



St George's Primary School

Full Governor Body Meeting

Thursday 22nd November 2018

Lower Site Main Hall 5:30pm

Present

Community Governors	P. Walters	FGB Chair
	B. Clark	
	A. Ward	
	M. Wiggins	
Parent Governors	P. Dunning	
	C. Scott	FGB Vice Chair
	A. Fisher	
Staff Governors	L. Horton	
	B. Cassidy	Head Teacher
Also Present	K. Choudhary	Clerk
	M. Chambers	Assistant Head
	C. Roberts	Business Manager
	L. Binks	
Apologies	K. Wadcock	
Did Not Attend	N. Sullivan	

Item 1 Welcome, Apologies and declarations of AoB

Noted and received as above.

Item 2 Confirmation of election of Chair and Vice Chair of Governors

Election Process paperwork circulated as part of the papers.

As discussed electronically prior to the meeting, K. Choudhary reminded FGB that he had received no EOIs for the role of Chair and 3 EOIs for the role of Vice Chair. As such, an election needed to take place (as set out in the election process paperwork) between B. Clark, P. Dunning and C. Scott. All candidates gave a brief outline of why they wish to fulfil the role of

Vice Chair of FGB and there was an opportunity for FGB to ask any question that they might have.

FGB informed that B. Cassidy wished to abstain from the election process. B. Clark, P. Dunning, C. Scott and B. Cassidy left the room whilst a discussion on candidates took place and a vote was taken.

Candidates invited back into the room.

K. Choudhary informed FGB that **C. Scott had been elected as Vice Chair of FGB.**

Given there was no EOIs for the role of Chair of FGB (and P. Walters desire to remain in post), P. Walters was nominated. M. Wiggins nominated and A. Ward seconded **P. Walters approved as Chair of FGB.**

SLT stated that it is really positive that Governors have shown a desire to 'step up' and drive forward the school's ethos. It was suggested that this is not typical of other Governing Bodies.

Item 3 Declaration of any business or pecuniary interests

There was no declaration of any business or pecuniary interests.

It was suggested that Governors are required to sign a Business or Pecuniary interest form annually.

ACTION FGB1(11/18): K. Choudhary to forward this document electronically for FGB to complete and hand back signed copy to school.

Item 4 Minutes of previous meeting and action points

Minutes accepted as a true and accurate record.

All actions points from previous meeting have been completed or are to be discussed in the meeting.

Item 5 Clerk updates

K. Choudhary updated FGB on the following;

DfE Portal and governor contacts: FGN informed that as per DfE requirements, a list of governor's names (and length of service) has been uploaded to the DfE portal and is a public record. K. Choudhary reassured FGB that only their names have been made public as K. Choudhary omitted certain detail input fields, for example, postcode.

Secretarial changes to documents/policies: FGB informed that administrative changes to documents/ policies should be actioned outside (and prior) to meetings. This practice will allow meeting to focus on strategy and direction of travel.

Parent governor elections: FGB informed that the school has received two strong parent nominations for the two vacant Parent Governor roles. The closing date for submission is 23/11/18 and if the school does not receive any further nominations, the current nominations will be accepted without the need for an election.

Induction arrangements for new governors: FGB informed that new governors will complete an induction to familiarise themselves with role and outline the responsibilities needed to be an effective and engaged governor.

Committee organisation for 2018-19: FGB reminded that following the skills audit that all committee's membership has evaluated and revised accordingly. The school has now completed the first cycle of committee meeting and TOR will be discussed later in the agenda.

Nominated governor roles: FGB informed that the nominated Governor role for English and SEND are currently vacant following R. Olsen and S. Slater relinquishing their roles. Following an action from C&PC, Sonia Huxley and A. Ward have had a conversation outside of C&PC to discuss the role and responsibilities of the SEND Lead Governor and A. Ward is happy to take on this challenge. A. Ward nominated for the role of SEND Lead Governor. P. Walters nominated and P. Dunning seconded. **A. Ward approved as SEND Lead Governor.**

K. Choudhary stated that the English Lead role remains open however FGB should look to fulfil this role after the recruitment of two new Parent Governors.

Scheme of delegation: Circulated as part of the papers. FGB reminded that this document acts as TOR for this group and steers the direction of travel for the other committees. FGB invited to comment on the Scheme of Delegation. FGB are happy with this document.

Governing Body Annual Planner: Circulated as part of the papers. FGB reminded that this document is informed by the Scheme of Delegation. SLT suggested that the first R&PC meeting needs to be brought forward in the next year to allow any pay disputes to be addressed earlier in the academic year cycle.

DECISION TAKEN: FGB agreed that the first R&PC meeting of the academic year will be brought forward to before the Autumn half term.

Key for Governors, Educare and NGA: FGB reminded and signposted to the various support networks made available to Governors – at a financial cost to the school.

Item 6 Disciplinary Policy and Training

Disciplinary Policy circulated as part of the papers.

FGB reminded that there was training session on 14/11/18 provided by SAS Daniels. This training was well received by all those that attended. SLT thanked those Governors that were able to attend.

ACTION FGB2(11/18): SLT to circulate presentation slide when available.

SLT highlighted the following points from the training session;

- It is a Governors principle responsibility to ensure a separation of duties once an issue escalates beyond the head teacher. This will mean that disciplinary issues may be undertaken in school where Governors have no knowledge of this. The rationale behind this is that if there needs to be an appeal, Governors need to be in a position where they are not privy to information nor influenced prior to the case being heard.
- If the Head Teacher is involved in investigating disciplinary procedures or the Head Teacher has witnessed disciplinary procedures, this then need to be escalated to the Chair of FGB. This issue cannot be delegated to a member of SLT so not to put staff members in

a compromising position where they may be required to contradict their direct line manager.

- Should there be any disciplinary involving the Head Teacher, the Chair of FGB would be tasked with investigating. Any investigation should be timely however the policy concedes that this may present challenges. As such, the policy allows Governors the right to appoint an independent advisor to undertake a disciplinary investigation.

DECISION TAKEN: FGB agreed the schools Disciplinary Policy. **RATIFIED.**

Item 7 Finance update

Documents circulated as part of the papers.

Period 6: FGB informed that C. Scott and C. Roberts had met before R&PC to discuss the school budget prior to the meeting.

FGB informed that the school is on track in the budget cycle with no significant issues. SLT highlighted that there are some areas of variance. For example, cleaning staff cost are substantially higher due to sick leave and subsequent additional cost agency staff being drafted in to meet school needs.

Overall, the school is on track and SLT are optimistic that the school will be ahead by end of financial year.

DECISION TAKEN: FGB agreed Period 6. **RATIFIED.**

Charging Policy: FGB informed that there has been no change to the policy however highlighted that schools are repeatedly being held to account for not applying charging policies. The charging policy is dictated by law and states that schools can only ask for voluntary contributions for things that are provided during the curriculum day and the school has to provide subsidies events which are run in the school.

SLT stated that this document needs to be revisited annually.

Debtors Report: supporting documents circulated as part of the papers. As discussed in R&PC, FGB informed that the school has seen an improvement in the debt levels. Following R&PC, Chair of FGB asked that the debt levels be investigated further. This investigation has highlighted the school debt levels are circa 25% higher than originally reported. As such, C. Scott met with C. Roberts to discuss debt levels and the school have prepared a statement of how the school has moved forward and show how the school is taking steps to recoup outstanding debts.

SLT stated that paying by childcare vouchers has caused issues in financial recording given the lag in the system through retrospective payment method. This issue has been augmented by the fact the Government system has crashed recently further adding to a lag in reporting.

FGB asked how much of the increased debt is due to the delay in voucher payments?

RESOLUTION: C. Roberts stated that government voucher payments are starting to trickle into the school however the current software used by the school does not allow reporting by date so SLT are unable to provide a definitive answer. SLT have asked the current software provider to tailor the existing provision to allow reporting by date however they are unable to do so. As such, the school is now exploring different software packages with other providers.

SLT stated that they have reshuffled the management team and employed a new administrative role. This now allows managers to focus on supervision of pupils and address skills gap in the team.

FGB highlighted that the report suggested that there are 77 cases of historical debts. Will schools be chasing?

RESOLUTION: SLT suggested that for small debts, for example circa £3.50, the school will be sending polite individualised letters home with pupils stating that there is a small debt and appreciate that this is more than likely an oversight and the school would be grateful if this could be cleared.

FGB asked is it worth chasing such small debts?

RESOLUTION: It was suggested that small debt all add up into a much larger debt and the cost of sending reminder letters home with pupil is minimal and could potentially yield positive results.

SLT stated that the LA Debt Enforcement service level is no as strong as it could be and they often just repeat the processes carried out in school.

SLT suggested that there may be a need to archive historically debt at some point.

FGB stated that they have done this in the past and this is not their preferred option as they do not want to see the school in same position in the future.

Gifts and Hospitality Policy: Circulated as part of the papers. FGB informed that this is a new policy and as such, needs ratifying.

FGB informed that this policy includes a disclosure section and anything given over the value of £25 should be recorded. SLT stated that this register will be circulated annually to FGB for transparency.

FGB asked does the school refuse the majority of gifts?

RESOLUTION: Yes.

FGB asked who authorises gifts over £25?

RESOLUTION: Finance and Business Manager.

DECISION TAKEN: FGB agreed the Gifts and Hospitality Policy. **RATIFIED.**

Item 8 Complaints Policy Review

The Complaint Policy was circulated in the papers.

FGB informed that the policy has not been updated form previous year.

DECISION TAKEN: FGB agreed the Complaints Policy. **RATIFIED.**

Item 9 Statutory Documents Update

SEND Report, Use of P.E Funding and Pupil Premium Report circulated as part of the papers.

FGB reminded that all policies have been review by the relevant committees.

FGB stated that the SEND document needs to be updated with A. Ward as SEND Lead Governor.

ACTION FGB3(11/18): SLT to amend SEND document with A. Ward as SEND Lead Governor.

Item 10 Questions on decisions made by other committees

FGB invited to raise question on any of the committee meetings. No questions were raised.

K. Choudhary reminded FGB that committee TORs were agreed at their meeting.

DECISION TAKEN: FGB agreed TORs for all committee groups. **RATIFIED.**

K. Choudhary reminded FGB that current best practice is to ratify all committee minutes at the Full Governing Board meeting given that all Governors attend this meeting.

DECISION TAKEN: All subcommittee groups' minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record. **RATIFIED.**

Item 11 OFSTED Update

OFSTED Update circulated as part of the papers.

B. Cassidy delivered an oral update on OFSTED changes and consultation. It was hoped that SLT would be able to share materials on the changes however there has been a DfE delay in releasing documents.

SLT suggested that OFSTED is having a change of focus from standards in school to quality of education across the whole curriculum. This represents a huge shift in focus with the review and judgement on a school being on the breadth across curriculum. SLT stated that for many Governing Bodies that means they are in the situation of really question how clear is the school on their wider curriculum offer. SLT suggested that the school is well ahead of the curve given the school completely overhauled the curriculum last academic year.

FGB informed that staff have recently attended a training session on the new OFSTED emphasis on pupil knowledge and understanding.

FGB informed that for school that requirement improvement, they will now be given 4 years to turn it around – previously it was 2 years.

FGB stated that they are very disappointed in the movement from 2 to 4 years.

RESOLUTION: SLT suggested that DfE welcomes feedback from Governors during the OFSTED consultation period.

ACTION FGB4(11/18): SLT to forward link to DfE feedback on OFSTED consultation.

FGB asked is this new OFSTED focus creating more work for staff?

RESOLUTION: Yes. The school feels like it is in a strong place but it has been massive effort by all staff and the challenge is being met.

Item 12 Head Teacher's Report to Governors

Head Teacher's Report to Governors circulated as part of the papers.

Comments on the report included;

Section 7 Attendance: FGB queried the persistence absence target for non pupil premium children at 94.5%.

RESOLUTION: SLT stated that this should 4.5% - not 94.5%.

Section 8 P.E Funding Impact: FGB informed that the school has applied and been awarded a £9k grant for capital improvement to encourage healthier activities however funds will only be released once the project has been costed. As such, the school council has been tasked with engaging local companies to provide project brief and meetings will commence soon. FGB asked if Governors are welcome to attend this session?

RESOLUTION: Yes

ACTION FGB5(11/18): SLT to invite M. Wiggins to upcoming meeting.

Section 10 Safeguarding: SLT highlighted that reported incidents numbers have increased but this is due to much stronger recording practices and as such, should be seen as a real positive.

Section 12 Mobility: FGB reminded that this is a statutory expectation that this is reported to Governors. In 2015/16 the school had 44 pupils leave the school however in 2017/18 this figure was reduced to only 8 pupils. Governors were reminded that this figure omits Early Years.

FGB asked is this because of an upturn in the school's reputation?

RESOLUTION: Anecdotal evidence would suggest so. FGB informed that the school had a open day recently on Saturday and feedback was really good. Parents stated that they would not have consider St Georges in the previous years.

FGB stated that they appreciated school staff willingness and endeavours to come in on a Saturday as this allows parents to presented families the opportunity to visits around their work commitments and involve the wider family unit.

Section 15 School Partnerships: The school is part of an EU partnership with a consortium of schools from Malta who are developing their curriculum. The school have secured €26k of funding to drive innovation in English. The school will be welcoming staff from partner Malta schools will be releasing 10 members of staff to attend Malta schools.

FGB asked how are SLT managing the workload?

RESOLUTION: Careful management of workloads and visits have been arranged for end of June/ beginning of July '19 when classroom management burden is slightly lessened.

Item 13 AoB

FGB asked for confirmation when C. Scott would be taking up the role of Vice Chair of FGB?

RESOLUTION: K. Choudhary stated as of this meeting.

FGB expressed their sincere gratitude for the sterling work B. Clark has done in the role of Vice Chair of FGB.

Item 14 Date and Time of next meeting

Thursday 14th March 2019 @ 5:30pm

The meeting finished at 7:00pm

Chair Sign Off

Date

Item	Summary of actions from meeting	Whom	Date to be completed
3	<u>FGB1(11/18)</u> : K. Choudhary to forward this document electronically for FGB to complete and hand back signed copy to school.	K. Choudhary	Nov '18
6	<u>FGB2(11/18)</u> : SLT to circulate presentation slide when available.	SLT	Nov '18
9	<u>FGB3(11/18)</u> : SLT to amend SEND document with A. Ward as SEND Lead Governor.	SLT	Nov '18
11	<u>FGB4(11/18)</u> : SLT to forward link to DfE feedback on OFSTED consultation.	SLT	Nov '18
12	<u>FGB5(11/18)</u> : SLT to invite M. Wiggins to upcoming meeting	SLT	Nov '18