

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames



Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body

Wednesday, 8 February 2023 at 6.30pm (virtual)

Constitution, Membership and Attendance

LOCAL AUTHORITY – 1	PARENTS – 2	CO-OPTED – 9	STAFF – 2
Alexander Cooksley	Nicole Dodsworth	Andrea Fryer	Dermot Bracken - Headteacher
	Rebecca Mathews	Arthur Mollett	Sam Jeffrey
		Hermione Ruck Keene	
		John-Paul Gentry	
		Sam Matthewson	
Bold = absent		Ryan Buckingham	
		Yusra Ahmad	
		Vacancy	
		Vacancy	

Also attended: Val Cameron, Assistant Headteacher

Helen Cox, Clerk to the Governors

1.0	Apologies – John-Paul Gentry, Yusra Ahmad, Ryan Buckingham	ACTION
2.0	Declarations of interest – none.	
3.0	Minutes of the last meeting held on 23 November 2022 - approved by all present.	
4.0	Matters arising 4.0 Hermione, Yusra and Alex to register for Headteacher’s Performance Management – carried forward. 8.0 Terms of Reference – text to be amended to reflect current practices – agenda item later - closed. How have governor actions impacted on outcomes for pupils? - Spencer has visited the school to speak to Nikki McClenning about how the school supports pupils on the Pupil Premium register. - Sam Matthewson visited as part of School Improvement Partner visit which was useful for strategic planning. - Rebecca is going to liaise with Tina Sandhu, HR Officer, about how agency workers are entitled to “equal treatment” after twelve weeks in the same job.	Hermione, Yusra and Alex

