

Ryarsh Primary School
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting
held at the school on Thursday 17 November 2016 at 7pm

Present: Ruth Austin (Headteacher), Iona Bell, Daniel Childs (Deputy Headteacher), Claire Crome, Steve Hill, Steve Hughes, John Macnab, Jon Naylor, Rachel Rowland (Chair), Stewart Speake, Carmel Sutton

In attendance: Vanessa Stevens (KCC Clerking Service)

| | | Action |
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| 1 | <p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>Apologies for absence were accepted from Daniel Sproul (work commitment). Iona Bell and John Macnab had advised they would arrive late due to transport problems out of London. The meeting was quorate.</p> | |
| 2 | <p>Business interests</p> <p>No business interests were declared against agenda items. Iona Bell and John Macnab re-signed register of business interests forms during the meeting.</p> | |
| 3 | <p>Governing Body (GB) matters</p> <p>3.1 Parent Governor election – Iona Bell and John Macnab had been re-elected as Parent Governors with effect from 17 October 2016; they completed new membership paperwork during the meeting.</p> <p>3.2 Training – No matters arising.</p> <p>3.3 Pay Committee and HT Performance Management – Governors reviewed the allocation of responsibilities with reference to advice from KCC’s Area Governance Officer. They agreed to retain existing arrangements, as per p6 of the Pay and Reward Policy: “This school has considered this issue and has decided that Jon Naylor will chair any appeals which may arise, and that the Chair and Vice Chair will remain as members of the Leadership Pay Committee, to ensure consistency in the Head Teacher’s performance management process.”</p> | |
| 4 | <p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>4.1 Governors approved, and the Chair signed, minutes of the Full Governing Body (FGB) meeting held on 29 September 2016.</p> <p>4.2 Governors shared updates on agreed actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Parent Governor election had been administered in school (see item 3.1). ii. The Chair was awaiting information on safeguarding training at Mereworth School. iii. The Chair had contacted Vanessa Dunnet to arrange HT performance management. iv. Most Governors had completed the online Prevent training. <p>Action: Steve Hughes and John Macnab to complete online Prevent training by 18 November 2016.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. The Head had submitted a proposal for expenditure of the Redrow grant. A response was awaited from KCC’s Area Education Officer Jared Nehra. vi. Stewart Speake had provided a profile for the school website. vii. Phonics data and monitoring covered elsewhere on agenda. viii. As above. ix. Finance monitoring covered elsewhere on agenda. x. The Head had put a reminder re. play equipment in the school newsletter and reminded staff to enforce rules. xi. The Chair had written to Mr Matthews concerning the hall planning proposal and had not received a response. xii. Collaboration with Discovery School covered elsewhere on agenda. | S.Hu & JM |

