

Spring 1 minutes 2017

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Chase Bridge Primary School held at the school on Wednesday 8 February 2017 at 2 p.m.

Present: Janet Scott (Chair) Ms Anne-Marie Fussey
Mr Iyas AlQasem Mr John Justice
Mr Michael Ashe Mr Andrew King (Headteacher)
Ms Una Blair Mrs Caroline McCarthy
Fr David Cloake Ms Lorraine Templeton-Cross
Dr Tom Flynn Mr Greg Twitcher

Also attended: Mr Brian Ostro, Deputy Headteacher
Ms Sarah Fleming, School Business Manager
Miss Beryl Hawkins, Clerk to the Governors

These minutes should be read with the reports listed at the end.

Part 1

1. Governing Body

1.1 Apologies Apologies for absence were **received** from Claire Debney, Mike Dormer, David Jones, Pippa Prior and Eleanor Wright. James Lovatt also gave apologies.

1.2 Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest.

1.3 Membership On the recommendation of the chair and headteacher, the governing body co-opted Michael Ashe, and appointed James Lovatt as a local authority governor on the nomination of the local authority, both for terms of four years ending on 8 February 2021.

1.4 Link Governor Roles The governing body agreed that Michael should be the Maths Link Governor and that James should be the Admin and Premises (including Health & Safety) Link Governor, currently held by Tom Flynn.

2. Safeguarding Policy The governing body noted that the Safeguarding Policy had been revised to reflect current statutory guidance – ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ and had been reviewed by Eleanor Wright, named governor for Safeguarding. The governing body **approved** the policy.

3. Confidentiality The governing body agreed that no items on the agenda were confidential.

Part 2

4. Welcome, Introduction and Overview Janet Scott thanked everyone who had given up their time to visit the school for the day and all governors for making time to come to the afternoon meeting.

5. Annual Self-evaluation Andrew King referred to the annual self-review document and its partner document – the School Development Plan (SDP). He then presented the annual review document, highlighting key points. In addition, it was noted that:

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- The school was in talks with private providers regarding how it could contribute to meeting local demand for 30 hours childcare for nursery aged children.
- There would be about 670 pupils on roll when the school expansion was complete in September 2017.

Andrew King and Brian Ostro answered governors' questions:

Question: Do you know what is missing for the school to be judged Outstanding?

Answer: The school has made improvements since the last inspection and can make more. The depth of learning required by the new National Curriculum (from September 2015) means that pupils are more secure in basic concepts, but the standard is more difficult to achieve. Overall effectiveness, including Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural is Good.

Question: Do other schools look for reasons to be Outstanding?

Answer: The school recognises and accepts its faults and may have a conservative view of its strengths.

Question: If outcomes are strong do you need strong evidence that the school is Outstanding?

Answer: Yes. Data for 2016 was not in the upper part of the barometer. The school needs to recognise where it is now in order to proceed.

A governor queried the difference between the school's Outstanding judgement for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare compared to the Good judgement of the School Improvement Partner.

Question: If there is another blip in results, in 2017, do you think there should be an exploratory study?

Answer: The school's judgements for the current cohort have been compared with those of other schools; the school has carried out mock tests; the expected standard was based on the 2016 average; if schools across the country improve their results the school's results could appear to be inaccurate; pupils in Year 6 have already exceeded the 2016 expected standard; if average marks go up then the expected standard will go up. The school will try to fill any gaps in learning.

Question: Would it be helpful to look at data at other points in the year?

Answer: That is done by the school.

It was **agreed** that it was more important to focus on learning than on data.

Governors were invited to raise any issues arising from **team meetings** during the year. Governors commented on evidence that:

- there is a greater depth of reasoning compared to previous years;
- there is a difference in the way that learning is delivered;
- pupils' show a greater level of understanding, using words to describe concepts;
- there is a greater level of understanding of one topic through another;
- whole school ideas have developed and evolved and staff are now looking for evidence of progress in three ways – transition to the next year group is made easy;
- the quality of PE teaching is impressive and the contract arrangement with Brentford allows teachers time for team meetings

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Andrew stated that:

- Maths was a potential priority for 2017/18;
- The school had a good working relationship with Brentford, the provision was good value for money, and he wished to continue the contract.
- There were a lot of strengths in the **performance management** system and **CPD** (continuing professional development) being undertaken by staff.

Governors asked questions about the **parent, staff and pupil surveys**:

Question : How does the response rate from parents compare with the national average?

Answer: There is no comparative data available.

