

St. Michael's CE (VC) Primary School

Minutes of a Meeting of the Governors held in the School on Thursday, 19 November, 2009 at 6.30 p.m.

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

Mrs. J. Wallbank (Associate Deputy Headteacher) and Mr. R. Mountford (Clerk to the Governors) were also present.

Apology: An apology for absence was received and accepted from Ms. N. Ellis.

The Chair welcomed Mrs. Patterson, Cllr. Eagland, Mr. Davies-Friend and Mrs. Wallbank to the meeting.

1596 Declaration of Business Interests:

It was resolved -

That Ms. Wilson declared an interest.

1597 Minutes:

- a) The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 June 2009, having been circulated, were taken as read and approved.

It was resolved -

That they be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising:

Communication about the Work of the School and Governing Body (Minutes 1583 (c) and 1587 (d) refer)

The Headteacher reported that:

- the first Governors' newsletter had been issued in the Summer Term and a second edition was being planned, with thanks to Ms. Ellis
- the production of a Governors' display by the school entrance was underway
- a Governors' section on the school website was to be established
- the next Learning and Teaching Open Evening was being considered for later in the year.

- b) The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 October 2009, having been

circulated, were taken as read and approved.

It was resolved -

That they be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

1598 Chair - Power to Act:

It was resolved -

That Governors note that the Chair had not taken any action under Chair - Power to Act since the last meeting.

1599 Implementation of the Post Inspection Action Plan

a) **Response of Stakeholders**

i) **Parents**

The Headteacher reported on numerous expressions of support and offers of help, particularly regarding promotion of the school's successes and improvements among both parents and the wider community. Governors highlighted the benefits to be gained from parents, pupils and staff working together to promote the school.

Mrs. Poulton stated that she was completing a summary of the outcomes of the post inspection parents' meeting for circulation. Rev. Beedon undertook to produce an action plan summary also for distribution and stated that parental confidence would grow as they saw the impact of implementation strategies. The Chair thanked Mrs. Poulton and Rev. Beedon for their undertakings.

ii) **Staff**

The Headteacher thanked Ms. Wilson for her significant support to staff regarding their well being. Ms. Wilson stated that staff were dismayed by overly negative press coverage of the report and felt that they had no voice to provide a response to highlight the school's many successes.

b) **Monitoring of the Implementation of the Action Plan**

The Chair outlined the membership and role of the Local Authority (LA) Core Group and the focus on the staff and Governor members' demonstration of progress made. He also outlined the composition of the Governors' Strategy Group and its monitoring role.

c) **Headteacher's and Governors' Reports on the Implementation of the**

Action Plan:

Accelerate pupils' progress in Writing and Mathematics in Years One to Four

Phase Leaders revisit with staff non negotiable good practice

Completed. Guidelines will be circulated to Governors.

Headteacher implements the planned monitoring programme

Sixteen out of twenty two teachers observed: two thirds showed good or better teaching, with clear evidence of progress in quality of teaching and learning. Learning walks also underway and Ms. Wilson invited Governors to participate.

Headteacher carries out more focused termly pupil progress discussions with teaching staff

Individual pupil progress analysis underway to track progress against expectations and to review intervention for pupils at risk of not meeting their targets. In response to Mrs. Staines' questioning about the rigour applied compared with previous years, the Headteacher reported that there was sharper focus and challenge on the effectiveness of classroom practice.

Headteacher undertakes a weekly review of teachers' planning to evaluate the effectiveness of differentiation and pitch of learning activities

Underway, with evidence of very thorough planning but also of whole class teaching geared too much to the middle ability range.

Advanced skills teacher works with Year One teachers to establish effective transition practice and accelerated progress

Implementation imminent.

Lead Teacher leads participation in the Every Child a Writer project as a core LA school

Initial lesson observations carried out to inform participation.

LA literacy consultant leads standardisation and moderation training sessions regarding teaching staff use of assessing pupil progress strategies (APP) in Writing

Sessions held, further support in December 2009.

Leadership Team leads a review of the Assessment Policy

Review underway, in liaison with teaching staff, draft version will be presented to the Curriculum Committee and then to the Governing Body.

