

Southway Junior School

Part 1 Minutes of Full Governing Body

Wednesday 25th September 2013 at 6pm

Governors Present: Pete Newbold (Headteacher), Stephen Ram Kissun (SRK) , Jo Noble (JN), Paul Cartin (PC), Kim Turner (KT) Damon Wright (part) (DW), Jane Cowley (JC)

Associate Members Present: Michael Dewey (MD) and Jacqui Sims

In attendance: Catherine Beckett (parent observer)
Sasha O'Connor (observer, and Authority Governor Designate)
Hayley Pettitt (observer and Associate Member Designate)
Terina Bryant (Clerk)

The agenda and all supporting papers for the meeting were placed on the Southway Moodle site for all Governors and Associate Members to view prior to the meeting. Hard copies of papers will no longer be printed out for the inspection file, apart from the minutes of each meeting - these signed minutes will be kept in the school office.

1.	<p>Membership of the Governing Body</p> <p>PC chaired the meeting, and said that the meeting was the first one of the academic year, with a new Headteacher in post and a new Governance structure in place. PC reported that Jenny Coley had resigned as an Associate Member after many years with the governing body. All present thanked Jenny for her contribution to Southway governance. PC welcomed the 3 observers to the meeting, and introductions were made.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Peter Izard, Nigel Stevens and Laura Carter. Andy Batson was not present.</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>MD stated an interest in agenda item 13.</p>	
4.	<p>HMI Inspection</p> <p>The Headteacher gave a verbal report following the recent HMI visit, which followed the Ofsted Inspection in July 2013. It was noted that 6 days notice were given in advance of the visit, and that it had happened right at the start of PN's new role. The visit was carried out by Alan Taylor-Bennett and also present were Maria Roberts (WSCC) and the Headteacher. Additionally, a 40 minute telephone conversation was held with Paul Cartin. PN reported that the visit was supportive and positive, with the inspector keen to work with Southway towards continued improvements. The official HMI letter had now been received by the school, and PN said that he would send a précis of the letter to parents for their information. In addition the information was now live on the Ofsted website. The result of the visit is that the HMI Inspector was pleased with the progress that had been made, and that was planned following the Ofsted Inspection, and as a result they would not be returning too soon for a follow up visit.</p> <p>A Learning Walk had taken place during the visit from which PN gave the following quotes - 'Calm and purposeful', 'children at ease in their learning', 'good relationships between children and adults', 'some nice activities in evidence' '1 or 2 children in classes not on task which is not something seen in 'good' lessons'. 'So are the activities challenging or engaging enough?'</p> <p>Following discussion during the meeting, it was noted that the word "nice" was used deliberately to</p>	

	<p>demonstrate the need to change practice in the school. The following suggestions were given at the Inspection to improve practice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leaders are focussed in Lesson observations to enable more targeted training rather than a broad approach 2. Promote consistency in the quality of teaching whilst allowing good to become outstanding 3. HT to liaise with perhaps a small group of locality HTs to engage in a 'critical friend' project 4. Develop class teacher and SLT analysis of significant groups of children to ensure progress <p>It was noted that work had already started on the suggestions, and that PN had already set the ball rolling on developing a critical friend project in the locality.</p> <p>PC said that from a governors' point of view, the conversation he had with the Inspector was around establishing whether the governing body understood the school, and that they were receiving the correct support from the local authority.</p> <p>JC asked PN to explain what could have happened if the visit had not been so positive. PN explained that if the Inspector had little faith in the Leadership and Management of the school then HMI would be back very frequently for further inspections. Instead, the visit was positive and enabled the Inspector to see how much progress had been made on the post-Ofsted plan.</p> <p>6.30 DW arrived</p>	
5.	<p>School Development and Improvement Plan (SDIP) (part 1)</p> <p>PN explained that 3 of the priority areas in the SDIP were a response from the Ofsted inspection. The 4th priority, Leadership and Management was not as a result of Ofsted, but is included as it how the school holds itself to account.</p> <p>PN stated that Priority 2 - Accelerate Writing focused on data analysis and the Ofsted focus on the progress of some groups of children - i) More able and ii) Free School Meals. PN feels that Southway have the correct steer in improving progress for children, and MD has been informing staff how to use the data more effectively to move children on in their progress.</p> <p>In response to a question from PC, PN said that he holds a bi-weekly year group meeting with a year group and the SDIP is a working document which is central to this meeting. PN said that Alan Taylor-Bennett liked the SDIP as it was simple and clear - the SDIP is the long term plan for the school right up to the next Ofsted Inspection, with tweaks made to it along the way. PC stated there were 56 underpinning actions in the SDIP, and JC agreed stating that these were there out of necessity and could be refined over time. PN said that staff feel ownership of the SDIP and understand that the plan will take time to resolve all the identified issues. PN said that the next Ofsted visit was due in 2 years, and that schools take time to turn round. There were some quick wins identified, but the governing body should view improvements as a marathon and not a sprint.</p> <p>In response to a question from SRK, PN said that the school does not have to make a response or give feedback following the HMI visit. PC said that he would like to work on how progress can be reported back in a simple way - i.e. out of the 56 actions, how many have been completed, how many are in progress and how many are outstanding - this could be done with a RAG system for example.</p>	
6.	<p>School Development and Improvement Plan (SDIP) (part 2)</p> <p>It had been agreed during previous governing body meetings to allocate governors to areas in the SDIP. PC reported that following discussions with individuals, it was proposed that the following governors be tasked with being responsible for monitoring:</p> <p>Teaching and Learning - JC</p>	

	<p>Achievement - NS Leadership and Management - PC</p> <p>Those present discussed the proposal and it was agreed that although the governors identified above would lead the work, they would work with a lead member of staff to work up detailed plans and would bring on board other governors and staff as necessary. This would be further picked up and discussed during the Teaching, Learning and Staffing committee.</p> <p>Following a question from JC about which priority area writing would sit, MD said that 50% of the priorities are to do with writing, however, progress is the key issue as to why the school is not "Good". MD was positive about Teaching and Learning being priorities as this has a direct impact on children in the classroom. It was agreed that JC and NS should have a further discussion with PN about moving this forward.</p> <p>A show of hands was requested to approve the lead governors and to approve the SDIP - this was unanimous.</p> <p>.</p>	
7.	<p>Pay Policy</p> <p>PN reminded governors that a new Pay Policy was required due to changes in Central Government policy on performance related pay for teachers. PN said that a staff meeting had been held concerning this change. Additionally, the Senior Leadership Team had discussed measuring consistency of teaching over a period of time and using a variety of methods of assessment.</p> <p>PN had adopted the WSCC model policy for Southway and the draft was put for governing body approval. Following suggestions from JC, it was agreed to change two areas - i) relating to evidence it was agreed to use the word "may" rather than "will" and ii) remove reference to payment for out of hours work.</p> <p>Following a question from JC, MD confirmed that there had been pay arrangements in terms of a fixed period pay award - the move now was to pay for responsibilities and the new structure with 3 Teachers with Learning Responsibilities reflected this.</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed to accept the pay policy with the amendments agreed.</p>	
8	<p>Headteacher's verbal report</p> <p>PN gave a verbal report to the meeting, and agreed to give the Clerk the notes to place on moodle. PN reported that there had been a busy start to the term and informed governors of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ofsted had noted that there was too much time spent at the start of each lesson with teacher talk - it has been agreed that the length of time spent talking at the start of each lesson was the child's age plus one minute. ii) The time -table was in the process of being re-gigged to allow for an additional 1.5 hours learning a week. iii) Inset day in November would focus on writing - in particular handwriting and presentation of work. iv) Guided Reading - would be more robust - an Ofsted key focus, and the introduction of a new Guided Reading scheme. v) SDIP had been shared with all staff. vi) Tea with the Headteacher had been introduced for those children who received commendations vii) Increasing working relations with The Gattons, and involvement in The Gattons Headteacher recruitment. viii) School website and virtual learning platform almost complete ix) Home and School Association project on the large pond area x) Admin/Office team weekly meetings held xii) Learning environment in classrooms has been improved, with the next stage the corridors 	

	In response to a question from PC, PN confirmed that the 4 new members of staff had settled in well. JS also confirmed that the 2 new Teaching Assistants had made a good start and were enjoying their induction. MD stated that the team has been strengthened this term and could move forward.	
9.	<p>Committee Structures</p> <p>PC reminded all present of the new structure that had been discussed during the last Full Governing Body meeting, which had come about following the Ofsted inspection. PC said that as committees find their way with new terms of reference and a new way of working, there would be a few things to resolve and there may be a few bumps along the way. The new structure is now on moodle for all governors to see.</p>	
10.	<p>Terms of Reference for committees</p> <p>In reply to a question from MD, it was noted that the full governing body meeting did not have terms of reference. PC suggested asking PI if he would be happy putting these together - to include the "orphaned items" identified by JC and statutory responsibilities.</p> <p><u>Teaching, Learning and Staffing committee</u> - JC was thanked for drafting the terms of reference for this committee. JC stated that she had stripped out of the old Curriculum and Community committee any items that did not directly relate to teaching and learning and staffing issues related to teaching and learning. This left a number of items as homeless - the clerk was tasked with establishing which of these homeless items the governing body had a statutory responsibility to cover. These would then come back to the next full governing body meeting for final approval.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the quorum for the meeting would be half the current governors (not including vacancies), although the expectation is that all governors would attend the meetings.</p> <p>The terms of reference were unanimously approved by all present.</p> <p><u>Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee</u> - NS was thanked for drafting these terms of reference. MD commented that he felt that the premises element of this committee had been significantly reduced in this draft. Following discussion, this was acknowledged and it was agreed that having finance and premises together at the same meeting decisions could be made more easily rather than in the old system of keeping these discussions separate.</p> <p>KT and JN stated that they felt that the old Premises and Health and Safety committee had come under undeserved criticism in the past. Again, it was acknowledged that the operational focus, rather than strategic focus of this committee had been largely due to lack of clarity about delegated responsibility to the committee, and to staff in terms of carrying out operational responsibilities.</p> <p>PC confirmed that the premises focus for governors should be on the major planned projects, of which a budget had already been agreed for this year. The day to day general repairs and maintenance was operational and should not be discussed by the governing body. In response to a concern raised by KT, PN said that he felt that item number 24 in the terms of reference would cover responsibility for bigger projects. It was agreed to draw a line under frustrations and concerns about the old Premises committee, and to move forward with the new structure.</p> <p>Following a suggestion from MD, it was agreed to change the opening parts of both committees to the same briefer wording as in the Teaching, Learning and Staffing committee. It was agreed to ask NS to complete this as he had drafted the terms of reference.</p> <p>The terms of reference were unanimously approved by all present</p>	<p>PC/PI</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>NS</p>
11.	Appointment of Associate Members to the governing body, and to appoint all Associate Members to committees	

	<p><u>Appointment of Associate Member</u></p> <p>HP left the meeting</p> <p>The governing body unanimously agreed to appoint HP as an Associate Member of the governing body for a period of 1 year.</p> <p>HP returned to the meeting</p> <p><u>Appointment of Associate Members to committees</u></p> <p>It was agreed to appoint the following Associate Members to committees and the full governing body:</p> <p>JS - Full governing body and Teaching, Learning and Staffing committee MD - Full governing body and Teaching, Learning and Staffing committee HP - Full governing body and Teaching, Learning and Staffing committee Business Manager - Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee Premises Manager - Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee</p> <p>It was agreed that the chairs of the committee would confirm the involvement of each associate member during the committee.</p>	
12.	<p>Chair's Update, including Chair's Action</p> <p>PI had sent a written report for PC to read out. The contents of the report were noted, and it will be placed on moodle for governor reference.</p> <p>There were no Chair's Actions to report.</p>	
13.	<p>Confidential Item</p> <p>S O'C, CB and MD left the meeting</p> <p>Confidential Item</p> <p>S O'C, CB and MD returned to the meeting.</p>	
14.	<p>Minutes of the last full governing body meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting on the 9th July 2013 were approved and signed as a true record by PC. The clerk reported that she had spoken to WSCC, and they did not produce certificates for In school training sessions.</p>	
15.	<p>Further matters</p> <p>None</p>	
16.	<p>Future business</p> <p>PC said that he did not think that this standard agenda item was needed with the new approach to governance.</p>	
17.	<p>Meeting review - judged against the new Ofsted Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The change in governance was positive and in particular the joining of Finance and Premises in to one committee, and holding termly Teaching, Learning and Staffing committees. • Good governor challenge on the Pay Policy • Good Headteacher report, especially encouraging is the introduction of tea with the Headteacher • SDIP agreed and recognised as clear and validated 	

18.	<p>Dates of future meetings</p> <p>The date of the next meeting were all on moodle. PC encouraged everyone to have a look at the dates for the rest of the academic year and advise if they were not able to make a meeting.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.05pm</p>	

Signed.....

Date.....