

MINUTES OF MEETING

School: Gotham Primary School
Meeting title: Spring term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Thursday 16th January 2020 at 6.00PM
Location: At the school

Membership

'A' denotes absence

Janette Allen
A Natalie Danylevych
Jennifer Walker
Andrew Howard
A Cath Kaylor
Sarah Riley
Alan Higgins
A Gill Aldridge
A Helen Lomas
Linda Dale
Allan Kerr

In attendance

Susan Beasley (clerk to the governors)
Emma Ault (new parent governor)
Clare Payne (new parent governor)

Governors attended a presentation by the head boy and girl featuring their schools Christmas performances. Governors asked questions and thanked the pupils for their time and effort.

GB/01/20

Apologies for absence

Action

Apologies for absence were received from Cath Kaylor (moved away), Gill Aldridge, Natalie Danylevych(maternity) and Helen Lomas(illness)

It was

Resolved

that the governing body consent to these absences.

In Cath Kaylor's absence Linda Dale chaired the meeting.

With so many new faces everyone present briefly introduced themselves.

GB/02/20

Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

JW

Jenny Walker declared she needed to change her declaration of interest. Andrew Howard also needed to sign the governors code of conduct.

GB/03/20 Election of chair

Cath Kaylor has resigned from the governing body and as chair of governors as she is moving away. Nominations were requested by the Vice Chair for the role of Chair of governors. Jennifer Walker was nominated by Linda Dale and seconded by Alan Higgins. Jennifer Walker then left the room.

Governors

Resolved

Unanimously to elect Jennifer Walker chair of the governing body for one year until the Spring term of 2021.

Jennifer Walker returned to the room and the clerk advised her of her election.

Jennifer Walker took the chair.

GB/04/20 Review of membership

The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body:

2 parent governor vacancies and 1 co opted governor vacancy.

The parent election process had been initiated by the headteacher. 2 nominations had been submitted from parents with suitable skills and knowledge. These candidates were asked to attend the meeting with a view to appointment. Emma Ault and Clare Payne were introduced and welcomed onto the governing body.

Link Governor roles

The governing body discussed the need to replace the safeguarding governor. Linda Dale was happy to step into the role of safeguarding governor and Andrew Howard volunteered to step into the role that Linda had be doing. They both requested further information and training and the Headteacher was happy to give guidance on this. The clerk also informed them of the safeguarding training by NCC

The clerk highlighted that with the departure of Louise Butler and Cath Kaylor there were some gaps in the link governor roles, especially complaints, pupil welfare and early years.

Governors discussed the link roles and thought re assigning governors to roles and classes would be useful.

Governors also wanted to share this information with parents, possibly via the school newsletter. This was delegated to the Strategy committee

Strategy

Ends of terms of office

The clerk brought to the attention of governors the following end of term of office:

Mrs Sarah Riley's term of office as parent governor would come to an end in October 2020. Sarah had decided that she would like to stand again as a parent

governor. The headteacher noted that parent elections could be run in September 2020.

GB/05/20 Approval of minutes of autumn term meeting

The minutes of the autumn term meeting held on Thursday 10th October, 2019 having been previously circulated were confirmed and signed by the chair.

Review of actions

Headteacher options for Pupil Premium training for governors is in progress, the headteacher is in discussion with Sutton Bonington to share the cost of training.

SDP discussions around resilience and curriculum intent had been actioned.

Pay committee review appraisal policy had been actioned

GB/06/20 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

Minutes of committee meetings were not available at the meeting, the headteacher reviewed the actions verbally.

Review of actions

Finance and General purposes

Finance committee had taken advice and need to decide what the school's needs are in this situation and action accordingly (AOB GB/93/19)

F&GP

Finance policy approved
Whistle blowing policy approved
Child protection policy approved

Pay table A adopted, pay policy review and adoption carried forward.