Leadership Team defines the Learning and Teaching Policy which is understood and followed by all teaching staff

Drafting underway, consultation as per the assessment policy. Policy will incorporate clear guidance on ensuring pupils' understanding of the difference between learning objectives and activities.

Headteacher ensures a cycle of peer moderated lesson observations

Implementation imminent and will build on earlier trials.

Headteacher/Lead Teacher(s) ensure the implementation of the 1:1 tuition programme

Mrs. Staines reported that the Personnel Committee had provided challenging scrutiny of the planning.

Sharpen up monitoring and evaluation procedures

Headteacher reviews the planned monitoring programme for the current term

Completed with a sharper focus and timelines.

Mrs. Staines and the Headteacher review the roles and responsibilities of the post of Deputy Headteacher

Mrs. Wallbank stated that a clear and manageable job description had been established, dovetailing well with the responsibilities of the Headteacher and Phase Leaders and focusing on school improvement. Governors noted that Mrs. Wallbank was to remain in post for the rest of the school year.

Mrs. Staines and the Headteacher audit the skills, expertise and focuses for the various staff teams

Production of audit and staff development plan underway in liaison with the LA HR advisor. Plan will include short and longer term development, challenge and support tailored to the needs of staff. HR advisor member of the Core Group. Governors considered the potential impact on financial and staff training resources.

Strategy Group reviews the impact of monitoring and evaluation in the light of the Autumn Term pupil progress grids so as to inform a rigorous programme for the Spring Term

Implementation imminent, outcomes will be referred to the Curriculum Committee

Headteacher and the Chair identify core Governors who will work with the Leadership Team to drive the aspects of the action plan

Completed.

The Chair identifies outstanding key policies

The Chair undertook to complete as a matter of urgency.

The Headteacher identifies a member of the Curriculum Committee who will undertake the role of Subject Policy Review Governor

Ms. Ellis will undertake this role.

Committee Chairs include the implementation of the action plan as a standing agenda item at Committee meetings.

The Chair stressed the importance of this action.

Implement a strategy for Community Cohesion (CC)

Rev. Beedon and the Headteacher undertake a CC audit

Completed and presented to Governors, with much thanks to the writers.

Rev. Beedon and the Headteacher formulate a CC action plan

Underway. School appointed as a partner school to a Birmingham secondary school and its feeder schools providing access to other communities and to CC resources. Link facilitated by a parent, Mr. Andrew Williams. It was agreed that Mr. Williams would be invited to speak on CC to Governors and to staff. The Chair will write to thank Mr. Williams for his support.

Improve communication with parents

A member of the Leadership Team is at the entrance gates each morning

Implemented as much as practically possible. New Leadership Team presented in the weekly parents' newsletter.

Parent Governors survey parents' views about the work of the school

Draft wording completed, incorporating issues raised at the post inspection parents' meeting, with thanks to Ms. Ellis.

Parent Governors establish a working party to formulate an action plan to target issues raised by parents.

Composition being determined. Headteacher will liaise with Ms. Ellis on the setting up of the group

Governors noted the action taken, including the establishment of a parents' trial group, to set up the Staffordshire Learning Platform (SLN2) and the very significant potential of SLN2 for improving school-parent and school-Governor communication. Support was expressed for Mrs. Elcock's suggestion that paperless meetings occur as soon as practical.

The Leadership Team establishes, in liaison with teaching staff, an agreed format for the Autumn Term parents' evenings

Completed.

SENCO leads a staff task group which steers the communication to parents and pupils regarding the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies

Underway.

SENCO leads the anti-bullying week

Ms. Wilson reported on very authentic and effective work which she observed incorporating differentiated activities. A parents' workshop with pupil input will take place and Mrs. Patterson suggested that a summary of outcomes be circulated to parents.

Mrs. Bryant and Ms. Pearce informally ascertain views on how parents would like to be involved in decision making on whole school issues

Underway and a report will be provided for Governors.

Address issues of safety identified at inspection

The Headteacher ensures the installation of security fencing

Well on the way to completion.

The Headteacher stated that she had made very strong representations to the LA regarding the unacceptable delay in implementing the car park project and Governors expressed strong support for her actions.

