



John Blandy Primary School

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| Meeting | Local Governing Body | Where | John Blandy Primary School |
| Date | Wednesday 6 March 2019 | Time | 19.00 |
| Attendees | Lucie Belcher (LB, chair, parent governor), Sarah Thompson (ST, head teacher), Stephen Arrowsmith (SA, community governor), Helen Benson (HBe, support staff governor), Hannah Boon (HBo, parent governor), Suzanne Elliot (staff governor), David Hancox (DH, community governor), Jane Tidy (JT, parent governor), Kerri Treherne (KT, community governor) | | |
| Apologies | Janice Simpson (JS, community governor), Clare Butcher (CB, community governor) | | |
| Clerk | Octavia Kelly | | |

MINUTES

Meeting opened at 7.15 pm.

| Action | | |
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| | Welcome and opening business | |
| | Welcome, quoracy and apologies | |
| | Meeting was quorate. | |
| | Apologies were received from JS and CB and noted. | |
| | Urgent matters as previously notified to the Chair | |
| | None | |
| | Declarations of pecuniary interests | |
| | None | |
| | Minutes of last meeting | |
| | Approval of minutes of last meeting (23 January 2019) | |
| | Minutes were approved. | |

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 Headteacher: Mrs Clare Silvester & Sarah Thompson



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| | <p>Matters arising from minutes of last meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costing of different building/admissions scenarios <p>No further progress in receiving consent from the Secretary of State for change of land use, so building will not be ready in time to accommodate an intake of more than 30 children into reception in September 2019.</p> <p>Reasons cited to OCC for withholding of consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building would have smaller footprint if it had 3 floors rather than 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ However, planning consent for a 3-floor building in the area would be unlikely to be granted. • A problem with the pathway linking the old and new buildings • A third reason, which OCC is not being clear on. <p>If the new building does not go ahead, improvements to the playground, which at present is deemed inadequately equipped by the Head, must be made.</p> | |
| | <p>Governing body</p> | |
| | <p>Election of parent governor</p> <p>Lucie Belcher was elected on 12 February 2019 as a parent governor for a second term of 4 years.</p> <p>New governor visit feedback forms – separate forms for walk through and monitoring visits, taken from the Key website for governors, have been introduced.</p> <p>It was suggested that all governors visit at the end of a staff meeting once per long term as a 'super visit'. Not all teachers would have to stay for each visit, but documentation of such 'super visits' would provide good evidence to Ofsted of governor involvement and communication with staff.</p> | |
| | <p>Governor visits</p> <p>None</p> | |

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| | Reports | |
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| | <p>Headteacher's report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caretaker was absent long-term and resigned at half-term. There was a period during which there was no caretaker cover. Statutory fire and water checks have been performed reluctantly by other staff, who have received the necessary training, and the statutory perimeter walk has been carried out by ST. ST had little control over the situation as she does not line manage the caretaker, though there has been discussion between the academy and headteachers affected by the shared caretaker's absence. • Exclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 child has had 6 exclusions, all for physically hurting an adult or child. The guidance is that a child can only be permanently excluded after 45 exclusions in 1 year. The child poses little risk to other children, since he spends much of the time in a separate room, to which he sometimes removes himself. He has no formal diagnosis, but an application for additional funding has been made. He has continuous 1 to 1 assistance. All outside agencies have endorsed the way the school has dealt with the challenges he presents. The child is on a reduced timetable, although this has not consistently been supported by parents. ○ Another child has had 1 exclusion. • Staffing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A formal complaint was received from a small number of Y4 parents, who objected to an HLTA (higher level teaching assistant) teaching their children for 1 day a week. The HLTA took over from a teacher who had reduced her hours mid-year because there was no suitable teacher already employed by the school able to take on the hours. Most of the morning of the day on which the HLTA is teaching has been spent swimming. The reduction in the much-valued teacher's hours has improved her supported the teacher and retained her as a member of staff. There has been no detrimental impact on educational outcomes. The class, however, has been taught for a period by 3 people per week. The teacher who reduced her hours has offered to increase her reduced hours by half a day more per week in the summer to teach core subjects. The HLTA's contract | |

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| | <p>will continue to allow for a full day's worth of teaching at HLTA rate. The HLTA hours released by the teacher's return could be spent with Y2 until the SATs are over, at which point the HLTA could be redeployed to Y3, which needs to accelerate to meet targets. Because one teacher left and was not replaced, a saving in staffing costs has been made this term. Next term costs will be roughly what they would have been had the teacher who left been paid for the summer terms. Overall, staff costs for the year will come in under budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff absence: if long-term absences are excluded from the analysis, staff absence is lower than at most academy schools. However, such short-term absence has been greater this year than last. It is not possible to say what has caused the increase: possible factors include functioning on less support across the school, being run-down and tired, or having to take time off to look after dependents. A high rate of absence among pupils suggests there has been widespread illness in the community. There are a number of measures in place to reduce staff stress. ● Behaviour policy: There were only 7 responses to the survey on behaviour policy, which were negative regarding the sanctions element, but rather than these responses being representative of general opinion, it is likely that dissatisfaction was what prompted those people to respond in the first place when others who were more satisfied did not. It was noted, however, that staff echoed the sentiments expressed in the responses, so the feedback was helpful, and the policy has been revised as a result of the survey and contributions from staff and pupil questionnaires. The policy will be reviewed one more time before a permanent policy is implemented after Easter. ● Attendance: Almost all children have satisfactory attendance; figures are reduced by 2 or 3 families and by children over 5 on reduced timetables. Support plans and 2 parental contracts are in place to improve the attendance of the relevant children. | |
| | <p>Progress review of Headteacher performance objectives</p> <p>The objectives were only set in December 2018. The review has therefore been deferred until the Easter holidays.</p> | |

