



INKBERROW FIRST SCHOOL



MINUTES of a meeting of the Governors of Inkberrow First School,
held on Thursday 11th January at 6 pm at the school

Supporting, representing and promoting the School together

Attendees:

Ann Derbyshire (Chair)(AD)
Heather Thomson (Head)(HT)
Gilly Hulse-Smith (GHS)(Part)
Maggie Hazlewood (MH)
Jenny Rose (JR)
Rob Hughes (RH)

Martin Allen (Vice-Chair)(MA)
Lisa Tagg (LT)
James Booton (JB)
Abbie Holliday (AH)
Bruce Rienstra (BR)
Helen Lees (HL) (Clerk)

- 1 Welcome and Receipt of Apologies with application for consent of absence:** Apologies were received, and accepted, from Richard Jordan (RJ); Heidi Fear (HF) (Associate Member – Finance) and Steve Wilkes (SW)(Associate Member – Curriculum). The Clerk advised that Gilly Hulse-Smith would be late arriving due to work commitments and advised that Richard Jordan had submitted a proxy vote regarding Change of Age Range in advance of the meeting. It was noted that Associate Members have no voting rights.
- 2 Declarations of Interest** – With regard to Agenda Item 7 (Change of Age Range) Revd Bruce Rienstra's links to the Diocese were noted, and it was also noted that Martin Allen is one of the Avonreach Academy Trust Diocesan appointed Trustees. It was agreed that neither relationship should prevent the Governors from voting upon the Change of Age Range proposal.
- 3 Review and Approve the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the 15/11/17 Full Governing Body Meeting:** The Minutes of the 15/11/17 Full Governing Body meeting were unanimously approved, and were signed by the Chair as being a true record of the meeting.
- 4 Review of New and Open Actions Table:** The New and Open Actions Table, which had been circulated to all prior to the meeting, was reviewed. A number of updates were made to the actions. An updated version of the Actions Table, to reflect the updates provided at the meeting and new Actions assigned, will be circulated alongside the Minutes of this meeting.
- 5 Reporting:**
 - a) Review and Approve the 2016/17 Sports Usage Report (final end of year position):** The End of 2016/17 Year Sports Usage Report was reviewed, and it was noted that the initiatives supported via the Sports Funding appear to have had a positive impact. The report was approved for publication on the IFS website. **Action:** HT to upload the 2016/17 Sports Usage Report (Final End of Year Position) to the IFS Website.
 - b) Receive Update regarding proposed usage of 2017/18 Sports Funding:** The Head presented Governors with a proposal regarding usage of the 2017/18 Sports Funding, noting that the Government has advised that they will be doubling the funding available during 2017/18 (@£17k should therefore be available) although no funding has yet been received. The Head's proposals were reviewed and Governors agreed that the proposals appear appropriate. It was agreed that the Head should provide an update (including costings) once further information regarding the Government's 2017/18 funding for this initiative is known. **Action:** HT to provide a further update

to Governors (including costings) once further information regarding the level of funds being allocated by the Government is forthcoming.

- c) **Any questions regarding the Heads Report and SDP 2017/18 Progress Report circulated prior to the meeting?** Further to the information contained within the Heads Report the Head advised that:
- The broken heaters in Reception have now been replaced. Replacing the heaters had not been included within the planned budget spend for 2017/18.
 - IFS has been successful in being awarded some fully funded places for two members of staff to receive Leadership Training, which links well with IFS SDP Objective 2. Congratulations were expressed to the Head for her successful application, and to Miss Holliday and Mr Knight for being awarded places on this training programme.
 - She has recently attended a Training Course on a new “Fisher Family Trust (FFT)” Pupil Performance Data report. The Head advised that the report is very informative. The Head advised that the report has highlighted some areas for focus that have not previously been identified, and that the SDP may be updated to incorporate these new areas of focus. **Action:** HL to upload the new FFT report to the secure page prior to 18/01/18. **Action:** HT to consider updating the SDP to incorporate the new areas of focus identified in the FFT report.

With regards to the SDP 2017/18 Progress Report, the Head advised that lots of items on the SDP are currently being worked on, and all activity is currently on track.

It was noted that the Head had also circulated an updated version of the SIF, to include the latest pupil data. Thanks were expressed to the Head for providing this updated information.

