

THE GOVERNING BODY OF RUSHEY GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Rushey Green Primary School held at the school on Monday, 13 March 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Ms L. Brooks
Mrs S. Coban
Mrs N. Evora-Kouassi
Ms A. Gregory
Ms J. Greene
Ms C. Kiwanuka
Ms C. Marks-Menzies
Ms B. Montague
Ms Y. Morris Headteacher
Canon C. Pickstone
Ms R. Pott-Negrine
Ms J. Purkiss
Mr G. Rees Chair

Also present:

Ms N. Badar Deputy Headteacher
Ms C. Gordon Assistant Headteacher
Mr M. Grocock Deputy Headteacher
Ms C. Williams Assistant Headteacher
Mrs J. Woods Clerk

1. APOLOGIES / DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / WELCOME TO NEW GOVERNOR

Apologies for absence were received with consent from Mr Ajayi, Ms McGarrigle, and Ms Phipps.

Governors were reminded that they must declare conflicts and pecuniary interest before items were discussed, and must withdraw from the meeting while the item was under discussion.

Governors welcomed Ms Judith Purkiss, the newly elected staff governor, to the meeting.

2. TO AGREE THE BUSINESS FOR THE MEETING

The order in which items were to be discussed and those items which would be considered as urgent business was agreed.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

(a) To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2017

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2017 be approved as a correct record.

(b) Matters arising

(i) Page 1, Minute 3(b)(i) – Register of Interests

The Clerk confirmed that the two outstanding forms for the Register of Business Interests had now been received, and would be passed to Howard Hawes.

(ii) Page 1, Minute 3(b)(ii) – Website

It was confirmed that all governors' photographs had now been removed from the website with the exception of the Chair and Vice Chair.

(iii) Page 6, Minute 7 – Lettings

Ms Morris informed governors that she had been introduced to the person who handled the events at St Laurence Church and she had taken on responsibility for lettings at the school. She had made a successful start, and had shown a number of people round who were interested in hiring the school for weekend events. She proposed that the situation should be reviewed after a six month period, to establish how much income could be generated from lettings.

Canon Pickstone said that a couple of complaints had been received from local residents about noise after events at St Laurence had ended and suggested that it would be sensible to keep windows closed where possible. Mrs Coban pointed out that companies and individuals who arranged lettings did not always carry out the required checks for DBS clearance etc. and there had been issues in some other schools. Ms Morris said that she was in discussion with Estates Management, and an appropriate contract would be drawn up with the person who was arranging the lettings, which would cover areas such as DBS checks, insurance etc.

(iv) Page 7, Minute 10 – Equalities data and objectives

Ms Morris said that the equalities data and objectives were being updated and would be sent to the Chair as soon as possible, following which they would be reviewed by the Finance and Personnel Committee at their next meeting.

(v) Page 7, Minute 11(b) – Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

It was noted that Ms McGarrigle had been working with Mr Hawes on the documentation and Ms Morris said that she would check with Mr Hawes whether this had now been submitted to the local authority.

4. GOVERNING BODY

(a) Changes to the Governing Body

The Governing Body were pleased to note that Ms Purkiss had been appointed to replace Ms Thomas for a four year period of office with effect from 18 February 2017. Governors were reminded of the importance of having induction arrangements in place for new governors, and that all new governors should attend induction training. The Clerk said that details of the next induction session would be included in the summer term Governors' Information Pack.

• Reappointment

Governors were advised that Ms McGarrigle's nomination for the local authority governor place was due to be considered by Mayor and Cabinet on 22 March. Subject to the nomination being agreed, it was **RESOLVED** that Ms McGarrigle be confirmed as the local authority governor for a four year period of office with effect from 22 March 2017.

Parent governor vacancy

Ms Morris informed governors that the parent governor election had taken place, and Ms Amy Welsh had been appointed to fill the vacancy.

(b) Governing Body self review

Governors considered two further questions from the list of 20 questions that Governing Bodies should be asking.

Engagement: Are we properly engaged with our school community, the wider school sector and the outside world?

13. *How do we make regular reports on the work of the governing board to our parents and local community?*

Ms Morris reminded governors that minutes of Governing Body meetings were available to all parents, and the most recent set of minutes were displayed on the wall by

Reception. She agreed that an item would be included in the newsletter to remind parents that the minutes were available for inspection. It was suggested that they could also be put on the website and the noticeboard outside. Ms Badar reminded governors that committee minutes were also available for inspection.

It was agreed that it was important to engage with parents and the community, and there was discussion about how Rushey Green governors could work with colleagues from other schools, for example through training sessions.

