



Minutes of a Meeting of the Governors of Barnabas Oley School, Great Gransden, held on Thursday 4th February 2016 at 7:00pm

Present: Mrs M Downes, Rev C Furlong, Mrs C Hall, Ms J Hodges, Mrs C Moretto, Mrs M Oxer, Mr J Petre (C), Mr A Pett, Mrs R Smith (HT), Mr I Strath, Mrs K Whinney, Mrs J Wisson,

In Attendance: Ms C Jarvis (DepHT), Mrs C Morton (Clerk)

The meeting began with prayer, led by Rev Furlong.

16.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs R Fogg, Mrs L Pitalis-Bliss and Mrs A Whiddett.

16.2 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

16.3 Minutes of the last Meeting

Rev Furlong pointed out that in Para 15.93 the Founder's Day representative was Dr J Hawkie. With this alteration, the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

16.4 Matters Arising

- **Governor Visit Report Template:** Miss Hodges advised that the template was complete and on the website. It now contained the extra questions and prompts as agreed. She also asked about whether hard copies of the reports were necessary as they were all available on the public access part of the website. All agreed that it would be a waste of paper to print them out.
- **Feedback on Head Teacher's Performance Review (HTPR):** Mrs Whinney reported that this was complete.
- **PAN update:** Mrs Hall confirmed that consultation has now finished and Barnabas Oley was included in the document. Mark Joshie has agreed that Barnabas Oley can over-admit to 21 in all age groups but Mrs Hall is still pursuing written confirmation of this.

16.5 Governor Training Update

In the absence of Mrs Pitalis-Bliss, Mr Petre presented the training summary and confirmed the in-house training. These documents will be added to the meeting documents on the web page.

Action: Mrs Morton

16.6 Plan Annual Report to Parents

Mr Petre confirmed that this report is due to be published at the same time as the school reports in July but he proposed to allocate sections to governors now to give plenty of time for them to be completed.

He allocated the sections to individual governors along with key priorities and governance impact. He confirmed that the report would be going out electronically and not as hard copies.

Action: Mr Petre to confirm allocation of sections with governors

16.7 Review Progress against SDP

The governors divided into groups and Mr Petre handed out sections of the Governance part of the SDP to each group to update. It was agreed that it was much better to do this in a full meeting rather than in the breakout sessions so Mr Petre will re-arrange the meetings for next term and next year to allow for this to happen.

Action: Mr Petre to collate updates and amend SDP

Mr Petre to update meeting schedule for 16/17

16.8 Update on Academies Diocese Meeting

Mrs Smith and Mrs Moretto had attended a presentation regarding the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DMAT) by Mr Andrew Read. It has been suggested that all schools would be encouraged to join academies in the next two years and it was particularly recommended for small schools.

Mrs Smith explained that some academy sponsors “cherry pick” the best schools but DMAT will accept any school including non-Church schools. She also indicated that, although some of the budget would be diverted to the Trust, a lot more control would stay with the individual schools including governance. Problems when the governors had last looked at academisation had been loss of autonomy, areas of school governance and finance. This was no longer the case and there were a lot of different options. She also confirmed that academisation was a governor decision and consultation with parents was no longer required. Mr Strathe indicated that teaching staff contracts would change as they would then be employed by the Trust. Mrs Moretto said the Trust was like a mini Local Authority and suggested that Mr Read be invited to the school to give more information. Mrs Whinney asked how many schools were already in the Trust and Mrs Smith confirmed that there were 31 schools so far and the Trust was one of the biggest in the country.

Mrs Smith and Miss Jarvis will be attending the Academies Show on 20th April at ExCel London and invited any other governors who would like to attend.

Mr Petre said there was no rush to academize and suggested “wait and see”. In the meantime, fact find and look at other academy trusts. Mrs Whinney suggested the University of Cambridge were also moving in that direction by starting a new school and so were worth investigating. This activity is covered in the Governance section of the SDP.

Revd Furlong left the meeting

16.9 CB23 Triads for Governors

Mrs Moretto explained that each Headteacher was in a Triad school group and she had attended the latest meeting of the Governors group of CB23. The meetings are very useful at exchanging ideas, ways of working and addressing common problems. A suggestion that governors work in triads had been proposed. The group was a little concerned about the extra time required to attend meetings and suggestions had been made about using the time to attend each other’s Governors’ Meetings. Mrs Moretto asked if there were any topics that the rest of the governors would like addressed. Miss Hodges said she would be interested to attend a committee meeting to find out how it was run and Mr Petre was interested in other Chairs’ ways of working. Mr Pett asked about tracking targets and interpreting data.

