



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**SARAH NISBETT, HEADTEACHER**

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**Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on  
22 January 2018 at 6.00pm at the School**

Present: Sarah Nisbett (SN) Headteacher Helen King (HK) Staff  
Kathryn Keeping (KK) Parent Neil Brading (NB) Co-opted  
Henry Cooke (HC) Foundation Sarah Varnom (SV) LA (Chair)  
Doreen Rose (DR) Co-opted Angela Dowley (AD) Parent  
Richard Border (RB) Co-opted Amanda Dickson (ASD) Parent  
Laura Edwards (LE) Foundation (Vice Chair)  
Nicci Boddam-Whetham (NBW) Foundation

*The Meeting was quorate*

In Attendance: Gemma Peace (GP) Clerk.

Apologies for Absence: none.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm.

**1/18 Welcome, introductions and apologies**

SV welcomed all to the meeting.

**2/18 Update of Register and declarations of interest in agenda items**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to agenda items.

**Action: NBW** to check her part of the website pecuniary interests document and return to GP as soon as possible. **Completed.**

**3/18 Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on 13 November 2017 for accuracy**

SV led the Governors through the minutes from the last FGB meeting, and the actions detailed in the minutes were considered.

SN reported that she has drafted the proforma for the school phone and plans to purchase a phone shortly.

Signed .....

Date .....

SV has drafted an email to Damian Ettinger at Cokethorpe regarding formalising the arrangement between the schools. However, SV explained that matters have moved on, and there will be an update in relation to this later in the meeting (see minute 9/18).

SV spoke about the information that is held nationally about school data – Analyse School Performance (ASP) and the Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR), which have replaced RAISEonline and the Inspection Dashboard. SN has produced a report for the Performance and Standards Committee based on that data, which Governors who had attended that meeting found very helpful.

SV, and SN had met Vicky Hickman to discuss the possibility of an after school club. It was a positive meeting, although it will only move forward once preschool arrangements have moved forward. This was also discussed later in the meeting (see minute 9/18).

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2017 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The Chair signed the minutes and handed them to SN to file.

**Action: GP** to send pdf version of November minutes to the school office. **Completed.**

#### **4/18 Matters Arising from the minutes, not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

Nothing to report.

#### **5/18 Headteacher's Report**

The report was available on GovernorHub before the meeting.

SN reported that staffing and pupil numbers remain stable. The new TA has settled in well at the school.

One to one support in relation to an Education Health and Care Plan is working very well. SN informed Governors that another TA would be required to offer one to one support relatively shortly. There is very little low level behavioural disruption at the school.

SN explained that attendance figures are falling, but the school's data remains in line with county figures. SN was booked to attend an inclusion briefing on 23 January.

**Q.** Governors asked why the authorised absence figure is rising.

**A.** SN explained that there has been more illness related absence than usual, which has been the case nationally.

The full mid year pupil reports will be distributed to parents this term, and there will be parents' consultation evenings on 27 and 28 February. SN said that it would be helpful if a Governor, or Governors, could attend the consultation evenings.

**Action: All Governors** to let SN know whether they are able to attend either or both of the consultation evenings in February.

The Witney Partnership meetings are still taking place. However, Headteachers of schools that have joined MATs are not able to attend every Partnership meeting. Activities that encourage collaboration between Partnership schools continue to take place. SV told Governors about recent Ofsted inspections in the locality. SN explained that the school is going to take part in a World War 1 project in conjunction with Witney Town Council.

It was noted that the FODS Christmas Fayre was a great success. SN explained that FODS are finding it difficult to recruit members and helpers for events. Governors discussed how this would affect fundraising for the school and what could be done to address this.

SN requested that Governors review the calendar that she had distributed, and asked that Governors let her know if and when they can carry out a monitoring visit.

**Action: All Governors** to let SN know whether and when they can visit the school to carry out a monitoring visit.

SEF/SIP update: The section relating to ‘outcomes for pupils’ had been discussed in depth at the recent Performance and Standards Committee meeting.

Incidents of racial harassment/bullying: nothing to report.

