

Approved Minutes

Meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of

ARCHBISHOP RUNCIE CE (AIDED) FIRST SCHOOL

Wednesday 20 September 2017

Present:

Mrs S Hawkins (Chair),
Mrs D Henry (Headteacher), Mrs K Massey, Mr A McCabe, Mrs H Miller,
Dr S Pickett, 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:

Mr N Sanders ~ Governor Services

1. Welcome to the New Academic Year / Opening Prayer

The meeting opened at 6.20pm with a prayer from Andrew Shipton.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were **accepted** from Carol Bainbridge, Dawn Cranston and Craig Dallison.

3. GB Membership and Appointments

It was noted that Craig Dallison had recently been appointed as a new Foundation Governor to replace Phil Moorin.

4. a) Declaration of Interests / Signing of Annual Register

Individual registers of interest had been circulated; those governors present completed and signed the registers. Those who were not present would be asked to complete and sign the registers at the next opportunity.

The school would ensure the staff register was signed.

Action: School

b) Data Protection

Governors gave their permission for Governor Services to use the correspondence information they had provided (particularly email addresses) within a closed governor contact context. Governors felt the 'reply all' facility was particularly useful. It was noted that all of the information held by Governor Services on a database of existing governors was password protected.

c) Changes to EduBase

It was reported that the DfE's EduBase system had recently been replaced by GIAS (Get Information about Schools); the EduBase system had been frozen at 5pm on 15 September and data transferred to the new system, which had 'gone live' on 18

September. It was suggested that the school check the new system to confirm that all of the necessary information had been transferred.

Action: School

It was also noted that there was still a requirement on schools to publish and update certain information about the GB on the website. As in previous years, Governor Services would work with the school to populate a template for the website this term.

Action: Governor Services / School

5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair(s)

Nick Sanders chaired this item. A reminder of the GB's election arrangements had been included on the agenda for this meeting.

Sarah Hawkins had nominated herself for the position of Chair of Governors. This self-nomination was seconded; there were no other nominations. Governors considered the nomination and **agreed** unanimously to re-elect Sarah Hawkins as Chair of Governors for the following year (term of office to end at the first GB meeting of the academic year 2018/19).

There had also been self-nominations received in advance of the meeting from Helen Miller and Caroline Tompkins for the position of Vice-Chair. As with the previous year, governors felt there were definite benefits in having a system of co vice-chairing and, on this basis, both nominations were seconded and governors **agreed** unanimously to re-elect both governors as co Vice-Chairs for the following year (same terms of office as the Chair).

6. Identification of Any Urgent / Additional Items

It was noted that there had been a loose dog on site earlier in the day. The Headteacher was to mention this in the next school newsletter to parents.

Action: Headteacher

There was discussion about the school crossing patrol facilities, which had been removed from Christon Road previously. It was noted that this matter had been reported in the local media. The Headteacher reported that some parents had been into school to raise concerns about the issue earlier in the term, but the situation had settled down more recently. It was understood that the LA was to have visited that morning to assess the traffic and it was hoped that this had been done. A letter was to have gone out from the school to ask parents to park / drive appropriately and the Headteacher would check that this had gone out.

Action: Headteacher

There were queries and some discussion about what more might be done in the meantime to help the traffic situation. A rota of parents / staff was suggested. It was understood that GCMS had arranged for one of their teachers to be stationed outside their school, though it was also acknowledged that some of their pupils came to school / went home unaccompanied whereas, technically, all of the pupils at Archbishop Runcie should be coming to school / going home accompanied. It was also noted that the traffic situation seemed to have worsened recently due to Killingworth Road being shut.

7. Review of Procedural Documents:

a) Governing Body (GB) Handbook

It was noted that the GB Handbook would be updated once some of the items below had been reviewed and agreed.

b) GB Code of Conduct

Governors had been circulated with an updated NGA (National Governance Association) GB code of conduct for consideration and to adopt / adapt. Governors **agreed** to adopt the new code and those present signed it. It was discussed that the code of conduct might be put onto the school website.

c) GB Procedures

The GB's procedures had been circulated and governors **agreed** to re-adopt them.

d) Committee Structure and Membership

e) Link Governors / Areas of Responsibility

The Chair had circulated a proposed / new committee and link structure with suggested membership. Governors discussed this document and the following was **agreed** for 2017/18:

