

ALEXANDRA SCHOOL
Part A Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body
held on Thursday 27 April 2017 at 7.00pm at Alexandra School,
Alexandra Road, Kingston upon Thames

Governors Present:

Louise Groves (LG) **(Chair)**
 Rachel Carr (RC)(Head Teacher)
 Nicola Gava (NG)

Niamh McMahon (NM)
 Pauline Sharratt (PS)
 Nick Shippin (NS)

Also Present: Zara Gallagher (ZG) **(Clerk)**

(All decisions taken were the unanimous decisions of the governors present unless otherwise stated).

	Action
<p>1. Apologies for absence</p> <p>a. Apologies were received and accepted from Jon Coello, Allan Dean, Yasir Rafi, Belinda Riley and Jane Ramsey,</p> <p>b. The Chair informed governors that Nisha Tailor had resigned with immediate effect due to a change in her personal circumstances and that she would write to Nisha on behalf of the governing body, thanking her for her contribution.</p>	
<p>2. Declaration of business interests for the current meeting</p> <p>Louise Groves declared her husband's position as Chair of Achieving for Children. No other interest was declared in relation to any agenda item.</p>	
<p>3. To agree the minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Body on 18 January 2017</p> <p>The minutes were approved for accuracy and signed by the Chair.</p>	
<p>4. Matters arising (see Table of Action Points below.)</p>	
<p>5. Head teacher's business</p> <p>a. Head teachers Report</p> <p>i. The Report having been circulated in advance and reviewed by governors, the head teacher invited questions.</p> <p>ii. Question: A governor asked about the impact of poor outcomes last year on the Year 2 teachers. The head teacher confirmed that the teachers had been feeling quite stressed and have needed support, but are much happier now. A local authority consultant came into school last week for a one to one with each of them and staff found that very helpful. There have been cross moderation sessions in English and Maths with Fern Hill and Latchmere and teachers came away feeling positive. The head noted that there is a rolling programme and it is Alexandra's turn to be moderated by the local authority next.</p> <p>iii. The head observed that everyone believes last year's outcomes were a blip, there are children in Year 2 with SEN and additional needs, but ideally all children who have no barrier to learning will achieve expected.</p> <p>iv. A governor pointed out that last year there was a new assessment model and teacher assessment may have varied between different schools and also between different authorities. RBK had generally been in the top 10 for writing, but last year dropped to near the bottom. The head agreed that</p>	

there have been differing interpretations of the interim assessment framework. The DfE is currently consulting on primary assessment and the head confirmed she has responded.

- v. **Question?** A governor asked how the projected results of 63% meeting expected compare to the national average.

The head advised that the national average is 65% and they had set their target at 75%. Teachers' latest projection is 63%, but they are feeling more positive all of the time. At the end of this half term the children will be doing two reading and maths tests and these will be marked and converted to a scaled score (the school is waiting to be told what is 'expected') and the results will feed into the teacher assessments. The head commented that reports that the Key Stage 2 tests may be scrapped are unsettling.

- vi. **Question:** A governor asked about the administration of the tests. The head teacher explained that they have to be completed within May, but all schools don't have to complete the same tests on the same days. More than one adult is required to be in the room at all times. The head confirmed that the approach is not to let parents know when they will be testing or to make them into a big thing.

- vii. **Question:** For the Maths test do the children need to be good at reading? The head explained that teachers can read the words to children, but not the numbers. Children who need a reader go into a separate room.

- viii. **Question:** A governor asked about the use of Dinton Fields. The head advised that they were previously promised the use of Dinton Fields, but a new person has taken over and has not responded.

- ix. Thanks were given to Ginette Higgins for her work on the website. Feedback has been good. This was a huge piece of work and governors were happy that the website is more representative of where the school is now and works well on mobile devices.

- x. Governors noted that attendance is an area that they need to continue to watch. Attendance has been broken down by different groups, in response to advice from Deborah Moss. PPG absence is a concern and the head advised that there will be a trend column in the next Report, so that the impact of the strategies put in place can be seen.

- xi. The positive comments from the ESTA inspection were noted. An action from the Pupils' meeting was that a summary of the inspection is to be included in @Alex for all parents to see the outstanding inspection result and the important ways in which all pupils benefit from having the ESTA children and extra staff in the class.

- xii. PS reported that a child who has been on the roll at Bedelsford, but attending Alexandra part time since Reception, will come here from September into Year 4 and how good it is that he will be in mainstream school full time.

- xiii. The head reported that five job offers have been made: three NQTs and two more experienced teachers.

