

The Governing Body of Aire View Infant School
Meeting held on 21 October 2014
MINUTES

Meeting commenced at 7.12pm

Present: Vicky Bottomley (Head – from Item 05/14), Ellena Cohen, Georges Droogmans, Louise Heslop (Assoc.Memb), Jo Munt, Theresa O'Connor, Lesley Pickard, Alison Teasdale, Lynda Whitton, Steve Wilkinson

In Attendance: Helen Osman (Supply Clerk, BC/SGS¹)

The Clerk chaired the meeting until the new Chair of the Governing Body had been elected.

01/14 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- **The Governing Body (GB) unanimously agreed** that the terms of office of the Chair and Vice Chair should be one year, until the first meeting of the autumn term of 2015.

The Clerk advised that 5 written nominations had been received for Ellena Cohen as Chair.

[Ellena Cohen withdrew from the meeting]

- **The Governing Body unanimously elected Ellena Cohen as Chair for 2014-15**

[Ellena Cohen rejoined the meeting and took the chair]

The Clerk advised that 4 written nominations had been received for Steve Wilkinson as Vice Chair. A further nomination was made orally for Steve Wilkinson.

[Steve Wilkinson withdrew from the meeting]

- **The Governing Body unanimously elected Steve Wilkinson as Vice Chair for 2014-15**

[Steve Wilkinson rejoined the meeting]

02/14 Apologies for absence and their acceptance

Apologies had been received, and were accepted, from Kelly Coburn, Anne LeGrove and Jane Ogston. The absence of Kim Green without apology was noted.

Governors noted that the Head had been unavoidably detained and would arrive late.

03/14 Any other urgent business and requests for agenda order variations

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

04/14 Declarations of interest

No interests were declared in any agenda items.

Those Governors present returned completed annual Declaration of Pecuniary Interest forms to the Clerk. Absent Governors are asked to return completed forms as soon as possible.

Action

*K Coburn,
A LeGrove,
J Ogston,
K Green*

¹ BC/SGS - School Governor Service, Bradford Council

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

05/14 Minutes of the meeting of 11 July 2014 and matters arising

- ***The minutes of the meeting of 11 July were unanimously approved by the Governing Body, signed by the Chair and retained by the Chair to be filed on the school's publicly available Governors' folder.***

[Vicky Bottomley joined the meeting at 7.20pm]

Item 29/13 – The Chair reported that materials for the Governors' Information Pack had been gathered and she would arrange for printing and circulation following approval of certain documents at this meeting.

Item 95/13 – the Head would amend the version of her Headteacher's report that would be attached to the signed minutes of the meeting of 11 July 2014 as agreed.

Other actions had been completed, were in hand or would be covered under other items on the agenda for this meeting.

Chair

Head

06/14 Receive Headteacher's report

The Head said that the 2014-15 academic year had started well. New pupils had settled in, as had new staff and staff who had moved to a different year group – an indication event had been held during the summer term. Reception was full, and Bradford Council had a waiting list for children whose parents wished to enrol them at Aire View.

As anticipated, a number of the newly admitted pupils had SEND and some had challenging behaviour; a number of them had struggled towards the end of the long first half term. A Governor thought Governing Bodies (GBs) now had powers to change the holiday schedule set by the local authority (LA) – the Clerk would seek advice on this. [Clerk's note: BC/SGS is unaware of any such proposal]

There were fewer children in Nursery than had been anticipated (66). This would affect the school's funding. There would be further intakes after Christmas and Easter. There were 68 pupils in Year 1 and 80 in Year 2. Just under 20% of pupils were eligible for Pupil Premium (PP) funding.

The introduction of Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) had been a major challenge for the school, doubling the number of meals provided daily by the kitchen. Initially, it had taken some time for Reception children, particularly those requiring one-to-one support, to complete their lunches. The school had exercised its contingency plans, keeping older children in later in the mornings doing guided reading to give more time for Reception to have their lunch. This had not been necessary in the last few days. Replying to questions, the Head confirmed that no teaching time had been lost.

