

Spring 2 minutes 2018

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 21 March 2018 at 6.30 p.m.

Present: Ms Janet Scott (Chair) Mr Andrew King (Headteacher)
Mr Iyas AlQasem Mr James Lovatt
Mr Michael Ashe Mrs Caroline McCarthy
Ms Una Blair Mr Harj Singh Mann
Fr David Cloake Ms Lorraine Templeton-Cross
Mr Mike Dormer Mrs Eleanor Wright
Mr David Jones

Also attended: Mr Steve Llewellyn, Financial Consultant
Mr Brian Ostro, Deputy Headteacher
Mrs Sarah Fleming, School Business Manager
Miss Beryl Hawkins, Clerk to the Governors

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

Part 1: Preliminary Items

1. Governing Body (See Report of the Clerk)

- 1.1 **Apologies** Apologies for absence were **received** from Dr Tom Flynn, Ms Anne-Marie Fussey, and Mr Greg Twitcher.
- 1.2 **Declarations of Interest** See Minute 4.1.
- 1.3 **School Business Manager** Sarah Fleming was welcomed back following her maternity leave. It was noted that Sarah would be working four days a week.
- 1.4 **Report of the Clerk** The report of the clerk was received.
- 1.5 **Membership** The governing body noted the update on membership of the governing body.
- 1.6 **Appointment of named governors** The governing body made the following appointments:
 - Year 6 Link Governor (working with Kath Briggs) – Harj Singh Mann
 - English (temporary) – Michael AsheIt was noted that the Year 2 and Year 3 Link Governor roles continued to be filled on a temporary basis and that more governors were needed for the Pay and Performance Management Panel.
- 1.7 **Ofsted Framework** The governing body noted changes to the Ofsted framework effective from the spring term 2018.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 29 November 2017 and 7 February 2018 were **confirmed** and signed.

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Part 2: School Improvement Items

- 3. Report of the Pay Committee** The governing body received the confidential report of the Pay Committee on consideration of staff remuneration recommendations and performance management at its meeting on 21 November 2017.

It was noted that due to a number of factors the Pay Committee had not met as planned on 9 March 2018 to review pay scales. It was noted that the Finance Working Group had yet to meet and agreed that Sarah Fleming should co-ordinate scheduling of the two meetings.

ACTION BY: Sarah Fleming, Financial Planning Group, Pay Committee

4. Financial Items

- 4.1 Budget Monitoring** Steve Llewellyn and Andrew King presented the annotated budget monitoring report to January 2018 and updated three-year budget plan. It was noted that due to the positive effect on Richmond of the new national funding formula and a change in the minimum funding guarantee from 1.5% to 0.75% the school now had a higher positive overall variance and a higher predicted year end balance, resulting in predicted carryovers for the next three years of £452,450, £318,041 and £107,213. It was noted that some of the current year carryover was ring-fenced and that the carryovers reduced year on year.

Budget Clawbacks

Question: Can AfC claw back money from the school's capital budget?

Answer: Capital funds can be rolled forward for three years. After three years they could be requested. If the school has plans to use them they will be safe.

Question: Could the school move funds from the revenue to the capital budget if it had plans to use them?

Answer: Yes.

Staff Absence Supply Scheme (SASS)

Question: Is the supply insurance scheme good value for money?

Steve Llewellyn declared an interest as a member of the SASS Board.

Answer: The school is expecting £46,000 by the end of the year and the estimated cost is £46,268. The £56,000 cost of supply cover does not only relate to sickness. If all schools had had a similar pattern of sickness absence there would have been a lot to redistribute to schools. This is a mediocre year for the school. It has received a 200% return in previous years.

Question: Can you compare the benefits to the school over the past five years? Can the school go elsewhere for insurance cover?

Answer: The school can look elsewhere, but this is the only scheme operating in Richmond.

Question: Does the SASS make a profit?

Answer: All profits are redistributed to schools within the scheme.

Question: Are the profits distributed equally among all the schools?

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Answer: No. The amount schools receive is based on the amount claimed over the year. There is no guarantee that there will be any return. This year some schools will receive a 200% return, others will receive a smaller percentage. The school did not support other schools last year, but may have done this year.

Budget Plan

Question: Why is income from facilities and services (I08) decreasing over the years?

Answer: Rugby related income is now dropping off. The school is expecting £25,000 for events in the current financial year. This is not included in the budget for future years.

Question: Where is the £150,000 under I08 coming from?

Answer: The income at I08 includes an annual amount of £20,000 from the No. 2 account, as well as income from Lions, and clubs. There are running costs to be met from the income. Increasing costs have been built into the budget.

