

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategy Committee of St. Giles School Governing Body
held on Tuesday 1st October 2019 at 6.00 p.m. at the school**

Present:

Callton Young (Chair)

Neal Fraser

Katherine Lewis – Head Teacher

Peter Denman

Michael Swadling – Resources (Vice Chair)

Ken Morcombe (Achievement & Standards)

Caroline Horgan – Deputy Head Teacher

Also: - Colin Milsom (Clerk)

1. Apologies and Quorum

The meeting was quorate and there were no apologies for absence to record.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations regarding changes to current interests and the agenda items for this meeting.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on the 1st May 2019 and matters arising

The minutes were agreed as a correct record but would be signed at the next quorate meeting. There were no matter arising that had not been completed or were not covered by the agenda.

4. Matters Arising

There were no formal matters arising identified from the last minutes but the following points were raised:

Staff governor – There had been a slight issue with ballot papers but the result would be announced on Thursday. Two staff members had applied for the post.

5. Committee Structure, Committee Chairs and Terms of Reference

The Strategy committee consider that the current structure met the board requirements. Current committee chairs were Callton Young (Strategy) Ken Morcombe (Achievement & Standards) Michael Swadling (Resources) and these were confirmed.

Board and committee terms of reference – The committee were not proposing any changes to the current terms of reference. The individual committees would review their terms of reference and if changes were proposed these would be submitted to the full board for approval at its next meeting.

6. Forward Look

a) Finance and Resources

Pupil Numbers and Accommodation – There were 104 pupils on roll at present as some pupils who should have moved to alternative provision had not done so. These were out borough pupils but it was possible that one pupil might be moving at half term and there were 3 other out borough pupils who could be placed elsewhere. The additional pupil was not causing significant accommodation issues. The current pupil population meant that some pupil groups were quite small but these were being

managed within the current accommodation.

Peter Denman arrived during the discussion of this item.

Q. Are the council aware of the details of the current pupil ages and potential changes that could occur over the next couple of years?

A. We do not know but this will be raised with Alison Farmer as it will have an impact on the number of admissions.

Action

The proposal to rebalance the pupil groups into a lower, middle and upper school had allowed greater flexibility in the school. In so far as future admissions were concerned, the LA should have some idea based on the children in the Rainbow Nursery, special units and other borough live birth data however families moving into the borough and needing appropriate educational provision was outside their control and could lead to short term issues.

Peter Denman had received a call from the LA, presumably admissions, concerning moving his child from KS2 to 3 provision although the called had no appreciation of the pupils needs. The committee consider that this was not only inappropriate but could cause distress to some families if this happened again. The head teacher would follow this up with the LA.

Action

Teachers Pay Award – The government had published their pay recommendation which recommended an above inflation increase in bands of 2.75%. The committee discussed this and agreed that it should be adopted. The Finance Officer would be requested to monitor this and report on the impact of this on the budget. The indication was that this would not be fully funded through additional grant funding from the government but further information was awaited.

Action

Q. Is the government giving schools additional funding?

A. Yes it is but only part of it will be for teaching staff. The school is still waiting for information on the funding that will be provided and how it can be used.

Premises – The bulk of the planned works had been completed. Roof repair works had been carried out but the head teacher was reminded that as winter approached there would be a need to ensure that the gutters and flat roof area were kept clear of falling leaves. This was a matter for the site management staff.

The one item outstanding was the installation of the partial fencing at the front of the building which would be part funded by Harris School. There was discussion about how far this should encroach onto the grassed area and it was agreed that this was a matter for the head teacher to deal with. The linked matter was vehicle access, parking and dropping of pupils at the site. Prior to the extension of the building there had been a car park on the southern boundary but most of this had been used for the building extension although there was still a dropped curb leading to the grassed area at the side of the school. In addition a representative of the council Health and Safety section had visited the school on a couple of occasions and had carried out a survey. Governors raised various points which included the possibility of a drop off arrangement involving a circuit around the school perimeter however it was agreed that the H & S representative return to look at the situation at the end of the school day. There was still an issue with rear rather than side loading vehicles and the committee asked for information on the actual number of private and private hire vehicle that were actually involved as most of the pupils were transported to the

school by bus. Neal Fraser estimated that there were 5 taxi's and 15 individuals who delivered pupils to the school.

Feasibility Study – The latest information was that this was being deferred as they LA had decided to extend the review to cover 3 special schools which included Priory, a purpose built school and Red Gates, both of which had moved to new sites and so had been built or adapted to meet the needs of their pupil population. St Giles had been designed 40 years ago to meet a completely different demographic to the one it now served.

Q. Could better use be made of the house in the interim?

A. The upper floors are already used for storage and the lower floor for meetings. The house would not be suitable for office accommodation to free up additional space in the school. The last fire survey did highlight issues with the use of corridors for pupil's equipment and although there had been some improvement it was still an issue.

Q. Is there an actual risk then?

A. No and the premises are cleared very effectively when there is a fire drill.

It was suggested that the school block one of the exits to see if staff can adapt to physical obstacles which a real fire could present. It was assumed that the doors were fire resistant and met current requirements but this needed to be verified. The committee also discussed the evacuation point which was the rear playground and whether there was access to the Purley Way playing fields. It was stated that there was a gate onto the fields but this was now not accessible as the area in front was set out as a wild garden. It was suggested that this be made accessible so that there would be clear access if there was a fire and the whole site require evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Action

b) Achievement & Standards

OfSTED Changes – The report from the head teacher briefly summarised the key changes that had been introduced from September which showed a greater emphasis on the curriculum being provided rather than performance data, although schools would still need this in order to assess pupil progress and attainment. The school felt that this was more advantageous to them since the school had a very clear curriculum designed to meet the pupils needs and develop their individual skills and needs but did not have the exam outcomes and performance that would be expected from a mainstream school. There would be more discussion of this at the A & S meeting.

School Development Plan – The main areas of the draft plan presented last term were being retained but in line with the OfSTED changes the curriculum focus was being reviewed along with classroom practice and as such Reading was being moved into one of the Quality of Teaching sections and an additional Quality of Teaching section was replacing the Community section. The circulated document showed these changes. This was agreed but it would be discussed in more detail by the A & S committee.

The chair had circulated the Education News Letter issued by the LA which covered a range of matters including Brexit Guidance issued by the government and the Council SEND Strategy. The school had been requested to provide information to include in the Council Statement.

Q. Will Brexit have an impact on any staff in the school?

A. This is being followed up by the Finance Officer.

There was some discussion about the current level of reserves, the reason why the funds had not been committed at the present time and the identified plans should the LA decide not to progress with a new build.

There was an Inset day on the 31st October and it was agreed that either Ken Morecombe or Kathleen Shields would attend.

7. Any Other Business

School Transport (HATS) – The new contract had been operating for 4 weeks but there still appeared to be issues with the rounds and the timing of pick up and drop off at the school. The LA Transport Manager had visited the school to monitor the contract and it was noted that there would be a compliance meeting. It was reported that there were issues with route 9. The vehicles were larger so there had been some changes to the route plans by the new provider.

Staffing – The school had employed 3 apprentice TA's and there would be an assessment visit next week, however the monitoring role in the school had proved to be a significantly greater, and the school was advertising a part time temporary TA3 position to undertake this work.

The committee was also advised of 2 potential issues regarding Teacher pay progression but the situation was being clarified with Strictly Education as the current school Pay Policy did not cover these particular circumstances. The matter would be discussed further at Resources but it was suggested that the current school Pay Policy might need to be amended to clarify how similar situation should be resolved in future.

Action

TLR posts – At the present time the head teacher was not considering the allocation of the vacant TLR posts.

Speech and Language and OT provision – Last term the board had discussed the need to provide additional pupil support and it was being proposed that a TA post be assigned to support speech and language in the school and that the school discuss with the OT service the purchase of specific support by the school to meet needs in the classroom.

Makaton – At the present time the school did not have an accredited trainer in the school although staff had been trained. The situation was being reviewed

8. Publication of Minutes

As there were no matters of a confidential nature contained in the minutes it was agreed that the minutes could be published after they had been agreed by the chair.

10. Dates of future meetings

All meetings would commence at 6.00 p.m.

A & S Data – Wednesday 2nd October (the data meeting was being moved to the 6th November)

Strategy – Tuesday 1st October

Resources Monday 14th October

A & S Wednesday 6th November

FGB Wednesday 4th December

Spring 2020

Strategy - Tuesday 14th January,

A & S - Wednesday 22nd January,

Resources - Tuesday 24th March,

FGB - Thursday 2nd April

Summer

Strategy - Tuesday 28th April,

A & S - Wednesday 6th May – this date was still subject to further discussion

Resources - Wednesday 8th July

FGB - Wednesday 15th July

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.18 p.m.

Agreed and approved by the governors and signed by the chair of the meeting.

Date

Chairman