

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF  
EXCALIBUR PRIMARY SCHOOL  
HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON JULY 8 2015 AT 5.00PM**

**Governors Present:**

Mrs S Allen (SA)  
Mrs V Alsop (VA)  
Mrs G Burgess (GB)                      Chair  
Mrs S Choi (SCh)  
Mr S Cotterill (SC)                      Acting Head teacher  
Mr M Cross (MC)  
Mrs Y Hilditch (YH)  
Mrs N Ratcliffe (NR)  
Mr J Riley (JR)  
Mrs J Tomkinson (JT)  
Mr D Townson (DT)

**Also in Attendance:**

Mrs J Ling                      SENco  
Mrs L Taylor                      Clerk to the Governors

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**PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

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The meeting was pre-ceded by the following presentations to the Board of Governors:

- I. **An Overview of SEN** presented by SENco Jayne Ling, minuted under item 9.
  
- II. **Assessment without Levels dated June 2015:** The Board received the report, which was summarised by SC.

There will no longer be levels in primary schools; School Pupil Tracker has previously been used by the school to track attainment and progress. SC attended an educational conference where there was opportunity to look at different products for tracking.

Targets now known as core skills are at the back of pupil's books and are age related. Core skills documents have been produced, which are differentiated for marking and targeting, to provide challenge and help teachers with assessment.

Marking over the term and year and tests will be used to assess, and to then inform pupil tracking.

Book samples with core skill marking inserts were handed round the meeting. Parents will be encouraged to engage with the new system.

Matters Arising (II):

**Q: Are teacher's looking for secure and not secure?**

**A:** It's about evidencing it, through conversations and questioning.

**Q: If I'm marking I am using this sheet to mark?**

**A:** They are there to support the marking, rather than appraisal documents, and are on hand to refer to as and when. Teachers will gain knowledge and confidence.

**Q: Is this similar to SRA?**

**A:** Staff are really positive with this system.

**Q: What does everyone think of this system?**

**A:** That it is less work.

**Q: How do you test an idea like this?**

**A:** It was trialled with Year 4.

**Q: This is not the first version?**

**A:** No, we've been using it since January.

Feedback from the conference was, that during lessons teachers don't want to tick off on an iPad.

**Q: How does it work if the teacher thinks its small but the child was given core skills challenge?**

**A:** If completed independently the pupil will tick that box.

**Q: Are they set for each term or a year? (Core skills/targets)**

**A:** Older children, a year to go through core skills.

**Q: Does that mean some children will go through them in less than a year?**

**A:** Yes.

The system is in place with assessment; the levels have gone and it is a complete cycle of assessment with judgement made against Age Related Expectation (ARE); 30-80% is middle, above 80% is high, and below 30% is low.

**Q: Is this the same as the three levels before?**

**A:** It's similar, there has got to be a benchmark with a different format. It will take time, ideally the percentage will increase year on year.

**Q: When you start with the books in September, will you already have some ticked off?**

**A:** No children will quickly be assessed using a fun quiz to get a baseline. There are 2 reasons to start in September, there is more time to prepare and assessing before the summer holiday wouldn't give accuracy.

**Q: What is the difference in expectation and tracking point?**

**A:** To make it easier to track progress from the assigned point, and to get a cohort average.

**Q: Have you compared to other schools in the trust?**

**A:** Some schools haven't done a lot; the core skills document has been shared at moderation meetings.

**Q: The trigger for this, is the previous system of levels is to be scrapped; this is a government decision, what is the rationale behind it?**

**A:** The argument is, level 5 is too broad.

*You can't assess without levels you have to assign a level, the core skills does a really good job.*

It was noted transition relationships with the trust are good, there was a need for an accurate system to be in place.

**Q: Are we planning on communicating this to parents?**

**A:** Yes; we won't include the tracking points. It will be at, above or below age related expectations to give parents a feel for where the children are.

## **1. APOLOGIES AND AOB ITEMS**

1.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs Sakina Shulver.

1.2 AOB: The term of office of the Chair and Vice Chair was tabled for discussion.

## **2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

To give governors the opportunity to declare any potential pecuniary interest or conflict of interest between an individual and the board of governors as a whole in connection with the business to be discussed during the meeting.

None were declared.

## **3. MEMBERSHIP**

There were no changes to the membership to note.

There is a vacancy for 1 Co-opted Governor; a skills matrix has been completed and went to the strategic committee.

**Action: GB:** Review skills matrix results in Autumn Term.

The term of office of staff governor J Tomkinson expires 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015.

