

**Minutes of a governing body meeting of Charles Dickens on Thursday,
3rd March, 2016 at 6.00 pm**

Governors Present: Nik Nicol (Chair), Cassie Buchanan (Headteacher),
Carolyn Forsyth, Emma Gleadhill, Laura Johnson, Zoe
Lillitos, Claire Maugham, Andrew Mayer, David Moore,
Cerian Morgan, Annastazia Nyaga, Shulamit Ambalu

Others Present: Malcolm Booth, Michael Eggleton (Associate Members)

Clerk: John Finch

The meeting started at 6.04 pm and was quorate. Newly-elected Parent governors Laura Johnson and David Moore were introduced, and governors introduced themselves.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Jemima Rhys-Evans and Linda Taylor, and consent was given for their absence.

Shulamit Ambalu arrived at 6.07 pm.

2. Declarations of Interest in the agenda

There were no declarations of interest in the agenda.

3. Minutes of the last governing body meeting on Thursday, 10th December, 2015

3.1 Approval of the minutes

Governors received the minutes of the last governing body meeting on Thursday, 10th December, 2015.

3.2 Matters arising from the minutes

The following points were raised:

- Malcolm Booth has now received nine responses to the skills audit that was e-mailed to governors.
- The Chair undertook to e-mail the NGA's New Governor checklist to new governors. **Action: Chair**
- Shulamit Ambalu, Emma Gleadhill and Claire Maugham offered to act as mentors to new governors.
- Governors stated that it was helpful to receive the NGA newsletter from the Chair, and asked that the Chair continue to keep e-mailing it to governors. **Action: Chair**
- The Chair undertook to undergo the NGA's Chair of Governors' 360 appraisal. **Action: Chair**

- It having previously been decided that it is useful to have succession planning for the Chair of Governors and the Chairs of each of the three main Committees (Resources, Curriculum & Standards and Children & Families), governors agreed that each Chair should look for fellow governors who might be able to become Chair in due course and, if they are willing, to help them to develop into the role.
- Five governors will be coming into the school to attend the first of three planned learning walks.
- The Headteacher undertook to contact the Headteachers at Charlotte Sharman Primary (Foundation) School and Bessemer Grange Primary School to arrange governor visits, as these schools have been on a journey of improvement.
- The new [school website](#) looks much better, but it was noted that some of the information on governance that schools are required to publish on their website is missing.
- The clerk undertook to send the Headteacher the information that is missing, so that the Headteacher can update the school website. **Action: Clerk/Headteacher**
- The policy on the commissioning of work from governors has yet to be written. **Action: Matthew Harris**
- Michael Eggleton and Jemima Rhys-Evans have been recruited as Deputy Headteachers.

4. **Governing Body**

4.1 **Governing body membership and vacancies**

Governors received the report as circulated with the agenda, and the following points were raised:

- Robert Loader has resigned as Associate Member, and the Headteacher asked governors to appoint Deputy Headteachers Michael Eggleton and Jemima Rhys-Evans as Associate Members.
- The following term of office is coming to an end:
 - Andrew Mayer - Authority - 13/7/16
- The clerk has received the reappointment form and advised governors to reappoint Andrew, subject to the nomination being approved by the Director of Education at Southwark Council.

Agreed – That governors make the following appointments:

- Michael Eggleton and Jemima Rhys-Evans as Associate Members.
- Andrew Mayer as Authority governor, subject to the nomination for reappointment being approved by the Director of Education at Southwark Council.
- Cerian Morgan is resigning as Partnership governor as of the end of the meeting.

- The clerk highlighted the following rules around appointing Partnership governors:
 - Partnership governors are appointed by the governing body.
 - Individuals are only eligible to be nominated as a partnership governor if the person nominating them believes that they have the skills needed to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.
 - Likewise the governing body may only appoint a person as a partnership governor if they believe that they have the skills needed to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.
- The governing body must first try to appoint Partnership governors from those nominated:
 - Where the school does not have a religious character, by the parents of registered pupils at the school and such others in the community as they consider appropriate (for example, staff, community organisations and other local bodies).
 - Where the governing body cannot fill all the vacant posts from among the nominees, either because there were not enough or because they rejected some of the nominees as ineligible, then the governing body can fill those posts from among persons nominated by governors.
- Where the governing body makes an appointment having rejected nominees as ineligible then they must put their decision and reasons not to appoint in writing to:
 - the local authority;
 - the person or body who nominated the rejected individual, and
 - the person rejected.
- A person is disqualified from being a partnership governor if they are:
 - a parent of a registered pupil at the school;
 - eligible to be a staff governor at the school;
 - an elected member of the LA; or
 - employed by the local authority in connection with its education functions.
- The Headteacher undertook to put an advert in the next newsletter for parents to nominate applications for the Partnership governor vacancy with time/project management, HR, IT, or finance skills. **Action: Headteacher**
- The Chair, Headteacher and Emma Gleadhill volunteered to interview any potential candidates, and it was suggested that the criteria that they will use for making a decision should be communicated in the advert.
- If there are no applicants, the clerk undertook to send an application form to the Chair and Headteacher. **Action: Clerk**