F&GP

Strategic Development and Pupils

Anti-bullying policy approved
Appraisal policy approved
Educational visit policy approved
Emergency plan approved
Online safety policy approved
Marking feedback and presentation policy approved
SEND policy approved
Peer on peer abuse policy approved
School code of conduct approved
Pay policy and tool kit approved

Strategy committee (to focus on Ofsted objectives)

Headteacher inclusion of committee membership information on Website to carry forward and complete after strategy committee meet and confirm class links and link roles for governors.

Governors questioned the plan for development of resilience for children within school. The headteacher said, after talks at the strategy meeting, training had been completed by the year 6 teacher and the Young Minds programme was being prepared but had not yet been implemented into lessons. This would start soon. Strategies had however started within the classroom to help children to learn from their mistakes and take the learning process as a positive and not focus on the mistake as a negative.

GB/07/20 Headteacher's report

The headteacher explained that numbers on role had dropped. She also said that 3 new children were expected in school.

Governors questioned if there were any indications of the numbers rising in the future? The headteacher said that playgroup was quiet but was also following the usual trend of previous years so that couldn't indicate future numbers she noted that Toy Box was busy so that could have a positive effect.

Governors challenged that the drop in numbers could be due to the latest Ofsted inspection report. The headteacher commented that that could be the case but that it hadn't stopped admissions from out of the immediate area.

The headteacher informed governors that one SEND child with TA support is still planning to leave. When they leave the TA SEND support funding would end at the end of that term, this TA support is well established for several children and would need looking at in regards of future funding.

Finance

The HT discussed the staffing arrangements for this term and the cost implications.

Governors questioned whether the arrangements were working well. Whether staff were receiving adequate time to fulfil their responsibilities. The headteacher said she wanted to maintain as much continuity as possible for the children and staff. Although there may be changes to make in the future, she would see how this works for the time being.

Finance

Governors wanted to review this at Finance committee

Governors discussed the wellbeing of staff and asked if the results of the Work and Wellbeing survey had highlighted any issues. They felt it was important to mirror the current Ofsted focus on wellbeing. The headteacher informed governors part time staff had commented on the receipt of work related emails during non-working days. Due to the nature of the staffing in school this could not be avoided.

Governors suggested that a more formal communication on expectation regarding responding to work related emails in work time only would help clarify.

HT

The headteacher also said she planned better communication techniques with TA's who were not present at staff meetings so that all staff were fully aware of necessary information.

HT

Staff were feeling time pressures during assessment times. The headteacher said she wanted to look into ways to streamline the assessment processes.

The governors asked if the new attendance policy had worked. The headteacher discussed the attendance figures. The governing body were pleased with the improvement.

Governors questioned where further improvement could be made? The headteacher explained that some especially with persistent absence parents were being invited in for meetings to assist parents where possible.

Governors wanted to know if there had been any resistance to the fines issued for absence. The headteacher said that the fines issued so far had been paid and that the court proceeding escalation after successive fines seemed to be a deterrent to further absence.

Governors enquired if in term holidays were still a problem with attendance. The head teacher said in the majority this had improved.

The governors further discussed safeguarding Linda Dale agreed to come into school to review the concern forms folder this term.

LD

Governor challenge; have the new pupil premium spending measures been implemented in line with Ofsted recommendations?

The headteacher explained the current funding and spending. A pupil premium lead had been established. At the pupil premium review a strategy was set out to identify the barriers to learning and how support is given in school. She wanted to be able to clearly show governors the impact of this and felt she needed more documentation to prove the work that had been done. She felt the format of the spending did not show what work had been done accurately and would re work the format.

HT

The headteacher discussed the data from the end of the summer term with the governors.

Governors challenged, how are structure and strategy changes in early years progressing? The headteacher said that staff in early years were planning to visit 3 schools to see examples of continuous provision. This would give a well-rounded view to build a new structure using examples of good practice in these schools.

The headteacher summarised the priorities on the improvement plan.

