

THURROCK BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Date and Venue: Wednesday 1st October 2014 at the School.

Present: Mrs L Eve, Mrs L Bennett, Mrs Fearnside-Still, Mrs J Wood, Mrs L Robinson, Mrs D Barrick, Mrs E Godfrey (Headteacher), Mrs J Pritchard and Mr R Meleady.

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

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were noted from Mrs R Popoola and Mrs W Willett. Apologies for lateness were received from Mrs Barrick.
2. **MEMBERSHIP:** Governors noted that Mr C Coles (current Chair) has decided to resign from the GB. The HT read his resignation letter aloud. Governors thanked Mr Coles for his valuable contribution to the GB over the past years. **ACTION: JP to organise a card and gift (plant).**

Governors noted that support staff were asked if they would like to stand for election (replacing Mrs Pritchard) but none came forward. Mrs Pritchard agreed to serve for a further term of office. Her start date is 2-9-14.

Governors noted that Mr Meleady's term of office is also coming to an end (10th November) and teaching staff have been asked if they are interested in standing for election. Another member of teaching staff has indicated that they are interested. An election will need to take place, should Mr Meleady also wish to stand again. This will be decided outside of the meeting.

b) Discuss Reconstitution – Governors recalled previous conversations about Reconstitution and the new Governance Regs. They agreed that the size of this GB is already a good size at '12' and therefore a smaller GB would not be workable. However, they agreed that the efficiency and impact of the GB could be improved. To this end, it was agreed that the GB should move away from a committee structure where there is often lots of repetition. It was agreed that having two GB meetings per term (one before and one after half term) where all Governors are present to make decisions about resource management and school improvement would improve the quality of governance and ensure that volunteer hours are used with the maximum effect.

Therefore all Committee meetings pencilled in will be cancelled. Statutory Committees, the Partnership Committee, the Admissions Committee and the Pay Committee will remain. The next full GB meeting will take place on Wed 3rd December 2015 at 5.30pm. There will also be a training element to this meeting. **ACTION: The HT and FC to liaise further about the content.**

A final decision about reconstitution (taking on board Diocesan advice) will be made at the next GB meeting. **ACTION: FC to note for the agenda.**

3. **TERM OF OFFICE OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:** It was agreed that this should remain one year (until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2015).
4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:** The HT read out the email from Mrs Willett, stating that it would be her preference to remain as Vice Chair,

although she would stand as Chair if necessary. Mrs Eve indicated that she would be interested in a Chair 'job share'. Governors discussed how workable this would be and the HT indicated that it would be her preference for there to be one Chair. The Clerk said that the Chair and Vice Chair can work in partnership and more collaboratively if they wished.

The Clerk and HT described the role of the Chair and outlined expectations regarding time commitment.

Mrs Eve said she would take on the role of Chair, if she is supported by the vice Chair and the Clerk. Mrs Barrick offered to support both the Chair and Vice Chair in their roles. All Governors agreed that effective governance was about collective responsibility and participation.

Mrs Willet was duly elected Vice Chair.

Mrs Eves was duly elected Chair. **ACTION: FC to send training/support materials regarding being an effective Chair of Governors.**

The following was agreed in relation to Committees;

Church Schools Partnership (next date 25-11-14 at 4pm)

J Wood
L Godfrey
R Meleady
W Willett

(Governors commented that the Partnership is good for the Parish and the community of schools but that it shouldn't be 'Orsett led'.

HTPM

D Barrick
L Eves
W Willett

Pay Committee

D Barrick
Y Fearnside-Still (Chair)
J Wood
W Willett
R Popoola

The Committee Terms of Reference in relation to pay will be as per the GB approved Pay Policy.

Admissions Committee

L Godfrey
L Bennett
Y Fearnside-Still
J Wood (Chair)
J Prichard

The Committee Terms of Reference in relation to admissions will be as per the GB approved Admissions Policy.

Statutory Panels

All Governors (not staff) will form a pool from which committee membership will be selected on the basis of availability and suitability. Should there be a lack of impartial or available governors, the Partnership Schools will be asked to provide panel members from within their GB membership.

The Committee terms of reference in relation to statutory hearing will be as per the GB/LA approved policy and procedure.

