

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Stormont House School held on Tuesday 22nd March 2016.

The meeting opened at 5.30pm.

Present:	Mr Bernard Hawes	Co-opted Governor – Chair
	Mr Kevin McDonnell	Head teacher
	Dr Hans-Christoph Hirt	Local Authority Governor
	Ms Ann Hollingworth	Parent Governor
	Mr Geoff Owden	Co-opted Governor
	Ms Mary Slocombe	Parent Governor
	Ms Katie Foster	Staff Governor

In attendance:	Ms Christina Elford	Deputy Headteacher
	Ms Frances Jessie	Deputy Headteacher
	Ms Yvonne Packer	Associate Member
	Ms Carol Weston	School Business Manager

Clerk: Ms Elizabeth Bart-Williams

PART 1: NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

1 ATTENDANCE

- 1.1 Welcome: Mr Bernard Hawes welcomed all to the meeting. All members present introduced themselves.
- 1.2 Apologies: these were received and accepted from Ms Lynn Dalton, Ms Emma Kingsley and Ms Claire Napier.
- 1.3 Declarations on interest: none were received.
- 1.4 Register of Pecuniary Interest: the updated form was not available.
ACTION: Clerk to obtain updated Register from the Core Team for next meeting.
- 1.5 Membership of the Governing Body and Committees: The Chair noted that the membership as revised at the last GB meeting had not been updated by Governor Services (Core Team).
ACTION: Clerk to obtain updated records from the Core Team for next meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND ACTION TAKEN

2.1 Minutes of the last meeting held on 10th November 2015 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

The Chair signed the minutes and a copy each will be retained by the School and the Core Team.

2.2 Matters arising from the minutes which are not included elsewhere on the agenda:

The following updates were given:

- Pupil Premium Grant: The updated document on PPG was considered by the Strategic Leadership Group on Monday 16 November 2015.

- Statutory Policies Meeting remains outstanding. The Chair, Ms Lynn Dalton and Ms Weston to arrange.

ACTION: Meeting to be arranged to discuss policy review.

- Skills audit: Mr Bernard Hawes requested all Governors who had not completed the audit to do so and send the information to him. He would send the document to Ms Katie Foster.

ACTION: All Governors to complete their skills audit as soon as possible.

- Capital budget: This remains outstanding - Ms Lynn Dalton will find out what the situation is regarding Ms Elizabeth Cope's donation.

ACTION: Ms Lynn Dalton to confirm Ms Elizabeth Cope's donation.

- Training: It was decided that governors should review the assessment data before inviting Mr Derek Powell to provide training on Data Analysis, FFT and RaiseOnline.

Governors also discussed the government's Schools Data Dashboard which contains useful information for governors. Such information could be extrapolated and made available on a secure area of the school's website for governors' use.

ACTION: Head teacher to collate the publicly available data and school summary and, with the IT Director, make it accessible to governors on secure website.

ACTION: Knowledge of Child Development and Child Mental Health to be discussed at a future meeting.

ACTION: Review of Health and Safety policy to be carried forward to a future meeting.

Governor training: the Chair pointed out that the record of training provided by the Clerk needs to be updated.

The head teacher also clarified that Governors would like to know if external training run by other organisations (e.g. Social Services) can be transferred and noted.

ACTION:

1. **Clerk to obtain updated record of training from the Core Team and keep the record up to date.**
2. **Clerk to confirm from the Core Team whether external training (as above) can be noted on schedule of governor training.**

Risk Assessment: Members discussed Risk Assessment, especially considering the questions: How does the school mitigate its risks? What is Governors' responsibility as a body? It was agreed that as the role of the Governing Body is to provide strategic leadership and challenge, members should conduct a strategic test of risk assessments. It was suggested that an external agency be commissioned to conduct a validation test of the school's Risk Assessment procedures. The Resources Committee will select a random sample to review annually.

ACTION: Ms Carol Weston (SBM) to arrange external validation of the school's procedures and a random sampling of Risk Assessments.

Head teacher's performance management: the Review Panel as agreed at the last meeting to conduct performance management.

2.3 Any urgent action taken since the last meeting: none had been taken.

3. MAIN BUSINESS

3.1 Link Governor Review

Governors deliberated on the need, benefit and responsibility of Link Governors. Members considered whether it was more beneficial to delegate specific tasks instead of having named link governors. It was agreed that extensive work will continue to be done in the Teaching & Learning Committee. Areas which would benefit from Link Governors were identified as ICT, SEN, Inclusion and Homework. The recent Parent Survey highlighted ongoing concerns re homework. Resources such as Purple Mash, E-schools and access to home pcs would help with homework, while issues around unclear and/or unmatched expectations need to be clarified.

ACTION:

- 1. T&L Committee to consider and delegate Homework responsibility to a nominated governor.**
- 2. Chairs of Committees to consider delegating specific responsibilities such as SEN, Inclusion etc. to Link Governors. CPD needs should be identified and actioned as appropriate.**

Mr George Owden offered to be the ICT Link Governor.