- xiv. **Question:** How will you ensure quality of teaching without experience? The head advised that the NQTs have all done very well in their teaching practices and are high calibre, two have worked in the school already. They will be coming in for induction after half term and following the NQT programme which gives an additional 10% non-teaching time (in addition to the usual PPA) for planning and observing (and they may choose to use this time for one to one support). They are part of the teaching programme at Latchmere and in school their mentor will be AG, who is very experienced in

this role. Observations will be carried out every half term and they will have targets and a termly report goes back to Latchmere. She added that they will bring new pedagogy and energy to the school. They are cheaper to employ, but will require extra cover time. The head teacher commented that everyone had been very flexible in giving up hours, so that the school could employ the maximum number of full time teachers.

- xv. **Question:** The Current Year 1 has the strongest projections?
The head confirmed this and that the team is strong and led by a teacher who was a senior leader in her former school and then a parent before returning to teaching and now punches above her weight.
- xvi. **Question:** Do the externally run clubs bring in any income?
The head confirmed that they nearly all pay rent.

b. SIP Spring Term Report

- i. Governors noted that the SIPs conclusions reflect their own comments at meetings and that there were no surprises in the Report, the areas the SIP is asking the school to focus on are the same ones governors are.
- ii. The bottom of page 11 sets out the next steps for progress reporting and the same analysis should come to the Pupils Committee.
- iii. A governor referred to the comment at the bottom of page 10, that further acceleration is needed to meet targets and that currently only 50% of Year 2 children are on target to meet expected. The head teacher responded that it was a little while ago that the SIP had come into school and it was at a time when teachers were feeling concerned regarding outcomes, but following a whole school effort they are now much more confident and the children are making good progress.
- iv. Governors commented that it was very valuable to get an alternative perspective from the SIP.

c. School Fund

- i. LG had attended the Parent Staff Association meeting and they were in support of a school fund (following lots of press on school funding cuts the PSA chair had asked LG to attend the meeting to talk about a school fund as they were aware that other schools are asking parents to make contributions). IP is looking into how this should be set up, but in the Interim parents can make contributions on Parent Pay.
- ii. The head teacher advised that they need to set up a charity, a separate trust (a couple of governors will need to be trustees) and IP is talking to Grey Court about how they set up their fund.
- iii. **Question:** A governor asked why the PSA couldn't collect donations on behalf of the school and it was discussed that they wouldn't be able to claim gift aid and that donations need to be separately tracked and managed and as the PSA are volunteers this would not be appropriate.
- iv. A governor suggested that the charity could target local businesses for donations and if parents own businesses, they may prefer to donate physical resources. Another governor raised whether this could raise issues relating to bribery, even if recorded as a donation. It was noted that Grey Court have a lot of experience and their advice is being sought generally on the best way to set up and run the Fund.
- v. Governors agreed that the wording in communications to parents will be important and should make clear that donations are voluntary and that it is understood that for some people this is not a priority and for others not

Action: RC The analysis set out at the bottom of page 11 of the SIP Report to go to the Pupils committee.

Action: RC/IP investigating best way to set up the School Fund

<p>possible, but the school is aware that some parents wish to donate.</p> <p>vi. It was agreed to set up a school fund, for uses to enrich the provision the school can offer.</p> <p>d. Building Project Update</p> <p>i. The head reported that the works are going well and there have been lots of opportunities for the children to visit: they have had fun signing in and wearing high vis safety clothes. They have looked at plans and buried a time capsule and over the next few weeks more children will visit on a rolling programme. The work over Easter went well, but there has been a leak today.</p> <p>ii. Communications with the team have improved. There is a new front and side gate and discussions regarding the outside area are ongoing with the consultant, landscape architect and playground lead. The budget is stretched but there is the money from Tesco for the front, and they may look to charities and businesses for help, but will wait to see the council's plans first.</p>	
<p>6. Governor business</p> <p>a. Governor recruitment and a new Vice Chair</p> <p>i. NT stepping down has left the governing body without a Vice Chair or Chair of the Pupils Committee. LG announced that AD will also be stepping down at the end of the summer term, which creates a vacancy for the Chair of Resources. One option is to carry on with replacements but LG reported that she has looked at other structures and some governing bodies have no committees and the full governing body meets half termly instead.</p> <p>ii. The pros are that with tighter budgets financial conversations impact on curriculum and it is difficult to separate areas and avoid duplication; everyone would be involved in every area. Currently governors in Resources don't get the in-depth analysis of outcomes and some governors in Pupils have finance skills which don't get used. There are also areas such as safeguarding which cross over and this would ensure there are no gaps.</p> <p>iii. The negatives would be that link governors would need to be doing more outside meetings, looking at details off line and then reporting back and involving everyone in everything is less efficient.</p> <p>iv. It was agreed that as a temporary arrangement for the summer term NS will Chair the Resources committee meeting and LG will bring a paper on the proposed new structure to the summer Full Governing Body meeting, on the basis that it would be implemented in September. The paper will also review the link roles (these could be shared).</p> <p>v. Generally governors agreed that it was a good idea and felt that there are currently too many meetings (5 Full Governing Body meetings and 4 meetings of each committee a year).</p> <p>vi. LG asked that anyone who would be interested in putting themselves forward for the Vice Chair role to speak to her. The role involves leading on the induction of new governors and attending some of the termly AfC meetings for Chairs. It was noted that AfC training on taking the Chair is coming up.</p> <p>vii. NT was the link governor for SEND and NM was happy to put herself forward (to be picked up at the next meeting).</p>	<p>Action: LG To bring a paper on the proposed new structure to the summer meeting, on the basis that it would be implemented in September. The paper to also review the link roles.</p> <p>Action: All Anyone interested in putting themselves forward for the Vice Chair role to</p>

<p>viii. A new Local Authority and Co-opted governor need to be recruited. It was noted that the governing body is already unusually parent heavy and it was agreed that these vacancies should be filled by non-parents. Former gaps revealed by the skills audit were education and finance and these have now been covered (by NG and NS). It was agreed that LG will contact AfC and register with Inspiring Governance and SGOSS and will interview promising candidates with the head teacher and make a recommendation to the FGB.</p> <p>ix. Governors discussed that the Local Authority governor used to be employed by the Council, but this is no longer the case and the governing body can now suggest a candidate for the LA to put forward.</p> <p>x. LG advised that ZG is also leaving at the end of the summer term and the role of Clerk will be advertised in @Alex.</p> <p>b. Alexandra ethos - feedback from last FGB meeting notes</p> <p>i. Governors noted that the key words from both exercises are consistent with the Introduction to the School Development Plan and reflect the ethos communicated to parents on the website and there are no gaps to be addressed.</p> <p>ii. It was agreed that the 20 Questions are a useful tool for self-evaluation and going forward a question should be included on the agenda which is relevant for that part of the year.</p> <p>c. Multi Academy Trusts (MATs)- letter from Charis Penfold and subsequent discussions (See Confidential Minutes)</p>	<p>Speak to LG.</p> <p>Action: LG/RC to find and interview potential new co-opted and LA governors, with a view to making a recommendation.</p>
<p>7. Safeguarding</p> <p>a. Annual Report to the Governing Body The head teacher explained that the Report had been considered in detail at the Pupils meeting, but it is important for all governors to see it. This will now be an annual report and details including new referrals made, those standing and children coming off Child Protection Plans will be updated in the head teacher's Termly Report.</p> <p>b. External Safeguarding Audit It was noted that the Audit was also reviewed at the Pupils meeting. Question: A governor raised that there were a high number of recommendations and asked whether they have all been actioned. The head teacher advised that most were put into place immediately. The review of job descriptions needs to be done and the critical incident plan is ongoing, these need a little time to complete.</p>	
<p>8. Policies It was noted that the Supporting Children with Medical Conditions (incorporating the Medicines Policy) was approved offline and with no changes.</p>	
<p>9. Reports from Committees:</p> <p>a. Report from the Pupil Achievement and Well-being Committee In NT's absence, LG reported that the main focus had been on outcomes and how SLT support teachers to improve their practice. Time had also been spent on the ESTA review and the importance of celebrating this, on the external safeguarding audit, on the annual safeguarding report and on updating the</p>	

sex education policy. The head teacher added that the school has been working on the policy and there was a staff meeting held last night to discuss.

b. Report from the Finance and Resources Committee

- i. AD reported that since the last full governing body meeting two Resources meetings have been held as an extraordinary meeting was convened as a result of a new RBK requirement to submit a draft budget by 31 March. The committee reconvened last week to consider the final budget, based on the actual income and expenditure for the year just gone. The committee has also looked at the Schools Financial Value Standard and the application of financial controls across the school and both documents are recommended for approval.
- ii. The committee had not discussed the anti-bribery policy, which had been updated by NS and LA off-line (minor updates only) and again the policy is recommended for approval.