5. **DECLARATIONS OF BUSINESS/ PECUNIARY INTERESTS:** There were none declared in relation to any of the agenda items.
6. **AGREE ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** None.
7. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** Governors agreed that the minutes of the Ordinary GB Meeting held on 7-5-14 were an accurate account of the meeting and they were signed by the Chair. (FC retained the signed copy).
8. **MATTERS ARISING:**
 - a) **Cost of UFSM Initiative** – Governors discussed that this issue had affected all Church schools around the country. It was discussed by F&GP. An invoice for the work has been received by the school, but it may not need to be paid (which will be a positive outcome).
 - b) **School Fund Balance** – Governors noted that the School Fund balance in July was £11,198.79.
 - c) **Annual Governor Safeguarding Report** – This was provided to Governors.

All other ACTIONS have been completed.

9. **HEADTEACHER'S REPORT:** The HT's Report was discussed and Governors were invited to ask questions.
 - a) **Admissions** – Noted.
 - b) **Attendance** – Report noted.
 - c) **Behaviour (incl. exclusions)** - Governors noted that there were no formal exclusions or reported racist incidents in the Summer Term. Behaviour continues to be very positive.
 - d) **Serious accidents to pupils/and or staff** – None.
 - e) **Premises & Finance (incl. security issues, thefts and illegal entries, health and safety and fire drills)** - Governors noted the reports.
 - f) **Staffing** – Reports noted. JW asked for more details about recent staffing changes (particularly the SENCo role). The HT explained that Mrs Manley was already having a significant impact as SENCo. She is doing her accredited SENCo training.

The HT explained the staffing issues/difficulties around supporting a particular child with complex medical needs in Early Years. Governors were keen to get assurance that this child's needs are being met. The HT described how she complained to the Director of Children's Services about the lack of LA support in relation to this child attending a school without the facilities needed to cater for his needs. As a result, money has been allocated for a new disabled

toilet and shower. The work is starting next week. There are a couple of options available to the school if the current staffing arrangements do not work out. Another member of staff has expressed an interest. The school can advertise externally if necessary. Governors asked if there was an Intimate Care Protocol in place. The HT confirmed that there was.

g) Staff Development – Noted.

h) Teaching and Learning (incl. Update on Quality of Teaching) - Noted, as per the report. DB commented that the changes to the monitoring of T&L were very positive. YFS asked what teachers thought of the new approach. The HT and SJ said that teachers feel it is fairer that they are not judged on one lesson. There have been no complaints about the changes. The HT said that the new approach was in line with the new Ofsted Inspection Handbook. Governors felt that engaging with Pupil Voice was very positive. The HT confirmed that the Early Years children won't be asked for feedback for obvious reasons. The HT described the new monitoring process in detail, including 'book looks'. She said it was important to see what the quality of teaching is like on a day-to-day basis.

i) Curriculum and Assessment (incl. summer term data) – Noted. DB referred to the achievement data and asked what the school was doing to address the areas of relative weakness such as Writing in Year 3. SJ described the interventions in place and said that the impact of this is already evident. SJ said the children are now highly engaged in their learning, and this year group should thrive this year.

Governors discussed the changes to homework. They gave their own experiences/opinions as parents and reported what other parents have been saying. DS said that although the new approach is more time consuming, children seem to be very enthusiastic.

The HT gave some examples of the type of homework projects that are being set and the impact this has had on teaching and learning. He said that the homework was child led and that children could choose different ways to present it. JW asked if some parents would find the new approach a challenge. The HT said that it would take some time for parents to get used to the change and outlined the benefits of the new approach. DB said that the school needed to make sure children/parents didn't get too competitive.

Governors congratulated the school for the excellent results this year and noted the comparisons against other Thurrock schools, particular in terms of rates of progress.

j) SEN Pupils, G&T, Vulnerable Groups, and Safeguarding Update – The information was noted. Governors asked if the school's 'SEND offer' was on the website. The HT confirmed that it was. DS asked who the designated lead for LAC was. The HT confirmed that this was her. Governors discussed the 'virtual school'.

k) School Improvement Plan 2014-15 – Governors approved the new SDP. They noted the new priorities for 2014/15.

l) Extra Curricular Activities – Noted.

m) **Parent/Governors/Community** – Noted. Governors discussed links with secondary schools. They discussed the secondary schools where pupils are most likely to go after Year 6. The HT said that the Dioceses is trying to persuade the school to be part of a D-MAT. The HT said that 11 pupils went to a grammar school this year.