4.2 Governing body meeting attendance

Governors received the report as circulated with the agenda, and the clerk undertook to contact Matthew Harris to state that he will lapse as a governor if he does not attend, or send apologies for, the next governing body meeting on Thursday, 14th July, 2016. **Action: Clerk**

4.3 Governor Training and Development

Governors received the reports as circulated with the agenda, and the following points were raised:

- New governors have booked onto the New Governor Induction modules.
- A safeguarding audit has highlighted the lack of safeguarding training for governors, and governors need training on Prevent and FGM.
- The clerk undertook to contact [Ela Cleary](#) to arrange an in-house training session on safeguarding.
- David Moore stated that he was booked onto a Prevent training session, which was cancelled as not enough people had booked onto the course.

The Headteacher gave the following answer to a question from a governor:

- *Is there an upcoming INSET day on safeguarding?* This was done at the beginning of year. Training on safeguarding needs to be specific to governors.

5. Committees

5.1 Committee membership and link governor roles

Governors received the reports as circulated with the agenda, and the following changes to committee membership were made:

- Children, Families & Community – Laura Johnson and David Moore to replace Linda Taylor on the committee.
- Curriculum & Standards – David Moore to join the committee.
- First/Second committee – Shulamit Ambalu, Laura Johnson and David Moore to join the standing committees in the event that a panel needs to be called, with Cerian Morgan to leave the committee following her resignation.
- Headteacher's Performance Management – Nik Nicol to replace Claire Maugham on the committee.
- Resources – Carolyn Forsyth and Linda Taylor to join the committee, with Cerian Morgan to leave the committee following her resignation.

The following link governor roles were also agreed:

- CPD - Carolyn Forsyth to replace Andrew Mayer
- Creative Arts - Carolyn Forsyth and David Moore

- Maths - Anastazia Nyaga to replace Nik Nicol
- SEN - Laura Johnson to replace Claire Maugham

The Headteacher gave the following answer to a question from a governor:

- *Can governors ask questions related to their link governor areas when they are visiting the school on learning walks?* Yes, as part of the learning walk will involve meeting with middle leaders. The clerk undertook to e-mail the link governor visit report template to Maria Faherty. **Action: Clerk**

The Headteacher undertook to include the more comprehensive link governor role document in future Headteacher reports, and to put the list of link governors onto the school website. **Action: Headteacher**

Zoe Lillitos left the meeting at 7.00 pm.

5.2 Link governor reports

None were received.

5.3 Committee meeting attendance

Governors received the report as circulated with the agenda.

5.4 Committee meeting minutes

Governors received the minutes of the following committee meetings:

- Curriculum & Standards - Tuesday, 19th January, 2016
(as circulated with the agenda)
- Children, Families & Community
- Tuesday, 2nd February, 2016
(as circulated via e-mail prior to the meeting)
- Resources - Tuesday, 23rd February, 2016
(as circulated at the meeting)

Children, Families & Community – Tuesday, 2nd February, 2016

Emma Gleadhill gave the following verbal report:

- The committee discussed the parental engagement project being run by Zoe Lillitos.
- The school has formed links with Beormund Primary School to help children adjust to mainstream school from a PRU.
- The committee discussed the idea of becoming a national beacon for excellence in promoting mental health and well-being.
- Following an INSET day in January, the school is working with MIND around accreditation.

- Pupil Premium funding has been used on a range of effective interventions, including emotional and social barriers to learning.
- The scrutiny of the effectiveness of these interventions is to be added as an item to the agenda of the next Children, Families & Community committee meeting on Tuesday, 28th June, 2016.

Action: Children, Families & Community committee

Curriculum & Standards – Tuesday, 19th January, 2016

Claire Maugham gave the following verbal report:

- The new curriculum is now embedded throughout the school, and the next focus will be on Science.
- Autumn 2015 data was reviewed, and it was noted that Pupil Premium are outperforming non-Pupil Premium children.
- Black Caribbean children in Year 3 were identified as a cohort that requires additional support.
- This small group (three pupils in total) requires more support due to attendance issues, and because of the large number of pupils in the cohort that have SEN.
- It was agreed on analysis that the ethnicity of this low attaining group was not the reason for their low outcomes, as all three pupils concerned also had SEND needs or attendance issues.
- The attainment of Black Caribbean pupils is not an issue in other year groups.