Rushey Green was always represented at the LGA conference, and it was noted that Mr Ajayi was now a member of the LGA Management Committee.

Governors discussed how parent governors interacted with parents, and whether parents were aware of their identity. Ms Montague said that she was very proactive and introduced herself to parents, and also invited them to open days etc. It was agreed that it was important for parents to see governors in the playground, and a suggestion was made that governors could wear lanyards to identify themselves to improve informal engagement. It was agreed that there should also be more formal opportunities for parents to approach governors, for example by having a governors' table at parents' evenings. It was also suggested that greater links should be developed with the RGSA, possibly with the appointment of a link governor.

There was discussion about how governors interacted with staff, and whether there were ways of improving visibility. It was noted that governors were now invited to INSET days.

Canon Pickstone suggested that parents may find it helpful to have a short summary of the main items discussed at Governing Body and committee meetings in the Green Paper, and to highlight the role of parent governors. It was agreed that this would be introduced as soon as possible.

It was agreed that coffee mornings provided a good forum for governors and parents to meet, but it was recognised that working parents were not able to attend these events. However, there were other opportunities for engagement, such as through Superdads. It was agreed that a more structured agenda would be used for future coffee mornings, and the issue of engagement between governors and parents would be discussed, including ways of improving engagement with working parents. Although the RGSA operated a Facebook page and Twitter feed, it was pointed out that this was run by parents, and was not an official school initiative. Ms Morris reminded governors that the school had now started a blog to give all parents the opportunity of keeping abreast of the work the school was doing.

Accountability of the executive: Do we hold the school leaders to account?

16. *Do governors regularly visit the school to get to know it and monitor the implementation of the school strategy?*

Governors felt that they held the school leaders to account effectively. Meetings of the Governing Body and committees were well attended, and governors were involved in regular learning walks. Ms Morris said that she would circulate dates for the next round of learning walks as soon as possible.

(c) Review of committee membership and link governor responsibilities

Governors reviewed the membership of committees and link governor responsibilities, together with the revised link governor review timetable. In order to ensure that link governor reports were provided in accordance with the schedule, it was **RESOLVED** that Mrs Coban would take on the role of co-ordinator, and would email governors to remind

them of the need to prepare a report one month before each meeting, and would also liaise with Ms Badar as appropriate.

Ms Morris agreed to circulate a template for governors to complete when they had made a visit.

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS VISITS TO THE SCHOOL, AND TRAINING

(a) Reports from committees

(i) Premises Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 January 2017 were received. The main item discussed had been lettings and how to generate additional income. Mr Rees said that the more able maths pupils had carried out some impressive statistical work on PV panels and the energy they produced, income generated etc. The Committee had also considered segregating an area for a Reception play area, which would be discussed further at the next meeting.

(ii) Finance and Personnel Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee held on 31 January 2017 were received. The main focus of the meeting had been the 2016/17 budget, and Mr Rees was pleased to inform governors that it was now anticipated that there would be a surplus of approximately £20,000 at the end of the financial year, rather than the deficit which had originally been predicted. This had been achieved by prudent management of the budget, and substantial savings had been made during the year. However, in common with all Lewisham schools, the financial position would become increasingly challenging over the next three years, and a significant deficit was predicted in three years' time due to rising costs and a reduction in the budget allocation. It was hoped that it would be possible to partially offset this by increased income from lettings, as well as from the voluntary donations to be requested from parents. Mr Rees said that there had been further discussion of this with the Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee, and it had been proposed that a letter should be sent to parents each September to request a donation. There was discussion about the potential uptake in contributions, and it was noted that an increasing number of schools, particularly secondary schools, were now taking this approach. The wording of the letter to parents would be discussed in more detail at the next meeting, but would make it clear that the contribution was being requested as a result on the drastic government cuts, and would give details of how the money would be used; in particular, that the money received would not be spent on luxuries but would be used to try to maintain existing provision such as Mathematics, computer licensed etc. It was proposed that the contribution would be per family rather than per child, and parents must also be made aware that this would be a voluntary payment.

It was noted that Reception parents had been asked for a contribution of £1.80 per term towards the cost of cooking ingredients etc, and the majority of parents were happy to pay this.

(ii) Curriculum Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 February 2017 were received. At their meeting, the Committee had received a presentation on the humanities curriculum from Laura Diaz (history) and Eucratia Thomas (geography). The presentation had highlighted a number of areas which were going well, and had also specified areas for development. Canon Pickstone said that it was clear this curriculum area was going very well, and the Committee had

been interested to learn about the increasing emphasis on self evaluation and had been pleased to learn that the quality of writing across topics was improving.

