

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
OF EXCALIBUR PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON
16 DECEMBER 2015
(Commencing 17.00)**

Governors Present:

Mrs V Alsop (VA) Chair
Mrs G Burgess (GB)
Mrs S Choi (SCh)
Mr M Cross (MC)
Mrs Y Hilditch (YH)
Mrs L Houldsworth (LH) Headteacher
Mrs N Ratcliffe (NR)
Mr J Riley (JR)
Mrs S Shulver (SSh) (from item 8)
Mrs S Sproston (SSp)
Mrs J Tomkinson (JT)
Mr D Townson (DT)

Also in Attendance:

Mr S Cotterill (SC) Deputy Head teacher
Mrs L Taylor Clerk to the Governors

PART ONE

1. APOLOGIES & ADDITIONAL AOB ITEMS

1.1 No apologies were received.

1.2 No additional items of business were tabled for discussion at the end of the part one meeting.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

None were declared.

b) Any outstanding annual declarations are to be completed and returned to the school.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Juliet Tomkinson was re-elected as Staff Governor effective 1.9.15.

There is one parent governor vacancy; the process for a parent governor election will be initiated in the New Year. **Action: YH**

Consideration was given to current vacancy for one Co-opted Governor. Mrs Sarah Sproston had been invited to the meeting and presented her business and personal skill set to the Board of governors.

Following consideration, the Board of governors **agreed** to the appointment of Mrs Sproston as co-opted governor for a term of four years.

There was discussion of mentoring of new governors; VA agreed to mentor Mrs Sproston.

No terms of office are due to expire before the next meeting.

4. PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THEM

The part one minutes of the previous summer term full Governing Board meeting on 8th July 2015 were **agreed** and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

5. CHAIR'S ACTION

The Chair reported one action taken under the Chair's Power to Act: Due to timescales, following the statutory recommendations regarding Teacher's pay, the Chair agreed the Strategic Leadership and Management committee recommendation to approve the Pay Policy.

The Board of Governors **agreed** to this Chairs Action.

6. COMMITTEES & NOMINATED GOVERNORS

GB informed the meeting that she wished to stand down as Chair of the Board of governors.

Following a governor vote Vicky Alsop was **elected Chair** for a period of four years, until the autumn term 2019 meeting.

Vicky Alsop in the Chair

Following a governor vote Nikki Ratcliffe was **elected vice chair** for a period of four years, until the autumn term 2019 meeting.

- a) The updated membership of committees and governor responsibilities for the 2015/2016 academic year were discussed and **agreed**.
Action:YH: email circulate updated list.
- b) Chairs for each of the Governing Board standing committees for the 2015/2016 academic year were **agreed** as :
Mike Cross - Learning, Teaching, Curriculum and Standards.
Vicky Alsop - Strategic Leadership and Management.
Vicky Alsop - Community.
- c) The list of functions to be delegated to committees and individuals by the Governing Board is contained within each of the reviewed committee terms of reference. The Financial Planner was **agreed** by the Board of governors.
- d) The constitution and terms of reference for each of the Governing Board standing committees following their review by each committee were **agreed** by the Board.
- e) Pay committee functions are covered by the Strategic committee.
- f) The panel of governors appointed to carry out the Headteacher's Performance Review in 2015/16 was **agreed** as Vicky Alsop, Gill Burgess and Nikki Ratcliffe.

7. GOVERNORS CODE OF PRACTICE/GOVERNORS CHARTER

The Governors' Charter and Code of Conduct for the Governing Board were **approved** and signed by all governors.

8. PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Minutes of Committee meetings

Learning, Teaching, Curriculum and Standards (LTC&S) dated 9th December 2015: The minutes were received with the following matters of note: Assessment for learning identified strengths and weaknesses. Congratulations were extended to the Headteacher and her team. Walking journeys and book scrutinies were carried out during the autumn term.

The Pupil Premium Governor report was received.

Strategic Leadership and Management (SL&M) dated 25th November 2015:

The minutes were received with the following matters of note:

The school is doing well; SIP outcomes were outstanding; SWAT analysis has identified strengths.

The committee reviewed the budget.

The heating system requires maintenance; quotes are being received. The LA has been approached regarding refurbishment of the boiler room.

Following assessment, work on the heating system will not be carried out until the summer. The school is currently running on one boiler.

If the system fails in the meantime, replacement would be the responsibility of the LA.

Q: Are they of increased cost?

A: No, a new boiler will be more efficient.

- Governors have contributed to the completion of the SFVS.
- All kitchen work has been completed; the maximum hygiene rating has been received.
- Delegated policies were reviewed.

