

School: Larkfields Junior
Meeting title: Autumn term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Tuesday, 13 October, 2015 at 6.30pm (start 6.38pm)
Location: At the school

Membership
'A' denotes absence

Mrs A Arnold (chair)
Mrs M Bates
Vacancy (co-opted)
Mrs E Poxon
Mr G Davies (vice-chair)
Mr D Kingsland
Vacancy (co-opted)
Miss A Sanderson
A Councillor Mrs J Owen
Mr M Tungait
Mrs J Williams
A Mr P Bancroft
Mrs L Mills
Mr P Taylor (headteacher)
Mrs M Bowley (Training co-ordinator)

In attendance Mr S James (clerk to the governors)
Mrs S Parnell (member of staff – prospective co-opted governor)

The chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

GB/38/15 Apologies for absence Action

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs Owen (council cabinet meeting). It was

resolved

that the governing body consent to this absence.

GB/39/15 Declaration of interest

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

Review and update Register of Business Interests

Business interest forms were circulated to all governors present by Mrs Poxon for completion which were all returned to her by the end of the meeting.

GB/40/15 Review of membership

Governors received the governing body membership list dated 29/09/2015 which had been previously circulated and noted the following:

➤ *Resignations* – governors noted with regret the following resignations with effect from the end of the meeting:

- Mr Bancroft – the chair advised governors this was due to an increasing work load. The clerk undertook to write a letter of appreciation to him on behalf of the governing body.
- Mrs Poxon – she explained that the school had been advised that it was not appropriate for her to be a governor and also the minute taker of the committee minutes which governors noted.

clerk

➤ *Vacancies*

- *Co-opted vacancies x3* – Mrs Parnell was nominated and seconded to fill one of the vacancies. All governors acknowledged that they had met Mrs Parnell on previous occasions and were aware of her skills and experience. It was unanimously

resolved

that Mrs Parnell be appointed as a co-opted governor with immediate effect for a term of four years.

In respect of the two remaining co-opted vacancies the chair encouraged all governors to be vigilant to possible candidates and it was agreed that contact would be made with SGOSS to assist.

chair

- *Parent x1* - headteacher to arrange necessary election.

HT

➤ *Staff members of the GB* – it was noted that there was now a total of four including the headteacher. The clerk advised that this was permitted under the regulations. Governors agreed that the right balance should be maintained.

GB/41/15 Determination of term of office for chair and vice-chair

It was

resolved

that the term of office for the chair and vice chair should be until the date of the meeting of the full governing body in the autumn term 2016.

GB/42/15 Election of chair

Mrs Arnold explained the process and indicated that it was her intention to stand down from the governing body during the next year due to increasing work commitments.

Mr Davies was nominated, proposed and seconded as chair. There were no other nominations. Mr Davies left the room. It was unanimously (without abstentions)

resolved

that Mr Davies be the chair of the governing body with immediate effect. Mr Davies rejoined the meeting and was duly thanked for his work as vice-chair and taking on the chair role. Mrs Arnold was thanked for her invaluable contribution and hard work as the chair.

Mr Davies took over the chair of the meeting. The clerk handed the latest edition of the NGA governors handbook to Mr Davies.

GB/43/15 Election of vice-chair

Mrs Arnold was nominated, proposed and seconded as vice-chair. There were no other nominations. Mrs Arnold left the room. It was unanimously (without abstentions)

resolved

that Mrs Arnold be the vice-chair of the governing body with immediate effect. Mrs Arnold rejoined the meeting and was duly thanked.

GB/44/15 Minutes of

Summer term meeting of the governing body

The minutes of the summer term meeting held on 18 May, 2015 having been previously circulated were confirmed and signed by the chair. The school display copy was handed to the headteacher; the minute book copy was retained by the clerk.

Matters arising

Governors noted that, unless detailed below or otherwise on the agenda, all actions listed had been addressed appropriately.

GB/25/15: Reports from Director – CSE – action

Mrs Bowley reported that the on line training had been duly accessed.

GB/26/15: Approval of Policy Checklist - action

The clerk confirmed that the checklist had been sent to the headteacher who requested that it be sent again for his attention.

Clerk/HT

GB/28/15: Approval of INSET days

Governors noted that the approved days had been appropriately published.

GB/30/15: Review of Delegation - Approval of Decision Planner - action

The clerk confirmed that the planner had been sent to the headteacher who requested that it be sent again for his attention.