The Committee had been shown an excellent video of pupils being interviewed in depth about the historical subjects they had been studying such as the Parthenon, World War II, dinosaurs, and the battle of Bosworth Field.

The Committee had reviewed and approved the Teaching and Learning Policy, and had approved the new Geography and History Policies; because these were new policies, they had been circulated to the Governing Body for ratification. The Behaviour Handbook had also been discussed and approved, and again, had been circulated for ratification by the Governing Body. It was **RESOLVED** that the Geography Policy, History Policy, and Behaviour Handbook be approved.

The Committee had considered the link governors' report template, and as agreed above, had suggested that a governor should be appointed to co-ordinate link governor reports.

A display of some of the extended work carried out by the more able children was available for governors' inspection.

Governors were reminded that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday, 8 May 2017 at 6.00 p.m., and all governors were welcome to attend.

(b) Visits to the school, meetings attended, and other activities

There had been no visits since the last meeting.

(c) Governing Body training

Ms Purkiss said that she had attended the SEN training the previous week. She had been interested to hear the views of parent governors, the majority of whom wanted to know how much money was received per pupil so that they could speak to their schools to find out where the money was being spent. Ms Kiwanuwa had also attended this training session, and reminded governors that schools now had responsibility for SEN pupils from the age of 3 to 25.

Ms Coban had attended the training session on British values, which had been interesting. She said that she would circulate information from the course, and it may be necessary to incorporate further points raised in the school's safeguarding practices. Ms Kiwanuwa said that she had also attended this training session, and emphasised that the British values must now be incorporated into all subjects.

6. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

The Headteacher's report had been circulated and included items on the diary overview, school roll, school meals, reading in Key Stage 1, London Citizens Assembly, Holocaust Memorial Day, visit to the Mayor, parent workshops, staff training, school blog, the Pupil Premium, SEND, and attendance. Ms Morris elaborated on areas of her report and answered governors' questions.

• School roll

The school roll continued to grow, and there were now 576 children at Rushey Green from Reception to Year 6, with 24 vacancies. The Chair asked whether the number of vacancies was unusually high; Ms Morris explained that there were usually a couple of vacancies in each class as children left and joined the school.

• School meals

It was noted that the number of school meals served was increasing in line with the expansion of the school. Governors were pleased to note that the Food Standards Agency had carried out

an inspection of the kitchen in January, and the school had again been awarded the highest standard of 5*.

- **Reading in Key Stage 1**

The first Key Stage 1 parents reading session had taken place and had gone very smoothly. The session had been well attended, with a number of fathers present. The children had enjoyed this, and were looking forward to next term's reading session.

- **London Citizens Assembly**

A group of the most able children had attended the London Citizens Assembly in November which had taken place at Denmark Hill. The children had spoken very clearly and with great confidence about the projects they had been involved in. The group had also given a presentation at the Refugee Summit held at the school. Ms Morris explained that these projects provided a good way of extending learning opportunities for the more able children.

- **Holocaust Memorial Day**

A group of Year 6 children had performed at Holocaust Memorial Day on 29 January. The theme this year was 'How can life go on', and the children had given an extremely moving performance, which had been highly commended by those present.

- **Visit to the Mayor**

Members of the School Council had been invited to visit the Mayor in February, and had been asked for suggestions of how they would use £25,000 for the benefit of the community. The children had given very sensible answers, and one child had done research on Cllr Bullock's background, which he had been impressed by.

- **Parent workshops**

Parent workshops were continuing to help parents to support their children. Governors asked about the topics covered, and it was noted that workshops had taken place on Key Stage 1 SATS, a Key Stage 2 information session, and the first in a series of three sessions, which had been very well attended.

- **Staff training**

The report summarised the staff training over the last half term which had been intended to develop teaching and learning in the school, drive improvement, and meet the aims of the School Development Plan.

- **School blog**

Governors' attention was drawn to the new school blog, which would be updated with information and links on a daily basis. Ms Morris showed governors how to access the blog, and explained that this had been developed to help to keep working parents more informed of developments in school and had been publicised in the newsletter.

- **Attendance**

The detailed attendance report was received. Ms Badar informed governors that the target of had now been achieved, with 96.13% attendance from September 2016 until 8 March 2017. The report broke attendance down into groups and also by year group. It could be seen that attendance by Pupil Premium children was slightly higher than most other groups, and attendance by girls was the lowest group; the highest unauthorised absence rate was also among girls. However, attendance by statemented children was the highest at 98.13%, with no unauthorised absence.