The Headteacher gave the following answer to a question from a governor:

- *Is data for all pupils shared with parents?* Parents look through books and are told at parent's evenings if their own children are making progress, and what support is in place for them. They also receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress annually.

Resources – Tuesday, 23rd February, 2016

Malcolm Booth gave the following verbal report:

- A recommendation on an increment to the Headteacher's salary has been implemented.
- There is a £30,000 surplus in the budget, although this would be £73,000 if Southwark Council had paid the school money that is owed to it for money spent by the school on classrooms last summer.
- It is hoped that the surplus will increase to £46,000 by the end of the financial year.
- The committee can approve virements of up to £20,000, and the following virements above £20,000 were recommended to governors for approval:

Expenses

• Teaching Assistants	-	£20,590
• Pupil/Sports Premium	-	£59,916
• Curriculum	-	£39,087
• ICT	-	£26,000
• Property Capital Expenditure	-	£260,000

Income

• SBS	-	£55,032
• Maternity	-	£20,000
• Other income	-	£22,688
• Property Capital income	-	£235,000

Agreed – That governors approve the virements requested by the Resources committee.

- Budget information is not yet available from Southwark Council, with Pupil Premium information not usually available until August, so this figure has to be estimated when budget setting.
- Benchmarking information has been reviewed, and the school is mostly comparable to similar schools.
- There is a government drive towards academisation, which would result in the school receiving a lot of income streams directly rather than from Southwark Council.
- Single school academy requests may not be approved, and schools may be encouraged to join existing or form new MATS.
- It was stated that any decisions made by the governing body will always be in the best interests of the pupils, and that consultation with parents and the community will take place where any decision-making process requires it.
- The Headteacher stated that the governing body does not need to make any decision at the moment.
- Information will be gathered and, if available, will be presented to the next governing body meeting on Thursday, 14th July, 2016.

Malcolm Booth gave the following answers to questions from governors:

- *Will teacher pension contributions increase this year?* Pension contributions will increase for all staff. The lower rate for National Insurance for those who are part of the pension scheme has been scrapped. National Insurance payments will be 4 % higher, and this will mean an increase in the salary bill before pay rises are awarded.
- *Has there been a change in the higher rate pension contribution?* Staff may ask for a pay rise but will only be awarded the 1 % pay rise given in the public sector.

- *Why is money being vired in relation to Teaching Assistants?*
This is because some Teaching Assistants have been doing work related to Pupil Premium, and the Pupil Premium budget was higher than expected and can therefore cover this expenditure.
- *Are faith schools being asked to consider academisation as well?* The Diocese is thinking of forming its own MAT.

Annastazia Nyaga left the meeting at 7.27 pm.

6. Headteacher's Written Report

Governors received the written Headteacher's Report as circulated via e-mail prior to the meeting, and the Headteacher gave the following verbal report:

- Information on English and Maths monitoring during the autumn term is to be added, as well as analysis of 2015 data and further context to represent this term's school evaluation form replacing the current SEF.
- This will provide greater consistency in the presentation of information governors receive.
- The percentage of Ever 6 children stated as 53 % comes from Key to Success, the online government database.
- The actual figure from RAISEOnline is 42.6 %, and the SEF will represent this amount.
- The number of children eligible for FSM is currently falling faster than predicted, and this will impact on the budget over time.
- There are more eligible children in higher years, as they have had FSM in the past.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is increasing, not decreasing as stated in the report.
- Pupil Premium expenditure analysis will be done in the future by Michael Eggleton (following his appointment in January 2016).
- New software has been bought that will allow more in depth analysis of Pupil Premium expenditure, tracked by child, intervention and cost unit.
- Feedback on the library from parents is very positive.
- An Assistant Headteacher, Nicola Metcalfe, will be leaving.
- The school will recruit a specialist SENCO with other duties already having been subsumed by the new Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and other staff.
- There has been a focus on emotional development in both staff CPD and additional provisions for children.
- There will be an INSET day on restraint training on Thursday, 10th March, as requested by teachers.
- Following a meeting on Tuesday, 1st March, work on groundworks and the installation of foundations will start on Monday, 7th March, and this shouldn't affect the completion day.

- Contracts should be signed off in April, otherwise work will be taken out of the main contract and will be signed off separately.
- Southwark Council has stated that it regrets closing the playground early, as the school could have had access to it for longer.
- The playground should now be completed by September 2016.
- The School Improvement Plan is included in the Headteacher's Report.
- Priorities for improvement continue to be:
 - Ongoing building expansion
 - Increased focus on parental engagement of vulnerable families
 - Ongoing development of middle leaders and appointment of SENCO for summer term onwards
- The SLT look at book monitoring evidence by class and by child, to highlight progress made in English and Maths half-termly.
- Non-core subjects such as Science, Art, P.E., Design & Technology and computing, and home learning will all be reviewed this term and next term, in addition to core subjects.
- Attendance is monitored every two weeks, and will be discussed at the next Children, Families & Community committee meeting on Tuesday, 28th June, 2016.