Clerk/HT

Committees and working parties:*Finance and General Purposes Committee*

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee dated 8 June, 2015 having been previously circulated were received and the following matters highlighted by Mr Tugnait

- Emergency alarm drill – the headteacher stated that this was yet to be done.
- Smoke alarm in the quiet room - the headteacher stated that this was yet to be done.
- School expansion – the headteacher reported that he had heard nothing further.
- Bad debt – Mrs Poxon provided a verbal update and following a discussion as to possible strategies for recovery governors agreed to await further developments.
- Capital and revenue expenditure – governors were advised that all projects except the toilet refurbishment had been completed within budget.
- Replacement windows – the headteacher provided a verbal update of when the work is to be completed.
- Grant applications - the headteacher provided a verbal update and it was agreed to defer the matter back to the F&GPC.
- Health and Safety – Mr Tugnait advised governors that the audit was ongoing.
- Kitchen improvements – the headteacher reported that these had been completed.

F&GPC*Pupils, Personnel and Curriculum Committee*

The minutes of the Pupil, Personnel and Curriculum Committee dated 29 June, 2015 and 6 October, 2015 having been previously circulated were received and the following matters highlighted by Mr Davies:

29/06/2015:

- SEN presentation – all governors agreed that this had been extremely informative and worthwhile with thanks to Ms Burger.
- ICT link governor – Mrs Bowley agreed to undertake this role

06/10/2015:

- Looked after children – the headteacher provided a confidential verbal update.

- Office restructure confidential item – it was noted that this was not appended to the circulated minutes and a copy had been provided to the chair and vice-chair.
- Appraisal Policy – in response to a question from the clerk it was confirmed that the approval was appropriately delegated to the committee.
- Attendance Policy – the headteacher reported that he awaits hearing from the headteacher at the Infants school and he will refer the matter back to the committee.

HT and
PPCC

Governor challenge: Won't the amended policy send the message to parents that it is acceptable to take three days unauthorised absence each half term?
Governors discussed in detail the merits of the various possible approaches to the issue to be considered at committee in due course.

Matters arising

There were no further matters arising.

GB/45/15

Correspondence

Nottinghamshire Governor E newsletter

The clerk drew the governors attention to the September 2015 edition, with particular reference to the following articles:

- *Page 2 and 3* – Information about governors on school website – following discussion it was agreed that governors would complete a form to be circulated by Mrs Bowley.
- *Page 8* – revised STPCD 2015 award – governors noted that consideration of the proposed award had been delegated to the Pay Committee via a quorate full governing body email vote, and that Option A award had been approved at the meeting of the Pay committee on 25/09/2015.
- *Page 8* – revised Pay Policy – governors noted that the Policy had been approved by the Pay committee at the meeting on 25/09/2015 under its' delegated powers.
- *Pages 10 and 11* – Revisit to children missing education

MBo and
all gobs

Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils

GB/46/15

Headteacher's report including

*Update on School Self Evaluation and Development Plan
Progress that vulnerable groups are making
Amount of pupil premium funding/sports funding
The rationale for spending the pupil premium
The impact of pupil premium
Annual report on whole school appraisal process
Report from designated LAC teacher*

The headteacher presented his report, which had been previously circulated and copies of which were available at the meeting. He highlighted the following matters and invited comments, questions and observations from governors:

- Numbers on roll
- Attendance

Governor challenge: How are such things as ice hockey and dance authorised as an absence? *The headteacher informed governors that it is part of the schools ethos to support and encourage children with outside commitments and individual talents provided they do not dramatically impact on their attendance; in these particular cases he said the children were participating in very high level competitions.*

Governor challenge: Has there been any adverse or negative reaction to these authorisations from other parents? *The headteacher said that there had not.*

- Year 3 children significant needs – the headteacher provided a verbal update.
- Looked after children – the headteacher gave a confidential verbal update.
- Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) – the headteacher explained the changes to the priorities and the interventions in place; he confirmed that the school website had been updated with the information.

Governor challenge: How would Ofsted view the spending of the PPG on low achieving non PPG children? *The headteacher informed governors that his understanding of the guidance was that the money does not have to be allocated for individual PPG pupils which it can't be anyway for the use of TAs, and he referred governors to the information contained in the various 'conversion' tables for PPG included in his report. There are PPG pupils in all the groups targeted with this money, group sizes were small and so PPG pupils and a small number of non PPG pupils were benefitting.*

- Harassment – the headteacher provided a detailed verbal explanation of the various incidents recorded and action taken and at the request of a governor provided further confidential details of the nature and outcome of the cyber bullying incident. Governors discussed the nature of 'bullying' and whether all incidents of harassment could be categorised as such.

Governor challenge: A lot of the incidents appeared to occur in the playground: what if any action was being taken to address this in the context to the general rise in society of this type of behaviour? *The headteacher advised governors that it was both worrying and challenging and more supervision might be appropriate. He advised governors of conversations he had had with parents of alleged perpetrators to convey the message that the children needed to be educated about their behaviour.*

- Teacher appraisals – the headteacher provided a verbal update and confirmed the process was in order.
- Standards – governors agreed with the headteacher that given where the cohort of children had started, the recent results were very good.

- Floor targets/'coasting' schools – the headteacher advised governors of the recent changes to the floor targets and the potential impact of being categorised as 'coasting'. He assured governors that on the schools current data it was not at risk of this.
- School Improvement Plan (SIP) – the headteacher tabled and circulated copies of the draft proposed SIP and provided a detailed verbal explanation of a number of the priorities, actions and timescale. Following discussion it was unanimously (without abstention)

resolved

to approve the proposed SIP as tabled.

- Staff recruitment and retention – the headteacher advised governors of the current difficulties facing all schools to attract and retain suitable staff and as an attempt to address this he proposed, as from September 2016, that the school subscribe to an initiative involving various local schools and a university called the North Midlands Training Consortium (NMIT). He provided full verbal details of the purpose and operation of the scheme which involved the deployment of student teachers at a school for a whole academic year at no cost to the school. He explained that should there be a vacancy at the end of the year within any school in the consortium the students deployed could be employed by them.

During a subsequent detailed, comprehensive and wide ranging discussion of the various issues raised and the potential implications and impact for the school a number of **governor challenges** including but not limited to the following were made:

At what stage of their course would the student be at? The headteacher stated this was a one year post grad teaching course similar to the 'SCITT' programme.

How would it work? The headteacher said that they would spend four days at the school and one at the university.

If it becomes apparent the student is not suitable can they be dispensed with? The headteacher said the arrangement could be terminated at any time akin to the PGCE.

What would happen at the end of the year? The headteacher said that neither the school nor the student were under any obligation or commitment.

Could students be switched between schools during the year? The headteacher said this could happen if needed. Governors acknowledged that it would be beneficial for students and the school for students to experience more than one school.

What would be the pressure on the class teacher? The headteacher said that it was proposed that the student would receive the support of both a co-ordinator and a mentor in the school, possibly on a daily basis. It was suggested by governors that it might be useful to also have a 'buddying' arrangement which the headteacher said could be considered.

Which year group would the student be assigned to? The headteacher said this would be dependent on various factors.

What if any approval was required from the governing body? The headteacher said that he was unsure if any was but that he would appreciate the agreement of all relevant stakeholders particularly staff, and at this stage he had only consulted with the SLT.

It was

resolved

to approve that the headteacher be mandated with the discretion to sign up to the scheme as he saw fit following all appropriate consultative processes.

- Supporting other schools – the headteacher informed governors that he had been approached by the local authority to see if he would be willing and able to offer support to other schools to which he had expressed a ‘tentative’ interest to support ‘non failing’ schools as an interim measure such as if they had no head or deputy, and he sought the views of governors.

During a subsequent detailed, comprehensive and wide ranging discussion of the various issues raised and the potential implications and impact for the school, the headteacher gave further verbal details of the possible arrangements, and a number of **governor challenges** including but not limited to the following were made:

Is there any financial benefit to the school? The headteacher stated that the usual practice is for the schools to share the head’s salary which would accrue a saving to the school.

What would be his role eg executive head/co-ordinator? The headteacher said his understanding was that it was more of a temporary interim headteacher.

How much notice would the school receive of any approach? The headteacher said very little.

How would the parent body be informed of this? The headteacher said that this would be by an appropriate means at the time.

If the governing body were to agree should the appointment of a deputy HT at the school be expedited? Following discussion it was agreed that this would be a matter for consideration as and when the situation arose.

Governors agreed that the first priority must always be to the school and to ensure that the governing body retain control. It was

resolved

to approve *in principle* the headteacher participating in such an arrangement and that every request would be decided on a ‘case by case’ basis by the full governing body.

GB/47/15 Confirm arrangements for the headteacher's appraisal meeting and ensure appraisal governors have appropriate training

Mrs Arnold informed governors that the final meeting for the headteachers' last appraisal cycle had taken place on 06/10/2015 and that the headteacher had 'almost completely met almost all of his targets'. On behalf of the governing body she expressed thanks and appreciation to him in the absence of any potential for any pay award.

The appraisal governors were confirmed as Mrs Arnold, Mr Kingsland and Mr Tugnait and the first meeting of the new cycle set. It was agreed that Mr Davies would also take on the role once he had completed suitable training.

chair

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

GB/48/15 Reports from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

Leadership and Governance Solutions for Improving Pupil Outcomes and Securing School Viability for Primary Schools

Governors confirmed that they had received and considered the report. The clerk spoke to the report and it was agreed that at this stage no further action was needed as all matters raised were being addressed.

The Prevent Duty

Governors confirmed that they had received and considered the report. The clerk spoke to the report highlighting the various governor actions suggested.

The headteacher gave a brief verbal summary of the background and nature of the duty; he referred governors to the Dfe guidance. He suggested that the matter should come under the auspices of Safeguarding/child protection and that the appropriate policies would be revisited and revised accordingly. Following a governor suggestion the headteacher agreed it is also a matter pertaining to E Safety.

HT

Governor challenge: Would a 'register of children of concern' be appropriate as they have in other schools? Governors discussed the matter without final resolution.

GB/49/15 British Values

Governors noted that the matter had been fully addressed in the meetings of the PP&CC who would report back to the full GB meeting in the spring term.

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the working party would take place on 20/11/2015 and a report would be submitted to the PP&CC

GB/50/15 Safeguarding children in education governors' compliance checklist

Agree arrangements for completion and sign off by the chair

The headteacher provided a brief verbal explanation of the process to governors and it was agreed that in conjunction with Mrs Bates if necessary (in the absence of any current Safeguarding governor) he would complete the form to be signed by the chair and returned to the local authority by the school.

HT/chair

GB/51/15 Governor training

Report from training co-ordinator including priorities for governor training and development 2015/16

Mrs Bowley provided a full verbal report to governors highlighting the following:

- Nine governors had completed some form of training during the previous academic year.
- CSE training – she would seek to encourage parents to complete the on line training.
- Possible future GB training – she suggested Understanding Data in the context of assessment without levels and at the suggestion of a governor agreed to try and ‘quality assure’ any proposed training before it was delivered.
- Courses booked – she asked all governors to notify her of any courses booked on.
- New course – she drew governors attention to the new Improving Governors Knowledge and Skills course
- Hot topic sessions – governors noted the date and venues of the sessions on Leadership and Governance.

MBo

Governing body self-review update

Mrs Bowley tabled and circulated the analysis of the ten completed questionnaires and drew governors’ attention to any issues of concern, and also matters relating to any identified GB skills gaps. She requested all governors to ensure that she had up to date information about their skills set.

All govs

Governors thanked Mrs Bowley for all of her hard work and dedication in completing the review on behalf of the GB.

GB/52/15 Governor monitoring reports

To agree monitoring timetable for autumn and spring terms

Mrs Arnold tabled and circulated copies to governors of the Governors Monitoring Plan which had been previously circulated and invited them to express any areas of interest/preference. The following visits were agreed:

- PPG – Mrs Arnold during the next half term.
- SEND – Mr Davies and Mrs Williams this term.
- Maths – Mrs Mills and Mr Tugnait spring term.
- E Safety (including the PREVENT Duty) – Mrs Williams, Ms Sanderson and Mr Kingsland 03/03/2016 9.15am.

- Gifted and Talented – Mrs Mills and Mr Davies January 2016.
- ICT including Ipads – Mr Kingsland and Mrs Poxon TBA
- Behaviour – Mrs Williams next half term.
- Literacy – Mrs Bowley TBA.

Mrs Arnold undertook to update and circulate the plan and asked all governors to ensure that timely visit reports were submitted to her.

**MA and all
govs**

Report of governor monitoring and other visits

The following reports were given on visits made to the school by governors since the last full meeting of the governing body:

- Mrs Mills and Mr Tugnait – Maths monitoring visit 09/10/2015 – a full and detailed written report was tabled and copies circulated which governors read and considered with thanks and appreciation to Mrs Mills and Mr Tugnait who added further verbal additional observations.

Governor challenge: What is the answer to the question on the penultimate page? Mrs Parnell said this very much depends on the particular activity and what it is that the children need to achieve. She advised governors of various strategies and practices employed to encourage such children to participate.

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

GB/53/15 Approval of

Schools financial value standard (SFVS)

It was agreed that the SFVS would be completed by Mr Davies, Mr Kingsland and Mr Tugnait in liaison with Mrs Poxon as before.

**GD, DK
and MJ/EP**

Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement

The clerk advised governors that the following two items related to all of the work of the governing body since its last full meeting.

GB/54/15 What has been done to impact on outcomes for pupils?

Governors noted the actions and involvement, including discussions and resolutions, of the governing body in relation to various matters including, but not limited to the following, which had had a positive and beneficial impact on outcomes for all pupils:

- Staffing matters including recruitment
- PPG spending and rationale
- SIP

- Safeguarding including PREVENT
- Governor monitoring

GB/55/15 How has the governing body held the school leaders to account?

The governing body noted that various challenges had been made by governors during the course of this and other meetings with the headteacher and senior management.

Concluding items

GB/56/15 Confirmation of date for 2016

The governing body

agreed

Spring term – Tuesday, 2 February, 2016 at 6.30pm
Summer term – Tuesday, 24 May, 2016 at 6.30pm

GB/57/15 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that all papers and reports be made available as necessary save for and matters pertaining to looked after children.

On behalf of the governing body the headteacher thanked Mrs Poxon for her involvement with and considerable contribution to it as a governor.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed(chair) Date

SJ/IY