**Action: YH:** Initiate staff election before end of Summer Term.

#### 4. PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The part one minutes of the spring term board of governors held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 were agreed and signed by the chair.

There were no matters arising from the part one minutes.

#### 5. CHAIR'S ACTION

There were none.

#### 6. PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Part 1 minutes from the following committee meetings had been circulated to all governors.

**Community:** dated May 20<sup>th</sup> 2015. Matters Arising:

It was noted in the minutes of subsequent SL&M meeting that the bid to refurbish the kitchen was successful and work will be going ahead.

Item 8: Planned use of the mobile classroom:

***Q: In terms of converting it back to private use?***

***A: Yes, or a school run business. Currently it is being used for interventions.***

***Q: What state is the building in?***

***A: It is in good order with Wi-Fi, well decorated and is a really good space.***

Item 14: Governor Mark:

There was discussion of using a buddy mentor system for new governors.

It was noted achieving Governor Mark evidences best practice; completing the relevant modern governor e-module would be worthwhile for all governors. Governor Mark could be included as a topic for the Autumn FGB.

The Board are keen to understand the benefits, and evidence commitment to the role.

There was discussion of 20 questions for governors, reflective practice and sharing knowledge i.e. Headteacher's performance management.

It was noted that it wasn't realistic for all governors to have in depth knowledge of all subjects from committees, but minutes and action sheets were available resources.

**Learning, Teaching, Curriculum, & Standards:** dated June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015.

Matters of note:

- Collaboration within the trust and peer to peer is good.
- Levels had been discussed and questioned.
- Following review the Literacy, Physical Education and Phonics policies were agreed for approval by the Board.

**Action: YH:** Update NGA gold membership with all governor details

The board thanked YH for her support and the minutes, which included lots of challenges.

Item 11: The Board were asked if they had any concerns or questions regarding this item on safeguarding; none were stated.

**Strategic Leadership & Management:** dated July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015.

Matters Arising:

Item 4: The SLT have completed the skills audit; governors now need to complete the skills matrix for governors.

**Action: YH:** email copies to VA and GB.

**Action: All governors:** complete skills audit

Funding was received towards the refurbishment of the kitchen which will take place over the summer break. This will include works to ensure compliance with current gas safety regulations, an area for action identified by a gas safety audit.

Three quotes were received for the work including new shutters, servery, 2 cookers and a dishwasher. The chosen company come with previous recommendation.

**Q: The costs?**

**A:** £49,910.

**Q: The project management of that?**

**A:** Triborne.

**Q: The remedial works, is there assurance on that work?**

**A:** The final meeting is to be held week commencing 13 July after the asbestos survey has been completed. A contingency is in place and CE catering will liaise with Triborne. If works are not completed on time CE will take responsibility to provide food. The timeframe for completion of work is 6 weeks.

**Q: In terms of sign off of the completed works?**

**A:** It will be the project manager, CE, Jackie Preen, YH and the caretaker.

**Q: Whose signature will sign of?**

**A:** Lise Houldsworth.

**Q: Item 5 – succession planning, there was healthy debate?**

**A:** Yes, there are good staff coming through. The summer term data was reviewed, looking at where we are doing well and not doing well.

**Q: What was the debate on Pupil Premium (PP) data?**

**A:** In some areas we have not made as much progress as we wanted. We looked at the impact of interventions, other schools and Quality first Teaching.

*There are extra needs for areas not making progress, not all are PP children. Taking the SEN data out, there are still areas identified where PP children haven't made the progress we would like.*

**Q: Is this in the SDP?**

**A:** Yes. Referencing item 5, Summer Term Director's report; from September we will create and use a PP review and present to the Board at the Autumn FGB.

**Q: It's not long since we received a letter congratulating us on PP?**

(Received on January 26<sup>th</sup> 2015 from Rt Hon David Laws MP, minister for schools)

**A:** We need to recognise there are areas within just a few cohorts where the raw data is not as good as we would like.

*Focussing on Quality First Teaching as first port of call, teachers need to take ownership, not just of the data, but knowing the children.*

The minutes evidence analysis of the quality of teaching against the SDP, challenge to data, review of policies and attendance.

Item 7.2: YH presented the summer term budget including the CE virement report. The committee members agreed the 2015/16 budget and 3 year forecast.

**Q: What's changed, those are bigger numbers? (Item 7.3 the 3 year forecast)**

**A:** We had a high carry forward at the end of last year with pension liabilities and movement of staff.

**Q: What are we allowed to carry over?**

**A:** 8%.

*Last year's figures had included insurance liabilities of 9k and 25k for the kitchen refurbishment.*

Governor Blogs are now active on the school website. There is a pro forma for school visits based on the SDP, ethos aims and objectives.

The SIP had looked at the schools website and found it to be very good and informative. Governor attendance at sporting events demonstrates involvement in school life.

Staff survey results: Questions were set before the Headteacher's secondment and answers anonymous; survey monkey will be used moving forward.

Agreed further actions include answers being relative to the SDP; all staff understood their contribution to it.

Literacy and numeracy was an action for focus, staff have been very constructive and open, and provided good challenge.

Communication with staff is encouraged via a suggestion box in the staff room; items are then discussed at the following staff meeting.

#### GOVERNOR REPORTS:

SCh informed the Board that the Year 6 SATs invigilating was efficient and very professional, the children conducting themselves with maturity.

The LA carried out a SATS monitoring visit at the time, which was very thorough. The LA officer was complimentary of the schools procedures.

It was a stressful situation for children and the staff are to be commended.

***Q: Is it normal to get an invigilator?***

***A: She went round 3 or 4 schools in Alsager.***

SCh attended the new intake visit and Alsager schools swimming gala where Year 6 were joint winners.

***Q: Was that as a parent or governor?*** (Speaking at the new intake meeting).

***A: Both.***

MC verbally reported on three link governor visits, participating in football skills with Reception, Years 1 and 2, and helping to run the football tournament. The good technical skills of the girls were commended.

There has been good inter year interaction, and reaching out to all children, including organising wheelchair basketball.

SA verbally reported on 2 visits before SATS week including time spent with a Reading group.

Governor blogs have been posted on the website.

- Item 8 SFVS: the outcome of the 2014/15 submission was Good Assurance.

## 7. FINANCIAL MATTERS

The draft 2015/16 budget was approved at the spring term FGB.

The SFVS is covered by the SL&M committee minutes.

The school fund account is awaiting audit by the LA.

**Action:** YH: PP report for Autumn FGB.

## 8. PART ONE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Part one of the Head teacher's report dated July 2015 had been received in advance of the meeting and contained the following:

- INTRODUCTION
- PUPILS
- STAFFING
- ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS
- PARENTS AND COMMUNITY
- SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
- PREMISES AND EQUIPMENT
- FINANCE
- PART II CONFIDENTIAL
- APPENDICES
  - a. SSDP 2015-16
  - b. School Improvement Partner Report, Summer 2015

The Board congratulated the acting Headteacher for the schools EYFS outcomes.

**Q: Do we understand performance data to hold the school leadership to account?**

**A:** Yes answering on an individual level; we can take this to the T&L committee to look at up-skilling governors on an individual level.

The Board commended the report; Lise Houldsworth's format had been retained by SC.

**Q: Can we discuss the SIP report; there is a feeling that he won't commit in his report?**

**A:** The SIP saw good teaching, but he didn't observe EYFS and Year 6. In his next visit he will see more of the whole school and carry out learning walks.



It was observed that the SIP could have documented that as an action in his report.

SC had emailed JM after receiving the report and asked for comment; JM responded that he had observed good and outstanding teaching but wants to see more of the school.

The focus of that SIP visit was to support younger staff, peer to peer support, achievement of consistently good teaching and progress toward outstanding.

***Q: My question is, what is his role? I don't understand John's role in that, at the moment he is not here enough to help us, then the SIP role is not working.***

***A: (SC) He is not here any less than when he was our Local Authority partner.***

It was noted that this discussion needs to involve the Headteacher upon her return from secondment, along with considerations regarding changing the SIP yearly.

There was discussion of the SIP report needing to reflect observations and teaching and learning judgements. It was noted that on a prior visit he found the school to be outstanding.

SC informed the Board that the SIP is targeted on areas of focus, i.e. books and on the last 2 visits carried out a mock Ofsted visit. These areas of focus drive the quality of the visit.

It was commented that the SIP is one person doing a one day visit, whereas Ofsted is two people doing a two day visit. The Board is looking for a whole school feedback and scrutiny of books.

## **9. IMPACT OF NEW SEN CODE OF PRACTICE**

Jayne Ling SENco presented this item prior to the meeting. Matters to note:

- SEN applied to all children who need support but not necessarily Autistic children.
- Currently the school had 3 statemented children and 10 school focussed plans.
- Plans consider the views of the child and what is important to them not for them, in collaboration with their parents and school.
- Interventions and the code of practice implement Quality First Teaching (QFT). There is focus on what works well and this travels with the child through school.