Strategic Monitoring Group (MSG)

S Hawkins, D Henry, K Massey (supported by Ian Dawson, Newcastle LA, and Jo Warner, CE Diocese)

Ethos Committee

C Dallison, D Henry, B Scott-Harden, A Shipton (Chair)

There was some discussion of the possibility of inviting pupils / staff / parents to attend meetings of this committee, as appropriate, and about the importance of finding an opportunity to involve a wider group of stakeholders in discussions about ethos, and those to do with vision / values and school distinctiveness.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee

D Cranston, K Massey, A McCabe, S Pickett (Chair), J Senior, C Tompkins

It was noted that this committee would pick up the post-Ofsted 'strands'. **There was some discussion about how best to focus on / monitor the TLA link areas in the committee meetings.**

Finance, Premises and Staffing Committee

C Bainbridge (Chair), C Dallison, S Hawkins, D Henry, H Miller

Head's Performance Management

S Hawkins, H Miller, A Shipton

Admissions

S Hawkins, K Massey, A Shipton

Pupil Discipline, Appeals and Complaints

To be established ad hoc according to need and availability (NB no governor involved in the original decision should be involved in an appeal – the committee in

each case will be made up of at least the same number as the committee making the original decision and with at least three governors taking part)

Remits will be reviewed at the first meeting of each committee of the new academic year. As some of the committees / roles were new, it was discussed that it would be important to ensure that the terms of reference for the former and new committees / link roles linked together and the revised terms fitted with the GB delegation planner.

Action: Remits to be reviewed as above

GB Link Roles

Safeguarding – A Shipton

School Council / Pupil Voice – B Scott-Harden (to be mentored by H Miller)

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Link Roles

Maths – D Cranston

EYFS – S Hawkins

Writing across all subjects (with English focus) – A McCabe

SEND / LAC / EAL / Disadvantaged – S Pickett with support from K Massey for SEND

Challenge / Deep Learning / Most Able – C Tompkins

It was recognised that Sarah Pickett's roles were extensive; it was **agreed** that she would carry on with these roles for this term to see if the amount of work involved was manageable or was too much for one person and should be shared

Action: S Pickett

Finance, Premises and Staffing Link Roles

Website – C Dallison supported by C Tompkins

Staffing – S Hawkins / H Miller

Health and Safety – A McCabe

New Governor Mentors

C Bainbridge (S Hawkins / H Miller)

C Dallison (S Hawkins / A Shipton)

It was further **agreed** that, for contact / liaison purposes, named staff would also be added to the above structure to show which member of staff was responsible in school for each link area. It was also suggested that those staff who were governors could also share link areas with the non-staff governors where it might be appropriate to do so.

Action: Staff to be added to structure as mentioned above

f) Delegation Arrangements (Delegation Planner)

Governors reviewed with the most recent version of their GB delegation planner. They **agreed** to re-adopt it with some additions / amendments in the light of the new committee / link structure they had agreed earlier.

During the review of the planner, there was some discussion about the process of reviewing policies going forward. It was **agreed** that, unless otherwise stipulated in the delegation planner, there would be a process of staff / governor review of policies, with the GB then to be informed about any changes made.

g) Governor Development / Training Needs

Governors' attention was drawn to the new training programme for 2017/18 from Governor Services, which had been circulated to every governor earlier in the term. They were encouraged to consider their development needs as individuals and as a whole GB. The importance of collecting / sharing evidence of development / training was noted. Governors were asked to let the Headteacher know if they wished to attend any of the sessions so they could be booked via the SLA online system.

It was also noted that there was to be a SIAMS governor training session on Tuesday 26 September (6.30 – 8.30pm). Bryony Scott-Harden and Andrew Shipton were to attend.

Action: B Scott-Harden / A Shipton

At this point, it was **agreed** to alter the order of the remaining agenda items.

8. Headteacher's Update / Post-Ofsted and School Improvement Items

The Headteacher presented two tabled documents and the key points were highlighted in each case:

- Draft action plan for school improvement
- Governor update / summary of draft action plan

Governors were invited to take away the documents (which included the key areas highlighted by Ofsted and initial ideas of how to address them) and feedback any comments.

Action: Governors

It was noted that Julie Stuart (Head of Throckley Primary) would be providing support to the school. She and Jo Warner would be visiting on 25 September and would be looking through the action plan as part of the visit.

