

## **St. Michael's CE (VC) Primary School**

### **Minutes of a Meeting of the Governors held in the School on Thursday, 1 October, 2009 at 7.00 p.m.**

**Present:** Mr. D.C. Piggott (Chair), Ms. E. Wilson, Mrs. R. Poulton, Rev. D.K. Beedon, Ms. N. Ellis, Ms. J. Pearce, Mrs. J. Bryant, Mrs. R. Athersmith, Mrs. A. Staines, Mrs. L. Elcock, Mrs. J.M Twomlow, Mrs. K. Van Block, Mr. P. Whitehead, Mr. M. Davies-Friend, Miss H.F. McKay

Mrs. J. Chrishop, Mr. D. Birdsall, and Mr. R. Worth (Local Authority) and Mr. R. Mountford (Clerk to the Governors) were also present.

**Apologies:** No apologies for absence were received.

#### **1589 Election of Chair:**

It was resolved -

That Mr. Piggott be appointed as Chair of Governors until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2010.

#### **1590 Election of Vice-Chair:**

It was resolved -

That Mrs. Poulton be appointed as Vice-Chair of Governors until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2010.

#### **1591 Chair Power to Act:**

It was resolved -

- a) That the Chair be empowered to act on behalf of the Governing Body on matters of an urgent or minor nature that may arise between meetings.
- b) That Governors note that the Chair had not taken any action under Chair-Power to Act since the last meeting.

#### **1592 Ofsted Inspection:**

##### **a) Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher reported on the inspector's verbal feedback, recorded by Mrs. Chrishop, including regarding:

i) **How well are the pupils doing taking account of any variation?**

- pupils' attainment was uneven across the Key Stages
- issues were identified regarding the quality of pupils' learning and progress, particularly in Years One to Four
- pupils were very well behaved and willing to learn
- pupils' adoption of healthy life styles, contribution to the school and wider community, development of skills for adult life and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development were all judged as satisfactory
- pupils had concerns about site security.

The Headteacher stated that:

- the findings on uneven attainment and learning progress affected the grading of other pupil related outcomes although there was evidence of good practice
- there was a contrast between pupils' very good behaviour and parental concerns expressed in the Ofsted questionnaire
- immediate action had been taken to secure the playground area and to plan for the securing of the school field
- Ms. Wilson, Well-Being Governor, was to explore with pupils their feelings regarding security.

ii) **How effective is the provision?**

- quality of teaching was satisfactory with evidence of good teaching but also of variable practice and not enough consistent use of Assessment for Learning to advance further learning
- the extent by which the curriculum met the needs of the pupils was satisfactory
- the effectiveness of care, guidance and support was satisfactory but more differentiated learning was required.

The Headteacher stated that:

- non-negotiable learning and teaching strategies had been revisited at a staff meeting
- specific feedback on quality of teaching had been given
- an analysis of pupils' work had been carried out and feedback and action points given
- Ms. Wilson had met with staff to consider well-being issues and action.

iii) **How effective are leadership and management?**

- overall satisfactory but the Senior Leadership Team should be sharper and more rigorous in driving learning forward

- governance was inadequate because Governors were not challenging enough and statutory requirements were not in place
- the effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents was inadequate because 1/3 of questionnaire responses showed concerns regarding communication, pupils' progress and the school not listening to parents' opinions
- the effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being, of the promotion of equal opportunities and of safeguarding procedures was all satisfactory, although the Health and Safety Governor should urgently audit the play areas
- the effectiveness of the school in promoting community cohesion was inadequate because no audit, action plan or monitoring was in place
- value for money was inadequate.

The Headteacher stated that the finding on achievement informed the finding on value for money. She thanked Mrs. Staines for representing the Governors at short notice on Safeguarding in inspection discussions.

Governors expressed great disappointment and frustration at the finding on governance:

- a number of Governors highlighted the focus given to monitoring and questioning regarding school improvement strategies
- Mrs. Poulton and Ms. Pearce highlighted the challenge provided regarding teaching and learning outcomes and the responses of staff to challenge
- Mrs. Poulton reported on the heavy workload of the Curriculum Committee in seeking to hold staff to account for school improvement and the Headteacher raised the possibility of appointing a Curriculum Governor charged with holding in depth discussions with staff on quality of learning and teaching and with bringing salient issues to the Committee for further consideration
- Governors highlighted the importance of the Local Authority providing rigorous challenge regarding the school's improvement in advance of the inspection and providing early notification of changing priorities in Governors' responsibilities
- Mrs. Bryant advocated more challenge on the big picture of quality of learning and teaching and a review of the Committee structure.

iv) **How effective is the Early Years Foundation Stage?**

- overall effectiveness was satisfactory, with good leadership and potential for development.

The Headteacher reported on the negative impact of playground resurfacing on external play provision at

inspection. Mrs. Elcock reported on positive feedback regarding the settling in of pupils into learning routines, care of children and their progress.

v) **Overall School Effectiveness**

- a notice to improve was given
- outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils were uneven across the school
- the capacity for sustained improvement was satisfactory with evidence present.

vi) **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- leadership and management: more rigour in monitoring and evaluation, higher expectations, Governors more responsible for achievement and statutory policies
- assessment: use of data, make staff more accountable, higher expectations for all groups
- community cohesion: complete audit and write policy
- communication with parents: regarding provision and pupil progress.

