

WOODLANDS MEED
'Enjoying Opportunities Together'
FULL GOVERNING BODY
Wednesday, 16th January 2013 at 4.45pm
VENUE: Woodlands Meed College, Birchwood Grove Road, Burgess Hill, RH15 0DP

FGB: Barbara Temple (BT), John Clifton (JC), Brian Davey (BD), James Green (JG), Jane Lacey (JL), Miriam Owen (MO), Gill Perry (GP), Annette Smith (AN), Sara Smith (SS), Margery Turner (MT)

Also Invited to the Meeting: Kevin Banfield (KB), David Anning (DA)
Clerk: Louisa Rydon (LR)

MINUTES

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

BT opened the meeting and new co-opted governors, Brian Davey and Margery Turner, both of whom had served on the temporary governing body, were welcomed onto the Board. Introductions were made.

2. Declaration of Interests

Barbara Temple: Learning Service of WSCC
John Clifton: Wife employed at Woodlands Meed
Miriam Owen: Director for Kangaroos
Margery Turner: Governor at Oakmeeds Community College

3. Approval of Minutes dated 14th November, 2012

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes/Action Grid

- i. Entitlement to time off work for governor meetings
LR gave details of the relevant extract from The Guide to the Law for School Governors. Section 5, point 5 on page 26 (attached). SS had also emailed information (attached). Link for Guide to the Law:
www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance/guidetothelaw
- ii. Teaching Assistant Pay Scale
GP explained the current situation with the TA pay scale and governors were aware of the need to ensure there was a clear, open and transparent process for progression through grades. A Pay Review Committee meeting would be arranged to look at and agree the process.
- iii. The Hub
See Headteacher's report.
- iv. Governor Run Clubs
To be monitored through committees. Agenda item for Learning and Wellbeing.
- v. Website
DA confirmed the website was up and running and governors were encouraged to visit the site. Governors were aware Ofsted had new requirements for school websites and would appoint a governor to monitor it through the committees.

- vi. Governor Training
JG reported on the induction training he had attended that day. All governors were encouraged to attend training opportunities. (A link governor would be appointed to ensure a record of training was kept and that governors were alerted to opportunities.)
- vii. Governors
The majority of governors had received their lanyards. New governors were asked to collect theirs' from the School office.

5. Chair's Action

- i. See 9iii
- ii. Extra INSET day
BT had circulated details of the extra Inset day for Court Meadow students. She explained that the decision had not been taken lightly but had been done to ensure the move was completely safe for pupils. She reported on a complaint received from a parent and that she had replied giving the reasons for the extra day. Governors completely appreciated the parents' views but agreed there had been no option but to close the school for the reasons of safety and thanked BT for her prompt action.
- iii. Lauren Silverlock
Governors thanked BT for writing to Lauren's family following their daughter's tragic death. GP reported on the funeral and several governors had attended. A celebration of Lauren's life was taking place on 29/1/13.
- iv. Admissions
BT/GP met weekly and BT had approved an increase of 1 over the pupil admissions number of 230. Subsequently, the numbers had gone back to 230. Governors were aware numbers would fluctuate but agreed they would need to take further action if the numbers increased by more than 3 or 4.
- v. Burgess Hill Locality (reported at end of meeting)
GP reported on the Locality Academy that Oakmeeds were investigating. BT had agreed to be the Woodlands Meed link on this working party. Governors noted the need to be involved and asked for this to be an agenda item at their next FGB. BT asked governors to email her any questions by 18.1.13 which could be raised with Oakmeeds.

6. Governing Body membership (BT)

- i. Shared Vision for Woodlands Meed

BT had highlighted the priorities and values of Woodlands Meed and the responsibility of the governing body to monitor and support the school.

Governors carefully considered the options open to them and the challenges they faced as a new governing body with several members completely new to governance. GP also highlighted that as Woodlands Meed was a new school governor input would be invaluable to help set the direction. Some governors were concerned they were not aware of the school systems and practices and discussed ways of ensuring they became more familiar with the school. It was hoped that as the governing body progressed an induction system could be set up for new governors. It was agreed it would be helpful to have a meeting to discuss the SIP (School Improvement Plan), SEF (Self Evaluation Form) and other programmes such as CASPA (Comparison & Analysis of Special Pupil

Attainment), Pupil Perspective to give them a clearer understanding/appreciation of Woodlands Meed.

