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CARE - THINK - INSPIRE - ACHIEVE

Headteacher: Clare Bladen BA (Hons) PGCE, NPQH

**MINUTES OF THE 4TH FULL GOVERNORS' MEETING IN 2014/15
HELD AT SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 9TH JULY AT 5.30pm**

Present: Claire Maxwell (chair) **CM**, Clare Bladen (headteacher) **CB**, Jenny Crouch **JC** (until 7.40pm), Rebecca Huxley **RH**, Andrew Roland **AR**, David Seymour **DS** (from 5.40), Kelly Faye **KF**, Colin Cook **CC** (until 6.30), Susanna Pressel **SP** (from 6pm)

Also present: Claudi Thomas (**CT**), Joey Potgieter (**JP**), Jenny Crewe (**JC2**)

In attendance: Ursula Irvine (clerk) **UI**

1.0 Apologies for absence - approved: Matt Cuttle **MC**, Godfrey Cole **GC**

Summary of actions – to be carried out by the next meeting, unless stated otherwise

- **JC** to investigate whether a legal declaration is necessary to protect the school in the case of any incidents out of hours.
- **JC** to undertake a lunchtime visit before the end of term.
- **RH** to undertake a visit to early years next term.
- **AR** to chase up the hall fire exit assessment and liaise with Matt Bird and CB concerning related issues going forwards.
- **CB and CC** to ensure that the staff stress survey is carried out before the end of term, (ideally using a more positive title for the survey) and to agree an appropriate time for conducting the survey next academic year, and annually thereafter.
- **CB** to share behaviour reports from Integris with the governors.
- **CB** to liaise with the FGB and ESW chairs to decide who should get data analysis training and what form it should take. It was thought that all governors would benefit from some form of data analysis training.
- **KF** to liaise with Peter Smith concerning safeguarding and be involved in the safeguarding audit, reporting on this to FGB2.
- **DS** to prepare report on the parent survey results.
- **DS and CB** to organise a pupil survey.
- **CB** to work on a strategy for making the logging of behaviour more measurable and consider how the impact of measures taken can best be recorded and evaluated.
- **CB (and Rachel Goode – new Governor)** to consider how best to share with governors and parents the review of, and explanation for school priorities.
- **CB** to liaise with **CM and AR** on a 3-5 year school development plan. **DS** and **JP** also to be involved.
- **CB** to report on the next mocksted of WOCPs once this has taken place.

- **RH** to review the existing SEN policy with Suzi Batterton
- **JC** to review the Early Years Foundation Stage Policies.
- **UI/CT** to send links if required to new governors concerning induction training in September.
- **JC and CT** to review relevant meeting minutes in search of any references to funding approvals relating to the early years playground during 2011-12 and report back to AR. (**AR** will forward to them the email triggering this request to provide context.)
- **AR and RH** to remain responsible for dealing with issues relating to the funding of the early years playground.
- **JC** to set ESW meeting dates for the coming year.
- **UI** to update the governor tree in September and arrange for new governor pecuniary interest forms to be completed.

Summary of matters arising for future FGB meetings to address

FGB1

- The allocation of areas of particular responsibility to individual governors, such as dealing with complaints and pupil premium.
- Appointment of a staff governor.
- Parent survey results.
- Review of early years/foundation stage policies.
- Allocation of governors to the ESW and HPR committees and election of an ESW chair.

FGB2

- Revisit and reach a decision in respect of the proposed temporary barrier and signs for the car park, following accessibility discussion at the parent forum in September.
- KF's safeguarding report.
- Results of first pupil survey of the academic year.
- Election of a permanent chair for each of the FGB and HPR committee.

FGB3

- Instigate next review of effectiveness of the governing body.

2.0 Notification of Any Other Urgent Business, racial or health & safety incidents (if any)

2.1 No AOB to add.

2.2 H&S incidents had been discussed in HPR3.

2.3 Complaints:

2.3.1 Three incidents of a concern or complaint being raised by parents were referred to: One (relating to an inappropriate comment made in connection with a child's religion), was briefly explained by CB who confirmed that the concern raised had been taken seriously, discussed with the member of staff in question and an appropriate response sent to the parent who had raised it. CM reported that she and GC had also dealt with a complaint against a member of staff this term on an informal basis. JC said that she had also received a complaint but on reviewing it felt it was not appropriate either for the school or the governors to consider. JC had written back to the person making the complaint to inform them of her decision.