- d) **Any questions regarding the School Improvement Partner (SIP) report circulated prior to the meeting:** A Governor noted that the report was not as detailed as had been expected. The Head advised that the initial visit was largely a “meet and greet” and to provide the SIP with an opportunity to see the school in action. The Head advised that the SIP, accompanied by the AAT Executive Officer, is to visit each AAT school this term to review “Teaching and Learning”, and that the SIP has advised that her report from this meeting will be much more detailed. The Head further advised that the AAT Executive Leadership Team (ELT) have agreed that going forwards the SIPs reports should be circulated to the entire ELT for transparency.
- e) **Any questions regarding the Minutes from the S&P Forum circulated prior to the meeting?** The S&P Forum Chair advised that the Forum had met on Tuesday 9th January, at which time they had approved the “Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions” policy and the “Intimate Care Policy” subject to a couple of minor amendments being made to the policies. A Governor queried whether the final version of the Behaviour Policy has yet been circulated. **Action:** HT to check whether the final version of the Behaviour Policy has been circulated and notify all Governors. **Action:** LT to circulate the Notes from the 09/01/18 S&P Forum to all Governors.
- f) **Any questions regarding the Minutes from the F&P Forum circulated prior to the meeting?** The F&P Forum had met on Tuesday 9th January, and the Notes from that meeting had been circulated to all Governors shortly before the Full GB meeting for information. The main points to note from the meeting were:
- The F&P forum noted that no AAT Financial Reports have yet been received and the F&P Chair agreed to contact the AAT Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for an update.
 - The F&P Forum reviewed their 2017/18 Workplan and made a number of updates, predominantly to reflect AAT decisions made regarding policies.
 - The F&P Forum agreed to meet monthly for the remainder of this academic year.
 - The F&P Forum were made aware that a number of parents/carers have recently raised some concerns (predominately on social media) regarding the IFS School Lunch provision. It was agreed that this issue should be discussed in more detail under Any Other Business.

- The F&P Forum made a recommendation to the IFS Full Governing Body that Mrs A Shephard should be appointed to undertake the School Fund Audit, which is required to be completed before the end of February 2018.

The IFS Full Governing Body unanimously approved the F&P Forum's recommendation regarding the School Fund Audit and the Finance Governor agreed to progress this action with Mrs Shephard. **Action:** JR to contact Mrs Shephard regarding undertaking the School Fund Audit before the end of February 2018.

The F&P Forum Chair noted that, following the F&P Forum on 09/01/18, the AAT CFO had issued the first AAT IFS Management Report (for the period December 2017) on Wednesday 10th January. The Head advised that the CFO had reviewed the report with the First School Head's at the 11/01/18 Executive Leadership Team meeting, at which time all Heads had notified the CFO that the report did not contain sufficient information to be able to validate the school's financial position. The Heads had also raised a number of other issues and concerns with the report which the CFO agreed to investigate.

The F&P Forum Chair enquired whether the information contained within the December 2017 report provided the Head with the information she was seeking for insertion into the IFS Costings relating to the Change of Age Range (eg projected Carry Forward position). The Head advised that the report did not provide her with the information she required for insertion into the IFS Change of Age Range costings.

- g) Any questions regarding the Safeguarding Governor's Report circulated prior to the meeting?** The Safeguarding Governor advised that he will submit a Spring Term Safeguarding report to the 08/03/18 Full Governing Body meeting. **Action:** MA to submit a Spring Term Safeguarding Report to the 08/03/18 Full Governing Body meeting.
- h) Any questions regarding Governor Visit Reports circulated prior to the meeting?** Thanks were expressed to Lisa Tagg for her informative Visit Report regarding the "Growth Mindset" initiative (linked to SDP Objective 1), regarding which no Governors had any questions. Those Governors with children at Inkberrow First School noted that the initiative had been discussed at the recent "Parents Introduction" evening, and that their children are already using "Growth Mindset" language (eg "yet") at home.
- i) Any questions regarding the Draft Minutes from the AAT Trustees Meeting and the AAT Members Meeting?** No Governors had any questions regarding the Draft Minutes from the November 2017 AAT Trustees meeting or the December 2017 Members Meeting.
- j) Any questions regarding the AAT Annual Report and Accounts for 2016/17 circulated prior to the meeting?** The Chair reminded all Governors that as the Avonreach Academy Trust (AAT) was not formed until 1st August 2017, the AAT Annual Report and Accounts for 2016/17 relate to 11 months of activity for Pershore High School and 1 months activity (August 2017) for AAT. A Governor queried whether AAT had been issued with a new Company Number upon formation, or whether the PHS Company Number had been used. The Vice-Chair advised that the PHS Company Number had been used as the Legal Advisors had advised that this would enable the quickest and cheapest means of forming the Trust.

6 IFS Governance Arrangements 2017/18

- a) Consider appointment of a new Associate Member:** The profile for the new potential Associate Member was reviewed. The Chair confirmed that appointing a new Associate Member would not have any impact upon the current Parent Governor or Co-Opted Governor vacancies, and confirmed that Associate Members have no voting rights at Full Governing Body meetings although they can be granted voting rights on Committees if the Governing Body so wishes. It was noted that the proposed Associate Members skills and experience would be a "good fit" for the IFS LGB, which is light in the areas of project management; competitive tendering and commercial

experience. It was agreed that the Vice-Chair should arrange to meet the potential Associate Member to discuss the role, and the support that the candidate could provide, going forwards. **Action:** MA to arrange a meeting with the potential Associate Member to discuss the role and the support that the candidate could provide going forwards.

A Governor queried whether there would be benefit in IFS approaching the parent/carer community in general to see if they have any skills/experience that they would be willing to share with the school should the need arise (eg legal experience; accounting experience; building skills). It was agreed that this idea should be discussed at the next IFS LGB meeting. **Action:** HL to place "Development of a database of parent/carers skills and experience that they are willing to share with IFS should the need arise" onto the 08/03/18 Full GB agenda.

[GHS joined the meeting]

7 Change of Age Range Consultation

The Chair reminded all Governors that with regard to their recommendation regarding Change of Age Range IFS Governors need to consider the issue from the perspective of what is best for the current and future pupils of Inkberrow First School, and advised that all feedback received from the consultation should be considered in that context.

- a) **Consider feedback received from parents/carers; and**
- b) **Consider feedback received from other schools; and**
- c) **Consider feedback received from the Diocesan Board of Education; and**
- d) **Consider feedback received from the Local Authority; and**
- e) **Consider IFS Financial Reports regarding the IFS Costs associated with progressing the Change of Age Range; and**
- f) **Consider AAT Business Case regarding the Change of Age Range**

The record from the IFS Consultation meetings; the collated feedback received via the feedback forms; the responses received from other schools; the response received from the Diocesan Board of Education; and the response received from the Local Authority, along with IFS Financial Reports regarding the IFS Costs associated with progressing the Change of Age Range, had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting. It was noted that an AAT Business Case had not been presented to the IFS LGB.

The Chair noted that the questions that had been posed at the Consultation meetings had been very perceptive and showed that attendees had given the issue considerable thought prior to the meeting.

It was noted that 76% of parents/carers who had provided feedback via the feedback forms were supportive of the Change of Age Range proposal.

Those Governors who are also parents of current IFS pupils advised that:

- parents seem to be happy with the process that has been followed and the information that has been provided to them,
- parents are now looking forward to receiving an update regarding the decisions taken by the IFS LGB and Avonreach Academy Trust
- the departure of the Pinvin Middle School Head, who left the school at the end of December 2017, has made some parents feel nervous and insecure about the future of that school going forwards.

It was noted that the educational landscape is forever changing (due to personnel moving on, legislative changes etc), and that for the purposes of reaching a recommendation regarding Change of Age Range it is important that Governors should focus upon the system/structure rather than personalities.

It was noted that the one of the main concerns raised via the consultation process related to the limited space available for expansion at Inkberrow First School, particularly bearing in mind that Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are physically bigger than pupils in lower year groups. It was noted however that the teaching of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils requires the pupils to move around less than the teaching of lower year groups, therefore these year groups can be accommodated in smaller classrooms. It was noted that the classrooms at IFS are significantly larger than the classrooms at Pinvin Middle School.

The Staff Governor noted that a couple of members of staff, whilst still being convinced regarding the educational benefits of the proposal, have recently changed their views from that provided during the consultation period due to concerns about space and the potential loss of the “family feeling”. Regardless of this however, the Staff Governor advised that all staff will be fully behind whatever decision is made and there is no risk that staff would leave the school if the result differs from their current personal views. Staff have noted that progression of the proposal will provide additional personal development opportunities.

It was noted that creating sufficient building space is dependent upon having sufficient funds to undertake the required building work and to provide the required resources (including teaching and support staff). The IFS Financial Reports regarding the costings associated with the Change of Age Range proposal were reviewed and the following points were noted:

- Information regarding the Projected 2017/18 Carry Forward figure is not currently available therefore it is difficult to accurately estimate the costs, however based on the information currently available it is estimated that there will be:
 - a budget shortfall of @£8k in 2017/18 (new multi-purpose SEND room is being built in 2017/18);
 - a budget shortfall of @£10k in 2018/19 (resources to kit out the multi-purpose SEND room will need to be procured during 2018/19);
 - and a budget shortfall of @£62k in 2019/20 (proposed first year of Year 5 intake, which will need to be accommodated and resourced within that year even though funding for that year will not be released until 2020 due to the lag in school funding)
- It was noted that clarity is still being sought regarding whether IFS will be able to “draw down from future years” to cover the 2019/20 funding lag issue.
- It was noted that the above estimates are very dependent upon the number of pupils joining and leaving the school, over which the school has very little control (determining factor is parental choice).
- It was noted that, based on historic pupil numbers which have been rising for a number of years, IFS anticipates that it will be able to recover the “funding gap” over time as a result of the increased pupil numbers that will be on roll if Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are retained at IFS.
- It was noted that if IFS was not successful in being awarded School Improvement Funding the current Reception classroom would need to be split into 2 classrooms in order to provide sufficient classroom space to accommodate Reception through to Year 6 (one class per year group). It was further noted that, given the generous size of the current IFS classrooms, this could be accommodated.
- It was noted that there is no capacity to increase the physical size of the school site, and that changes would therefore need to be made to the organisation of the school day in order to ensure that the playground and school hall were not overcrowded at lunchtime/playtime etc. The Head noted that IFS already regularly reviews and adapts their arrangements according to current needs, and advised that she believed that any issues that may arise could be overcome.
- It was noted that consideration would need to be given to changing facilities and toilet facilities should the proposal proceed.
- The Head confirmed that the school are able to use the village playing fields, and that usage of the village sports clubs facilities is likely to be confirmed in the near future.

With regard to the responses received from other schools, the Diocesan Board of Education and the Local Authority, the following points were noted:

- There remains a lot of opposition to the proposal from the Middle Schools and schools within the Pershore area, who have expressed concerns that the proposal may lead to staff redundancies and possibly school closures going forwards. It was noted with disappointment that the responses did not focus upon, or reference, what is in the best educational interests of the pupils.
- A Governor queried whether the non-supportive response received from the LA means that the proposal is unable to proceed. The Vice-Chair advised that the LA is one stakeholder in the consultation process and that the Regional Schools Commissioner (who would be the decision maker in this case if AAT decide to progress the proposal) is required to review all responses submitted from all stakeholders. It was noted that the LA's response reflects the fact that they have a legal duty to ensure that every child has a school place and that the required pathways for all pupils are in place.
- A Governor queried whether there is any pressure to grow the MAT quickly. The Chair advised that Trustees have acknowledged that the MAT will need to grow over time (current thinking is that a MAT needs to have @3000 pupils on roll to be financially viable), however Trustees are mindful of the need to grow in a sustainable and controlled manner.
- A Governor queried whether clarification had now been received regarding School Transportation. The Chair advised that the LA have advised that they have no plans to change their current policy (which is based upon the current legislation in this area), and that they will therefore cover the costs for children to be transported to their nearest designated school. This means that, if there are Year 7 places available at Pinvin Middle School the LA will cover the cost of transporting Year 7 pupils to Pinvin Middle School but will not cover the cost of transporting Year 7 pupils to Pershore High School. The Chair confirmed that this poses an issue that has yet to be resolved, and that the AAT Executive Officer and Chair of Trustees are exploring options.
- A Governor stated that they felt that the AAT Executive Officer's responses to both the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) and the Local Authority (LA) had been well argued and presented a good counter-argument for their consideration.
- A Governor queried what the position is if a Governor believes that the proposal would provide the best potential educational outcomes for pupils but the Governor is not confident (based on the information currently available) whether the proposal is financially viable. It was agreed that in order for the proposal to be progressed a viable full business case needs to be presented.

- g) **Agree IFS Recommendation to AAT Trustees regarding progression of the Change of Age Range Proposal:** Following on from the above discussions, the IFS Governing Body unanimously agreed to hold a secret ballot on the following proposal:

Proposal: The Inkberrow First School (IFS) Local Governing Body (LGB) recommend to the Avonreach Academy Trust (AAT) that IFS becomes a primary school with effect from 1st September 2019, subject to a viable business plan being presented by AAT.

