

Autumn 1 minutes 2015

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 30 September 2015 at 6.30 p.m.

Present: Mr John Justice (Chair) Ms Francesca Ehmann
Mr Iyas AlQasem Mr Andrew King (Headteacher)
Ms Una Blair Mr Ade Lawal
Fr David Cloake Ms Pippa Prior,
Mr Mike Dormer Mrs Janet Scott
Councillor Alexander Ehmann Ms Lorraine Templeton-Cross

Also attended: Mr Steve Llewellyn, Financial Consultant
Mr Brian Ostro, Deputy Headteacher
Ms Caroline McCarthy, Friends of Chase Bridge (FoCB)
Miss Beryl Hawkins (Clerk to the Governors)

Part 1 Preliminary Items

1. **Apologies** Apologies were received from Claire Debney, David Jones, Mark Potter and Eleanor Wright.
2. **Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest.
3. **Membership**
 - 3.1 **Current Membership** The governing body received a current membership list (copy in the minute book). Ade Lawal was welcomed to the meeting and all governors introduced themselves.
 - 3.2 **Staff Governor** Andrew King reported that there had been some interest in the position of staff governor, but to date no formal nomination had been received. **AK**
 - 3.3 **Co-opted Governors** The governing body appointed Mr Ade Lawal and Mr David Jones as co-opted governors for terms of four years ending on 30 September 2019.

The governing body received the resignations of Francesca Ehmann and Mark Potter due to changes in personal circumstances. The governing body wished to record their thanks for the contribution made by both Francesca and Mark during their time as governors.

John stated that he would continue to work with Janet Scott and SGOSS to find suitable candidates for the three remaining vacancies for co-opted governor. See also Minutes 8.4 and 13.6. **JJ, JS, AK**

Una Blair arrived at this point.

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- 3.4 Governors' Profiles and Register of Interests** Governors were reminded to update their profiles and complete the revised register of interests form. Forms were available for completion at the meeting.

The governing body noted that the statutory guidance on the school governance constitution regulations was further revised in August 2015 advising that governing bodies should publish on the school website the attendance record of governors at governing body and committee meetings over the previous academic year and that the information about governors that was to be published should include anyone who had been a governor at any time in the previous 12 months.

- 3.5 Qualification for Governorship** Governors were reminded of the need to complete qualification for governorship forms. Forms were available for completion at the meeting.

- 4. Chair and Vice-chair** John Justice proposed that a governor should shadow the chair/vice-chair role with a view to him relinquishing the role during summer 2016. John asked for anyone who was interested to contact himself or Janet. John stated that the role would be less onerous when the new structures were fully in place.

Non-staff governors

- 5. Minutes and Matters Arising** The minutes of the meeting of the governing body held on 17 June 2015 were confirmed and signed (copy in the minute book).
- 6. Confidentiality** The governing body agreed that no items on the agenda needed to be recorded as confidential.

Part 2 School Improvement Items

- 7. Reports from Linked Governors** The governing body noted that the governing body meeting was too early in the term for Team Leaders to have completed their action plans. Two governors had met their linked Team Leaders and submitted interim reports to the governing body:

Link area	Governor	Team Leader	Date of Visit
Maths	John Justice	Tania Noble	16/9/15
Creative Arts	Mike Dormer	Rachel Scott	21/9/15

Mike stated that although he had been unable to complete a full link governor report he had valued the opportunity to spend time in the classroom.

In view of Mark Potter's departure, the governing body agreed that there would be no Year 4 visit report for the autumn term.

- 8. Report of the Headteacher** The governing body received the report of the headteacher (copy in the minute book), including:

- Implementation of SEND Code of Practice
- Effect of new threshold for persistent absence of pupils
- Performance data
- Nurture Group

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- Teachers' Pay
- Reception Baseline
- Smoking on site – e-cigarettes
- Site and premises update
- Cabbage Patch House
- Personnel
- Impact of RFU activity on the operation of the school
- Budget monitoring
- Pupil Premium Grant
- Supervision before the start of the school day

Questions were invited from governors. Arising from the report:

8.1 Reception Baseline

Question: How will Reception Baseline assessment be moderated?