5.0	Headteacher's written report – available via Governor Hub prior to the meeting. Dermot's report includes photos of events around the school and he emphasised his aim to increase the photographic representation of our children in reports and within the school environment. <u>Behaviours and Relationships Policy</u> The inset on 3 January focused on the new proposed Behaviours and Relationships Policy. Dermot explained it is important we have clear policies which are consistently applied. Three overarching expectations which strike a balance between rules and values, Ready, Respectful and Safe. <i>Question – ready, respectful and safe – it sounds a good and sound approach which is also used at Christ's School. Has there been any discussion about how you understand effectiveness of that policy / monitor on on-going basis?</i> Dermot referenced the work of Paul Dix, his philosophy is held as highly effective. The monitoring will come once it is rolled out and the use of CPOMS for behaviour incidents is the medium-term consideration. <i>Question – how do we capture positive behaviour as well?</i> Dermot explained consistency with things we already do, such as the Golden Wall, then considering other strategies such as certificates, postcards or phone calls home about positive behaviour. We would like to further enhance our culture of celebrating positive behaviours and attitudes. <i>Question – it is a good idea to reward positive behaviour, however sometimes children are rewarded for good behaviour for reaching same standard as others and therefore children who are always have good behaviour are not necessarily rewarded and then sometimes this can have a negative effect?</i> Dermot talked about it in terms of happy faces and sad faces it can always seem to be the same children, the policy is a complex and multi-layered shift. It is an "attachment sensitive" approach and it is very child centred, he recognises that all changes may take time to fully embed. <i>Question - can you explain attachment sensitive approach?</i> It is about looking out for approaches for those children who have insecure attachment models, building and strengthening relationships. It is about clarity, consistency and predictability with members of staff. The adults are the models of self-regulation and appropriateness. Thanks to the CFC Committee for giving the school time to consider this policy. <u>International Week</u> Dermot explained this has been historically referenced with great pride by staff and pupils. It was his first time experiencing the International Food Market on the Friday and it was an amazing day. It delivered on a sense of community and the international context of families at Marshgate. The staff ensured the children had a week of learning related to the country the class was learning about. Arthur explained the week focussing on one country meant the children experienced learning geography, trade, dynamics of the people living there. It was acknowledged by the governors present that it marked the return and healing from the Covid pandemic and how good it is to give children a different perspective. Thanks to the parents for their involvement and engagement. Thanks to the staff team and in particular, Sam Jeffrey, who led International Week. There was a brief discussion about the recent devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria which may be directly affecting members of the school and its wider community. Dermot explained that a Parent Mail had been sent to the parents on this matter. <u>Contextual information</u> <u>Roll</u> There are 418 pupils currently on roll (218 girls and 200 boys). This is the fullest it has been since Dermot became Headteacher. <i>Question – with the primary school allocations to be announced in April do we know how popular Marshgate is?</i> We have not got the figures yet from the Local Authority, however Dermot and JP are busy doing lots of prospective parent tours. <i>Question are we above the borough average for EAL statistics and can we have a format and key</i>	
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	<i>measure for borough and national comparisons?</i> Dermot explained Richmond borough has a very high international context. For future reports Dermot will present the school statistics with reference to useful points of context. For example, comparing to the borough and nationally where relevant, appropriate, feasible and/or contextualising with historical data for the school to show trends over time. Action: Dermot. <u>DAP – 32 children (7.6%)</u> <i>Question - reference has been made to “working poor” in the report, can you provide examples of how the school supports those children?</i> Dermot explained this is very fluid and difficult to officially classify. It is born out of a culture of openness where families make the school aware of their circumstances and part of a growing context due to financial pressures in all aspects of society. We can help by just knowing the children are possibly more vulnerable which allows for pastoral vigilance to be stronger and ultimately we can financially support. <i>Question - whether “working poor” should be included in the list of support payments in the Charging and Remissions Policy?</i> This can be reviewed at the next policy review. The governors acknowledged thanks to the PSA for continuing to support the children. <i>Question – do we get a grant from Richmond Parish Lands?</i> We are entitled to claim from RPL and they make a contribution to the locality to support individual children. Discussion took place about how the grant is used. <i>Observation - how we must not assume everyone has as much money as we think they may have and to think about how we can make more things affordable.</i> This was noted. It was explained Party Day food has changed so that the children bring in their own party packed lunch food instead of parents signing up to the class list. Discussion about making sure school uniform is cost effective for families. Dermot explained all schools have an obligation to provide parental value for money. <u>SEND Support</u> – 17 pupils and five pupils with an EHCP. <u>English as an Additional Language</u> – 69.2% (this is a three percent rise on the school year 2021.2022). It was discussed that we need an update on who will be the EAL lead. Dermot is in discussion with a member of the teaching team. In the meantime, he is the school’s point of contact with the Local Authority’s Diversity and Multilingual Advisor. <u>Attendance</u> Dermot and Helen met with the Education Welfare Officer this week and she was pleased to see the whole school attendance at 96%. At the meeting general attendance trends were discussed alongside individual pupil concerns. Dermot asked the governors to note the overall whole school target is not quite where we want it to be. The EWO discussed at the meeting possibly adopting FPN for absences. With our international context we have a lot of term time holiday requests. Teachers have been discussing attendance at the teacher and parent/carer meetings and if relevant how low attendance impacts on learning. It was acknowledged by the governors present this is a good approach. <i>Question – how sensitive are the percentages?</i> Dermot explained there are 190 school days which equates to 380 sessions (a session is a morning or afternoon). If a child takes time off at the beginning of the school year then the figure will be different at the end of the school year in July. Parents often perceive 90% as really good, so it is about explaining what it actually means. The EWO will only intervene if the absences are unauthorised. <u>School Improvement and School Development Priority Areas</u> Summary of the key points from the spring term School Improvement Partner were shared with the governors. Jenell Chetty, has left AfC and is no longer the SIP for Marshgate. Her contribution has been very much appreciated. Minuted item: thanks to Jenell Chetty for her excellent advice to the FGB over the years.	Dermot
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	<u>Governing body</u> References were made to Spencer Hall and Gabriela Vinader who have stepped down as governors. Thanks to Spencer who has been a governor since February 2004. Spencer joined as a Parent Governor. He has been the Co-Chair and has served on all three committees. Gabriela has most recently been the Safeguarding Governor and has played a pivotal role supporting the school. Minuted item: the school and FGB expressed thanks to Spencer and Gabriela.	
6.0	Safeguarding from a class teachers' point of view – by Sam Jeffrey • Our biggest tool is the rapport we build with the children; we find out what is normal or not normal for the children. The relationship we build up with them enables us to know if something has changed and if we need to do anything more. • We put on detective hats when we find out something may have changed at school or home. • The procedures and protocols to protect children at Marshgate are highly effective. • Analogy that teachers wear many hats, we are first aiders, parents, teachers, but we never take off our safeguarding hat. We are always ready to deal with a concern. <i>Question – is it a challenge to have all those hats on at once and juggle the time, we acknowledge that it is a big responsibility?</i> Sam explained it can be challenging, however we are always building relationships with the children. If you know what is typical for the child, then you know what is atypical and then you may notice a change in the child. Dermot informed of the imperative that every Marshgate pupil can identify a trusted adult at Marshgate to talk to. Minuted item: Governors expressed thanks to Sam for his presentation.	
7.0	Reports from Committees	
7.1	Resourcing Committee – meeting held on 17 January 2023 – feedback from Alex <u>Key updates from meeting</u> • The Charging and Remissions Policy was reviewed. The charge to parents for independent school reports was not reflective of the administrative costs to Marshgate. • Budget Model 2022 was reviewed line by line. • Impact of strikes on schools discussed. Dermot explained our NEU Rep was appropriately communicative to Dermot about the strikes. • Discussed how we recover costs in debt Recovery Policy. The Committee is mindful about the current circumstances of the financial difficulties families may find themselves in.	
7.2	Curriculum and Progress Committee – meeting held on 27 January 2023 feedback from Rebecca <u>Key updates from meeting</u> • Excellent report from Val about Early Reading and Phonics and how this is being rolled out through the school and the changes with the new scheme (see committee minutes for details). • PPG report prepared by Nikki McClenning, how the PPG grant is used and the wider opportunities for children. • Anonymised case study discussed at the meeting and subsequently shared with the whole FGB. Governors present at the committee meeting found the information very helpful and thought this was a good reflection of best practice from a governor perspective. • Spencer's Link Governor report on PPG has been circulated on Governor Hub.	

7.3	Children, Families and Community Committee – meeting held on 2 February feedback from Hermione <u>Key updates from meetings</u> - Reviewed the Complaints Policy and Procedures - Reviewed the Complaints – Policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints. - Discussion about the strikes. It was acknowledged that the way it has been handled at Marshgate is very good.	
8.0	Terms of reference These have been updated by Sam. Reference to virtual meetings has been updated. Minuted item: approved by all present.	
9.0	Governor training - Ryan attended Primary Curriculum: An Overview for Governors. - Val and Helen have attended Safer Recruitment (Multi-agency). - Nicole attended Safeguarding: The Governing Board's Role Nicole reported that her course was very useful and a pamphlet summary about safeguarding for visitors was mentioned. It was suggested that any notes or feedback from courses can be shared via Governor Hub.	
13.0	Any other business The next meeting will be on the school site and will be an opportunity to say thank you and goodbye to Spencer and Gabriela. Discussion about information crib sheet for Governors. This will be a future agenda item.	

The meeting ended at 8.25pm

Signed by the Chair _____ Date _____

Printed name Sam Matthewson

Summary of Actions – 8 February 2023

	Details	Action
4.0	From matters arising Headteacher's Performance Management – Hermione, Yusra and Alex to register.	Hermione, Yusra and Alex
5.0	For future reports Dermot will present the school statistics with reference to useful points of context	Dermot