



**Minutes of Willingham Primary School  
Full Governing Body Meeting  
held on Tuesday 7th February 2017 at 7.30pm**

**Present**

Caroline Hyde (CH)	Chair
Hannah Francis (HF)	Vice Chair
Vyv Francis (VF)	Headteacher
Jo Aldhouse (JA)	
Liz Bowen (LB)	
Fiona D'Arcy (FD)	
Jamie Efford (JE)	
Emma Fuller (EF)	
Vicki Hayes (VH)	
Louise Johnston (LJ)	
Ian Kelly (IK)	
Laura Latham (LL)	
Emma Mason (EM)	
Sarah Morgan (SM)	
Kate Van Dort (KVD)	
Ben Tregenna (BT)	

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence from the meeting were presented on behalf of Matt Haigh and Paul Joel.

**Also in attendance:** Libby Nicholas and Benedict Ashmore-Short, Reach 4 Academy Trust, Steve Ellison, Cottenham Village College and Christine Brandon (Camclerk).

The meeting was quorate.

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all present.

**2. Presentation from Reach4 Academy Trust**

The Chair welcomed Libby Nicholas, CEO of Reach4 Academy Trust to the meeting. Libby was accompanied by Benedict Ashmore-Short, Director of Education (Primary). Steve Ellison, Executive Head Teacher, Cottenham Village College also was in attendance to offer support.

Having described her background and that of her colleagues and the ethos, values and work of the Academy Trust, the Chair led a session during which Governors were invited to ask questions of the visitors. A handout comprising responses by Reach4 to questions asked in advance of the meeting was circulated. On conclusion, Governors were invited to visit schools already part of the Reach4 Academy Trust.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

No pecuniary interests were declared by those present.

#### **4. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Governing Body held on 13th December 2016 and 31st January 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **5. Head teacher's Report and Update on RAP**

The Governing Body received the Head Teacher's report (a copy of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting). Before turning specifically to review progress on the Post Ofsted Plan for Raising Attainment (a copy of the latest version also having been circulated), the Head teacher drew attention to the following matters –

##### **Comparing Cohorts at a Glance**

Governors commented on the usefulness of this new analysis and requested that, at future meetings, class profiles and comparative information be presented on a single page.

##### **Safeguarding and Behaviour**

Governors were appraised of the number of children at school currently subject to a Child Protection Plan and the legal duties placed on the LEA by Sections 17 and 47 of the Children Act 1989 to take action to safeguard and promote a child's welfare should it be considered that they were at risk of 'significant harm'. The Head teacher made reference to children who had been assigned a part time timetable, those 'looked after' by the local authority and the exclusions that had been necessary during 2016/17.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Head teacher explained that the school received support from the Specialist Teaching Team and were doing everything possible to minimise the negative impact of behaviour on other children. As a mainstream primary school, Willingham makes adjustments to accommodate individual children and their families.

HF asked specifically if there was anything that Governing Body could do to assist. The Head teacher reiterated that she wanted Governors to be aware of the time being taken from the school day to deal with these matters.

##### **Absence Policy**

It was noted that staff absence was reported to Governors on a termly basis. The new policy will be implemented from summer 1, 2017.

##### **Honeypot Pre School**

The Governing Body received a report from Kate Van Dort, Manager of Honeypot Pre School. It was noted that there were currently 55 children on the school role, slightly down on numbers in comparison with previous years but that, upon investigation, similar establishments were experiencing the same problem.

##### **Raising Attainment Plan - Progress**

**Priority 1 – Assessment:** Reported that the Head teacher and SM had met in December to review the progress of pupil premium children and that it was the intention to introduce a charter to acknowledge that whilst these pupils were disadvantaged as a cohort marginal improvements could be achieved by implementing small changes to routine events, seating arrangements and book marking for instance.

LL added that, together with SM, she had undertaken a learning walk which had focussed on targets/marking and assessment and had given feedback to teachers. There had been many examples of good practice.



Governors noted that detailed progress/attainment data for pupil premium children would be reported to the next TALB meeting.

**Priority 2 – Improving Teaching & Learning:** The SLT described the new approach being taken towards the assessment of teaching practice and attainment and setting of appraisal targets. Learning walks had included the videoing of staff in class to enable teachers to assess and develop their own teaching techniques.

**SEN Audit:** The Head teacher reported on the outcome of the SEN Audit undertaken by Judy Ruff and Joe Hedley of the Specialist Teaching Team. Gemma Hartman-Ayers and Matt Haigh were commended for their efforts and contribution to preparations for the audit. The audit highlighted the following key messages –

- positive relationships with parents and LEA;
- ability to adapt to access learning;
- availability of extra curricular activities for SEN pupils; and
- systems in place for annual reviews.