Question: Does the percentage of respondents reflect the number of pupils represented?

Answer: The percentage is a reflection of the number of households responding.

The governing body **agreed** that the school should consider using Survey Monkey at parents' evenings when conducting future surveys.

Question: Will you be following up on the 2.9% who would not recommend Chase Bridge to other parents?

Answer: Survey Monkey has made it easier to follow up individual responses. The data can be tracked back to individual answers even if they have been submitted anonymously. Respondents can enter their names and ask to be contacted. About six would like to be contacted and these will be followed up. According to Parent View, nationally, 16% of parents would not recommend their child's school to another parent.

Question: Is there an explanation for the difference in responses for the statements 'I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress' and 'CB positively encourages parents to engage with the school and their child's learning'?

David Cloake left the meeting at this point.

Answer: There may be more that can be done to develop the partnership with parents, eg by strengthening feedback.

The governing body noted that the letter to parents asking for feedback was signed by the chair and responses were to the governing body.

The governing body **agreed** that Andrew King should offer a date for a group of governors to look at the full text of the responses with Sarah Fleming.

ACTION BY: Andrew King, Sarah Fleming, Governors

Question: Would it be useful to publish a 'you said, we did'?

Answer: That is already included in the school self-evaluation document. The school has been holding 'book looks', when parents can look at pupils' work with their child, as well as continuing with parents' evenings. The school could consider making the parents' evening in the summer term more formal.

Question: Would it be useful to replicate the Year 6 one-to-one meetings throughout the school for those most in need?

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Answer: The school has been considering whether this would be a good use of time. About 25% of parents are engaging, 25% never engage and 50% will engage if they know what to do. The school is on the way to helping the middle group and needs to do more to help those parents who never engage.

With reference to the relatively weak response from staff to the statement: 'Staff consistently apply school policies', the governing body **agreed** that governors who are linked to a policy should be looking for evidence that the policy is being applied when they visit the school. A suggestion was made that governors from other schools could be involved and best practice shared.

The governing body **agreed** that the 97% positive response to the statement in the staff survey: 'The school is well led and managed' should be highlighted in the leadership and management section of the self-evaluation document.

The governing body **agreed** that efforts should be made in future to obtain the views of the 40% who had not responded.

ACTION BY: Andrew King

- 6. Governing Body Self-evaluation and Actions** Andrew stated that the presentation on the school's vision and values had been shared with staff and that governors needed to share this vision and their expertise be used to best effect. Iyas AlQasem gave a presentation on vision and principles.

Vision and Values Iyas stated that:

- Following the last Ofsted inspection it was decided to take a step back to review the school's vision and values; the governing body needed to strengthen vision and principles without losing ownership.
- There is evidence from school visits that staff have a greater sense of ownership.
- The Chase Bridge agreement includes expectations of children, parents and staff: governors also have responsibilities and need to be included.
- With the statutory framework in place, the governing body has an opportunity to strive for best practice.
- The school's vision statement – Excel at learning, Express your talents, Care for others needs to be embedded.

Operating Principles for the Governing Body Proposed expectations of governors were shared with the governing body (see slides). Iyas stated that:

- Making sure that policies were being implemented should be systemic and was fundamental to the running of the school.
- The governing body needed to consider how well it was doing those things it was doing and what it needed to do to take the school to the next level.
- Governors' responsibilities at Link meetings could be summarised in four points:
 - Contextualising
 - Prioritisation – governors are not teachers; they should be taking a strategic, not an in depth, view
 - Preparation
 - Continual learning
- Link governor reports should be living documents.
- At the end of the meeting governors and team leaders should consider how the meeting could have been more effective.
- The next step is to look at the job specification for governors.

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The work of the Governors and a Role Description Janet Scott stated that:

- The role description for a governor of Chase Bridge is being reviewed and will include the three core functions of the governing body plus an individual governor role, including the Link role and policy review.
- It will include guidance on questions for governors to ask.
- Sarah Fleming has worked on the review of the role description, this will be looked at by Andrew and Janet and then circulated to governors for comment.
- It is important to make best use of the expertise on the governing body.
- The Department for Education has recently published a governor competency framework: Janet is preparing a summary which she will share with governors. The next stage will be to tighten up on role descriptors.
- Janet wrote the last EYFS visit report in the meeting with the Team Leader when it was also signed off: the experience led to a more focussed meeting.
- Andrew will field answers to questions raised on visits and feedback from governors is welcome.
- The reports will be available on the document portal.
- In terms of training, opportunities other than those offered by AfC will be added to the options for governors.
- There is a need for a governor to attend Health & Safety training and a trained back up might be needed for the Safeguarding role.
- The terms of office for a number of governors is ending in June 2017 and the governing body needs to plan ahead to ensure that there is no dip in effectiveness as a result of any governors not continuing.

