

Minutes

Meeting of New Bridge School Governing Body

Thursday 12 February 2009
at the school
at 5.00pm

Present:	Mr Steve Williams	LA Governor (Chair)
	Mrs Karen Evans	Community Governor
	Mrs Pauline Fitzgerald	Community Governor
	Dr Elaine Joynes	Community Governor
	Mrs Margaret Ramsbotton	Community Governor
	Mrs Pauline Fitzgerald	Community Governor
	Mr Graham Quinn	Headteacher
	Miss Joan Readyhough	Parent Governor
	Ms Linda Hunt	Parent Governor
	Mr Keith Lucas	Parent Governor
	Miss Victoria Potter	Staff Governor
	Ms Carol Kinder	Staff Governor

Also Present: Mrs Kim Hartley Clerk to the Governing Body

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 An apology for absence was received from Mr Philip Palmer.
- 1.2 The governing body gave consent to the governor who had apologised for his absence.

2 DECLARATION OF BUSINESS OR PERSONAL INTERESTS

Governors were invited to declare any business or personal interests in the 'Register of Declaration of Interest' provided for this purpose.

No declarations were made.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendment:

Item 9.2.2 should read '...Mrs Pauline Fitzgerald had been in school when the fire alarm went off' and not Dr Elaine Joynes.

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Arising from minute 17 (Consultation on School Admissions 2010), the Headteacher is to set up a group to consider Admissions which will convene in the next few weeks and explained this had not been carried out due to a distraction around BSF. He confirmed that Year 6 and Year 7 numbers had risen from 36 to 40 pupils and 5 to 10 young people in Year 11 and Year 12. Numbers will rise between 15 and 20 pupils.

4.2 Arising from minute 8.2 (School Policies), only two governors remained to review the policies. Mrs Margaret Ramsbottom agreed to join these governors to review policies.

ACTION: Headteacher (4.1)
Mrs Ramsbottom (4.2)

5 HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

The Headteacher's report was circulated at the meeting.

Main points referred to:

5.1 Attendance

5.1.1 Attendance was slightly down in the last two terms but has improved this term. The attendance figure is slightly below 90% at 88.6%. Historically, the attendance figure has been 90%.

5.1.2 Exclusions - the Headteacher reported that there had been more exclusions this term than previously as the school now had a zero tolerance approach which may take time to have an impact. He explained that the school is now taking more disruptive pupils particularly in Years 8 and 9 who are extremely challenging youngsters.

A question was raised regarding the Learning Support Unit (LSU) and the Headteacher explained that between five and ten children were particularly demanding and their behaviour required hourly and daily support.

The LSU is pro-active and supported these children in specific subjects.

5.2 Fire Drill

5.2.1 This item would be considered at the next meeting of the governing body.

5.3 Staffing absences – there was an improving trend regarding staff absence. The Headteacher has dedicated a lot of time going through the situation with governors. Currently three or four staff are absent and the Headteacher pointed out that the school was a caring employer.

5.4 Teaching Staff

5.4.1 The Headteacher reported that his role as Local Authority Consultant had now come to an end and he now spent all his time at the Learning Centre. He gave governors a brief synopsis of the work he had undertaken.

5.4.2 Ms Jennifer Hidden has been appointed to lead the English/Communication strategies and has brought new ideas and working practices to the school.

5.4.3 Additional funding from Extended Schools has been made available between New Bridge School and The Kingfisher School. This will allow the schools to jointly recruit Ms Sarah Dunsden. Ms Dunsden will support young people in their social and emotional needs and will also signpost families to an appropriate source of advice. Ms Dunsden's appointment is as a result of the outcomes by the Pastoral Board.

5.5 Staff Training

5.5.1 The Headteacher congratulated Mrs Helen Langford on successfully completing her NPQH.

5.5.2 A decision is still required regarding the Graduate Teaching Programme (GTP). The school is to complete a return for staff development. The GTP is an excellent initiative for the majority of teachers. It allows people with a degree to go into schools and experience teaching. New Bridge School are unable to be the sole provider of the GTP as the graduate spends six months in a mainstream school and six months with them. The Headteacher reported that five colleagues have expressed an interest in taking part in the programme and asked governors to consider the following options:

- Continue to support the GTP
- The Headteacher to draft a policy to ratify fairness as all five colleagues will be unable to access the programme.
- Two colleagues could be supported with one completing the first six months in a mainstream school whilst the other remains at New Bridge School and they change places for the final six months.

- RESOLVED:** (i) that the governing body continue to support the GTP; and
- (ii) that the Headteacher draft a Fairness Policy by 27 February 2009 and e-mail to colleagues concerned.

5.6 Premises

5.6.1 The only item to report is the ongoing issue with Millers.

5.7 BSF

The Headteacher reported that he was not satisfied with the Local Authority as they continue to pull back on BSF and he was concerned as to the destination of funding if it was not put into schools. He also reported that he had not received any reply to the documentation he had sent to the Local Authority.