10. **REVIEW SUMMER 2014 DATA:** This was presented and discussed under HT's Report. There were no further questions.

11. **RECEIVE SEF:** The HT reported that the SEF is being reviewed in light of changes to the Inspection Framework. Judgements will be re-evaluated over the next 4 weeks and the amended SEF will be circulated to Governors. **ACTION: The HT to do.**

12. **APPROVE NEW SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2014/15:** The HT said that one of the key areas of focus is to embed the new assessment system. Pupils will be assessed against 'I can statements'. Levels will not be used. Targets won't be set. A 'Life After Levels' workshop for parents will delivered in November so parents are clear about how their child's progress will be assessed. Governors approved the new SDP. There were no further questions.

13. **RECEIVE ANY EXTERNAL REPORTS ON STANDARDS:** There were none.

14. **GOVERNOR TRAINING:**

a) **Feedback from Training Link Governor** – Mrs Fearnside-Still and the Clerk encouraged Governors to attend the Thurrock training courses. LR confirmed that she will attend the Induction training.

b) **Training Reports** – DB reported that she attended training on Reconstitution, Safer Recruitment and FGM (safeguarding).

c) **Training Needs identified** – Strategic planning, the new Ofsted Handbook and effective/professional governance were key themes identified. Governors agreed that this should be incorporated into the next GB meeting. **ACTION: FC to note.**

15. **GOVERNOR VISITS/MONITORING: a) Reports** - Governors noted that the following Governors have conducted visits since the last GB meeting;

Mrs Barrick – Visit to look at 'attendance'

Mr Coles - Monthly meetings with HT and H&S visit

Mrs Eve – A range of visits (all recorded and on file)

Mrs Robinson - Safeguarding visit

ACTION: All Governor visit reports (and training reports) to be emailed to Mrs Pritchard.

ACTION: DB suggested that 'checks' and monitoring can be done by Governors prior to GB meetings. DB to email the HT details.

FC suggested that the focus of visits should be strategic and not operational. Governors should be using the latest DfE and Ofsted guidance documents to successfully monitor and hold to account.

Review Monitoring Plan – SJ confirmed that the plan for 2014 has been updated. She encouraged Governors to contact her directly to arrange their visit.

- 16. COMMITTEE MEETINGS: a) Minutes** - Governors noted the following Committee minutes;
- Personnel on 18-6-14
 - Church Schools Partnership on 3-6-14
 - Curriculum & Pupils on 24-6-14
 - Finance & Premises on 8-7-14
 - Admissions on 7-5-14

b) Membership/structure/terms of reference – See above.

17. GOVERNING BODY ORGANISATION AND DEVELOPMENT:

- a) **Skills Audit.**
- b) **New NGA Code of Conduct.**
- c) **Key GB Issues (e.g. changes to Pay and Conditions, Safeguarding, website content).**
- d) **Key Information/training materials.**
- e) **Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.**

Governors agreed to move this agenda item to the next GB meeting. **ACTION: FC to note for the agenda.**

- 15. POLICY REVIEW:** Governors agreed the following policies;
- Safeguarding
 - Safer Recruitment
 - SEN

16. CHAIR'S ACTION: None.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: None.

18. FUTURE ITEMS:

- Strategic Planning
- Training on effective/professional governance (as per above)
- GB Self Review (20 questions)
- New Code of Conduct
- Delegation Planner
- Skills Audit
- Key GB Issues (e.g. changes to Pay and Conditions, Safeguarding, website content).
- Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
- Reconstitution
- Agree Link Governors
- Finance, Premises, Staffing Update – verbal
- Raise/FFT Reports
- Latest data
- Admissions Criteria

- 19. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Governors agreed that the next GB meeting will take place on Wed 3-12-14 at 5.30pm.

The following Committee meetings were agreed;

- Pay – after this meeting.
- Church Schools Partnership on 25-11-14
- Admissions 7-5-14 at 4pm (this Committee met earlier today) – minutes to follow.

21. CONFIDENTIALITY: Governors were reminded of confidentiality.

End of meeting.

Chair & Date