Community: dated 21st October 2015. The minutes were received with the following matters of note:

- Governor kite mark; actions generated following discussion.
 - The SDP 2015/16 was reviewed.
 - The Risk Register was reviewed.
- b. Any other reports from Committees;
Pupil Premium and SEN reports were received by the Strategic committee.
- c. There were no recommendations requiring the approval of the Governing Board.
- d. Governor Blogs are now posted on the school webpage.

SC updated the meeting following a link visit accompanying pupils on a walk to the church.

MC updated the meeting following a link visit with Year 5 to the world war 2 exhibition at Mow Cop. Pupils had the opportunity to question a war veteran.

Leadership and Management Action Plan:

- This report feeds back to the SL&M committee; items include the impacts on EYFS of investments in I.T and software, electronic learning journeys and School Pupil Tracker.
- The member of staff recruited to cover EYFS maternity leave is experienced in use of software used by the school.
- EYFS is now a separate Ofsted judgement.
- SFVS blog is on the website.

MC and JR attended a recent Alsager Community Trust meeting; the success of the group in part was due to the inclusion of a high school and the Leadership of the schools.

Academy status of schools was discussed. Over the course of the next year the Headteacher will be looking into how academies work. Although there are no strong feelings either way it was noted that there is not a lot of evidence of middle ground. It was considered prudent to be equipped and aware.

There was discussion of local Multi Academy Trusts. At Headteacher and School Business Manager group meetings in the New Year, Academies will be topics of discussion.

NR reported on a link visit during a school performance dress rehearsal; the pupils and staff performance was impressive.

Q: Have we had a report from all link governors?

A: The Health and Safety link reports to the committees.

Action: The Racial Equality report is c/fwd to the next FGB.

Safeguarding is a standing item at committees, English and Maths link reports are fed back to committees.

There was discussion of developing Pupil Voice further. The parent questionnaire will be looked at in March.

The Racial Equality and Disability link governor will report on all areas in relation to the Disabilities and Equality Act 2010.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- The SFVS submission date is 31st December 2015, completion is in hand. There is a list of findings to be actioned, noted under item 9.1 of the SL&M Committee minutes.
- The Unofficial School Funds accounts were audited on 9th September 2015; the audit certificate had not been received in time and will be taken to the next committee meeting.
- The Board **agreed** to retain CE as auditor of the annual accounts for the current year.
- Pupil premium is reported to committees and posted on the school website.

10. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Part one of the Headteacher's report dated December 2015 contained the following:

- INTRODUCTION
- PUPILS
- STAFFING
- ACHEIVEMENT AND STANDARDS
- PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

- SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
- PREMISES AND EQUIPMENT
- FINANCE
- PART II CONFIDENTIAL
- APPENDICES

11. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Q: What would class as a bullying incident?

A: *When perceived to be so by staff and or pupils. It is an imbalance of power; if the victim feels victimised it is treated as a bullying incident and reported. The full definition is in the bullying policy.*

The report was commended by the Board.

The Headteacher asked for feedback from the Board requiring the content of the report: the Board of Governors' responses were positive.

Item 2.3: The fixed penalties issued included from the last half of the summer term.

Item 2 from the Director's Report– Children Missing out on education had been discussed at the LTC&S committee, governors were asked to take note of this item.

12. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INFORMATION

School Improvement Partner Record of Visit: the report dated 25th November 2015 was received with the following matters arising:

The next visit will be on 18th March 2016. As this is the third year with the current SIP, it is good practice to consider arrangements and ensure good challenge is being provided.

Q: Are we aware of someone else?

A: *No; there are possibilities regarding a practising Headteacher. Some schools do not have a SIP; an external partner is required for the Headteacher's performance management.*

Pen portraits of prospective candidates will be sought.

Q: Could the school retain the current SIP for performance management and the good to outstanding group, with someone new to school to provide challenge and fresh eyes?

A: *It will be looked into.*

Q: The SIP is contracted for this year?

A: Yes.

There were no agenda items 13 or 14.

15. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

School performance is documented within the Headteacher's report and LTC&S committee minutes.

Targets are estimates based on end of year expectations. The government removed levels at the end of the summer.

Q: Is there an underlying overreliance on old levels?

A: *Pupil tracker was used; at this moment it is not helpful.*

Q: How are we going to get through that information and gain assurance on standards and learning?

A: *Nationally it is a difficult picture. In school baseline tracks progression with the new curriculum, books and knowledge of children.*

With reading it is difficult to ascertain progress; we are confident in school, the national picture is uncertain.