Answer: Baseline assessment outcomes are intended to be a key added value tool in seven years' time. They are a statutory requirement and the assessment principles are published on the school website. The school wants to make the process as robust as possible and is working with a group of local schools to establish a common moderated standard.

Question: Can you say how much variation in assessments there is likely to be across the country in seven years' time?

Answer: It is likely that there will be a high level of variation.

8.2 Children's Blog

Question: How will you police content on the children's blog?

Answer: The blog is easily moderated. The school uses a blogging tool through the London Grid for Learning. All content has to go through a staff member before going live. Comments from governors in response to the children's blog are welcome and help to motivate the children to write. **Governors**

8.3 Sporting Activities

Question: Why is there a linear decline in involvement in sports?

Answer: The figures continue to be very high compared to those for other schools. There has not been a significant drop in the number of pupils involved in an active sport. The school is keen to improve participation and would like to see all children involved in an active sport.

8.4 Budget and Finance Update A budget monitoring report showing staff costs for the first five months of the year was tabled. Andrew King and Steve Llewellyn highlighted variances between the draft and final budget plans and estimated and actual expenditure and answered governors' questions.

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Question: Can the overall underspend of £45,000 on staffing be carried forward and moved to another budget head?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Should a governor have picked up that a member of staff had been double-counted resulting in an overestimate in the draft budget plan?

Answer: No – it is not the responsibility of a governor to pick up thin. The double counting was due to a member of staff moving from one area of the school to another and being included in both. The error could only have been picked up at an operational level. Nevertheless, it would be helpful to have greater scrutiny from a governor and given our current vacancy we should consider appointing a governor with that skills set.

Action: John Justice stated that he would take into account the desirability of increasing the number of governors with financial expertise when recruiting governors.
JJ, JS, AK

8.5 Grounds Maintenance and Improvement

Question: Why is there an underspend of £230,000 under grounds maintenance and improvement?

Answer: This funding has been set aside for outside premises-related projects following on from the expansion of the school and spending can go ahead when the grounds have been released from Rugby World Cup activities.

8.6 Catering

Question: Why is there an overspend on the Catering Supplies budget?

Answer: The school is expecting £110,000 income in the near future for Universal Infant Free School Meals. When this is received the budget will balance.

8.7 Pupil Premium The governing body was pleased to note that the school had received about £90,000 Pupil Premium funding and £15,000 more than estimated due to a higher number of eligible pupils and a higher rate of Premium. Governors were appreciative of the efforts made by the school to increase applications for eligible pupils.

Question: As there are more pupils attracting Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) will the school need to increase spending on provision for those pupils?

Answer: The additional income will have to be accounted for. Andrew King, Brian Ostro and Laura Jeffrey have been discussing use of the income. A spreadsheet has been drawn up showing each child, the intervention they are receiving, and their performance levels. The school is required to publish an annual update on use and impact of the PPG and will need to complete this soon for the 2014/15 academic year.

Question: In what way is the provision this year different to what you have had previously?

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Answer: The provision gives greater capacity to support with intervention groups. There is more focus to help progress in reading, writing and maths. The school is opening half an hour earlier to help children eligible for the PPG who are making slower progress with 1:2 support in key skills.

Question: Does the increase in PPG affect projected income for Years 2 and 3?

Answer: Yes. Some PPG is calculated on 'Ever 6' – PPG is paid for any child who was eligible at any time during the previous six years. Each eligible child attracts PPG of £1,300. Because all infant school children are entitled to a free school meal there is a continuing need to encourage parents to sign up for PPG.

Question: How much Service Premium Grant is available?

Answer: Each eligible pupil attracts £300. There are 20+ eligible pupils.

Discussion Point: A discussion ensued with regard to an anticipated less favourable funding formula, funds available to spend in the current financial year and the projected deficit in years two and three. The governing body agreed that the school should:

- Safeguard any unspent balances in the current financial year by allocating them for future spending.
- Strike a balance between ensuring an adequate contingency – say, 2% of the budget – and spending available funds.
- Ensure adequate provision for all age ranges as the school increases in size, including suitable play areas.

8.8 Community Use of the Premises

Question: The school site and premises is a fantastic asset, but most weekends it is not being used. What could the school do to change this?

Answer: On a legal point, income from use of the premises has to be used for the benefit of the pupils. There have been informal discussions with possible providers.