A Governor had visited the school at lunchtime and had found the environment to be busy but controlled. She suggested reducing the number of choices of meal available to children. Asked whether the delays had been caused by a bottleneck in the queue or by the time it took children to eat their meals, the Head said that both had been issues. Asked whether it would help to have 2 serving stations, the Head said that she had thought that was the plan but that the number of staff available had not allowed for such an arrangement. Asked whether children could give their choices earlier in the day, the Head said that this would not work well for younger children, who would tend to forget their choices and could become distressed if they were held to them.

Asked whether the delay in getting children through lunch had required catering staff to work longer hours, the Head said that they had been given an additional staff member.

Replying to questions, the Head said that a higher number of pupils than anticipated were bringing packed lunches.

The Head reported that much training had been undertaken. Almost all staff had undertaken refresher training in Child Protection, as had the Designated School Leader (DSL) for Child Protection. Training had also been undertaken in Health & Safety, autism, medical conditions, Speech & Language, internet safety, the new curriculum, mentoring NQTs², Looked After Children issues and Female Genital Mutilation. Leaders had attended Outstanding Leadership courses and the NQT had attended NQT training.

Playground Buddies continued to do an excellent job. A Governor had noticed on her visit that there was a dinner stop where children could wait after their lunch to be picked up by a Playground Buddy.

Support services had visited the school, including experts in learning difficulties, Speech and Language, an Occupational Therapist, autism support and the new educational psychotherapist.

The Headteachers of the schools in the Two Valleys Learning Collaborative (2VLC) had met and agreed workstreams for 2014-15: EYFS, SEND, Creative Curriculum, Assessment and Leadership & Management. Aire View contributed £2k to the 2VLC budget but received £1k of this back in respect of fees for the Head's work as leader of the EYFS workstream.

The Bradford Primary Improvement Partnership (BPIP) continued to provide conferences and other events for senior and middle leadership. BPIP had undertaken a development review at the school; the report had been sent to Governors. The report had highlighted the school's strengths as a strong community feel, committed staff, energetic and articulate pupils, good relationships, positive attitudes to learning, a feeling of safety on the part of pupils, a safe and secure site, good support for pupils with SEND, certain areas of the curriculum, including the quality of teaching and learning.

The areas that the review had highlighted for the school to work on were not new – they had all already been addressed in the school's action plans. The school was ensuring that teachers had opportunities to learn from each other, and planned to increase these opportunities. The school was also increasing joint lesson planning and self-observation. Through rigorous monitoring, the school was addressing the need to ensure that support staff provided the appropriate support to children – specifically, that they did not provide so much support that children did not learn as much as they should. The Chair noted that this would also be addressed through the performance management arrangements for support staff.

The report had highlighted a need for staff to make more of opportunities to encourage children to speak in complete sentences, for example through the use of open questions. It had indicated that leadership and management should focus on accelerated progress – this was being addressed through the appraisal system, continual tracking of pupil progress and evaluation of lessons to ensure suitable

² NQT - Newly Qualified Teacher. Qualified and undergoing 1 year training post. Governors have a responsibility to ensure that NQTs are given the support and training to which they are entitled, including induction time away from the classroom as well as the usual Planning, Preparation and Assessment time to which all teaching staff are entitled.

spacing. Governors noted that the bar was being raised for progress at all levels in schools.

Asked whether the reviewers had made a connection between the pace of lessons and the rate of pupil progress, the Head said that this was possible; that conclusion could be drawn from headline information. This had been a surprise to the school, which took pride in the support it provided for SEND pupils.

The Head said that some of the feedback had been hard to hear. It was important to recognise that the BPIP review provided a snapshot – an Ofsted review would be more in-depth and, for example, would observe teachers more than once. One of the school's strongest teachers had not done herself justice due to the pressure of being observed. Governors discussed the need to support teachers to give of their best under conditions of pressure. It was important to build their confidence.

The Head said that morale was low at present. Asked how Governors could help to reassure staff, the Head said that Ofsted would focus on hard data. The school had high levels of parent satisfaction. A staff member said that staff supported each other.

The Marking and Feedback policy had been reviewed since the BPIP review took place. Because many of the school's pupils were very young, much of the feedback was given orally; BPIP had expected it to be written. The new marking system used an "R" in a circle as a sign to children that they needed to do something. A staff governor said that teachers were expected to know how each child was performing against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals. She noted that some schools displayed every child's next steps in each area.