2.3.2 It was noted that GC had hitherto acted as the governor who is the first port of call for complaints and he needs to be replaced in this role. **Action for FGB1.** It was noted that parents may sometimes raise concerns with any of the governors they encounter. There is a school policy on complaints and this should be closely followed. If a complaint is about a teacher they should talk to the teacher and if the matter remains unresolved, then they should raise it with CB as head teacher. Commonly either the teacher or CB can resolve any issues quickly on an informal basis. If a complaint is about CB the complainant should go to a governor, and that governor should then pass it on to the governor who is designated to deal with complaints. In practice, any meetings held concerning a complaint should be attended by at least two governors, but sufficient people should remain uninvolved so as to be able to come afresh to any appeal that may be raised.

3.0 Procedural items

3.1 Quorum The meeting was quorate

3.2 Declaration of Interests relevant to agenda None

3.3 Starring of agenda items No changes were requested

4.0 Matters arising or outstanding from the minutes of 18 March 2015 save as covered elsewhere below

- The investigation by ESW as to whether a legal declaration is necessary to protect the school in the case of any incidents out of hours remains outstanding and JC committed to undertake this before her departure as ESW chair. **Action JC**
- Proposed temporary barrier and signs for the car park - CB said that this linked in with the wider accessibility agenda which is up for discussion with the parent forum in September. As such, she felt that this discussion should take place before any such measures are agreed. It was agreed that the issue will be revisited in FGB2 and a decision reached at that point. **Action for FGB2**
- Governor visits: RH had carried out a SEN visit; the lunch visits had not happened, but JC said she would aim to undertake one before the end of term at least in her capacity as parent, since there was now insufficient time to give the two weeks notice required for a governor visit; a formal early years visit had not taken place, but CM reported that Laura Cheeseman is keen to have a governor linked to early years to share her plans with, and RH volunteered to undertake a visit to early years next term. **Action JC and RH**

The minutes were approved and have been signed by the chair as an accurate record of the meeting.

5.0 Report/action points from the Human and Physical Resources (HPR) and Effectiveness, Standards and Welfare (ESW) Committees

5.1 AR briefly summarised the main actions and issues arising from HPR3, in particular:

- work on replacing the back windows - due to commence during the last week of term;
- progress with regards to a second fire exist for the hall and the question of whether the number of people using the hall at any one time should be limited in the meantime - AR will chase up the fire exit assessment and liaise with Matt Bird and CB going forwards. **Action AR.** It is hoped that OCC will accept that they have to pay for a new exit assuming one is required on H&S grounds, but it is uncertain when the work would be undertaken given the limited funds available and also limited availability of contractors;
- the uneven surface of the playground causing accidents - possible solutions are being explored;
- progress is being made with regard to making improvements to the staff room, and actioning the approved ICT spend;
- the next staff stress survey: CB confirmed that she is committed to getting this done before the end of term and will liaise with CC accordingly. It was agreed that next year the survey should be undertaken earlier within the academic year and not right at the end of a term, and that then it should normally be undertaken at the same time in subsequent years to aid the comparison of results. It was also suggested that the survey should have a more positive title – such as “health and wellbeing at work”. **Action CB and CC** CB confirmed that a helpline is available to staff suffering from stress or similar issues, but she did not believe that it is used.
- Replacing the activities which Tim Kiggell has been undertaking – examples include: year 6 children applying for roles, and more effective delegation to parents in respect of each class (for the cake sales). There is also the possibility of some continued work by the pay-back team for example on one Saturday per month if the school agrees to allow them to continue to store equipment in the shed and perhaps also to use the canteen. This will be decided next term.

5.2 JC gave a brief summary of main actions and issues arising from ESW 3. The recommendations made for the FGB mostly fell within the agenda for FGB4.

- It was agreed that the allocation of responsibility to governors for particular matters such as the pupil premium will be dealt with at FGB1, as well the appointment of a staff governor. **Action FGB1**
- With regard to the action for CB to share behaviour reports from Integris with the governors, CB explained that behaviour incidents are logged on Integris which can then help to identify peaks and trends for particular attention. Staff are responsible for logging the data and all have access to Integris. **Action CB**
- The suggestion for governor training on data analysis was discussed. CB will liaise with the FGB and ESW chairs to decide who should get training and what form it should take. It was noted that in itself data showing good levels of achievement (?) will not trigger a “good” Ofsted finding. Nevertheless, clearly it is important for the data to be useful and for those tasked with reviewing it to actually understand it.

6.0 Review of Staffing

6.1 CB reported on the staffing changes for the next academic year, covering departures, new recruits and which teachers and TAs would be assigned to each class.

6.2 CB noted that given particular issues with levels of achievement in the cohort that will become year 6, an additional support teacher will be assigned to this class for 12 hours each week. Peter Smith will teach core subjects to the class during the mornings and the support teacher will teach the bulk of the class in the afternoons when she is on duty, freeing him up, as the more qualified teacher, to take the under-achievers for precision teaching/extra intervention work, as against the more common approach of leaving this to the less qualified teacher.

6.3 The level of staff turnover, which was recognised as a cause of concern to some parents, was discussed. AR said that overall turnover was at 14.4 %. At Matthew Arnold and North Hinksey turnover was higher than this at 20%, at two other local schools it was lower. The local average was around 17%. He did not therefore consider that there appeared to be a particular problem at WOCPS. CM said that on each occasion when a member of staff had resigned she and CB had discussed the factors behind the resignation to see if an underlying problem could be identified. AR suggested that if the percentage of turnover increased, exit interviews could be considered. CB said that exit forms are already given and she talks to staff herself about their reasons for leaving, on the basis that informal conversations will usually yield more information than the completion of a form. CB felt that a certain percentage of turnover was healthy and her focus was on seeking to make good new appointments and to grow good new teachers where NQTs are recruited. It was queried what incentives were put in place to encourage, in particular, outstanding teachers to stay. In addition, with regard to bringing on new teachers, it was noted that, for example, one of the resignations this year had been from an NQT. CM said that things had been done to encourage staff to stay. Ultimately, it is not always possible to retain staff, however much you want them to stay. There may be a range of motivations for moving on – personal, financial and professional development for example - that would override anything the school could offer. It was suggested that if the departures of staff were not a cause for concern then this needed to be conveyed to parents and CM confirmed that this issue would be addressed in the school’s annual report. The school needs to be seen to engage with the concerns and respond to them. It was acknowledged that the issue is emotive, given the degree of personal investment that parents tend to make in teachers so there may be a limit to what can be achieved to overcome parent concerns.

7.0 Safeguarding Update

The last safeguarding report was in December 2014 and contained an action plan. CB will meet with KF, the governor tasked with overseeing safeguarding, to go through the next audit and this will be reviewed by the SLT in December 2015. Peter Smith (PS) is seeking to make the safeguarding procedures more accessible and easier to understand. KF will liaise with him, although she reported that it had not proved possible for them to meet so far due to their busy schedules. They are planning to meet in September. In the meantime, PS had sent KF a paper on behaviour both in the classroom and playground, aiming to ensure consistency of approach in sanctions and rewards. Teachers have already received training in this respect and TAs will

receive this in due course – hopefully a full day’s training for those who are less experienced. It was noted that whilst behaviour is not strictly part of safeguarding, together with issues such as anti-bullying and internet safety it falls within a spectrum of issues that are interlinked to safeguarding. CB explained that behaviour was a focus of the last SDIP given its intrinsic importance, and in particular because she wants to demonstrate that behaviour in the school is better than the last Ofsted inspection judged (where it was only judged as good – we would like to school to be outstanding in this respect). Various steps are being taken to monitor and improve behaviour in a tangible way. A new system of house points will be launched in September to help incentivise good behaviour. KF noted that ultimately to ensure a consistent approach, PS will have to set guidelines, but take into account the views of staff and the school council, which CB confirmed will be the case. It was queried whether there should separately be a governor with responsibility for behaviour issues, but it was considered that this should fall within KF’s remit at least for now. It was noted that bullying is also within PS’s action plan and the SDIP, not because it is considered a particular problem, but because it has to stay on the agenda. CB confirmed that safeguarding is regularly reviewed within the school. **Action: KF** to liaise with PS and be involved in the safeguarding audit, reporting on this in **FGB2**.

8.0 Parent and Pupil Survey Feedback

8.1 It had been decided this year to out source the processing and analysis of the results, but unfortunately the results were not yet available. Therefore DS will report on this at FGB1. **Action DS + for FGB1**.

8.2 It was noted that the recent survey had sought the views only of parents. The pupil survey is online and it was not feasible to undertake this by the end of term. It was agreed that two pupil surveys would be undertaken during the coming academic year, one after the October half term and a second towards the end of the year. It would be helpful to gauge how pupils are feeling when they are still settling into their new classes and then useful to be able to compare these results with how they are feeling towards the end of the year. **Action DS and CB** to organise this and report to **FGB2** with the first results.

9.0 Update on the WOSP Collaborative Company

9.1 Matthew Arnold School will become an academy next year, but none of the six primary schools in the partnership have accepted the invitation to join it, fearing a loss of autonomy. Matthew Arnold will, however, remain in the WOSP notwithstanding its new academy status. CB will be the next WOSP chair. The next WOSP meeting for head teachers and chair of governors is in September and both CB and AR will attend.

9.2 Pupil Premium: CB reported that all the WOSP schools are in the same position with regard to the difficulty in achieving improved results for pupil premium children. The focus now will be more widely on underachieving children, which category will encompass pupil premium and SEN children plus others. A number of strategies are being considered to support this initiative.

9.3 Transition and what to do ‘after levels’: CB reported that internal transition arrangements have already been improved. Effective and consistent methods of assessment and moderation are already in place. Transition arrangements with Matthew Arnold are also better than they were, but there is still scope for improvement. The focus here is on expanding inter-school moderation, getting teachers from different schools together to try to achieve a consistent approach. Under the new curriculum, the old system of “levels” has been replaced with different terminology – “emerging”, “expected” and “master”. Certain core objectives are non-negotiable, others involve a percentage judgement. There is no prescribed system of assessment but the six WOSP primary schools are using the same criteria, consistent with what most schools are doing. The bar for attainment has been raised across the board. Expectations are age-related, but the focus of assessment is on progress – recognising that some children may not actually attain expected levels for their age.

9.4 CM reported on a meeting of WOSP governor chairs. There was satisfaction about the benefits of working in partnership. There is likely to be more focus on sharing of services going forward. Currently, OCC provides a package of services but there is a feeling that the schools are paying more for these in return for less. It is felt that the point may soon be reached where the cost of these services outstrips their value. The situation will be kept under review. The answer may be to join a wider association – perhaps joining more primary schools together – to buy in services. Generally, it was agreed to be helpful that the school can face the challenges ahead in partnership with other schools rather than on its own.

10.0 Review of SDIP

10.1 CB's SDIP update document was discussed.

10.2 It was noted that much had been achieved. The improvement in relation to the results of EAL children was seen as a particular success. There was a detailed discussion as to the appropriate level of expectation for these children and whether it should be raised. The widely held view was that it would be wrong to make general assumptions about this group when such a wide range of factors affects each individual's progress in the long term. It was agreed that the current targets are sufficiently ambitious and challenging already. Another success was the further strengthening of the SLT. CB reported that she was working closely with Peter Smith who has got to know the school well. The investment in additional support in Early Years during 2013/14 had also paid dividends this year. In particular, literacy in Early Years has improved as planned. Average attendance across the school is at 97.2% which is above the national average.

10.3 In terms of objectives not met, punctuality remains a problem. This was an issue raised by Ofsted. It will be brought back to the parent forum again, and further efforts will be made to achieve an improvement. Unfortunately, punctuality seems not to be a priority for some parents. Further efforts need to be made to communicate to parents the problems that arise for their own child, their classmates and their teacher if their child is late, in terms of loss of settling in time and disruption to learning. It was noted that using quotes from teachers in this respect is helpful in making the problems less remote to parents. It was queried whether punctuality could be recorded and rewarded class by class in a similar way to attendance, but CB said that this would first require all teachers to be equally strict in how punctuality is recorded. Another area of concern is the level of progress being made by SEN children, which was under-par except for year 6. CB reported that SEN provision will be audited in September and a consultant will be brought in to help Suzi Batterton. It was noted that often there are other contributory factors and vulnerability indicators that may impact on the educational achievement of these children. (It was also noted that the e-security training for parents will be re-run next year at a more convenient time for those that work.)

10.4 It was noted that development of priorities needs to be more measurable. Generally there is an issue about how the impact of measures taken can best be recorded and evaluated. **Action CB** CB noted that she aims to ensure targets are inspirational even if this means that they are not always met.

10.5 It was noted that the explanation for the priorities set in the SDIP appears in CB's self evaluation form which governors do not commonly see. It was felt that it would be helpful to make this information available to share both with governors and parents.

10.6 Overall it was noted that many of the SDIP objectives had been met or at least partially met and that it was good to see a plan of action in place in respect of objectives that remain wholly or partially outstanding. The success in delivering on our SDIP will be mentioned in the school's annual report issued to parents before the end of term.

10.7 Pursuant to suggestions made in a training session earlier in the year, it was agreed that a small group will work on a 3-5 year development plan which will provide a background to the annual SDIPs and help ensure that the school has a longer term vision. **Action: CB** will liaise with **CM and AR** on this, **DS** and **JP** volunteered also to be involved.