Voting Outcome: The Voting Outcome is captured in a separate confidential minute.

Having recorded the above voting outcome, the following **actions** were agreed:

- The Chair agreed to notify the AAT Chair of Trustees of the IFS LGB's recommendation
- The Chair agreed to provide the IFS LGB with an update following the AAT Trustees meeting on 6th February 2018
- The Chair agreed to propose to the AAT Trustees that a joint statement should be issued to stakeholders following the 6th February 2018 Trustees meeting
- All Governors agreed to keep the above recommendation confidential until notified otherwise by the Chair (notification expected to be given after 6th February 2018), given that not all schools have yet voted and it is important that the voting outcome from one school does not influence the decisions to be made by other schools within the MAT.

8 Any Other Business:

School Lunch Provision: The Parent Governor advised that a number of parents have recently raised concerns, predominantly on social media, regarding the quality of the school lunches and the service provided by the School Lunch Provider. Those parents raising concerns have stated (via social media and other forms of communication) that they would like:

- an alternative School Lunch Provider to be procured,
- to be provided with the opportunity to trial and test the School Lunches,
- to be assured of the nutritional content of the school lunches

The Head advised that:

- No recent complaints have been made about the school lunch provision and the majority of children eat all of their lunch
- Only a handful of parents have contacted her in recent days to discuss their concerns regarding hot lunches
- She has only recently been notified of the social media messages that have been posted online by a number of parents
- A couple of issues with orders have arisen recently, however the school has progressed these straight away with the School Lunch Provider who has taken appropriate action
- The Governing Body reviews the School Lunch Provider Contract each year and the School Lunch Provider fulfils all the required statutory obligations with regard to nutritional content of school lunches
- The Governing Body would be required to give the School Lunch Provider one terms notice if they wish to cease the contract
- The Governing Body regularly reviews alternative provision within the local area, but to date have not found a better alternative to that provided by the current provider.
- In light of recent concerns that have been raised the annual review of the School Lunch Contract has been brought forward and alternative options are being investigated.
- PHS have confirmed that they do not currently have the capacity to provide school lunches to IFS.
- A communication regarding School Lunch provision has been issued to parents, and the school is happy to involve parent representatives in their reviews.

The Parent Governor advised that the social media “chatter” referenced above has also raised concerns that lunchtimes are “chaotic and noisy”, and has proposed that the staff should eat their lunch with the children. The Head advised that:

- lunchtimes are noisy, however this is purely due to the number of children engaging in conversation in a constrained space.
- staff continually evaluate the lunchtime arrangements, and trial different arrangements, but that the children need to be allowed to quietly interact with each other at lunchtime .
- the school cannot contractually require staff to eat their lunch with the children
- the majority of IFS staff use their lunchtime to prepare for the afternoon lessons

A Governor, who through his employment visits multiple school settings each week, advised that in his experience the IFS lunchtime experience is comparable to that encountered in the other schools in which he works.

- One Governor stated that he had been aware of the social media chatter regarding this issue in recent days but that he was of the personal opinion that grievances raised via social media can be “blown out of all proportion”. It was agreed that, given the increasing usage of social media, that the Chair should propose to Trustees that an AAT Social Media Usage policy should be developed. **Action:** Chair to propose to Trustees that an AAT Social Media Usage policy should be developed.

Following the above discussions the following **actions** were agreed:

- Parent Governor to notify parents who have raised concerns that the Governing Body has been made aware of, and has discussed, their concerns
- Parent Governor to remind parents who have raised concerns that their first port of call regarding any concerns that they have should be with the class teacher or the Head as appropriate, in order that their concerns can be addressed promptly
- S&P Forum Members to arrange to have a hot lunch as part of a forthcoming meeting
- Parent Forums to be placed onto the March 2018 Full GB Agenda for consideration

On behalf of the IFS Governing Body the Chair congratulated Martin and Diane Allen on their recent wedding.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and drew the meeting to a close at 9.00 pm.

Date of next Full GB Meeting: Thursday 8th March 2018 at 6pm

[Please note the above meeting will take place in the staffroom as Parents Consultation Meetings are taking place at the same time. Apologies received from Abbie Holliday. Heather Thomson to join the meeting at 6.30pm]