***Q: Where do you get your ideas Jane?***

***A: Reviews are discussed termly with the Headteacher, with a focus on what's worked with QFT, any referrals such as Speech and Language Therapy, outside agencies and the CE autistic team.***

*There is a termly cluster group meeting where good practice is shared.*

**Q: With good practice, where do fresh ideas come from?**

**A:** *The SEN magazine; CE's conference was really successful. We look at data, who needs support and decide where intervention groups go and any long term plans.*

**Q: In terms of the data for these children compared to the others?**

**A:** *Compared to SEN reports they make good progress, it's about getting the register right.*

**Q: A child may be ticking off the register; do they know?**

**A:** *No, all children did pupil views.*

*Inclusion and equality is about understanding the children.*

The Board extended thanks to Jayne for her presentation.

## **10. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP)**

The SDP is a focus of the committees.

## **11. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER/EXTERNAL ADVISER**

This had been covered by item 8 with the following action determined:

**Action: GB:** SIP report to include more specific objectives

## **12. SELF EVALUATION**

The School Self Evaluation information will be reviewed in September after SATS data and the SIP report has been received.

## **13. GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

The Governance statement will be completed over the summer and send to governors for approval via email.

**Action: GB/YH:** complete and circulate governance statement to the Board.

**Action: Clerk:** email YH template governance statement. *Completed*

#### **14. DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES' REPORT**

The Director of Children's Service Report for the Summer Term 2015 contained the following matters:

Director's Introduction

1. Governance and Liaison update
2. Holiday and Term Dates
3. The Annual Education report 2013-14
4. Cheshire East Learners
5. Using Pupil Premium Reviews to support and monitor outcomes for learners
6. Keeping Children Safe in Education
7. Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
8. School Exclusions and Supporting Children with challenging Behaviour
9. Finance Update – Deficit Budget Applications and SFVS

Relevant items had been taken to committee meetings and actioned.

#### **15. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT**

Governor attendance at the following training since the last FGB were noted:

- SC: Child Sexual Exploitation training (CSE): Building a Training and Development culture.
- SS: Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC).

The clerk advised exclusions training places were available on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

#### **16. SCHOOL POLICIES**

The following 11 policies had been reviewed at committees and were **approved** by the Board:

1. Administration of Medicines
2. Health and Safety
3. Literacy
4. Physical Education
5. Phonics
6. Complaints
7. Attendance
8. Safeguarding Policy Framework for Children and Young People
9. Parental Leave and Leave for Cared for Dependents Policy
10. Staff Attendance Management Policy
11. Manual of internal Financial Procedures

## 17. PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VISITS

The following trips are registered on evolve:

- Year 6 two night residential at Kingswood commencing September 23.
- Year 4 Staffordshire, May 2016.

### **Q: The Risk Assessments?**

**A:** Kingwood is on evolve awaiting LA approval. They are usually completed 4 weeks in advance by the Headteacher, YH and the LA.

## 18. TERM DATES FOR 2016-2017 AND 2017-2018

The term dates for the next school year were set following the Alsager Trust meeting so as to align with Alsager High and local primary schools. It was noted that there were changes to the usual Christmas holiday dates.

The Board **agreed** the dates subject to the following action:

**Action: YH:** Check suggested ACT trust dates comply with statutory 190 school days.

### **Q: When parents need to check dates, do they refer to the website?**

**A:** Yes, it is under parent information; the website title bar was altered recently following feedback from parents.

## 19. MEETINGS

The dates of the three full board of governors meetings to be held during the academic year 2015-2016 were agreed as:

Autumn: December 16<sup>th</sup> 2015

Spring: March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016

Summer: July 13<sup>th</sup> 2016

All meetings will start at 17.00.

**Action: YH:** email committee meeting dates to the Board.

## 20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

YH confirmed that the term of office for Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Board is 4 years.

GB and VA were elected Chair and Vice Chair respectively on 27 November 2013; their term of office will be until the autumn term 2017 Full Board of Governors meeting.

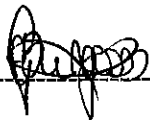
The need for succession planning and for Governors to access chairs and vice chairs training was noted.

There was discussion that publishing part one minutes would make actions of the Governing Board clear, open and transparent.

## 25. IMPACT STATEMENT

- The Governing Board ratified the SDP after review at committees and this will feed into next year's SDP.
- All academic results are scrutinised at committees and published.
- PP and SEN data has been reviewed and questioned at committee meetings
- The SFVS was completed by governors and received an outcome of Good Assurance.
- Risk Assessments for visits are evidenced in committee meeting minutes.
- Level 1 Safeguarding training for all staff has been facilitated.

Part one of the meeting closed.

----- Chair

16/12/15----- Dated