3.2 Safeguarding

The Chair reminded all members that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. He reported that he had attended the Safeguarding training provided by Governor Services recently and would circulate the presentation to all members, including the observers.

ACTION: Chair to email slides to all members and observers present. To be carried forward to the next meeting.

3.3 Staff Performance – Governor Responsibilities

Governors agreed that staff performance is not the responsibility of the Governing body, and only the Head Teacher is performance-managed by Governors.

Staff Performance Management must be in line with Pay Policy and decisions should be carried through to CPD. Governors pointed out that the process must be fair and equal, and the Appraisal and Pay Policies should be up to date and reviewed regularly.

Governors should be briefed annually through the Head teacher's Report.

Governor question: Are the Appraisal and Pay Policies up to date?

Answer: Yes. These are separate policies and they are reviewed annually in line with the Local Authority's policies. The Head teacher explained that there is very little wriggle room in the salary structure and pay progression can only be withheld due to capability issues.

Governor Question: has progression ever been withheld and was it challenged?

Answer: progression was withheld once and it was challenged. However capability procedures had already commenced and the challenge was not valid.

Governor Question: is there an appeal process in place?

Answer: yes – appeals will be sent to the Chair of Governors by aggrieved staff.

ACTION:

1. **Ms Carol Weston to send copies of the Pay and Appraisals Policies to Governors.**
2. **Pay and Appraisal Policies to be revisited together with Teachers' Standards and the appraisal objectives should be reviewed at committee level in light of changes to membership.**

3.4 School Performance Data Analysis:

This had been reviewed by the Teaching & Learning Committee, with detailed analysis of individual student and subject attainment and progress.

ADMINISTRATION

4. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

The report had been circulated to Governors in advance of this meeting, and it included a detailed update on the Impact of Pupil Premium Grant and the School Priorities for the years 2015-17.

Governors deliberated on the Report and the following points were noted/highlighted:

Fischer Family Trust (FFT) Report:

- The FFT provides a factually accurate overview of the overall attainment of all pupils
- FFT comparison is with mainstream schools nationally, hence attainment for our pupils always appears lower than most schools. However, all our pupils' attainment is in line with national averages expected
- The FFT report shows that our pupils' progress is higher and 'significantly above the national average'.

School SEF: Student Outcomes:

- The overall Average Point Scores (APS) for the current cohort is slightly higher than the previous cohort using identical range of accreditation

- The progress of pupils who have been on FSM in the past 6 years (FSM 6) is also higher in 2015 than non-FSM6
- Girls present as achieving lower than boys, but the rate of progress is deemed appropriate, considering their on-entry point. There appears no rationale to accelerate their progress unnaturally
- The challenge of Assessment without Levels is that OfSTED has asked schools to determine how to measure progress and attainment, by using the Fundamentals approach to measure linear progress.

ACTION: Assessment Lead to closely examine gender differences based on starting points, targets and current performance for 2016 and 2017 cohorts.

Impact of PPG

A summary of the interventions, costs and impact was presented on pages 22 and 23 of the Head teacher's report.

- Numbers Count is a very expensive program with significant impact. The impact is demonstrable and the gains need to be maintained. The program is an intense program usually targeted at primary age children. The school is breaking a relatively new ground in using it at secondary level
- 1st Class at Numbers is also a good intervention and a fully trained teacher delivers this.
- SLT interventions are evidence-based with a track range of activities. Pupils are assessed whether they have met set objectives and the PPG was used to boost this intervention to 5 days.

Governor Question: who determines if pupils meet objectives?

Answer: the SLT determine if objectives are met.

ACTION: Head teacher to check if this service can be externally validated.

Governor Question: how do other schools spend their PPG?

Answer: the Grant is used in various ways by schools to meet their needs. This includes extra interventions, smaller class sizes, subsidy for school journeys etc.

- Home Speech Programme and Home Language Programme: Governors did not understand what these programmes entail.

ACTION: Head teacher to check and clarify at the next meeting.

Whole School Priorities 2016-19

The Strategic Leadership Group was tasked with the review of priorities and the Head teacher presented a short summary document which also details the measure of success.

Three priorities were identified: Student Priorities (for the first time ever), Parent/Carer Priorities and Resource Priorities and these link in with the result of the parents' survey.

- Student priorities: this included making break times more enjoyable and is under discussion.
- Parent/carers priorities: parents prioritised the need for them to be kept more informed of their child's progress. Ms Chris Elford (Deputy Head) will work with parent governors so parents know what their children are learning, how well they are doing and how to help them at home. This will also help the school to be clear on what parents want their children to learn at home.

- Resource priorities: ensuring that the school has a sustainable business model; generate additional incomes and use the school's expertise and resources efficiently. The school is now on a solid financial footing, with the right levels of funding secured for the children. With the impending funding cuts by central government, the school needs to ensure that its business model is adaptable and sustainable without losing quality. **This was delegated to the Resources Committee.**
- An 'APE' Curriculum – Appropriate, Progressive and Enjoyable is a key aim of the whole-school priorities. This will focus outcomes and pathways, may involve redefining the curriculum and foster inclusion and personalisation. **This was delegated to the Teaching & Learning Committee.**
- Visible Learning – this will encourage every teacher to conduct a piece of research into student learning. Impact coaches will be trained to make research work more smoothly. All subject leaders will be free to propose changes to ensure that children learn and progress. Teacher reception has been very positive and all are positively engaged. The Lead trainer will be Craig Parkinson who developed the Visible Learning program. All teachers will receive an initial training on two Inset days. **This was delegated to the Teaching & Learning Committee.**
- Collaborative Expertise – this will ensure that areas of expertise are recognised within and beyond the school, with 'everyone an Expert'. Emphasis will also be put on creating positive team working, drawing on reports from the Staff Forum which is discussed in more detail under the Confidential Report. **This was delegated to the Resources Committee.**

Governor Question: what is the timeframe for these objectives and are they achievable?

Answer: it will be useful to map the priorities against set milestones. The various Committees will agree timelines and also track and review progress.

Governor Question: Who are the Impact Coaches?

Answer: the coaches will be teachers who will receive further external training so they understand the 'ins and outs' of the process. They will be able to support and signpost colleagues.

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

- 5.1 Resources: the Chair updated members on the financial position of the school. The school is expected to be in surplus at the end of year of £75 to £100k, plus a current brought-forward surplus of £200k. Members are aware of the proposed changes in national funding which will affect Hackney schools as they are currently significantly higher funded. It is crucial for schools to provide for a funding cushion in light of central government cuts to school funding.

Members considered various options to maximise returns on the school's surplus, including the possibility of running a deposit account. Ms Weston has already started checking out the options, including what is allowed/disallowed to schools. One quotation has already been received from one bank, with an interest of 1%. Other options such as government bonds were suggested.

Members noted that a savings of £300k is not substantial considering the scope of costs that may be required in emergencies such as emergency repairs to buildings etc.

ACTION: Ms Carol Weston to investigate options and report back to Governors.

Governors APPROVED the Financial Procedures which had been considered extensively at the last Resources Committee meeting.

6. GOVERNOR TRAINING

The Chair pointed out that the record of training provided by the Clerk had not been updated by the Core Team.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain updated record for the next meeting.

7. URGENT BUSINESS

None to report.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday, 14 June 2016

Tuesday, 8 November 2016

8.1 MEMBERS TO NOTE DATES OF HASGA MEETINGS

Tuesday, 10th May

Wednesday, 29th June

All meetings take place in meeting rooms 1 & 2 Third floor, HLT 1 Reading Lane E8 1GQ, from 6:00pm

PART 2 – CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

9. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

None to report.

10. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE HEADTEACHER

None to report.

11. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES

None to report.

13. URGENT CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

13.1 Staff Forum.

Note: all members present remained for this section.

Geoff Owden had circulated the report, and Kevin McDonnell updated members on actions taken since then.

Three things were identified as causing dissatisfaction: workloads, pressures and apparent inconsistencies around dealing with challenging behaviour. Some of the actions put in place include allocating SLT members to oversee Years 7 and 8; 9 & 10 and 11&12. Staff now have clear points of reference to monitor behaviour. There has also been conversations with staff around how to deal with incidents. The roles of form tutors have also been strengthened. A clearer problem solving approach has been adopted.

Specifically, the following have been agreed:

- Need for clear plans around children with most disruptive behaviours – available in the staff room. Teachers and TAs will be working on this before the end of term
- Recognising changes in team work: this will be addressed during the CPD inset day, with a view to addressing issues that occur when strategies do not work
- Conversations will be had around directed time; bespoke to the need for clearer and regular times to air needs. A formal discussion will be had with teachers after Easter. It is obvious that subject leaders struggle for time to meet together.
- Set up training on Crucial Conversations later in the year for teachers. With reference to the issues around relationships with managers who are mainly teachers, work will be done around how the various layers of managers talk to each other. Three sessions have been held, with the latter two more positive than the first. All staff need to develop skills and processes to hold these crucial conversations.
- Need for staff surveys. The Trade Union will be contacted for support, along with the staff governor.
- Teamwork needs to improve. Structures to deal with and report issues upwards are now a priority in the SDP.

The head teacher stated that they are working through the issues raised and highlighting actions needed to improve working relationships. Processes need to be made clear to facilitate teamwork.

Governor Question: have these been fed back to staff?

Answer: not yet. Processes need to be clear, so the details are being sorted out.

ACTION: Head teacher to report back to Governors at the next meeting to be held on 14th June.

The meeting closed at 8:10pm.

Signed _____
Chair of Governors

Date _____