

Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 18 March 015 at 7.30pm

Present:

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

In attendance:

Mrs J Steward (Clerk)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr Ablett and Mr Hartley and governors consented to their absence.

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** Croxley Rail link
- 3.2** Visit to the Base - RG

4 Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2014

These were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by RG.

5 Matters arising

Staff holidays and Pay Policy to come to the next P&R meeting **Action for Clerk.**

6 Head Teacher's Report

RG thanked JR for his comprehensive report. The headline data in the report is based on current data but the Y6 data will be updated again as they are doing mocks next week. Similarly, KS1 data will also be updated. Assessment and reporting are very different now for the non-SATs year groups; fewer are at ARE because of the change in pitch but LHS is in a good place compared to other schools. We are seeing progress but HCC say it will take up to a year and a half for schools to come up to speed following the changes. There has been some negative reaction from parents because some "average" children are now "below average" but staff are working hard to help all children achieve ARE. BB asked if JR had any concerns about L3 writing. JR responded that a lot of work has gone in to support the higher achieving children but the target had been set at 24% which is a challenging target and had been set when the children were still doing transition. The higher ability children are doing alright but do not yet have all the required skills. 24% would be well above the national average and any children achieving this would be expected to go to get good L6s but this is not likely to happen. The L2 results should be good though. There will be some fluctuations and it was noted that 2 children are the equivalent of 3% in the data. RG commented that the reality seems to be down from projections. JR responded that our benchmarks are the national average and looking at last year's average maths and reading are close but still a challenge but writing is more variable. Maths and reading are assessed in SATs but writing is teacher assessed in June. The national average for L6 reading is 0.01 so it is very challenging and ESB remarked that they have entered a few children who will enjoy the challenge. BB asked if anything

can be done to support them and JR responded that reading practice and vocabulary are crucial. Some children will not have the range in vocabulary but wider reading helps to build this. Children need a true talent for reading to get the L6. JR advised that Alison Moore has become a County Moderator.

The **Data Dashboard** shows last year's data; it is "dead" data but does show trends; governors have seen the data before and BG felt that it is impressive compared with other schools.

The **JARV** has been postponed twice but is due shortly. It is a good focal point for OFSTED readiness.

The **Croxley Rail Link** will go ahead now that the government has given final approval to the funding needed. There is to be another public consultation and this will include discussion of a one way system outside the school. Because of the increased value of contract it will now be managed by TFL on behalf of Herts cc.

Rock Challenge – RG thanked everyone involved and also wished to record thanks to the Friends for their continued support.

Wider support - LHS staff are providing support to a number of schools which is generating income for the school and fulfils the requirement that outstanding schools should support other schools.

Secondary transfer – two families are appealing. The % of pupils getting their first choice school is not known but there is a move away from Westfield as the school of choice.

Free School – JR and MP have been supporting SLT from St Clement Danes School who are the lead school for the new Free School in Croxley Green. JR stressed that this school's involvement is to provide expertise in EAL and should not be interpreted as giving support to the Free School. The opening of the new school has now been delayed by a year to September 2016 and there is a feeling that people have given their support to the school under false pretences. Croxley Green parents in particular are unhappy at this delayed opening date.

Shared parental leave – with the introduction of shared parental leave, fathers can now request time off in blocks of a week; this comes from their spouse/partner's maternity leave. Employers must accommodate this by law. There are 2 policies – statutory entitlement and occupational enhancement – and the advice from HR is that we should follow the statutory entitlement provision. This is not expected to present an issue at LHS.

Governors thanked JR for his report.

7 Committee Reports

7.1 Curriculum Committee

BB commented that the minutes are thorough and self-explanatory.

7.2 P&R

RG asked if the reports commissioned by British Gas have been received. They have and SC indicated that of the options available they have chosen to have solar panels installed as these will generate an income for the school. They will have a life of c25 years. There is a structural survey being carried out next week and HCC need to give Landlord's Consent before installation can go ahead; it is hoped they will give consent once the survey report has been received. Additionally, there will be some lagging done in the boiler room and some lighting updated.

RG will liaise with SC to do a H&S visit.

8 Budget Headlines

Income is down significantly – pupil numbers are down by 10 and funding for FSM, CLA and Prior Attainment are down. The school census is now taken in October and because of the crisis in places in Watford schools we had a lot of mobility in September and HCC Admissions Team were behind with processing which meant we were down by 10 pupils, equivalent to £27k. Those places are now filled but only after a delay. BB asked if we

should write as a GB to complain but it was felt that this would not achieve anything useful.

Expenditure is greatly impacted by changes to teachers' pensions which will cost an additional c£22k with 7/12 paid this year. The following year there is a change to the contracted out National Insurance scheme and the 3.4% rebate disappears. In total, NI will cost c£24k extra. SC commented that within income there is an extra £24k which was unexpected and comes from HCC's capital pot; it is a one-off payment and without it the financial situation would have been much worse. It will be a tough budget to balance. There will be some natural reductions over the year but we have 2 members of staff largely funded from the PP monies and this is down significantly. The 2 members of staff are on permanent contracts so it will be people on temporary contracts who will be affected first. BB commented that as a bigger school we are able to cope better than some of the smaller ones and SC advised that Financial Services are already working with HR in other schools where they are faced with redundancy situations. GH felt strongly that LHS was praised by OFSTED for the work on Nurture and Ben McDonald's work and so much more and that it would be detrimental for the school and pupils to make cuts in this area. The budget will come to P&R in May.

9 SFVS

This must be sent to HCC by 17 April. RG, JS, DP and SC will complete the form.

