

MINUTES OF MEETING



School: Larkfields Junior
Meeting title: Spring term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Tuesday, 30 January, 2018 at 6.00pm
Location: At the school

Attendance: 'A' denotes absence:

Membership (11)

	Mr G Davies (chair)
	Mr C Terry (vice-chair)
	Mrs M Bowley (Training co-ordinator)
A	Mr M Tugnait
	Mr L Gensler-Woodcock
	Mrs R Bowley
	Councillor Mrs J Owen
A	Mr K Sheldon
A	Mrs L Mills
	Mrs J Scott (headteacher)
	Mr B Betts (staff governor)

Vacancies (2) Co-opted x2

Associate members None

In attendance Mr S James (clerk to the governors)

GB/01/18 Apologies for absence

Action

Governors **noted** there were no apologies from any of the three absent governors. The headteacher informed the meeting that she had contacted Mr Sheldon, given his attendance record, and that he had informed her that though he was aware of this meeting he was unsure whether he would attend or not. Following discussion it was

resolved

that the governing body did not consent to the absences of Mr Sheldon and Mr Tugnait and that accordingly the six month disqualification period for each due to expire on 10 April, 2018 would continue to run. The clerk was requested **to write to both informing them of this.** clerk

It was further **agreed** to wait and see if Mrs Mills attended as she might be delayed and if she did not attend defer any decision regarding her absence to the end of the meeting. Mrs Mills did not attend and no contact was received from her prior to the end of the meeting and accordingly at that time, following discussion, it was

resolved

that, in the light of her contribution to the governing body and attendance at other school and governance events and forums, consent be given to her absence on this occasion.

GB/02/18 Declaration of interest

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

GB/03/18 Review of membership

The clerk referred governors to the membership details on Governor Hub (GH) under 'governing body' and a list of current members under 'constitution'. The following was further advised and **noted** by governors:

- *New staff governor* – Mr Betts was welcomed to the meeting as the new staff governor following an election on 20/10/2017 and his term of office was confirmed as four years from that date.
- *Vacancies – co-opted x2 (ongoing)*. It was **agreed** that in view of the conversion of the school to academy status no action was required at this time.
- *End of terms of office* – There were no governors terms of office due to end during the current or next school term and it was **agreed** therefore that no action was required at this time.
- *Departed governors* – Mrs Williams and Mrs Sanderson had left the governing body and appropriate letters of appreciation had been previously sent to each of them.

GB/04/18 Approval of minutes of autumn term meeting

The minutes of the last full meeting held in the autumn term on 10 October, 2017 having been previously circulated by email and on Governor Hub 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.

Review of actions

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

GB/41/17: Declaration of interest – action HT: ensure absent governors were requested to complete the form.

Governors were advised that all current members had completed the necessary forms as required.

GB/46/17: Approval of minutes – summer term full meeting – review of actions -

GB/24/17: Approval of minutes of spring term meeting – review of actions -

GB/14/17: Approval of Finance Policy –action HT: to check the current position regarding the schools finance policy and action accordingly – action F&GPC: any necessary action would be deferred to the F&GPC.

Governors were advised that the finance policy had been finalised.

GB/46/17: Approval of minutes – summer term full meeting – review of actions -

GB/33/17: Review of delegation et al – agree committee structure/membership –

action chair and vice chair: review the current committee membership in liaison with governing body members – action MB: to ensure that the school website was appropriately updated as to governor membership et al.

Governors **noted** that the information was up to date as it could be given recent changes and anticipated further changes and **agreed** no action was required at this stage.

GB/46/17: Approval of minutes – summer term full meeting – review of actions - GB/35/17: Governor monitoring reports – action GD: report to be done – action GD: complete and disseminate the necessary report.

Mr Davies undertook **to complete the matter as soon as possible.**

chair

GB/52/17: Safeguarding matters – completion and sign off of checklist – action HT, chair and RB: amend/approve/sign off the completed checklist to be submitted by 22/12/2017.

Governors were advised that the checklist had been appropriately completed and returned as required.

GB/52/17: Safeguarding matters – completion and sign off of checklist – action RB: undertake an audit of safeguarding files.

Mrs Bowley confirmed that the audit had been completed and no safeguarding issues had been identified.

Governor challenge: Why is this done? *Governors were advised this was recommended 'best practise'.*

GB/53/17: Communication – from clerk: Governor E newsletter – re use of social media – action HT: consider the amended Code of Conduct [for governors] and action appropriately.

Governors **noted** the matter would be addressed.

GB/54/17: report from training co-ordinator – action all govts: complete PREVENT (radicalisation awareness) training.