The biggest change on previous years is on staffing costs. The plan includes a 2% increase for support staff, reflecting the national offer of a 4-9% salary increase for lower paid staff – a 6-6½% increase has been factored in for lower paid staff at Chase Bridge. A 1% increase has been included for teaching staff for each of the three years.

The governing body agreed that the school's contribution to the nurture group could be taken out of the budget plan for the second and third years.

The governing body **approved** the draft budget plan. The governing body wished to record their thanks to Steve, Andrew and Greg for their work in preparing the plan.

4.2 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) The governing body **approved** the SFVS audit statement.

4.3 Financial Benchmarking Steve reported that the financial benchmarking data had just become available and agreed to prepare a retrospective report for the next meeting.

ACTION BY: Steve Llewellyn

Steve Llewellyn left the meeting at this point.

Discussion Items

5. Special Educational Needs and Disability – Presentation by Kate Gauvain Kate was welcomed to the meeting and introduced herself, outlining her roles during her 10 years at Chase Bridge up to her current role as SENCO. Arising from prior discussion with Janet Scott and David Cloake, Kate gave a presentation on SEND – what it is; identifying and supporting children with SEND; the impact of SEN provision; and the effective deployment of staff to support children with SEND. During the presentation, Kate and Andrew answered governors' questions. It was noted that:

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- The school has an attached educational psychologist (EP) who visits regularly to make assessments.
- Speech and language therapists (SLTs) are available for assessments, but cannot deliver a package to any child who does not have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan).
- Based on historical data for the school, a notional sum of £6,000 is included in the school's budget for every child who may need it. The school has to prove that this amount, as well as the standard £4,000 for each child has been spent before it can start the EHCP process.

A governor challenged the legality of withholding funds where a child was known to have special educational needs and to be in need of an EHCP. A governor stated that the governing body could not take up the challenge on behalf of parents as this would constitute a conflict of interest.

Question: How easy is it to access EPs and SLTs?

Answer: Professionals who are linked to the school visit several times each half term.

Question: Does the school pay for these services?

Answer: Yes. Schools can choose a bronze, silver, gold or platinum service. Chase Bridge pays for the gold or platinum service and receives a good level of support – to provide evidence and support parents.

Question: What is ELSA?

Answer: An emotional literacy support assistant.

Kate stated that SEN statements for the three Year 5 children are now being transferred to EHCPs. This will be the last year group to transfer. The EHCPs will include a sum of money to support the child's needs rather than a specific number of hours of support.

Question: Do we need to look at the supply staff budget to pay for a teaching assistant for children with EHCPs?

Answer: No we don't. The absence of a member of staff will not necessarily disadvantage a child with an EHCP. We need staff to work as a flexible team, with the teacher also teaching the child and taking responsibility for the teaching and learning of the whole class. The idea of this approach has been broached at eight annual reviews and in every case parents agreed that withdrawal of a child from the class was not necessarily in his or her best interests. All agreed that they wanted the best for their child but they wanted their child to be more independent and to be with the rest of the class.

David Cloake stated that he had seen a sea change on his last Inclusion Link Governor visit – with better classroom management, a culture in the classroom of "care for others", and evidence of the school's aim of employing effective adults effectively.

Question: The school is looking to balance value for money with the best outcomes for pupils. Will the new approach to provision mean that the school is compliant? How will the school respond if an EHCP states that a child needs 1:1 support?

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Concern was expressed by a governor about EHCPs not being specific about the needs of the child and the likelihood of AfC being taken to tribunal on this.

Answer: If an EHCP states that a child needs 1:1 support then the child must have that provision.

The school's vision is for every child to have made the best possible progress and be fully prepared for the next stage of their education. Where needed 1:1 support will be provided, but for most children 1:1 support will not help them to be emotionally and socially prepared for the next stage of education. Children who have 1:1 support can often become dependent on one member of staff and the member of staff concerned is not being effectively employed.

Question: How many pupils are on the SEN register?

Answer: There are 55 on the register. Of these 16 have an EHCP.

Question: In practice, is it difficult to get an EHCP?

Answer: Kate stated that she had not yet followed through the whole process, but had three pending cases for which an application would probably be made and three cases of parents thinking that their child should have an EHCP, but who did not meet the raised threshold criteria.

Parents sometimes see an EHCP as an end in itself. From the school's point of view it brings with it money, but from the parents' view point it can give advantages such as access to their school of choice and extra time for exams.

