



## Little Paxton Primary School Governing Body

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 6.30pm

Ellen Barrett	Co-opted Governor	Graham Hiom	Co-opted Governor
Penny Conway	Authority Governor	Rebekah Jenkins	Associate Member / Staff
Neil Donoghue	Co-opted Governor	David Jones	Parent Governor
Richard Fairbairn	Parent Governor	Gemma Manning	Parent Governor
Debbie Gray	Co-opted Governor	Oliver Poulain	Parent Governor
Diane Hawkes	Head Teacher	Jordana Watts	Staff Governor

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Received and accepted from: Mike Kendall Co-opted Governor  
 Apologies not received from: Barbara Hughes Parent Governor

2. **Declaration of Interests** – no changes declared. New register will be circulated when RF has completed a declaration of interests form.

3. **Associate Member** – Maria Button apologised that she was unable to attend the meeting as planned. It was agreed she should be invited to the next FGB meeting.

#### 4. Minutes of the last meetings and matters arising

*Full Governing Body - 30th November 2015*

Pupil premium was removed from the discussion at parents evening due to the expansion plans being available. It was previously planned that EB and GH would work on pupil premium this half term. DH updated governors that she has reviewed the class lists for Foundation and KS1 and identified only 2 or 3 families who are not currently claiming pupil premium who may be eligible. **QU:** What about families further up the school? As they are entitled to free school meals it is more likely that the eligible families will have registered but DH review these year groups. **QU:** If the Pupil premium incentives would only attract a couple of extra children then is this the best use of governor time to come up with an incentive programme? **QU:** Is it possible that we are not aware of children who have previously had free school meals in other schools? This information is shared when the children transfer into the school.

**ACTION:** DH will assess the possibility of further Pupil Premium children further up the school and feedback to EB and GH regarding any further focus which may or may not be required.

- Item 7 - amendment should be “not to go ahead”

- Item 8 – Update: performance management outstanding is still in progress.

*Site & Buildings, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016*

- Quote for kitchen work has been requested, 2 have been received and one is still awaited. A decision about which supplier to use will be made once all quotes have been received
- Review of finger guards is planned to be done before Easter.
- Pegs have been ordered but not put up as yet.

*Finance, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016*

- As the Finance meeting was not quorate, the Committee made recommendations in the minutes for the FGB to consider and agree. Governors had been provided with all relevant documentation prior to this meeting and were asked to consider and agree the following:
  - Emergency Plan – agreed by FGB
  - Freedom of information – agreed by FGB
  - No changes to policies – agreed by FGB
  - Server purchase - **QU:** Were governors comfortable with the way it was purchased? This was discussed in detail in the finance meeting. It was sourced through the ITC service provider, which carries out a best value assessment itself, and the support technician who attends the school weekly to manage the server will be responsible for dealing with any technical issues so it was important that the hardware was compatible with his skills and experience.- agreed by FGB
- Need for more governors to join this committee to try and avoid this situation on future occasions.

*Personnel, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016*

- Regarding recruitment 15 applications were received, 8 have been invited for interview with 7 accepting the invitation and one is yet to respond.
- Policies relating to staff have gone on the website.
- Opportunities to recruit further co-opted governors - **ACTION:** Ongoing, EB to continue to review
- Pay policy for support staff is not a model policy on EPM website **ACTION:** DH to follow up with EPM.
- Physical intervention policy - to be reviewed at the next personnel meeting.
- GH has completed the flow chart for the pay policy which will be reviewed in the next personnel meeting.

**ACTION:** MK to add both to agenda of next meeting

*Curriculum and Standards Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016*

- Early years staff are happy to come in September to discuss the baseline data. The summary report is now available from Early Excellence. This will be shared with governors via email.

**5. Head's report**

Governors had received the HT's written report prior to the meeting. DH updated governors that a reception child was temporarily excluded for 3 days. The exclusion was put in place following behavioral issues to enable school to seek further support for the child. The parents are supportive and working together with the school. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process has begun. **QU:** Has there been any improvement following the exclusion? So far there have not been noticeable improvements to his behaviour in school. He

is being supported by a one to one TA but further inventions are required to help manage and resolve the situation in the long term.

**QU:** Regarding class sizes is there a concern that the F/Yr 1 class will be too big when it moves up in September? The pupil admission number (PAN) was increased by county during the year as a new child requested a place. It is highly likely that this will not be an issue by September as there is normally some movement in the numbers.

Governors congratulated DH and her team regarding the Pupil Premium local award. DH advised that Sam England had reviewed the national application but it appears to be a lot of work. It was agreed not to pursue this further this year, but be open to reviewing in the future. The school is given a logo to display to acknowledge the award.

DH gave a brief update on her OFSTED work. She has completed one inspection and was on standby ready to do the second day of inspection if required, but she was not called up. **QU:** Is this valuable in school? It may affect the way some things are approached, the OFSTED framework has stopped judging teachers based on a single observation and perhaps this should have an impact on the way that performance management observations are carried out. So it is giving food for thought which may lead to future changes in how things are done.