Ms Badar reminded governors that attendance generally dipped in the spring term because of illness, but had remained fairly steady this year.

The main focus for attendance work was on girls and children who received SEN support. Ms Badar highlighted attendance concerns about three individual girls, and the steps which were being taken to improve their attendance.

The breakdown of attendance by year group showed that attendance in Year 1, Year 3, and Year 6 was below other years. Governors asked the reasons for this. Ms Badar said that Year 1 attendance had been affected significantly by an outbreak of chicken pox.

It was noted that there were currently five children in Year 3 with poor attendance, which impacted on the rest of the class. In two of these cases, the children had suffered from health issues; two of the other children were living in temporary accommodation and were having difficulties with attendance, and the third child had been abroad for three weeks for a family funeral, and was then off sick on her return. Ms Badar said that there were six children in Year 6 whose attendance was below 86%. One of these children had suffered a bereavement of a parent, and three had been ill after being taken abroad at the beginning of the year. One of the children had been off school with chicken pox for two weeks, and the remaining child had historical poor attendance, although this was now better than in the past as a result of considerable support from the school.

Ms Badar outlined the range of family support measures which had been put in place by the school to improve attendance, which included home visits and joining the walking bus.

Page 3 of the report gave information on the 19 children living in temporary accommodation. It was noted that some children travelled a significant distance to school from areas such as Streatham and Thamesmead.

Whole school attendance was reviewed each week to determine whether the weekly attendance targets had been met; so far, the target had been met in 13 out of 20 weeks. Ms Badar informed governors that attendance was lowest at the start of each new term, and had fallen to 93% at the height of the chicken pox outbreak.

Governors asked what steps the school could take if attendance fell below 85%. Ms Badar said that meetings took place with the local authority, and a meeting of the Attendance Panel had taken place.

The Chair congratulated the school on the improvement in attendance, and Ms Badar was thanked for her detailed report.

- **Pupil Premium**

Governors then discussed the comprehensive report on the Pupil Premium Grant, prepared by Ms Gordon. The first page of the report set out the context of the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) and it was noted that the school received £1,320 for each child over 4 who had been entitled to free school meals over the past six years, with the exception of looked after children or post looked after children, where £1,900 was paid per pupil. It was noted that there were currently three post looked after children at Rushey Green.

The report gave a summary of the points system used to indicate and measure attainment and progress across the school, broken down into year groups, and showed how progress and attainment were tracked using the John Sinnot system.

Ms Gordon reminded governors that the PPG was used in three broad areas: improving attainment, developing emotional and social skills, and to provide tailored resources to impact on achievement, for example by the provision of iPads. Pupil Premium children were targeted in each year group, and were monitored regularly through teacher assessment and pupil progress meetings. The report included a long list of the ways in which the PPG was used, which included teacher and teaching assistant group support, phonics focus groups for Years 1 and 2, maths and English booster sessions in Year 2, one to one support in class, one to one

counselling, booster groups in Year 6 in reading, writing, and maths, a computer club for children without online access at home, a computer club for gifted and talented children, iPads for smaller nurture groups, boys and girls social skills groups, additional speech and language support, handwriting support, reading and SoundsWrite support, provision of school uniform where needed, learning mentor support, provision of revision books, and walking bus and breakfast club allocation to help attendance and performance at school.

Ms Gordon said that when the data had been analysed, it had been evident that Pupil Children were performing below their peers. She stressed that there was a difference between attainment and progress, and although children were making good progress, many had a very low starting point. In addition, many Pupil Premium children also had special educational needs, and very few were more able. However, as children moved up the school, it was usually possible to see the gap reducing because of the work carried out by the school.

Ms Gordon highlighted two areas. In Year 1, there was a significant gap between Pupil Premium and non Pupil Premium children in reading, writing, and maths. It was noted that there was a significant proportion of Pupil Premium children in this year group with complex additional educational needs including cognitive difficulties, ASD, dyslexia, behaviour difficulties, and hearing impairment, and many of these children were unlikely to ever meet the age related expectations. There were also a number of children in Year 3 who were below age related expectations in maths, due to the high number of SEND children.

It was noted that Year 2 was the only year group with more able Pupil Premium children who were working above age related expectations in English.

Ms Gordon drew governors' attention to the tables which gave a comparison of progress between Pupil Premium and non Pupil Premium children. It could be seen that Pupil Premium children were wither in line with or just above/below non Pupil Premium children, except in Year 3 maths and Year 1, where progress was significantly lower in writing.