10 School Plan

The plan has been updated. The priorities are the same but have been tweaked. The plan will be an agenda item for C&CC and P&R – **Action Clerk**.

Assessment is a huge task, much bigger than anticipated. It is hard to evidence progress.

HfL have received feedback on their assessment tools and are having to update them.

There is strong support for writing and maths but materials for reading will not be available until June. SLT attended a course yesterday which has been helpful. Reporting progress to parents is difficult. Phase meetings and staff meetings are now very different. SLT take small groups and there is a concentrated focus on training. The topic is chosen by SLT and the groups then work on this. "Mentoring Triangles" will come to the next C&CC meeting –

Action Clerk. There is a focus now on Phase Leaders as a level between staff and JR/ESB.

Monitoring happens in the phase meetings and JR/ESB moderate the Phase Leaders.

Assessment in Foundation subjects is also being covered in meetings to start teachers thinking of next steps in these subjects.

Family Room – SC has applied for a £10k prize for school development but if this is unsuccessful she will apply to the Lottery for funding to develop the Family Room. If neither approach is successful then capital money will be used. The old dining room will become a combined office/teaching space/family room with laptops provided for parents to use.

11 SEF

This has been updated to include the OFSTED grades but needs to be updated thoroughly to reflect OFSTED more fully.

12 Disadvantaged Pupils

DP reported on the need to increase numbers of families claiming FSM and advised that 3 more had been identified. A key focus will be to get EY parents on board and it was suggested that the PP forms could be completed when staff are doing Nursery home visits. JR thanked DP for her work in this area – there had been a good meeting with DP and SC. Until now parents have not been given PP money but the intention is take a more personalised approach and produce a menu of options that parents can choose from including, for example, a contribution towards uniform or school trips, to encourage parents to sign up. However, SC needs to get the budget done before she can allocate money for this. Governors thanked DP.

13 Staff Council

The Staff Council has not met since the last meeting.

14 Parent Council

It had been a good meeting with some new members attending and parents had looked at 2 policies: the Maths Calculation Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy. ESB clarified how cyber bullying is dealt with:

- There is training twice a year for students
 - In February training follows the national strategy as per the internet safety website
 - In October staff do training according to LHS strategy
- Issues arising from the use of Facebook and Instagram have arisen and dealt with immediately
- Y5 and Y6 are shown a video about cyber bullying being a crime

ESB will attend the next Parent Council meeting to raise issues with parents about Facebook and will also bring the eSafety policy. Parents also need to learn that what they think of as bullying is not actually always bullying.

JR is considering a trial of Y6 bringing their devices into school and using them under supervision during lessons.

15 Governor training

Governors who have attended Safer Recruitment training were asked to bring their certificates into school so that ESB can take a photocopy.

MP said the "Behaviour for Learning" was a very good course.

BB has attended "Effective Chairs" training which was also very good.

16 Governor vacancies

Paul Meyler has resigned. Lisa Cooper has expressed an interest in becoming a governor and attended the meeting today as a taster. She will meet with SC for further discussion.

17 AoB

RG has visited the Base and spoken with Lyn Williamson. She advised that it is difficult to get an idea of the future of the Base but remains positive. RG went through the training packages offered by the Base and thought they were very user friendly. GH asked about staffing of the Base and SC advised that one member of staff has resigned. JR hoped there would be information about the future of Bases available next week. The focus of their work is on training and empowering class teachers to cope with their pupils' challenges and needs. SC has asked for a breakdown of the 2015/16 allocation of funding to the Base and is still waiting. Lynne Williams is willing to come and speak to the GB at some point. She is very enthusiastic in progressing the future of Base and the services they provide.

18 Chair's remarks

RG read out a statement as follows:

"As you may remember at the last FGB meeting I informed the meeting there had been a permanent exclusion of a child at the school. I would like to update you on this matter.

As was the Parents right they appealed the decision and asked that the Governors Disciplinary Committee review the permanent exclusion. The committee of Bill, Denise and Jonathan, reviewed the considerable documentation outlining the case. Both the Parents and James made statements to the committee and were questioned where necessary. The committee both individually and collective considered all the evidence and eventually upheld the decision to permanently exclude the child.

At this point I would like to thank Bill, Denise and Jonathan for their efforts in carrying out this difficult task. I would also like to record our thanks to Jill Steward whose considerable efforts ensured the review process was carried out in the appropriate manner.

Following this judgement, the Parents asked that the decision to permanently exclude go to an independent review. The Independent Review was held and both James and Bill were asked to make statements as well as the Parents and there was the opportunity to cross examine each other. The Independent Committee then reviewed all the evidence and their conclusion was that James was justified in permanently excluding the Child.

This has been a long complicated and stressful process for all concerned, in which there were no winners.

I would like to thank James and Lizzie who through- out the process, showed a high degree of professionalism in dealing with a difficult situation in trying to keep the child in mainstream education.

I think for all those closely involved with the process have learnt valuable lessons in dealing with this type of process. I only hope we do not need to use them in the immediate future."

GH asked how long the process had taken – December 2014 – February 2015. ESB advised governors that staff had been kept on the payroll until the result of the Independent Review Panel was known despite funding for the child being withdrawn by HCC and HCC have been asked to reconsider their decision to withdraw funding.

RG thanked everyone for attending. SC reminded governors that the budget will be considered at the P&R meeting on 7 May and invited all governors to attend.

19 Dates of forthcoming meetings

P&R	7 May 2015 at 7.00pm
C&CC	4 June 2015 at 7.00pm
FGB	15 July 2015 at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.05