

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames



Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body

Wednesday, 24 May 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
	Rebecca Mathews	Arthur Mollett	Sam Jeffrey
		John-Paul Gentry	
		Sam Matthewson	
Bold = absent		Ryan Buckingham	
		Yusra Ahmad	
		Vacancy	
		Vacancy	
		Vacancy	

Also attended: Val Cameron, Assistant Headteacher

Helen Cox, Clerk to the Governors

1.0	Apologies – none.	Action
2.0	Declarations of interest – none.	
3.0	Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 March 2023 - approved by all present.	
4.0	Matters arising – none. How have governor actions impacted on outcomes for pupils? Nicole attended a School Council meeting (this is for the pupils and is run by Sam Jeffrey). Dermot emphasised the importance of pupil voice and how the School Council is a vehicle for this. Nicole and Dermot gave full credit to Sam Jeffrey for running the meeting. Nicole explained the pupils attending the meeting were fully prepared with ideas from their classmates and she was very impressed how the children participated in the meeting in a democratic manner. Ryan visited the Year 6 classes to meet the children who talked about what they have been learning about. Ryan explained it was very impressive and thanked Arthur and the Year 6 team for the opportunity to come to the school.	

5.0	Headteacher's written report – available via Governor Hub prior to the meeting. The front photograph showed all the children who dressed as a character from the Harry Potter books on World Book Day. Dermot explained they capture the magic that the Marshgate children bring to school life. Thanks to Sam Jeffrey and Fay Richards for organising the photo. <u>Year 6 SATs</u> SATs for Year 6 took place were conducted in typical Marshgate fashion, very slick and the children were very well prepared. The logistics and every statutory requirement were carried out with the children feeling comfortable. Thanks to the Year 6 team, Arthur Mollett, Helen Gray, Marie Giles, JP Gentry, Nikki McClenning and all LSPs supporting individual children. Arthur explained in general the feeling was positive throughout. The change in structure due to the King's Coronation, Bank Holidays, strike days meant it the week was structured slightly differently. However, everything went to time and was organised well. <i>Question about this year's reading test in relation to media reports</i> – Arthur explained the complexity of this year's reading test was raised in the national media. Many schools reported high numbers of children not completing the test. Increasing the Marshgate children's reading stamina ensured the children were resilient in their engagement with the reading task. <u>Reception 2023/2024</u> To date fifty-five confirmed offers and we hope to be at a full complement of sixty in September. <u>PSA news</u> Congratulations to the Marshgate Primary School Parent Staff Association (PSA) which has won England PTA of the Year at the National PTA Awards. Dermot explained this award reflects going above and beyond to make the PSA inclusive of our diverse community and embracing families that join our school. The governors present acknowledged the significance of this award and congratulated the current PSA team. <i>Question do the PSA struggle to get volunteers to run activities?</i> Sometimes they do struggle to get people to volunteer, in fact one of the planned Film Nights had to be cancelled for this reason this year. <i>Question – do you have a sense of how fundraising income being steady or is it decreasing?</i> There has been a typical round figure, we have identified three key areas and allocation of funds has been given to those three areas. We have a relatively conservative £20,000 per year and have raised larger sums in the past, but as we are in cost of living crisis it would be appropriate to have conservative expectations. It was acknowledged by those present that businesses were in a better position to give more in the past. It is good the PSA are making sure there are inclusive activities for people to attend. Thanks expressed to Hamptons who are still supporting the school. Dermot thanked Val and Helen for their time working closely with the PSA team. Action: Chair of Governors to thank the Chair of PSA and Committee on behalf of the FGB. <u>Staffing</u> The deadline for teachers to hand in their notice is 31 May. A new teacher has just been recruited for September and Dermot has committed to three part-time teachers for the next school year. <i>Question - how do we ensure that children who have not had stability this year will have stability</i>	Sam M
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next year? Dermot explained a wide variety of considerations are taken into account when placing teachers in year groups, it is always child centred. There have been unique staffing issues this year which have brought inconsistency to one particular class.

Contextual information

Roll

There are 414 pupils currently on roll (217 girls and 197 boys).

SEND Support – 17 pupils and five pupils with an EHCP.

English as an Additional Language – There are fifty-one different languages spoken by Marshgate children. Turkish, Chinese and Russian are the most common languages spoken after English. Thanks to Val for her recent work re-invigorating and re-informing staff in terms of identifying children who have English as an Additional Language.

Question – how does the school engage with parents/carers of different languages? Dermot explained increasing parental engagement is important. For example, we have members of staff who have been able to support new families with English as an Additional Language. The school office puts new families in touch with Class Reps.

Religion - “No religion” is the dominant faith, followed by Muslim and Christian.

Attendance

Whole school attendance at 96% which is above the national average.

31 pupils have 100% attendance for the school year to date.

95% attendance for both DAP and SEND pupil groups.

Attendance breakdown by class showed Reception the lowest at 92% and 94% respectively.

Question – there seems to be outstanding issues in Reception are there specific issues with that cohort? Sam Jeffrey explained that they are working with those parents/carers of children who have long term attendance issues. The figures for the whole cohort can be affected by one or two children who are off school a lot. DB explained that educating families about the importance of excellent attendance is often necessary for Reception families new to the school. Parental mind set linked to statutory school age can also be a complicating factor for Reception attendance.

Question – asked about guidance for keeping pupils off school? There is information on the Marshgate website with links to the NHS website called “Is my child too ill for school?” and information about common childhood illnesses/conditions from the UK Health Security Agency “Should I keep my child off school?” will be added. Both are very informative.

IT infrastructure

See Resourcing Committee feedback.

KS1 SATs

Thanks to Mrs Macpherson, Mrs Davies, Mrs Noone and the team for all their work on the KS1 SATs. The Year 2 SATs are being discounted from next year.

The Year 2 teachers have external moderation taking place in June to quality assure their assessments, this will involve a lot of work for the teachers.

	<u>Safeguarding</u> One child has a Child Protection Plan and one is registered as a “child in need”. Our Safeguarding Governor is Nicole Dodsworth. The school’s “Single Central Register” is constantly being reviewed to make sure we are beyond compliant. <u>Finance</u> The draft budget is being produced by Dermot, Julia Doherty and Steve Llewellyn. <u>Governor recruitment</u> We are pleased to announce Issy Monkton and Lucinda Holmes will join as Co-opted governors and will attend the next FGB meeting.	
6.0	Reports from Committees	
6.1	Resourcing Committee – meeting held on 15 May 2023 – feedback from Alex <u>Key updates from meeting</u> - Two representatives from Colwyn Technologies presented to the Committee about the current IT systems at Marshgate and the proposed move to a cloud based server. See minutes for further details on the presentation and questions asked at Committee level. <u>Key things to note</u> - There is an urgent need to update the IT system. It is now at inflection point; it would be better for IT security to upgrade the system. - The costs will be significant. - IT outages with the current server have cost the school in terms of wasted time spent by teaching staff and office staff not having full access to teach and work at full capacity. - The Committee agreed this is an urgent case for review. <i>Question – what are the time constraints for this?</i> It is an urgent need and Dermot explained the costs have been itemised costs and we have enquired from LA about using the Capital reserve to address this. See the information prepared by JP in the Headteacher’s report. - It has been acknowledged there has been under investment and we need to move from physical server to a cloud-based server. - The presentation was really helpful and the representatives explained the answers to questions in lay terms. <i>Question – are we getting value for money and should we be seeking multiple quotes?</i> Under the tendering rules if they are on the DfE list then they have been pre-approved. Action: Dermot to confirm Colwyn’s status as an approved supplier. <i>Question – do those figures include some items such as licences? Can the governing board see what, if any, are doubling up costs?</i> The Resourcing Committee will look at this. - Also to note we need to upgrade our hardware. The governors present noted that we need to have an understanding of all costs and whether there costs we can defer to a	Dermot

