

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames



Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body

Wednesday, 22 March 2023 at 6.30pm (on the school site)

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
		John-Paul Gentry	
		Sam Matthewson	
		Ryan Buckingham	
Bold = absent		Yusra Ahmad	
		Vacancy	
		Vacancy	
		Vacancy	

Also attended: Val Cameron, Assistant Headteacher

Helen Cox, Clerk to the Governors

1.0	Apologies – Sam Matthewson and Andrea Fryer	ACTION
2.0	Declarations of interest – none.	
3.0	Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 February 2023 - approved by all present.	
4.0	Matters arising 4.0 Hermione, Yusra and Alex to register for Headteacher’s Performance Management. Yusra has this booked on 27 June and Ryan has also completed this training. 5.0 For future reports Dermot will present the school statistics with reference to useful points of context – <i>closed</i>. How have governor actions impacted on outcomes for pupils? - Dermot explained the presentations at the Curriculum and Progress Committee by Arthur Mollett and Michelle Wrigley added further to the committee’s strong body of knowledge. - Yusra and Andrea have liaised with Finance Officer, Julia Doherty, to ensure governance processes in place with the Schools Financial Value Standard document which has to be submitted to the Local Authority on an annual basis. - Rebecca has liaised with Tina Sandhu, Finance Officer, about how agency workers are entitled to “equal treatment” after twelve weeks in the same job.	
5.0	Local Authority Governor appointment and update on governing body membership	

	Alexander Cooksley – LA Governor Based on the skills required and recommendations of the board at Marshgate Primary School, Achieving for Children Governor Support, working on behalf of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Authority, formally nominates Alexander Cooksley to the position of LA governor. This second term of office is for four years ending on 26 March 2027. Minuted item: The board formally ratified Alexander Cooksley to the position of LA governor. Spencer Hall - Co-opted Governor Spencer has stepped down after many years as a Governor at Marshgate. Spencer first joined in September 2004 and has been a stalwart of the Governing body since working closely with the former Headteacher, Ms Jackson and the current Headteacher, Mr Bracken. Minuted item: Thanks to Spencer for his considerable contribution to Marshgate over the years as a school governor. Gabriela Vinader – Co-opted Governor Gabriela kindly extended her term for a short period when it finished in June 2022 to ensure there was a smooth transition with the Safeguarding Governor role. Minuted item: Thanks to Gabriela for her contribution to the FGB and in particular on the CFC Committee. Hermione Ruck Keene Hermione’s four-year term is now complete and Hermione is stepping down as a Governor. Minuted item: Thanks for Hermione for her contribution to the FGB and in particular as Chair on the CFC Committee. Arthur Mollett Arthur’s four-year term is now complete and he has kindly agreed to stay as a Co-opted Governor for another four-year term. Andrea Fryer Andrea’s four-year term is now complete and she has kindly agreed to stay as a Co-opted Governor for the time being. <i>Thank you to all our governors for their valuable contribution to Marshgate Primary School.</i>	
6.0	Headteacher’s verbal report – available via Governor Hub prior to the meeting. Contextual information <u>Roll</u> There are currently 417 pupils on roll (218 girls and 199 boys) <u>DAP</u> (disadvantaged children) – represents 8% of children <u>SEND Support</u> – seventeen pupils and five pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). <u>English as an Additional Language</u> – 69.2% of pupils <u>Overall school attendance</u> 95.55% which is above the national average and very good for the Richmond borough. Dermot explained 79% of schools have agreed to share their data with the DfE which means schools can look at national and local comparisons. Marshgate has registered this. <u>Continuing Professional Development</u> Staff continue to avail of training, Dermot provided some examples to the governors present. <u>Budget</u> It has been acknowledged at Heads’ Forum that all schools are facing financial pressures. The draft budget has been reviewed by the Resourcing Committee (see minutes below). Thanks to Julia Doherty for all her work on this. The staffing costs account for approximately 75% of the budget.	

Industrial action

Unanimous engagement with the teacher strikes by the teaching staff. Arthur explained the parental response was very positive with some parents bringing refreshments to the teachers picketing outside the school. As a goodwill gesture Dermot has spread the last three strike day pay deductions across three months' salaries.

Staffing

Dermot explained there has been turbulence with staffing this school year, in particular in Year 2 and Year 4. He is aware of parental disappointment and has prioritised ensuring consistency.

Question – whilst we appreciate it is a difficult situation do you feel like you have appropriate level of resources to support the class? Dermot explained he does. He knew in advance about the paternity leave in Year 3, however some situations in Year 2 and Year 4 have been challenging as they have presented mid-year. The SLT want to make the best decisions we can as we know consistency is best for the children. The SIP referenced staffing matters beyond the school's control in her report to Governors.

Governors update

Farewell and thank you to Hermione, Spencer and Gabriela. Thanks in particular for the required challenges they brought to the roles. Thanks to Arthur and Andrea for staying on board.

Question – how can we recruit new governors? Sam and Dermot will prioritise this and liaise with Helen to recruit new governors.

School Improvement Partner

The new SIP is Chris Chen who has a strong curriculum background.

Practice SATS

These have taken place for Year 6 and Year 2 recently. The Year 6 SATs Week will start on Tuesday, 9 May due to the King's Coronation Bank Holiday on 8 May. Therefore, they will run Tuesday to Friday.