In terms of areas for development, mention was made of the following -

- a desire for a 3 stage plan;
- Link Governor for SEN to undertake training and make regular visits to school;
- to avoid unnecessary duplication of paperwork;
- to produce an accessibility plan;
- to achieve DDA Compliance;
- to incorporate SEN section on the School Website and to include as standard item on Governing Body meeting agenda;
- to undertake pupil led reviews with parents; and
- to undertake visits to schools with excellent provision.

The Governing Body was satisfied that there was a clear plan to take forward the actions identified by the Audit.

## **6. Policies for Ratification**

Governors reviewed a series of policies (copies of which had been distributed in advance to the Governing Body).

Regarding the Health & Safety Policy, the Chair thanked IK and JA for their effort and contribution to the review of the policy. In terms of the proposed Pupil Premium Policy, it was suggested that the policy should contain a couple of examples where the school should target higher attainment rather than 'closing the gap' referring, for instance, to enhancement activities or the Challenge Club. Subject also to some further minor amendments to the text of this policy, it was

### **RESOLVED**

- a. that the Policy & Procedure for Handling Redundancy (February 2017) be approved;
- b. that the Health & Safety Policy be approved;
- c. that the Model School Complaints Policy be approved; and
- d. that, subject to the comments in the preamble, the Pupil Premium Policy be approved.

## **7. Governing Body Business**

- i. **Membership Matters** – It was noted that Steve Harding and Gemma Hartman-Ayers had resigned from the membership of the Governing Body. As it would be of benefit to

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have a link to the Honeypot Pre School and in the light of ongoing discussions regarding future governance arrangements, it was

#### **RESOLVED**

- a. **that Kate Van Dort be appointed to the Governing Body as a Staff Governor; and**
  - b. **that arrangements to fill the remaining two vacancies be held in abeyance pending the outcome of any discussion on the future make-up of the governing body.**
- ii. **Annual Governors Conference** – As Steve Harding was to attend the Annual Conference on 4th March 2017, the Chair undertook to seek an alternative nominee after the meeting.
  - iii. **Termly Workshop to Improve Governance: Spring Term 2017**– It was noted that Workshops would be held on 21st, 23rd and 28th February at various locations in Cambridgeshire.
  - iv. **Governor Training Programme: Spring Term** – It was acknowledged that this had been circulated by email.
  - v. **School Website** – It was noted that steps to publish information on Pupil Premium and the Governing Body were underway.
  - vi. **Governor Visits** – Governors were reminded to complete forms following visits to school and to forward these to HF.

#### **8. Reports and Updates from Committees**

In terms of updates from Committees, it was noted that TALB had not met recently but would do so on the return to school after half term.

In the absence of formal minutes, the Chair (VH) reported that, at its last meeting, the Personnel Committee had reviewed the school staffing situation including the present position on maternity and support staff and the arrangements that had been put in place to cover leave and absence.

LJ reported that the Finance & Premises Committee had considered an update on premises and the Asset Management Plan at its recent meeting and had recognised that there was a need to prioritise the allocation of funding for replacement information technology. It was anticipated that there would be an estimated budget surplus of £13,000 at year end.

The Chair reported that the WSA had offered to fund replacement safety matting for the Pirate Ship in the school playground.

**At 9.33pm and given the confidential nature of the business to be transacted all Staff Governors, with the exception of the Head teacher, left the meeting.**

#### **9. Report of the Strategy Group**

Further to the Special Meeting of the Governing Body held on 31st January 2017, the Chair revisited the proposals presented by the Strategy Group. Having also identified a further series of actions for future consideration, the Governing Body noted key actions and the timeline for implementation of the proposals.

After further discussion of potential options and subject to clarification of the process, the Governing Body

#### **RESOLVED**

- i. **that, in the absence of any acceptable alternative solution, the Business Case proposed by the Strategy Working Group be supported;**
- ii. **that, in the event of currently unforeseen changes to the information available, the Governing Body be afforded the opportunity to review their position before the deadline of 31st May 2017;**

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- iii. that the Chair and Head teacher be authorised to progress the necessary arrangements to effect the changes to staffing as described in the Business Case; and
- iv. that the Strategy Working Group and Head teacher be authorised to progress and oversee the necessary consultation process and documentation.

#### **10. Outcomes and Key Messages**

To close the meeting, the Chair referred to the presentation from Reach4 and suggested that further research and school visits would be necessary to thoroughly examine the opportunities, support and package offered by the Academy Trust. Although recognising that more needed to be done, Governors were pleased with the positive messages arising from the SEN Audit and finally, the Chair expressed the reluctance that Governors had expressed at having to accept the conclusions of the Business Case to address the budget deficit in future years.

#### **11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Governing Body is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 21st March 2017 at 7.30pm.

Chair

*The Meeting ended at 10.27pm.*