6. **Personnel/Staffing Structure** Andrew King gave a presentation on progress to date in reviewing the staffing structure, with questions that needed to be addressed, how the changes would support disadvantaged pupils and pupils attracting Pupil Premium Grant, and key emerging themes. Andrew stated that there was a need to look more closely at the delegation of responsibilities having regard to overall staffing in the fully expanded school. See also confidential minutes.

The governing body **agreed** that:

- It was important to keep in mind the school's vision, culture and values – "excel at learning, express your talents, care for others".
- The proposals offered a holistic inclusive approach.

The governing body **agreed** that the SEN and staffing structure presentations should be made available on the AfC document portal and that governors should submit their thoughts on the proposals.

ACTION BY: Governors

James Lovatt left during discussion of the above item and Mike Dormer left at this point.

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7. **Leadership and Management Report (formerly Report of the Headteacher)** The Leadership and Management Report was received. Arising from the report:

Question: What will happen to the child in the Nurture Group who has been involved in a number of incidents?

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Answer: This child is already on roll at another school and that school is responsible.

- 8. SEND Information Report** The governing body **approved** the SEND Information Report for 2017/18 and noted that it had been published on the school website.
- 9. Safeguarding Update** The governing body received a report from David Cloake on a visit to the school to review safeguarding and persistent absence on 12 December 2017. David stated that there would be a further report on persistent absence. The governing body also noted that there had been a serious incident and, as previously notified to governors by email, David was satisfied that the incident had been well managed by the school.
- 10. Policies and Statutory Compliance** The governing body received the updated compliance tracker and noted that James Lovatt would be meeting with Sarah Fleming on 27 March 2018 to review the tracker.
- 11. Link Governor Visits** The governing body **received** reports from link governors who had visited the school and met with their Middle Management Team Leader.
Governors were reminded to make regular visits and keep their reports coming in. Janet stated that both she and Andrew were now considering the reports.

ACTION BY: Governors

- 12. School Improvement Partner Visit** It was noted that the report of the spring term visit of the School Improvement Partner, Charis Penfold, was awaited.

Part 3: Concluding Items

- 13. Dates of Future Meetings and Planning** The governing body confirmed dates of future meetings (see Clerk's Report).
Una Blair gave apologies for the next meeting as she would be on the Isle of Wight trip.
Mike Dormer gave apologies for possible non-attendance for the next two meetings.
- 14. Confidentiality** See minute 6.
- 15. Governing Body News** The governing body highlighted aspects of the meeting for inclusion in the school newsletter.
- 16. Thanks** The governing body thanked Kate Gauvain for attending the meeting and for her presentation.
The governing body wished to record their thanks to John Justice for his contribution to the work of the governing body over the past 12 years and in particular for his work as chair.

ACTION BY: Janet Scott

The meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.

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Next Meetings

Wednesday 16 May 2018 at 6.30 p.m.

Wednesday 20 June 2018 at 6.30 p.m. (final budget plan)

Chase Bridge Minutes Action Sheet

| Minute reference | Action required | By whom and when |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Minute 3 | Co-ordinate scheduling of Finance Working Group and Pay Committee. Meet to consider financial items and pay policy | Sarah Fleming Immediate Financial Planning Group, Pay Committee Before 16/5/18 |
| Minute 6 | Make SEND and staffing structure presentations available on AfC portal. Submit thoughts on the proposals | Beryl Hawkins Immediate Governors Immediate |
| Minute 11 | Arrange summer term visits | Governors Immediate |
| Minute 16 | Arrange for John Justice to be thanked for his services to the school | Janet Scott Immediate |

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| Documentation | |
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| 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 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda |
| Minute 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk's report • Current membership (GB information folder) • Named governor roles (GB information folder) |
| Minute 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the meetings held on 29/11/17 and 7/2/18 |
| Minute 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report of the Pay and Performance Committee meeting held on 21/11/17 (password protected document – circulated by email) |
| Minute 4.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget monitoring report to January 2018 • 2017/18 draft budget plan |
| Minute 4.2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFVS audit statement |
| Minute 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from Kate Gauvain on SEND |
| Minute 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from Andrew King on proposed changes to staffing structure |
| Minute 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Management Report (Headteacher's Report) |
| Minute 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND Information Report |
| Minute 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report from David Cloake on a visit to the school on 12/12/17 to review safeguarding and persistent absence |
| Minute 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated compliance tracker |
| Minute 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years – 29/11/17 and 24/1/18 • Year 5 – 5/10/17 • English – 17/10/17 • Extended Services – 9/11/17 • Premises (Health & Safety) – 28/11/17 |