Action: Children, Families & Community committee

- The SLT has changed the way meetings are held with parents regarding attendance, so issues are addressed sooner.
- The focus on teaching and learning has been on Science this term, in recognition that it has not been monitored as rigorously in past.
- The school is working with Harris Academy on a Maths mastery project.

The Headteacher gave the following answers to questions from governors:

- *Is the number of children eligible for FSM falling, or is it that parents are not registering?* The number is probably falling as parents have been chased up.
- *Is there anything more that can be done to encourage parents to register?* The school offers free uniform and a free book bag to any parent that applies for FSM, regardless of whether they are then eligible or not.
- *What is the criteria for deprivation indicators?* This is based on the national census and the school's postcode.
- *What is Arts Mark Platinum?* The school has Arts Mark Gold as a result of having outstanding Arts provision for the last 7 years, and is applying for the next award. This application process will take a year, with the focus on sharing provision, providing more opportunities for gifted and talented children, and training for NQTs being linked to drama.

- *What is being done to encourage the involvement of fathers in their children's reading?* This has been difficult to improve previously. Once the new library is being used regularly, the school will look at what new initiatives can be implemented.
- *What is the Journal Club?* This looks at a paper linked to educational research, which is read by teachers and then discussed in a group. It is a way of engaging teaching staff with academic research, and looking at the implications on current practice.
- *How are you measuring the impact of target 2 in the School Improvement Plan, around ensuring that the refurbishment and expansion of the school has limited impact on pupils' learning and well-being?* This is measured by checking that the refurbishment is being done by the stated deadlines. The impact of the works on the local community will be discussed at the next Children, Families & Community committee meeting on Tuesday, 28th June, 2016.

Action: Children, Families & Community committee

- *Has the programme of book looks been a burden on staff?* There is no difference to last year, and a monitoring timetable will be introduced. Books aren't graded, but book looks allow for feedback to be given to teachers as part of performance management.

Zoe Lillitos re-entered the meeting at 7.58 pm.

- *Why are you investing in Science?* There is a strong curriculum, and there is a need to make it easier for teachers to teach it by ensuring they have the resources necessary to do so.
- *What is an action research project?* This is research based on a practical need, and looks at academic research that can then be implemented in the classroom.

Claire Maugham left the meeting at 8.05 pm.

7. Safeguarding – STANDING ITEM

No matters were raised.

8. Budget 2016/17

Malcolm Booth reported that budget information is not yet available from Southwark Council, and that the next Resources committee meeting on Tuesday, 14th June will have to be brought forward to April so that the budget can be adopted.

Agreed – That governors delegate the adoption of the budget to the next Resources committee meeting.

8.1 To ensure the school meets the Southwark Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

This was signed off at the Resources committee meeting on Tuesday, 23rd February, 2016.

9. **Statutory Responsibilities**

9.1 Policy schedule

Governors received the report and the Terms of Reference – Children, Families & Community committee as circulated with the committee, and it was noted that the Terms of Reference had been updated and agreed at the last Children, Families & Community committee meeting.

Agreed – That governors re-adopt the Terms of Reference – Children, Families & Community committee as recommended by committee.

Agreed – That the following policies be reviewed by the relevant committees (where appropriate) and added as an item for adoption to the agenda of the next governing body meeting on Thursday, 14th July, 2016:

Governing body meeting – Thursday, 14th July, 2016

- Terms of Reference – Curriculum & Standards committee

10. **Dates and times of future meetings**

Governors received the report as circulated with the agenda, and noted the following dates and times of future meetings:

Summer term

Curriculum & Standards - Wednesday, 13th April, 2016

Resources - Tuesday, 14th June, 2016

Children, Families & Community - Tuesday, 28th June, 2016

Curriculum & Standards - Tuesday, 5th July, 2016

Governing body - Thursday, 14th July, 2016, 5.00 pm

Curriculum & Standards - Friday, 15th July, 2016

It was noted that the next Resources committee meeting will be brought forward to April to allow for the approval of the budget.

11. **Any Other Business**

The following points were raised:

- Carolyn Forsyth undertook to bring in documents to Jenny Gaskill in order to complete her DBS check.
Action: Carolyn Forsyth
- All other governors confirmed that they have had their DBS check done.

The meeting finished at 8.07 pm.

Date..... Signed.....