



**The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
Chase Bridge Primary School**

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Full Governing Body
held at the school on
Wednesday 20th March 2024 at 6.30pm**

Present

Mike Dormer (MD) Chair of Governors	Brian Ostro (BO) Deputy Head Teacher	Daniel Bishop (DB) Head Teacher
Nida Rehman (NR)	Bhaven Marshall (BM)	Graeme Kirkpatrick (GKK)
Gillian Keane (GK)	Caroline Chadwick (CC)	Tony Meehan (TM)
Gareth Mantle (GM)	Yuvraj Nirwal (YN)	Eleanor Wright (EW)
Navdeep Sidhu (NS)	Ash Patel (AP)	Becky Seaward (BS)
James Lovett (JL)		

Apologies

Archana Jhinger (AJ)	Cllr Kuldev Sehra (KS)	Kath Briggs (KB)
Sue Stanley (SS)	Clare Rees (CR)	Hannah Gilbert (HG) SENCO

Also in attendance

Julie Fox (JF) Clerk to Governors		
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Item	Previous Item		Action
1.0		WELCOME, APOLOGIES & NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from KB, HG, CR,SS, AJ, KS.	
2.0		DECLARATION OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest for this meeting.	
3.0		MINUTES & ACTIONS OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING The following papers were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting: [01] FGB Minutes 13.12.24 [02] FGB Actions 13.12.24 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 th December were reviewed by Governors, approved and signed by the Chair.	



<p>3.1</p> <p>(i)</p> <p>(ii)</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p>7.0</p> <p>(i)</p> <p>(ii)</p> <p>9.0</p>	<p>The following actions arising from the meeting held on 13th December were reviewed as follows:</p> <p>OFSTED Preparation</p> <p>Circulate 2 page safeguarding checklist to Governors.</p> <p>Add review of the SEF to the Ofsted Preparation item on the next FGB agenda.</p> <p>Community Surveys</p> <p>Present the findings of the parent survey at the next BAPD and FGB.</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
<p>4.0</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p>		<p>GOVERNANCE MATTERS</p> <p>Chair's Network</p> <p>The Chair briefed Governors on the content of the Chair's Network meeting held on 19/3/24.</p> <p>The main focus was on the management of parent complaints and the exponential rise in the number of complaints especially those arising via WhatsApp groups. The AfC advise on this is to have a robust Communications Policy and CPD for staff on handling complaints.</p> <p><u>How are complaints managed when escalated to Governor level?</u></p> <p>A panel of Governors would be selected and can be drawn from any committee.</p> <p>There has also been a rise in disability discrimination claims which can result in legal cases being pursued. The AfC SENDCO Lead will be issuing guidance on how a school can make reasonable adjustments / provisions for disability.</p> <p>Governors noted that whilst there has been a rise in disability discrimination claims, the number is proportionally low in comparison to EHCP/SEN appeals.</p> <p>ACTION: Requirement for a Communications Policy to be added to the BAPD agenda.</p> <p>Ash Patel</p> <p>The Chair informed Governors that Ash Patel is standing down as a Governor after 4 years in the role. The Chair paid tribute to Ash for his support and dedication to the role of Governor and Chair of the Finance, Premises & Personnel Committee. Ash demonstrated financial knowledge and skill that has helped steer the school into a stable financial position.</p> <p>Ash Patel responded by paying tribute to the Chair of Governors for ensuring that the Board has been active, effective and focused on its strategic responsibilities.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>5.0</p>		<p>COMMITTEE UPDATES ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES</p> <p>The following documents were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting:</p> <p>[03] FP&P Minutes 06/02/24</p> <p>[04] FP&P Minutes 12/03/24</p> <p>[05] QE Minutes 06/03/24</p> <p>[06] BAPD Minutes 21/02/24</p>	