Governors wanted to know how the focus on reading improvement was working. The headteacher said she needed to measure the impact going forward to provide evidence. Whole class reading had been introduced after recommendations by the education improvement advisor. It was the school's intent to create mastery for all pupils and improvement would be seen once a consistent structure was in place across school and the technique was embedded. School is using VIPERS to build reading skills and is being supported by Cath Wilkes. She highlighted the need to embed phonics in reading in early years and that progress was difficult in KS1.

Governors challenged the provision for support for the lower abilities in classes and the challenge for higher abilities in a whole class situation. The headteacher explained the challenge in creating the correct environment for all pupils and the resources it required.

Governors questioned whether reading could be focused more on an ability level rather than class level. The headteacher said this would not work with the mastery teaching and that all students should be supported to access the whole class approach.

Governors also queried the reading at home initiative. The headteacher said she would communicate the house point incentive with parents.

Governors asked if funding could be made available for reading resources. Pupil premium funding could be used to challenge the higher achieving pupil premium students. Andrew Howard offered to look for relevant funding to apply for.

AH

Governors asked if buddy reading was still in place, the headteacher said it had been stopped as pupils were sometimes difficult to partner and benefits had waned. It had been replaced with reading for pleasure.

A governor asked when would governors get an indicator of whether any of this work was working? The headteacher said that in March there would be school data from class testing. This could be used to monitor progress. In year 6 there has already been practice testing and pupils who need support have already been identified. This would be tracked.

The governing body discussed community events, especially sporting events. It was identified that events needed pupil numbers to be viable and to create pupil numbers required practice and training to garner confidence to participate.

Governors asked if that was the reason events had been organised then cancelled. The headteacher agreed it was but she was also concerned about staff over-committing their own time.

Governors asked if they could get more involved. This was something that could help. The headteacher explained there was extensive training and a vast number of events to get involved with and that school would need to be more selective for the project to be efficient and successful.

Governors asked for feedback on the sports day consultation. The headteacher said the replies were diverse but she felt that more focus on planning would benefit next years event.

A governor challenged if this was a priority for now? The headteacher thought that sports day, at least, was a task that would take only small changes to improve quickly.

GB/08/20

Approval of (if applicable)

Visitor policy, the NCC visitor policy was tabled at the meeting and has been adapted to suit the schools` needs. It was adopted at the meeting.

School budget

This was delegated to finance committee. The clerk advised this needed to be approved by the full governing board and sent to the Schools Finance Team by 31/05/2020

Finance*Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) for 2019-2020*

This was delegated to the Finance committee. The clerk advised this needed completing and presenting to governors. The sending to the Schools Finance Team by 31/03/2020.

Finance*Year-end re-forecast*

This was delegated to the finance committee.

Finance*Services for schools*

This was delegated to the finance committee

Finance

GB/09/20

Update on appraisal process for headteacher and staff

The headteacher appraisal had been completed and target set by the external advisor. The headteacher appraisal review had been set for 18th Mar 2020. Staff appraisals had been completed in the autumn term. Reviews had taken place during this week. The next reviews were set for 23rd March 2020. TA's had not yet been appraised this was planned for April 2020. The headteacher also communicated the advice given at Heads and chairs meeting regarding appraising non-teaching staff, Governors said that a more informal appraisal approach with a focus on wellbeing as well as performance could be a viable option to fulfil this.

GB/10/20 Confirm arrangements to review Child Protection and Safeguarding recording and reporting systems

Linda Dale arranged to come into school during the spring term to review the reporting and recording systems and assist with the auditing of child protection and confidential files.

LD

GB/11/20 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

The clerk shared the information from the Corporate Director and informed the governors this information could be found on GovernorHub in the Spring 2020 folder.

- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE): preparing for September 2020

The clerk explained that Sara Lee from the tackling emerging threats to children department at NCC came to speak to clerks regarding statutory changes that come into force in September this year. She was passionate that governors take the time to read this report to realise their responsibilities and assist their school to make the changes necessary to bring this into the school curriculum to match the nature of their school. There should be an emphasis on quality training for delivery, timetabling to fulfil obligations and clear intent to parents for effective delivery. Support from the tackling emerging threats team is available with any potential objection from parents and some Notts schools have become early adopters so there is the potential for sharing relevant good practice.

“RSHE encompasses relationships, physical and mental health as well as all aspects of pupil safety and well-being.” With guidance in this area not changing in the last 18 years this guidance brings in relevant changes for the world our children live in now.

The Clerk highlighted the Action for governors' section and the link to the full guidance.

- Auditing of Child Protection and Confidential Files

The Clerk shared information from Cheryl Stollery and for the completion of this audit. “Governors need to be confident that schools keep careful records in relation to children of concern” The audit should be undertaken by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Designated safeguarding lead with either chair of governors or named safeguarding governor or any combination of these people. The purpose is to highlight the effectiveness of the school's system and results can be used to improve future practice.

Governors delegated the organisation of RSHE policy and a letter to parents to the strategy committee.

GB/12/20 Communication

From chair

The chair confirmed an appeal process had now been completed

From headteacher

No communication from the headteacher

From clerk

The Clerk presented the Governor newsletter highlighting the following articles.

Schools for peace-diversity development

Chairs handbook

Governance resources DofE pages

Ofsted updates

Recruitment of foster carers

NGA what governing bodies and school leaders should expect from each other and members can have a place at regional conference which takes place in Notts this year

GB/13/20 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training requirements for 2020

Gill Aldridge was absent from today's meeting. The chair discussed the need for a skills audit in order to structure useful training recommendations and to see which skills could be sought from a new co-opted governor. The governor's induction course was recommended for the new governors

As safeguarding governors Linda Dale and Andrew Howard were looking at training on Educare and with the local authority.

**GA
EA
CP
LD
AH**

The clerk reminded governors that there is a list of NCC training courses on the NCC website and on GovernorHub.

GB/14/20 General Data Protection Regulations

The DPO was currently on maternity leave during her absence Nadia Cox was acting DPO and would complete training on February 28th 2020.

The schools Senior Information and Risk Owner (SIRO) is Janette Allen.

Report from the DPO and Information Governance Governor

There had been 1 data breach this period. The headteacher sent information to a new member of staff who didn't yet have a school email address via personal email address. The content wasn't sensitive or confidential and the message had been encrypted.

There had been 1 subject access request which had been fulfilled within the time limits.

GB/15/20 Governor monitoring visits

Linda Dale and Allan Kerr had visited to see the whole class reading in action.
 Sarah Riley and Linda Dale had met with the SENDCo
 Sarah Riley had attended a health and safety visit.
 Alan Kerr and Linda Dale had met with the English Lead
 Alan Higgins had visited the headteacher to discuss the timetable structure for the school day.
 Andrew Howard had been into school to support and encourage reading at home.

GB/16/20 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Governors had assisted with recruitment to cover maternity leave.
 Resilience training had been implemented to cascade through staff and the children.
 An acting deputy head and literacy lead was now in place.
 A new midday supervisor appointed.
 Recommendations to increase SENDCo time during bidding process.

Governors have challenged the school leaders regarding

- Staffing arrangements
- SEND provision and SENDCo support
- Attendance
- Pupil numbers
- Pupil premium funding, spending and impact
- Whole class reading progression
- Foundation stage improvement update
- Competing against schools' project

GB/17/20 Confirmation of dates for 2020 – 2021

The governing body

agreed

Summer term - 21st May 2020, at 6.00pm
 Autumn term 2020 – 8th October 2020 6.00pm
 Spring term 2021 – To be agreed
 Summer term 2021 – To be agreed

GB/18/20 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

Resolved

that all papers and reports be made available as necessary.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.



E/Signed (chair) Date 29 September, 2020

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