

LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE

REDRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Governing Body held at the School
on Thursday, 11 October, 2018

PRESENT:

	Mr D. Backhouse – Chair
Ms T. Ahmed	Mr Z. Furreedan
Dr K. Atwal*	Mr S. Ghosh
Ms J. Braysher	Mr D. Low
Mr R. Chatterjee	Ms C. MacLeish
Mr Y. Din	Mr K. Mushtaq
Ms C. Downey	Mr E. Saigol

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs M. Smith,	Clerk
Mrs P. Kambo,	Associate Headteacher
Mrs P. Raj,	Associate Headteacher
Mr C. Stewart	LA's Operational Director of Education and Inclusion

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mrs K. Cornwall.

2. REGISTER OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTEREST

All governors were asked to complete and return the register of pecuniary and personal interest forms which were circulated.

ACTION: All Governors

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest relating to any of the agenda items.

4. PUBLICATION OF NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS

A governor expressed the view that all non-confidential governing body minutes should be posted on the school website. The aim would be to gain the confidence of the community.

There was a wide ranging discussion regarding reported requests from parents to see minutes of the previous governing body meetings via Freedom of Information requests. CS advised that the Freedom of Information request related to more than just minutes of meetings and the Chair confirmed that he had not received any requests for copies of minutes, by e-mail or otherwise. It was suggested that there had been requests to the Chair but he had not responded. The Chair asked to be informed of any parent who had claimed to have contacted him so that he could respond accordingly.

A governor commented that there appeared to be some confusion about the role of parent governors and that parents should not lobby governors. It was noted that Parent Governors are representative parents, not parent representatives, which is a different role.

KA advised that publication of agreed minutes on the website might release some anxiety within the parent community. He confirmed that no requests for sight of the minutes had been received in school. It was acknowledged that building good links with stakeholders was important. KA stressed that if there was a breakdown of trust with parents then he needed to be informed about the reasons for that situation.

The Chair invited governors to vote on the proposal to include non-private and confidential minutes of full governing body meetings (not committees), once agreed and signed, on the school website. The vote was carried and it was agreed that arrangements would be made for agreed minutes to be posted on the website. It was acknowledged that there would be a time lag between a meeting taking place and the agreement of the minutes at the next meeting before the minutes could be added to the website.

ACTION: DB / KA

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday, 9 July, 2018 were received. Governors raised two issues in relation to the minutes.

- 5.1. A governor requested that the initials of governors asking questions or making comments should be included in the minutes. Other governors commented that this was not an issue and shouldn't be discussed. Another governor commented that he would be happy for his initials to be included alongside any specific contribution made.

Governors were asked to consider that what was important; was the governing body being able to demonstrate challenge, as well as support, for the school with the focus always on the impact on the children. Governors were asked to consider every question in terms of outcomes for the children. Governors were also asked to consider not only the quality of the challenge but also

the quality of the response. It was suggested that issues such as this took up unnecessary time at governing body meetings when there were more important things to discuss.

The Chair invited governors to vote on the inclusion of governors' initials in minutes of meetings. The vote was a tie. Using the Chair's casting vote, it was determined this practice would not be introduced.

- 5.2. In minute 3.2 it was noted that Mr Sandhu's name was incorrectly spelt.
- 5.3. A governor queried the text of minute 13 and expressed concern that the minute did not provide sufficient detail to reflect the discussion at the meeting. It was agreed that Chair would discuss with the Clerk about the missing details, e.g. extent to which rooms were booked and the costs for the different sized rooms. It was noted that the minutes are not a verbatim record and, as such, would never be able to include every specific point made.

It was noted that the minutes could not therefore be agreed at this meeting and hence would not be published on the school website until such time as they are agreed, i.e. after the December meeting.

ACTION: HGS

- 5.4. The private and confidential minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The following were matters arising from the minutes:

- 6.1. Confidential items (minute 3.4.3 refers)
CS confirmed that any item recorded as private and confidential item would remain private and confidential, even if the substance of the content was subsequently in the public domain. The important factor is that if the content was private and confidential at the time it was discussed, it remains in the private and confidential section of the minutes.
- 6.2. Register of Pecuniary Interests (minute 5 refers)
It was noted that the necessary forms for governors to complete had been circulated earlier in the meeting.
- 6.3. Code of Conduct (minute 7 refers)

It was agreed that the Clerk would check whether the school office had any signed copies of the Code of Conduct. Copies were available at the meeting for any governor.