Caroline McCarthy stated that parents would welcome appropriate provision.

Question: Why did the school stop some use of the premises?

Answer: Some provision had to stop because of the building work and there have been restrictions on use due to use for the Rugby World Cup, however the impact of the RWC2015 has been limited and easily managed and not detracted in any significant way on the children's curriculum provision.

Question: To what extent is use of the premises for RFU activity permanent?

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Answer: The current contract with MBG will continue for another three years. There continues to be a high demand for housing in the area and the premises continues to be a valuable asset.

8.9 Teachers' Pay The governing body considered the available options for teachers' pay and on the recommendation of the headteacher agreed to adopt Option 1: Standard pay scale. This option reflected the previously followed positions – a set number of spinal points within each range; there would be a 1% increase applied to the minima, maxima and each of the spinal points in between, except that 2% would be applied to the maximum of the Main pay scale and the 1% would not be applied to the maximum of the leadership group pay ranges. In reaching their decision the governing body noted that:

- The Pay Committee would be considering a confidential report on pay recommendations linked to performance for individual teachers. Pay awards did not have to be granted if teachers had not met the Standard.
- The pay options had been agreed by the teachers' unions.
- There had been no pressure from staff to change from the status quo.

8.10 E-cigarettes The governing body endorsed the school's policy of not allowing smoking of e-cigarettes on the premises.

9. Discussion Item – Pupil Performance Results in the Context of Ofsted

The governing body received a report prepared by Deborah Moss, School Improvement Partner, providing an evaluation of pupils' outcomes in the summer term statutory assessments for 2013 to 2015 (copy in the minute book) and the headteacher's report summarising the key points from the assessment. The governing body also received key contextual data and data on internal tracking of pupils' achievement through year groups. Andrew King thanked Brian Ostro for preparing the data.

Andrew stated that:

- The internal school tracking data showed overall annual progress to be outstanding.
- Writing was particularly good throughout the school and there were strong outcomes from interventions.
- There was room for improvement in some areas at the end of Key Stage 2 (the year 6 group from the last academic year) and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) results were not good.
- Results for reading were good across the school, as were the combined results for reading, writing and maths at Level 6.

Governors questioned the headteacher and staff on the data provided.

Question: Would it be true to say that results for middle ability pupils are no so good when compared with lower and higher ability pupils?

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Answer: It is the results for lower attainers that need to be addressed. SPAG will be a main focus for the school particularly for some of the lower/middle ability children.

Question: **Results in Phonics have improved over the last three years through targeted interventions. Other areas, previously good, now need to be addressed. What does the school need to do to sustain good practice?**

Answer: The school will continue to work on ensuring consistency in pedagogy. Our new tracking systems and the way these are managed in year groups will help identify children more quickly especially where there is weak progress so we can put interventions in place as soon as possible.

Question: **How would Ofsted view the results?**

Answer: That would depend on where the inspection team decided to focus. It might focus on Key Stage 2 and look at progress from Year 5 to Year 6 or it might focus on progress throughout the whole school or give a stronger emphasis to data through the school. The school needs to provide evidence of good practice and action being taken to address any concerns. Overall, there is very good evidence of progress.

Question: **Are you happy with the results?**

Answer: Not altogether at the end of KS2 in last year's year 6. Some of the results are incredibly good given the characteristics of the cohort – for example reading and writing, and results for the most able pupils. There are reasons relating to individuals in the cohort for the SPAG results not being good but nevertheless this is clearly an area where improvements need to be made.

Question: **Are you doing anything differently now that you are using Target Tracker?**

Answer: Yes. There are now no Levels so progress is tracked in a different way, using assessment systems in Target Tracker, introduced in the summer term. Management structures have been changed to focus on year groups.

Question: **Speaking as a parent, without Levels, how can we tell parents how we are doing?**

Answer: The school's annual self-review is on the school website. The school has tried to strip out jargon and would like to make it simpler to understand. We are looking to provide parents with meetings to help explain how we are assessing the children and tracking their progress. This will be focused on the end of key stages but be open to all parents.

Conclusion: Governors felt re-assured with the high level of improvement evidenced in the data and the realistic and honest approach of the senior management team to taking action where there was room for improvement.

Andrew agreed to circulate a sample test paper to governors.