Arthur explained the practice tests are to prepare the children in terms of logistics and timings, we try to make it as calm and regular as possible (biscuits are a treat after the tests). There have been no visible signs of stress from the children, they are taking to the challenge. There are quite a few new members of staff involved in the SATs process, there are a range of needs for the cohort, including the use of a translator for the first time. Results from the mock tests inform areas we can support the children in.

Question – are the tests back to back that week? Yes, and they are lengthy tests, however the children do get additional breaks.

Educational visits

Year 4 will be visiting Sayers Croft in Surrey for a three-day residential visit. Thanks to Nikki McClenning, Educational Visits Lead, for all her work on this.

Observation - it is good that residential journeys have started again following the Pandemic and the children have the opportunity to enjoy the experience. Parent Governors present noted how the Year 4 Sayers Croft residential is a very good and memorable experience for the children.

Professional Growth (Appraisal) mid-year reviews

These are currently taking place.

Primary Admissions 2023

There were 278 applications in total with fifty-two requesting Marshgate as a first preference.

Question – how does that compare to other schools? We can't currently be sure; the offers will be made on 17 April.

	<u>Harrisons – School Meals Catering firm</u> School meals continue to be something that encourage strong views amongst the parents. At a recent Class Reps meeting the Harrisons manager attended and was able to respond to a lengthy dossier of feedback. He presented very well and this was well-received by the Class Reps. <i>Question – in terms of volume of complaints/issues has it changed recently or has it increased?</i> School meals have always been something parents will raise at Class Reps meetings, the current uptake for school meals is very high which is positive. Dermot has arranged for two Class Reps to visit lunchtime service after the Easter holidays. <i>Question – are there any changes with school meal costs in relation to Sidiq Khan’s announcement that every London primary pupil will get free school meals in the 2023/2024 academic year and will there be gaps in the finances?</i> Dermot explained the meals will cost £2.62, currently the charge to the school is £2.18 and we charge £2.40 to parents. The gap is unfunded and the school will have to cover the costs. <i>Question – do you think Harrisons have the capacity to make all the additional lunches?</i> Yes, we currently have a high uptake.	
7.0	Reports from Committees	
7.1	Resourcing Committee – meeting held on 14 March 2023 – feedback from Alex <u>Key updates from meeting</u> - Industrial action discussed at meeting within staffing matters. - Draft budget 2023/2024 was reviewed with the three year forecast. There is a prediction of deficit in Year 2. This is not unusual and Marshgate is in a better position than most other schools in the locality. Year 2 and 3 is uncertain and assumptions about wages will affect those predictions. - Schools Financial Value Standard document (SFVS) – Yusra and Andrea met with Julia Doherty to look at the budgeting and financial processes in the school. The governors were very impressed with the systems in place, for examples the Purchase Orders and controls on how invoices are paid. This is essentially a check to ensure we have the right governance processes for finances and Human Resources. - The committee had an update on the 2022.2023 budget (<i>see minutes for details</i>).	
7.2	Curriculum and Progress Committee – meeting held on 10 March 2023 feedback from Ryan <u>Key updates from meeting</u> - Presentation from Michelle Wrigley on the Early Years Foundation Stage. - Presentation from Arthur Mollett on Reigniting and Revitalising Writing at Marshgate. The committee were very impressed with the two presentations. They learnt about the new EYFS framework, re-naming and classification of skills and the interwoven curriculum, and the removal of exceeding judgements. It was interesting to hear how Read, Write Inc is being embedded in Reception. New parents and carers have additional information sessions and home visits are now carried out for the new Reception children before they join the school. Looked at collaborations with other schools in the borough with a common writing focus. The committee learnt about writing stamina, the pen licences system and long term goals. <i>Question – have you had discussion about how hand writing may be affected by the use of digital devices?</i> Arthur explained the parental view is very different now compared to six or seven years ago about this. A requirement is to leave primary school with joined up writing. It is best practice about handwriting to think what the purpose is and to automatically write something without thinking about what they are doing. In the past it was about beautiful handwriting, now about functionality. <i>See minutes for further details.</i>	

7.3	Children, Families and Community Committee – meeting held on 16 March feedback from Nicole <u>Key updates from meetings</u> - Nicole was elected as Chair as Hermione has stepped down as Governor. A Vice-Chair is needed once new Governors are on the FGB. - The Health and Safety Policy was reviewed and updated. - Dermot provided an update on the progress of Behaviour and Relationships policy. - Discussion took place about easing back on school requirements on families regarding school uniform. <i>See minutes for details.</i> - Gabriela and Nicole carried out a review of the Single Central Register (DBS list) with Helen Cox.	
8.0	Governor training Rebecca has completed the two-part SEND for Governors training which she said excellent. Other governors have training planned for the coming term and will feedback at the next meeting.	
9.0	Any other business Val asked the governors to note the date of the Summer Fair, 1 July 2023. The PSA are working hard to put together this community event. More to follow in terms of governor involvement on the day. Future meetings 24 May – virtual 21 June – on the school site.	

The meeting ended at 7.45pm

Signed by the Vice-Chair _____ Date _____

Printed name Alex Cooksley

Summary of Actions – 22 March 2023

	Details	Action