

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 6 December 2023

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 (CB) (Chair), Dan Simson (DS), Andy Lillie (AL), Amy Campbell (ACL) Rachel Wills (RW), Amy Lewis (ALS), Ben Crowley (BC), Megan Arnold (MA), Carrie Spittlehouse (CS), Sally Dore (SD), Jane Wheelock (JW)</p> <p><i>Apologies:</i> Shabaana Mitha (SM), Emily Shuker (ES)</p> <p><i>Absent:</i> Megan Arnold</p> <p><i>Attending:</i> Alexandra Casley (AC)</p>		
	<i>Present: 10</i>	<i>Quorum met: Yes</i>	
2.0	Previous minutes/matters arising		
	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>CS confirmed that this term outturn does not have to be approved by governors.</p>		
3.0	Clerk's report		
	<p>AC reminded governors to complete their various declarations of interest and confirmation they had read KCSIE.</p> <p>The newly elected parent governor was Claire Kearney. CS suggested the governors co-opt Ben Seal (the other candidate) as a governor, and this was unanimously approved. AC would liaise with CS over the induction process.</p>		

	AC would be stepping down as clerk at the end of term 5, and AC would liaise with RWS over recruitment of a replacement.	
4.0	Governing body	
	CS and AL had considered the strategy work previously undertaken by the governors a few years ago, and this was being worked on further by AL, who was also liaising with DS. The plan would be to consider this in more detail at a future meeting, possibly T3.	
5.0	About the children	
	The governors enjoyed the Christmas decorations in the halls that had been made by the children. The theme this year was 'light'.	
6.0	Policy review	
	<p>Q - how often is the Complaints policy relied upon?</p> <p>A - the last time the school had had to use it was 2017, and that experience had informed some amendments. Governors would be informed if a complaint was in process, although not about the details themselves.</p> <p>Q - should there be a cross-reference within the complaints policy to the safeguarding policy and the LADO?</p> <p>A - a complaint is different to a safeguarding concern, and a different process was followed in each instance.</p> <p>The Pay policy, Complaints Policy and Data Protection policy ratified.</p>	
7.0	SLT report	
	<p>This was taken as read.</p> <p>DS highlighted that this was the first time that the school has had percentile data against outcomes, which further backs up what the school knows and is working towards. It highlights where the school is nationally, and DS highlighted that the school's placing is a great achievement. The relevant cohort had had a high level of pupils with SEN, which demonstrates how children with SEN can achieve.</p> <p>The results for writing highlight why school is emphasising this aspect during the current academic year..</p> <p>The recruitment of an assistant SENCO had been welcomed by staff and parents, particularly the SENDCo who had seen a significant positive impact immediately.</p> <p>In terms of staff workload and wellbeing, teaching staff are feeling low and had struggled this term. DS was confident that the staff could raise any issues troubling them with him, and there were no tangible reasons for their low mood that had been raised with DS. While their workload has not increased by design, in practice the increasing number of SEN children brought with them an increase in admin and paperwork. DS and the SLT need to consider how to manage this time. The real challenge was when people are missing from the team, and how to cover their workload. Supporting staff workload and wellbeing needs to be balanced with supporting the children in getting the best education they can, and there can be a tension between the two..</p>	

	<p>BC gave his point of view as staff governor, highlighting that the school had just had assessment week, and with the lead up to Christmas, it was a busy time. Issues with heating and the roof leaking in some classrooms adds to the low mood. It is very valuable to encourage people to say if they are struggling, as help can lead from there. It was noted that Victorian school buildings around Bristol do struggle in the cold, as there is insufficient funding within the Council to undertake maintenance.</p> <p>Q - does cold impact on children's ability to learn? A - Possibly, but it was noted that the school was not as cold as it had been during the pandemic when all the windows had had to remain open.</p> <p>Q - what was meant by negative progress? A - the school was looking for value added - a positive score is where it has added value by the end of KS2. Negative progress was when children have a negative score compared to their starting point in KS1..</p> <p>Q - were the writing numbers a surprise? A - progress in the context of national figures is out of the school's control as it is not in control of what other people do in the country. Attainment numbers were within the school's control, and had been about what was expected. The school had been surprised about the maths score, where 79% had achieved age related, but this had put the school in the 63rd percentile.</p> <p>Q - if writing is addressed, will this cover SPAG too? A - not necessarily, as writing is taught in a very different way to SPAG. The latter is a test of terms etc. A lot of children with EAL do very well at SPAG but not at writing. People have different views on the value of SPAG versus writing. However, the work the school is doing on writing will improve pupils' 'real' SPAG such as full stops and capital letters.</p> <p>Q - how is the school going to engage parents with supporting writing, and in a way that is encouraging rather than highlighting issues with writing within the school? A - this was an issue for the SLT to consider. Julian had previously presented on the development of writing, and generally if children do more writing, their writing will improve.</p>	
8.0	F&R Committee	
	CS took governors through the discussions at the meeting, particularly the Playpod that had been approved by the committee. It was noted that potentially part of this will be paid by the PTFA.	
9.0	CCS Committee	
	<p>The committee had discussed writing at length, with ES taking them through the school's plans, what had been included in teacher appraisals, and the 'caught' and 'taught' elements. This would be revisited later in the year..</p> <p>The committee had considered the PP strategy, the main change to which was focussing the academic mentor on PP children to ensure consistent support.</p> <p>Q - what would happen if, in concentrating on writing, maths and reading then drop - the school only has finite resources?</p>	

	<p>A - this was a potential issue, which is why there is no quick fix with writing - improvement will be incremental to ensure that focus is not lost on other areas. The school was working on a 24 month cycle, rather than a 12 month cycle.</p> <p>Q - is the school seeing any less parental involvement in encouraging reading?</p> <p>A - not necessarily - the parent group is generally very switched on and invested in helping their children.</p>	
10.0	SEND report	
	<p>ALS highlighted changes from previous year, particularly the whole school approach which shines through the report. The interventions demonstrate a positive impact, and progress and attainment of year 6 children in particular is very impressive. The cohort tracking in place shows the accelerated improvement heading up the school.</p> <p>Parent communication/collaboration was a big area of development. BCC had initiated focus groups to facilitate discussions between schools and parents, and there had been positive feedback from these. The SENDCo now has increased time to consider communication, with the assistant SENCO in place. The SRB would be another big change.</p> <p>From talking to the SENDCo, DS and parents, there are some year groups where more careful monitoring of SEND needs to be carried out - particularly years 2, 3 and 4. The SENDCo would be monitoring these.</p> <p>The committee had discussed acknowledging the efforts of all staff in this context, and ALS would take this forward.</p> <p>Q - BCC had requested feedback on SEN - should governors check what the school's preferences would be so that all governors respond on similar lines?</p> <p>A - ALS would consider the email with SENDCo and circulate a suggested response. come up with suggested response..</p> <p>One suggested addition to the report was moving forwards was transition to the SRB coming online and include integration of SRB staff in any action list, as well as considering required changes to the buildings etc.</p> <p>The Governors thanked ALS for a very valuable report.</p>	
11.0	SEND Resource unit	
	<p>The requested amendments to the SLA had been rejected by BCC initially, but after the School had pursued this further with the Council, these were now with their legal team.</p> <p>It was looking like the start date for works would be February..</p> <p>Consultation had closed the day before the meeting, and confirmation had been received that the SRB would open in the future, subject to the legal agreement being in final form..</p> <p>The revised agreement would come to FGB, and it would be made clear to the Council that any building work started in advance of the SLA being signed was at their own risk.</p> <p>Recruitment has been pushed back further.</p>	
12.0	Communication with parents	

	Now that the final Council decision had been made, the recommendation was to communicate this to parents. This was an opportunity for the school to consider how best to deal with any residual concerns, and it would be useful to have a member of the governing body present at any discussions with parents.	
AOB		
	AC would move CCS meeting times to 6.45pm for the rest of the academic year.	

Meeting closed:

Actions Agreed at Meeting		
10	ALS to take forward thanking all staff for SEN efforts.	
10	ALS to consider consistent governor responses to BCC consultation on SEN	

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

Agenda Item	Policy/Document	Action
	Pay Policy	Approved.
	Complaints Policy	
	Data Protection policy	