

The Governing Body Sefton Park School

Infants and Juniors

Chair of Governors: Corrie Bell

Headteacher: Dan Simson

Clerk to Governors: Jessica Wewer

Sefton Park



Infant and Junior Schools

Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 4 December 2024

Sefton Park School

Ashley Down Road

Bristol

BS7 9BJ

| ITEM | AGENDA ITEM AND NOTES | PAPERS CONSIDERED |
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| 1.0 | Welcome and apologies | |
| | <p><i>Present: Sally Dore, Dan Simson, Emily Shuker, Helen Martin, Rachel Wills, Carrie Spittlehouse, Andy Lillie, Amy Campbell, Jane Wheelock</i></p> <p><i>Apologies: Corrie Bell, Amy Lewis, Claire Kearney, Ben Crowley, Ben Seal</i></p> <p><i>Absent:</i></p> <p><i>Attending: Jessica Wewer (JWR)</i></p> <p>Sally Dore chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chair.</p> | |
| | <p><i>Present: 9</i></p> <p><i>Quorum met (7): Yes</i></p> | |
| 2.0 | Clerk's Report | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No new Declarations of Interest Governors were thanked for updating on GovHub to confirm they have read KCSIE & accepted the Governor Code of Conduct. Available Training includes Support new headteachers Website and Bios - Governors were thanked for sending photos and bios. Clerk will chase outstanding and only upload to the website when all are received. Clerk to check with School Business Manager (SBM) re: uploading minutes. This is a statutory requirement. | |
| 3.0 | Previous minutes/matters arising | |
| | <p>Minutes of the last meeting were approved as accurate</p> <p>No matters arising</p> | Previous minutes |
| 4.0 | Pupil Voice | |
| | <p>Headteacher showed a filming of 3 pupils, 2 of which were recently and unexpectedly enrolled at the school and speak no English. Siblings who have moved from Iran. Governors saw how they are interacting with staff and one other pupil who speaks</p> | |

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| | Persian. The challenges around this situation were discussed and appreciated. The school is doing what they can to welcome these children and believe their English language will develop and the use of play will be important to help their development and settling in. | |
| 5.0 | SLT report | |
| | <p>The headteacher had sent a report which had been read by Governors.</p> <p><u>Headteacher recruitment process</u></p> <p>SLT were involved in the recent selection days .</p> <p>SLT and staffs' commendations go to the Governors involved, the staff felt they were involved. Especially thanks to the Chair of Governors for driving the process. It was noted that it is difficult to satisfy so many stakeholders.</p> <p>Governors also expressed thanks to those who were involved last time as a lot of the material created in 2021 was used, and that was essential for it being done that quickly.</p> <p>The leadership team suggested that it has felt business as usual at the school since the selection days and there is comfort in a known entity for the new Headteacher.</p> <p>The Headteacher explained he will meet with the Chair of Governors and the incoming Headteacher regarding the transition and what is important to handover in the next 10 days before the Assistant Head begins Parental Leave (which will last until the current Headteacher's leaving date). Priorities will include how to cover absences.</p> <p>Recruitment for the School Business Manager (SBM) closes on Friday 6th December and there are 5 applications currently. This recruitment process and whether a suitable candidate is appointed, will massively affect the Headteacher transition.</p> <p>It was felt that the new Headteacher should attend all Governance meetings to understand the Governance structure. The continuous link throughout will be the Deputy Head.</p> <p><u>SEND Resource Base (SRB)</u></p> <p>The headteacher confirmed that the SRB building work is completed but there are still no timescales for recruitment due to the delay by the council in signing an SLA. Bristol City Council (BCC) are desperate to get pupils into the resource base. The Headteacher continues to liaise with contacts at the Council to chase the SLA.</p> <p>The school can use the space, for example for FGB meetings.</p> <p>Q: Regarding recruitment for the resource base; is the advert ready to go once the SLA is signed, including Teaching Assistant job descriptions?</p> <p>A: Yes there are adverts and specifications available from previous recruitment. There will be some amendments needed to the TA wording to make specific for SEN</p> <p>The headteacher was transparent about parental concerns arising as a result of an absent teacher in Y2 due to bereavement. In previous years, situations like this have been expressed in the annual parent and carer feedback. The SLT have met with parents to mitigate and there is an excellent cover teacher in place.</p> <p>Q: Can the school preempt parents raising concerns on the door by sending out updates via email.</p> <p>A: This is already in place.</p> | SLT Report |

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| 6.0 | F&R Committee | |
| | <p>The minutes from the F&R committee meeting had been read</p> <p>The Chair of the committee summarised that the Health and Safety committee was covered in the meeting; the budget is going to be a challenge from April, but we don't know what it's going to be yet, there is a rising deficit. The Appraisal Policy was reviewed.</p> | Minutes |
| 7.0 | CCS Committee | |
| | <p>The minutes from the CCS committee meeting had been read</p> <p>As the chair for the committee was unable to attend FGB she had provided a summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PP Strategy was well researched and approved • Attendance has improved, a detailed analysis was shared and the in depth knowledge of each child was evident. • Committee had a really detailed discussion over the SEND report which showed good progress, but maths and writing needs improvement (in line with the school as a whole) • Some concern was expressed around the dyslexia support role being unavailable but governors were reassured children with dyslexia were receiving support in other forms • There was a discussion about the proposed strategic review of criteria for SEND which the school will do but emphasising that the school will continue to provide a needs based approach for SEND support. • We had an overview of the curriculum intent and impact and the changes made to improve this over the last year • Safeguarding was discussed and the Safeguarding Governor and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) had started working on Safeguarding information to report to Governors. • It was noted that the implementation of classroom environments and routines to support learning and regulation have led to calm learning environments is having a positive impact on the school <p>Governors thanked the SEND Governor for the SEND Report and were extremely impressed by the detail and depth. It gives the reader a full understanding of how SEND is covered in this school. It also explained the challenge of the changes in structure of support from BCC. It was recommended that all Governors should read it if they haven't already.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that the SEND report gives us a picture of what's going on at school, the initiatives in place and how there is a handle on the range of needs and emphasised that a huge amount of work has been done.</p> <p>Q: Has the academic mentor got the capacity to deal with maths? (to do as much as might be needed)</p> <p>A: He's targeted towards certain children based on various vulnerabilities. Currently this intervention is taking place in KS2. As teaching and learning evolves he will move down the school to ensure early intervention.</p> <p>Q: What impact will the SRB have in terms of expertise in the rest of the school?</p> | Minutes SEND Report PP Strategy |

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| | <p>A: Taking the example of another school - the impact of the special expertise was huge on the rest of the school. Staff are able to ask experts for advice informally regarding children in their class and they can help with initial evaluation of children. The only barrier will be the separate location of Ashley House, although staff can share the staffroom.</p> <p>With the new assessment pathway children are looked at in terms of their broad needs rather than specific diagnosis.</p> <p>Governors linked the Pupil Premium strategy and the mention of the current lack of music lessons impacting attainment in the SLT report and asked:</p> <p>Q: Now the building work has finished, has there been any progress in reinstating the music lessons?</p> <p>A: Discussions are beginning following this recent completion.</p> | |
| 8.0 | Policy Review | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Expenses Policy <p>Approved by Governors</p> <p>Proposed by F&R</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers appraisal policy <p>The link between pay and performance has been removed. This policy was created by the school and the school is waiting for the new pay policy from BCC to go alongside. It was designed to encourage individual performance. The first round of appraisals have been done and staff feedback is positive.</p> <p>Unlike the pay policy the appraisal policy is not subject to review by the unions and local authority. Governors agreed that the policy is a succinct document</p> <p>Governors approved the Teacher's appraisal policy.</p> <p>Proposed by CCS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Procedure <p>Governors commented you need timescales around complaints and some wording around vexatious complaints and this policy has both of these.</p> <p>Governors approved the Complaints policy.</p> | Policy folder |
| 9.0 | Safeguarding | |
| | <p>The Safeguarding Governor explained that following the Safeguarding visit at the end of last year it was agreed that information of use and interest would be brought to Governors meetings.</p> <p>C-Poms is the safeguarding tool used by the school but the data direct from this system may not be useful for Governors. The DSL has created a dashboard to share which will be more meaningful for governors, and anonymised.</p> <p>There is nothing significant to report around safeguarding at this meeting. There is an ongoing relationship between incidents and the areas of Development which have been brought to Governors, particularly around regulation and children's coping strategies.</p> <p>Governors would be able to interrogate patterns and rise of specific types of incidents. Going forward there will be data presented at the FGB followed by questions.</p> | |