iii. 2017/18 Budget Highlights

- iv. NS explained that at the beginning of last year the school had reserves of £180,000, it ended the year with a deficit of £62,000 and is planning to spend £35,000 more than it will receive next year. It is permissible to set a deficit budget this year on the basis that at the end of that year the school will still carry forward a (reduced) surplus of £83,000.
- v. Cash flow is not an issue (cash in the bank is currently higher than the surplus at £149,000.)
- vi. An overall income increase of £23,000 next year has been budgeted, mainly as a result of the extra class from September, but this includes a 1.5% reduction in per pupil funding applied to all Kingston schools.
- vii. Slightly higher SEN funding has been budgeted compared to the draft and this reflects a recent very positive meeting with AfC at which they agreed to increase ESTA funding, some areas they committed to (but not in writing) and other things were promised, but the school has taken a conservative and sensible approach and it may be that a higher level of funding is received and the deficit can be reduced. In respect of individual pupils, RBK can't change the rates that they pay out at, but cases can be made for additional hours within their framework and they agreed to pay for therapies direct.
- viii. As income has only slightly increased, the school looked at staffing very closely and is reducing staffing costs by £27,000 next year. One of the reasons for the deficit this year is that there was a lot of overtime up until October, which was the point at which the school first had an accurate picture of its financial position and put in place measures to restrict all further overtime.
- ix. Staffing costs are being reduced by not replacing TAs who are leaving, tighter control of the staffing of the after school care and teachers leaving being replaced with cheaper NQTs. A close watch will be kept on staffing costs next year, in basic terms the school knows that if the payroll is over £140,000 a month it is over budget.
- x. There is no reliance in the budget on the School Fund.
- xi. **Question:** A governor asked about plans to secure approval of additional high needs funding.
The head teacher explained that PS has revisited the ECHPs of all children who are not already receiving maximum funding and sent off details this afternoon. All have full time one to one support which is not currently

<p>reflected in the matrix funding.</p> <p>xii. Non-staffing costs are increasing slightly (curriculum and facilities) and in terms of risk there may be unforeseen costs in relation to the new building (provision has been made in the budget for additional utility costs). The budget also assumes that all 75 nursery places will be full.</p> <p>xiii. School generated income is flat and there may be opportunities to increase this following completion of the new building.</p> <p>xiv. Governors thanked NS for his work on the budget and felt that they had a clear view of the financial position of the school.</p> <p>xv. The head teacher advised that a new protocol for the delegated budget is being putting in place and how responsibility is devolved to budget holders. Now that IP has been appointed SMS support is being reduced and the school will set up its own budget monitoring tools.</p> <p>xvi. Question: A governor asked about the extent to which the School Development Plan informs the budget. The head teacher advised that regard is had to finance, but the School Development Plan isn't written until outcomes are known and unlike the budget runs from September to September.</p> <p>xvii. The budget was approved.</p> <p>c. Recommendation to approve the Schools Financial Value Standard 2017 Review</p> <p>d. The Schools Financial Value Standard was approved.</p> <p>e. Anti-bribery policy</p> <p>i. The head teacher confirmed that all staff sign the Declaration of Business Interests and the gift register is actively kept, although the school doesn't receive many gifts over £25 in value. She confirmed that the policy covers joint gifts.</p> <p>ii. The policy was approved.</p>	
<p>10. Topic for @Alex The next topic will be a note on the recent ESTA review and to inform parents that a very tight budget has been approved, which will require careful management.</p>	
<p>11. Any other business Congestion in the street and parents parking in front of the garages was raised as an issue. The head confirmed that the school does remind parents not to do this and has a good relationship with the local community group. There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm.</p>	
<p>12. Minutes and confidentiality Item 6a. (Multi Academy Trusts) to be treated as confidential.</p>	
<p>13. Date of next meeting: 28 June 2017</p>	

Table of Action Points from 30 September 2016 Meeting

Action:	Who:	Notes:
1. Financial Environment and Internal Control document to be updated once new Finance Manager in post.	AD	Update once finance manager appointed (interviews on 16 th December). 18.01.17 Ongoing, Finance Manager only just

		appointed 27.4.17 Discussed at Resources and LA is updating.
2. An audit was recommended to ensure the school is complying with the latest edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education (published earlier in September) and the information for school helpers to be updated to include relevant safeguarding information.	RC	Update to parent helpers guidance: ongoing Audit to take place on 03.12.17 18.01.17 new date for RBK safeguarding audit is 2.2.17 BR is reviewing guidance for school helpers 27.4.17 The audit took place and the review is on the agenda. The Guidance for parent helpers has been updated.

Table of Action Points from 7 December 2016 Meeting

Action:	Who:	Notes:
1. To check that a link to the DfE performance tables, the date of the next pupil premium strategy review and the PE Premium details are added to the website to comply with statutory requirements (already requested from Ali Gowe).	JR/LG	The performance tables don't include Key Stage 1, when the website is updated the link should be included, but it won't have outcomes for now. 27.4.17 It was agreed that the link doesn't need to be included on the website, as the school doesn't have these results.
2. Send policies (excluding HR) to Ginette Higgins to be uploaded to the school website.	ZG	These have been sent and will be uploaded to the new website, which should be ready within 4 weeks. 27.4.17 Done
3. To prepare questions for the School Council (to seek children's views on how the school has improved).	LG	Ongoing, LG has prepared questions on attitude to school and self and is putting a survey together with PS. Ongoing 27.4.17 PS used LG questions to discuss all very positive and results will be fed back to the next Pupils meeting. Action to be closed.
4. To settle format of an annual safeguarding report to the full governing body	BR/RC	Ongoing, RC and BR will prepare a draft next week. 27.4.17 Report has been completed and is an agenda item.
5. Equalities: to develop a response, demonstrating how the school is meeting each of the three strands of the Public Sector Equalities Duty, and together to select equality objectives (which should have measurable targets) all to be published on an equalities page on the school website.	NG/ RC	NG and RC to meet. Ongoing. 27.4.17 Carried forward to next Pupils meeting to settle equality objectives.
6. To carry out a wider review of the E-safety policy for April.	JR, BR and NM	Ongoing 27.4.17 Carried forward to June. AG will co-ordinate in school.

7. To supply more polished and transparent wording for the Babysitting/ tutoring/ home visits policy for approval at the January meeting.	AD	Carried forward. 27.4.17 To be revisited in the Autumn.
8. To check data protection signage requirements for new CCTV system.	ZG	Ongoing

Table of Action Points from 18 January 2017 Meeting

Action:	Who:	Notes:
1. To produce gant charts for each of the strategic themes.	RC	Agreed that this will be actioned in respect of the new SDP (rather than the current which comes to an end in September).
2. To provide an update on the possibility of offering a 30 hour week in nursery following course attendance (and also on the possibility of nursery children using the extended school provision).	RC	<p>RC met with the LA lead, which was very useful and led to a decision not to offer 30 hours and to prioritize the universal entitlement of 15 hours, but reserving the option to reconsider if the nursery is not full in the afternoons. Letters will ask parents if they would be interested should 30 hours become available and the school will also write to families to check whether they want to be removed from the waiting list so that places can be offered quickly to those who still want them. The nursery is oversubscribed on 15 hours, staff are prioritizing filling it and understand that there is a financial penalty if it is not full.</p> <p>The head explained that the LA is not offering a terms and conditions agreement for the 30 hour offer as they are waiting for an announcement from the DfE and this is unlikely to happen now during purdah. The school would have had to write an agreement quickly before making offers tomorrow. The LA lead did offer to help write this and suggested using the admissions criteria (nursery admissions are not coordinated). Generally it was felt that not enough was in place for this to take effect from September and it was noted that lots of private nurseries have chosen not to offer it.</p>
3. To report back on the outcomes of the two exercises undertaken by governors regarding their vision for the school.	LG	Agenda item
4. To develop questions to collect parent views, to be handed out at the next parent/teacher meeting and collected in a box on the evening.	LG	In practical terms it was agreed that this wouldn't work and it was noted that there will be a parents and staff survey this term. The same questions are asked as in previous years to produce comparable data, one question has been added regarding the website.

5. To attend PSA meeting to discuss school finance (and to discuss inviting direct contributions from parents).	LG	LG attended and the School Fund is an agenda item.
6. To request LA prepares a summary of changes to the Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy and then circulate to governors	ZG	Agenda item RC The analysis set out at the bottom of page 11 of the SIP Report to go to the Pupils committee.

Table of Action Points from 27 April 2017 Meeting

Action:	Who:	When	Notes:
1. The analysis set out at the bottom of page 11 of the SIP Report to go to the Pupils committee.	RC	Update at next Pupils meeting	
2. RC/IP investigating best way to set up the School Fund	RC	For next meeting	
3. To bring a paper on the proposed new structure to the summer meeting, on the basis that it would be implemented in September. The paper to also review the link roles.	LG	For next Meeting	
4. Anyone interested in putting themselves forward for the Vice Chair role to speak to LG.	All	For the next meeting	
5. To find and interview potential new co-opted and LA governors, with a view to making a recommendation.	LG/RC	For the next meeting if possible	

L Groves

.....28 June 2017

Louise Groves, Chair