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| 5 | Headteacher's Update | |
| 5.1 | Overview – Governors had received for pre-reading the Headteacher's update (filed with minutes). The Head gave verbal updates and Governors discussed the report as follows: | |
| 5.2 | Phonics – The Head advised that the school's target pass rate for the Year 2 phonics re-take was 70% i.e. higher than the 66% national figure. The Head reported that occasional mispronunciation in phonics teaching had been addressed. Workshops had been held for parents of Year R and Year 1 children. A Governor asked about the expected performance of the current Year 1 cohort in the phonics screen. The Head was anticipating good results. Although the school's phonics results were anomalously low compared to performance data as a whole, a recent Ofsted-style exercise had confirmed they would not be a limiting factor on the result of a real Ofsted inspection. <i>John Macnab joined the meeting.</i> | |
| 5.3 | Education, health and care plans (EHCPs) – A Governor asked how the school identified children's individual needs and decided whether mainstream education was the best learning environment for them. The Head outlined the EHCP assessment process, including the presentation and discussion of individual children's cases at meetings. | |
| 5.4 | Year 4 cohort – The Head presented attainment and progress data for Year 4 (p2 of Update). A Governor asked whether there had been regression in the data for higher achievers. The Head explained that this was an anomalous artefact of the change in pupil numbers in that cohort. A Governor asked whether improved behaviour management was the reason behind improved data generally. The Deputy Headteacher (DHT) said that it was a key factor and that there had been a discernible shift in children's attitudes. Collaborative moderation of Writing the previous day had identified children with potential to make further accelerated progress. | |
| 5.5 | Data update – Governors had received for pre-reading detailed RAISE online data and the dashboard summary (copy of latter filed with minutes). They noted the positive correlation between the proportions of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) and passing the phonics screen. A Governor asked whether children went on to do well in Reading in Years 3-6 if they did not pass the phonics screen. The Head said that they could, citing strong Year 6 Reading outcomes i.e. 96% achieving Expected+ versus 69% for Kent as a whole (p2 of summary report). Governors noted cohort-specific factors which might impact on data – for example, proportion of children with SEN; cohort size; and, mobility – and agreed that the school's targets remained realistic and aspirational. A Governor asked why the proportion of children achieving greater depth in Key Stage 1 Maths was so much higher than the national average. The Head identified the impact of strong teaching, including the fact that the school's Maths Leader was a Year 2 Teacher. A Governor reported that the school's strong Maths teaching had been cited during a recent Governor training course. Governors commended staff and pupils for the hard work that had produced strong data. | |
| 5.6 | Buildings update – The light survey had concluded that no significant impact was anticipated in terms of loss of light resulting from the construction of the proposed new hall. There was a mandatory three week consultation period before the plans could be discussed by the Planning Committee. As such, the application would not be ready for consideration at the planning meeting scheduled for 7 December 2016. KCC had apologised for the delay. The subsequent meeting would be held on 18 January 2017. If approved at that meeting, the new hall was anticipated to be completed by September 2017 i.e. in time for the start of the new school year. The Head had been advised that no further actions or documents were required by or from the school. It was assumed that KCC had already received half of the Redrow grant funding as the first house was occupied. | |
| 5.7 | New entrants meetings – All four meetings had been held and the Head had received very positive feedback from attendees, especially with regard to the school's warm community atmosphere and sense of tradition/history. A Governor asked whether the increase to two form entry at nearby Leybourne Chase was likely to have an impact on Year R enrolment at Ryarsh. The Head did not anticipate a significant impact; it was likely that the other school would pick up slack resulting from oversubscription across the wider local area. It was anticipated that 13 of the Year R intake in 2017 would have sibling links at the school. <i>Iona Bell joined the meeting.</i> | |

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| 6 | Policies | |
| 6.1 | Anti-Bullying Policy – Governors approved the Policy subject to: the specification of Daniel Sproul as the Safeguarding Governor; and, a minor adjustment so that the reference to support appeared before the reference to sanctions. | |
| 6.2 | Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy – Governors approved the Policy. A Governor asked how many pupils had health care plans and what training had been provided to staff. The Head said that fewer than 10 children had health care plans and that specific staff training had been provided regarding children’s individual medical conditions. | |
| 6.3 | Online Safety Policy – Governors approved the Policy subject to the specification of Daniel Sproul as the Safeguarding Governor. | |
| 6.4 | Complaints – Governors approved the Policy which had been updated in line with the revised KCC template, including a section on unreasonable complaints. | |
| 6.5 | Safeguarding Policy – Governors approved this Policy. | |
| 6.6 | School Emergency Management and Business Continuity Plan – Governors approved this Policy. | |
| 7 | School Action Plan | |
| 7.1 | Overview – Governors had received for pre-reading the updated School Action Plan (copy filed with minutes). The Head highlighted the new target for achievement of a GLD in the Early Years (87%). Governors discussed issues arising from monitoring visits as follows: | |
| 7.2 | Effectiveness of early years – The Vice Chair presented a report of her and Daniel Sproul’s monitoring visit (copy filed with minutes). As some of the milestones were not due to be achieved until the end of term 2, discussions had focused on Teachers’ confidence that they would be achieved on time. The DHT advised that the Target Tracker app had been released, was currently being trialled, and would be reviewed around Christmas time. | |
| 7.3 | Personal development, behaviour and welfare – Discussion of monitoring by Steve Hill & Claire Crome was carried forward to the next FGB meeting. | |
| 7.4 | Milestones – Governors discussed amending the timing of milestones in order for them to fall at the end of terms 1, 3 and 5 (as opposed to terms 2, 4 and 6). Action: The Head and the DHT to further discuss timing of School Action Plan milestones. | Head & DHT |
| 8 | Finance Jon Naylor presented previously-circulated notes of the budget monitoring meeting held on 7 October 2016. There was a forecasted rollover of £65,993. Extended schools income was projected to be £51,467 (revised up from £43,791); numbers in extended school sessions were often at the maximum capacity of 32 children. Governors were reminded that extended schools provision could not be profit-making. The Head advised of the planned shift to online booking for activities. Benchmarking figures were in line with expectations. Administration costs had decreased. Approval had been given for writing off a laminator, printer and sound system. The Head was reviewing bank costs to ensure best value; the school was currently paying £300 per year as part of a KCC package. The PTA fund balance stood at £22,000. The Head identified scope to invest in a built-in light and sound system for the new hall. Action: Finance Governors to review accounting for all overheads incurred by extended schools services, including light, heat, equipment and staffing. | Fin. Govs |
| 9 | Child protection and safeguarding No matters arising. | |
| 10 | Health & safety and premises Steve Hill and Stewart Speake reported an historic problem with reporting systems whereby actions identified during monitoring visits had not always been followed up by school staff. The problem had been overcome by the introduction of a new report format. Governors agreed that all asbestos should be removed from the school site by appropriately qualified contractors. This included three areas identified during the recent health and safety monitoring visit: incoming mains cable lagging; a downpipe outside the kitchen; and, the roof of the gas meter cupboard. | |