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| | <p>In addition The Governing Body review and approve the policies relating to Safeguarding.</p> <p>Q: Will there be a sense of how many children are involved within the data?</p> <p>A: Yes it would include the totals and the DSL can tell the story behind the data. It's a place to start and can be adapted depending on how Governors interpret it. It's about the work going on to prevent those incidents happening.</p> | |
| 10.0 | Recruitment | |
| | <p><u>HT Recruitment & transition</u></p> <p>Governors expressed gratitude to the SLT for everything they did to contribute to the recruitment process, and requested that their thanks be passed on to staff.</p> <p>A plan for the transition is going to be put into place. This is challenging until the result of the SBM recruitment is known. There will be no overlap between this and the Assistant Head going on parental leave.</p> <p>Q: How will the transition be managed in this context?</p> <p>A: The keeping in touch days will be the transition. The chair of Governors is managing the priorities for this transition. If a Headteacher from another school was appointed it would be a similar transition as they would still be in post over the next few months. So there is an advantage that the new headteacher will be familiar with the school.</p> <p><u>Business Manager recruitment</u></p> <p>As discussed in agenda item 5 this recruitment is underway. Shortlisting will take place on Monday. Governors suggested that there are an encouraging number of applications. 2 have worked in schools before.</p> | |
| 11.0 | SEND Resource Unit Update | |
| | <p>Previously covered within the SLT report and section (5.0) of the agenda.</p> <p>SLA not signed. This delay is not logical as all the hard work is done. It may be a question of who is required to sign the document.</p> <p>It was mentioned to Jenny who was the LA advisor during selection days.</p> | |
| 12.0 | Wellbeing WG update | |
| | <p>A Governor who is part of the Working Group gave context for the role description for the Wellbeing Governor.</p> <p>All past minutes of FGB were researched and while there were plenty of mentions of wellbeing there was little thread through to connect these which suggested a specific role would be useful. National guidance suggested the 6 points within the description are relevant. This Governor role would not step on the toes of staff doing operational work, but would show staff this is an important issue.</p> <p>There was some discussion around where the focus of wellbeing is discussed. The committee forum is where you can look at the absence figures in detail. Data relating to staff and resources is discussed in F&R.</p> <p>Some amendments were suggested for Point 5:</p> | Wellbeing champion role description |

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| | <p><i>The Wellbeing Governor will work with the Headteacher to ensure key data on staff retention and absence rates are included in FGB board papers going forward</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include - add data from exit interviews. ● Modify - report to FGB <i>through the F&R minutes</i> <p>Clarify that point 6 - was reported in FGB (not the board)</p> <p>Role description approved pending above changes</p> <p>Ben Seal has volunteered for the Wellbeing Governor role - Governors approved this nomination.</p> | |
| 13.0 | Educational Landscape WG | |
| | <p>Governors provided a T2 Update regarding the Educational Landscape:</p> <p>Comparison of numbers of Local Authority (LA) Maintained schools and Academies between 2020 and now in Bristol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2020 - 106 Primary Schools, of which 58 were academies, 48 were LA Maintained ● 2024 - 103 Primary Schools, of which 65 are now academies, 38 are LA Maintained <p>(16% of schools that were LA Maintained have converted to academies).</p> <p>There was a massive increase in Academies in 2012 due to a financial incentive. A lot of these were SATs (Single Academy Trusts) and are now converting to MATs (Multi Academy Trusts). Governors suggested it's no longer financially viable to be a 2 form MAT.</p> <p>Trend in recent years:</p> <p>2012-2019 - Consistently 4 new Academies per year. Some conversions and some new provisions.</p> <p>2021-22 - not many schools converted</p> <p>2024 - 3 have converted so a bit of an upturn, but could be due to a Covid backlog. There have been some Fresh Starts (rebranding of a school)</p> <p>Conclusion: There is a general trend of increasing.</p> <p>The Working Group has not yet compared this to a national picture.</p> <p>Q: Does the new Government have any new policies about academisation?</p> <p>A: Not that we know it. There are incentives for MATS to merge with each other.</p> <p>The risk is that the LA does not have the resources to support a small number of schools if the trend continues.</p> <p>Q: Any idea of what that threshold would look like?</p> <p>A: No, it depends on the budget</p> <p>In Bristol there are 1 or 2 extra schools per ward. The council will ask maintained schools to reduce their intake. The current priority is to keep schools open but reduce intake.</p> | |

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| | <p>Governors thanked the WG for the information and agreed it is useful and the discussion will be ongoing.</p> <p>The data behind the above summary will be added to Governor Hub.</p> | |
| 15.0 | AOB | |
| | None | |
| Meeting closed: | 20:35 | |

| Actions Agreed at Meeting | | |
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| 12.0 | Assign Wellbeing role to Governor on GovHub | Clerk |
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Summary of Documents and Policies Agreed/ Ratified/ Adopted or if sub-committee – to be recommended for adoption by FGB

| Agenda Item | Policy/Document | Action |
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| 8.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor Expenses Policy | Approved |
| 8.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers appraisal policy | Approved |
| 8.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints Procedure | Approved |