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CARE - THINK - INSPIRE - ACHIEVE

Headteacher: Clare Bladen BA (Hons) PGCE, NPQH

**Minutes of the first Human & Physical Resources meeting of 2015/16 (HPR 1)
held at WOCPS on Thursday 12 November 2015 at 6pm**

Present: Joey Potgieter (acting chair) **JP**, Rachel Goode (vice chair) **RG**, Clare Bladen (Head teacher) **CB**, Colin Cook **CC**

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

Summary of Actions to be carried out by HPR2 unless otherwise stated

SECTION 2

- (a) **CB** to report to HPR2 for next parent pay review.
- (b) **CB** to ask Matt Bird to get quotes for repairing the leaded stair well windows.
- (c) **CB** to ask Matt Bird to get quotes for new toilet facilities upstairs.
- (d) **JP** to discuss with Sue Bright any budgetary problems arising from delay in actioning last year's ICT spend. **CB** to try to ensure that the ICT spend is now actioned as soon as possible.
- (e) **CB** and Matt Bird to hold a critical incident drill before the end of the current term.
- (f) **CB** to progress planning for a possible office reorganisation.
- (g) **CB** to ask Matt Bird to investigate how tree root damage to the playground surface can be remedied. **JP** to discuss with Sue Bright any options for covering the cost of resurfacing the playground, and to discuss with the Friends the possibility of their paying for another area of astro turf.
- (h) **CB** to ask Matt Bird to arrange an annual fire risk assessment.

SECTION 3

- (i) **JP** to discuss and agree with Andrew Roland and Claudi Thomas allocation of individual governors to responsibilities separate from the SDIP, including by reference to school policies.
- (j) **JP** to undertake a school visit focusing on behaviour before Christmas, and **RG** to do a visit bearing in mind her leadership and management brief.

SECTION 4

- (k) **JP** and **RG** to meet with Sue Bright to discuss issues relevant to HPR's remit.

SECTION 5

- (l) **JP** to review this year's template pay policy from OCC and create a version tailored to the school which she will finalise with **CB** and **Andrew Roland**.

Signed

Date.....

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- (m) The pay committee comprising **JP**, **RG** and **Andrew Roland** to meet with **CB** as soon as practicable.
- (n) **RG** to assist **CB** with the announcement of a further change in the school's teaching staff once the succession plan is certain.

SECTION 6

- (o) **JP**, **CC** and **CB** to hold a special staff meeting to discuss the stress survey results and the approach to monitoring and alleviating stress going forwards, and report back to FGB2.

SECTION 7

- (p) **CB** to try to ensure that progress continues in getting the new fire exit and access ramp installed.

SECTION 8

- (q) **CB** to discuss security issues with OCC **JP** to visit other local primary schools to discuss their security arrangements.

SECTION 9

- (r) **UI** to update the policies matrix on drop box with regard to the reviewed appraisal and capability policy and **CB** to ensure that this is used and accessible in practice.
- (s) **JP** and **CB** to agree which policies are to be reviewed at HPR2 and 3, **CB** to prepare these and **JP** to assign them to individuals for review.

1.0 Administration

- I. It was agreed that, following David Seymour's resignation, JP will be acting Chair of HPR going forwards, her appointment as Chair to be formalised at FGB2.
- II. In attendance: no committee members were absent.
- III. The meeting was quorate.
- IV. No urgent business not on the agenda was raised.
- V. There were no declarations of interest relevant to the agenda.

2.0 Minutes of 4 June 2015

I. Matters arising from actions

- (i) parent pay debts: As of 12/11/15 there was £2,380 in credit and £2,804 in debt giving a net debt of £424. CB said that the debt and credit figures fluctuate – for example, one of Jo Carr's periodic reminders to parents will immediately result in many payments being made, whilst when a class trip is first logged on the system this will result in a big increase in the debt figure. Most of the parent debts are small, and Jo looks out for anything that is beginning to look substantial. There are two large debts currently – one of £600 which will be referred to legal services as there has been no response to the school's repayment proposals; and a second of just under £200 where the parent has been willing to engage with the school about repayment. It was agreed that managing the parent pay debt should be left to Jo's discretion but HPR will continue to review the situation each meeting as a matter of course. It was recognised that a precise figure of debt that would trigger a referral to legal services cannot be set – in particular this will

depend upon whether the parents are willing to engage with repayment proposals.