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| | Action: The Head to obtain quotes for asbestos removal and instruct contractors as appropriate. | Head |
| | Action: Steve Hill to circulate the health and safety monitoring report to Governors. | S.Hi |
| 11 | Headteacher's performance management A meeting had been arranged for 2 December 2016. | |
| 12 | Chair's report The Chair had spoken with the Chair of Governors at the Discovery School regarding the decision of Discovery Headteacher Mr Matthews to withdraw from the collaboration. The Discovery School Chair, who had been disappointed by the decision, hoped to continue working closely with Ryarsh. The Head advised that paired work was continuing with Kings Hill and Mereworth Schools at the leadership level, and Discovery School staff below leadership level were still participating in collaborative work. The Head had not received formal notification from Mr Matthews that his school was pulling out. A Governor asked whether the lack of clarity made it difficult to continue with collaborative work below the leadership level. The Head said that, despite the confusion, joint working below the leadership level continued to work at the present time, and that the situation would be reviewed in future if necessary. Action: The Head to redraft the collaboration memorandum of understanding with Kings Hill and Mereworth Schools. | Head |
| 13 | Any other urgent business | |
| 13.1 | Car parking – A Governor reported an incident in which parents were sworn at by men trying to prohibit parking in the village hall car park. The Head advised that the Parish Council had since provided the school with a list of dates when the car park was booked and thus not available for public use. The list would be circulated to parents in advance of those dates. The Head had updated parking information in the school prospectus in order to clarify the situation. | |
| 13.2 | Staffing – A Governor noted the relatively high turnover in Midday Meals Supervisory staff and asked about notice periods. The Head said it was four weeks. | |
| 13.3 | Quiz night – Governors to attend the school PTFA quiz night on 24 March 2017. | |
| 14 | Confidentiality No items were deemed to be confidential. | |
| 15 | Date of next meeting 26 January 2017. | |

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed (Chair) _____

Date _____

Action Summary

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| i. | Complete online Prevent training by 18 November 2016. | S.Hu & JM | |
| ii. | Discuss timing of School Action Plan milestones. | Head & DHT | |
| iii. | Review accounting for all overheads incurred by extended schools services, including light, heat, equipment and staffing. | Finance Governors | |
| iv. | Obtain quotes for asbestos removal and instruct contractors as appropriate. | Head | |
| v. | Circulate the health and safety monitoring report to Governors, | S.Hi | |
| vi. | Redraft the collaboration memorandum of understanding with Kings Hill and Mereworth Schools. | Head | |