

The Governing Body of Aire View Infant School
Meeting held on 13 December 2013
MINUTES

Meeting commenced at 1.29pm

Present: Vicky Bottomley (Head), Kelly Coburn, Ellena Cohen, Joanne Gill, Louise Heslop (Assoc.Memb), Anne LeGrove, Theresa O'Connor, Jane Ogston, Lesley Pickard, Steve Wilkinson

In Attendance: Helen Osman (Supply Clerk, BC/SGS)

FGB 18/13 Chair's introduction

The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting. She felt it would be useful to open each meeting with a brief reminder of one or two elements of the Governors' Code of Conduct. On this occasion, she drew Governors' attention to the following:

- The Governing Body (GB) had agreed that, while it encouraged open expression of views at meetings, Governors accepted collective responsibility for GB decisions. Governors would not speak out against decisions, publicly or privately, outside the GB.
- Governors could only speak or act on behalf of the GB when they had specifically been authorised to do so by the GB.

FGB 19/13 Apologies for absence and their acceptance

Apologies had been received, and were accepted, from Georges Droogmans, Martin McGowan and Lynda Whitton.

FGB 20/13 Any other urgent business and requests for agenda order variations

No other business was notified and there were no requests to vary the agenda.

FGB 21/13 Declarations of interest

No interests were declared in any agenda items.

FGB 22/13 Consider co-option of Governor: Georges Droogmans

Agenda papers FGB 22/13 (a) and (b)

Steve Wilkinson said that he had contacted the School Governor Service at Bradford Council (BC/SGS), which was arranging for Georges Droogmans to be appointed as a Local Authority (LA) Governor.

FGB 23/13 Minutes of the meeting of 24 September 2013

- ***The minutes of the meeting of 24 September 2013 were unanimously approved by the Governing Body, signed by the Chair and passed to the Head.***

Item FGB 09/13 - the Head said that the website had been strongly promoted and was being well used. The Key Stage blogs were particularly popular. The website was promoted at parents evenings and individual parent consultations, in curriculum newsletters and in routine communications with parents. The site used Google Translate which, while imperfect, allowed wider access. The website and blogs were also used in classes, which had the impact of pupils asking their parents to use them at home.

Action

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____ - 1

The GB thanked staff for their work on the website and blogs, which they knew was time-consuming.

Item FGB 15/13 - the Chair reported that efforts continued to arrange training for Governors in Buildings Management. **ACTION:** The task had passed to the Chair of the Finance & Buildings Committee (Chair/FB), who would continue to pursue the matter.

Chair/FB

Item FGB 16/13 (a) - the Chair reported that she had apologised to the previous Clerk in person, re-written the missing thank-you letter and arranged for the replacement of the gift.

Item FGB 16/13 (f) - the Head reported that she had discussed with the Chair of the 2 Valleys Learning Collaborative (2VCL) the scope for GBs to collaborate on hearings; the Chair had thought that there might be some interest in doing so.

All other matters arising had been completed, were in hand or would be addressed under other items on this agenda.

FGB 24/13 Headteacher's report

Agenda paper FGB 24/13

Governors thanked the Head for her comprehensive report, noting that future reports would consist of amended versions of this report to highlight changes. They noted that references to the old School Improvement Group should be updated to refer to the new Pupil Progress & Welfare (PPW) Committee.

The Head said that the Headteacher's report and the SEF¹ could be found in the Governors' section of the school website. While there were inconsistencies between the versions of these documents circulated as agenda papers FGB24/13 and FGB 25/13, the updated versions on the website were consistent.

Governors noted that the School Improvement Partner (SIP) recommended that its LA category for 2013-14 should be Priority 4, (the LA's lowest priority for support, reflecting that the school was not giving cause for concern). The Chair and Head had agreed with this recommendation.

The Head said that the Early Years Senior Achievement Officer from Bradford Council (BC/EY SAO) was trialling an EY SEF, which Aire View had completed. BC/EY SAO had agreed with the school's judgements. Governors welcomed this external validation of the school's self assessment for EY.

Noting the significant gap between current Year 2 attainment and the 2014 targets (page 1), Governors asked whether the targets were realistic. The Head said that they were certainly challenging but that it was important to aim high; children often exceeded expectations if aspirations were high. The current and next cohorts were challenging, and interventions were being put in place to support progress and attainment. Replying to questions, she said that the current level of attainment was not unusual at this time of year; a similar jump in attainment between the autumn and summer terms had been seen last year, so staff knew that it could be done. Governors agreed that it was important to have high aspirations for pupils.