AK

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Question: What does Deborah Moss think of the Year 6 data?

Pippa Prior and Janet Scott had attended the meeting with Deborah and reported on her view of the outcomes – there were things for the school to be proud of; she was not overly alarmed where data was weaker; she felt that everything was on the right trajectory and provision was on track to address weaknesses; there were lots of opportunities for children to be creative.

Brian Ostro stated that there would always be ‘next steps’ and he had discussed with various groups around the school what was needed to put the best resources in place.

It would be useful if governors who were linked to a year group or subject asked their Middle Management Team link how they were using tracking and addressing the weakness in SPAG and followed this up with a visit to see plans being put into action. Governors agreed that it would also be useful to ask about the progress of Pupil Premium Grant pupils.

Question: How does ‘life without Levels’ affect Key Stage 2 tests?

Answer: Pupils will pass or not.

Question: How will secondary schools respond to the results?

Answer: Information about the tests has just been published for primary schools, but secondary schools are still waiting for advice so this is not yet known.

Question: Will the ‘pass/fail’ test have a detrimental effect on pupils with higher ability because they cannot showcase their achievements?

Answer: The test will be pitched to a higher standard and so it will be harder to meet the pass mark. Schools are still absorbing the detail of the new tests so the full implications are not clear.

Question: Is there a possibility that resources will be removed from pupils of higher ability in order to concentrate on raising the percentage rate?

Answer: That is not the intention. We want all children to of whatever background and ability to achieve well at Chase Bridge.

Question: Is there a possibility that higher ability will go unrecognised?

Answer: It would be possible to identify deciles – top 10%, bottom 10%, and so on. There might be an age standardised score. The school will continue to use its own internal assessment. The school could use Target Tracker to track progress and attainment and report to parents on whether their child is below, in line with or above expectations, plus a score. The Senior Leadership Team needs to come to a view on the best way forward and will share this with governors. The school would like to see children being challenged to achieve their best.

10. School Improvement Partner’s Visit The governing body received a report from Deborah Moss on her termly visit to the school on 17 July 2015 (copy in the minute book). The governing body was pleased to note the positive nature of the report.

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11. Preparation for Ofsted The governing body received extracts from Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework and School Inspection Handbook showing Ofsted's approach to governance (copy in the minute book).

12. Policy Review The governing body considered policies due for review:

12.1 Register of Business Interests of Headteacher and Governors See Minute 3.4.

12.2 Emergency Plan It was noted that the new School Business Manager, Sarah Fleming, would take up post in October 2015 and that review of the Emergency Plan for emergencies other than fire would then be scheduled.

12.3 Home: School Agreement The governing body received the revised Home: School Agreement, effective from September 2015.

12.4 Child Protection Policy and Procedures, including designated teachers (Safeguarding Policy) Andrew King reported that the staff had received training on the new requirements relating to safeguarding including the 'prevent strategy' and a policy had been written, which would be brought to governors when its place in the policy framework had been decided. **AK, EW**

12.5 Data Protection Policy Iyas Alqasem reported that he had reviewed the Data Protection Policy with help from Lorraine Templeton-Cross: a number of minor queries had been referred to the school, in particular, the need to include a reference to cloud-based storage and compliance with recommended systems, and a reference to the children's blog and how it was being managed; further review by the school would be scheduled after Sarah Fleming took up post. Iyas thanked Lorraine for her input to the review. See also Minute 8.2. **AK, SF**

12.6 Central Record of Recruitment and Vetting Checks Included in Safeguarding Policy.

13. Reports from Training and other Events Attended Janet Scott reported that she had attended the AfC training on Performance Management of the Headteacher and an Ofsted webinar. It was agreed that Janet should draw up a sheet of key headlines for governors from the Ofsted training. Janet stated that it was important for governors and the headteacher to be giving the same messages to Ofsted and stressed the importance of using the school self-evaluation as a core document. **JS**

Part 3 Future Planning and Summary

14. Future Planning

14.1 Governing Body Structure The governing body agreed the governing body structure chart for publication on the school website and that it should be included in the Chase Bridge School Handbook. John Justice stated that he hoped to complete the revision of documentation associated with the restructuring of the governing body by the end of the autumn term.

