

ALEXANDRA SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Wednesday 29th November 2017 At Alexandra School, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey

Governors Present

Rachel Carr (RC) Head Teacher
Louise Groves (LC) Chair
Nick Shippin (NS) vice Chair
Pauline Sharratt (PS)
Nicola Gava (NG)
Susan Jackson (SJ)

Niamh McMahon (NM)
Jane Ramsey (JR)
Belinda Riley (BR)
Louise Robinson (LR)
Richard Williamson (RW)

In attendance

Clare Blake (Clerk)

Apologies

Jon Coello (JC)

| Minute | Action / Decision |
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| <p>1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence The Chair welcomed governors and there was one apology for absence (JC) that was accepted.</p> | |
| <p>2. Non Governor Participants/Observers Clare Blake, Clerk</p> | |
| <p>3. Declarations of Business Interests in the meeting LG declared that her husband held the position of Chair of Achieving for Children. No other interest was declared in the agenda items.</p> <p>The Clerk collected completed Declaration of Business Interest forms from NS/PS/RW for the year 2017/18.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to remind RC/NG/NM to complete forms and return</p> | Clerk |
| <p>4. Governor Recruitment The Chair introduced Susan Jackson to the committee and explained that JC would step down as governor (due to work commitments). Thanks were given to Jon Coello and LG will write and thank him for his time as a Governor. It was agreed that that SJ would be appointed co-opted governor with immediate effect.</p> | LG |
| <p>5. Minutes of Meeting 28.9.2017 There were no amendments and the minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.</p> | Approved |
| <p>6. Matters Arising <u>Item 7.2 Action List</u> The Chair thanked governors for completing the Action List and stressed the importance of completing it ahead of the meeting. It was agreed that a more streamlined Action List would be adopted to ease the process. ACTION: Clerk to reformat Action List and circulate to governors</p> <p><u>Item 10 SDP</u> It was agreed that the school would retain the strapline <i>"Together we nurture the genius in everyone"</i>. RC added that it could be reviewed in the future and it was agreed that the children would be asked what they thought the word genius meant. Action: PS to ask School Council to explore the meaning of the word genius</p> <p><u>Item 7.1 Matters Arising</u> <u>School Fund</u> JR confirmed that the letter regarding the voluntary fund was ready and would be sent out once the fund administration was in place. It was agreed that the wish-list would be made more succinct and circulated with the letter.</p> <p>RC explained the parameters around becoming a registered charity and therefore benefiting from gift aid. There was a discussion about how the £5k income could be proved and it was agreed that</p> | Clerk Agreed PS |

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| <p>it would be discussed at the next finance meeting (13.12.17). ACTION: NS to discuss at next finance meeting and report back at next FGB (18.1.18)</p> <p><u>Perks at work and staff awayday</u> ACTION: LG to follow up with JC</p> <p><u>Jigsaw Letter</u> PS confirmed it would be sent at the end of the current term.</p> <p><u>SEND report</u> NM confirmed the SEND report had been published on the school website</p> <p><u>Item 8.2 Teacher's Pay Policy</u> NS reported that the 2% pay award was investigated and found not to be affordable. Q Could pay awards be moved to April? RC said yes.</p> <p><u>Item 9.1 Head Teacher's Report – After School Clubs</u> ACTION: RC to provide a report on income and expenditure on after school clubs for next FGB (18.1.18)</p> | <p>NS</p> <p>LG</p> <p>RC</p> |
| <p>Head Teacher's Business</p> | |
| <p>7. Head Teacher's Report</p> <p><u>Attendance</u> RC referred to the previously circulated attendance report stating overall, attendance was good and improving but highlighted some cohorts where figures were down on average. RC said that most absences were due to illness. RC said that she would reintroduce the medal table in @Alex to encourage attendance.</p> <p><u>Pupil Numbers</u> RC said the school was almost full and highlighted that many of the new joiners had EAL that represented a challenge for the school.</p> | |
| <p>8. School Development Plan (SDP) RC explained that a newly formatted SDP had been produced and thanked LR for her assistance with the design (RC added that there had been a few minor amendments since circulation to governors). RC explained the five learning pillars, the priority areas within them and the vision for the school by the end of 2020 broken down year by year. RC said that the SDP was a working document and it would be prominently displayed in the staff room and colour coded so that progress could easily be seen. RC added that the moneys needed to achieve the priorities would be tabled at the next finance meeting.</p> <p>Q Will the year-by-year priority areas change over time? RC explained that they would evolve.</p> <p>A governor stressed the importance of maintaining a record of achievements so that they could be recognised and communicated. The Chair added that governors should be mindful of the SDP when conducting visits and record achievements and question the priorities within their reports.</p> <p>Q Can the SDP be sent to parents? There was a discussion about whether it should be sent to parents in its current format and it was agreed that a summary of the SDP, in a different format, could be sent to parents ahead of the parent survey.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the format was pitched correctly and congratulated RC on developing the SDP.</p> <p>ACTION: RC to send updated version of SDP to Clerk for circulation to governors</p> <p><u>School Partnership Project</u> RC said that Alexandra had enrolled on the School Partnership Project where local Head Teachers would work together to improve schools. RC explained that it was an ongoing project and she felt it would be of great benefit to the school</p> | <p>RC</p> |

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| <p>Q How did the initiative come about? RC explained that she attended a presentation by EEF where all schools were invited to sign up. RC explained the benefits of the scheme including training for staff, workshops etc.</p> <p>Q What is the mechanism for schools reporting on other schools? RC explained that it would be shared internally (confidentially) and added that she would be trained on how to write reports and that reports would be written on all schools within the partnership.</p> <p>ACTION: RC to send NS the School Partnership Project presentation</p> | RC |
| <p>9. Comparative Outcomes Data The Chair explained that the SPA[RK] data had already been seen by governors but it was now validated. The Chair said that she had found that among the PPG cohort, data had revealed that the barrier to learning was due to other factors (SEND, EHCP etc) and therefore PPG was not the barrier.</p> <p>The Chair explained that the previously circulated Fischer Family Trust (FFT) report gave more context on the school. The Chair said she had attended ASP training and said that governors should only be concerned where numbers were underlined once or twice (representing more than one/two standard deviation from national).</p> <p>The chair pointed out that disadvantaged children were compared to the national average of ALL children as there should not be a gap. Governors were reminded that this was the document Ofsted would refer to when they inspect a school. The Chair stressed that there was a lot of data that the school held on children that could be used should Ofsted inspect.</p> <p>ACTION: LG to circulate ASP data when ready</p> | LG |
| <p>10. SIP Meeting The Chair explained that a new SIP had been appointed and that she had met them. The Chair highlighted the following advice given to her by the SIP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new inspection Ofsted framework should be understood. • Statutory compliance on the school website needed to be addressed. • Case studies on children to evidence barriers to learning/progression should be maintained. <p>The Chair said she wanted to ensure that school was “Ofsted ready” and that the school had curriculum in place for Y5 and Y6.</p> <p>SJ agreed to be the link governor on Ofsted.</p> <p>Q Is the SIP the same as the School Partnership Project? RC said it was not and explained that the SIP would conduct a mini inspection next term that would look at all aspects of the school.</p> <p>Q Do the SIP reports go to Ofsted? RC said no but they go to LA and the school. RC added that the school would continue to improve and it should always strive to do so.</p> | Agreed |
| <p>11. Staff Plans for the year RC said the school would employ one extra member of staff as there will be one additional class and were uncertain as to leavers as staff did not need to inform her until the end of the May half term.</p> | |
| <p>Governor Business</p> | |
| <p>12. Policies for Approval <u>12.1 Accessibility Policy</u> The Chair explained that since the school refurbishment, the policy had been updated and whilst there were a few areas that needed to be addressed, the school was fully accessible.</p> <p>Q Have parents with children with disabilities had the opportunity to input into the document? The Chair said they had not.</p> | |

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| <p>There was a discussion regarding the absence of a dropped kerb outside the school grounds and as this was the council's responsibility a governor agreed to contact them directly to address the issue.</p> <p>ACTION: LG to send NM the email of whom to contact at the council</p> <p>The policy was signed off and it was agreed that it would be tabled at the forum of parents with children with disabilities before being approved next year.</p> <p>SJ agreed to be the link governor on HR.</p> <p><u>12.2 Pay Policy</u> The Chair suggested that the members of the Head Teacher Review Panel should also form the Pay Panel (known now as Head Teacher's Appraisal and Pay Panel). All present agreed. LG, NG and LR would sit on the panel.</p> <p>There was a discussion whether the wording in the Pay Policy should state against budget and it was agreed that it should state affordability rather than budget (in reference to governor checks).</p> <p>The Pay Policy was approved, subject to the changes noted above.</p> <p>ACTION: LG to make changes and send to LA</p> | <p>LG</p> <p>SIGNED OFF</p> <p>AGREED</p> <p>AGREED</p> <p>APPROVED</p> <p>LG</p> |
| <p>13. Safeguarding Annual Review BR explained that the report awaited a few additions of data including the outcome of the Local Authority audit. BR highlighted the need for a paper outlining the requirements of a safeguarding lead and explained it would be based on the Safeguarding Policy.</p> <p>Q Do we have copies of the after school provider's DBS certificates? RC said that the school asked providers to ensure that their staff members held a DBS certificate and added that when new staff members were appointed, the school checked with the providers that they held DBS. RC added that the after school club staff members were not the schools employees.</p> <p>Q Do the after school club providers know our safeguarding guidelines? RC said yes they were made aware of them.</p> <p>Q Would it be prudent to have a third Safeguarding Lead? RC said that there was a member of staff who worked within safeguarding who would soon complete Level 3 safeguarding training – once done, the school would have three Safeguarding Leads.</p> <p>Q Do you still feel that we do not need to renew DBS on staff every three years? The safeguarding governor (BR) said it was up to teachers to let the school know if their circumstances had changed and that fact was very explicit in the staff handbook. She added that staff were questioned on potential changes of circumstances, annually, at their appraisal. PS added that DBS was also questioned on an annual basis.</p> <p>Q Where are we with children against children safeguarding? RC said she did not think that the FGB was an appropriate forum for the discussion of individual incidents of this nature. BR suggested she conduct a visit focusing on bullying and provide a report for governors.</p> <p>Q Do we need more staff in the playground for these incidents? RC said she would prefer to speak to parents separately regarding such incidents. BR added that she would look at this within her visit.</p> | <p>BR</p> |
| <p>14. Finance Report NS said that he and RW had attended a number of finance meetings including funding for children with SEND, school development plan and internal audit. NS said that the school's cleaning contract had been put out to tender.</p> <p>NS took governors through the previously circulated Budget Monitoring Report highlighting the</p> | |

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| <p>following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school would have a surplus of £9k at the end of the year. • £50k more income for ESTA. • Higher staff costs of £19k. <p>Q What are the implications of the previously circulated DSG letter? RW gave the status on the deficit and how Alexandra's SEND was funded. RW said he did not think that funding was under threat at Alexandra. He explained that the council could claw back 0.5% of reserves without consultation. The Chair added that she felt that Alexandra would not suffer unduly as the school took their fair share of children with SEND. The chair stressed the letter was just to inform governors and set the scene of a tight financial environment moving forwards.</p> | |
| <p>15. Pupils Working Towards The Chair referred to her previously circulated report: <i>Pupils working toward the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1</i>- where she had found that children had made progress based on evidence from her investigations.</p> <p>Q Does that evidence exist in an Ofsted friendly format? PS confirmed that the data was available and LG said that she would provide the narrative on her investigations should an inspection take place.</p> | |
| <p>16. Topics for @Alex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDP highlights • Kingston DSG letter | |
| <p>17. Visits The Chair reminded governors to provide a written report on any school visits that they conducted.</p> | |
| <p>18. AOB</p> <p><u>18.1 GDPR Training</u> RW said he would attend <i>How will The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) affect schools? (governors)</i> training</p> <p><u>18.2 Governor/Parent Q&A</u> There was a discussion on whether there should be a parent Q&A forum with governors and it was decided that any parent who had a question for governors could contact the GB via links provided on the school website. It was also noted that governors were present at school events and The Chair added that she always attended new parent days.</p> <p><u>18.3 Governor Social</u> ACTION: LR to organise governor social to follow next FGB (18.1.18)</p> <p><u>18.4 Head Teacher's Appraisal and Pay Panel</u> ACTION: Panel and HR link governor to review teacher performance management document, virtually, within next week</p> <p><u>18.5 School Website Review</u> RC asked governors to review the school website (including the photos used) to ensure it reflects the school's ethos. ACTION: All to send comments by end December to JR who will collate feedback and send to RC.</p> <p><u>18.6 Lunchtime visit</u> RC requested that governors visit the school at lunchtime. ACTION: NG and NM would conduct a lunchtime duty visit and provide a visit report</p> | <p>LR</p> <p>LG/SJ/NG/LR</p> <p>Lead: JR ALL</p> <p>NG/NM</p> |
| <p>15. Determine confidential items none</p> | |
| <p>16. Date and time of next meeting</p> | |

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| Thursday 18th January 2018: 6.30pm-8.30pm at Alexandra School. Governor social to follow the meeting. | |

The meeting ended at 9.35pm