Governors noted that, as had been demonstrated at the recent PPW Committee meeting, the school's processes for tracking and supporting pupil progress were impressive. The Head said that the school benefited from high quality teaching and learning throughout. The curriculum was outstanding and continued to evolve. Parent Governors observed that the use of themes was successfully engaging pupils in

¹ SEF - Self Evaluation Form: the basis of Ofsted inspections until replaced in 2011-12. Some schools found the SEF format useful and continue to use it; many now produce one in a shorter format.

learning. A more physical approach (for example through Physical Phonics, Maths in Motion) was successfully engaging those pupils who responded well to this type of learning - the Head and AHT said that these approaches were particularly successful in engaging many of the boys. These factors all supported the view that, though testing, the targets were realistic.

Asked about the reasons for authorised absences, the Head said that absences were authorised in case of sickness, medical appointments, exceptional circumstances (eg bereavements and weddings abroad). As a transitional arrangement, pre-booked holidays were being authorised in 2013-14. Attendance was monitored daily, weekly and half-termly, and the school expected to arrange for its first Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued in January 2014.

Replying to questions, the Associate Member (AM) said that the Boxall Profile was an assessment tool used by SEBD² Teams - as part of her accreditation for the Nurture Room she was licensed to use the profile.

The Vice Chair reminded Governors of the importance of ensuring that they were familiar with, and understood, the content of the Headteacher's report so that they could discuss it with Ofsted as the need arose.

The Vice Chair and Clerk mentioned a number of data dashboards³ that Governors might find helpful in focusing on the key facts and figures relating to the school's strengths and weaknesses. While some of the information in those dashboards might be misleading, it was important that Governors were familiar with what they said - particularly the Ofsted dashboard - and understood the reasons behind any misleading data.

FGB 25/13 Approve Self Evaluation Form (SEF)

Agenda paper FGB 25/13

The Head said that the most recent version of the SEF, which had been updated following detailed discussion between the Chair, SIP and senior leadership team (SLT) in light of the 2013 RAISE Online data, was available in the Governors' section of the school website. The Chair said that the SEF was overwhelmingly positive, and was backed up with robust sources of evidence. Governors noted that the SEF, along with the RAISE Online data, Headteacher's report and SIP report, would be the prime sources of information for Ofsted.

- **The Governing Body approved** the Self Evaluation Form.

ACTION: The school would provide a glossary of terms, including GLD and its components, to Governors.

Head

FGB 26/13 Approve holiday schedule for 2014-15

Agenda paper FGB 26/13

Governors thanked the school for liaising with Hothfield Junior School on proposed holiday dates. It was unfortunate that the Bradford and South Craven holiday dates, set by the respective local authorities, differed significantly in 2014-15; this could be expected to cause difficulties for parents with children at schools in both areas, as well as for staff with children in South Craven, and might affect attendance. There was, however, little that the GB could do to address this.

- **The Governing Body approved** the holiday schedule for 2014-15.

² SEBD - Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

³ Ofsted: <http://dashboard.ofsted.gov.uk/dash.php?urn=107273>; Fischer Family Trust: <http://www.fft.org.uk/fft-live/governor-dashboard.aspx>

FGB 27/13 Report from Committees

Paper: Finance Committee Budget Monitoring Summary v 2.0 - Q2 2013-14 - tabled at meeting and attached as Annex A (signed minutes only)

Pupil Progress and Welfare - Chair/PPW reported that this new Committee had met twice. It had gained a good view of the school at the level of both the whole school and individual pupils, and had a clear overview of the procedures and processes in place to support pupil progress and attainment and ensure their welfare. He considered that the information received by the Committee so far had been very useful, and expected that to continue. He underlined the importance of Governors understanding school data to enable them to perform their role of supporting and challenging the school effectively.

The Committee had considered safeguarding and had assured itself that the school had in place the procedures and links with external agencies necessary to minimise the risk of encountering issues such as those raised in the recent Serious Case Review in Bradford.

Finance & Buildings - Chair/FB talked Governors through Annex A. Quarter 2 had seen an increase in both income and expenditure, leaving a projected carryforward of £30k, broadly in line with the original budget. Since then, income from Pupil Premium funding had been reduced by £10k because a number of pupils had gone to Hothfield Junior School. This meant that the budget was expected to go into deficit in 2014-15 instead of 2015-16 as originally anticipated. The projected deficit in Year 3 was £32.5 k, against a budget of £1.2m. Replying to questions, she said that these projections did not take account of increased income from expanding to 3 Form Entry in 2014, because it was not yet definitely agreed that this would go ahead. It was not yet clear what effect the new National Funding scheme would have on the schools finances. Information on formula funding was expected to be available in January 2014.

Because the school's main expenditure (approximately 85% of budget) was on staff, it was difficult to see where substantial savings could be made without compromising teaching and learning, although a saving of £12k had been made by not replacing a Level 3 Teaching Assistant. This meant that additional demands (for example, the arrival of new SEN pupils) had to be met by redeployment of existing staff rather than by increasing staff numbers. Governors highlighted the importance of ensuring that this was done in a way that did not compromise the care of pupils. The quality of staff at Aire View was the school's greatest strength.

The Committee had approved policies on charging and Data Protection, and had recommended a policy on Governor Allowances for approval at this meeting.

Meetings had been held with the architects and BC project manager to discuss the proposed building works, and a traffic management plan had been submitted, as had an application for change of use of the playground. The Head said that the Project Board had approved funding of £1.0m against the total estimated cost of £2.0m. The funding would be used to construct the new Nursery block; other elements of the proposed works would tackled in order of priority according to how much of the £1.0m remained. She assumed that the Project Manager would submit a bid for the remaining £1.0m in the next bidding round. It was not clear whether the school would continue to be regarded as a high priority for funding; according to the Project Manager, funding for primary schools was expected to be based on "basic need". The Head said that the lack of enclosed cloakrooms presented a fire safety issue; BC's buildings management team agreed.

Chair/FB said that work was due to begin at Easter 2014. It was unlikely to be completed by September 2014, but work would be prioritised in such a way to ensure that the additional 15 pupils expected to arrive in September 2014 with the proposed expansion to 3 Form Entry could be accommodated.

Replying to questions, the Head said that the school would receive additional funding from central Government in respect of the extension of Free School Meals to all children for their first 3 years of schooling. This would be needed to ensure that the kitchen could handle the additional work.

Governors noted that the newly appointed LA Governor had considerable experience of building projects which would no doubt be of great help in the coming months.

Personnel and Pay - the GB noted the minutes of the Personnel and Pay Committee meetings.

FGB 28/13 Approve minutes of final meetings of old Committees

➤ **The Governing Body approved** the minutes of the meetings of:

- the School Improvement Group meeting on 02 May 2013
- the Finance Committee meeting on 20 June 2013.

FGB 29/13 Approve Terms of Reference for new Committees

The Chair thanked all concerned for their work on developing the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the new Committees; the task had been substantial but useful. **ACTION:** Governors asked that the following amendments be made to the ToR for the Pupil Progress and Welfare Committee:

Membership: add Anne Legrove (she had been appointed to the Committee but omitted from the list)

Membership: Move the sentence starting "The Clerk to the committee..." from this section to the top of the section on Reporting.

Voting rights: amend text to reflect the wording used in the FB and PP ToR.

Quorum: amend text to reflect the wording used in the Finance & Buildings (FB) and Personnel & Pay (PP) ToR.

Standing Orders: third bullet - delete "members of the committee" and replace with "Governors".

➤ Subject to these amendments, **the Governing Body approved** the Terms of Reference for the Pupil Progress and Welfare, Finance & Buildings and Personnel and Pay Committees.

ACTION: The Clerk would prepare a Governors' pack which would include these Terms of Reference and Governor contact details, among other information. **ACTION:** The Chair would send her a copy of the existing pack. The new pack would be printed and bound by the school. **ACTION:** The Head asked that an up to date Governor contact list (telephone numbers and email) be issued as a priority.

FGB 30/13 Review policies etc

Agenda paper FGB 30/13 (b)

a) Policy list - the Chair said that she was working with the Head to establish a definitive list of policies, when they needed to be reviewed and by which Governors/Committees.

ACTION: When completed, the Chair would forward this list to the Clerk to inform the GB workplan, which would be included in the Governors' pack.

b) Governor Allowances - though Governors were mindful of the school's budget position, they agreed that Governors should not be out of pocket as a result of their

Chair

Clerk
Chair

Clerk

Chair

voluntary service to the school. **ACTION:** They asked that the following amendments be made to the policy:

Page 1 - postcode to be corrected.

Page 2, fourth paragraph - delete "... of the Governing Body" and replace with "as necessary".

Page 2, penultimate paragraph, first line - insert "written" between "prior" and "approval".

Page 2, penultimate paragraph, fourth line - insert "the Headteacher and either" between "approval by" and "the Chair".

Page 2, insert new paragraph immediately before the final paragraph: "The Governing Body has agreed that the following routine expenses do not require prior approval: mileage and fares for travel to courses run by Bradford Council's School Governor Service".

- **Proposal:** that Governors should be entitled to claim mileage and/or fares for journeys to and from routine GB and Committee meetings.

Votes for: 6 **Votes against:** 0 **Abstentions:** 3 **Proposal carried**

ACTION: The policy would be amended accordingly.

- Subject to these amendments, **the Governing Body approved** the Governor Allowances policy and **agreed** that it should not be backdated.

c) **Data Protection** - **the GB noted** that this policy had been approved by the Finance & Buildings Committee.

