



Faringdon Junior School

Gloucester Street Faringdon Oxon SN7 7HZ

Tel: 01367 240232

office.2562@faringdon-jun.oxon.sch.uk

Part of the Faringdon Academy of Schools

Headteacher- Sharon Farrell

Chair of Governors - Mr Adam Pickford

Meeting	Local Governing Body (LGB)	Where	Faringdon Junior School
Date	Monday 9 March 2020	Time	6.30 pm
Attendees	David Border (DB, community governor), Heather Bourne (HB, staff governor), Anthony Cook (AC, vice-chair, community governor), Dawn El-Masri (DEM, community governor), Sharon Farrell (SF, head teacher), Pauline Forbes (PF, associate member), Adam Pickford (AP, chair, parent governor), Ian Pugh (IP, parent governor), Lisa Row (LR, staff governor), John Turner (JT, community governor)		
Apologies	Caroline Tilling (CT, parent governor)		
Clerk	Octavia Kelly (OFK)		

MINUTES

Meeting started at 1840

Welcome and opening business	
<i>Welcome, quoracy and apologies</i>	
<p>Lisa Row was welcomed as the new support staff governor. She has previous experience of governing bodies, having been clerk to the Shrivenham School LGB.</p> <p>Meeting was quorate.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Caroline Tilling and accepted. She will shortly be returning to an active role on the committee.</p> <p>With her current term due to expire shortly, Susan Long has stepped down as a community governor. The committee would like to record its thanks to her for her hard work over several years; she was committee chair through some difficult times for the school and has provided great support.</p>	

For signing by chair



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<p>Urgent matters as previously notified to the Chair</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>Declarations of pecuniary interests</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>Minutes (confidential and non-confidential) of last LGB meeting (13 January 2020) were approved</p>	
<p>Matters arising from minutes of LGB meeting on 13 January 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academy board has recently stipulated that, without undue urgency, safeguarding lead governors should receive the more in-depth 'generalist' safeguarding training, while the other governors can continue to undergo the 'introductory' training. AP, safeguarding lead governor, will undertake the training in due course. • Governors have successfully used google surveys, which may suffice in place of Slido. • Security issues make it undesirable for LGBs of academy schools which do not already use one to deploy a committee-wide generic email address. • Governor support with reading – JT and DEM have already provided support with reading. DEM will liaise with HB over further provision of further support. DB will be supporting Y3's reading during his Easter holidays. • The science event has been postponed until Monday 16 March. Many parents and children have signed up to attend and Y6 teachers and students from FCC will be running it. DB will kindly loan Abingdon School mini lab coats. Help clearing up after the event, which will finish at 6.30, would be very welcome. • The safeguarding report was reviewed by Lindsey Baldwin, Academy Safeguarding Officer and AP before submission by SF. SF will post it in dropbox for review by others and approval out of committee. <p>The report did not bring to light any major concerns but did highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need for the documentation of the supervisions of designated safeguarding leaders (DSLs) that already take place. ○ Safeguarding documentation needs to be more readily available. 	<p>AP</p> <p>DB</p> <p>SF</p>

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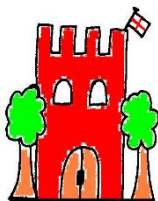
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<p>Approval of minutes of LGB meeting, 13 January 2020</p> <p>Minutes were approved.</p>	
<p>Appointment of associate member, Pauline Forbes</p> <p>The governors agreed to appoint Pauline Forbes as an associate member.</p> <p>Post-meeting note:</p> <p><i>OK ascertained from Siobhan Vinall, Academy Governance Officer, that there is no potential for conflict of interest in Pauline's also being Chair of the FIS LGB.</i></p> <p><i>Siobhan was also consulted as to whether an associate member is required to attend every LGB meeting. Such members are appointed to the board to provide expertise without which the LGB would otherwise not function as effectively. Associate members cannot vote at full LGB meetings.</i></p>	
<p>SDP</p> <p>AP, SF and Liz Holmes of the Academy Board met for one of the governance reviews that are being conducted across the Academy. The committee was encouraged to evidence more effectively its challenges and the responses to them.</p> <p>The format of the SDP, revised this year, was agreed to be working well. It was proposed that a version of the SDP should be put in dropbox for each meeting of the LGB, into whose text challenges and responses from the previous meeting will have been incorporated, and to which new challenges and responses for the current meeting are inserted as comments. Rather than minuting the challenges and responses, just the comments from the SDP, rather than the SDP itself, could then be printed off and attached as an appendix to the minutes so that challenges and responses are published but the SDP document itself remains available only on request.</p> <p>Questions should be inserted in blue or as comments into the latest version of the SDP at least 2 weeks before the meeting to allow staff – SF or preferably subject lead teachers - time to respond. It may be necessary to open the document in the Word desktop app in order to insert comments. Each governor should aim for at least 1 question LGB meeting. The focus should be</p>	

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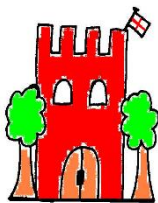
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<p>on areas identified in the SDP as 'red' or 'orange' or on the subject of a subject lead teacher who has been invited to attend the next meeting.</p>	
<p>Challenge Ensure mental and physical wellbeing of staff. Response</p>	
<p>ACTION Mental health lead teacher to update her section of the SDP</p>	SF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health leader is currently voluntarily undertaking an online course in children's mental health • Staff wellbeing session led by AP has been postponed but is still intended to take place. • Signposting information in staff room. <p>Staff were a little uncomfortable discussing mental health issues during a recent twilight session, so SF is approaching the subject with caution. However, it was reported that a culture of concern for each-others' wellbeing is growing among staff: they talk of being 'above or below the line'. Several staff have recently faced emotionally demanding situations outside school.</p> <p>Challenge How are targets determined and are children on track to meet them? Response Targets are determined using the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) data tool; aim is for children to reach these targets by the end of KS2. Prior to that, they will fluctuate above and below the target.</p> <p>Reading test data suggests children are doing well but they will be assessed again next week. Booster sessions in reading are, however, required for some Y6 pupils.</p> <p>SF is reluctant to state too categorically whether children are on track to meet targets after last year's predictions were found to be inaccurate. Progress in writing and maths has so far been greater than in reading. The emphasis has been on engaging children rather than drilling them in assessment technique, an approach that was unsuccessful last year. SF has, however, drawn up a list of children who are less likely to meet targets. Help for reading, the greatest concern, is very much welcomed; boosters in maths are also being given where children are currently not on target for ARE. Another aim is to raise the percentage of children reaching greater depth (GD).</p> <p>Challenge Are all lessons observed deemed 'good' or better than that?</p>	

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Response Almost all lessons were deemed good or better; for any that were not, teachers have been given advice on how to improve pedagogy as part of performance management. Following input from the reading lead teacher and Louise Warren, Director of Education at the Academy, lessons and workbooks for reading have both notably improved. The main focus of lesson observations has been reading and maths.

Children who are not reading at home and/or are not at age -related expected (ARE) level have been identified and are being given priority, for example when governors come in to help with reading.

Challenge Improvement is rewarded with 'prizes' but not consistently good performance. Is that fair?

Response

Prizes are used as an incentive to encourage children to try harder. However, all children can receive team points, and consistent attainment and hard work is highlighted as an example to others.

Challenge Have reading book sets been purchased for all years, or for a specific age group?

Response When an effective reading system is identified, enough books are purchased to allow an entire class to have one book between 2.

Governors cautioned that a system should be in place to ensure that books are not inadvertently over-ordered.

Challenge The SDP states that children have brought examples of work they have done at home after being inspired by a topic at school. Is a record kept of these to document the impact of school-based learning?

Response At the end of each topic, teachers list examples of additional work brought from home.

Challenge What CPD is available to staff and how is it funded, especially training abroad?

Response Several teachers have been booked on various high quality CPD courses. Teacher receiving CPD in Greece is self-funding the travel and accommodation, as they did for another course in Jerusalem. Another teacher will be going on a residential course that is entirely funded by the school.

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Governors advised that a record of CPD courses taken by teachers across each academic year be kept.

Challenge Have all students shown good progress?

Response The area of concern is phonics. Even some students who passed the Y2 phonics test are showing evidence of poor grasp of phonics in their writing. There has been much input into phonics over the last couple of years. Sally Robins, FIS head teacher and Read Write Inc trained, recently worked with FJS TAs to ensure that they are using the same phonics terminology as that used at FIS, to ensure consistency. She will also work with the SPAG lead teacher and help disseminate Read Write Inc techniques to teachers and later to TAs. Phonics will be deployed throughout the school, into Y6.

Exclusions

A couple of internal exclusions have been imposed on a single child, who had 23 incidents of poor behaviour in a short period. The second exclusion seemed to have had at least a temporary beneficial effect.

In general, incidents of poor behaviour are decreasing.

Attendance

Challenge Persistent inattendance is increasing – what is being done about that?

Response The poor attendance figures actually stem from only one child who has since left the school. Poor attendance is addressed by the pastoral lead, for example by standing by the school gate at the start of the day encouraging reluctant attenders and by liaising with the families and offering reward certificates for good attendance.

Sending reports of attendance rates is an effective way of reducing poor attendance but the use of Edulink, deployed by FCC, is not cost-effective in a small school where the number of poor attenders is small. The parents of any child whose attendance falls below 90%, and of some whose attendance is below 95%, receive reports of the child's rate of attendance.

Governors commented that a year-on-year comparison of attendance would be helpful. However, a major outbreak of an illness can considerably adversely affect the data, as it did last year.

