

RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD (LGB)

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8th July 2019 at 6.30pm

Present: Mrs Carolyn Walker (Vice Chair), Mr Ian Yapp (Headteacher), Mr Peter Carr
Miss Alison Woodward, Mr Rick Miles (via video link), Mr Charlie Heard, Mr John O’Callaghan

In attendance: Mr Iain Tessier (Clerk, Governance Advisor)

Prior to the meeting starting, governors received a presentation from the co-chair of the School Council, supported by Mrs Adams.

1.0 Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

1.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Ian Butler and Andrew Warnes.

1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

2.0 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 24th June 2019

2.1 Resolved:

Governors agreed that the minutes of the last meeting, held on 24th June 2019, were a correct record of that meeting and the Vice Chair was duly authorised to sign the minutes.

3.0 Action Points and Matters Arising (from last meeting)

3.1	Complete governor link visits (carried over)	Some governors still needed to diarise link visits
	Pupil exit survey – support with exit interviews	Mr O’Callaghan and Mr Heard to support the exit interview process
	Investigate issues over communication with parents re: requests for payments	On agenda

4.0 Governor Matters and Board Development

4.1 Mr Miles fed back on the recent chairs’ forum. Those in attendance received an update on the new assessment strategy for schools – it was envisaged that this would allow for fairer comparisons with schools across the Trust and clearer reporting on data generally. The Governance Advisor updated chairs on the planned governor recruitment strategy – aimed at addressing both capacity and skills gaps. The GA also highlighted the importance of training and focussed governors visits and there would be protocols on these published shortly. LGBs would also benefit from an agenda planner for the year. LGBs were strongly encouraged to operate as a singular committee of the Trust board and to use working groups, as opposed to sub-committees, to discuss specific matters in more detail. Working groups could feedback to the LGB with recommendations as required. The GA talked about how to approach succession planning. Chairs’ received a budget update from the COO and were made aware that finances remained an issue for the Trust – the lack of political leadership and general uncertainty over future funding was not helping the situation. School budgets for the year ahead were looking better than initially forecasted but the three-year projections showed a substantial budget deficit and therefore careful management was required, along with an understanding that further savings would have to be identified. Schools needed to plan spending wisely and identify more opportunities for income generation.

ACTION

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JO’C
CH**

Clerk

4.2 In order to best address the current vacancies on the LGB, the Vice Chair suggested updating the skills audit. Governors agreed. The Clerk indicated that this was in hand for September. The Vice Chair also requested the training record for the year.

ALL
Clerk

4.3 The Headteacher felt it would be beneficial for governors to receive the update on the new assessment regime. Governors agreed. This to be added to the September agenda.

Agenda

5.0 Curriculum Presentation - Maths

5.1 Governors were shown the current school data for Maths. The SATs test results would be released tomorrow. Given the recent issues around Maths leadership and outcomes, the Headteacher noted that a balanced and varied curriculum had to be weighed against adequate test preparation and ensuring children mastered the basic concepts. Ultimately, schools would still be judged to some extent on results and it never looked good if Maths outcomes were poor.

5.2 The Pixl practice tests were unsuitable and SLT were uncomfortable about the knock-on effect on pupils and their confidence. This approach was to be scrapped.

5.3 A governor noted that one of the year groups had a 96% ARE target. Was that realistic? The Headteacher replied that, based on prior attainment information and progress tracking, this was a reasonable, stretching target.

5.4 With regards Maths schemes of work, the Headteacher believed that the school's pupils would benefit from questions and tasks that enhanced their fluency, their problem solving abilities and their reasoning. Classroom Secrets was a resource that offered a wide range of examples in these areas and would compliment White Rose. Governors were shown some examples of recent test questions and how Maths provision needed to be geared to address this level of questioning.

5.5 Y6 had made positive use of IXL, an AI curriculum support package. It was described as one of the year's successes. Differentiation and challenge could be pinpointed based on pupil's responses to the questions under certain topics. The tool helped with fluency and problem solving in particular but was less in-depth on the reasoning side. The subscription for the year was £1,700 and the Headteacher said that he would submit a further report to governors next year, outlining overall effectiveness and value for money.

IY

5.6 In terms of monitoring, Mr Miles had joined SLT for a book scrutiny. The learning walls were generally good, however, some inconsistency needed to be addressed. In terms of next steps, the focus had to be on some non-negotiables: effective working walls, the quantity and quality of work set, promotion of complex/abstract problem solving and SMIRF time.

5.7 The presentation moved to a focus on the new approach to primary assessment. The MAT would be using PUMA by Hodder. The current six tracking points would reduce to three. The new tools and diagnostics would allow for a more accurate analysis of standards 'fine scoring' and that would help to better differentiate, challenge and support pupils. It was noted that a further investment in ICT (Chromebooks in classrooms) would complement the investment in IXL, Classroom Secret etc.

5.7.1 A governor asked if parents had been informed about the new systems. The Headteacher acknowledged that this had not happened yet but agreed that a message needed to be conveyed.

IY

5.8 The Headteacher announced that the school would be withdrawing streaming in Y6 in the autumn term. Maths outcomes had not been good enough and thus they could not justify carrying on doing the same thing. Research had shown that streaming had a negative impact on lower ability pupils, with little perceivable benefit for middle/higher ability pupils. Booster groups would continue though.

5.8.1 Given the talk about better differentiation and the need for it, a governor wanted to be clear that mixed ability groups would allow teachers to effectively differentiate across what would be more diverse groups ability wise. The Headteacher believed there would be no impact on the ability to differentiate. Again, research had shown that mixed ability groups actually helped to promote support and stretch across the ability range.

6.0 Headteacher's Report

6.1 The Headteacher's report had been circulated prior to the meeting, along with the latest attendance report. The following points were highlighted:

- The KS1 data was weaker than expected. Everyone was aware of the challenges that had been faced in that phase but SLT was conscious of the need to move things forward as quickly as possible.
- Admissions data was looking slightly more positive than previously reported.
- In terms of SEND, the school had 7 EHCP applications going through. It was conceivable that the school could have 13 or 14 pupils with EHCPs next year. The SEND local offer was on the website, with the SEND policy coming through via the MAT. Governors would continue to receive an annual SEND report, delivered in the autumn term.
- External moderation had taken place in Y2 in order to validate assessments. There were good processes in place.
- Appointments and resignations. The school would have 4 NQTs in September, all of whom had mentors. The school was 'almost there' in terms of fulfilling the staffing requirements for the agreed model. Further TA hours might be needed but a decision on this would wait until September and the outcome of the EHCP applications.

6.1.1 A governor wanted some reassurance that the school would have more stability in terms of teaching staff. The Headteacher acknowledged a challenging two-year period, one where lessons had hopefully been learned. He was conscious of the need for a more settled environment and sincerely hoped that the right steps had been taken to achieve this. Miss Woodward said that the staff were very positive about the new team that was taking shape. Governors welcomed this news.

6.2 The Headteacher needed to report to governors that a stage 2 safeguarding complaint had been resolved and another had been withdrawn following investigation.

6.3 Governors were keen to hear about the leadership and management arrangements for September and these were divulged.

6.4 It was confirmed that pupil progress meetings would be taking place this week now that final data was coming in. The SIC had visited to look at certain teachers that had not been observed by her to date.

6.5 Miss Woodward gave an overview of EYFS transition arrangements – visits to some of the feeder nurseries had been very positive and had given the team lots of ideas to help make the transition as smooth as possible. Children and parents clearly valued the school's approach to this.

6.6 Attendance

Current tracking showed an absence rate of 3.29%. Overall, the trend was only slightly negative but in real terms the message was that hundreds of 'sessions' were being lost to absence. Yes, the school was still above the national average and the persistent absentee rate was steady at just over 4%. However, absence was higher than the Headteacher wanted. Leave of absence requests and unauthorised absences remained a concern. Most parents were candid about the reasons for it but that did not alter the bottom line. There was now a MAT agreed policy on Holiday in Term Time and forms and guidance to parents on making requests and possible outcomes would be standardised.

7.0 Data Update

7.1 EYFS

GLD 79%. This was considered a good result and would likely see the school above national.

Phonics

75%. This was a fall on the previous two years. Outcomes were symptomatic of the journey the cohort had been on. They had suffered from some weaker teaching and the cohort had also seen incoming children with additional needs. There had been accelerated progress since a new teacher had come in but the turnaround would take time.

KS1

The Writing data was weaker than had been expected. Handwriting and spelling were clearly areas that needed working on. Weaker teaching had been challenged and certain staffing issues addressed. SLT was clear on what needed to happen for the recent accelerated progress to continue. The Headteacher was disappointed at the underperformance, notwithstanding the upheaval and instability. KS1 data simply had to be better. This was the second year in a row that outcomes had not been good enough. The school was certainly not complacent or underestimating the task at hand. This was reflected in the steps taken and the planned deployments for next year.

KS2

Writing ARE 85% with Greater Depth at 12%. The ARE percentage was very good. Marking had been tougher in terms of judging GD; this following the teacher having been on moderator training. Progress was within the expected range.

8.0 Policy Review

Revised Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Behaviour

- 8.1 The Headteacher said that a research and evidence-based approach had been taken with regards behaviour strategies. This new information had been combined with the strong content already present in the policy. A lot of the pupil voice had been reflected in the language of the policy and in terms of expectations, rewards and consequences.
- 8.2 A broad discussion followed. Governors discussed the evidence based assumptions and the aims of the policy (which were very clear). The school was 'tight' when it came to parental involvement around discipline and there was good awareness of the need to understand pupils when it came to rolling out strategies. There was agreement that staff needed to be well trained so that incidents were managed consistently and effectively. SLT were conscious of the need to ensure an orderly yet stimulating environment. The importance of attendance and punctuality were highlighted. A couple of minor amendments were proposed and agreed and these were noted by AW.
- 8.3 AW spoke about a fresh approach to rewards. There would be an investment in class dojo. The resource provided good visibility for pupils, parents and teachers. It should be noted that some rewards were given for what might be perceived as 'lesser effort', however, one had to recognise that sometimes SLT were trying to motivate pupils and/or to accentuate the positives. This was not a step towards lowering standards or having a two-tier system.
- 8.4 With regards sanctions, the 'zonal board' had been used to good effect to minimise low level disruption. However, moving forward, teachers would be instructed to have a 'quiet conversation' with misbehaving pupils, as opposed to a public rebuke. The school was looking to avoid having children feeling devastated about minor infringements – the system was not designed for this. The policy now contained more detail around sanctions and the sanction system and making sure that it was communicated that it was the behaviour that was not acceptable, not the child. Again, it should be noted that the behaviour systems could not be universal but this should not be viewed as there being allowance for less than the highest expectations.
- 8.5 The policy made clear where governor involvement would be necessary. The Clerk noted that the exclusions guidance had been updated in 2019 and that the policy should reflect that guidance. The Clerk to circulate the guidance. The Headteacher to ensure that the policy had the correct statements when it came to the role of governors.

Anti-Bullying

- 8.6 The descriptors for bullying had been changed following discussion and consultation with pupils. The 'what bullying isn't' section was new and had been designed by the children. A poster had been designed on the back of this and children had led an assembly on the topic. The Anti-Bullying charter would be updated accordingly, in line with the new policy and displayed around the school.

**Clerk
IY**

8.6.1 A governor was unhappy with the language in one of the sentences on pg3. A frank discussion followed and some suggestions were made and noted by AW. The Headteacher agreed to look at this with Miss Woodward ahead of final publication.

8.7 **Resolved:**
Governors approved both policies, subject to SLT addressing certain points as noted above.

9.0 Pupil Exit Survey

9.1 The data from the exit survey was now available. Mr O'Callaghan and Mr Heard to support the pupil interview process. The Headteacher reflected upon several key positives and areas to work on. Mr O'Callaghan and Mr Heard were asked to compile a link report on this for the next meeting.

JO'C/CH

10.0 Finance Update

10.1 Trustees had approved school budgets following a remodelling of pension grants under advisement from AVEC. This had resulted in a positive impact on the school's budget of around £15k. The in-year position for 2019/20 was now expected to be between -£2k and +£5k.