ACTION: HGS

- 6.4. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (minute 8 refers)
See minute 7 below.
- 6.5. Audit Report (minute 10 refers)
See minute 13 below.
- 6.6. 2018/19 Budget (minute 12 refers)
See minute 12 below.
- 6.7. Scale of Charges for Lettings (minute 13 refers)
- 6.8. Finance Policy (minute 14.1 refers)
A governor wished to make the point that the clarity suggested for para 3.2 of the policy relating to the maximum for a single purchase was not the only example of where clarity was needed. It was recommended that the policy be reviewed to ensure clarity throughout the document.
- 6.9. Finance Audit Recommendations (minute 15 refers)
See minute 13 below.
- 6.10. Charges for Breakfast and After School Clubs (p&c minute refers)
KA reported that he had had long conversations about the lettings and he would consider the issues. Discussions had also taken place with the Breakfast and After School Clubs and the impact of varying the budget.

KA recommended and it was agreed that all charges would remain the same until the end of the financial year. The possibility of a holiday club would be reviewed.

KA advised that although lettings charges would remain for long standing organisations using the premises, the facilities at the school would not be marketed to new organisations at the current time. It was hoped that the issues would be reviewed in the second half of the spring term. Consideration would also need to be given to the arrangements to support lettings and the potential negative impact of letting.

It was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the meeting after February half term.

ACTION: HGS

7. **SAFEGUARDING**

It was noted that a new Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2018 document had been published. All governors were asked to confirm, by signing the sheet circulated, that they had read and understood it.

ACTION: All Governors

Governors were advised that the Local Authority had updated its Safeguarding Policy to reflect the new KCSIE requirements. The school's details needed to be added to the document which would then be added to the school's website. The Chair advised that he would arrange with the Clerk to advise all governors when the new policy was available to view.

ACTION: Chair / HGS

It was agreed to re-appoint Claire Downey as the Safeguarding Governor. Governors received the comprehensive report from the Safeguarding Governor. It was reported that a further safeguarding visit would be undertaken after half term.

It was noted that the school would carry out a safeguarding audit.

ACTION: KA

In response to a question from a governor, it was confirmed that the requirements for governors is for them to have a DBS check, complete the pecuniary interest form and confirm that they have read and understood KCSIE.

ACTION: All Governors

KA advised that as part of the school's procedures the Single Central Record will be checked against all staff files. Governors were also advised that every Local Authority (LA) Adviser visit has an element of safeguarding. KA advised that he would also review what safeguarding and prevent training had been undertaken by staff to ensure that knowledge and experience was extended across the staff.

ACTION: KA

A governor asked about the support available to help governors prepare for an Ofsted inspection and what the role would be for individual governors. KA advised that he would be willing to support governors with key questions. As time goes by, governors will increase in experience. This would also include governors attending, by invitation, meetings with the LA Adviser. Any inspection would be led by the Headteacher. As a school with a current Ofsted rating of outstanding, the school would receive a Section 8 inspection.

8. **EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

KA advised that he would present a written report at the next meeting.

Governors who were able to attend the 'Data Learning' session were thanked for making the time to do so.

KA advised that 6 priorities had been identified for the school.

The School Learning Plan now had one more objective – to improve attendance. Key responsibilities have been allocated to members of the senior leadership team (SLT). It was confirmed that the percentage of pupils with persistent absence was low compared to the local authority as a whole. It was noted that attendance data could be presented in different ways. There were still a high number of pupils who were absent due to term time holidays. It was noted that the LA Adviser asks questions about attendance during every visit.

Appraisals were arranged for all staff. There was a clear plan on pay progression which had been communicated to all staff.

The budget was being scrutinised with a specific focus on agency fees. All expenditure would be reviewed in terms of the impact on children. It was noted that the impact of the expansion of the school on the budget was difficult to predict.

It was agreed that the LA Adviser's report would be circulated for the next meeting.

ACTION: KA

KA identified building capacity as a key focus. Every leader is to be given the opportunity to develop coaching skills.

Governors were also advised that KA was questioning the cultural norms in school.

In terms of capacity, KA advised that there was room for greater distributed leadership across the school. Staff were responding well to the changes which had been introduced to improve pupil outcomes.

Some concerns had been expressed by parents about issues such as lunchtimes in KS1. Opportunities had been created, for example via parent forums, for parents to share concerns. There had been a lot of communication from parents.

The learning plan was fairly detailed about Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff, particularly in relation to developing assessment for learning.

KA expressed the view that he was pleased with the work in the first few weeks of term which had proved to be a very good start to the academic year.