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| | <p>School self-evaluation (SEF)</p> <p>The school rates itself as good but not outstanding.</p> <p>The current academy template for SEF is verbose and onerous and does not present schools in their best lights. Duncan Millard, Academy CEO, has drafted a different form which splits the evaluation by values: learners, nurture and development, strengthen and grow, outcomes and PPG/disadvantaged students. There is also a section on key strengths and areas for improvement. Academy headteachers are working with Duncan on this template, which could be introduced in September, when the Ofsted framework, with which it is consistent, will be brought in.</p> | |
| ACTION | Governors are asked to consider the template and submit questions to ST with all governors copied in, to which ST will reply at the next meeting. | All governors |
| | Policies | |
| | <p>Policies for adoption:</p> <p>1. Admissions</p> <p>Buckland has a 'bespoke' admissions policy whereby, all other factors being equal, attendance of the pre-school attached to the primary school confers priority for admission. Formal association with its local pre-school would be in JBS's financial and educational interests but 2 proposals to that effect have been rejected by the pre-school. There is little incentive for the pre-school to formalise its association with JBS since almost all applicants from the pre-school are accepted by JBS.</p> <p>Policy approved.</p> | |
| | Reports | |
| | Performance and standards report | |

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| | <p>Report deferred until next LGB meeting as Performance and standards committee have not met since their last report was reviewed at an LGB meeting.</p> | |
| | <p>Condition survey of school</p> <p>Report deferred until next meeting following the Academy meetings planned.</p> | |
| | <p>Finance governor's report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little scope for further income generation • In-year deficit was forecast to be £18K. Peaked in T4, now falling and may decrease further. • Cannot mitigate effects of absence; not all costs can be claimed back on insurance and money is only paid on return or resignation of the member of staff. • High number of SEN children and presence of several EHCP children increases need for TA support, a cost that is not fully offset by additional funding. • An increase in pupil numbers would bring in greater income, but the scope for it is limited by the lack of accommodation for more pupils, following the current failure to obtain consent for a change of land use from the Secretary of State. | |
| | <p>Correspondence</p> | |
| | <p>AOB</p> <p>Discussion of future LGB agendas</p> <p>Governors will have to provide evidence for Ofsted in LGB minutes that governors have guided priorities in forward planning. Such priorities will be incorporated into the school development plan (SDP). Governors also need to show that steps have been taken to implement plans, and that the impact of plans has been monitored and challenged.</p> <p>It was felt that there is a tendency to cover the same agenda items, often finance-related, in the same way at every LGB meeting. More aspirational</p> | |

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thinking is often lost when trying to resolve everyday problems. The LGB meetings should be a forum the Board to reflect on a collective vision for the school. Tonight, the Head asked the board, either as current, or ex-parents, to consider what they want for their children? Current parents to voice their wishes and for ex-parents to reflect on what are the school's strengths and weaknesses.

- It may be more fruitful to lay more emphasis on considering the ethos of the school and its aims for children's development and for engendering a lifelong desire for learning. Ideas and discussions around:
 - Children's interests in non-core subjects such as history should be fostered. This is in line with the new Ofsted framework coming in in September, which stresses breadth. It would be acceptable to spend a day a week on non-core subjects because sparking children's interest is important.
 - External teachers and speakers have a disproportionate impact on children's engagement, and are seen as a real positive for the school.
 - External speakers could talk to Y6 children about career options. Such talks could take place either after SATs so as not to reduce teaching time beforehand, or before SATs, to focus children on the need to optimise performance to achieve their career goals.
 - Need to recognise needs of more able children.
 - CB has sent some very useful material on the facilities at Abingdon School available to visiting school groups and the possibility of borrowing a minibus.
 - For the school to properly fulfil its aspirations, parents must be engaged. There has been less interest and involvement from parents in recent years, probably because the proportion of them who work and are therefore 'time poor' has increased. Other factors in the decline may include fewer assemblies and events to which parents are invited and the rate of growth of the village.
 - Ideas for increasing parental engagement:
 - Could organise Friends of JBL School events in school, with the children making tea etc. This would bring people in to the school but cause minimal disruption to school activities.
 - Repeat successful homework evening.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boardgame evening, explicitly promoted as being 'fun' rather than 'fundraising'. • Friday afternoon tea parties: a couple of such events held this year in Oak class have been popular. • Ask in feedback what parents would like funds raised by parents to go towards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to work on developing children's self-confidence and self-worth, though much effort has already gone towards doing so. <p>It was agreed that the Friends of the school may appear a somewhat closed group to those outside it. Events that are held solely for enjoyment rather than fundraising may draw people in more effectively; on the other hand, increasing the formality of parental input, such as by having named parent class representatives, may alienate some parents. Different types of event/communication will appeal to different groups of parents eg working or non-working parents.</p> | |
| | <p>Upcoming events</p> <p>Blandy Boffins – 23 March 2019, 7 pm.</p> <p>Parents' evenings next week – LB, JT, SH and SA will each attend for part of an evening to represent the governors. They will encourage questions from parents and could use the opportunity to invite suggestions or feedback about the school whilst they are there.</p> | |
| | <p>Academy news update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCC was recently inspected by Ofsted. • The academy is changing its name from Faringdon Academy of Schools to a name that would reflect membership of schools from beyond the immediate surroundings of Faringdon. Suggestions are welcomed from parents, governors and children. | |
| | <p>Items for next agenda</p> | |
| | <p>Date of next meeting Wednesday 22 May 2019</p> | |

Meeting ended 2102.

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