10.2 The p10 monitoring report had just become available and would be worked through before the end of term. Information would be communicated to governors in due course. The majority of spend had been accounted for by this point. The next important task was to look at the advanced 2020/21 budget as soon as possible so as to evaluate whether the current structures could be maintained.

10.3 Home-school communication

The Headteacher put forward a proposal to purchase a one-stop-shop service from a single provider, Parentmail, at a cost of £6771 over three years. The MAT's COO was happy for governors to consider the proposal and make a decision accordingly. The Headteacher explained how the new system would work and how and where it was more secure and efficient compared to the current mechanisms. The school was confident of achieving a 90%+ take-up rate. Governors welcomed the news that it would free-up staff time to attend to other priorities. A governor was familiar with the system from their experience with a local nursery and provided some positive feedback. A brief discussion followed.

Resolved:

Governors approved the proposal to purchase a home-school communication service from Parentmail as outlined above.

11.0 Premises Update

11.1 A temporary cleaning contract was in place across the MAT pending the tendering process for a permanent contract. SCA bids for external works, the boiler, various internal refurbishments, and certain fixed electrical works and TCU exits had been submitted. These were on top of the capital works that were already on the priority list for the MAT and which would be dealt with from a separate tranche of the capital allocation. The MAT was looking to be favourable towards SCA bids.

12.0 Stakeholder Behaviour Protocol

12.1 There was a discussion about the protocol, which had recently been approved by the Trustees. Governors largely welcomed both the tone and content of the document, although it was agreed that the school should proceed with displaying a slimmed down and simplified summary on site that parents could be referred to. The Clerk noted that there should be reference to the full protocol being available upon request.

IY

12.2 A governor felt that a suitable reference should be made about the fact that religious intolerance and persecution of an individual based on their faith were both unacceptable. It was agreed that the Clerk should refer this back to the Trust board for consideration.

Clerk

12.3 Governors were conscious that external groups and clubs used the school site outside of normal hours but that some of these groups/clubs involved children from the school (and therefore their

parents). Would the protocol extend to being applied to such parents when they were on site? The Headteacher and Clerk explained that the protocol was designed to cover the period when parents were on site - or in contact with the school about school matters - during school hours. Jurisdiction beyond that did not exist. However, the Headteacher pointed out that it was made clear to clubs using the site under contract that they needed to have their own codes of conduct and deal with unacceptable behaviour accordingly. There had been isolated incidents in recent years but the clubs were good about making the school aware of what had gone on and who had been involved etc. The Headteacher would make sure that local clubs were aware of the MATs efforts to curb unacceptable behaviour and remind them of their responsibilities as users of the site. Governors were satisfied with this.

13.0 Governor Link Reports

None.

14.0 Any Other Business

- 14.1 The Chair, on behalf of governors, wished to thank Miss Woodward for her efforts to support the school's leadership as Head of School for the year.

The meeting closed at 9pm

	Action Points from the Meeting	Agenda Item	Person(s) Responsible	Date for Delivery
1.	Complete link visits (carried over)	3.1	ALL	ASAP
2.	Support exit survey interview process and complete visit report accordingly	3.1 9.1	CH JO'C	Autumn term (for visit report)
3.	Circulate agenda planner and new governor protocols	4.1	Clerk	Autumn term
4.	Complete skills audit	4.2	ALL	Autumn term
5.	Share training record with Chair/Vice Chair	4.2	Clerk	ASAP
6.	Update on the new Assessment regime	4.3	IY	Next meeting
7.	Report on the Effectiveness of the IXL subscription	5.5	IY	Next academic year (date TBA)
8.	Inform parents about new assessment systems etc	5.7.1	IY	Due course
9.	Ensure behaviour policy correctly detailed the role of governors in disciplinary processes etc	8.5	IY	ASAP
10.	Circulate exclusions guidance	8.5	Clerk	ASAP
11.	Ensure behaviour protocol summary included reference to full protocol being available upon request	12.1	IY	ASAP
12.	Report requested amendment to protocol to MAT Board	12.2	Clerk	Next Trust Board meeting
13.	Remind local clubs using school facilities of expectations around behaviour and reporting relevant incidents to the school	12.3	IY	Due course