The Head said that the school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF) had been updated in light of the recommendations of the BPIP review; it was due to be approved at the next meeting of the GB. She said that the review would not be seen by Ofsted – it was private peer-to-peer advice to the Headteacher. Asked whether the review had been useful, the Head said that it would prove to be so, but that it could have been handled in a more positive way.

Governors were reassured that the review, which formed part of the school's ongoing efforts to improve, had revealed no issues of which the school had been unaware. The school needed to continue to pursue the actions it had already put in place. Governors and leaders in school needed to be explicit about expectations and ensure that all staff understood the part they played.

07/14 **Receive report from Committees**

Pupil Progress and Welfare Committee - Chair/PPW said that the Committee had received substantial information on the SATs outcomes for 2013-14. There had been a dip recently in Reading and Writing, and the Committee had looked at the reasons. Certain groups of pupils had made significant progress. The Head said that lower performing pupils (those who had reached Level 2c) had been tracked back to their starting points – they had made expected progress in Reading during Key Stage 1, marginally below expected progress in Writing and below expected progress in Maths. For these children, that represented a significant achievement. Chair/PPW noted that this tracking and monitoring had been done before the BPIP review, underlining the point that the school had already been aware of, and addressing, the issues. The Committee has asked for comparative information for local and national schools.

The Committee had received feedback on the work of the Pupil Premium (PP) Working Party. It had asked for some amendments to the PP policy for approval at

the next meeting. The PP Working Party was working on the PP report for 2013-14. Replying to questions, he said that the report would link expenditure to attainment and achievement. The report would be brought to the GB.

The Committee had approved policies on Safeguarding, Teaching and Learning, Home Learning and Support for Children with Medical Conditions. It had asked Georges Droogmans to pick up the work that Kim Green had been doing on the Equalities policy. Work was in hand on the attendance policy and targets, Child in Care policy and Whole School Food policy.

Resources Committee - In the absence of Chair/Resources, Alison Teasdale reported that the Committee had reviewed the Quarter 2 budget position. The school was just breaking even, so the position was tight. All possible savings had been identified. Chair/GB and the Head were reviewing financial benchmarking data, comparing income and expenditure at Aire View with a cluster of local schools and with other infant schools nationally, to see whether lessons might be learned from others.

Chair/Resources was taking forward recommendations made in the audit of the Sports Grant. The Fundraising Working Party was due to meet after the half term break. The Committee had adopted a number of model policies provided by PACT HR³.

The Committee had asked Alison Teasdale to undertake the audit of the School Fund account, as she was a member of a recognised professional accountancy body. The GB accepted Lynda Whitton's offer to arrange for the audited accounts to be signed off by a colleague who was independent of the school.

L Whitton

08/14 **Receive report on work with parents and the community**

The Parental Involvement Officer (PIO) said that the school was supporting 32 parents to undertake the NCFE course for Teaching Assistants (TAs) in association with Craven College. The 1-year course required a significant commitment from parents – it involved a 3-hour session every week plus half a day per week voluntary experience in a school for the Level 2 TA qualification and one day per week for the Level 3 TA qualification. The Head had undertaken to try to arrange voluntary placements for those who needed them; Hothfield Junior School had agreed to provide placements for 8 students. All students would be DBS⁴ checked. The course would end with a graduation event, to which Governors would be invited.

Governors greatly welcomed this support for the learning of parents. The Head said that the school had been offering this support for a long time, though not every year, and that parents typically went on to secure positions in schools.

The PIO said that In Communities were running a programme to support parents to return to work. They planned to run workshops and drop-in sessions.

The school had arranged a wellbeing evening for parents on Thursday 23 October 2014 at which local businesses would provide services.

The school was seeking sources of funding for laptops.

The school would run a Reading Café for 12 weeks from just before Christmas. Parents would come in to school to read with their children.

³ PACT HR – the HR support service provided by Bradford Council.

⁴ DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service (previously CRB - Criminal Records Bureau)

The school continued to liaise with Daisy Chain, though the previous manager had not yet been replaced. The PIO met their Family Support Worker regularly.