5.8 Curriculum

The Headteacher explained that developments relating to the curriculum were at a very exciting stage and he has asked Miss Victoria Potter to give a brief outline on her activities on this area. Miss Potter is leading a nationwide project relating to Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS). She has made a visit to the school in a consultancy capacity and the feedback was positive.

5.8.1 Miss Potter reported that staff were split into groups and discussed what they felt the core offer in different Key Stages would be for the following year. Everything that the school provided this year should be offered again next year. This year's curriculum was very ambitious fitting many activities into the timetable but it was felt that it may be been too ambitious as some activities did not work as well as expected.

5.8.2 Super Learning Week – exploring World War II was considered successful and the school will be approaching other subjects in the same way. A number of areas will be considered for a super learning day or super learning week. For example, RE would be considered. Year 9 at Key Stage 4 will work more towards accreditation. This would be advantageous on how the school offered options.

5.9 Visitors

5.9.1 During the Autumn term the school had a ministerial visit by Miss Sarah McCarthy Fry. This was her first visit in her capacity of Minister of State and she joined the school in their world record signing attempt.

5.9.2 During Super Learning Week - the school had a visit from Oldham Chief Executive, Mr Charlie Parker and local Councillors who arrived when the Street Party was taking place.

5.9.3 Ball Hall - the Headteacher reported that Mr Parker, had requested him to forward details of the revenue plans for the Astroturf, the legal challenge around the Ball Hall and the Outline plans for the Sports Arena.

5.10 Getting a Life

The Headteacher reported Person Centred Planning had come round again and the school was working in the right direction.

5.11 Arts Development

The Headteacher reported major developments. One pupil had been successful in an audition for a part in 'The Street' by Jimmy McGovern. This programme is produced by the BBC and had 25 children as extras.

5.12 School Budget

The Headteacher and Chair were invited to London to the SSAT Awards Presentation at the Guildhall. The highlight for him was meeting with the Grand Master of Scriveners.

The outcome of this meeting was that New Bridge School were the only Special School in the country who can count on the support of the 16th Century Scriveners.

The Chair would write to the Guild of Scriveners.

5.13 Educational Visits

The Headteacher reported on the following:

- The Calvert Trust visit took place on Monday
- A joint visit to London to see the sights with pupils from Kaskenmoor School has been arranged for March 2009.
- A residential visit by pupils to the link school in Germany is planned for September 2009.

The Headteacher asked the governing body to approve the visits.

RESOLVED: that the governing body consent to the visits planned by the school.

ACTION: Business Support Team - agenda item (5.2.1)
Headteacher (5.5.2)
Chair (5.12)

6 APPOINTMENT OF COMMUNITY GOVERNORS

6.1 Dr Elaine Joynes and Mrs Margaret Ramsbottom terms of office would come to an end on 7 March 2009. Dr Joynes informed governors that she would be moving away from the area in May 2009 and if she was re-appointed it could only be until she moved.

(Dr Joynes and Mrs Ramsbottom left the meeting at this point).

6.2 Governors discussed the re-appointment of both community governors.

- RESOLVED:** (i) that Dr Elaine Joynes be re-appointed as a community governor until May 2009; and
- (ii) that Mrs Margaret Ramsbottom be re-appointed as a community governor for the ensuing year.

ACTION: Business Support Team (6.2)

Dr Joynes and Mrs Ramsbottom returned to the meeting and were informed of the governing body's decision.

6.3 The Chair welcomed Mrs Carol Kinder, recently elected staff governor, to her first meeting of the governing body.

6.4 It was noted that a Local Authority governor was still required.

7 **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER ANNUAL REPORT**

The Headteacher reported that he had met with Mrs Noreen Buckingham (School Improvement Partner) and was advised that this was a standing agenda item for governing bodies. The annual report had not yet been but would be completed in time for the next meeting of the governing body. The Headteacher pointed that if they required a termly report he would be happy to supply one.

8 **SCHOOL FUND ACCOUNT**

The Headteacher advised that the school fund account had been sent to the auditors. He also explained that the Agresso accounting system was not fully implemented as both the Local Authority and Agresso were late in providing the school with the figures.

9 **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Headteacher reported that there were no Health and Safety issues to report.

10 **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

10.1 Curriculum Committee – 11 February 2009

This item was deemed to be confidential and therefore would not be included in the minutes and papers to be made available for public inspection.

10.2 Community Development Business Planning

A new committee have undertaken the development of capital and fund raising.

There was a suggestion to recruit a community development worker and to advertise the post would cost in the region of £25 and a clear job description and person specification would be required.

RESOLVED: that an advertisement be placed for a community development worker.

ACTION: Chair

- 10.3 A Pastoral Board meeting was held before Christmas 2008 with Mr Richard Monaghan who spoke about governors linked to classes and how it would give the children a chance to know who governors were and would give the class some focus. The Headteacher asked parent governors not to sign up to be link with their own child's year group. He suggested they link with a higher year group e.g. Year 14 and when those children left the school, go back to the beginning. A pro-forma would be available for governors and governors could be invited into assembly or invited to read to the children.

The Headteacher reported that he would co-ordinate the governor links.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting be approved and adopted.

ACTION: Headteacher (10.3)

- 10.4 Curriculum Committee

The minutes of the Curriculum Committee meeting held on 19 January 2009 were submitted for consideration by the governors.

Main points referred to:

- 10.4.1 Focus intervention in school – this was being observed and there was concern that time was not being used effectively. Ms Hidden is implementing the Reading and Spelling Programme for Focused Intervention which is a new approach by teachers to Key Stage 3 with a different Focus Intervention at Key Stage 4.

There will be a training day on 23 February 2009 looking at suggested models for F1.

- 10.4.2 Maths Trips – concern was expressed regarding Year 11 Maths pupils as visits to shops have been planned to enable pupils to use money in real life situations. It was also reported that the Maths Leader was absent through illness.
- 10.4.3 SRE – the timetable was incomplete at the commencement of the September 2008 term. The time had been used for pastoral matters. However, the timetable is almost complete and will run from Easter 2009 onwards and will then be reviewed.
- 10.4.4 Data – Kent indicators examine progress throughout the school. Governors wanted to know how the data was used. The data compares results year on year to see if there were any significant indicators and if the school is lagging behind issues can be identified.

The Headteacher also reported that he was waiting for a working party called KIT to advise him and he explained at length how helpful it would be to use the Kent indicators to compare information.

Training Day – literacy focus after half-term to examine priority programmes for the day.

The Chair reported Ofsted would be coming to the school and it would assist the school to be on KIT now.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting be approved and adopted.

10.4 Finance Committee

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 19 January 2009 were submitted for consideration by the governors.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting be approved and adopted.

(Mrs Margaret Ramsbottom left the meeting at this point).

11 **REPORT FROM LINK GOVERNOR/GOVERNOR TRAINING AND OLDHAM GOVERNORS' FORUM**

The link governor, Miss Joan Readyhough, reported on the following issues discussed at the last meeting of the link governor network.

- 11.1 Mr David Devane spoke about e-safety as there is concern regarding young people talking in 'chat rooms'. He also spoke about parents and teachers being vigilant regarding cyber bullying.
- 11.2 Miss Readyhough pointed out that there was a new scheme commencing in 2010 on safer recruitment training and a course would be held at The Centre for Professional Development on the 29 April 2009. This training is limited to Headteachers and Chairs but there were other training days which were available to all governors during the Autumn term.
- 11.3 E-learning - it was report that governors could pay into a scheme costing £99 for secondary schools which would consist of eight hours basic training on-line.
- 11.4 Oldham Governors Forum – Miss Readyhough explained that the Forum was independent and not financed or serviced by the Local Authority. It had national links and was the voice of governors. Membership cost £60 which covered mailing costs. There were publications available if governors wanted to read more.

RESOLVED: that this item be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the governing body.

ACTION: Business Support Team - agenda item (11.4)

12 **RESPONDING TO RACIST INCIDENTS: LA SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE TO SCHOOLS**

Governors were requested to consider the statistics for the school and the effectiveness of the school's procedures in responding to racist incidents in order to strengthen further existing good practice.

RESOLVED: (i) that the summary be noted; and
 (ii) that the statistics and procedure in place to respond to racist incidents be noted.

13 **SEN UPDATE**

Governors were asked to note the information contained in the attached letter updating governors on current SEN issues.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

14 **SCHOOL COMPLAINTS – BRIEFING FOR SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

Governors were requested to note the information in respect of future direction regarding school complaints.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

15 **SCHOOLS FORUM**

Governors were asked to receive and note the minutes of recent meetings of the Schools Forum.

RESOLVED: that the information be received and noted.

16 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of the governing body should be held on Thursday 21 May 2009 at 5.00pm.

17 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

17.1 Holiday Pattern 2009/2010 - the Headteacher explained there was an opportunity to change five days in the new year. Two of the days related to starting school on 2 September 2009 and finished school on 15 July 2010. He explained that wished to change three days to the following:

- One day at the beginning of the year
- One day at February half term
- One day at the end of the year

Governors were requested to adopt the holiday pattern for 2009/2010 and agreed as follows:

- One day in July 2009

- One day in September 2009
- One day in February 2010

17.2 The Headteacher reported that Mrs Jenny Hidden who carried out English Moderator duties for exams had requested one days holiday per year. Governors agreed that this was feasible as part of her role.

17.3 The Headteacher also reported that Ms Kate Tomlinson, Business Team has advised in writing of her intention to retire on 23 October 2009.

18 **CONFIDENTIALITY**

There was one item of confidential business.

(There being no further business, governors were thanked for their attendance and the meeting was declared closed at 6.55pm).

Signed _____
(Chair)

Date _____