

Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 10 December 2014 at 7.30pm

Present:

Mr N Ablett (NA)	Mr A Armstrong (AA)*	Mrs B Blackstaffe (BB)
Mrs E Butler (ESB)	Mrs S Carlyon (SC)	Mr R Gibbs (RG)
Mr B Grimwood (BG)	Mr J Hartley (JH)	Mrs G Heath (GH)
Mrs M Penny (MP)	Mrs D Plociennik (DP)	Mr J Roach (JR)
Mrs S Shan (SS)		

*Mr Armstrong arrived at 8.00pm having been delayed by work commitments.

In attendance:

Mrs J Steward (Clerk)

1 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received. Paul Meyler was absent.

2 Declaration of conflict of interest

RG reminded governors that they must declare any conflicts of interest that may occur in the course of the meeting.

3 Notice of urgent items of AoB

- 3.1 A confidential matter at the end of the meeting – RG
- 3.2 Staff Council feedback - JR
- 3.3 Parent Council – MP

4 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2014

Item 16 Review Pay Policy – “The model policy includes the option to give a member of staff a double point increase for exceptional performance **but the intention is for LHS to only do that to respond to a retention issue.**” SC advised governors that the phrase highlighted had been intended to illustrate another use for the double point increase and not as a limitation on how it would be used; she therefore proposed that this phrase be removed from the minutes and governors agreed.

Item 15 Head Teacher’s Report under the section on the new SEN Code of Practice, it is likely there will be **c40-45** children in the K category rather than c10.

With the above amendments the minutes were agreed and signed by RG.

5 Matters arising

Pay Policy – see item 12 on the agenda.

6 Head Teacher’s Report

JR had issue a shortened report as last year’s data has already been thoroughly examined. Pupil Premium is extended to children in Early Years at the rate of £300 per annum (53p/hour) for those children attending for the full 570 hours but it is not clear if they will be part of Ever 6; guidance is awaited. New food standards in schools come into force from January 2015 and although our caterers say they can meet the required standards the school is seeking evidence. From January 2015 schools must provide milk to any child who wants it and it must be semi-skimmed milk and a lower lactose content variety must also be available. Children eligible for FSM will receive milk free and other children will need to pay. JR will write to parents of children in KS2 to see if they want their children to have milk but he does not anticipate much take up other than in Y3. There is some

confusion in relation to guidance from HCC and JR will seek clarification. A new strategy is in place to deal with a small number of children who exhibit extreme behaviour in the playground at lunchtime. This provision aims to help them modify and adapt their behaviour to manage themselves more appropriately. So far only 2 children in KS1 and 2 children in KS2 have been identified and it is not envisaged that there will be many more. DP advised governors that the Anti-Bullying course she had attended was very good and recommended it to colleagues. GH asked for further information about languages being taught in school and JR responded that staff are teaching basic French and that although Portuguese had been considered SLT had felt that a completely different language should be taught so that all children had the opportunity of learning a new language. The HIP report had arrived the day before OFSTED came and had been superseded by the OFSTED report. The new HIP is very supportive of the school and a big advocate of the work undertaken at LHS and sends staff from other schools to see the different phases at work.

7 Committee Membership

It was decided to leave the committees as they are at present.

8 Committee Reports

8.1 P&R

8.1.1 Readiness for SFVS filing in March 2015

This is in hand.

8.1.2 Change of date for the next meeting

The meeting will be held on 22 January 2015 at 7.00pm and SC advised that this change of date only gives her a small window of opportunity to get finance documents ready for governors so they may be circulated close to the meeting date.

8.2 C&CC

The concept of 'British Values' has been high profile for several months now and was discussed at length at the last C&CC meeting where it was agreed to bring the topic to the FGB for discussion. Subsequently, we now know that the statement on the school website was highly commended by OFSTED. Schools are being directed to LHS to see how we put this into practice and OFSTED were also very complimentary about how inclusive the school is. Governors feel that "we accept and celebrate" rather than "tolerate" other cultures and beliefs is a key part of the school's ethos.