	different financial year. The works are itemised into six aspects and the only one which would require tender is the switching element (approximately £11,000). One of the main issues is the fact that in October certain software will be out of life. This is why the phasing is really important, we definitely need to do modelling in terms of switching on and off. It is really important to make decision so we are not “left out in the cold”. The FGB agreed to delegate to the Resourcing Committee to make a concise recommendation. The order of work was presented in the report. The school would like a green light to prepare to change switches this side of the summer holidays. It was explained that we cannot switch over until we have the new devices as they will not work with the new server (this is not the children’s devices). There is a body of work in what we want to decommission. Action: Resourcing Committee to focus on this project and make timely recommendations by email to the FGB.	Resourcing Committee
6.2	Curriculum and Progress Committee – meeting held on 12 May 2023 feedback from Ryan <u>Key updates from meeting</u> - The first presentation was from JP on behalf of Emma Jerwood on Special Educational Needs. It was an interesting update on changes in approach and support of school in terms of SEN. Information was provided about the ELSA intervention (Emotional, Literacy Support). Governors were able to review the SEND Report for Governors, 2023 which was circulated at meeting and the SEND Information Report which is published on our website and also circulated at the meeting. - The second presentation was from Michelle Wrigley on Religious Education. It was very interesting to hear how it is being implemented across the school and how the staff are able to deal with the breath of topics. See minutes for further information.	
6.3	Children, Families and Community Committee – meeting held on 19 May 2023 from Nicole <u>Key updates from meetings</u> - Safeguarding – Single Central Register information provided in alignment with training for staff on safer recruitment. - The GDPR Policy was thoroughly reviewed and updated. - The terms of reference for this committee were reviewed including discussion about Accessibility Plan. See minutes for further information.	
7.0	Being Ofsted Ready Due to the lengthy discussion about the Attendance Policy this agenda item has been moved to the in-person meeting in June.	
8.0	Attendance Policy approval The proposed draft policy was circulated prior to the meeting, items for discussion and questions	

	raised were as follows: ○ Wording to be adjusted from “We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school” to “We will ensure best endeavours are made to provide learning for children who are absent for a significant period of time in line with our statutory guidance.” ○ <i>Question – how do you plan to use this?</i> Is it aimed at parents/carers and all stakeholders about what we are obliged to do and our procedures. It firms up our position and we are committing to that it adds a layer of support to what we communicate in terms of expectation to parents/carers. Dermot explained we have a lot of requests for absences, while our attendance is high we do not want to rest on our laurels. ○ <i>Question about the difference between authorised and unauthorised attendance codes?</i> Information and definitions of attendance codes to be added to the policy. ○ Suggestion to add the UK Health Security Agency “Should I keep my child off school?” poster to the school website. Accepted. ○ Suggestion to change the wording regarding how the attendance register is reviewed by governors to how the Headteacher updates the FGB about trends and punctuality in reports to the FGB. Accepted. ○ <i>Question – does the policy reflect that parents/carers are requested regularly to update their telephone numbers to ensure the school office has the correct contacts to call?</i> This will be added. ○ <i>Question – will some parents/carers find it controversial?</i> There will always be some parents/carers who have strong views about term time holidays, however we have a responsibility and we have set out our expectations. Minuted item: Draft policy to be updated with amendments and emailed to FGB for approval. Action: Helen to update the Attendance Policy and circulate via email to FGB.	Helen
9.0	Governor training – assessment and feedback from courses attended Nicole attended “Getting it Right as a Parent Governor” and explained this is a good summary of do’s/don’ts and expectations. Sam has asked all governors to look for Ofsted training and encouraged everyone to attend.	All
10.0	Any other business Summer Fair on 1 July 2023 - Val explained all governors are welcome to attend and there is the opportunity to volunteer on the front entrance with staff and to participate in Beat the Goalie.	

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

Signed by the Chair _____ Date _____

Printed name Sam Matthewson

Summary of Actions – 24 May 2023

	Details	Action
5.0	Chair of Governors to thank the Chair of PSA and Committee on behalf of the FGB.	Sam M
6.1	Check Colwyn's status as an approved supplier.	Dermot
6.1	Resourcing Committee to focus on this project and make timely recommendations by email to the FGB.	Resourcing Committee
8.0	Update the Attendance Policy and circulate via email to FGB.	Helen
9.0	All governors to look for Ofsted training.	All