENT OFSTED INSPECTION – OUTCOMES/ACTIONS:** This was covered in the previous item. The plan for moving from ‘good’ to ‘outstanding’ will be included in the SDP and the SEF.

9. **REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST KEY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES:** Governors noted that progress on school improvement priorities was on track. Governors noted that the revised SDP with post Ofsted recommendations will be presented at the next GB Meeting. **ACTION: The Clerk to note for the agenda.**

10. **POLICY APPROVAL:** Governors approved the following policies with no changes;

- a) **Governors Expenses.** Approved. Governors agreed that it was important to pay expenses where necessary to ensure that the GB in this school is inclusive.
- b) **Child Protection/Safeguarding.** The Headteacher confirmed that procedures for dealing with allegations against members of staff are within the Whistle-blowing Policy. She also confirmed that there is a Safer Recruitment Policy in place. Governors noted that Mrs J Wood is the Child Protection Link Governor.
- c) **SEN.** Governors noted that Mrs J Wood is the SEN Link Governor.
- d) **Behaviour.** Governors approved the policy and the two appendices. The Headteacher said that she hasn’t had to issue a behaviour letter to parents since Easter. Mrs Barrick reminded the Headteacher that the new DfE Statutory Guidance on Behaviour Management requires certain key information to be included with the Behaviour Policy. **ACTION: Mrs Barrick/the Clerk to forward the information to the Headteacher.**

11. **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

- **Budget Update** – Mrs Pritchard referred Governors to the latest Finance Committee minutes and said that the budget had been discussed in great detail by the Committee. She said that there were no major issues to report and that expenditure is on track. Governors noted the cost centre summary and budget update. Governors noted the projected carry forward as of month 7 (£55,653). The Headteacher said that this may be slightly higher by the end of March, but is less than last year’s surplus of £87,000. She said that the Finance Committee will be looking at expenditure benchmarking in more detail.

Mrs Pritchard said that in terms of next year’s budget they already know that the utilities bills will be up 10% and there will be a 1% increase in pay. The Headteacher said that there will be a more

rigorous system in place for the purchasing and accounting for general resources next financial year. The Chair thanked Mrs Pritchard for the financial update.

12. GOVERNOR TRAINING:

- a) **Feedback from Link Governor** – There was nothing to report as the Link Governor was not present.
- b) **Training Reports** – The Chair reported that he attended (through work) a training session about controlling hazard and risk (health and safety).
- c) **Training Needs** – Governors discussed their training needs. They noted that they are entitled to a free 'whole GB' training session from the LA. Rev Hanson suggested a training session on 'good to outstanding'. They also suggested a session on how the GB can hold the school to account. **ACTION: The Clerk to explore options with Jo Lang at Thurrock.**

Mrs Pritchard confirmed that Governors are emailing her with details of training they have attended.

13. **GOVERNOR VISITS:** Governors noted that visits and focus areas this term have been agreed at the Committee meetings. The Headteacher thanked the Chair and Vice Chair for their input during the inspection. Mrs Willett reported that she did a Maths focused visit earlier today. In addition to this, she comes into school on a weekly basis to hear children read (reading focus). She also reported that she has done a Science focused visit. **ACTION: Once Governors have written up their visits, they should be emailed to Mrs Pritchard.**

Mrs Wood suggested that the Visit Proforma be reviewed so that it lends itself to more positive feedback. **ACTION: The HT to review the visit record form.** Governors agreed that there should be a section on the form inviting comments/suggestions.

Governors agreed that the focus of visits this term should be based on the new SDP and post Ofsted priorities.

Governors discussed how they should canvas parents' views, and agreed they need to communicate on a more regular basis with the parent body. Governors agreed that by actively taking part in parent surveys and questionnaires they would have a direct opportunity to liaise with parents and that this would in turn raise the profile of the GB. Governors agreed that in the past, parent forums have been poorly attended. They agreed to undertake a survey about 'improving communication' and that questions will be developed by Mrs Barrick and the Chair. Parents should be asked about the school website, what could be improved...any suggestions? (The Headteacher said that parents should be asked if they would be willing to help maintain the website on a voluntary basis). Governors agreed that feedback should also be sought about communication by letter/email/text. and about the school newsletter. They decided that the 'communication survey' should be carried out at the next parents evening on 7th March. **ACTION: The Chair and Vice Chair to work on the first draft.**

Governors discussed which policies should be on the website.

Governors agreed that a future questionnaire can be done on an area of school improvement, seeking suggestions and feedback from parents.

14. COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES AND FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS: Governors noted the following Committee minutes;

- **Personnel on 14-11-12**
- **Church Schools Partnership on 22-11-12.** Governors approved the latest Partnership Committee Terms of Reference.
- **Curriculum on 27-11-12**
- **Finance & Premises on 12-12-12.** The GB ratified all the policies that were approved at this meeting.

Mrs Wood was appointed onto the Curriculum Committee (she will step down from the Personnel Committee). Mrs Popoola was appointed onto the Finance/Premises and the Personnel Committee.

15. INFORMATION UPDATE – THURROCK: The Clerk said that the Clerk's briefing had been postponed due to the snow. Governors noted that updates in the form of Governor Bulletins are circulated by email as soon as they become available.

16. OTHER UPDATES: Governors noted the changes in relation to the following;

- a) Changes to Vetting/Barring
- b) KS2 SATs assessments (introduction of spelling and grammar tests)
- c) Pupil exclusions
- d) New Guide to the Law 2012
- e) Statutory website requirements (including the publication of information about the use of Pupil Premium funding)
- f) New DfE Guidance for Schools on Health and Safety
- g) E-Safety – new briefing paper from Ofsted

17. CHAIR'S ACTION: None.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: a) Holding the School to Account – Governors received a draft document titled, "Holding the School to Account." The Headteacher said that this would support the GB in their role and would ensure the GB effectively hold the SLT to account.

b) Academy Status – Governors were referred to the information in the HT's Report and the 'Academy Status Information' document. The Headteacher presented the local context, and outlined the extent of changes to centralised LA support services. She explained the particular circumstances for this school (re being voluntary aided). The only other VA schools in Thurrock are Catholic schools. Governors agreed that the academy option needed to be given serious consideration. They agreed to have a special GB meeting to discuss this matter in more depth. **ACTION: The Chair to invite Ann Bard from the Diocese. The HT to arrange an external speaker to be present (possibly a Headteacher from an Academy school) to answer questions.** The meeting was arranged for 12-3-13 at 5.15pm (to 6.15pm).

19. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Governors agreed the next GB meeting should take place on 8-5-13 at 5.30pm.

20. CONFIDENTIALITY: Governors were reminded of confidentiality.

End of meeting.

Chairman

Date