

**Minutes of a governing body meeting of Charles Dickens on Thursday,
23rd November, 2017 at 6.00 pm**

Governors Present: Claire Maugham (Chair), Shulamit Ambalu, Cassie Buchanan (Headteacher), Daniel Efunuga, Simon Gleadhill, Matthew Harris, Ran Holst, Laura Johnson, Rebecca Kaloo, Andrew Mayer, Mrs Linda Taylor, Miaomiao Yu,.

Others Present: Michael Eggleton, Maria Oakley, Jemima Rhys-Evans (associate members)

Clerk: Carrie Fentum

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and was quorate.

It was agreed to take item 6.2 first

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Emma Gleadhill

2 Declarations of Interest in the agenda

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

3 Election of Chair

The clerk took the chair and nominations were invited for Chair of Governors.

Rebecca Kaloo and Claire Maugham nominated themselves co-chairs. They explained how this would work operationally:

- Meetings would be chaired alternately,
- in the event of a casting vote being required this would be the chair of the particular meeting.
- In the event of a complaint made against the chair the issue would be dealt with by the vice chair
- Both co-Chairs would commit to supporting decisions made or advice given in one another's absence, to ensure the smooth running of school business

They also said that they work well together, bringing different and complementary skills and strengths to the role

A governor expressed a concern that neither is an elected parent governor. The Headteacher said that it was not the norm for the chair to be parent governor and not something she has encountered often in her role as HMI. The clerk concurred with this and said that in her experience Chairs could be a variety of categories of governor

Rebecca Kaloo and Claire Maugham were elected as Co Chair of

Governors for the academic year 2017-18

4 Election of Vice-Chair

Laura Johnson was nominated as vice chair by Claire Maugham. This was seconded by Andy Mayer. There were no further nominations . Laura Johnson was elected as vice chair for the academic year 2017-18

5 Minutes of the governing body meeting on Thursday, 17th July, 2017 and the Governors strategy Day on 13th September 2017

5.1 Approval of the minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on **Thursday, 17th July, 2017** were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on **13th September 2017** were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting

5.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not appearing elsewhere on the agenda

6 Governing Body

6.1 Register of Interests

The Register of Business Interests was circulated at the meeting and signed by all present. It was passed to the Headteacher to be held at the school and published on the school website.

6.2 Governing body membership and vacancies

A report on governing body membership had been circulated prior to the meeting.

It was noted that parents are not eligible to serve as partnership governors.

Simon Gleadhill and Rebecca Kaloo left the meeting

It was noted that following the resignation of Carolyn Forsyth there were two co-opted vacancies on the governing body

Governors considered the options to fill those vacancies and discussed appointing SG and RK as co-opted governors. It was noted they have both made an enormous contribution to the work of governors already and have been able to fill some of the gaps in governor skills, particularly finance

It was agreed to appoint Simon Gleadhill and Rebecca Kaloo as co-

opted governors for a term of four years

Simon Gleadhill and Rebecca Kaloo re-joined the meeting

It was noted that Andrew Mayer has been elected as a common councilman for the City of London and is therefore planning to resign from the governing body. He has agreed to continue as a governor until a suitable replacement has been found.

Governors discussed the skill sets that they would want to see enhanced on the governing body

It was felt that the school would benefit from appointing governor with the skills and expertise to act as a champion of the performing arts. It was agreed to look for suitable candidates to fill the role

It was felt that the governing body would benefit from expertise in HR issues. It was noted that the particular HR expertise may be very specific and time limited. Governors agreed that they would make short term appointments at a time when they are dealing with particular HR issues

It was explained that the local authority has forwarded the CV of potential governor Ifrah Ibrahim. She has met with the co-Chairs and head and brings skills in dealing with local government in different countries and corporate responsibility which governors agreed would be useful. She has also demonstrated a commitment to voluntary work in her community in Switzerland working with refugee children, and would enrich the FGB with elements of visible diversity and personal experience of being a refugee coming to Europe as a child, and now a recent immigrant to London as an adult.

It was agreed to appoint Ifrah Ibrahim as Partnership Governor at the next meeting of the FGB. Chairs were delegated to inform Ifrah of her appointment.

It was noted that the term of Linda Taylor is coming to an end on 23rd February 2018. A staff governor election will be required

Maria Oakley (school business manager) was appointed as an associate governor

6.3 Governing body meeting attendance

A report on governing body meeting attendance had been circulated prior to the meeting and was received

6.4 Governor training and development

The report on governor training had been circulated prior to the meeting. And was received. Governors were invited to discuss any training they have undertaken.

Laura Johnson reported that she had attended the Southwark Governors association. The main issues discussed that are relevant to this school were

- A new primary and secondary school will be opening following the regeneration in the Old Kent road area
- The local authority set out its proposals for its school improvement offer,

The Headteacher had asked about the cost and it was noted that prices had not been included in the brochure

Miaomiao Yu reported that she had attended a large number of training sessions which had been useful.