Mr. Worth stated that the school had good characteristics to be celebrated but that the quality of learning and teaching was inconsistent and that a greater focus on learning was required. He stated that in moving governance forward Governors' exercise of accountability related to holding the staff to account for pupils' progress compared with other schools and to monitoring the impact of their own actions on school improvement. Governors welcomed his suggestion that training be provided for them. Mr Worth highlighted the school's adjudged capacity to improve and the consequent role of Governors in raising stakeholder perceptions about the school's work.

At this point Mrs. Chrishop left the meeting.

b) **Post Inspection Next Steps**

i) **Post Inspection Action Plan**

Mr. Birdsall and the Headteacher stated that:

- work had begun on writing a rigorous plan composed of clear actions, assigned responsibilities, time lines, support funding and outcomes designed to address the inspectors' recommendations
- progress on the plan would be monitored by the Headteacher and a post inspection Core Group composed of the Headteacher, representatives of the Local Authority, Governors and staff
- the Headteacher, Mr. Birdsall and a Governor would attend a notice to improve school Ofsted seminar focusing on the school's sustained capacity to improve

- an exit strategy would be implemented to support the school in its move out of the current Ofsted category.

The Headteacher and Governors stated that the action plan represented a key opportunity for the pupils, staff and Governors to make a significant move forward. Ms. Pearce and Ms. Wilson stated that they felt reassured about the action plan process and confident about the resulting outcomes.

ii) **HMI Monitoring Visit**

Mr. Birdsall highlighted:

- the anticipated timescale
- the anticipated dialogue with parents and Governors, including regarding Safeguarding
- the focus on the school's sustained capacity to make progress up to the next inspection.

iii) **Statutory Inspection of an Anglican School**

Governors considered inspection procedures, including within the context of the outcomes of the Ofsted inspection. They noted that Rev. Beedon was leading the work on the completion of the self evaluation form in liaison with the Headteacher and the School Worship and Ethos Committee.

iv) **Publication of the Ofsted Report**

It was agreed that:

- a robust commentary on the report outcomes and the action plan would be provided
- a press release would highlight the joint work of the Local Authority and the school on the action plan.

Ms. Ellis stated that she was willing to help with the press release and Governors noted the role of the Local Authority's press officer.

It was agreed that a parents' meeting would be held to discuss the findings of the report, the action plan and resulting outcomes and the Local Authority officers were invited to attend. Mrs. Twomlow highlighted the key role played by parents in supporting school improvement.

At this point, Mr. Birdsall and Mr. Worth left the meeting.

v) **Governors' Participation in the Implementation of the Action Plan**

Governors expressed the view that:

- they had worked hard on school improvement issues since the previous inspection but that their work could have been sharper and more rigorous

- robust corporate responsibility should be exercised in Governors' implementation of assigned new actions so that deadlines were met.

The following areas of responsibility were assigned in relation to monitoring and promoting progress on the actions to be outlined in the post inspection plan:

### **Communication with Parents**

- Mrs. Poulton
- Mrs. Van Block
- Ms. Ellis

### **Community Cohesion**

- School Worship and Ethos Committee

### **Holding the Staff to Account**

- Mrs. Bryant
- Ms. Pearce

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Ms. Wilson
- Mrs. Athersmith

### **Unevenness of Pupils' Progress**

- Mr. Davies-Friend
- Mrs. Staines

### **Representation on the Core Group**

- the Chair
- additional representation to be considered.

### **Planning Group for the Parents' Meeting**

- the Chair
- Rev. Beedon
- possibly Mrs. Poulton.

Mrs. Elcock highlighted the very hard work of staff and Ms. Wilson stressed the need for the Governing Body to support staff in sharpening their focus on successful learning and in building their confidence as well as in challenging. Governors reiterated the importance of quality school-parents communication. The Headteacher stated that at Parents' Consultation Evenings teaching staff would provide information on:

- pupil learning outcomes
- next learning steps
- suggested strategies for parents to help their children.

Mr. Whitehead highlighted the importance of parental understanding of pupil achievement data.

### **1593 Review of the Membership and Terms of Reference of Governors' Committees:**

The Clerk reported that Governors are required to consider the Membership of Committees of the Governing Body and also to consider the Terms of Reference of Committees.

It was resolved -

- a) That the Premises and Health and Safety Committees be amalgamated and that the other Committees of the Governing Body be re-established
- b) That the membership of Governors' Committees for the 2009/2010 educational year be as agreed at the meeting
- c) That the Terms of Reference of the Governors' Committees be reviewed in Committee.
- d) That Governors individual responsibilities be as follows:
  - Safeguarding – Mr. Whitehead
  - SEN – Mrs. Athersmith
  - Staff Welfare – Ms. Wilson
  - Gifted and Talented Pupils – Ms. Pearce
  - E-safety – Mrs. Bryant.

### **1594 Any Other Business:**

There was no any other business.

### **1595 Date of Next Meeting:**

It was resolved -

That the next clerked meeting of the Governors be held in the school on Thursday, 19 November, 2009 at **6.30 p.m.**

Governors were asked to note the change of starting time.

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**Chair**

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**Date**