

BURDETT-COUTTS AND TOWNSHEND FOUNDATION CE SCHOOL

Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 October 2017 at 5.00pm

Present: Mrs N Bowles (Chair) Mrs R Dyer (Headteacher)
Mr S Brickell Ms L Playford
Rev G Buckle Mrs E Siddall
Mrs S Butcher Mr A Woodward (Vice Chair)
Mr P Carrivick

Apologies: Mr C Drewson (Associate Member) Mr W Walter

In attendance: Mr N Cressy (Bursar) Ms C Mehegan (Clerk)

1. Opening prayer; welcome and apologies

- 1.1 All present were welcomed to the meeting, which was opened with a prayer led by Rev Buckle. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Walter and Mr Drewson. It was noted that Mr Drewson had sent in a number of written questions. Apologies for anticipated late arrival were received from Mr Brickell, who was attending a training course.

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 No declarations of interest were made in any item on the current agenda. Governors who had not done so at the previous meeting updated and signed annual declaration of interest forms.

3. Minutes of meeting of 14 September 2017 and matters arising

- 3.1 Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. Governors considered actions from the previous meeting. In response to a QUESTION, it was explained that only actions originating from meetings were recorded as formal actions, with any matters reported as already planned merely noted in the minutes.
- 3.2 Position re panels and St Gabriel's governors (Min 12.5): It was reported that efforts to contact the former Headteacher, the Revd. John Hicks, regarding arrangements made with St Gabriel's had, thus far, been unsuccessful. It was not proposed that the reference in the Standing Orders to reciprocal arrangements for forming panels, where necessary, be amended at this time.
- 3.3 All other actions from the September meeting and all earlier actions were reported now to be complete. There were no further matters arising not otherwise on the agenda.

4. Chair's report

- 4.1 A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The sole formal 'Chair's action' to report was the signing of staff salary statements by the Vice Chair. Questions were invited on other areas covered in the report.
- 4.2 Local Authority support The report included a reference to a letter received from the LA, recategorising the school from being in need of 'Additional

Support' to being part of the 'Core Programme/Light Touch Support and Monitoring', with an overall local evaluation of Good. A QUESTION was asked regarding the reasons for this change. It was explained that this was in part due to improved pupil outcomes in Summer 2017 and in part due to the LA being satisfied that the Senior Leadership Team understood what was necessary for continued improvement and was working towards this. It was AGREED that the letter would be circulated to all.

Action: Chair/Headteacher

- 4.3 Governing Body membership A QUESTION was asked regarding the timescale for the appointment of a new governor by the school's Trustees. It was reported that the next meeting was due to take place on 9 November 2017. It was noted that Mr Drewson had some concerns about how many meetings he would be able to attend but that it had been emphasised that there were a number of ways in which a contribution was possible. The position would be kept under review. It was reported that Mr Turpin had stood down from the GB for personal reasons and confirmed that the need for a new Parochial Church Council-appointed governor was to be considered at the next meeting of the PCC. Governors wished to put on record their thanks for Mr Turpin's contribution to the school and the GB over a period of several years.
- 4.4 Monitoring structure A QUESTION was asked about the nature and content of 'phase meetings' referenced in the report. It was explained that, although primary education was divided into three Key Stages (Foundation for ages 3-5, Key Stage 1 for ages 5-7 and Key Stage 2 for ages 7-11), the school management structure included team leaders for four 'phases': ages 3-5, 5-7, 7-9 and 9-11. Regular meetings for each phase considered matters including safeguarding and pupil progress.
- 4.5 Governing Body effectiveness and development It was reported that the majority of questionnaires on GB effectiveness and the performance of the Chair had now been received. An analysis would be presented at the next meeting of the GB. Governors were now requested to complete a skills audit form, which would inform consideration of skills during succession planning and planning of governor training. Governors were pleased to note the content of the recently developed folder of training/reference materials. It was confirmed that two recently appointed governors had attended induction training.

Action: Governors

- 4.6 There was some discussion of governor training and the range and suitability of courses available. It was noted that it was sometimes necessary to attend similar courses every two to three years due to changes in national requirements or processes. However, it was recognised that fitting training in around governors' other commitments could be challenging and that arranging tailored 'top-up' training might be helpful. It was AGREED that this would be investigated further. The skills audit would help identify what was needed. It was further noted that it would be helpful if governors could disseminate key learning from courses attended, with brief reports (either written or verbal).