The induction module on SEND had stood out and she had been please to observe the work that was done at the school for SEN children

Other governors reported that the induction training had been useful and had left them feeling well informed. The finance training had stood out

It was noted that the school had undertaken a safeguarding update in September. Governors requested an in house safeguarding training session in the spring term. The Chair undertook to arrange this

7 Committees

7.1 The following changes were made to Committee membership and link governor roles

- Laura Johnson appointed to the Pay Review Appeal committee
- Daniel Efunnuga appointed to the Pay Review Appeal committee
- Daniel Efunnuga, Simon Gleadhill Ran Holst, Rebecca Kaloo and Miaomiao Yu appointed to the First and Second committee
- Ran Holst to leave CFC committee
- Daniel Efunnuga was appointed as Pupil Premium Link Governor
- It was noted that Laura Johnson has been elected chair of CFC committee

7.2 Link governor Reports

The safeguarding link governor report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Governors recorded their thanks to Emma for the huge amount of work that had gone into the report which was very informative and clear.

The report was received

7.3 Committee meeting minutes

Governors received the minutes of the following committee meetings:

- Curriculum & Standards - Thursday, 6th July, 2017

The chair of the committee reported that the meeting had recognised the quality and strength of the external assessment data

- Curriculum & Standards - Monday, 2nd October, 2017

The chair of the committee reported that the meeting had been inquorate but had considered items on the agenda not requiring a decision. There had been discussion on the SIP and the research taking place in the school.

It was felt that the meeting had taken place too early in the year and that in future the autumn term meeting of C and S should take place in November

It was noted that an 8 am start did not suit most people, the clerk undertook to find a suitable time and date for the next meeting

- Resources Committee - Wednesday, 1st November, 2017

The meeting chair reported that the main items discussed had been

- Nursery admissions policy which will be considered again in the summer term
- The non payment of nursery fees
- The £100K kitchen deficit
- The progress that has been made in financial controls and cash management; the school is now cashless
- Monitoring of the impact of the changes in the deployment of the TAs (working with C and S committee)

- Children, Families & Community - Tuesday, 17th October, 2017

The minutes which had been circulated were not the final minutes and would be recirculated in due course.

It was reported that the committee had discussed homework and is seeking clarification on where the homework policy lies

8 Senior Leadership Team's Written Report

The Report had been circulated in advance and governors were invited to ask questions.

Page 4 The percentage of pupils with SEN and EHCPs seems low, is that likely to increase?

The numbers have not declined but the process of getting children plans or onto the register is long and arduous. We currently have four children in the process and four have been accepted this year.

You have talked before about reaching capacity with the numbers of children which greater needs, has the school reached that?

For some children we are reviewing whether we are the right setting for their needs. In these cases we need to demonstrate what we have done.

What will be the next step for these children?

They would be moved to a special provision that would better meet their needs

When are the figures for the school level trends collected?

They are based on the January census

Page 5 Are there more full-time children in the nursery?

Yes, there are more as a result of the 30 free hours but we have decided to reduce the number of places from 32 to 24 for this year. This was due to the building work. The numbers of two year olds has gone down. There were some families who had not paid and they have left the nursery

Page 6 Can you explain what the Leuven scale is, how it is used and how well that is working?

The Leuven scale is a way of measuring wellbeing and is used as part of the challenge the gap intervention. It provides a way of measuring wellbeing on a clinical scale. The score is used in addition to the child's self assessment

The results for the year are excellent. Which schools in the borough do we benchmark against?

We do not compare ourselves to faith or one form entry schools. Comparisons can be made through the league tables. Last year we were the highest performing non faith school after Bessemer Grange

The School performance summary should we have high levels of pupils with FSM and high KS2 outcomes. KS1 was not so high, particularly in Maths (flagged on page 22). What is being done to address this?

There were a number of issues with this group. We have now split this year group into three classes and are using a new maths scheme. It was noted that a learning walk is planned. Governors with questions about the maths scheme were encouraged to email them before the learning walk.

The work done on children's social and emotional needs had reduced the number of behaviour incidents. Is this now an acceptable level, is further improvement needed?

Yes we are now looking for a step change. This reduction was achieved during the very difficult period of intense building work and difficult and challenging outdoor space issues. We are looking at how to re-learn to use our outdoor space and have undertaken a peer review. The behaviour is impeccable as a result of the zoning and organisation of the space, we will continue to work on this

Page 14 Can you explain more about the NPQs and the Southwark teaching school alliance?

We are a strategic partner and lead school in the Southwark teaching

school alliance leading on professional qualifications.
The NPQML is the National Professional Qualification for middle leaders. The NPQSL is the National Professional Qualification for senior leaders. We are driving these qualifications now.

Are these qualifications accredited?

Yes

Page 15 Is there a plan for the year 2 teacher who is leaving?

Yes, year 2 is a priority, there will be a teacher in place in January

Has the way in which TAs have been shared in year 2 been successful?

There are a large number of adults that work with this year group. The way in which they are organised has been successful in minimising the disruption for the group. Assessment week is next week and we will then be able to measure success in terms of outcomes.

Page 21 Can the KS2 Attainment/Progress data be explained?

The Headteacher explained the quintile percentiles

Is this information on the school website?

No but there is a link to it from the website.

Page 24 Why was there a backlog of SEN casework ?

The previous SENCO had left a backlog. This is now being cleared

Page 37 was the guided reading issue general or specific?

It was very specific and has been resolved

8.1 Review exam and assessment results

It was noted that these had been presented and considered as part of the Senior Leadership team report

8.2 School Improvement Plan progress

It was noted that committees have kept sections of the plan under review. The chair of governors undertook to circulate the report to governors

Governors to **adopted** the School Improvement Plan for 2018/19.

8.3 Safeguarding

There were no further safeguarding issues to report beyond the link governor safeguarding visit report and the issues highlighted in the Senior leader report. Thanks were noted in particular to Michael Eggleton and colleagues who have been especially active in this period in identifying systemic issues emerging through multi-agency

working and acting confidently to have these addressed.

8.5 Senior Advisor visit reports

The senior advisor visit report was received

9 Discussion of Vision for Kitchen and formation of task force.

Governors felt that there was a need for a focussed discussion about the future vision for the kitchen and that this should include governors from across all committees. The following governors agreed to meet as a kitchen task force to look at all of the issues and hopes for the kitchen:

Ran Holst

Matthew Harris

Rebecca Kaloo

Linda Taylor

Shulamit Ambalu

Cassie Buchannan

Lara Johnson

Maria Oakley

10 Statutory Responsibilities

10.1 Single Central Record

It was confirmed that the safeguarding link governor had **checked** that the school's Single Central Record is up-to-date and that she checks it every time she makes a visit to the school

10.2 School Information published on a website

Ran Holst undertook to check that the relevant information is on the school's website and that the school website is compliant specifically in respect of governance

10.3 Equality Information and data

It was noted that the equality information and data had been scrutinised in detail at the meeting of Children, Families and Community committee who had recommended that it be approved by governors.

Governors received and approved the statutory Equality Information & Objectives Statement

10.4 Policy Schedule

Governors received and adopted the Safeguarding Policy as circulated prior to the meeting. Some minor amendments had been made to the LA model policy.

The Financial Scheme of Delegation was deferred to the next meeting. Changes are being made to the scheme to ensure that

reflect practice

Governors discussed the Charging Policy and Remissions Policy which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors asked if it is made clear to parents that there will be help available. It was noted that the letters sent to parents state that contributions from parents are voluntary but that if insufficient funds are received the trip will not be able to go ahead. It was noted that the charges made to parents do not reflect the full cost of the trips.

There was a suggestion that pricing should reflect the cost for non FSM pupils and a 30% discount offered to PP pupils.

There was also discussion about asking parents to make voluntary contributions, this had been discussed at resources committee and it had been agreed that parents should be given to opportunity to make voluntary contributions to the school

It was felt that the school should be transparent about the costs of trips and the financial implications of the school subsidising trips and that this should be communicated to parents

It was agreed that the business manager would produce an item for the school newsletter.

Governors received and adopted the Charging Policy and Remissions Policy as circulated prior to the meeting

Governors re-adopted the Pay Policy in the interim. It was agreed that this will be updated with best practice from the local authority at the next meeting

Governors adopted the SEN Information Report

Governors adopted the Terms of Reference for Children, Families & Community committee

Governors adopted the Terms of Reference for Curriculum & Standards committee

Governors adopted the Terms of Reference for Resources committee

It was agreed to defer discussion on the Data Protection Policy to the new Data Protection Register legislation that is being introduced next year

11 Dates and Times of Future Meetings

Dates and times of future meetings were agreed as

SPRING TERM

Curriculum and standards: Weds 31 Jan at 6pm

Children, families and community: Tues 30 Jan at 6pm

Resources: Mon 19 Feb at 6pm

FGB: Tues 27 Feb at 6pm

SUMMER TERM

Curriculum and standards: Tues 15 May at 6pm

Resources: Tues 12 June at 6pm at 6pm

Children and families: Tues 19 June at 6pm

Curriculum and standards: Tues 10 July at 6pm (update, date changed to 25th April 2018)

FGB: Tues 17 July at 6pm

12 Any other Business

Following a recommendation by resources committee It was agreed to reduce the number of credit cards held by the school to two and that the limit on the cards be raised to £4K .

Governors were reminded that any further business should be notified to the clerk, chair and Headteacher in advance of the meeting.

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