Health and Safety/safeguarding: a safeguarding concern regarding school swimming had been raised. The parties involved had discussed the concern, a satisfactory outcome had been reached and any concerns had been allayed. SV said that the school had dealt with the matter very well. She emphasised that, should Governors be approached about such matters, they should refer the concerned party to SN, whilst underlining that the matter would be taken seriously.

## **6/18 Committee Reports**

As the Committees had met very recently, Governors noted that the Chairs of the Committees and SN have not yet officially approved the reports. Therefore, Governors should refer to the approved minutes from those meetings once they are available on GovernorHub.

Performance and Standards Committee – The Committee had met on 15 January 2018. AD reported that the Committee had discussed:

- The assessment update report and SATs results. SV took Governors through the ‘Next Steps’ section of the document, which lists the current aims that the school, which are: improving reading attainment across the school, increasing the number of pupils reaching greater depth level, improving the attainment of PPG pupils so that it is in line with non PPG pupils and raising the attainment of pupils at the end of KS2, so that more pupils attain Age Related Expectations and more are working at greater depth at the end of KS2.

- The outcomes for pupils section of the SEF had been considered. Governors had looked at what needs to be done for the school to become outstanding in this area. Governors agreed that the aim to be outstanding should be presented in a more overt manner in the SIP.
- PPG was discussed, and VS had reported back to Governors.
- Maths and English reports were considered.
- Policies were considered and approved.

**Action: SN** to update the SEF and send to Governors as soon as possible.

Resources Committee – The Committee had met on 19 January 2018. HC reported that:

- The budget is in surplus, which is very encouraging, as many schools are struggling to maintain any surplus funds.
- Costs for extra TA support that is required was discussed, and HC confirmed that this would be covered by the budget. Governors queried whether schools are under an obligation to accept a pupil who has complex SEND needs, but does not yet have an official diagnosis. SN stated that the school has to accept such pupils unless there is, for example, a problem with a risk assessment. Governors noted concerns about such a situation in that it is unfair that a pupil with very complex needs should have to experience several moves between educational establishments in a relatively short space of time. They also voiced concerns about the impact on other pupils, although this could be overcome to a certain extent by the skill of the staff and additional TA provision. Provision for special school places and the assistance offered by the local authority were also identified as areas of concern. Governors recognised that there is a duty on schools to encourage and support a pupil in this situation, and how unfair it would be to leave a pupil at their current setting if it is not deemed to be suitable. Therefore, it is the job of schools to assist in obtaining a diagnosis for these pupils, to help to ensure that they are eventually placed in the most appropriate setting for their needs.
- The size of the tarmac area at the school would be increased during the summer. Smiths of Bletchington have agreed to carry out the work at a favourable price.
- The preschool was discussed. Governors had debated postponing the inclusion of the preschool into the school until September 2018, as there are still many matters to consider, such as the creation of a trust. HC also explained that the accounts of the preschool must be scrutinised following its move to the school site.
- Staffing issues were also discussed. Governors considered whether the school should adopt a policy stating that, should a member of staff wish to take time out of teaching, the school would re-employ them on their return. Governors discussed concerns about setting any precedents in this respect, such as how long they would allow someone to take off, along with employment of a suitable teacher in the interim. Governors also commented that they were not certain what the effect would be on the pupils, especially in a smaller school. Concerns were voiced regarding the quality of applicants for a one year temporary post, although it was noted that it is similar to the position where a staff member is on maternity leave. SN agreed to refer to the Teachers’ Pay and Conditions document to see if this situation, and how best to approach it, is already recognised. Governors agreed that any policy would have to be

discretionary. Governors also suggested that there should be a requirement for some form of assurance from the member of staff that they are going to return to the school, which would have to be provided closer to the time of their return. It was suggested that there should be a Governors' Committee to consider any such requests and returns to work.

**Action: SN** to consult the Teachers' Pay and Condition document, and seek HR advice. The Resources Committee should consider her findings and subsequently report back at the following FGB meeting.

- Governors also queried whether any work is to be carried out on the stream near the school, which might overflow if there is particularly heavy rain.

### **7/18 Review of Policies**

There were none to review.

### **8/18 Changes to the Section 8 inspection Framework**

SV detailed changes that came into force in January 2018. She informed Governors that there are two types of inspection for maintained schools: a section 5, which is a full inspection, and a section 8, which is for schools that were judged to be good at their previous inspection. SV said that the outcomes of a section 8 inspection have changed in that schools will either:

- remain a good school,
- remain good, but with the possibility of being outstanding,
- remain good, but with possibility of moving to requires improvement, or
- where concerns have been raised, there will be an immediate longer section 5 inspection.

SV explained that the second outcome is interesting, in that the handbook states that the school could move to outstanding, although an inspection will take place within 1 to 2 years following the initial section 5 inspection, rather than immediately. Therefore, it is not possible to be graded outstanding shortly after a section 8 inspection, as had been the case previously. SN suggested that this could work in favour of schools such as Ducklington, which are working towards being outstanding. SV said that a number of outstanding schools are being re-inspected sooner than previously anticipated, so an outstanding grade no longer means that a school has a very lengthy gap between Ofsted visits.

### **9/18 Preschool Update**

#### ***School expansion –***

SN, NBW and HC had met with preschool representatives recently. The Resources Committee had suggested that the date for the expansion of the school to include the preschool class should be September 2018. Governors recognised that the preschool is a separate entity at present; therefore they cannot question the finances too robustly. Governors also noted that the way that the preschool is funded at the moment is very

different to the way that the school is funded, so this is also a consideration. Governors spoke about publicity relating to the preschool. Governors also discussed staffing of the preschool class.

Governors noted that, should the date be set for September, a great deal of interaction with the preschool would be required before then. SV proposed that a small group of Governors should be involved with this – it was agreed that SN, DR, AD, HC and RB sit on a Preschool Committee and feedback from that Committee would be a standing item on FGB agendas. It was emphasised that the governing body must consider this matter from a strategic perspective.

**Q.** Governors asked whether the proposed September date had been discussed with the preschool.

**A.** SN said that Jo George was at the recent meeting and had agreed to the proposal. She had also suggested that the preschool staff would be happy with that deadline. SN also reported that staff in Foundation class have started to build a positive relationship with the preschool staff.

**Q.** Governors also asked how the existing preschool staff view the potential school expansion.

**A.** SN and SV assured Governors that the staff see it in a very positive light, although it was noted that the school should continue to manage the expansion in a sensitive manner.

**Q.** Governors queried whether the school is looking at this as a business proposition, or from a long term educational provision.

**A.** DR said that the school has a responsibility to take on a business that is in a good financial state, so as to mitigate any detrimental financial impact on the school itself, but the school and Governors must look equally at the expansion from an educational standpoint and how it could have a positive impact on the school in the long term.

***Governors voted on the proposal for the school to enlarge to incorporate a nursery class from September 2018.***

**Governors voted unanimously in favour of the proposal.**

**Action: GP** to include Preschool Update as a standing agenda item.

***After school club –***

Governors went on to discuss the possibility of the school hosting an after school club. SN explained that an after school club could not use the preschool building at the moment, due to the terms of the lease. However, Governors agreed that the after school club could use the school classrooms as an interim measure, provided it is made clear to parents that it is a short term solution. SV assured Governors that Vicky Hickman is fully aware of safeguarding requirements and possesses the appropriate understanding and documentation in this respect. The after school club would offer a wide range of activities to children, which would meet the needs of pupils in years 1 to 6. Parents would also be able to pay by the hour.

**Governors voted on the proposal that an after school club would start after Easter, preferably in the preschool building but, should that not be possible, it could be held in the school in the interim.**

**Governors voted unanimously in favour of this proposal.**

**Action: HC** volunteered to find out whether the lease of the preschool building could be altered. **SN** agreed to put HC in touch with Jo George so that she can give him a copy of the lease. **SN** also agreed to keep Vicky Hickman informed of what is happening.

**Cokethorpe -**

SN reported that discussions are underway with Cokethorpe School regarding the possibility of forming the 'Corinthian Partnership', along with Aston and Combe primary schools. SN explained that school improvement priorities have been considered already, and how the primary schools have differing priorities. Cokethorpe are organising a reading day for all year 6 pupils in the prospective partnership. This is relevant to the reading focus at Ducklington. SN had also visited the junior school at Cokethorpe, and was very impressed with the provision there, which adds to the appeal of collaborative working between the schools. Cokethorpe is also hosting a drama workshop day for year 3 and 4 pupils, and parents will be invited to a performance in the evening following the workshop. It has also been agreed that the primary schools will also be able to borrow the Cokethorpe minibuses.

SN said that, should the proposed partnership become a formalised arrangement, it could be the first of its kind in the country. Dame Alison Peacock has expressed an interest in supporting the partnership, which would be tremendous for the staff and schools involved. SV reiterated that this should be a reciprocal relationship between the schools. SN said that she and VS would endeavour to ensure that the focus remains on school improvement. Governors expressed the view that the terms of any agreement would be very important. SV and SN confirmed that they have already reviewed a draft memorandum of understanding.

**Action: SV** to send the memorandum to GP. **GP** to distribute the document to all Governors. **Completed.**

**All Governors** to send any feedback they have to SN as soon as possible, as the schools must meet the deadline of 22 March.

Governors also agreed that, once the memorandum is in an agreed format, it should be voted on at the FGB meeting on 12 March.

**Action: GP** to add consideration of the memorandum to the March FGB agenda.

**Q.** Governors asked whether the staff at Cokethorpe support this proposal.

**A.** SN confirmed that they do.

**Governors voted on the proposal that, in principle, they agree to form a collaborative partnership with Cokethorpe and other interested parties, known as the Corinthian Partnership.**

**Governors voted unanimously in favour of that proposal.**

### **10/18 Approval of 2017-18 Standing Orders**

The Standing Orders were available on GovernorHub before the meeting. GP explained that they had not altered from last year.

Governors **approved** the Standing Orders in their current form.

### **11/18 Update from Foundation Governors**

NBW had met with a SIAMS inspector to discuss the new SIAMS framework. NBW reported that a SIAMS 'healthcheck' had been carried out (the report is on GovernorHub). It had been a very positive visit. The inspector had stated that the new SIAMS framework would be published at the end of January 2018. Therefore, the school must take this into account. NBW stated that the Foundation Governors must be aware of what the framework contains. Governors thanked NBW for attending the meeting with the SIAMS inspector.

**Action: All Foundation Governors** to meet with **SV** and **SN** to discuss this matter. **SN** also agreed to inform Foundation Governors about any training that is available on the new framework.

SV told Governors that another Messy Church session had been held at Christmas time. She also asked whether the next session might be held at the school, and SN agreed that it could.

### **12/18 Governor Vacancies / Terms of office ending**

There are currently no vacancies on the governing body.

### **13/18 Governor Training, Training Record and Visits**

Training – nothing to report.

Visits - KK had carried out an ICT visit. She had spoken to members of staff and watched lessons. It was very positive overall, although she had noted that there is an increased demand for laptops across the school. HC said that some money from the budget should be available for ICT equipment. Governors also queried whether the link with Cokethorpe could be used to assist with sourcing ICT equipment.

NB had visited twice to speak to VS about PPG pupils.

RB had met with the Maths and English staff leads and is going to carry out a learning walk.

Governors also discussed the School Council governor interviews, which could be carried out at a governor visit or via email and be posted on the school website. HC, LE, DR, HK, NB and RB have not yet been interviewed.

**14/18 AOB/Date of the next FGB meeting**

AOB – SN said that it has been noted that recent Ofsted inspections have focused to some extent on the PE aspect of the curriculum. SV said that, if sports premium reports are up to date and available on the website, that should be sufficient to evidence what the school has accomplished using the funding.

**Date of next FGB meeting – Monday 12 March 2018**

Items for discussion at the next meeting:

- Health and safety report from ASD.
- Corinthian Partnership memorandum of understanding.
- Preschool.

SV and RB gave their apologies in advance of that meeting.

*The meeting ended at 7.53pm*

*GP: 22 January 2018*