JJ, JS, AK, BMH

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14.2 Named Governor Roles and Links The governing body confirmed the appointment of governors to panels, committees and named governor roles, including the appointment of Fr David Cloake to the Pay Committee and Lorraine Templeton-Cross as Year 5 Link Governor. The governing body agreed to continue with existing link governor appointments and that newly appointed governors should contact John Justice about their preferred link governor role. **AL, DJ**

14.3 Annual Work Plan and Priorities The governing body confirmed the updated annual work plan. It was noted that 'academy status' would be an item on the agenda for the next meeting, when there would be a report from governors who had attended the West cluster AfC conference to be held on 14 October 2015. See also Minute 7. **AK, JJ, MD, JS**

14.4 Future Meetings The governing body confirmed dates of future meetings:

	Reports to Clerk	Agenda Despatch
Wednesday 25 November 2015	11/11/15	18/11/15
Wednesday 3 February 2016 (Governors' Day)	20/1/16	27/1/16
Wednesday 23 March 201	14/3/16	21/3/16
Wednesday 18 May 2016	4/5/16	11/5/16
Wednesday 29 June 2016	15/6/16	22/6/16

14.5 Induction of New Governors John Justice reported that Janet Scott and Iyas Alqasem had volunteered to be buddies for David Jones and Ade Lawal.

14.6 Training Needs John Justice agreed to initiate a governing body skills audit to identify any training needs and to inform the recruitment of new governors. **JJ**

14.7 Governing Body Self-evaluation John Justice agreed to initiate a governing body self-evaluation exercise using a template provided from The Key by Janet Scott. **JJ, JS**

15. Governing Body News and Impact Statement

15.1 The governing body highlighted aspects of the meeting for inclusion in the school newsletter:

- No smoking – e-cigarettes
- Performance results – good results, realistic open discussion about when improvements need to be made and action so far
- Thanks to staff for covering interregnum between school business managers and Pippa Felsing for the newsletter.

15.2 The governing body highlighted aspects of the meeting that would have an impact on teaching and learning:

- The new governing body structure, with fewer meetings, is providing governors with more time to see the school development plan in action, to be better informed and to challenge staff to provide evidence of action plans being put into practice and having an impact
- Staff see meeting with governors as part of their job and want to talk to them and explain what they are doing
- Ensuring a balanced budget, use of PPG, financial stability for the future

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- Critical friend – celebrating successes

16. The Key Janet Scott tabled a publication from The Key – School Governor Essentials – containing a number of useful checklists for governors.

17. Thanks The governing body wished to record their thanks to Andrew King, Brian Ostro and all the staff for maintaining a positive image in the community in spite of the challenges of the Rugby World Cup and other pressures.

The meeting ended at 9 p.m.

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Chase Bridge Primary School Governing Body Minutes Action Sheet		
Minute reference	Action required	By whom and when
3.2 Staff governor	Arrange for election of staff governor	AK Immediate
3.3 Co-opted governors	Interview potential candidates for co-opted governor vacancies	JJ, JS, AK Immediate
4 Chair and vice-chair	Contact John Justice about the role of chair and vice-chair	Non-staff governors Immediate
8.2 Children's blog	Respond to children's blog	Governors Ongoing
8.4 Budget and finance update	Consider need for financial expertise on governing body when recruiting governors	JJ, JS, AK Immediate
9. Pupil performance results	Circulate sample test paper to governors	AK Immediate
12.4 Child Protection Policy and Prevent strategy	Present revised policy to governing body for approval	AK Immediate
12.5 Data Protection Policy	Review Data Protection Policy in respect of governors' queries	AK, SF Immediate
13 Ofsted	Draw up a list of key headlines from Ofsted training for governors	JS Immediate
14.1 Governing body structure	Arrange for publication of governing body structure chart Complete documentation for governing body restructuring	BMH Immediate JJ, JS, AK, BMH By 31/12/15
14.2 Named Governor Roles and Links	Contact John Justice about preferred named governor role	AL, DJ Immediate
14.3 Academy status	Report from AfC West cluster conference	JJ, AK, JS, MD To meeting on 25/11/15
14.6 Skills Audit	Initiate skills audit	JJ Immediate
14.7 Governing Body self-evaluation	Initiate governing body self-evaluation	JJ, JS Immediate