



CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Body

Tuesday 14th January 2020 at 6.00pm

Present: Kevin Vanterpool (Chair)
Karen Stanton (Head Teacher)
Kate Duncombe
Pippa Smith
Mary-Ann Claridge
Renu Martingale
Cristina Turner
Rebecca Snelling
Natalie Martin

Clerk: Vicky Miles

Apologies: Suzy Reed, Dom Hordern

Reference

Action

1. Welcome to all and apologies for absence

KV as Chair formally opened the meeting, extending a welcome to all present.

2. Declaration of interests relating to items on the agenda

None declared.

3. The Current Context

KV had requested this additional meeting to give everyone the opportunity to think about how individuals on the committees work effectively together.

KS updated all on the current predictions for end-of-key-stage attainment. She explained that predictions for July 2020 are significantly lower than previous years. The predictions are based on

historical data of the cohort and although the majority have made good progress from their starting points, overall the attainment will probably match or be slightly below national.

KV reviewed the membership of the GB and confirmed he would contact RM to confirm whether he wishes to remain as a governor as his term has ended.

KV

4. KS reported that finances are tight but broadly on-track; there are overspends in a few areas but these are offset by underspends in others. Going forward, if the proposal to top-slice 1.8% of our budget is agreed, it will be very difficult to maintain current provision without some cuts to staffing. KS added that at present we are one of the very few schools that continue to have classed based teaching assistants; most schools operate with teaching assistant only where there is additional funding or need (e.g. EHCP funding).

To a question, KS explained that we are able to demonstrate value of our teaching assistants by the degree of progress children in identified categories make compared to others in their cohorts. The majority of our funding for disadvantaged and SEND goes towards TA costs, which not only enhances teaching provision but also provides a vital pastoral role for the more vulnerable children. KS added that the school had received a letter of congratulations from County on the achievement of disadvantaged children.

To a question, KS explained that discrete data around the 'Closing the Gap' sessions is difficult to quantify. Support that TAs provide is wide-reaching i.e. it is not only for learning and academic subjects, but also around making sure children are ready to learn, supporting their emotional and mental well-being.

KS added that last year the school was able to employ a teacher to do booster groups with the Year 6 children in preparation for SATs, this year it is not possible – this is not just based on finances but it is also about finding a good quality person. We have a teacher for English and KS is taking on the maths.

RS explained that the Phonics results could be affected this year as the teaching assistant in Year 1 is teaching elsewhere on extra days, therefore, there is less time for 1:1 support and hence the children might not achieve as highly.

PS suggested class based governors go in and chat to children to get their perspective on teaching assistants.

RS added that having class based TAs also supports staff well-being. They work with the teacher to lead guided groups, which reduces the marking workload.

CT added that the reality is that at present class based teaching assistants are not sustainable unless things change in terms of finance. ReM added that this should be a data based decision that when the time comes it needs to be made.

MaC suggested looking at where TAs are having the most impact.

5. Ofsted

KS explained that there are areas of expertise and experience on the governing body but also weaker areas. There was a discussion around the skills audit and how governors can address these weaker areas so they are in a position of strength when Ofsted visit.

To a question, KS explained that a useful service from Governor Services is that during their termly briefings they give out topics that should be covered in meetings and associated challenging questions. It might be worth governors agreeing a rota for attendance and structuring the meetings around the suggested topics.

To a further question, KS explained that the National Governors Association will have suggested questions/agenda items. PS to look at basic questioning to be able to hold the Headteacher to account.

PS

6. Staffing

KS reported that at present there are no issues around staffing, the challenge will be around affording our staff. We are currently in the process of looking at models for next year – although it totally comes down to finance. The best solution is we are able to remain as we are; worst case there will be redundancies. The staff we have are very good and we would like to retain them if we can.

7. Results of Skills Audit

PS reported on the Governing Body Effectiveness comparison from 2016 – 2019. One result highlighted as a concern is the Governor's understanding of special educational needs.

To a question, KS explained that in order to understand special educational needs governors would need to be familiar with the policy and how we address SEND and fulfil our legal obligations.

To a further question, PS explained that in order to improve skills, governors could skill themselves up by using the resources on the NGA website, reading and sharing articles and on-line training is also offered. The need is to identify the gaps in our knowledge and look at governing body training for all.

RS recommended a few meetings with NM to get up to date with SEN. MaC volunteered to stand as SEND and Pupil Premium Lead. NM and MaC to arrange to meet.

NM, MaC

A discussion took place around governors taking responsibility to skill themselves up.

KV informed the committee that he had received an email from an organisation offering help to source governors, it may come at a cost and would have to come out of the school budget.

PS suggested contacting local companies to see if anyone with the skills required would like to become a governor.

KS commented that we could explore the possibility of soft-federation with another school. This would mean we would need one governing body with governors working across both schools. KS is meeting with Monkfield Park and Rosemarie Sadler (LA) to explore options.

To a question, KS explained that the person who had expressed an interest in becoming a governor felt they were not in a position to help at the moment but have asked to speak to KD for more information.

The options put forward:

- Contact local businesses to see if anyone would consider becoming a governor. KV to draft a letter, committee members to send any local businesses they know of to KV.
- KV to make contact with the organisation offering to help.
- Explore the federation route.
- KV to draft a letter to parents to go out via parentmail.

KV, ALL

KV

KV

8. Governor Effectiveness Audit

ReM reported that only 3 governors had engaged in the audit. The areas of weaknesses were: strategic direction, this was red because as a governing body a vision for 3-5 years was not fully understood by all; setting clear goals and not getting overly involved.

MaC suggested a sub committee for discussion of the above, then report back to the FGB.

ReM suggested that governors need to formalise an induction programme for new governors and succession planning should be in place. ReM also recommended that governors have an action plan to achieve the identified steps in the audit, with each action having a governor lead.

To a question, KS explained that governors names are assigned to areas of the RAP.

To a further question, KS explained that some schools have a 3-5 year whole school development plan. However, experience shows that they can be a paper-exercise and waste of time as the majority of developments have a cost and unless you have guaranteed funding streams, the majority of planned developments don't happen. There is an ongoing plan for our internal and external environment, but this has stalled as the finances are not available and emergency items eg boiler repairs, take precedent. KS added that staff and governors have focused on our vision and the Caldecote Curriculum and that is how we came up with our Learning Tree. We could revisit this if needed. KS also added that many governing bodies have their own development plan which runs alongside the school plan.

KS questioned whether we need to look at the committee structures. A general discussion around the structure took place.

- KV as a co-opted member for PCS to remain as Chair of the Governing Body
- PS as a co-opted member to move to the PPF committee as Chair
- ReM as a parent governor to remain on the PPF
- CT as a parent governor to remain on the PPF
- KD as a co-opted member to remain on the PCS as Chair
- MaC as a co-opted member to remain on the PCS
- SR as a co-opted member to remain on the PCS
- NM to remain as a staff member on the PCS
- RS to remain an associate member on the PPF and PCS
- LW to remain as an associate member on the PPF
- Waiting to hear from RM

KV asked if all committee members would think about whether they are happy to continue and commit to becoming an effective governing body.

A discussion around new email addresses took place, all governors now using their school email accounts.

KV suggested identifying when actions should happen.
At the next FGB

- write a plan of how we capture our vision as a school.
- all governors to look on the governors' area of the website and respond to the Governing Body Effectiveness Audit by reviewing and contributing.
- Governors to think of which areas they feel they can take a leading role in
- possible training
- SEND and Pupil Premium feedback

9. Other Matters Appropriate to School and Governing Body

KS informed the committee that Anne-Marie Cooper will be coming into school to do a 3 hour governor audit, followed by a debriefing with KS and KV.

10. Dates for Committee Meetings

PPF and PCS to be confirmed at next FGB

11. Dates for Future Meetings of the FGB

Tuesday 4th February at 6:00pm

There being no further business the meeting was formally closed at 8:42pm.

Signed as a true record.....Date.....

Chair