Action: Mrs Moretto to collate suggestions of topics to be covered within the Triads and forward to CB23

Mrs Moretto explained that the topic for the next meeting was governor recruitment as some of the schools had great difficulty in recruiting governors. It was agreed that Barnabas Oley did not suffer from this and the governors had traditionally worked as a close knit friendly team and been very welcoming to new governors. Mrs Jarvis explained that Ofsted now required recruitment to be more aligned with the specific skills requirements of the governing body and that the process should be transparent with references followed up and identity checks completed. To DBS or not to DBS was also discussed and it was agreed that, as governors may sometime be talking to children unaccompanied whilst visiting, it might be a good idea to ensure that everyone went through the process.

16.10 Getting ready for OFSTED

Mr Petre reported that the first meeting of the action group had taken place. Ofsted questions had been fairly consistent year on year and there was more information on the Ofsted visit page on the school website. He indicated that displaying confidence was the key in talking about the school with the Ofsted inspector.

16.11 Head Teacher's Report

Mrs Smith highlighted various points from her report that was on the website. When asked about attendance, she confirmed that poor attendees were subject to a three step letter system standardised from the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). Any attendance that fell below 95% was closely monitored with letters being sent out to individual pupils causing concern and meeting thresholds required for letters to be sent. There were very few more of these being sent since thresholds had been altered. She confirmed that sickness was not counted as unauthorised absence but hardest to record were the pupils who had odd days off that could not necessarily be confirmed as sickness (doctor's note, prescription, etc).

Under Equalities Duty objectives, Mrs Smith noted that the school now employed a male teacher.

Under Staff, Mrs Smith recorded her regret at the loss of Mrs Lucyna Jachacy who was re-locating to Australia. Her contribution to extra work on computing, iPads and International Schools work has been greatly appreciated.

Premises and Finance: The contract with Cath Conlon Property Services is up for review but the school has not been happy with their service levels and will therefore not be renewing the contract. Two other providers are being considered.

Data: With the changes to assessment without levels, new ways of showing data are still under review through the use of the O-Track system. A new page on the website has been created to inform parents about the assessment systems being used in school. Graphs and charts are available to show progress in a simple, visual way that can be monitored by all governors. When challenged on when this would be ready, Ms Jarvis confirmed that there would be a presentation ready for the next meeting. Updates have already been made to the system to align with information received from DFE. Mr Petre showed concern over whether the governors would be able to show good knowledge of progress to Ofsted. This will be possible and will be demonstrated at the next FGB. Mrs Moretto said that was a good question to consider at a CB23 meeting.

16.12 Curriculum Committee Report

Miss Hodges listed the policies that had been reviewed and reported that the SEF Planner review was now going to be moved to the first FGB of the year.

Single Central Record is fully updated and DBS checks for governors have already been considered earlier in this meeting. When asked, Miss Hodges confirmed that DBS checks were not transferrable and were currently £45 per check.

The governor visit schedule has been re-published to include class assemblies and volunteers are needed to attend these. Please let Miss Hodges know if you can attend. The new template had already been covered earlier in Matters Arising.

Miss Hodges also confirmed that Gamlingay First School had been taken on by the Comberton Academy Trust.

16.13 F&GP Committee Report

Mr Pett listed the policies that had been reviewed and said that the budget would be very tight again. The SFVS was under review. Mrs Smith said that the budget proposed for the school (2016-17) had included an unexpected budget of £3500 due to the realignment of post codes in the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). The grant to our school had been £0 before.

16.14 Recruitment of new Clerk

Mr Petre confirmed the resignation of Mrs Morton as Clerk to take effect from the end of the spring term. He agreed with the comments made by Mrs Morton on the new clerk being more connected to the school. Advertisements will be placed in Roundabout, on the school website and via school email system.

Action: Mr Petre and Mrs Smith to review and place advert for the role.

16.15 Date of Next Meeting

The next full Governor's meeting will be held on **Thursday 10th March 2016 at 7 pm**. This will include breakout sessions for the Curriculum and F&GP committees.

The meeting closed at 21:02 with the Grace.

Signed:

Date: