

MINUTES OF MEETING



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

School: Willow Brook Primary
Meeting title: Spring term meeting of the Governing Board
Date and time: Monday, 6 February, 2017 at 6.00pm
Location: At the school

Membership

'A' denotes absence

		Mr D Cameron
A		Mr K (H) Herrington
		Mr N Rabbitts (chair)
A		Mr S Harris
		Mr D Condon
		Vacant (co-opted)
		Mr A Williams (vice-chair)
		Dr T Armour
		Mrs K Revell
		Mrs A Harrison
A		Mrs C Limon
		Mr C Brearley
		Mrs L Ballard (headteacher)
		Mr J Walker-Jones

In attendance Mrs Christine Wilson (clerk to the governors)

GB/01/17 Apologies for absence Action

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Herrington (prior commitment), Mr Harris (prior commitment) and Mrs Limon (work commitment).

It was

resolved

that the Governing Board consent to these absences.

GB/02/17 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

GB/03/17 Review of membership

The chair welcomed Mrs Ballard to her first meeting of the Governing Board as headteacher.

Governors received and noted the Governing Board membership list, which had been previously circulated. Mrs Ballard now fills the ex-officio headteacher position, leaving a co-opted governor vacancy. The clerk noted that the end date on the membership list would need alteration.

Clerk

The chair noted that Mrs Revell's term of office as parent governor would come to an end on 10 June. He was keen that she keeps her membership of the Governing Board as she chairs the Finance and Personnel Committee and is the training co-ordinator and he had ascertained she would like to continue.

Governors discussed the co-opted vacancy highlighting the result of the skills audit, the balance of parents on the Governing Board and the experience of governors. On balance the advantages of asking Mrs Revell to consider the co-opted vacancy came to the fore.

Mrs Revell resigned from her position as parent governor.

The chair nominated Mrs Revell to become a co-opted governor with a term of office of 4 years.

Mrs Revell left the room.

Governors

resolved

to elect Mrs Revell co-opted governor with a term of office of 4 years.

Mrs Revell re-joined the meeting and the chair congratulated her on her appointment.

Mrs Revell completed a declaration of eligibility.

Clerk

The chair asked the headteacher to hold a parent governor election in the next half term.

HT

GB/04/17

Minutes of

Autumn term meeting

The minutes of the autumn term meeting held on 7 November, 2016 having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the chair.

Matters arising

GB/47/16 SEN/LAC link governor

Mrs Limon has been appointed SEN, Behaviour and LAC link governor. Due to the headteacher recruitment process, the LAC link meeting hasn't yet taken place. A meeting will take place in early course.

CL

GB/48/16 SEF

The headteacher advised that the SEF has been completed and circulated to all governors.

GB/48/16 Maths link visit data

Mr Walker Jones and Mrs Harrison advised that the data has been used to inform the maths link visit.

GB/49/16 Working party for headteacher recruitment

The working party met and agreed that the headteacher should be appointed on the scale 11 to 17. It was agreed that advertisements were to be made on the Nottinghamshire County Council web-site and in the Times Educational Supplement.

GB/50/16 Link governor role for Dr Armour

This was discussed later in the meeting.

GB/50/16 Link governor training

This hasn't been actioned yet. See item GB/11/17.

GB/53/16 Collective worship

Dealt with at the Strategic Development and Pupils Committee.

GB/57/16 Skills audit

Mrs Revell had carried this out and reported to governors in GB/11/17.

Extraordinary meeting of Governing Board

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 27 January, 2017 were displayed on the whiteboard by the chair.

Governors read the minutes and confirmed they were a true record. The chair signed a paper copy.

Matters arising

Feedback

Mr Williams asked if the feedback to candidates included review of the process. The chair said that Phil Unsworth gave the feedback to the candidates. One candidate who was not shortlisted also asked for feedback, which the chair will provide.

Chair

He has asked the panel to provide feedback on the process. Panel members are to provide this to the chair and Mr Condon offered to co-ordinate feedback about the chair's performance and the process as a whole. He will e-mail the panel to begin this.

**SH, DCo,
KR, JWJ
DCo**

Headteacher's report

The headteacher presented her report which had been previously posted on sharepoint, highlighting:

- Staffing
- 'Mid-point' of the year for reporting
- September choices – 1st choice for 27 families
- Gender balance
- Attendance
- Data

Staffing

The headteacher expressed her thanks to Mrs Myring and Mrs Graham who have worked so hard with year 6 since January. It has made the handover seamless both for the headteacher and other staff.

Mrs Harrison congratulated the headteacher on her first report. She said it was very good and made lots of impact.

Gender balance

Looking at school statistics included in the report, Mrs Revell observed how many cohorts were girl heavy. There was discussion. Mr Walker Jones said that anecdotally when he first came to the school, the opposite was the case. The headteacher said that recent data studies showed that it did impact on results as boys were seen to be underperforming in some areas and she wanted to look into this with staff after the half term holiday.

Prejudice based incident

Mr Cameron asked if the incident had been dealt with to prevent recurrence. The headteacher explained that this was an isolated incident, which had been dealt with to the satisfaction of all concerned. She had held a whole school assembly to address the issues. She is planning to update her own knowledge through training on the reporting of such incidents.

Persistent absence

The chair asked about the number of children whose attendance has fallen below 90%. The headteacher said that it's a short period of time and statistically it has highlighted some instances where illness is the cause. Extended holiday has been agreed in another instance. The headteacher said she feels the attendance policy needs to be clearer and should be reviewed. Governors agreed this should be on the agenda of the next meeting of the Strategic Development and Pupils Committee.

SDPC*Schools' performance link*

The headteacher asked governors to note the link to the government's performance data in her report. It gives a snapshot of the data and can compare the data with other schools or nationally. The chair demonstrated the link on the whiteboard.

The chair thanked her for her report.

GB/06/17 Link governor reports

The chair thanked governors who were working on their reports. He showed the link governor list on the whiteboard and said it would be good to revisit the list with the new headteacher. The headteacher said that when she reviewed the School Improvement Plan with staff, they had discussed what they would expect governors to challenge them on.

Governor training for link visits was discussed. Mrs Harrison asked if her recent report was the right length and if there was any guidance. Mr Cameron said that training on the current system would be good. The chair said he would arrange training for all governors after the appointment of the new parent governor. It was decided that Mrs Harrison, the chair and the headteacher would meet to review the requirements on Link Governors, and develop the training. The clerk mentioned there is a governor training course on 6 March at County Hall – a governor could attend this and feed back into the Governing Board training.

**AH, Chair
HT**

After discussion, Dr Armour decided she would take over the Equality link governor role. The chair changed the list on the school web-site.

GB/07/17 Report from the Finance, Personnel and General Purposes Committee

Mrs Revell reported on the meeting on 1 February, highlighting

Appointment of deputy headteacher

The committee had agreed a deputy headteacher should be appointed. Governors discussed this with the headteacher outlining how she sees the role with one and a half days out of the classroom to develop projects and support the headteacher with complementary skills to her own. Governors agreed that they should move quickly to recruitment. The headteacher and Mr Walker Jones looked up the Burgundy Book notice requirements and governors decided that recruitment would need to take place after half term for a teacher to give the required notice and be able to start in September.

Governors set up a working party consisting of Dr Armour, Mr Williams, Mr Brearley and the chair. After discussion, they decided an external adviser would not be necessary and that the advert should focus on teaching experience.

**TA, AW,
CB, Chair,
HT**

School budget

Mrs Revell referred to the report circulated by the office manager to all governors which is a summary of the main areas of the budget. She offered further detail to any governor who would like to see it. The budget has been set with a 'worst case scenario' allowed in respect of salaries.

Capital swap

Mrs Revell advised the school has agreed to undertake a capital swap to reduce our revenue budget and increase the capital budget for the current year. She and the chair explained the purpose. Where another LA school requires increased revenue, they are only able to swap capital for revenue if another school makes the reverse swap, in order to keep overall budgets correct. This swap has no practical impact on Willow Brook, but helps another school in this way.

New funding formula

When the new central government funding formula comes in, the effect on the school budget will be -2.7%, around £16,000. It will be implemented progressively, -1.5% next year and -2.7% the year after. Given the predicted number on roll next year, budgets are expected to be tight but achievable going forward.

Other issues

The increase in national insurance and the new apprenticeship levy will also bear on the budget.

SFVS

Mrs Revell explained how the SFVS is a self-assessment of the security of financial matters within the school. It is now completed by governors to provide oversight and assurance. She could report that there are no remedial actions needed. She has followed up the question on benchmarking and can report that the school buys into a benchmarking service so that various budget areas can be compared with similar schools and outliers identified. Benchmarking results were discussed at the committee.

Governors

resolved

to approve the SFVS document and signing by the chair.

Services to schools

Mrs Revell explained that some of the costs of packages would be received too late for consideration by the committee. Governors therefore

resolved

to set up a review group of the chair, the chair of the Finance Personnel and General Purposes Committee, Mr Cameron and the headteacher to review and sign off the order for services, both from the LA and other suppliers.

**KR, Chair,
DCa, HT**

Finance policy

The updated finance policy had been put on the shared drive for governors to peruse. The only changes were tailoring the local authority template to Willow Brook and checking details of committee membership etc was up to date.
Governors

resolved

to approve the updated finance policy.

New standard agenda item - Keeping Children Safe in Education

Every meeting will now include the above item to ensure that safeguarding is kept to the forefront of considerations at the committee.

Mr Williams asked about the cost of safer recruitment training. He had looked at the NSPCC course and noted that it cost £30.00. The headteacher said she would ask the office manager to contact him to let him know how to access the course.

HT

Strategic Development and Pupils Committee

Mrs Harrison reported on the meeting held 30 November 2016, highlighting:

Governors' questionnaire

This had been discussed as a means of raising the governor's profile so that parents know who governors are and how to contact them. They also suggested that the chair should include articles about governance in the school newsletter. Governors agreed that the profile of governors was raised during the headteacher recruitment process and that a questionnaire might not now be the best way forward. Mr Condon suggested that the newsletter could contain articles from each committee in turn which would spread the workload. Mrs Harrison said that there should be a who's who on the wall in the entrance area. Governors agreed to have their photographs displayed. The school photographer will be in school on Tuesday 28 March and photograph governors. Mr Condon noted that the governor who's who area of the web-site needs updating.

**All gavs
chair**

Improving the efficiency of the Board's task management

This topic had been discussed at committee meetings and Mrs Limon and the chair would meet and decide how to carry out a suitable review.

CL, chair

Collective worship

Minor improvements were made to the policy which is due for review in May 2017.

Collaborative working group

Membership is now the chair, Mrs Limon, Mr Harris and the headteacher.

New chair of committee

The chair asked governors to consider becoming chair of the Strategic Development and Pupils Committee as Mrs Harrison had given him notice that she had too many demands on her time to continue. Governors decided that a new chair should be elected at the next meeting of the committee on 8 March, 2017.

SDPC

Summer term meeting

It was noted that the summer term meeting is planned for 31 May which is in half term week. It was agreed that the meeting would now be 7 June, 2017.

All gavs

GB/08/17 Report from School Improvement Plan monitoring group

The chair said this item was on the agenda in error.

GB/09/17 Reports from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

Changes to Ofsted Inspections 2016-17

The chair drew governors attention to the key questions for governors to consider, in particular:

Prepare for inspection by ensuring your school's:

- Safeguarding, in particular, the Single Central Record is up to date and meets latest requirements.
- Website meets all statutory requirements, especially reporting the use and impact of the pupil premium fully.
- Inspection dashboard has been used to predict the key lines of enquiry and governors understand pupil's performance. Governors know the outcomes well, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Summary self-evaluation (SEF) has been shared with governors and school leaders and all agree this is accurate. It may be considered useful to have a SEF and School Improvement Plan 'on a page', making sure there are explicit references to disadvantaged pupils and the difference you make to them.