Ms Gordon summarised the interventions which had been started in January to help to move the children on, and stressed that there was a focus on how to help children to meet expectations and diminish the difference between Pupil Premium children and their peers.

Mr Rees asked which of the interventions had been the most successful. Ms Gordon felt that small booster groups were the most effective intervention, and many Pupil Premium children had additional needs which made it more difficult for them to absorb information in a larger setting. In response to a further question, Ms Gordon confirmed that the school was careful not to stigmatise children, and non Pupil Premium children were also included in booster groups. Clarification was sought on how places at the homework club etc were allocated, and it was noted that places were allocated based on need.

Ms Gordon invited governors to submit any further questions by email. The Chair thanked Ms Gordon for her very detailed report and presentation.

- **SEND**

Ms Purkiss presented her report on the implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (SEND) and the Inclusion Policy.

It was noted that there were currently 16 children at Rushey Green with statements of EHCPs and 130 children with SEN support. The proportion of children on the SEN Register had fallen from the previous academic year. Ms Purkiss said that 11 children had statements/EHCPs for hearing impairment, although some of these children had additional needs. She explained that children with statements/EHCPs automatically qualified for 25% more time in the SATs, and applications had already been made for four children in Year 6. As noted earlier, attendance by children with SEN was above average.

Even though the percentage of children with SEN had fallen from last year, 22% of all children on roll had special needs. Ms Purkiss informed governors that Lewisham had the highest level of ASD in London, and numbers were likely to increase.

The report included a summary of the level of SEN support in each year group, and Ms Purkiss said that there was a clear correlation between the level of support needed and the way in which classes were performing, and it was clear that some classes were struggling to achieve age related expectations. However, most pupils with SEND had a very good attitude to learning, and responded positively to improving their work. It was noted that in one class, there were four children with hearing impairment, which had an impact on speaking and listening in the class.

Ms Purkiss reminded governors that there were 17 children living in temporary accommodation, and there was therefore high mobility in the school community. Two children who had previously received extensive academic and social support had now transferred to a school in Greenwich.

The report gave details of the range of provision that was in place for pupils with SEND, which included differentiated daily phonics sessions for Key Stage 1 and some Key Stage 2 children, paired reading support, one to one reading support for children in Year 2 with PGCE student teachers, targeted reading and writing programmes in Key Stage 2, SATs booster groups for Year 6 children, small group work in maths throughout Year 6 using materials such as Numicon, and one to one tuition, and SATs booster groups. In addition, targeted speech and language interventions were used to support pupils, as well as one to one learning mentor support for children in Key Stage 2 and small groups work with children who had been identified for self esteem and social skills support. A range of interventions were in place to support children with ASD.

Ms Purkiss highlighted the increasing number of external agencies which the school had worked with this year. This include work with the Eveline Children's Hospital, Educational Psychology Service, Social Services from a number of Boroughs, Drumbeat, Action for Refugees, the school counsellor, the No Recourse to Public Funds Teams in Lewisham and Southwark, and the Attendance Advisory Services in Lewisham and Lambeth. It was noted that two children at Rushey Green had epilepsy and needed additional nursing.

Governors were pleased to note that every child with an EHCP/statement in Year 6 now had a place in their school of choice, and would be visiting their new schools after Easter.

Ms Purkiss explained that funding for the Centre for the Deaf was provided on a matrix formula, but all other children with statements or EHCPs were funding in accordance with the 2016/17 formula for schools. Two children with extremely complex needs received the maximum possible allocation for their support. Ms Purkiss said that in cases where children had health needs which were not appropriate for Rushey Green, efforts were made to find alternative placements; however, Brent Knoll was currently full but as soon as a place became available, one of the children with extreme medical needs would visit the school with a view to transferring.

- **Sports Premium**

Ms Morris drew governors' attention to the Sports Premium report, which was available on the school website, and which included details of the use and impact of the Sports Grant for 2016/17.

7. SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT REVIEW (SAR)

The spring term report by the School Improvement Adviser was received. The report confirmed the findings of the Ofsted inspection, and was fundamentally complimentary.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

No items of urgent business were raised.

9. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Governors were reminded that the following dates had been agreed for meetings of the Governing Body and committees for the remainder of the 2016/17 academic year.

Governing Body

Monday, 15 May 2017

Monday, 26 June 2017

All meetings to start at 7.00 p.m.

Finance Committee

Tuesday, 18 April 2017 at 4.30 p.m.

Curriculum Committee

Monday, 8 May 2017 at 6.00 p.m.