		<p>There were no questions raised on committee minutes.</p>	
<p>6.0</p>		<p>DRAFT BUDGET</p> <p>The HT led Governors in a review of the draft budget 2024/25. The current draft has been approved by the FP&P Committee and will be submitted to the Local Authority at the end of March. The final budget submission will be made at the end of June, following ratification from the full governing body – this is likely to be via email, with formal approval at the FGB in July.</p> <p>The HT noted that the arrangements for budget submission are proposed to change for next year, with no draft submission required, and the final budget submission being required earlier in May to come in to line with other Local Authorities. The proposed changes means that schools will not have certainty on staff numbers as the Resignation Day is not until 31st May.</p> <p>The HT stated that there had been a small increase in income from the designated schools grant of 0.5%, which is raised to 2.5% due to an increase in the number of pupils on roll. There has also been an increase from self-generated income (Clubs, Twickers Parking, Wraparound Care etc.)</p> <p>The HT noted that a number of capital projects have been progressed this year but are unfinished at this point (Nursery playground and KS2 flooring) and the funding for these projects will be carried forward and ring-fenced.</p> <p>The school’s financial advisor, Steve Llewellyn, has stated that the Local Authority has no policy on clawback over 8% reserve as long as there is a narrative to support the carried forward funds. In this case, capital projects have not been completed within the current financial year due to contractor availability and the requirement to carry-out works during school holidays.</p> <p>The HT discussed leadership capacity at all levels in the school and the objective of providing time additional to SLT, ECTs and Subject Leaders. The approach to recruitment is to not automatically replace leavers, but to consider the role and whether it is needed to support the school operationally or as part of the school development priorities. The school is looking to be more flexible in its use of Teaching Assistants, SALT and OT. To enable staffing flexibility, staff development and assessment time, the school will increase the supply budget.</p> <p>The school has assumed a 5% pay increase for teaching staff and 8% for support staff, however it is unlikely that pay increases will be confirmed until the Autumn term.</p> <p>Self-generated income is higher than expected this year – wraparound care is now a fully flexible offer and with a flexible workforce provided by Brentford FC.</p> <p>The school has continued to invest in 12 month duration TLRs and there are two planned for 2024/25.</p> <p><u>Governor asked if there are alternatives materials to tarmac when resurfacing the playground to avoid flooding.</u></p>	



	<p>The HT stated that the existing wet pore surface is an ideal base for astro-turf which is cheaper to fit and can be removed and replaced easily. It is important to keep the school environment to a high standard to continue attracting prospective parents. Drainage solutions are more expensive to install and therefore a more cost effective solution is to have the area jet washed on a quarterly basis which helps avoid flooding.</p> <p><u>Governor asked if the school can assure quality of delivery when using a greater number of supply staff?</u></p> <p>The HT stated that while a supply teacher assistant may not be suitable on each occasion, in practice this rarely happens. The school has not lowered the bar on the expectations for staff that work with pupils. The school had one supply on a flexible contract for 15 months and that person has now joined the school on a permanent contract. The initial temporary contract allows the school time to determine if the candidate is suitable for an available role.</p> <p><u>Governor noted that where an agency supply teacher is sick, the agency can source another teacher quickly without interruption to the class.</u></p> <p>The HT noted that there are two SMSAs looking to progress to Teaching Assistant roles and have volunteered in school to gain experience and have now been taken on in permanent roles.</p> <p>The HT went on to discuss short term savings for the 2024/5 budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tech Support- continue to reduce support to 2 days.• Profs EdPsych – Review ruby package £10,920 via AfC in March 2024 for correct level of support.• Building & Maintenance - small savings for annual playground inspection - approx £150.• All major contracts have been reviewed this past year for best value.• Water - anticipated costs for 23/24 lower than budgeted amount. Continue to monitor water usage for 2024/25.• Energy and Gas - anticipated costs for 2023/24 lower than budgeted amount. New supplier to be sourced this year.• Continue to monitor and source best value for daily consumables such as stationery, paper and general supplies. <p>The HT outlined anticipated changes to income for the 2024/25 budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cabbage Patch House - increase in annual letting delayed due to lease renewal process with LA. Expected increase from £17,700 to £18,700 Dec.• Sports Focus Coaching - potential increase of letting fee pending annual review with the provider in July.• Clubs Income - for the school year 24/25, slight increase to charge to parents to offset associated staff costs relating to internal clubs.• 9-10 week term clubs will increase from £15 to £20. 7-8 week term (spring) will remain at £15. <p><u>Governor noted that the after school clubs provision has a good variety and is offered at an affordable price. Wraparound care developed in terms of facilities and offer to children. How can this be promoted further to parents?</u></p> <p>The HT stated that there is currently capacity on Fridays and the school is looking to create a 'play date' or 'youth club' environment where air hockey, table football etc is available. EYFS would be managed separately from this.</p>	
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7.0		<p>LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT (including safeguarding update)</p> <p>The following documents were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting: [08] HT Report Spring (2) 2024</p> <p>The HT invited questions on the reports.</p> <p>The HT reported that the SIP, Emma Clarke, visited the school this week and was very impressed by what she saw at school and gave positive feedback, which is very reassuring. The HT was not involved in the SIP visit, rather it was hosted by the DHT and AHT who articulated the school vision very well. The HT was pleased to report that the SIP agreed with the school self-evaluation of outstanding in 'behaviour, attitudes and personal development'. The HT also added that and safeguarding is outstanding in the HT's judgement and the curriculum is not formulaic and benefits from the Chase Bridge pedagogy and adapted schemes. The curriculum continues to develop through the work of Karen Brook on underpinning with EDIB.</p> <p>The HT informed Governors of a new initiative, Westfield Health, which provides a taxable benefit to all staff for wellbeing. The scheme includes health care, support with prescription costs, limited therapy, health MOTs, cover for children up to 22 years of age, opportunity to add a spouse, mental health counselling etc. This scheme is being funded by a corporate donation (sourced by a Governor) and income received from hosting and organising the local mental health cluster.</p> <p><u>Are other schools implementing the same or similar schemes?</u></p> <p>The HT stated that he is aware of two schools who have trialled the scheme and given positive feedback. The school will be able to access usage data to judge the success and value of the scheme to staff.</p>	