The chair asked governors to note the Ofsted changes as theoretically there could be an Ofsted visit in the next few terms. He noted the full SEF has been circulated to governors.

Mrs Harrison asked how many governors Ofsted will ask to speak to. The chair said he has joined a governors' facebook group, from which he receives information about the latest trends on inspections. The headteacher said that the key lines of enquiry will be decided by inspectors before they visit and so the more information on the web-site, the better. The chair said as many governors as possible should attend the feedback session.

Safeguarding: a reminder for governors and school leaders

The chair introduced the report highlighting that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

He asked all governors to read the paper carefully and also the National Safeguarding Children's Board Christmas newsletter and NSPCC Briefing so that they are sure about all the issues. Mr Harris has completed the file audit referred to and the headteacher confirmed she has done the designated safeguarding lead training.

All gobs

Schools Causing Concern Strategy

The clerk noted that the school is consistently performing well for attainment and progress and it would be unlikely that in the near future it would fall into the 'causing concern' category.

GB/10/17 Governor training

Report from training co-ordinator including priorities for governor training and development 2017/18

Mrs Revell advised that she had recently circulated a document that summarises the skills audit. The chair showed a copy on the whiteboard.

She summarised the results as showing that the Governing Board is doing well across the board, but there are areas where the confidence rate is slightly lower – experience of procurement, links to local businesses, special needs and legal skills. The majority of these skills can be bought in apart from links to local businesses.

Although still well represented on the Board, two areas of training might be special needs – e-learning or school session - and additional time on safeguarding to further stimulate learning and discussion on this.

Mrs Revell said she would contact the office manager to make sure that all governors have had induction training. She would e-mail governors to ask them to provide certificates to the office manager for safeguarding and anti-terrorism training. She asked governors if anyone could attend 'Prevent' training at the end of February. Mrs Harrison said she would. Mrs Revell will ask the office manager to send out reminders for this training.

**AH
KR**

GB/11/17 Correspondence

The chair said that he had received an invitation to attend the installation of the new local Church of England minister at Bunny church in March. The headteacher said she had received an invitation too. Both said they would attend.

The clerk drew governors' attention to the spring term edition of the Governor Newsletter, highlighting the following articles:

2017 Governors' Conference

This takes place Saturday 11 March 2017 at Eastwood Hall. Workshop topics include An Ofsted Inspector comes to call, School Improvement, Pupil Premium, Working as a Team and Child Protection. Two free places are available to governors.

Governor telephone voting

Details of the legal setting and how to make sure that your Governing Board can use the legislation effectively. The clerk noted that the Board had already used this power.

Quality Assurance of the Headteacher's Appraisal Statement

This is a reminder that the role of QA in the headteacher appraisal process. Governing Boards need to make a suitable appointment to this role.

Advice from Legal Services – Dealing with Complaints

This article gives advice in dealing with escalation of e-mails from a complainant.

Free trees

Saplings are available from the Woodland Trust for primary schools in Nottinghamshire. The head observed that this was already in hand.

GB/12/17 Review behaviour and pupil attendance policy

Governors decided to review the attendance policy at the next meeting of the Strategic Development and Pupils Committee.

SDPC

The behaviour policy had been reviewed in September and the anti-bullying policy would be reviewed after half term.

GB/13/17 Policy update – review policy checklist

The chair demonstrated the checklist on the whiteboard showing how responsibilities had been allocated. The document is on Sharepoint and he asked governors to check that they are up to date with their individual responsibilities.

GB/14/17 Confirmation of date for 2017

The Governing Board

agreed

Summer term – Monday, 15 May, 2017 at 6.00pm

Dr Armour and Mr Williams offered their apologies for that meeting.

Clerk

GB/15/17 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that all papers and reports be made available as necessary.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Signed(chair) Date

CW/jag