

The Governing Body Sefton Park School

Infants and Juniors

Chair of Governors: Corrie Bell

Headteacher: Dan Simson

Clerk to Governors: Alexandra Casley

Sefton Park



Infant and Junior Schools

Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 7 December 2022

Sefton Park School

Ashley Down Road

Bristol

BS7 9BJ

ITEM	AGENDA ITEM AND NOTES		PAPERS CONSIDERED
1.0	Welcome and apologies and declarations of interest and resignations/new appointments		
	<p><i>Present:</i> Corrie Bell (Chair) (CB), Carrie Spittlehouse (CS), Jane Wheelock (JW), Rachel Wills (RW), Dan Simson (DS), Megan Arnold (MA), Maggie Smithson (MS), Neville Catton (NC), Sally Dore (SD), Madeleine O'Loughlin (MOL), Andy Lillie (ALL)</p> <p><i>Apologies:</i> Amy Lewis (ALS), Amy Campbell (ACL), Shabaana Mitha (SM)</p> <p><i>Absent:</i></p> <p><i>Attending:</i> Alexandra Casley (AC)</p>		
	<i>Present: 11</i>	<i>Quorum met: Yes</i>	
2.0	Previous minutes/matters arising		
	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.		
3.0	Clerk's report		
	<p>AC reminded governors that they would be asked to use school email addresses from January. She would follow up on the email address for the chair.</p> <p>Governor recruitment – MOL was stepping down and a new staff governor would be needed – DS would deal ACTION. There were spaces for co-opted governors, and Matt's departure would allow the governors to co-opt another parent. It was also possible to co-opt people as associate governors in the first instance to give them a flavour of the role before taking it on formally. The governors recognised the importance of the governing body representing the diversity of the school community, and CB would speak to a contact of SM to see if they would like to be an associate governor. Governors were asked to put out feelers to non-parents as well.</p> <p>Email/WhatsApp protocol – some governors expressed concerns with having yet another email address, and it was agreed that the protocol would be kept under review.</p>		

4.0	Governing body	
	<p>Governor visits – all governors were encouraged to visit the school, and it was agreed that they would be given a time within which to complete their visit, as well as considering the curriculum and what they should be looking at. In terms of reports, governor reports would be sent to DS in the first instance, and would be shared with the relevant staff members, before being fed back into the relevant committee. Governor visits would be added as a standing item on committee and FGB agendas.</p> <p>Visits carried out by governors with a specific role, such as H&S, were a different type of visit and would be dealt with differently, as they perform a statutory responsibility with a different monitoring function.</p> <p>The report template was available on GovernorHub.</p>	
5.0	About the children	
	DS gave a presentation to the governors on a specific child, which highlighted the positive impact that additional support had had on their SEN. He highlighted the importance of music to the child in question, as well as the one to one support and play therapy that they had benefitted from.	
6.0	Policy review	
	<p>The pay policy and complaints policy were approved. A cover sheet was being developed in the future to highlight changes and this would come to future meetings.</p> <p>In terms of the uniform policy, it was noted that the Equalities Act examples given are not actually covered by the relevant Act – for example self-expression versus protected characteristics – and these should be divided into two different paragraphs. The policy was approved subject to these changes.</p> <p>The following comments were made on the accessibility plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan is supposed to contain aims and track changes by highlighting targets and how they have been/are being met. The governors queried whether the plan is doing this. • The plan should cross-refer to other plans, such as SEND or the belonging strategy, and should demonstrate progress being made. CS will share the accessibility plan that she has written for her school by way of example. • The revised plan would come to the next CCS meeting and any other comments should be fed into DS in the meantime. • AL would provide MS with the statutory minimum that was to be included on the website. 	
7.0	SLT report	
	<p>Q – at what point does absenteeism become responsibility of the LA?</p> <p>A – anything below 90% is classed as a persistent absentee. If attendance drops below 50%, the school must demonstrate that it is doing everything it can do get the child into school on a more regular basis. Clearly this would be a safeguarding concern, and there would be channels via which to report this. There are always stories behind absenteeism, and DS has always supported families who want to take an extended time away on the basis that they will return, but this does have an impact on the school's data.</p> <p>Q – there is a charity that walks children to school – is this something that the school could use to help some families, for example single parent families?</p>	

	<p>A – it may be possible for some families to be supported by a member of staff walking to school with a child, but there was the risk of the family in question feeling stigmatised by having to be picked up/dropped off. For some families, who do not live locally, sometimes it is not in the child’s best interests to attend SP as they cannot physically get there. The school has not fined people for absenteeism, as there are often fundamental reasons why children are not in school and a fine would make their position worse.</p> <p>Q – had there been any actions put in place as a result of the staff wellbeing survey? A – in response to comments made, the school had now put in place a yearly plan to highlight what was happening in which week, and this had been helpful.</p> <p>Q – how is staff wellbeing generally? A – this can fluctuate at different times of the term, and largely depends on the position the individual holds within the school. The school had a very festive feel at present, which has a positive impact on people’s mood, but it does take it out of staff and they are tired.</p> <p>Q – are people more reassured by the budget in terms of funding and pay? A – potentially, yes, but it is not entirely clear what this means quite yet.</p> <p>Staff were feeling reassured and supported by the school in terms of possible industrial action – the school would await to see what would happen in January when the ballot results are in.</p>	
8.0	F&R Committee	
	<p>The minutes would be circulated.</p> <p>There had been little change on the budget, and funding changes for the following year were awaited to see what impact they would have.</p> <p>Work was to be done on educational visits.</p>	
9.0	CCS Committee	
	<p>MOL had reported to the committee on English and Reading, and the PP strategy and BEP report had also been covered.</p> <p>SEND report would be covered below.</p>	
10.0	SEND Report	
	<p>This had been considered at CCS, who reiterated that it was an excellent report, very illuminating, and it was helpful to understand what is being done and the complexities of funding. It was noted that the document is already proving to be a useful working document within the school.</p> <p>Q – within the data, does the increase in number of SEND pupils as they move up the school result from increased assessment of pupils? A – yes, one would expect more to be identified as one moves up the school, for example more dyslexic children being identified in years 2 and 3. For those with autism, diagnoses can take time.</p>	
11.0	SEND Resource unit report	
	<p>The working party consisting of CS, RW, MA and AL and SD had met, with all questions asked by governors having been collated and responses given. The head at Shirehampton had spoken to the working party about their experience in setting up a unit, and there were further questions to go to BCC. SD and MA would meet with Jessica</p>	

	<p>Taylor on Monday, with a view to one further meeting being required before reporting to FGB in Term 3.</p> <p>The governors expressed their gratitude to the working party for their time spent on this issue.</p>	
12.0	Communication to parents	
	<p>In terms of funding, the situation has changed since previous discussions and it appears as though the school will receive additional funding, although it was not clear what this would be as yet. DS hoped to record a video message to mark the end of term, which would acknowledge the funding reporting in the media, but the message would be that the school does not see it impacting on education now. If it were to in the future, parents would be updated.</p> <p>Communication would need to go out to parents in the event of a teachers' strike – although details were not known at this stage, it was more than likely that in the event of a strike, the school would need to be closed. A conversation would be needed with teaching staff about how to approach it, but that conversation could not be pre-empted. BCC will send out a risk assessment for schools to establish whether they can stay open, for example for vulnerable children, but there were a lot of unknowns.</p> <p>It was noted that children's education had already been impacted by Covid – if teachers want support of parents, it would be worth considering setting children work to ensure that they do not miss out, but this would depend on union advice.</p>	
AOB		
	MOL was thanked for all her work on the governing body.	

Meeting Closed at 20:48

Summary of Documents and Policies Agreed/ Ratified/ Adopted or if sub-committee – to be recommended for adoption by FGB

Actions Agreed at Meeting		
3	AC to follow up on email address for chair	
3	DS to deal with any necessary staff governor election	
3	CB to follow up with SM contact re associate governor role	
3	All governors to consider possible non-parent governors	
6	Governors to provide feedback to DS on accessibility plan via email	
11	Report from SEN Unit working party to come to Term 3 FGB	

Agenda Item	Policy/Document	Action
6	Pay Policy	Approved
6	Complaints Policy	
6	Uniform policy	