**QU:** Does not having an EWO affect our ability to follow up persistent absence? No, we have school based systems in place and DH advised that we have now been given a new Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who intends to look at every child who has attendance of less than 90%. It has been observed that there is a lot of illness around and holiday requests have increased again.

There was a meeting regarding restarting the Little Paxton School Association (LPSA). It was a very successful meeting with 12 to 14 people attending who were keen to get going as soon as possible. They are looking at what has been done before and have some new ideas.

Termly Operational Plan (TOP) – The writing audit is a big focus. There are different resources feeding into it which will make it easier for staff. There is more detail which makes it easier for the staff to see whether the children have achieved the objectives. There has been a moderation session with Priory Infants focusing on year 2 and it was encouraging that despite using two different systems the outcomes were the same and staff were comfortable that their judgments about the attainment of pupils were consistent. The same thing will be done soon with Priory Juniors. Beth Embrey (BE) will once again be a county moderator and she has some training for this coming up this week. This is valuable for her professional development but also gives school an insight into what is required.

Boosting reading in Primary (BRP) - The TAs have had their training on this intervention. There is a BRP information event for specific parents, those whose children are on the intervention programme or are soon to be on this training.

As the school grows it is essential to have the right staff in place and there have been discussions as to how to best develop experienced staff who could take on leadership roles once the school has grown to its full size. Already additional responsibilities are being given to staff for example reviewing year 5 and 6 data,

leading outdoor learning, running staff meetings etc. This is essential to aid retention until other positions become available.

A further parents' forum meeting has taken place. The turnout of 10-12 parents was reasonable and the discussions were useful. It was an opportunity to answer some questions that had and to dispel some playground myths. **QU:** Who set the agenda for the meeting? Some were set by school and others suggested beforehand by the parents. **QU:** Will the discussion notes be available to governors? A summary can be shared but topline the discussions were:

- The current communication system works well so don't change it.
- Review of building plans
- Payment schedules for school residential trips especially for those with children on both Burwell and Hilltop.
- Communication regarding medical conditions of children and how this is shared between relevant staff. Parents were informed that school ask for this information regularly as medical situations are so often subject to change.
- Concern over whether there is enough supervision at lunch time. This has been reviewed and there are more staff outside with the children than is required.
- A question was raised regarding a non-timetable day because the teacher was on a course. Information about the learning objectives for that day was shared with the parents the group activity was explained. The reason was that both the teacher and the TA were on the same course so this was a means of covering the class in a different way. Parents appreciated the information and said they now understood the educational value of the work done that day.

**QU:** What is the attendance level at parents evening? It is generally very high with only a handful of parents not attending. If people don't make an appointment then an appointment is made for them and sent to the parents by the office. Generally they don't attend, but the class teacher still follows up and tries to catch parents at drop off or pick up.

**6. Preliminary thoughts the budget 2016/17 and ratification of documents required for SFVS** There is a meeting with Rob Cottle, the school's Finance Adviser, scheduled for 1pm on 4<sup>th</sup> March. A further meeting is scheduled for 9.30am on 23<sup>rd</sup> March for the budget build. The budget will be agreed at the Governing Body meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April, ready for submission in May. GH, DH and PC will attend, other governors are invited to attend these meetings.

GH has already reviewed the SFVS with Mary Parnham (Finance). There is a need to update the internal financial procedures regularly and it is proposed that there is an annual review in January.

**ACTION:** AG to add to policy review timetable

**QU:** Regarding the healthy accrual, what is the background? The planned growth funding was received at the end of last year. It wasn't immediately required but there will be large expenses associated with updating the main school to ensure it aligns with the extension, this money is being held for these expenses. There are no plans for County to claw back what hasn't been spent. In addition, when recruiting a new teacher there is the option to look at more experienced teachers as the decision will not be influenced by the financial implication of a more expensive teacher.

## 7. Governor attendance at parents' evenings

A report of parental responses to questions about proposed extension to the school has already been shared with governors. Thanks was given to those governors who attended the meetings.

## 8. Pupil Premium - See item 4

## 9. Head Teacher Performance Management

The panel to review the heads performance has been the same for a number of years (PC, DJ, and MK) and it is best practice to change the panel regularly. PC asked for governors to consider volunteering and attending the relevant training. DJ confirmed he is happy to remain on the panel. PC to check with MK. EB volunteered.

**ACTION:** PC to check with MK. AG to advise EB of available training courses

## 10. Personnel Policies

Governors agreed that the head teacher should continue to refer to updated EPM policies should there be an updated policy relating to a specific immediate circumstance which she needs to use. The policy will then be reviewed and agreed by governors in the normal way at the next meeting.

## 11. Policy reviews:

*Behaviour policy* - the revised version was completed by DH and staff and sent out this afternoon. Suggested change in the section 'Role of Parents' was that if concerns remain to contact the head teacher, rather than the governors as the draft said. This was amended. Governors were asked to review the policy and it will be on the agenda in the next Personnel on 14th March. Any governors not in that committee were asked to share any comments either ahead of the meeting by email or to attend the meeting and this item would be brought to the start of the agenda.

**ACTION:** MK to add to agenda of next meeting

## 12. Review of the list of school policies

There are a large number of policies that are currently held by the school and they need to be reviewed against the list of statutory and recommended policies supplied by the DfE (see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-policies-for-schools>) with a view to rationalising our list of policies as many are probably no longer required. This will require a working party. DH, PC, ND and GM volunteered.

**ACTION:** AG to share the policy list. GM to arrange the meeting.

**QU:** A previous meeting discussed the need to have all the policies on one page with links to them from other areas. This would avoid the danger of having duplicate policies. Has this been actioned? A couple of duplicates have been identified and this will be best practice going forward not to put policies anywhere other than on the policy page.

## 13. Governor training:

- a. In-house training session - British Values, 7.00pm on Monday 16th May 2016.

It was agreed to change the start time to 7pm to enable some of the Priory governors to attend. The trainer has confirmed this start time is acceptable.

**ACTION:** Please advise AG by the end of term if you are able to attend.

- b. CGS Termly Briefing held on 27th January attended by PC and ND  
Discussion topics included

- Safer recruitment update – all job descriptions to include statement about the safe-guarding responsibilities of the role.
- Think Family – the benefits of coordinating all support through a single lead professional – the CAF begins to look at the whole family to reduce duplication.
- Big Education - broad balanced curriculum for all.
- Governors are required to be supportive and challenging. DH confirmed that the Personnel Committee in particular are very good at caring for her well being.

**Action:** ND to share his notes from the briefing via email

#### **14. Governor visits**

A reminder to ensure reports of visits are ready for the next relevant committee meeting.

#### **15. Governor vacancies**

- Parent Governor vacancy

This vacancy has now been filled by Richard Fairbairn.

RF and AG left the meeting whilst the following discussion took place.

MK had contacted the Chair prior to the meeting to draw her attention to the fact that, with the election of RF, there were now 2 members of the Kingfisher Church at Governing Body meetings: RF and also AG (the Clerk to the GB). In addition MK himself is leader of the Evangelical Church in St Neots which started the Kingfisher Church in Little Paxton. His concern was that governors (and maybe others) might feel this was a little unbalanced and that there could be a risk of them being perceived as trying to “take over” in some way. MK offered to step down if it was generally felt this would be in the best interests of the school.

Governors were unanimous that MK is a highly valued member of the Governing Body who makes a full and proper contribution and has always acted with integrity and in the best interests of the school. It was noted that both he and AG had already declared their interest in the Kingfisher Church (which rents the school premises) on their declaration of interests forms, a summary of which is published on the school website. RF had made clear in his statement of application to be a parent governor that he is the pastor of the Kingfisher Church (this statement was distributed to all parents prior to the election).

Following a discussion which considered whether there could be any potential problems arising from the situation it was agreed no action was needed beyond ensuring that declaration of interests forms were properly completed and the register of interests is published on the website.

RF and AG re-joined the meeting.

- 2 Co-opted Governor vacancies - EB to follow up as noted in item 4

**16. Half-yearly review of governor attendance and participation** - Attendance is not a problem currently.

**17. Correspondence received** - Non received

#### **18. Any other business**

The CoG had supplied all governors with a copy of the DfE publication “Forming or Joining a Group of Schools: staying in control of your school's destiny”. She asked governors to consider if they would be willing to serve on a group looking at the future possibilities for the school in conjunction with the PPP schools.

There is increasing pressure from the government for schools to become academies. There is a concern that a school which is not actively looking at possibilities to form partnerships may well be put under pressure to make changes as directed, removing the element of choice. A working party needs to be set up to explore the opportunities that are available to the school. Just a couple of ideas were shared in the first instance -

- Flat MAT (Multiple Academy Trust) – a structure where schools join together but each school remains autonomous with their own head teacher and governing body. This could be a possibility in joining more formally with the Priory schools.
- To take on a small school that is struggling and looking to federate. Small schools struggle to recruit head teachers and therefore look to become a “satellite” of a good or outstanding school and come under their leadership.
- To look at new primary schools planned in the local area and become a sponsor school.

MK had responded to the CoG’s email and he has volunteered. DJ was also interested depending on timing and availability. OP and JW also volunteered. The first meeting needs to be arranged as soon as possible. Governors’ preference for evening meetings was noted although it was understood that meetings may need to be during the day.

EB advised that at a recent training session she was informed that all governors have to be DBS checked by September, this can be done through Mary Parnham in the office.

#### **19. Dates of the next meetings**

- Date of next Committees Evening: 14th March 2016, 6.30pm
- Date of next full Governors’ Meeting: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016, 6.30pm

Meeting closed 8:10pm