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<p>Staff sickness rate recently has not been too high. The staff absence rate has reduced this year and is satisfactory compared to other academy schools. There is a relatively high rate of compassionate leave, but the rate is very variable.</p>	
<p>ACTION SF to provide year-on-year comparison of attendance.</p>	<p>SF</p>
<p>Curriculum</p> <p>The academy is carrying out reviews of curriculum and subject leadership.</p> <p>The first review at FJS was of Science, led by HB, which was chosen by the school as the subject most ready for review. HB was praised for her knowledge of what was being covered by Y2, her effective and non-threatening leadership and her passion for the subject, and the reviewers were also impressed by the school's support of HB, the action plan for the subject and the focus on child-directed learning.</p> <p>There was also positive feedback from the reviewers on a meeting with the curriculum leader.</p> <p>Other subjects will be reviewed on 7 May.</p> <p>Challenge How effective was teaching swimming in one intensive week of 1 hour per day lessons compared with teaching it for half an hour a week for 10 weeks?</p> <p>Response Children appeared to make more rapid progress in intensive lessons but that cannot be proven until the data for the numbers able to swim 25m by the end of the lesson series is collated. Intensive lessons did disrupt the week, however, and children may lose their newly acquired skills if not taken swimming by parents afterwards.</p> <p>Bullying</p> <p>The rate of bullying incidents fluctuates, rising when a couple of children fall out. Arguments centre on football and mimic behaviour seen in the media. Football has been banned for all, reinstated, then banned again; bans are now imposed on individuals rather than being collective.</p>	
<p>Preparation for school closure due to coronavirus outbreak</p>	

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<p>School is following Public Health England (PHE) advice as to whether it should close. The academy is leaving it to individual head teachers to make decisions on closure but must be made aware of any closure.</p> <p>If Y6 SATs could not go ahead, teacher assessments could be carried out instead.</p> <p>If the school were to be closed, various online resources could be provided for children to work on at home, such as Moodle, Twinkl, BBC Bitesize and SeeSaw, but they rely on children and teachers having access to computers and WiFi at home.</p> <p>A governors' meeting may have to be convened in the event of the school closing.</p>	
<p>Block B meetings with staff and with parents, 9 March 2020 – please see confidential minutes</p>	
<p>Financial update (AC)</p> <p>Resources sub-committee will meet on 27 March.</p> <p>If the CIF bid for the Academy's share – about £75K - of the Block B renovation cost is unsuccessful, the money will come out of Academy reserves and will therefore have no impact on teaching and learning.</p> <p>The boiler situation is dire, with one boiler too old for the parts to be replaced and another running with no backup. The whole boiler system is shortly to be reviewed by a consultant to ensure that repairs are cost-effective in the long-term. Money for the repairs could be borrowed from the government and paid back slowly.</p> <p>Recruitment of a deputy head, which is under way, will have an impact on the finances but one which has already been discussed and agreed.</p>	
<p>ACTION AC to check that the financial summary from last term is available in dropbox.</p>	AC
<p>It is not known who benefits from the solar panels on the roof, whose installation was paid for via a grant. The school is liable for the cost of any maintenance of the solar panels that might be required.</p>	

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<p>ACTION SF to contact electricity suppliers and carry out regular metre readings to determine whether there is a reduction in the school's electricity bill reflecting the contribution of the solar panels.</p>	<p>SF</p>
<p>Condition survey (JT)</p> <p>Survey was carried out by JT and Jo Ray. Main issue was boiler system (please see financial summary above). Contingency plans need to be in place in case the boiler system fails before it can be replaced eg provision of heaters in classrooms. However, since there is no option but to replace the system, the installation of a new system should go ahead as soon as possible, taking into account in the choice of system a possible future ban on the use of fossil fuels.</p>	
<p>ACTION SF to liaise with Academy over contingency plans for boiler system for failure</p>	<p>SF</p>
<p>The other significant cost arising from the survey is repair of windows.</p> <p>The fabric of the building is sound, but it needs redecoration.</p> <p>The Academy tradesman has not been very available recently owing to illness, and some maintenance issues have therefore gone unresolved.</p> <p>Some parents have expressed discontent that funds raised for playground equipment have remained largely unspent and that their children may have left the school by the time any new equipment has been installed. However, SF is reluctant to spend the money, which is currently in the Special Purposes account, before Block B is renovated in case the equipment then has to be removed during the building works. The money could be used to cover the cost of maintenance issues but that might not be an inspiring enough use of funds raised for the school.</p> <p>The projector and screen are broken.</p>	
<p>ACTION 5 year plan to be discussed at resources sub-committee meeting.</p>	<p>AC/JT</p>
<p>Policies for approval</p> <p>Behaviour policy – amendment has been made to reflect need to take into account special needs when considering exclusions.</p>	

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<p><i>Exclusion policy</i> – amendment as for behaviour policy.</p> <p>Both policies will be circulated for approval via a Google survey out of committee.</p>	
<p>AOB</p> <p>The committee would like to very much <i>thank the representatives of OCC and the Academy and the structural engineer for attending the Block B staff and parent meetings</i> on 9 March.</p> <p>The committee also wishes to <i>thank AP for organising the fundraising evening</i>, which brought in a magnificent £1051.</p> <p>The <i>fire alarm</i> went off unexpectedly and the ensuing <i>evacuation</i> went well, though more clarity is needed around the role of the fire marshals.</p> <p><i>SEND – please see confidential minutes.</i></p> <p><i>Recruitment of deputy head teacher</i> – ongoing. Interviews will be held on 19/20 March.</p>	

Meeting closed 2045

For signing by chair