Those governors who had not yet completed it undertook to do so and submit the necessary certificate to Mrs M Bowley.

GB/05/18 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

Receipt of minutes:

Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GPC)

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 7 November, 2017 having been previously circulated by email and on Governor Hub were received.

Strategic Development, Pupils and Personnel Committee (SDPPC)

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Development, Pupils and Personnel committee on 28 November, 2017 having been previously circulated by email and on Governor Hub were received.

Review of actions

It was **agreed** that any actions or matters arising would be considered at the next meeting of the relevant committee.

Approval of policies:

Governors **noted** that there were no policies requiring approval by the meeting.

GB/06/18

Headteachers' report

The headteacher presented her report, having been previously circulated to governors by email and on Governor Hub who confirmed they had read and considered it, and from which the following matters were highlighted:

- Numbers on roll – the headteacher provided a brief verbal **confidential** update regarding one pupil who had left and advised governors that all necessary protocols and procedures had been observed and followed.
- Attendance – the headteacher, with thanks to Mrs M Bowley, advised governors of the current monitoring processes and procedures.
- Exclusions
- Handling of pupils – the headteacher provided **confidential** verbal details of recent incidents and actions taken which governors **noted**.
- 'Equality incident' - the headteacher provided **confidential** verbal details of recent incidents and actions taken including the completion of necessary records which governors **noted**.
- SEND – the headteacher and Mrs M Bowley gave a brief verbal summary of various school initiatives and their perceived positive impact on the pupils concerned.
- Staffing matters including midterm appraisal reviews.
- School Development Plan (SDP) priorities – governors **noted** the linking of priorities to targets and that the matter would be full considered by the SDPPC.
- Report of School Business manager (SBM) – the headteacher alerted governors to the potential likely uncertainties given the planned conversion of the school to academy status and advised them that appropriate contingency plans were in place.
- The 'School Bus' (for recording policies) – the headteacher provided a brief verbal explanation of the system which governors **noted**.

Governor challenges:

Should the current level of unauthorised absences regarded as 'high'?

Governors were advised that the level was not of concern and consistent with if not better than national figures.

Are the school issuing fine requests for unauthorised absences? *Governors were advised the school do fine and this is in the policy but currently have no fines pending and have not issued any fines so far this term.*

In discussion governors concurred with and approved of the approach.

What action is taken by the school for persistent late attenders? Governors were advised of the procedures and actions taken.

Is there any concern regarding reports of some children being brought to school 'too early'? The headteacher advised governors of the issues identified and actions being taken in liaison with other relevant local organisations.

In respect of the SEND actions how do these fit in with safeguarding issues with reference to their purpose, format and boundaries? The headteacher provided a verbal explanation of the relationship and advised governors there were no issues of concern arising.

In respect of staffing are there any issues around any long term absences such as occupational health involvement? The headteacher provided further **confidential** verbal details.

In respect of the SDP, is the school 'on track'? The headteacher advised governors that it was and referred them to the data provided regarding standards, attainment, progress and the like, and advised them of the monitoring being undertaken to evidence the evaluation of the school performance.

In the above regard have any 'anomalies' been identified? Governors were advised by the senior leaders that no issues were apparent and referred governors to the various reports provided.

In respect of the school finances, what are the anticipated advantages of conversion to academy status and joining a MAT? The headteacher provided a brief summary of the various perceived fiscal benefits.

GB/07/18

Approval of:

- *Schools Budget* – Governors **noted** the matter would be considered by the F&GPC for referral to the full governing body.
- *Schools financial value standard (SFVS)* – the completed SFVS was tabled and a brief synopsis provided to governors with thanks to the SBM, Mr Terry and Mr Gensler-Woodcock. It was

resolved

to approve the SFVS as tabled which the chair and headteacher undertook **to finalise and submit to the local authority as required.**

Chair and HT

- *Year end reforecast* – governors **noted** that matter had been fully considered by the F&GPC and there were no issues to address.

GB/08/18

Policy update – to approve policies referred from the previous meeting or committee meetings

The headteacher tabled and circulated a revised Disciplinary (staff) policy and explained it was based on the local authority model without amendment which had been approved by the relevant trades unions. It was

resolved

to approve, ratify and adopt the revised policy as tabled.

The chair advised governors that it might be necessary to convene a discipline committee and possible appeal panel. Mr Terry, Mrs R Bowley and Mr Gensler-Woodcock indicated that they would be willing to sit on the latter.

GB/09/18 British Values

The headteacher referred governors to the SMSC section in her report (see agenda item GB/06/18 above) and proposed that, to ensure the schools approach was properly monitored and evidenced, the matter be considered by the next meeting of the SDPPC to which governors **agreed**.

GB/10/17 Communication

From chair:

- i) Letter from the local authority regarding the delay to conversion to academy status. The chair advised governors of the reasons for the delay and stated that the anticipated date for conversion was now 01/06/2018 and that the LA costs to the school were now 'capped' at £7kre.

From headteacher

There were no items of communication from the headteacher.

From clerk:

- i) *Notts Governor E newsletter January 2018*

The clerk drew the following articles to the attention of governors which they duly **noted**:

- Page 1 - Governors Services information – percentage of good schools
- Page 2 – Vacancy schools forum membership
- Page 2 – NAGS annual conference 10/03/2018
- Page 4 – ASP training for governors
- Page 4 – Complaints – policy and support
- Page 5 – outcome of school holiday consultation
- Page 6 – school website compliance checks
- Page 7 – Cost of academy conversion
- Page 10 – social media issues advice

GB/11/18 Academy conversion

The chair advised governors that the Dfe had now confirmed the proposed conversion date as 01/06/2018 and that the governing body was now required to make a formal decision on whether the school should convert to academy status. The headteacher provided a detailed summary of the various consultation

processes which had been undertaken with the relevant stakeholder groups and their outcomes. Governors **noted** that the FAQs had been uploaded onto Governor Hub and confirmed they had read and considered them and **acknowledged** that no objections to conversion had been raised by the school staff (as advised by trades unions) or parent body.

The chair read out the proposed resolution which had been previously circulated.

On enquiry by the clerk the governing body considered whether governors who were also members of the school staff should be permitted to vote on the issue. Mrs M Bowley and Mr Betts advised the governing body that neither felt they had a conflict of interest in the matter. The headteacher advised governors that she felt that it would not be appropriate for her to vote. Following discussion it was

resolved

that those governors who were also members of the school staff, except for the headteacher, be permitted to cast a vote on the resolution whether the school should convert to academy status.

The chair formally proposed the resolution which was seconded by Cllr Owen. It was **agreed** that the vote be by a show of hands and it was unanimously

resolved

that, having considered the outcome of public consultation and received an update from the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors:

a. to complete the conversion of the School into an Academy as part of East Midlands Education Trust on 1st June, 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter; and

b. to delegate to the Chair of Governors, Vice-chair of Governors and the Headteacher the authority to **take all necessary steps to complete the process of academy conversion on behalf of the current Governing Body, and to sign the appropriate documents on behalf of the Governing Body.**

**Chair,
vice-chair
and HT**

GB/12/18 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training requirements for 2017/18

With thanks from the governing body, Mrs M Bowley tabled and circulated copies of her detailed written report which had been previously circulated via Governor Hub, and provided a brief verbal summary under the following headings:

- Training completed
- Training booked
- Online training
- Suggestions for future training needs

GB/13/18 Governor monitoring reports

Governors **noted**, with thanks to Mr Terry, that the handbook which had been discussed by the SDPPC was now on Governor Hub. Mr Terry provided a brief verbal explanation of the purpose and content of the handbook for governors which it was **noted** included the Code of Conduct, details of roles/responsibilities, and schedule of visits. Governors further **noted** with thanks the various reports of monitoring visits made to the school by governors since the last full meeting of the governing body uploaded under the relevant Governor Hub folder.

GB/14/18 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Governing Body Impact

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:

- Discussions and decision in relation to conversion to academy status to secure the viable future of the school.
- Ongoing review of the SDP to ensure that the appropriate priorities were identified and necessary action taken to progress.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the pupils including learning walks.
- Regular scrutiny and interrogation of pupil performance data to ensure its integrity and reliability.
- Appraisal and regular review of the headteachers' performance and targets in line with the SIP.
- Overseeing the management of the schools finances to ensure the school remains solvent and appropriate value for money is achieved.
- Taking responsibility for the safeguarding of all pupils at the school to ensure that any at risk are identified and appropriate action taken.
- Monitoring and scrutinising attendance data to ensure that all pupils attend on a regular basis to comply with the law and fulfil their educational potential.
- Monitoring and scrutinising data in relation to disadvantaged pupils including those attracting pupil premium to ensure that any difference in attainment with their more privileged peers is addressed with a view to being diminished.

Holding 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 leaders in respect of all aspects of the schools activities and its management.
- The headteachers' report had been scrutinised and interrogated.
- School data had been scrutinised and interrogated.
- Appraisal of the headteachers' performance.

GB/15/18 Confirmation of dates for 2018

The governing body