There were a number of queries from governors and responses, as follows:

- **It was queried whether staff were working across the Key Stages in their teams (page 1).** It was explained that this was not necessarily the case.
- **In response to a query, the subject leader areas were clarified.** There was some discussion about the possibility of another staff member working with / supporting Jenny Burn on Literacy; the Headteacher was to give this some consideration.

Action:Headteacher

- **In response to a query, it was explained that the current pupil performance data was still unvalidated until November. Whilst the data was unlikely to change, it was noted that the school had put forward some possible changes in the area of EY to the LA.**
- **In response to a query about school-to-school support, there was some discussion about the useful opportunities which had been taken up already and might be taken up in future.** In terms of the feedback received, it was noted, in particular, that some comments had been made about the school possibly being overly harsh on itself in judging its own performance. It was queried whether there was any particular support available from within the Gosforth Schools' Trust (GST), in addition to any other support that was already available. It was explained that Matt Ward, Head of Grange First School, had offered a member of staff from his school to help with moderation

of judgements. It was noted that both schools had very similar systems so it was sensible to link up in this way (it was noted that, whereas everyone was working to the same criteria for Year 2, the other first schools in the Trust were using varying systems in respect of the other year groups). In addition, the Headteacher was planning to meet up with Matt Ward (and other colleagues) to look at what they were doing in more detail. She felt it might also be interesting to look into where the school's pupils fitted when they transferred to GCMS at the end of Year 4 and how they were viewed; it was noted that the school did ask year on year for Year 6 data for those pupils who had transferred so their performance could be tracked, and the Headteacher would look at asking for this again.

Action: Headteacher

- It was noted that a bid had been submitted by the LA for emergency funding for the school (£27,000) on the basis of tackling post-Ofsted issues. The success of the bid was not yet known.
- The Headteacher and Angela Harrison had recently attended training (metacognition) and would be disseminating this to the staff.

Action: Headteacher / A Harrison

- There were currently 12 children in the Nursery (13 by October). It was noted that there were more children who could have been admitted if the Nursery was offering full-time places; this was an issue that needed further consideration. It was confirmed that the school would be looking to have a January intake.
- **There were queries and discussion about the school's lack of basic / everyday resources, and how budget might be allocated for these items.** It was noted that care needed to be taken about the messages that this situation might give. Staff had been asked to make a 'wish list' of what they might need in this respect and the Headteacher would look at how best to allocate money accordingly; she indicated that she would be involving the FPS Committee in this process in terms of looking strategically at the budget.
- There was reference to the PTFA and the involvement it might have in relation to those items it might appropriately purchase for the school. It was noted that the PTFA had been into school recently to talk about grants.

Sarah Pickett gave her apologies and left the meeting at this point (8.15pm).

- The Headteacher had attended a GST admission policy workshop / meeting the previous day and outlined the main areas of discussion. She was to meet with Deb Tyler, LA, the following week. Reference was made to the GB's previous discussions about potential options around expansion of the school.

Action: Headteacher

Andy McCabe gave his apologies and left the meeting at this point (8.25pm).

9. Draft Minutes of the Previous GB Meetings

The draft minutes of the following GB meetings had been circulated and were **approved** subject to some amendments being made and some confidential items being removed from the public record:

- 28 June 2017 (summer term meeting 2 – Scheduled GB meeting)
- 13 July 2017 (confidential / extraordinary GB meeting)

10. Matters Arising

28 June 2017

Card (page 1)

The Chair confirmed that she had sent a card to Dominic Raymont on behalf of the GB as agreed.

GST Items (page 2)

It was understood that the proposal for BEFS to re-locate had been agreed by its GB and a final decision would be made by City Council in November.

Proposed CE Free School (page 2)

In response to a query, it was felt that it was now highly unlikely that the proposed CE free school in North Gosforth would go ahead.

Achievement Partner (AP) (page 3)

It was explained that the school would not have AP facilities this year, but would be supported as discussed earlier. It was noted that the GB would still need to have someone in place to advise / assist the group of governors with the Head's performance management process.

Action: GB needs to appoint external HT PM adviser

Associate Member (page 3)

It was **agreed** to defer any decision about Sarah McCloud joining the GB as an associate or observer.

Governor Skills Audit (page 4)

It was confirmed that the GB skills audit had been used to inform the review of committees / link roles.

Worship Council (page 5)

The Worship Council had been set up and the Headteacher and Andrew Shipton were to meet with them in due course.

Action: Headteacher / A Shipton

Home / School Agreements (page 5)

The Headteacher and Deputy Head would follow up a query about the circulation of the home/school agreements.

Nursery (page 5)

In response to a query, it was confirmed that the school would be admitting 'rising' three year olds (in January).

FPS Committee (page 6)

The following dates for FPS Committee meetings were confirmed (all at 5pm): 14 November; 23 January; 27 February; 28 April; 19 June

Health and Safety (page 7)

It was confirmed that trees had been removed from the site before the summer

holiday; it was understood that more were to be removed.

13 July 2017

Re-Appointments (pages 1 and 2)

It was noted that all of the governor re-appointments had been / were being dealt with.

The Chair's term of office as a Parent Governor, and possible options for reconstituting the GB, had also been discussed with the Diocese and it had been advised to continue as things were for the time being, with an opportunity to revisit this issue in due course as necessary.

Q&A (page 3)

It was noted that a 'Q&A' had not been circulated in the end as it was not felt to be necessary. However, it was suggested that a 'Q&A' document could be put together now in response to the questions received to show what had been done so far.

Action: Suggested 'Q&A' document

School Vision (page 4)

With regard to a school 'visioning' exercise, it was noted that Craig Dallison had offered to be involved and Jo Warner had also offered to facilitate. It was suggested that this might form part of a forthcoming school training day (30 October), and it was **agreed** that the Headteacher would check this with Jo Warner.

Action: Headteacher

Preparation for HMI Visit (page 5)

It was noted that Mark Wilson had not been re-booked with a view to looking at a session around preparation for an HMI visit.

Effectiveness (page 5)

The Chair confirmed that she had sought responses from governors regarding the document she had tabled at the last meeting grading the GB's effectiveness.

11. Reports from Committees / Individual and Link Governors / Governor Visits / Governor Development and Training

Ethos and Curriculum Committee – 11 September 2017

The draft minutes of the above meeting had been circulated and the following points were highlighted:

- It was noted that challenge from governors during the meeting had been clearly highlighted in the minutes.
- The committee had spent much of the meeting discussing forward planning in terms of the types of things they would be doing over the year.
- The committee's discussion of the re-naming of the Ethos and TLA Committees (and the associated link roles), and the establishment of a new structure / membership was noted.
- It was noted that there had also been discussion of data / publication of data.

Finance, Premises and Staffing (FPS) Committee – 11 September 2017

The draft minutes of the above meeting were not yet available so Helen Miller gave a verbal summary of the main points arising from the meeting:

- The committee members wished to ask the GB to endorse a staff pay rise of 2%. They felt to be a fair decision to make and the additional costs for this and next financial year had been modelled and were felt to be manageable. Those governors present indicated that they were **in favour** of this proposal; it was suggested that other governors' endorsement could also be sought by email as necessary.
- Overspend would need to be reviewed. This figure had increased and it now looked to be around £46,000 next year. Governors were reassured that the committee and Headteacher were looking at an action plan.
- Carol Bainbridge and Helen Miller were drafting revised terms of reference for the committee and would ensure they linked with the GB delegation planner.

Action: C Bainbridge / H Miller

- The Headteacher and Carol Bainbridge were to meet with the LA School Business Manager, Olwyn Graves, in advance of the next committee meeting to discuss key issues. Olywn Graves had also been asked to provide clearer financial notes.
- There had been discussion of the promotion of school meals as one way for the school to increase income; 'themed days' had been suggested.
- SEND funding: The Headteacher had checked up on a particular query about SEND funding and understood that the funding in question was already in the budget.

12. Financial Items / Budget Monitoring / Audit Related Items

It was felt that this item had been covered through the discussion of the FPS Committee meeting.

13. Policy Review

The Headteacher had altered the LA's model Pay Policy and would circulate this version to the governors for comments prior to adoption.

Action: Headteacher

14. Safeguarding / Health and Safety / Risk Management Items

There were no items raised.

15. LA Reports – Autumn Term 2017

A package of LA reports had been circulated; all of the reports were noted.

16. Any Other Business

There was no further business; the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.05pm.


21/11/2017