11. Update on Partnership Mocksteds

CB said that the next Ofsted inspection is not expected for another 18 months. A mock inspection had been held previously involving CB's peers from Appleton and Botley schools and someone who had worked as an Ofsted inspector and this had proved valuable in ensuring that the school was well prepared for the real Ofsted inspection when it came, making the inspection less stressful and more constructive as a result. CB has also

been involved in mock inspections of other schools. She found both exercises helped her understand how the inspectors look at things and had been a good way of checking that her own judgements were accurate and that she has all relevant targets in mind. A further mock inspection of WOCPS is planned for the coming year and CB will report on this to FGB once it has taken place. CB is hoping that the, now retired, head teacher from her previous school will be involved. CB is also hoping that this person will review and advise on the SEF and SDIP and contribute to CB's personal professional development through involvement in her appraisal.

Action CB.

12. Review of Effectiveness of Governing Body

It was felt that the governing body appears to be working effectively. Given the amount of change currently, with many governors leaving and joining, it was agreed that there needs to be a period of integration for the new governors prior to a proposed review of effectiveness in April 2016. **Action for FGB3** to instigate this.

13. Review of Early Years Foundation Stage Policies and Special Educational Needs Policy

RH and Suzi Batteredton will review the existing SEN policy, with Suzi leading on this. **Action RH.** JC will review the Early Years Foundation Stage Policies. **Action JC.** All policies to be ready for approval at FGB1. **Action for FGB1.**

14. Governor Training update

KF reported that the governor induction training had been useful. JP, JC and RG were encouraged to attend this in September and planned to do so. Links would be sent to them if required for booking training places **action: UI/CT.** As discussed earlier, data analysis was identified as a useful topic for training for the whole board. **Action CB and AR** to consider this further.

15. Urgent Other Business

AR briefly explained the current situation with regard to clarifying issues concerning funding of the Foundation Years Playground. Following receipt of a detailed email from Saskya Huggins on behalf of the Friends he queried whether anything had been minuted in governors' meetings concerning funding approvals during 2011 and 2012. **Action: JC and CT** to review relevant minutes. (**AR** will forward Saskya's email to them to provide context.) It was agreed that AR and RH will remain responsible for this matter as it draws to a close, given its complexity. Thanks were expressed for the work which they had done to date which had secured £16,000 for the school from the ASC charity.

16. Elections

16.1 Chair of FGB: No one wished to stand to undertake this role for a full year. It was agreed that AR will be acting FGB Chair to the end of 2015. FGB2 will revisit the issue and it is envisaged that a permanent chair will be elected then. **Action for FGB2**

16.2 Vice Chair to FGB: RH was unanimously elected on a secret ballot to act for the coming year. She had noted that she does not believe that it is practicable to share the Chair's role as such, but is happy to act as stand in and provide support to the Chair as required.

16.3 HPR Committee Chair: Further to the discussions in HPR3, no one wished to stand to undertake this role for a full year. It was agreed that DS will be acting Chair until the end of 2015. AR envisaged standing for this role again at that time. **Action for FGB2**

16.4: ESW Committee Chair: There had been insufficient people present at ESW3 to discuss this. It was agreed that an election would be held at FGB1 for this role once the new co-opted governors' service has begun and anyone wanting to be considered for the role has had the opportunity to put themselves forward. The responsibilities of the role could be shared between a Chair and Vice Chair if more than one person is interested. **Action for FGB1** JC offered to help with a handover to the new ESW chair in due course and was

asked to deal with setting ESW meeting dates for 2015/16 in the meantime. **Action: JC FGB1** will also deal with the allocation of governors to the ESW and HPR committees.

16.5 Co-option of new governors: JP, JC2 and Rachel Goode had all been proposed on the basis of the skills they would bring to the governing body and no objections had been raised. Each was elected unanimously onto the board by secret ballot and were welcomed. Their term as governors will last for 2 years from September 2015. They can be re-co-opted after that.

16.6 UI will act as clerk to the FGB and HPR committee going forwards. CT will continue as clerk to ESW committee and will kindly continue to provide handover support to UI. It was confirmed that the governor tree will be updated in September 2015 and new governor pecuniary interest forms will be completed. **Action UI**

17. Thank yous

Thanks were expressed to JC, GC (in his absence) and CM who are all stepping down as governors, and CT who is stepping down as clerk to the FGB, for the enormous contribution each had made.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

Dates of meetings for 2015/16 :

FGB1 24/9/15, FGB2 10/12/15, FGB3 17/3/16, FGB4 23/6/16. All 5.30pm at WOCPS