Mrs. Poulton and the Headteacher carry out an audit of play areas and produce an action plan for any improvements required

Action plan completed and addressed.

Ms. Wilson, as a Learning Coach, explores pupils' perceptions about safety

Ms. Wilson presented a detailed report on a very comprehensive investigation showing that:

- the vast majority of pupils felt safe
- a number of expressions of anxiety were of a minor nature usually involving pupil relationships
- pupils' statements could be easily and negatively construed.

Ms. Wilson suggested that lunchtime supervisors took up a more active role. The Chair thanked Ms. Wilson for her major undertaking.

The Chair expressed his pleasure at the overall significant progress made and thanked the Headteacher, staff and the Governors involved. It was agreed that the implementation of the action plan would be an agenda item at future meetings with a focus on the impact of actions taken and on communication to parents on progress made.

1600 Headteacher's Business:

a) Attainment Targets

The Headteacher presented year group targets for 2010 and, for Year Five, end of Key Stage targets for 2011 and highlighted the significant challenge involved.

It was resolved -

That the targets be received and accepted.

b) **Attendance/Absence Targets**

Factoring in a reduction against prior absence rates, the Headteacher proposed an absence target rate of 3.5 % for 2010-11.

1601 Committee Reports:

a) **Worship and Ethos Committee**

It was resolved -

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Worship and Ethos Committee held on 18 June 2009 be received and accepted.

Matters Arising:

i) **Christian Values and the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools**

Rev. Beedon reported on the Committee's defining of the school's Christian values and on their incorporation into the Self Evaluation Form and the work of the school. The Headteacher paid much tribute to the work of both church ministry and parent members of the Committee and highlighted their great impact on the very positive inspection report received.

ii) **Committee Terms of Reference**

Rev. Beedon presented revised Terms of Reference and recommended them for approval.

It was resolved -

That the recommendation be received and accepted.

iii) **Associate Governors**

Rev. Beedon highlighted the very beneficial role played by Associate Governors on the Committee and the lack of use of members of the community with appropriate skills and experience as Associate Governors on other Committees.

It was resolved -

That it be the Governing Body's policy that Associate Governors are allowed to serve on all Committees.

Governors noted the implications of Associate Governor membership for Committee voting.

b) **Personnel Committee**

It was resolved -

That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Personnel Committee held on 7 July and 11 September 2009 be received and accepted.

Mrs. Staines also reported verbally on a recent meeting and stated that the Pay and Review Committee had met.

Matters Arising:

i) **School Policies**

Mrs. Staines reported on the significant work of the Committee on revising and drafting and recommended the following policies for approval:

- Volunteer
- Directed Time for Teaching Staff
- Performance Management for Teaching Staff
- Performance Management for Support Staff.

It was resolved -

That the policies be received and accepted.

ii) **Staff Stress Survey**

Governors were pleased to note that Ms. Pearce was analysing outcomes and that they would be used to draw up an action plan.

iii) **Work Life Balance**

Ms. Wilson highlighted the importance of the Committee's consideration of the work life balance of the Headteacher and of other staff and of the implications arising for its review of the teaching and support staff structures.

iv) **Staffing**

The Headteacher reported on staffing changes, including with regard to the implications arising from the Committee's decision that Mrs. Wallbank should be non class based.

c) **Health and Safety Committee**

It was resolved -

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 30 April 2009 be received and accepted.

Mrs. Poulton also reported verbally on a recent meeting.

Matters Arising:

i) **Committee Update**

Mrs. Poulton reported on the consideration given to:

- the revised Safeguarding Policy, the Physical Intervention Policy and the Business Continuity Plan
- outdoor learning provision
- the completed Health and Safety checklist and the resulting actions taken
- the Health and Safety implications arising from the Ofsted inspection report
- safeguarding and e-safety Governor training
- the outcomes of a fire safety audit and the resulting action to replace the fire alarm system
- the Headteacher's annual Health and Safety report.

Mrs. Poulton presented the Health and Safety report and recommended it for approval.

It was resolved -

That the report be received and accepted.

ii) **School Policies File**

Governors thanked Mrs. Bryant, Ms. Pearce and the Headteacher for their work on updating the file.