FGB 31/13 Consider Governor recruitment

The Vice Chair reminded Governors that the GB had 2 vacancies for Community Governors. He had circulated details widely, including to local solicitors, Childrens' Centres etc, and had sought referrals via the School Governors' One Stop Shop. He had met potential Governors but had not so far identified the right person - Governors were keen that Community Governors should bring needed skills to the GB and/or be local. Governors thanked the Vice Chair for his continuing work on this and **ACTION:** undertook to let him know of any ideas for other people and organisations that might be approached.

FGB 32/13 Chair's correspondence and actions

The Chair said that the school had received £500 from Silsden Town Council for a sound system, which had now been bought and installed. **ACTION:** Governors considered that it would be appropriate to invite the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor to visit the school to see it in use.

Governors noted that the Town Council had invited the Head to attend any meeting.

The Chair had received a letter from the Council advising that they planned to undertake a survey of school crossing patrol sites. The Head said that a local Councillor had been pressing for a replacement lollipop person; the post had been agreed and advertised, but there had been no applications. The Chair said that she had written to thank the outgoing lollipop lady.

The Chair had received a letter of resignation from the play leader, who had found a job elsewhere that fit better with her desired working hours. A new play leader had been appointed.

Action

Chair/FB

All

Chair

The Chair said that Vik Fieldhouse had written to resign as a Governor. She had thanked her personally, **ACTION:** and would write formally on behalf of the Governing Body.

The Chair sad that the newsletter, Curriculum Innovation, included an item on a school that had been fined in relation to data protection. The Head said that this had been drawn to the attention of all staff, with a reminder of the importance of complying with data handling procedures.

FGB 33/13 Report on Governor visits to school, training and development

The GB noted the following visits to school:

- Ellena Cohen, Anne LeGrove and Jane Ogston had attended an Arts and Crafts session
- The Chair had accompanied the Head while classroom monitoring. She had been impressed by the displays in classrooms - the environment had been stimulating, behaviour impressive and the interaction between adults and pupils strong.
- The Chair and Vice Chair held fortnightly Governance and Leadership meetings with the Head.
- The Chair had met the SIP and SLT to consider the school's RAISE Online data.
- The Chair and Chair/FB had attended a meeting with the BC Project Manager and architects about the expansion of the school.
- The Chair had met the Learning Difficulties consultant from Bradford Council, who had explained her involvement with Aire View and been extremely complimentary about the school, the Head and the staff.
- The Vice Chair had observed a session of the Adoption and Fostering support Group. He had been impressed by the supportive environment and considered that the school had cause to be proud of its work in this area.
- The Vice Chair had reviewed existing and recent Safeguarding files for Looked After Children.

The GB noted that the following training and development had been undertaken by Governors:

- Chair/FB had attended a master class on fundraising
- Chair/PPW had attended training on data dashboards
- The Chair and Vice Chair had attended a course on Early Years strategies

FGB 34/13 Approve meeting dates for 2013-14

Agenda paper 34/13 - revised version attached as Annex B

The Clerk said that, since the agenda paper had issued, the F&B Committee had agreed to hold meetings at 1.30pm instead of 1.00pm; and the PPW Committee had agreed to hold meetings at 9.00am instead of 9.30am.

Governors agreed to continue to trial the alternating times for GB meetings (7.15pm Tuesday, 1.30pm Friday) for the remainder of the 2013-14 year.

- Subject to the changes described above, **the Governing Body approved** the proposed meeting dates and time. An amended copy is attached.

FGB 35/13 Other urgent business referred from Item FGB 20/13 above

There was no other business.

FGB 36/13 Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held at **7.15pm** on **Tuesday 18 February 2014**.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm

Clerk's contact details - hosman01@hotmail.co.uk; 07725 880625

Summary of actions

| Item | Action | Person responsible |
|----------|--|--------------------|
| 15/13 | Chair/FB to pursue Governor training in Buildings Management | J Ogston |
| 25/13 | School to provide glossary of terms to Governors | V Bottomley |
| 29/13 | Chair to amend PPW ToR as agreed | E Cohen |
| | Chair to send Clerk photocopy of existing Governors' pack | E Cohen |
| | Clerk to prepare Governors' pack to be issued by school | H Osman |
| | Clerk to obtain and issue SGS list of Governor contact details | H Osman |
| 30/13(a) | Chair to provide definitive list of policies to Clerk | E Cohen |
| (b) | Chair/FB to amend Governor Allowances policy as agreed | J Ogston |
| 31/13 | Governors to advise Vice Chair of potential sources of Community Governors | All Governors |
| 32/13 | Chair to invite Mayor/Deputy Mayor to see sound system in use | E Cohen |
| | Chair to write on behalf of GB to thank Vik Fieldhouse | E Cohen |