A governor asked whether the attendance was low against the national figure or on a downward trend. In response, KA explained that there was an upward trend but the attendance was inconsistent. There had not yet been an opportunity for a detailed analysis of the data. It had been identified that absence for religious observance was removed from the data had an impact on the figures.

KA explained how attendance can be addressed and said that at Highlands a particular issue had been identified with absence in Year 3. In response, he had visited the home of every Year 3 child who was absent which brought an immediate impact of increased attendance.

It was noted that children of working parents were less likely to be absent. It was confirmed that first day calling arrangements were in place. An Education Welfare Officer is currently funded by the school. KA advised that his aim was to streamline money spent on such support as it removes the responsibility from the class teacher for attendance issues. Breakfast club without charge was offered to some pupils to support their well-being.

It was highlighted that there was low pupil mobility at Redbridge Primary.

In response to a question, it was noted that Year 5 & 6 children who walked to and from school alone required a letter from their parents. It was noted that over 80% of pupils live within 1km of the school.

Another governor thanked KA for the understanding data session and the coffee mornings arranged for parents.

KA was asked whether staff felt involved and supported in relation to the changes being introduced. In response, KA explained that a clear rationale and vision was presented to staff. As part of his role, KA aimed to allow the new Headteacher to have a clear understanding of the staffing structure. Agreed procedures were used for all changes and processes in school. For example, all staff attended a presentation on appraisal. Governors were advised that the best evidence would be gained by them speaking to staff. KA stressed that he was doing what needed to be done if he were to be in post for 5 years – he was not acting as a temporary leader.

It was reported that there was a need to develop significant capacity in the office and administrative teams to enable KA to have a key focus of driving teaching and learning across the school. KA stressed that he cared about staff and governors but he cared more about the children.

Another governor sought further clarification about the calculation of pupil absence data. KA advised that a child with 95% attendance had missed 10 days across the school year. Lots of incentives would be used to reward attendance. Examples of incentives used at Highlands included a different colour PE bag for pupils with 100% attendance.

Every class teacher was able to nominate a 'wild card' for pupils who didn't achieve 100% attendance due to sickness. It was noted that the parents of any child with less than 90% attendance were invited into school to discuss the reasons for the absences.

KA advised that attendance would be a feature of his written report for the next meeting.

ACTION: KA

9. SATS RESULTS 2018

Governors received the school data and the following points were highlighted:

Early years outcomes were strong with 86% at a Good Level of Development (GLD) which is above both the national and LA figures.

The School Learning Plan and appraisals for staff in early years included a target to raise the percentage of children exceeding expectations.

Phonics were strong in Year 1 and Year 2. Strategies to raise outcomes would be started earlier.

KS1 outcomes were strong, particularly in writing. There was a potential for an increase in greater depth in maths and reading.

KS2 results were significantly above national and LA figures. There was still room for improvement in outcomes. Progress was not as strong and, in response to a governor's question, it was clarified that this was due to high KS1 results. KS1 outcomes in 2018 had been well moderated.

A target had been set for 90% of pupils achieving the expected standard in the combined subjects.

KA advised that he was spending a lot of time in Year 6. There had been some pupil movement within the year group.

Governors were advised that the aim was to put cultures and structures in place – there were no short term measures.

10. DATA LEARNING SESSION

The governors who attended the Data Learning Session reported that they had found it useful. It was noted that a number of staff had also attended and governors asked KA to pass on their thanks to the staff.

It was noted that parent and staff surveys had been conducted in the summer term. KA advised that the school was in a different context at that time and he did not wish to comment on the outcomes of the surveys. KA planned to undertake pupil, parent and staff surveys at an appropriate time.

ACTION: KA

A governor asked about the mechanics of the surveys. It was explained that small groups of children would be asked questions to generate a summary of pupils' views. Staff surveys were not conducted very often as the rationale was that with true distributive leadership, with high trust and high challenge, staff opinions were obvious.

Governors expressed the view that with the considerable amount of change, a staff survey would be valuable. KA agreed to carry out a specific staff survey to gauge staff views on the changes. One outcome of the survey would be to enable the staff team to build a culture of high challenge and high trust. It was noted that the first survey would be for teaching staff only.

The deployment of support staff had not yet been reviewed and therefore staff had not been exposed to changes which had been teacher focussed.

The importance of parent surveys was stressed. The Ofsted survey questions would be used and pupils' books would be sent home for parents to see pupil progress.

11. APPOINTMENT OF A SUBSTANTIVE HEADTEACHER FOR SEPTEMBER 2019

Dr Atwal, Ms Kambo and Ms Raj left the meeting for this item

It was clarified that the Terms of Reference and membership of the Selection Panel for the recruitment of a substantive Headteacher would be agreed at the December meeting.

ACTION: HGS

The role of the panel was to agree the advertisement, person specification and job description. The panel would then shortlist and interview the identified candidates. At the conclusion of the process, the Panel would make a recommendation to the governing body asking it to ratify the appointment of the chosen candidate. The date for the final interviews has been set as 21 March, 2019. The governing body would either accept or reject the recommendation, which would mean re-running the whole process.

CS advised that the only deviation would be if the panel offered the post to a candidate and they chose to decline the appointment, in which case the post could be offered to the second candidate.

The Chair advised governors that the panel would be supported by a school improvement adviser and, possibly, the Head of School Improvement at the LA during the interviews.

It was noted that the panel size is typically 3 governors and with 2 professionals as advisers.

In readiness for the next meeting, all governors were asked to consider the attributes and skills the appointed candidate would need to have in order to continue the school's movement forward. It was also noted that consideration should be given to the way the school presented itself so candidates would want to work at the school.

The Chair explained that there were some significant dates in the academic year for staff resignations and commented that the proposed timing of the advertisement allowed time for a second advertisement, should that be necessary, before the final resignation date of 31st May.

CS advised that governors needed to be realistic in terms of the history of school as it is well known within education circles. It was therefore vital to present the school in the best possible way and to encourage candidates to visit to enable them to fully appreciate the potential of the school.

The Chair agreed to forward a copy of an example Information Pack to all governors.

ACTION: DB

At the December meeting the skills and attributes required of the successful candidate will be discussed.

Dr Atwal, Ms Kambo and Ms Raj returned to the meeting

12. 2018/19 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

It was reported that the second quarter budget report was not yet available, but it would be forwarded to all governors at the earliest opportunity.

The detail of the report would be considered at the proposed 'Finance Learning' session which would be arranged for after half term.

ACTION: DB

13. FINANCE AUDIT REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

Governors noted the audit report and agreed the action plan.

14. SCALE OF CHARGES FOR LETTINGS

See minute 6 above.

15. SKILLS AUDIT

It was agreed that the skills audit would be included on the agenda for the December meeting.

ACTION: HGS

16. DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors agreed, in accordance with the School Staffing Regulations 2013, to delegate to the Executive Headteacher the following two powers:

- the decision that a member of staff should no longer work at the school;
- appointments outside the Senior Leadership Group (defined as Deputy and Assistant Headteacher level).

17. STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT ADVICE

Governors noted the DfE Staffing and Employment advice.

It was noted that the school followed the Local Authority's HR policies which were negotiated with the unions.

The governing body wished to record that in future, all LA approved policies would be adopted without reference to the governing body.

18. PAY COMMITTEE

The Terms of Reference for the Pay Committee were agreed for the 2018/19 academic year. The membership of the Committee was confirmed as Mr Backhouse; Ms Braysher and Mr Furreedan.

A governor questioned why the minutes of the Pay Committee were treated as confidential. Another governor explained that there could be a need for governors to be able to form an appeal committee, which must be formed by governors with no prior knowledge of the issue.

It was noted that the Headteacher would need to present to the Committee the rationale for the appraisal process. Anonymised papers would be presented to demonstrate the robustness of the process. Dr Atwal offered to share his presentation on appraisal as he had done with staff. Governors agreed that this would be helpful.

ACTION: KA

19. FINANCE POLICY

It was agreed to consider the Finance Policy at the next meeting.

ACTION: HGS

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 6 December, 2018.

It was also agreed that two dates on a Friday would be identified for a Finance Learning session and circulated to governors.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

21.1. A governor asked about the possibility of a governor 'Learning Walk'. It was suggested that this could be undertaken when

governors attend the finance session. Any governor not able to attend on that occasion was invited to contact Dr Atwal to make alternative arrangements to visit the school.

- 21.2. Governors were asked to consider starting meetings earlier. It was agreed that future meetings would start at 6.30 pm.

It was suggested that consideration could be given to holding more frequent governing body meetings to avoid the need for meetings of three hours. The Chair commented that most governing body meetings last 2 hours and pointed out that nearly an hour of this meeting had been spent agreeing the minutes, their style and whether to publish them on the school website.

He added that if the governing body got to a point where meetings couldn't be completed within 2 hours or so on a regular basis, then their frequency could be reviewed.

22. CONFIDENTIALITY

There were no confidential items discussed.

Chair.....

Date.....

The meeting closed at 9.55 pm.