Action: Chair

- 4.7 There was some discussion of the updating of knowledge via use of The Key, the National Governance Association etc. It was noted that the school had Gold membership of the NGA and governors received email updates and magazines. The Chair had access to The Key. It was AGREED that access for all would be investigated.

Action: Bursar

5. School Improvement Plan

- 5.1 The proposed School Improvement Plan, as drafted based on previous discussions, was presented by Mrs Dyer. It was pointed out that the plan was based on a model format provided by The Key and was slightly streamlined when compared with the previous year's plan, containing five key priorities as opposed to the previous year's ten. The priority areas had been chosen based on pupil outcomes and on recommendations in the school's most recent Ofsted report. Proposed link governors for each key priority area were noted, as was detail of various actions to be taken within each area. It was noted that there was a further, more detailed planning document in use within the school but that this need not be part of the SIP itself.

[Clerk's note: Mr Brickell joined the meeting at 5.40pm]

- 5.2 There was some discussion of the length of the plan, the degree of detail included and the various audiences for the plan. It was noted that the document needed to include both strategic goals and a degree of operational detail. A broad overview was useful for parents and a summary booklet was reported to be in development. Inspectors and advisers would need to see more detail and the current draft had been created with that in mind. The plan was formally APPROVED and thanks were extended to all those involved in its development. It was AGREED that the full version of the plan should be published on the school website, with the addition of a contents page, and that a summary should be made available.

Action: Headteacher

- 5.3 There was some discussion of the process for monitoring of progress of the plan. It was noted that there were target dates for key actions and that these would serve as a useful guide for scheduling of link governors' monitoring visits. It was explained that governors were asked to report back to the full Governing Body regarding their visits but that the relevant sections of the SIP itself would be updated by the subject leaders/strategic leaders. In response to a QUESTION, it was explained that senior leaders, as well as governors, had been closely involved in the drafting of the plan and that it would now be disseminated to all staff.

6. Headteacher's report

- 6.1 Mrs Dyer provided a verbal report with key data presented on screen.
- 6.2 Behaviour and Safety Governors were reminded that **pupil behaviour** had long been a strength of the school, frequently commented upon by visitors. Use of sanctions was recorded using an information management system, and it was reported that there had been only two incidents requiring a 'yellow

card' warning, leading to a discussion with parents, during the first six weeks of term. Information was given regarding the circumstances of the pupils involved. It was confirmed that intervention was believed to be making an impact.

- 6.3 It was reported that there were currently no pupils on the child protection register. There had been one **safeguarding** incident, which had been referred to the police and the Local Authority. In response to a QUESTION, it was explained that it was appropriate that governors be informed about the number of incidents but not the precise details of incidents. The safeguarding link governor would also provide a written report towards the end of the year.
- 6.4 There was some discussion of processes and protocols and the support provided by the Local Authority's Designated Officer, who was reported to have approved the action taken by the school in this specific case. It was noted that the school considered safeguarding as the first item at every weekly phase meeting. In response to a QUESTION, it was reported that there had been a number of incidents on the previous school year, as a variety of matters qualified as safeguarding incidents. Governors could be provided with a breakdown of the types of incident. It was emphasised that, in the event of the Local Authority/Social Services having any concerns about the school's processes, this would be drawn directly to the attention of the Governing Body by those bodies.
- 6.5 Teaching and Learning - general Information was provided on the current staffing structure, including the number of full and part time teaching staff and arrangements for covering teachers' Planning, Preparation and Assessment time. An updated school Self-Evaluation Form would be provided at the next meeting of the Governing Body, but it could be reported at this time that the quality of teaching across the school was assessed as being good, with some being outstanding. Governors were reminded that five further staff were to go through an outstanding teaching development programme in the current year, with funding having been received from the St Giles and William Sheldon Foundation.
- 6.6 Leadership and Management It was reported that the Senior Leadership Team's work during the term thus far had included work on the Pupil Premium and Sports Premium (as submitted at the September meeting) and various policies (included in papers for this meeting). The SLT and middle leaders had begin work on the school's Self-Evaluation Form. There had also been work on curriculum development, including a recent Spanish Day, a Peace Day and the temporary transformation of a classroom into a prayer space. A further event had been a very successful interfaith assembly, attended by a representative of St Stephen's with St John, an imam, a rabbi and a Buddhist monk. It was noted that one particularly positive aspect of the assembly was the attendance of some children whose families had previously withdrawn them from collective worship.
- 6.7 Key Stage 1 update Information was provided on the two classes in Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2). This included contextual data: numbers of pupils, data re gender/ethnicity/free school meals status and incidence of English as an Additional Language and Special Educational Needs. Information was provided on pupil attendance, which was reported to be above the national average in both years, on staffing and on strategies used to provide pupils with tailored support. In response to a QUESTION regarding the definition of

SEN and the funding implications, it was reported that this could include a variety of needs, including cognitive or behavioural issues. Formal diagnoses were made by medical professionals. At the 'school support' level, no additional funding was available. For pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan, the first £6,000 per pupil must come from the school's existing budget, with further external funding available where this sum was insufficient to meet pupils' needs.

- 6.8 Information was provided on pupil attainment data, including baseline testing for Year 1 pupils, and on areas of particular focus for development (notably writing, as in the School Improvement Plan). A full written report on standards would be provided to the next meeting of the Governing Body. It was noted that it was no longer a statutory requirement that governing bodies set formal targets. Governors considered the data provided, including data comparing pupil outcomes across the Local Authority. A QUESTION was asked regarding whether there were particular barriers within the current Year 2 group. It was explained that this cohort was very different from the previous cohort, and contained a number of children with processing issues and other challenges. The school's preferred approach was not to 'teach to the test', but rather to adapt teaching to provide pupils with relevant skills. A variety of strategies were used to provide appropriate support and challenge.
- 6.9 Governors were pleased to note the evidence of self-review and the increasing strength of provision in Key Stage 1 over a period of years. It was confirmed that the school's position in the Local Authority results had continued to improve since 2013. Governors were asked if they had any feedback for pupils in Key Stage 1 and stated that they were pleased to see reports of pupils' good attendance and excellent behaviour, which both led to good results for pupils.

7. Bursar's report

- 7.1 Mr Cressy presented a written report, including details of payroll amendments for October 2017 and a full report on the budget for the first six months of the school financial year.
- 7.2 It was reported that spending was broadly in line with projections for this stage of the year. In response to a QUESTION regarding key sensitivities and 'red flags', it was explained that the most significant area of spending was always staff costs and that these were currently within budget. Further QUESTIONS were asked regarding utility bills and regarding the money owed to the school by the Local Authority for meals provided from the school's kitchen to another school. It was explained that it had been discovered that gas bill payments had been being automatically refunded to the school because of a change in the provider's bank details but that this had now been rectified. The money owed by the LA was yet to be paid and the school had brought the matter to the attention of the Director of Finances. The service had not, however, been withdrawn from the other school. There was some discussion of the differences between the former catering contract and the previous contract, which had been agreed by the LA. The school was not a party to the contract process, but was keeping the position under review.
- 7.3 It was reported that there had been a recent significant change to the school's annual income which was not included in the half year report. Although the school had received no money in the previous year to compensate for the

falling number of pupils on roll, £108,000 had now been received from the Local Authority for the current year. It was explained that this was likely to be a one-off payment but that it was sufficient to cover both the lower amount of Pupil Premium funding received in the current year and the unplanned expense of the urgent upgrade to the school's server. There was some discussion of the possible earmarking of funds for specific purposes and the risk of clawback of unspent funds. It was confirmed that proposals for spending and/or earmarking of the additional funding would be brought to governors at a future meeting.

7.4 Governors thanked Mr Cressy for his report.

8. Other financial matters

8.1 It was reported that research into the costs of website provision had been undertaken but that no written report was available at this time. Mr Walter not being present to report upon his findings, it was AGREED that this matter should be considered by email.

Action: Governors with no financial interest in this matter

9. Committee reports

9.1 It was reported that a date for the Headteacher's performance review meeting had been scheduled for November and that a pay recommendation from the Headteacher's Performance Management Committee would be forthcoming in due course.

10. Governance matters

10.1 Governing Body membership matters Membership had been discussed earlier during this meeting, under the Chair's report. There was some discussion of succession planning, with it being noted that Mrs Siddall was unlikely to be in a position to continue in her role past the end of the current school year. It was recognised that the planned skills audit would be relevant to succession planning. It was noted that the School Governors' One-Stop Shop was a further source of potential governors.

10.2 Committee Terms of Reference Updated drafts of the Terms of Reference for the Pay Committee and Headteacher's Performance Management Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting and were APPROVED.

10.3 Link roles and SIP monitoring roles It was noted that the School Improvement plan had included proposed names of governors to monitor progress of Key Priorities. Subject to the addition of Ms Playford to monitoring of KP2, for succession planning reasons, these were AGREED.

10.4 Further Link Governor roles were AGREED as follows:

- SEND and Looked After Children - Mr Walter
- Safeguarding - Mrs Butcher
- Pupil Premium - Mr Carrivick
- Sports Premium - Ms Playford
- Governor Training - Mr Woodward
- Health and Safety - Mr Brickell

- Religious Education/SIAMS - Mr Woodward
- Equalities - Mr Woodward.

- 10.5 Governors were reminded that these monitoring roles were not intended to be onerous. Governors should meet with the relevant member of school staff to inform themselves regarding progress/compliance with requirements and provide a short written report to the Governing Body once during the school year. They should also keep their monitoring area(s) in mind during meetings and when reading Governing Body papers in preparation for meetings.
- 10.6 Governing Body Standing Orders An updated copy of the Governing Body's Standing Orders had been circulated prior to the meeting. These were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.
- 10.7 Governing Body year planner The current version of the planner had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that, where governor names were listed next to policies, their responsibility was not to draft policies but to monitor and review them for recommendation to the Governing Body.
- 10.8 There was some discussion of business listed for the November meeting and whether this could realistically be covered in the time remaining following training scheduled for that evening. It was AGREED that this would be considered during drafting of the agenda.

[Clerk's note: the November meeting was subsequently rescheduled to 14 December 2017, with the training session remaining on the original November date]

- 10.9 Statutory policy audit A copy of an audit of statutory policies on the website had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was reported that no concerns had been identified. It was noted that one change had been made to the website in the previous year following a review by the Local Authority's Tri-Borough Service and that no issues had been raised following a more recent audit by the London Diocesan Board for Schools.

11. Statutory policies/key documents

- 11.1 School term dates Subject to the amendment of a typographical error showing staff training dates in June which were, in fact, scheduled for July, proposed term dates for the school year 2018-19 were APPROVED.
- 11.2 Governors' Allowances Policy It was reported that the Governors' Allowances Policy had been amended to remove references to a committee which no longer existed. The policy was APPROVED.
- 11.3 Exclusion Policy It was reported that the Exclusion Policy had been updated in line with new national guidance. The policy was APPROVED. In response to a QUESTION, it was explained that a copy would now be circulated to staff following approval. A further QUESTION was asked regarding the number of exclusions in the previous school year. It was reported that one child had been excluded for three fixed term periods during the year. There had been no permanent exclusions.
- 11.4 Safeguarding Policy It was reported that the Safeguarding policy had been checked against new national guidance. The policy was APPROVED.

- 11.5 Attendance and Punctuality Policy The Attendance and Punctuality policy was APPROVED. It was reported that the school was encouraging 100% pupil attendance via newsletters and that action (beginning with letters to and meetings with parents) was taken in the event of a child's attendance falling below 98%. Attendance was currently reported to be running at 97.47%, as compared with 96.13% at the same point in the previous school year. In response to a QUESTION, it was reported that the rate of unauthorised absence was currently highest in Years 3 and 4.
- 11.6 Scheme of Delegation (including internal financial delegation) A copy of the National Governance Association's delegation planner had been circulated prior to the meeting. This provided a list of matters which could and could not be delegated by the Governing Body, either to committees or to individuals. It was AGREED that a proposed scheme of delegation should be drafted for submission to the next meeting of the Governing Body. It was noted that one matter for particular consideration was sign-off of financial transactions now that the GB did not have a separate Finance Committee.

Action: Chair, Vice Chair, Headteacher

12. Any other business

12.1 There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.50pm.

Summary of action points

Action (and relevant section in minutes)	Owner
Circulate LA letter re recategorisation of school support needs (4.2)	Chair/Headteacher
Complete skills audit form and return to Vice Chair (4.5)	Governors
Investigate possibility of tailored governor training from London Diocesan Board for Schools (4.6)	Chair
Investigate governor access to The Key for School Governors (4.7)	Bursar
Publish SIP (with contents page) on website, and make summary version available (5.2)	Headteacher
Liase by email re costs of website provision (8.1)	Governors with no financial interest in this matter
Draft proposed Scheme of Delegation for submission to next meeting of Governing Body (11.6)	Chair, Vice Chair, Headteacher

Signed as a correct record by the Chair:

_____ (Print name)

_____ (Date)