Parents were supportive of the school's efforts to improve attendance and the new leave of absence criteria. The number of requests for leave in term time had decreased substantially. Requests were handled by means of individual 'phone calls to ensure that parents understood why the school had to deny their requests. Replying to questions, the PIO outlined the attendance procedures and the arrangements under which the LA issued fines for unauthorised absences. Replying to questions, she said that the school would authorise leave for pupils with siblings at other schools with different holidays, considering this to constitute "exceptional circumstances". The school liaised with Hothfield on such requests. Governors welcomed the clear guidance that the school was giving to parents from the outset. Asked whether the new rules would affect attendance, the PIO said that they would have a positive impact.

09/14 Update on proposed merger with Hothfield Junior School

The Chair confirmed that a letter about the proposed merger had been sent to parents at the end of the summer term and copied to Governors. The PIO said that parents had not commented on the latter.

The Chair said that no further information had been received from BC; the promised update at the end of September had not materialised. A meeting was planned for 06 November 2014 at which BC was expected to provide an update to the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Heads of both Aire View and Hothfield; the Chair would share the outcome of that meeting with Governors.

The Vice Chair said that local Councillors had been briefed on the proposal but that had not yet appeared on any Council agenda; it was, however, on the agenda for the Director of Childrens' Services team meeting on 05 November 2014.

Replying to questions, the Chair said that the decision to be made was whether to have a new school. If the Council decided there should be a new school, the matter would then be referred to the national and local School funding teams.

The Chair thanked the Governors who had volunteered to participate in the Project Board. She had proposed to Chair/Hothfield an initial meeting of the Project Board to establish Terms of Reference, chairing arrangements etc. the Chair had obtained supporting documentation and information, including about GBs working together and model Terms of Reference for Project Boards. Project Board members would identify possible dates within the next few weeks for an initial meeting.

Chair

Project Board members

10/14 Chair's correspondence and actions

The Chair had liaised extensively with Hothfield and BC about the proposed merger.

The Chair had received initial achievement data for Bradford schools from BC's Bradford Achievement Service. It looked as if Aire View's Early Years had performed well compared to other Bradford schools, but final data was not yet available.

BC undertook an annual "Knowing Our Schools" visit for Priority 3 and 4 schools – Aire View was classed as Priority 4 and would be visited in November 2014. It seemed that the visit would focus on one specific aspect of the school. Asked what that aspect would be, the Chair said that it would be agreed between the Head and the school's Achievement Officer in advance of the visit.

BC had agreed a strategy and aspirational targets, which were available on Bradford Schools Online. The focus was on high quality leadership, improved teaching and learning, improved literacy, higher attainment for vulnerable groups, increased school readiness and improved end of Early Years outcomes. The aim was for all schools in Bradford to be judged Good or better at their next Ofsted visits.

11/14 Governing Body matters:

Agenda papers 11/14 (a) to (h). NB – Paper 11/14 (e) was amended and re-circulated by e-mail on 18 October 2014 following amendment by the Resources Committee

a) Adopt NGA⁵ Code of Conduct – **The Governing Body unanimously agreed to adopt the NGA Code of Conduct.**

The Chair undertook to add information on the role of the Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Chairs to the Governors' Information Pack.

b) Governing Body Skills Audit – Governors handed completed skills audit forms to the Chair. Absent Governors and the PIO were asked to send their completed forms to her. The Chair would collate the responses and report to the next meeting.

c) Approve Governing Body Self Review – The Chair and Vice Chair had drafted the response sent out with the agenda. They had considered that the GB had met all the criteria in the review except number 4, where they believed that the GB could focus its monitoring more sharply on outcomes for pupils.

Governors asked that the following amendments be made to the Self Review:

- Page 5, section 5, central column, paragraph 1:
 - Delete "Within the school"
 - Replace "a downward trend" with "a dip in achievement in 2013-14"
 - After "with maths remaining steady" insert "though pupils have made expected progress"
- Page 7, section 6, central column, blank box – the Chair would copy and paste text from elsewhere in the document relating to effective use of the Pupil Premium.

The Chair would seek the input of Chair/Resources on the financial sections of the self review.

Subject to these amendments, **the GB approved** the GB Self Review and authorised the Chair to submit it to BC in response to the letter of 22 August 2014 from Paul Makin requesting that GBs submit self reviews by 30 November 2014.

Replying to questions, the Chair said that the draft GB workplan had suggested that the School Development Plan (SDP) be approved at this meeting. In light of the work that she and the Vice Chair had done on the Self Review, it had been agreed that the objectives in the SDP should be expressed in a more SMART⁶ way. The SDP would therefore be brought to the next meeting for approval.

d) Consider Governing Body constitution – The GB agreed to make a decision on the constitution at its next meeting. It also agreed to defer decisions on filling Governor vacancies until this decision had been made and the analysis of the GB skills audit had been compiled.

Chair

K Coburn,
A LeGrove,
J Ogston,
K Green
L Heslop
Chair

Chair

Chair

Chair

⁵ NGA - National Governors' Association - <http://www.nga.org.uk>

⁶ SMART (objectives or targets) – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timed

e) *Approve Terms of Reference for new Resources Committee – The GB approved* the Terms of Reference of the Resources Committee as re-circulated by the Clerk following amendment by the Resources Committee.

f) *Approve Governing Body workplan for 2014-15 and assign policy leads* – the GB asked the Clerk to assign policies to Governors [*attached at Annex A*]; Governors would be free to swap policies, keeping the Clerk informed.

Governors noted that 3 policies should be added to the workplan: Uniform, Pupil Premium and Food (whole-school).

Clerk

Subject to these changes, **the GB approved** the workplan for 2014-15.

g) *Report on Governors' visits to school, training and development* – Jo Munt reported that she had visited the school at lunchtime; she had enjoyed a tasty meal and had helped scrape plates afterwards. She had found it interesting to see how much was involved in providing school lunch. She had spoken to pupils and had been surprised by how many had always taken school meals (as opposed to having started with the introduction of UIFSM). She had been impressed by the smooth handover of children between classroom and lunchtime staff. She thought that a reduced range of choices for meals would speed up lunchtimes.

She had spoken to the catering manager and had been interested by the low cost for which she could provide meals. She had found the kitchen team to be efficient, pleasant, cheerful and polite. Governors welcomed this – it was important that all adults in school modelled positive behaviour at all times. She had found the whole process of providing food and managing lunchtime to be well-organised – children all had to have finished their meals within an hour and a half because the hall was needed afterwards for PE.

The Chair urged other Governors to visit school, after giving notice to the Head.

Georges Droogmans had undertaken training on Headteacher Performance Management. Alison Teasdale had completed online training on Child Protection and was booked onto training on the Pupil Premium – Jo Munt would also attend if her diary permitted. The Chair was booked onto training on the new pay arrangements.

h) *Agree meeting dates for 2014-15* – The Clerk said that Anne Legrove had asked that the date of the next GB meeting remain 28 November as originally planned. Governors said that the reasons for moving the meetings from Fridays remained valid; they understood that Anne Legrove would need to give apologies for that meeting. **The GB agreed** the proposed meeting dates for 2014-15.

12/14 Other urgent business referred from Item 03/14 above

There was no other urgent business.

13/14 Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held at **7.00pm on Tuesday 02 December 2014.**

The meeting closed at 9.29pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____ -

Summary of actions

Item	Action	Person responsible
29/13	Chair to arrange printing and distribution of Governor Information pack	E Cohen
95/13	Head to amend copy of her report to be attached to signed minutes of 11-07-2104 meeting	V Bottomley
04/14	Absent Governors to return completed Declaration of Interest forms to Clerk asap	K Coburn, A LeGrove, J Ogston, K Green
07/14	L Whitton to arrange for colleague to sign off audited School Fund account	L Whitton
09/14	Chair to share with Governors the outcome of meeting on 06 November 2014 with BC and Hothfield	E Cohen
	Project Board members to agree potential dates for initial meeting with Hothfield counterparts	G Droogmans, J Ogston, L Whitton
11/14(a)	Chair to add information on role of Chair, Vice Chair, Committee Chair to Governor Information pack	E Cohen
11/14(b)	Absent Governors and PIO to return completed Skills Audit forms to Chair asap	K Coburn, A LeGrove, J Ogston, K Green, L Heslop,
	Chair to collate Skills Audit forms and report to next meeting	E Cohen
11/14(c)	Chair to complete GB Self Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend draft as agreed • Consult Chair/Resources on finance section • Submit completed review to BC 	E Cohen
11/14(f)	Clerk to add Uniform, Pupil Premium and Food policies to workplan and assign policies to Governors	H Osman