It was resolved -

That Committee Chairs be responsible for updating the policies within the Committee remit and that updating be completed by mid December.

d) **Finance Committee**

It was resolved -

That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Finance Committee held on 6 July and 28 September 2009 be received and accepted.

Mr. Whitehead also reported verbally on a recent meeting.

Matters Arising:

i) **Budget Update**

Mr. Whitehead reported on consideration given to:

- pleasing on track expenditure on staffing
- concerns about the repair and maintenance and the capital budgets
- the key task of funding the post inspection action plan
- planning regarding the very substantial funding of the single site project or of the alternative major maintenance and repair work to render the Annexe fit for purpose
- the significant costs related to the required ICT equipment upgrade
- the review of the lettings policy.

Mr. Whitehead highlighted the very significant expenditure issues facing Governors and the need for a carefully planned rolling programme of improvements.

ii) **Audit of School Fund 2008-09**

The Headteacher presented the audit and recommended it for approval.

It was resolved -

That the audit be received and accepted.

e) **Curriculum Committee**

It was resolved -

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Curriculum Committee held on 19 June 2009 be received and accepted.

Mrs. Poulton also reported verbally on a recent meeting.

Matters Arising:

Committee Update

Mrs. Poulton reported on the consideration given to:

- the outcomes of the 1:1 tuition pilot
- policies for SEN, ICT and Geography
- scrutiny of the outcomes of pupil tracking and of intervention for stuck pupils
- the very pleasing achievement of the full dyslexia friendly school status.

1602 School Items:

a) **Gender Equality Statement**

Mrs. Staines presented the Statement and accompanying action plan and thanked the Governors involved for their significant work. She stated that the documents were the result of careful drafting and of stakeholder consultation and recommended them for approval.

It was resolved -

- i) That the Statement and action plan be received and accepted subject to minor amendments to be made by the Personnel Committee in the light of suggestions made at the meeting.
- ii) That the responsibility for overseeing implementation be allocated to the Worship and Ethos Committee
- ii) That the policy and its implementation be reviewed annually.

b) **Sex Education Policy**

The Chair reported on impending changes to national requirements. It was agreed that the implications for the sex education policy would be given further consideration by the Curriculum Committee and the Governing Body.

1603 Children and Lifelong Learning Directorate Items:

a) **Community Cohesion Guidance**

The Clerk presented the summary report and asked Governors to consider the Guidance on Community Cohesion document and the 'toolkit' for schools entitled 'Learning Together to be Safe'.

It was resolved -

That the report be received and considered on behalf of Governors by Rev. Beedon.

b) **Consultation on Proposed Admission Arrangements for 2011/2012**

The Clerk presented the report and asked Governors to comment on the school's Published Admission Number for 2011/2012 and to comment on the draft Co-ordinated Scheme for Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools in Staffordshire 2011/2012.

It was resolved -

- i) That the Published Admission Number of 60 for 2011/2012 be accepted

- ii) That the draft Co-ordinated Scheme for Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools in Staffordshire 2011/2012 be received and noted
- iii) That criterion five of the school's admission policy referring to priority given to parents regularly attending Church of England services be retained.

c) **Governor Training and Development 2009/2010**

Governors were asked to note the County Training Programme published in the Staffordshire Governors Newsletter and on the Governors' website, to book places as appropriate and to consider arranging an in-house version of the County topics to meet specific needs.

1604 Any Other Business:

a) **Staffordshire Governors' Association**

The Chair reported on the formation of the Association and on the planned launch event and stated that he had been appointed as vice-chair of the executive committee. He recommended that the Governing Body join the Association.

It was resolved -

That the recommendation be received and accepted.

b) **Christmas Fare**

On behalf of the PTA, Mrs. Patterson requested Governors' help.

c) **Governors' Welfare Fund**

Mr. Whitehead asked that any requests for reimbursement of expenses be forwarded to himself.

1605 Date of Next Meeting:

It was resolved -

That the next clerked meeting of the Governors be held in the school on Thursday, 21 January, 2010 at 7.00 p.m.

Chair

Date