There is reluctance to declare targets due to reporting. We are able to track progress, but not sure what the government will do.

16. ATTENDANCE TARGETS

Last year's attendance was 96.5%; current attendance is 97.1%. The school's attendance is always in the green bracket, outstanding attendance would be 98%.

It was **agreed** the attendance target would be maintained at 96.5%.

Incentivising attendance was discussed.

Q: Do we know of any long term illness?

A: *Short term which is being tracked. Attendance is contained within the Headteacher's report and governors should monitor attendance.*

100% attendance badges are issued and it is about creating a balance and understanding individuals. Systems to support attendance and policies are in place and other agencies are used as required.

17. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Message from the Director of Children's Services

1. Governance and Liaison Update

2. Children (Pupils) Missing Out on Education
3. School's Level of Support and Intervention, School Improvement, Partnership and Advocacy
4. Attendance Guidance, What's New for September 2015?
5. Inspecting Safeguarding Under the New Ofsted Common Inspection Framework from 1st September 2015
6. Extremism and Radicalisation Prevent Duty 1st July 2015
7. Keeping Children Safe in Education UPDATE
8. The Importance of Religious Education
9. Virtual School for Cared for Children
10. Implications for Schools on the Living Wage
11. Model Education HR Policies for Schools and Academies
12. Education HR Safer Recruitment Training
13. Responsibility of Schools for Learning Outside the Classroom (school visits and overnight stays)
14. Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2017/18
13. Free Early Education for 2 Year Olds
14. Cheshire East Internal Audit – 14/15 School Audit Programme findings
15. Finance update – Salary Overpayment Audit Report (Draft), Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)
 - Governors received the report and were reminded to read the recommended actions for governors.
 - Items from the Director's report are comprehensively covered at committee meetings.

18. GOVERNOR MONITORING, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A skills analysis was carried out and will be repeated next year. Although there are no large skills gaps, areas identified to strengthen included Legal and HR.

The SFVS review 2015/16 identified finance training needs; documented under item 9 in the SL&M committee minutes from 25th November '15.

Since the summer meeting, MC had attended Ofsted training and YH attended Finance and Fischer Family Trust (FFT) training.

It was noted that FFT is now FFT Aspire and based on percentages.

Q: Normally KS1 last year's data, secure level 2b etc. was used?

A: The most aspirational figure is used. Currently the FFT is still in use using AGE related expectations.

It was noted that you cannot compare the old curriculum to the new and that governors need to understand enough to challenge the levels set by the school.

19. SCHOOL POLICIES

The following policies were reviewed and agreed at committees and **approved** by the governing board:

- Letting and Letting Charges
- Dealing with Incidents of Abuse, Threats, Intimidating Behaviour or Violence towards Staff
- Social Media Policy for Staff, Pupils, Parents, and the Wider School Community
- Behaviour
- Safeguarding Policy Framework for Children and Young People
- Bullying Prevention
- Shared Parental Leave
- Leave and Time off
- Annual Leave
- Adoption Pay and Leave
- Teacher Appraisal
- Flexible Working
- Disciplinary Policy for All School Staff
- Capability Policy for Teachers
- Capability Policy for Support Staff
- Pay Policy for Teaching Staff 2015/16
- Admissions Policy from September 2017
- Lone Worker
- Governors' Allowance
- Continuing Professional Development
- Racial Equality
- Scheme for Financing Schools 2015/16
- Acceptable Use Policy for ICT
- E Safety
- Using Images of Children and Internet Access
- Science

Q: The social media policy and publication of photos of pupils in school uniform; has this debate been had?

A: Not yet; the feeling is, it is an issue that can't be enforced. Pupil performances being put on social media could potentially be a safeguarding issue.

Q: Does anyone sign at school performances?

A: A letter sent to parents stated that performances cannot be shared on social media.

Q: How are we going to police it?

A: The school produce an edited version of the performance with only eligible children included.

Q: How many children in school are opted out of image publication?

A: 20 to 25, for different things.

There was further discussion of parent's use of social media including during sports day. It was noted it is an emerging problem in part due to a lack of understanding of the implications.

There was discussion of how best to communicate to parent's appropriate use of social media. The school newsletter may be utilised.

There was discussion of the availability of the mobile version of the school website.

Action: LH: Check availability and then contact I.T if required.

20. PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VISITS

There were no forthcoming visits to approve. New venues under consideration will be visited by staff and reported back to the spring term FGB meeting.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

22. MEETINGS

It was confirmed that the next full Governing Board meeting will be held on 23 March 2016 at 5pm.

Part one of the meeting closed.

V. Alsep----- Chair

23-3-2016----- Dated