7. Priorities, Conclusions and Summary

The governing body **agreed** that a new school development plan should be drafted, and **approved** the key priorities on Page 43 of the draft self-review, subject to the inclusion of a reference in the second priority to developing extra-curricular approaches to support core skills.

Andrew stated that:

- The school had reviewed costs of clubs and would be comparing charges with those of other schools.
- He and Sarah had been in conversations with Caroline McCarthy about possible ideas for generating income from the school's proximity to the rugby ground when income from the MBG contract came to an end.
- The school would continue to look for savings.
- The school would be considering value for money in any services that it continued to provide or wished to bring in.
- **Year Group Leaders had each been given a budget and governors might wish to monitor the use of these budgets when visiting the school.**
- The Financial Planning Group would be meeting on Monday 6 March 2017 at 6 p.m. provided relevant budget information was available at that time.
- The school had begun to look at the 2017/18 budget and so far had been able to set a balanced budget for an additional year; after three years the school would be £700,000 in debt if it did not make changes to patterns of expenditure.
- The school might need to protect reserves to invest in business development and might need to establish a staff role for this purpose; the ideas would be

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considered by the Financial Planning Group and a proposal brought to the governing body.

In summary:

- There was one amendment to the strategic priorities.
- Andrew should draft a new school development plan.
- A draft budget would be prepared by the end of February.
- The work of the governing body needed to be consolidated and embedded.

The governing body **agreed** that wherever possible key outcomes in the school development plan should be measurable and that there should be measurable steps along the way that could be observed by governors.

Andrew stated that team leaders should bring their action plans to meetings and be able to show progress.

Janet Scott stated that it had been a useful day and thanked Andrew and Iyas for their input. It was noted that documents relating to the day were available for perusal on the document portal and asked governors to send her any ideas they had. Janet stated that it was good to see the school in action and a reminder of the reason for being a school governor.

ACTION BY: Andrew King, Link Governors

Part 3

8. Future Meetings The governing body **confirmed** dates of future meetings:

	Reports to Clerk	Agenda Despatch
Governing Body		
Wednesday 8 February 2017 at 2 p.m. (Spring 1 – Governors' Day)	30/1/17	1/2/17
Wednesday 22 March 2017 at 6.30 p.m. (Spring 2 – draft budget plan)	13/3/17	15/3/17
Wednesday 10 May 2017 at 6.30 p.m. (Summer 1)	28/4/17	3/5/17
Wednesday 21 June 2017 at 6.30 p.m. (Summer 2 – final budget plan)	12/6/17	14/6/17
Pay Committee		
Friday 3 March 2017 at 7.30 a.m.	23/2/17	24/2/17
Friday 3 November 2017 (time tbc)	19/10/17	20/10/17
Financial Planning Group		
Monday 6 March 2017 at 6 p.m. (tbc)		

9. Governing Body News The governing body highlighted aspects of the meeting for inclusion in the school newsletter.

Janet Scott **agreed** to write a message of thanks for Andrew to convey to staff.

The meeting ended at 4.35 p.m.

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Chase Bridge Minutes Action Sheet		
Minute reference	Action required	By whom and when
5. Annual Self-evaluation	Arrange date for governors to view survey results View survey results	Andrew King, Sarah Fleming Immediate Volunteer governors As agreed
	Highlight in L&M section of the SSE that 97% of staff agree that 'The school is well led and managed'.	Andrew King Immediate
7. Priorities, Conclusions and Summary	Draft new SDP Adopt draft key priorities, subject to inclusion of reference to extra-curricular approaches.	Andrew King Immediate
	Monitor use of budgets	Link Governors When visiting

Meeting documents	
The following documents should be read with the minutes. Copies will be filed in the minute book and on the AfC Document Portal meeting folders unless otherwise stated	
Reference	Document
	Agenda
Part 1	Safeguarding Policy (use link to CB website for approved policies)
Part 2	Governors' Day programme letter, including links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Chase Bridge Agreement • a video presented to prospective parents during open mornings
	Draft annual review document
	Autumn SIP visit report
	Slide presentation
	Governor/MMT link meeting checklist (Template folder)