	<p><u>Governor noted that where recruitment of good staff is challenging, the offer of such a benefit is attractive.</u></p> <p><u>Governor asked about staff workload – especially with data analysis, assessment requirements etc.</u></p> <p>The HT informed Governors that the DHT has developed a single document that enables staff to complete multiple functions once. The school is keen to support and invest in staff with additional CPD wherever a need is identified. The AHT added that time to support subject leaders and carry out some tasks in common is scheduled into the SLT time. The DHT added that the SLT has an open door policy and understands the 'pinch' points for staff. For example in the approach to pupil progress meetings the DHT adds the data for staff members to make the most efficient and effective use of the time.</p> <p><u>Governor commented that where work requirements are cohesive and aligned there is less of a burden on staff workload and wellbeing.</u></p>	
<p>8.0</p>	<p>COMMUNITY SURVEYS</p> <p>The following documents were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting: [09] Staff & Parent Survey 2023-24 [11] Survey questions 2023-24</p> <p>The HT reported that 56 of 71 members of staff completed the staff survey – all of the admin team and teachers completed and most of the support staff, but fewer members of the SMSA and Lions Club teams.</p> <p>The parent survey yielded 176 responses.</p> <p><u>Governor suggested that there should be a section of wellbeing questions on the next survey.</u></p> <p>The HT stated that teaching can be a very stressful job and while the school can change some operational things to make the job less stressful, there are some aspects of the job that cannot be easily changed. The key approach to managing wellbeing is to give staff more time to prepare, develop, assess and analyse. The HT added that where a member of staff has been on sickness absence for more than 3 days, the return to work paperwork is reviewed by the HT and a meeting will be held with the member of staff to establish if the absence was due to work related sickness. The aim is for staff to feel supported to do their job well.</p> <p><u>Does the SLT promote the employee assistance scheme?</u></p> <p>Yes, the new scheme will also be modelled by key staff that have been identified. We also have a session with a lead from the company to demon the actual usage of the app and website. This will happen in early May.</p> <p>The HT stated that there is a mental health lead in school and staff are encouraged to use this and other available resources. The DHT added that other processes and procedures can have an impact on supporting staff wellbeing, such as a robust Behaviour policy and effective Communications Policy.</p>	



		<p><u>Have staff been asked if the school recognises and responds to their diversity?</u></p> <p>The HT noted that the ‘This is Me’ Day was the beginning of opening up what can sometimes be difficult conversations with staff. The ongoing work with Karen Brooks on EDIB will continue to explore this. A recent learning walk with staff looked at displays across the school and valuable observations and feedback were received. A similar learning walk of the school environment will be carried out with the children. The school wants to be forthright in demonstrating it values and be proactive in anti-racism.</p> <p><u>Governor stated that the anecdotal feedback on ‘This is Me’ Day was 50% in favour and 50% less enthusiastic. The school needs to ensure that such events are not tokenistic, but help parents to understand the bigger objective of embedding the school values in all aspects of school life and community. Conversely, two other parent governors noted it was very well received.</u></p> <p><u>Governor noted, however, that the parent survey results suggests that the overwhelming majority of parents are happy with the school.</u></p> <p><u>Governor suggested that the school cannot just rely on survey findings, rather, there should be focus groups held on attendance, quality of education, bullying, SEND etc.</u></p> <p><u>Governor noted that it is difficult to capture the views of parents who consistently do not engage.</u></p> <p>The HT stated that the ‘This is Me’ Day gave parents an opportunity to engage with the school where they have not done so before.</p> <p><u>Governor noted that the parent survey is just one point of engagement, there are also class rep meetings.</u></p> <p>The HT noted that the school looks to address as many challenges as possible, but it is not possible to address everything. The school is not complacent and continues to explore ways to engage with the community.</p> <p>ACTION: Circulate the SIP Report for Spring term once available. The report has significant feedback on the schools EDIB objective.</p>	<p>HT</p>
<p>9.0</p>		<p>OFSTED PREPARATION</p> <p>The following documents were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting: [10] SEF 2024 Review</p> <p>The HT reported that the SEF has now been validated by the SIP.</p>	
<p>10.0</p>		<p>POLICIES</p> <p>There were no policies to review in this period.</p>	
<p>11.0</p>		<p>AOB</p> <p>The HT noted that the school now has a new school brochure which has been significantly re-written and is available on the school website.</p>	



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		The meeting ended at 8.00pm Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 10 th July 6.30-8.30pm	

Agreed & Signed as an accurate record:
(Mike Dormer)

Date: