



The Castle School

A SPECIALIST COLLEGE FOR COMMUNICATION & INTERACTION

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Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body, held on Tuesday 10 March 2015, 5pm at Post 16 site, Castle School (Newbury College)

Present: Brian Connolly (Chair of Governors), Katherine Wilkes (local authority governor), Georgie Woods (community governor), David Greenway (parent governor), Wendy Batchelor (community governor), Ursula Codrington (community governor), Jon Hewitt (Headteacher), Roses Parfitt (staff governor), Ola Cassels-White (local authority governor), Tracy Warwick (parent governor), Shannon Booth (staff governor) and Vicki Murphy (Clerk)

In attendance: Atul Attra (School Business Manager)

Apologies: Kate Dress (parent governor), Malcolm Pullinger (parent governor), Rhona O'Neill (Deputy Head)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Malcolm Pullinger, Rhona O'Neill and Kate Dress.

2. Items for any other business (AOB)

The following items were raised for discussion at the end of the meeting:

- Disqualification by association
- Residential visits

3. Declarations of interest

No declarations were made.

4. Minutes from 18 November 2014, and matters arising:

The minutes from 18 November 2014 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

Updates were then given on the following matters arising:

- *Business interest and declaration forms* – VM updated that these were mostly up to date, any outstanding forms would be signed on the strategy day. OCW to update form in light of new work with the school.
- *Governor vacancy* – following recent appointment of KW there are now no current vacancies.
- *Bid submissions to St James Place* – JH updated governors that there had been an update given on this to the finance committee and a grant had been received that was used in the development of the red zone playground.
- *Assessment review and health & safety training* – OCW noted that this would be covered under governor development.
- *Pay panel administration* – GW updated governors that the pay panel is now being administered in the same way as the other committees and updates would be given at future meetings as required.
- *Policy updates*- VM noted that the policies agreed at the last full governors meeting were now in the school files.
- *Governor skills audit* – OCW updated that this had been completed as part of the reconstitution process.
- *Strategy day*– this will be held for all governors later this month and JH has already sent an agenda out to colleagues. BC reminded governors that this is

an important part of the governors calendar and thanked them in advance for their support.

- *Terms of reference* – the Clerk confirmed that the terms of reference had been updated following the last meeting.
- *Ofsted celebration* - staff updated governors that the celebration event had taken place and all those attending had enjoyed it. JH thanked governors for their support of this event.

5. Reconstitution of the governing body

OCW gave an update on the reconstitution of the governing body. She noted that the skills audit had formed the first stage of the process and although some gaps were identified, it confirmed that governors were skilful and appropriate for the schools needs. OCW also noted that some consideration had been given to the size of the governing body as part of the reconstitution, but the working party had agreed that the current size enabled representation from across the different parts of the school. OCW also confirmed that she and BC have met a number of times with Michelle Blain (West Berkshire Governor Services) to fully understand process and agree next steps.

Governors had been given a copy of the new proposed governing instrument and agreed with its content and proposed structure.

Governors then discussed and agreed the following next steps:

Surplus governors

As part of the new governing instrument, OCW noted that there would be surplus governors in the following categories:

Local authority governors – proposed to have one. KW will remain as an LA governor, OCW and BC will resign.

Staff governor – proposed to have one, RP will remain as a staff governor, SB will resign.

Community governors – this category will no longer exist and therefore WB, GW and UC will resign.

Parent governors – proposed to retain four governors in this category to enable full representation across the school. No changes necessary as MP, KD, DG and TW to remain.

Headteacher and Clerk – no changes necessary.

Governors then agreed that those resigning will provide a letter of resignation to the Clerk (by 24 March), which will be effective as of the 15 June 2015. At the date of the next full governors meeting (16 June 2015), the first agenda item for this meeting, will be the appointment of co-opted governors (proposed and agreed to be WB, OCW, BC, SB, GW and UC).

ACTION: VM to arrange necessary resignation letters for surplus governors, and to manage process for the appointment of co-opted governors at the next meeting. VM to arrange for new instrument of government to be sent to Governor Services to enable the legal process to be completed ahead of the next governors full meeting in June. The new instrument will then take effect from 16 June 2015.

6. Committee updates

Committee chairs were invited to update colleagues on the committees which have taken place earlier this term.

a. *Curriculum & Staffing (GW)*

GW gave an update on the committees that met in January as per minutes circulated ahead of the meeting.

Staffing – SB updated that since the meeting, IIP status had been retained and thanked all for their work towards this. JH thanked SB for her work in achieving this with staff teams.

Curriculum – Since the meeting it was noted that TW and UC have completed exclusions training. Governors asked about process for forming an exclusions panels, and it was agreed that GW would suggest process for this at the next meeting. AA also updated that plans to update all DBS (from older style certificates) checks were underway and these would be completed at 50 staff per year, until all were completed.

b. Finance & Premises (WB)

Finance – WB noted that the group had discussed the possibility of purchasing another type of vehicle to avoid insurance issues with D1 category on licences that were obtained after 1997. AA noted staff were investigating options and would report back to the group next term to ensure school vehicles can still be used to support trips and travel arrangements.

Premises – WB noted that AA had shared the current list of works with the group and it was progressing well. AA noted that further progress had been made since the meeting and the new staff area was almost ready. Governors were assured that site health & safety was being closely monitored following a fall by a staff member earlier in the year.

c. Pay panel (GW)

GW noted that the Pay Panel had met earlier in the day to discuss progress towards agreed objectives as part of the Headteacher's Performance Management.

7. Headteacher's Report

JH invited questions on his report which has been circulated ahead of the meeting. All thanked JH for his report. JH noted that the Heads report would continue to evolve and he would like feedback on the reporting format at the next meeting.

WB asked about lessons observations, and JH noted this role was shared by the Leadership Team.

KW asked about role of half term / holiday activities and staff updated about pastoral programme and the role of the Guidepost Holiday Club.

BC asked about website information and JH confirmed that he had updated information so that it includes required and relevant information on the school. Two governor profiles need to be added and it was agreed that a group photo could be taken on Strategy Day to update governors section. JH confirmed for staff that list of meeting dates was now included, which should help with requests or proposals that need to be considered by governors being sent in a timely way.

Governors had a short discussion about recruitment of staff, as a number of lunchtime controllers had moved onto other positions in the school (for more hours, or more focused role). All agreed that this was natural progression and did not indicate any issues. Noted different ways that the school is trying to attract new interest e.g. social media and networking events. JH will update in due course.

AA gave a short update on school budget and noted that the school budget was looking healthy at present. AA / JH advised that changes in funding could affect the way in which a surplus can be managed in the future, but the budgetary updates and discussion would continue with the finance committee and shared with full governors on a termly basis.

**WB left the meeting at this point.*

8. Progress and Achievement

SB gave governors an update on progress and achievement, and talked through the headlines from current data sheet (this had been circulated ahead of the meeting). SB noted how staff were now able to access data remotely and this was helping to ensure data is considered at all stages, on an ongoing basis. SB noted that ways of recording progress in Maths was being advanced, and governors would learn more about this as part of the Strategy Day coming up later this month. DG asked about how information was shared with parents, and SB noted this was through review meetings, but could also be shared via newsletters to provide more timely updates. All thanked SB for her ongoing work in this area.

9. Policies for ratification

The following policies have been agreed at committee and are coming to full governors for approval:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| • Admissions | • Manual Handling |
| • Behaviour | • Model Grievance |
| • Capability | • SEN |
| • Complaints | • Severe Weather |
| • Creative Arts | |

There was one query on the SEN policy which was resolved, and governors then agreed all policies that had been brought forward.

Governors agreed with all the policies that were brought for ratification.

Governors then discussed the new Model Safeguarding policy and agreed. As per point 5.3 governors were reminded to update Madeleine in the School Office about any training undertaken so that the school records can be updated.

Finally, governors discussed the Colocation Agreement and agreed the policy. **ACTION: VM to arrange signature and update school files with the above policies.**

10. Safeguarding report and signing of central register

BC updated governors that a safeguarding meeting has been held and there are no issues to report. The central register was signed by BC.

11. Governor visits, training and development

OCW updated governors that governor visits continued to take place to school sites and this was well supported by teams across areas of the school. All agreed this was a valuable activity. OCW reminded governors to complete a visit form if they are attending school, and also noted that other opportunities for governors to get involved were available e.g. attending staff training sessions, visiting school / learning environments or informal shadowing.

OCW noted that KW had agreed to be Maths link governor and there were now link governors for all areas of the curriculum.

Finally TW and UC gave updates on recent visits to main site and Post 16 noting how useful and enjoyable the experience had been. OCW reminded governors about newsletter contributions and the next contributions were due from UC, OCW, RP and BC (in order). A short 150 word submission should be sent to JH ahead of each deadline.

12. AOB

The following AOB items were discussed:

- *Disqualification by association*

JH updated governors that new legislation around working with children in Foundation / KS1 means that staff can now be suspended from work if they live / partner with someone who has been convicted of a serious criminal offence. JH / AA noted that they would have to collect information from staff in due course about this. Governors then had a discussion around the nature and effectiveness of self-referral of this type of

information. Governors also noted that all children in the school could be seen as particularly vulnerable to this legislation, not just those in the early years curriculum. Governors thanked JH for the update.

- *Residential visit (Dover Class)*

A request had been made to governors for funding to support a residential trip by Dover Class. Governors agreed that such requests should be considered by the finance committee rather than full governors and so this would be fed back to the school teams. AA noted that a small surplus was available in the Private Fund to support such trips. All agreed that while they supported the nature of this trip, future requests should go to finance committee ahead of meeting dates each term so requests can be considered in full.

- *Budget date*

BC asked governors to note the date for the budget setting meeting had been suggested as 21 May at 4.30pm. This will be a short meeting to agree school budget for 2015/16, and will need a quorate of governors to attend.

Meeting dates for next term are as follows:

Curriculum & staffing committee – 7 May, 4.30pm onwards

Finance & premises committee – 14 May, 4.30pm onwards

Full governors, 16 June, 5pm onwards.

These meetings will all take place at main site, Castle School. Papers will be circulated by the Clerk in due course.