9 OFSTED

JR thanked governors and congratulated them on the outcome of the OFSTED inspection. He felt it had been a very fair experience. The Inspector was interested and complimentary at every level, and JR believed that the self-review undertaken by governors had been very beneficial. Governors thanked JR, SLT and all the staff for their hard work and commitment, and governors thanked the Clerk for her hard work and support. The Inspector had teased out answers so that people had a real chance to get their point across and SS had been ideally placed to answer the question "Why would a Muslim send their child to this school?" JR firmly believes that LHS is an outstanding school but for the reasons given in the report we were evaluated as good. The Inspector commented that we were close to outstanding and she thought that if she came back in one or 2 years we would have addressed all of the issues. She had seen outstanding teaching during the inspection but rapid progress in Writing is not good enough. BG commented the remit of inspections is faulty – our pupils come with so little but leave with so much but we will not see the level of attainment rise high enough in Years 3, 4 and 5 as it takes until Y6 to address the issues. We achieved outstanding in the areas where we should. Overall, it was a fair result and the report reads very well. JR reiterated that everyone at school had a part to play and had been brilliant. DP felt that the parents' meeting went well and she had spoken as a parent and not as a governor. Parents spoke about their love of the school and DP spoke from her own experiences. The Inspector

noted the passion for the children to do well. It is hoped that there will be an article in the Watford Observer noting this successful OFSTED inspection.

AA joined the meeting at this point (8.00pm) and was invited to advise colleagues about the school fair. This had been held on Saturday and AA reported that there had been a mixed reaction to the change of day. He thanked all members of staff who had helped and each would receive a thank you card to acknowledge their help. Although more money was banked this year costs were higher and the overall profit was £1317. More people had visited the fair than last year and Saturday seems to be a popular day but more parental involvement is needed in running the stalls as there were only 10 parent helpers on the day. AA extended his thanks to Ben McDonald and X1 Church who had also helped. Governors offered their thanks to AA and the Friends committee for organising the fair.

10 School Plan

The priorities of the Plan had changed again since the inspection to take account of the inspection outcomes. Each priority is broken down into sub-priorities which can be seen in the Plan.

Priority One: To ensure a good rate of progress across each key stage to sustain good attainment by the end of KS2

Priority Two: Establish a rich and varied curriculum that engages, motivates and prepares our children for successful life in modern Britain.

Priority Three: Develop a culture of self-reflection to enhance the quality of provision.

DP asked how writing can be accelerated. JR responded that increasing writing in other subjects to give opportunities to write will help as will extended writing practice. RWI is a 2 year programme with the first year focussing on reading and the second year on writing. DP had heard a comment made that writing does not work in the afternoon and asked if this was in fact the case. JR's response was that this is not the case although it is accepted that the children are often tired in the afternoons. The planned changes will help to create more writing opportunities for the children. Governors can look at children's books and see examples of good work. JH asked when the detail will be added to the Plan and JR advised this will be ready after the Christmas break. DP asked about the teaching of calculation in Maths and JR advised that Nuno Alexandre has written a Calculation Policy which has gone to staff for consultation and will also go to governors for review. JH asked if JR would like to articulate what he wants to achieve at the next inspection. JR responded – outstanding.

11 Completion of HCC Governor Declaration Form

This revised form was issued by HCC following a recent change to legislation and was circulated to governors prior to the meeting together with an explanatory note. JR reported that the introduction of these changes had caused issues in some schools where staff have lost jobs. The completed forms were collected in.

12 Policy Review

12.1 Pay Policy

The policy had been reviewed and adopted at the previous meeting although the document was not complete. It was adopted on the advice of HCC HR. RG was of the view that there were several issues that had not been finalised and the working party set up to consider the issues raised in the policy was still to meet again. JR and SC felt that although the outcome of the working party deliberations may lead to changes it can stand as it currently is. If there are subsequent changes then the policy will come to the FGB meeting in March 2015 for another review. The key issues are around Leadership pay scales and benchmarking but HCC do not have any benchmarking information available about HT salaries. Roy Hardcastle, HCC HR Lead, advised that GBs must be able to justify any decisions they make about Leadership pay. SC has emailed the SBM forum to try and

collect information about this but has not received any responses so far. HCC HR have indicated that different schools are paying different rates because of retention issues. OFSTED drilled in on pay freedoms and mentioned senior leaders who had impressed and asked if they are paid enough.

13 AoB

13.1 Staff Council

The minutes of the last meeting were circulated at the meeting. Any staff can attend the meeting but no SLT are present; staff set the agenda and Nicola Furey and Julia Borlase organise the meeting. Governors considered the following items:

Religious Observance – the school policy is in line with HCC guidance which states that the additional 2 days leave should be unpaid or made up. This leave is not restricted to members of staff from ethnic communities and it was noted that a Christians member of staff recently requested a day's leave to go on retreat. Pupils at the school are also allowed 2 days off for religious celebration. It was agreed to continue with our existing policy and that the absence should be paid in keeping with the ethos of our school.

Pay scales – staff do reach the top of their pay scales over time but jobs carried out are linked to a particular pay scale. Job vacancies do arise in school from time to time and staff can apply for opportunities as they arise. Professional development training is provided but sometimes there is not the scope to develop a role further or a vacant post to apply for. Governors agreed there would be no change to the policy.

Staffroom – DP volunteers in school and said that sometimes the only place to do some jobs is in the staffroom and perhaps staff need to understand that volunteers are doing jobs that teachers would otherwise have to do. School need to consider providing alternative work space for volunteers if the staffroom is not to be used.

Support staff – changes to support staff contracts mean that the first 2 days of sickness absence are unpaid. Support staff are unhappy at the differences between their terms and conditions and those of teaching staff. It was noted that attendance of support staff has improved since the changes came in and also that it is quite rare for staff to be sent home sick. ESB commented that some staff have said they are afraid to be off sick because they need the money they would otherwise lose. It was reported that some schools are now changing the terms and conditions for support staff so that they are once again paid for the first 2 days of any sickness absence. It was agreed to take this issue to the next P&R meeting for further discussion. **Action – Clerk for agenda.**

Staff loyalty scheme – no decision was made.

13.2 Parent Council

It was agreed to pass any relevant reviews to the Parent Council so that governors would have the parent voice on matters eg the Calculation Policy would go to the Council to seek feedback on the language used in the policy to assess if it is clear and easily understood, etc. The Anti-Bullying literature will also go to the Parent Council for review. The language of this policy is important as sometimes parents do not understand that bullying is not just physical but covers all kinds of unkind behaviour. It was noted that on Parent View there is a small percentage of parents who think there is an issue with bullying at the school but also at the inspection meeting parents were happy with the use of mediators.

13.3 see Part 2 confidential minutes



Part 2 Confidential Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 10 December 2014 at 7.30pm

13 AoB

13.3 Permanent Exclusion

RG informed governors that a pupil had been permanently excluded from the school this week and a Governors' Disciplinary Panel needs to be convened. The hearing must be held within 15 school days ie by 13 January 2015 and the Panel must meet to review the HT's decision to exclude whether or not the parents wish to appeal. Governors on the Panel must have attended training but only 2 governors are trained at present so a session has been arranged for Wednesday, 7 January 2015 between 6.00pm and 8.00pm at the school. It is important that all governors attend the training so that a second Panel could be populated if the need was to arise. The Hearing will be held on Friday, 9 January 2015 at 6.00pm at the school.

13.4 SLT Salary Review

RG informed governors that the P&R committee had met prior to the FGB to consider the recommendations of the HT PM committee and they had agreed with their recommendations regarding JR's salary.

JR had made a recommendation with regard to ESB's salary progression as she had met and exceeded her targets and governors agreed with his recommendation.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm