

Approved Minutes
Meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of
ARCHBISHOP RUNCIE CE (AIDED) FIRST SCHOOL

Thursday 11 May 2017

Present:

Mrs S Hawkins (Chair),
Mrs D Cranston, Mrs K Massey (Deputy Head), Mr A McCabe, Mrs H Miller,
Canon J Robson (Headteacher), Mrs B Scott-Harden, Mrs J Senior,
Rev Canon A Shipton, Dr C Tompkins

Governors in post - 14; quorum – 7; governors present – 10
The meeting was quorate

In attendance:

Mrs D Henry	~	Headteacher Elect
Mr N Sanders	~	Governor Services

1. Welcome / Opening Prayer

The meeting opened at 6.15pm with a prayer from Andrew Shipton. The Chair then welcomed everyone, in particular Denise Henry, who was attending as an observer prior to joining the school as Headteacher in September.

Julie Robson was presented with a card and bouquet from the governors to mark her birthday.

A replacement agenda was tabled. It was **agreed** to use this agenda for the meeting (it included one additional item: GB Membership / Appointments).

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were **accepted** from Carol Bainbridge, Philip Cunningham, Phil Moorin, Sarah Pickett and Dominic Raymont.

Apologies for lateness were received from Jayne Senior.

3. GB Membership / Appointments

An email from Dominic Raymont was read out. Dominic's term of office as LA Governor was due to end on 31 August 2017 but, given his current commitments, and the fact there was a potential replacement ready to start, he felt it would be best to stand down early and to resign as of this meeting. He wished to take the opportunity to thank staff and governors and to indicate that he would be looking forward to continuing his involvement with the school in his role as a local councillor. Governors acknowledged the valuable contribution he had made to the school / GB and **agreed** to send a 'thank you' card.

Action: Chair

It was **agreed** to appoint Carol Bainbridge as LA Governor with immediate effect, provided that she was happy to take up the post at this point. The Chair would contact her to confirm.

Action: Chair

4. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared in the business of this meeting and no changes made to the annual register.

5. Annual Report from Achievement Partner (AP)

The latest report from the AP, Deborah Ashcroft, had been circulated (date of visit: 31 March) and the main points were highlighted. She had added comments in red to the autumn term 2016 report produced by the previous AP. The Headteacher indicated that she was delighted with the report. Deborah Ashcroft was a qualified Ofsted inspector and it was felt she had been very clear in her judgements / comments and in what she was looking for, and had made some practical points about what the school might do next. It was felt that the report very much reflected the actual situation in school. The SEF would be re-written in the light of the report.

Action: Headteacher

Deborah Ashcroft would be visiting again towards the end of this term and would add further comments to the AP report in a different colour to give an overall picture across the year.

There were some queries and discussion about the situation in Newcastle regarding the arrangements for external / AP support from September 2017. It was noted that the school / GB would need to organise its own arrangements and it was suggested that Deborah Ashcroft was asked to continue in the role given the valuable support / challenge she had been providing, and to ensure continuity. The importance for the GB to be able to continue to access external validation of this kind, and to receive assistance with the Headteacher performance management process, was also emphasised.

6. Identification of Any Additional / Urgent Agenda Items

The Headteacher highlighted an issue which had been raised at previous GB meetings regarding the withdrawal by the LA of school crossing patrol wardens at all bar two sites across the City from 21 July 2017. It was also noted that the LA was able to offer an annual SLA (£5,000) to employ someone to carry out this duty. The Headteacher had discussed with the Headteacher of GCMS (Susannah Webb) the possibility of the two schools sharing the cost. Susannah Webb had been willing to do so, but the shared cost (£2,500) would still be too much for Archbishop Runcie to bear out of its budget so the Headteacher had approached the PTFA and suggestions had been made for a fund-raising event to raise the money, or perhaps an approach to local businesses for sponsorship. **There were several questions from governors and discussion; the main points arising were as follows:**

- Given the difference in size between GCMS and Archbishop Runcie First School, whether it might be negotiated to share the cost differently across the two schools, proportional to pupil numbers. It was also queried where on Christon Road the crossing patrol warden would be sited if both schools contributed to a warden;

