

Minutes

Westfield School Governors Meeting

13 November 2017
5pm
Westfield School

Chair: Eric Williams (EW)
Minute taker: Jenni Hicks (JH)
Attendees: John Hatton (JHa)
Nicki Gilbert (NG)
Steve Wall (SW)
Ceri Hibbert (CH)
Sam Bell (SB)
Richard Binnersley (RB)
Ann Hatton (AH)
Steve Tisdale (ST)
Emma Jenkins (EJ)- School Administrator
Apologies: Andy James (AJ)
Julie Newcombe (JN)

Agenda item 1:	Apologies
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Received and accepted from AJ and JN.	
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Agenda item 9:	Renew term as governor (EW) and expressions of interest from potential Governors
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<p>It was agreed to move this item to the top of the agenda to allow the new governors to fully participate in the meeting.</p> <p>EW confirmed that he would like to continue and this was unanimously agreed by all governors.</p> <p>SB's term is due to expire in the next half term, she put herself forward for a further term. This was agreed.</p> <p>AH and ST put themselves forward to become Governors and were voted in by all present.</p>	
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Agenda item 2:	Declarations of Interest
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None.	
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Agenda item 3:	Minutes of last meeting & matters arising
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<p>Minutes were agreed for accuracy and signed.</p> <p>Actions were all completed.</p>	
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Agenda item 4:	Chairs report
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<p>EW circulated a report prior to the meeting. On behalf of the governors, EW congratulated NG and the staff on maintaining the Ofsted 'good' status and on following up on the actions of the previous inspection.</p> <p>Barrs Court Governors have indicated that they are happy to proceed in further discussions around a multi-academy trust.</p> <p>EW encouraged all governors to attend some of the school events. Children in Need Talent Show is at 1.30pm on Friday 17th at the sports and social club and all governors were invited to attend. The Christmas Fair is Friday 1 December. All governors were directed to the website for the weekly newsletter which includes all the dates of future events.</p>	
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Agenda item 5:	Committee reports
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Resources (including budget report, update on fire evacuation and H&S report)

RB circulated a report prior to the meeting. He acknowledged that finances are an ongoing challenge and will continue to be in the future, however the school have managed the budget and have a projected surplus. RB acknowledged this as a huge achievement by the leadership team. RB noted that since the arrival of EJ, the management of school resources has notably improved.

EW asked NG if there will be a high level of timesheets which could impact on the budget surplus. NG confirmed that sickness always needs to be covered, however there is no backlog of timesheets so at this point in time it is not expected that this will impact on the surplus.

Curriculum & Achievement

CH advised that it was great to be joined by Bea May at the last meeting and gave an overview of the discussion at the recent meeting, including update on the attainments and comparative data. CH noted that Barrs Court are also signing up for Achievement for All and SIMs which will make moderation between the two settings easier.

Children, Families & Community

In AJ's absence, SW fed back on the discussion at the previous meeting.

Agenda item 6:	Feedback from Governor visits
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Due to Ofsted, not many visits have taken place. CH advised that when people visit school, they need to sign the Governors book which is kept in reception. This can then be used as evidence that the Governors are visiting the school.

Action: Teacher emails to be forwarded to all governors.

Action: CH to coordinate governors visits. CH to accompany AH and ST to a class visit and support them in the completion of their initial visit report.

Action: NG to arrange for each governor to be allocated to a class at her next teachers meeting. Visits to the allocated class can then occur on a regular basis (e.g. termly).

Agenda item 7:	Headteachers report
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NG circulated a report prior to the meeting which was talked through.

She clarified that the Curriculum Lead (Bea May) is focused on the key areas, including writing and these are linked to her performance management targets and the SDP.

EW advised that the school internet contract is being considered at the moment, but issues with the broadband, may mean that the contract for this through Hoople will need to cease. EW advised that any contracts going forward need to be easily movable to take into consideration the possibility of becoming a multi-academy trust in the future. EW sought approval from the Full Governing Body to allow NG to work with Simon (Technician from Wigmore) to consider options and decide on the appropriate option for the school, without this needing to come back via a committee for approval. This was agreed and RB advised that he would liaise with NG on this.

NG advised that she has received two applications for the handyman/security 16 hour post. NG sought a governor to sit on the interview panel. She has also approached Nick O'Sullivan (Health and Safety) to sit on the panel. EW, SW and RB all offered and NG to advise of the date once agreed.

NG advised that Barrs Court are putting in the proposal for the Free School for 16-19 provision. NG advised that a new student in Year 1 has started this week. He appears more able than the rest of the cohort, however this will be reviewed over time and his socialisation skills are at the level associated with significant learning difficulties.

NG advised that following Ofsted, she has done a comparison of attendance vs attainment, which does seem to correlate, however NG cautioned that this is likely to be skewed as the young people with poor attendance are some with the most significant medical conditions and needs. SW asked how attendance is targeted. NG advised that the school are trying to improve this and their work on this is evidenced. In terms of authorising holiday leave, for many of the children this is their only opportunity to engage in quality family time and many of them need to

do this in term time when holiday locations are quieter and less overwhelming for the children. She has however noted in the most recent newsletter that if attendance is low, holiday requests may not be approved.

RB asked about the number of children on social care plans (CP, LAC, CiN etc.) and asked if it is high? NG advised that the current figure is low for the school. NG clarified that the Section 2 Plans are to allow families and children to access short breaks provision and are not related to safeguarding concerns. JHa asked for clarity regarding the various safeguarding plans. NG clarified this. She advised that at a recent meeting with the LAC team, it was advised that the threshold for becoming/remaining looked after is increasing as the team need to reduce the number of children who are Looked After. ST asked if Strong Young Minds might be appropriate for some young people if CAMHS are not able to offer a service. NG will consider if this would be appropriate for some of the children at Westfield.

Agenda item 8: Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)

RB circulated a report prior to the meeting which he talked through, advising how this has come about and the benefit of being able to maintain special school provision in the north of the county.

RB has met with Malcolm Green, Schools Finance Manager at the LA. He talked through costings and noted that Barrs Court already have experience of going through the academy process.

The academy status would move the school from LA maintained provision to a body which is funded directly from the government. NG advised that no school is able to become an academy alone, it needs to be as part of a MAT. RB advised that the MAT needs to be in place first, it has its own governing body and then the school need to become an academy, under the trust. Each academy may choose to keep their own governing body. RB talked through potential structures and advised that the school would be run much more like a business.

SW asked how resources are managed in an academy. NG advised that money then needs to be bid for from the government. NG advised that the LA are not allowed to hand over a building to the academy board of trustees which is not fit for purpose, therefore things would need to be rectified prior to handing it over.

SW asked how funding from the government is allocated. RB clarified that the school would get a lump sum, plus the tariff funding allocated to the EHC Plans. If, for example, building work needs to be completed, this would need to be bid for from the Department for Education. NG clarified that the school administrators would commission the services required for the school (for example maintenance or direct support for the children) and headteachers become, for example 'heads of learning'.

JHa advised that the deficit projected for 2018/19 shows a significant deficit and asked how this is managed. RB advised that it would be managed as a trust, not as separate settings to find the funds. NG clarified that the graph is based on current pupils and leavers, as the incoming students cannot be projected in the same way as a mainstream school are able to.

The MAT would enable the two schools to make the most of the resources for the young people, for example the PMLD pupils from both settings attending the Barrs Court site which enables them to utilise the hydrotherapy pool.

RB advise that the MAT is a whole Governing Body and executive team project and proposed that a working group is arranged to discuss this. A timescale needs to be agreed, due diligence needs to be done to consider if this is a realistic proposal. RB advised that key stakeholders need to be consulted, including parents. EW asked when a meeting with Barrs Court should take place, RB considered that this should be after the free school proposal has been submitted, perhaps in the new year. **Action:** MAT meeting to take place with all Governors, after NG and RB have been to a conference regarding becoming an academy.

Action: Letter to be drafted to the Chair of Governors at Barrs Court to acknowledge their response to the expression of interest and advise that this has been discussed at the FGB, NG and RB attending conference and an extraordinary governors meeting will take place, after which we will be in touch.

NG advised that the meeting with parents is to take place following RB and NG attending this meeting, to enable them to be able to answer as many questions as they can to assure parents.

JHa advised that a staff briefing also need to take place to provide assurances of implications for staff, who their employer would be, implications on pay scales etc. RB advised that over the next 5 years, with the government initiative, all teaching staff will find themselves working for academy's and academy trusts.

EW clarified that he does not want this process to be rushed, it needs to be properly considered and may take a number of years. RB stated that discussions need to ensure that the arrangement is beneficial for both schools and their young people.

RB was thanked for his work on this.

Agenda item 10: Any other business

CH asked what is happening with the money which has been raised for the hydro pool. RB advised that fundraising is ongoing and the placement of it is in discussion. He advised that the money has been offered back to the donators to pass onto other charities if they wish. NG advised that 5 years ago, £200k was the projected cost. The school have raised £46k, which NG assured has been ring-fenced for this purpose and the intention is still to be used for a hydro pool. NG clarified that the money is held by the PTFA, not the school directly. JHa suggested that those who have donated to the fund were informed of progress.

Agenda item 11: Date of next meeting

5pm on Monday 19th March at 5pm.
EW to liaise with JH to arrange meeting re MAT.

Agenda item	Action	By whom	Deadline
6 Feedback from Governor visits	Teacher emails to be forwarded to all governors.	JH	Completed.
	CH to coordinate governors visits. CH to accompany AH and ST to a class visit and support them in the completion of their initial visit report.	CH AH and ST	19.03.18
	NG to arrange for each governor to be allocated to a class at her next teachers meeting. Visits to the allocated class can then occur on a regular basis (e.g. termly).	NG All Governors	End of term and ongoing
8 MAT	MAT meeting to take place with all Governors, after NG and RB have been to a conference regarding becoming an academy.	EW/JH to propose date	31.01.18
	Letter to be drafted to the Chair of Governors at Barrs Court to acknowledge their response to the expression of interest and advise that this has been discussed at the FGB, NG and RB attending conference and an extraordinary governors meeting will take place, after which we will be in touch.	JH	Completed.