Action: CB to report to HPR2 for next review

- (ii) small leaded windows in stair well: CB reported that these are functional and safe but in need of repair – they do not close so the stairwell gets very cold in winter. The windows do not actually need replacing, so the cost will fall to the school not OCC. One possibility is to get them sealed. It was recognised that this is unlikely to be a priority for expenditure, but CB will ask Matt Bird to obtain quotes for HPR to consider. **Action CB**
- (iii) fire exit: see section 7 below
- (iv) Staff room: Work has not commenced on improving the staffroom. This has been promised and remains a priority. However, provision of more toilet facilities upstairs is also pressing. It was felt that work on the staff room could not be undertaken before dealing with provision of more toilets but hopefully the two projects can be undertaken together. It may be that installing lockers to replace coat pegs will free up more space to spur this on. It was noted that a lump sum was set aside in last year's budget to cover any costs arising in relation to the new fire door which, since these costs will in fact be paid by OCC, could now be assigned to the toilets and staff room work along with the money already allocated to get the staff room work started. CB will ask Matt Bird to get quotes for new toilets in the first instance. **Action CB**
- (v) ICT spend: CB reported that this has still not been actioned. Carrie Cook is on maternity leave and did not place the orders before this commenced. Pete Smith has been liaising with Bill Wicker but the latter is leaving so it is his successor who is expected to end up dealing with this. Pete does not have the expertise to decide exactly what to buy himself. There is also a focus on making the order more cost effective. It was noted that this relates to expenditure from last year's budget. JP will check with Sue Bright whether the delay is in danger of causing problems for example with regard to the claw back rules. **Action JP**. In any event it is a priority for the new ICT equipment to be purchased and in use as soon as possible. **Action CB** to ensure this is progressed.
- (vi) critical incident drill: this has not yet taken place. Whilst not a statutory requirement it was agreed that best practice would be to conduct a drill once a year. CB undertook that she and Matt Bird would get this done by the end of the current term. **Action CB**
- (vii) office reorganisation: There had been no developments. It was recognised that given the school's growth, a business manager role would be helpful to take responsibility for some practical non-teaching matters away from CB. This would involve different responsibilities to the current office manager role and, it was envisaged, would be most effective with a working day longer than school hours – eg 8.30 – 4. CB will liaise with OCC HR and the office staff, and will ask other school's in the partnership to share relevant job specifications for her to review. **Action CB**
- (viii) Policies spreadsheet: CB had updated this.
- (ix) Stress survey: see section 6 below.
- (x) The joint governor visit didn't take place. The importance of governor visits was acknowledged and visit plans for the current academic year discussed - see section 3 below.
- (xi) Policies: see section 9 below
- (xii) Appraisals: CB reported that some relevant training came up in September so SLT members attended this and delayed dealing with appraisals until afterwards. All appraisals have now been undertaken.

- (xiii) Factoring staff changes into future budget projections: CB confirmed that this happens as a matter of course.
- (xiv) funding issue concerning ASC , the Friends and the foundation years playground: It was understood that this has now been concluded.
- (xv) Playground surface: the quotes for completely resurfacing the playground are in the region of £80-90 K. The Friends have raised the possibility of paying for some more astro-turf. However, Matt Bird first needs to investigate what can be done to resolve tree root damage in the area in question. **CB** to ensure this is progressed. JP will discuss with the Friends further and also with Sue Bright about the availability of funds to tackle this. **Action JP**
- (xvi) It was agreed that an annual fire risk assessment by a qualified safety officer should be undertaken as a matter of good practice in addition to the normal H&S inspection. CB will ask Matt Bird to arrange this. **Action CB.**

II approval of minutes

The minutes were approved and signed off by JP as an accurate record of the meeting.

3.0 HPR Governors (JP/UI/CB)

I. Election of replacement parent governor

The call for nominations letter had gone out to parents and carers by email and hard copy with a deadline of 28th November for nominations to be received. If there are two or more nominations then details of the candidates will be sent out and an election held. In any event, the new governor should be in place by the end of term. It is anticipated that they will join HPR.

II. Allocation of areas of special responsibility to governors

JP had discussed this with Claudi Thomas (CT). It was recognised that giving individual governors a particular focus on different areas in the SDIP was helpful. Many of the areas of responsibility arising from the SDIP will most logically fall to ESW members. Foundation, KS1 and KS2 will be covered by ESW members as will quality of teaching, progress /outcomes and safeguarding. "Effective management and leadership" will be covered by Andrew Roland as acting chair of FGB, supported by RG. "Behaviour" will be covered by both JP and someone from ESW. CB said that where appropriate a staff member would also be allocated as a governor contact, but often this would end up having to be herself.

UI noted that in addition specific governors should to be allotted other responsibilities – eg with regard to dealing with complaints, the Head Teacher's appraisal, sitting on the pay review committee and overseeing health and safety. It was also suggested that individual governors might be allotted areas of extra interest or responsibility by reference to particular policies or batches of policies. This was not with a remit of keeping the policies up to date, but rather, looking at the things the policies were concerned with and being involved in any related panels and appeals. JP will discuss this further with Andrew Roland and CT. **Action JP**

III. School visits

JP had undertaken a general school visit, which she reported had been helpful and constructive. JP will do a further visit focussing on behaviour, before the end of term. It was suggested that she visit the dining room during lunch time and sit in a lesson to observe behaviour to see how low level disruption is handled. RG will also undertake a school visit before HPR2 bearing in mind her

“effective management and leadership brief”. It was noted, though, that this more obviously links in with the 5 year development plan. **Action JP and RG**

4.0 Finance (CB)

- I. CB reported that the transfer of the accounts system from OCC to Hampshire CC had caused considerable disruption – all activities involving money and finance had been affected.
- II. Sue Bright had not been available to attend the meeting, but had circulated a budget monitoring report in advance which was briefly discussed. There were no particular concerns. JP and RG will arrange to meet with Sue Bright to discuss issues relevant to HPR’s remit.

Action JP and RG

5.0 Staff Update (CB/JP)

- I. Pay policy update
JP agreed to review this year’s template from OCC and create a version tailored to the school which she will finalise with CB and Andrew Roland. The policy needs to be formally approved by FGB but pay reviews need to be conducted before FGB2 on 10th December to ensure that all pay awards can be backdated to September before the end of the year. Since the policy will follow the OCC template and should not be in any way controversial, once prepared it will be circulated to all governors inviting any comments or concerns to be raised but then used in the pay reviews prior to formal approval at FGB2.
- II. Appraisal update
As already noted, all appraisals have taken place.
- III. Pay review committee
This will comprise, Andrew Roland, JP and RG. They will arrange to meet with CB as soon as practicable.
- IV. Staff complement review
CB reported that a new TA has been recruited to fill the vacancy in foundation. Another anticipated departure was discussed in some detail, in particular the reasons behind it and progress with recruitment. Once the succession plan is certain (hopefully by the end of the month) an announcement will be made to parents - RG will assist CB in this respect. **Action CB and RG**
- V. Staff absence update
CB had no matters of concern to report.
- VI. Exit interviews
In response to concerns raised by a group of parents about staff turnover, it had been suggested that a designated governor should become involved in holding exit interviews with departing staff members. This would mean that reasons for departure and any other comments staff may have could be kept under review and any possible trends monitored. This would logically operate through HPR, although the proposal will first be put to FGB2 as the original concerns about turnover had been addressed to the governing body as a whole.

HPR agreed that exit interviews would be helpful going forwards and that a positive proposal to meet should be made to a departing member of staff, rather than this being presented as an option if they wished, although of course the interview would not be compulsory. It had been suggested that the interviews should be conducted by a non-parent governor. This was briefly discussed and may be revisited by FGB. If that were the case then CC is the only non-parent on HPR. The exit interviews could tie in with responsibility for the stress survey.

6.0 Health and Safety CB/CC)

I. No H&S concerns or incidents were reported.

II. Stress Survey (CC/CB)

There was a detailed discussion about the stress survey results and the appropriate next steps both in terms of these results and monitoring stress/well being going forwards.

The results are based on just 9 responses out of a total of 34 full and part time staff. This was noted to be unsatisfactory being a relatively small number and a small proportion of the whole. It was noted that there had never been a high proportion of responses in the past. A lack of feedback had apparently contributed to apathy about the survey – CC said that in the past concerns has not arisen from the results such as to trigger further action.

Looking at the current results, in 5 out of 7 areas the responses were more negative than last year, which was a concern. With regard to the experience of bullying at work – just one response other than “never” was sufficient to flag this as a major concern.

As in previous discussions, it was noted that whilst this is an NUT approved survey, the questions are generic and some do not fit with the reality of the school day and the nature of the job teachers are doing. In addition, feedback from teaching staff previously had indicated that the main causes of stress tend to be external, for example changes in government policy and in particular the recent changes to the national curriculum, and “life without levels”. However, it had to be remembered that currently the same survey is used for all staff, including non-teaching staff, and everyone’s experience of their work place needs to be monitored.

It was agreed that as promised, the results will be reported back to staff and discussed with them, although it was felt that the low number of responses gave the results only limited value. An extra staff meeting will be held for this purpose, which both CC and JP will attend - 30th November was proposed.

It was agreed that there also needs to be a discussion with staff about how the survey and generally, attempts to monitor and alleviate stress in the work place, can be handled better going forwards. Most members of staff are clearly not motivated to complete the survey and the view was expressed that the current approach is failing both the staff and the governors. It is the governors’ responsibility to deal with this better to satisfy both staff and parents. Most people accept the nature of the job they are doing, but it is nevertheless important for the school to understand the stresses involved and help to alleviate these so far as possible. Although the merit of being able to compare results from one year to the next was recognised, this was insufficient in itself to justify continuing with the survey as is. Concerns were again raised that focusing in the survey’s title on “stress” rather than “wellbeing” is off-putting in itself.

It was also felt that some of the questions in the current survey should be more neutrally phrased.

CB will research what other schools in the partnership do. A quick internet search immediately revealed a wide range of resources on line. Consideration will be given to either adjusting/supplementing the current survey (accepting that in this case the automatic analysis of the results cannot be relied on) or totally replacing it. Alternative questionnaires might be put forward for discussion in the staff meeting.

Action JP, CC and CB to hold special staff meeting and report back to FGB2.

It was also noted that CB will have a 360 degree appraisal this year as part of her personal development plan and this may be extended to the SLT in due course. This is usual practice for managers in other sectors and should be helpful, provided appropriate support is available in processing the feedback.

6.0 Buildings, Maintenance (JP/CB)

I. Fire Exit update

It is a priority to get this done soon given the disruption resulting from the hall not being available for assemblies and other events. An access ramp is also expected to be linked to the new fire exist. Matt Bird has been chasing OCC and it appears that they are close to both confirming budgetary approval and setting a date for the work. Matt will continue to chase on this as needs be. **Action CB** to try ensure that the progress continues.

II. No other matters were raised beyond those already discussed and noted above as actions arising from the last meeting.

8.0 Security (CB/RG)

Security had been the focus of discussions at the recent parent forum. It is recognised that security should be improved in particular at certain times of the day as a matter of health and safety, but this needs to be balanced with the ethos of the school and the wish to maintain a reasonable level of accessibility. The nature of the building and site also affect the options. Aiming to prevent access even to the playground may be appropriate when the school is not in use at all – for example late at night, early in the morning and during weekends. But if the school gate is always locked, even when the building is in use, then someone will need to be responsible for enabling access - for example to collect children from after school clubs. Potentially access to the hall can be channelled through the new fire door and some form of corridor could be created to lead just to ASC. As well as people gaining access, the other concern is of children leaving the school during school hours, particularly given how busy Ferry Hinksey road is. However, CB did note that no concerns were raised in this respect during the last safeguarding walk. The question of legal liability in relation to any accidents occurring in the playground outside of school hours was again raised - investigating this is already an action for reporting back at FGB2. (CB noted that previous efforts to encourage children and parents to leave the playground promptly at the end of the school day had been unpopular, although this is what happens at other local schools.)

HPR was keen to understand the extent of the school's liability after school hours and was generally of the view that a proactive approach to improving security should be taken to minimise the risk of potential future problems and that this should therefore be considered a priority as far as funding is concerned. It was agreed that CB will see if OCC can offer any advice in this respect and will involve Matt Bird as far as possible. JP will visit other local primary schools to investigate their security arrangements and may also enquire further about the fob system used for access at the local community centre. **Action JP and CB** The issue will then be further discussed at HPR2.

9.0 Policies (CB/JP)

policy review

- I JP and CB had worked on the appraisal and capability policy and the final version was approved. The matrix will be updated accordingly by UI. CB will ensure that the updated policy is accessible and adopted in practice **Action UI and CB**
- II. JP and CB will liaise to identify policies for updating at HPR2 and HPR3. CB will work on these and JP will allocate them to individual members of HPR to review in advance of these meetings. **Action JP and CB**

10.0 A.O.B.

None

The meeting closed at 8.20pm

11.0 Date and time of next meeting:

2nd March 2016 6pm at WOCPS.

Appendix 1

Papers used at this meeting

- HPR 3 draft minutes from 24/6/15
- Budget monitoring reports to end September 2015
- Stress survey papers
- Updated Policies Matrix
- Appraisal and capability policy