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- It was understood that there were proposals / plans for road crossing measures to be put in place locally once the crossing patrol warden was withdrawn, although it appeared that these proposals were being held back currently;
- The main issues experienced in the vicinity of the schools as a result of parents' driving / parking were highlighted. It was understood that GCMS had circulated an email this week to remind parents to drive more slowly. It was felt that the LA should be encouraged to enforce the requirement not to park on double yellow lines;
- It was understood that the crossing patrol provision was definitely being withdrawn at the end of term but individual wardens might choose to leave earlier than that if they chose to take redundancy before then;
- It was discussed that the LA would continue to retain liability through its SLA offer should any schools wish to buy into this arrangement;
- The idea of sponsorship was discussed and how this might be taken forward. It was **agreed** that the Headteacher would contact the LA to ask whether this form of advertising would be acceptable; if so, Dawn Cranston would look at possible options / sponsors.

Action: Headteacher / D Cranston

- The Headteacher was also to check on potential plans for the introduction of other traffic measures locally, and would also speak to Susannah Webb about other options for sharing the cost of the traffic patrol warden.

Action: Headteacher

The Headteacher had been asked by the PTFA if a clothes recycling bin could be installed on the school site (bearing the school logo) which it could use to raise funds for the school. This was **agreed**.

Action: Clothes recycling bin

7. Gosforth Schools Trust (GST) Items

The next GST meeting was due to take place on 14 June.

Caroline Tompkins commented on the football tournament involving schools from the Trust, which had taken place earlier in the day; she felt the event had been well organised and the children had really enjoyed themselves.

8. Draft Minutes of the Previous GB Meeting

The draft minutes of the GB meeting held on 22 March 2017 had been circulated and were **approved** with no confidential items identified.

9. Matters Arising

Headteacher Recruitment (pages 1 and 2)

Denise Henry had been appointed as Headteacher from 1 September 2017.

SIAMS Inspection (page 2)

The action points would be picked up later in the meeting under consideration of the committee reports.

STH

GB Membership / Appointments (page 3)

Kate Massey confirmed that she had asked the School Administrative / Finance Officer, Sarah McCloud, if she would be willing to join the GB as an Associate Member in due course, and she had indicated that she would be willing to do so. It was suggested that this was perhaps deferred until the autumn term; it was also noted that there was the option of having a less formal arrangement (i.e. attending the meetings as an observer) if there was any notion of there being any conflict of interest given Sarah's role in school.

Action: Consideration of appointment of S McCloud as Associate Member (autumn 2017)

GST Items (page 3)

The Chair was to still to circulate the minutes of the March 2017 GST meeting.

Action: Chair

Safeguarding Walk (page 3)

The Chair and Andrew Shipton had carried out a safeguarding walk during one lunchtime recently. Andrew Shipton had produced a report and gave a verbal summary of the main / action points. The report was to be edited and circulated to everyone.

Action: Chair / A Shipton

Admissions (page 4)

It was noted that there still needed to be further discussion about the letter the Chair had drafted.

Action: Chair / A Shipton

Re-naming of Committee (page 5)

It was noted that the Curriculum Committee had ultimately ended up being re-named as the Ethos, Curriculum and Performance Committee (rather than the Curriculum and Ethos Committee).

Finance and Staffing Committee (pages 5 and 6)

Two sets of FS Committee minutes had been distributed for this meeting (6 March and 2 May); hard copies were tabled. These minutes would be discussed later in the meeting.

SEND Support (page 6)

There was a query about any progress regarding the possibility of purchasing a Trust-wide SEND support package. It was explained that this had been investigated and it had been determined that there would be no benefit in purchasing as a Trust and so each individual school was buying in at an appropriate level with some additionality.

It had also been queried previously whether the GST schools could be allocated the same Educational Psychologist (EP). It was understood that this would not be possible so the EP allocation would remain as it was currently.

SJH

Establishment of Working Group to Discuss Functioning of Committees (page 6)

The Chair reported that she had spoken to the Chair of Regent Farm First School's GB, Gillian Sanders, about the functioning of their committees. It was **agreed** that the Chair would meet with Helen Miller and Caroline Tompkins to discuss this further and report back to the next GB meeting.

Action: Chair / H Miller / C Tompkins

10. Reports from Committees / Governor Development and Training

Finance and Staffing (FS) Committee – 6 March and 2 May 2017

Both sets of minutes had been circulated. There had been a verbal summary of the main points of the 6 March minutes given to the GB meeting on 22 March so these minutes were taken as read. The main points of the 2 May minutes were outlined and it was noted that the Headteacher and Denise Henry were to meet with Olwyn Graves, the LA school business manager, the following week to look at staffing / budget.

Action: Headteacher / D Henry / O Graves

Ethos, Curriculum and Performance (ECP) Committee – 24 April 2017

The minutes of this meeting had been circulated and hard copies were tabled. The main items were highlighted as follows:

- **SIAMS Report:** The committee had been pleased with the result of the SIAMS inspection.
- **Ethos:** The committee had felt it very helpful to have the Assistant Diocesan Director of Education, Jo Warner, in attendance at their meeting. Reference was made to the suggestion she had made to establish a group of 'RE Ambassadors', drawn from across the school and separate from the School Council. It was discussed that this was different to the suggested 'Worship Council' and that the school should focus on the establishment of the 'Worship Council' initially as this had been a recommendation of the SIAMS inspection.
- **Spring Term Data:** Kate Massey had presented this data to the committee and there had been a discussion, the main points of which were included in the committee minutes. It was noted that Angela Harrison was to be invited to the next ECP meeting to update the committee on progress towards SATs.
- **Classroom Visit and Pupil Voice / Book Scrutiny:** Jo Warner had led the committee in a Pupil Voice training session. Governors had been interested to note the questions she had asked pupils as part of this session, and to be part of the book scrutiny (English writing) which had followed. A collated report from the book scrutiny session was to be discussed at the next ECP meeting.
- **STEM Week Observation Feedback:** Observations / feedback from committee members had been collated and circulated; hard copy was tabled. Andy McCabe was pleased to note the extent to which faith had been mentioned throughout the visit he had participated in; he had also been extremely impressed with the pupils' behaviour and their enthusiasm. It was noted that there were a number of questions from governors highlighted within the reports and it was **agreed** that, ideally, they should be taken to the staff to respond to.

Action: Questions to be taken to staff

SJM

- Policy Review: It was noted that there had been some discussion regarding the role of staff / governors in reviewing policies and there would now be a system of policies being circulated to staff for comment before governors to ensure they reflected current practice.

11. Headteacher's Report / School Improvement Priorities

The Headteacher's report had been circulated. The following areas were highlighted and governors raised any questions / comments during the presentation of the report:

Safeguarding

The Headteacher highlighted an incident which had occurred on 31 March involving the report of an armed person in the vicinity. Following receipt of this information, the pupils were rapidly brought inside the building and the school was 'locked down'. The LA had then contacted the school when the incident had been resolved. It was noted how effectively the process had been implemented by staff, and the extent to which the school site was, on the whole, very secure.

Staffing and Organisation

A new Teaching Assistant (TA), Katie Green, had been appointed to support a child with SEND and would be starting in post the following week.

Admissions

15 Nursery places had been accepted for September 2017; this was a similar situation to the same time the previous year and the budget for 2017/18 was based on this number. It was noted that, in previous years, the school had always taken in additional 'late admission' pupils once the new university year started and overseas students arrived.

Reference was made to the discussion of Nursery places at the previous GB meeting and, specifically, the possibility of admitting 'rising' three year olds if the Nursery was not full. It was confirmed that the school could do this next term. Denise Henry referred to the situation in Gateshead LA where all schools adopted this approach.

Behaviour

It was noted that pupil behaviour was generally very good. The Headteacher was pleased to note the extent to which behaviour at lunchtimes had improved; a lot of work had been done with pupils in relation to them managing differences themselves rather than through an adult.

The Headteacher referred to a skipping workshop which had taken place earlier in the day; the skipping coach had commented on the pupils' behaviour, participation and listening skills, and this feedback would be put in a letter to parents.

Action: Feedback to be put in letter to parents

Dawn Cranston commented on how much her child had enjoyed the workshop.

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Formal Proposal for a C of E Free School

Helen Miller gave her apologies and left the meeting during this item (7:20pm).

The Headteacher reported that she would be attending a meeting the following day with the GST Headteachers. She understood that, with regard to the information from the Diocese regarding the proposed North Gosforth C of E Free School, the other Heads were concerned that the proposal had been put across in such a way as to appear to be a 'done deal' and that they had not been consulted before hearing about it through this route. There was a discussion in which it was confirmed that the proposal was in fact still part of a consultation process, and that the Diocesan Director, Paul Rickeard, had offered to come and talk to the GST Heads and was also due to meet with the Trust Chair, George Snaith, on 15 May. **There was a discussion, in which several queries were raised, including: the link / involvement / connection with the churches / parishes; whether the GB might need to follow up matters with a meeting with Paul Rickeard; to what extent the GB / school should support the proposal; the impact on numbers in respect of Archbishop Runcie First School; in the longer term, the need for the school to consider the proposed local housing development plans.**

Visitors and Visits

Reference was made to the visit by the Right Reverend Mark Tanner, Bishop of Berwick, at the beginning of term. This had been a lovely event, which the pupils had enjoyed, and the Bishop had written to the school following the visit to thank everyone for their hospitality.

Complaints and Compliments

A complaint about alleged bullying behaviour in Year 4 was being addressed by Miss Burns. The Headteacher was in discussion with Miss Burns about doing some general work with pupils about what bullying is. Caroline Tompkins referred to a poster she had seen at another school which she felt had conveyed this message very well.

The Headteacher was thanked for her report.

12. Formal Proposal for a C of E Free School

This item had been dealt with earlier in the meeting.

13. Financial Items / Budget Approval 2017/18

Budget information was tabled showing the proposed budget for 2017/18 and projected figures for the following two years. The FS Committee had been through the figures in detail at their meeting on 2 May. The following points were noted:

- The surplus brought forward into 2017/18 was now confirmed as £42,300.
- The High Needs Block funding had now been confirmed (£11,330), which increased the contingency for the 2017/18 budget to £9,340.
- The projected figures for 2018/19 and 2019/20 showed deficits but were based solely on this year's funding levels and did not take into account the introduction of the National Funding Formula.
- **In response to a query, it was explained what the level of Pupil Premium funding the school received was based on.**
- Overall, therefore, the school budget for 2017/18 was balanced with a small

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surplus / contingency. The budget was **approved** by the GB on this basis and signed off by the Chair (subject to an amount for piano tuning being checked by the Headteacher).

Action: Headteacher

14. Safeguarding / Health and Safety / Risk Management Items

Reference was made to a recent email on the Prevent Duty, which had been sent out on behalf of the LA's Lead Assistant Director for Education and Skills; it was noted that all of the governors had viewed the accompanying short video.

Andrew Shipton reported on two recent visits he had made to Year 2 (March / April) in his role as Safeguarding Link. On his first visit, during which pupils had been involved in preparing Mother's Day cards, he had noted some instances of 'disruption' in class. However, on the second visit (to an RE lesson), he had noticed a definite change in atmosphere, and things had been much more orderly with pupils listening and asking questions.

15. LA Reports – Summer Term 2017

A package of reports had been circulated; the reports were dealt with as follows:

Attendance

There were concerns raised regarding instances of parents taking pupils out of school for holidays during term time and the impact on pupils' education. The importance of punctuality, and the impact of lateness, was also highlighted given the critical nature of the school sessions held early in the school day.

Education Service Re-structure

Update on HR Issues

Both reports were noted.

Monitoring School Finances

It was agreed to refer this report to the FS Committee.

Action: FS Committee

16. Any Other Business

GB meeting dates were discussed and the following meeting dates were **agreed** for the academic year 2017/18 (all at 6.15pm):

Autumn: 20 September; 22 November;

Spring: 29 January; 20 March;

Summer: 10 May; 12 July

In response to a query, there was some reference made to the advertising of a Nursery teacher post. It was noted that it had yet to be announced that the current post-holder would be leaving. It was also noted that the meeting between the Headteacher, Denise Henry and Olwyn Graves to look at budget / staffing (as mentioned earlier) would be taking place first.

There was no further business; the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

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Sarah Harding