BT reported on the weekly meetings she had with GP. It was agreed it would be beneficial for governors to have a record of these meetings so they had a full understanding of issues covered. Governors also highlighted the importance of having written evidence of these meetings to clearly demonstrate actions taken. If governors had any queries on subjects raised they were asked to email BT.

Governors had received the model code of practice prior to the meeting. As a Foundation without a Foundation, they raised some concerns with the wording, but after a discussion and clarification from LR that they could review and adapt it to reflect the ethos of their school they agreed to adopt it as it was. It was confirmed the code of practice would be reviewed as the governing body developed. Discussion on their status as a Foundation without a Foundation raised more concerns with governors and the members who had been on the Temporary Governing Body explained they had spent a large amount of time ascertaining their accountability. BT made it clear that no one governor was singularly accountable and they asked LR to copy information from the TGB minutes:

Temporary Governing Body Meeting: excerpt from minutes 27/2/12
Foundation without a Foundation.

The TGB highlighted that when originally forming plans for the new school they had been advised that the only way to proceed was by forming a Foundation without a Foundation. They raised concerns that now the Government had indicated that all new schools should be Academies. They were anxious about the level of legal responsibility that fell on Foundation governors and also recorded that they did not want to be left behind as all other new schools took Academy status. There was a concern that as the employer and owner of the assets the governors were taking on a great deal and they sought assurance of exactly what they were undertaking and the level of risk involved.

Andy Nichols (WSCC Leadership & Governance Adviser) explained that a Foundation without a Foundation would not feel different from normal governing bodies and that governors would broadly have the same responsibilities with a strategic overview. He confirmed that the responsibility sat with the corporate body of the FGB rather than the individuals.

TGB: excerpt from minutes 26/3/12
Corporate Body (clarification)

David Gwenlan (WSCC Schools Resource Manager) confirmed governing bodies were incorporated so individual governors were protected and this would apply to the FGB or Woodlands Meed as it currently did for the TGB.

ii. Governing Body Structure

Governors then carefully considered the most efficient way of carrying out their responsibilities and after some discussion agreed to set up three committees to report into the FGB:

Premises, Health and Safety
Learning and Pupil Wellbeing
Staffing and Finance

All committees to have safeguarding on their agenda but would officially be the remit of Learning and Wellbeing.

Governors were asked to email BT/LR with their preferences so that the committees could be set up and meet before the next FGB. They were informed that they could attend all three to get a clearer idea of the terms of reference of each committee before agreeing to join one or two committees. BT offered to chair the first meeting of each committee and it was agreed that a good balance of experienced and new governors

should be on each one. LR to source terms of reference for consideration at the first meetings and to allocate policies from statutory policy list to relevant committee.

BT had highlighted the further roles individual governors would take on and governors were asked to email any preferences they might have. LR to put together a list for the next meeting.

iii. Confidentiality of Minutes

Governors agreed that minutes would remain confidential until they were formally approved at the next FGB meeting. As staff governor, AS confirmed she could inform staff on areas discussed at the meetings but only on decisions once the minutes had been approved. At this point, minutes would be made available on the website and notice boards within the school.

iv. Governor Expenses

Governors were entitled to expenses and asked to put claims through with DA. (Staffing and Finance committee to adopt Governor Expenses policy.)

v. West Sussex Grid for Learning (WSGFL)

LR explained the grid and would forward all governors usernames and logins. Governors were encouraged to use the WSGFL email addresses.

BT also reported on the Governor remote access which could be accessed from home computers. LR/GP currently had access and LR had set up the filing system of all governing body papers. Ian Carter was trialling the system with BT and once it was up and running all governors would be given access. (LR to inform governors when available.)

vi. Governing Body Vacancies

Nominations for partnership governors had been sought and received. Governors looked at the personal statements and unanimously agreed to appoint Karen George and Alan Ranger as partnership governors. LR to inform them and give dates of next meetings.

There were two vacancies for staff co-opted governors and the Board asked the school to begin the process for recruiting these members in the fairest way.

LR confirmed that once BT had been appointed as the LA governor (as was expected) there would be one further co-opted vacancy. Governors looked at their options and emphasised the importance of having some legal experience on the Board. They considered whether it would be appropriate/possible to try to co-opt a lawyer though recognised there were many different areas of the law. They were aware that SS had 20 years experience in HR and was very conversant with employment law. They recognised the commitments of many lawyers but understood they could appoint an associate member with legal experience to guide them when necessary.

BT noted that she had been approached by a very experienced and well regarded governor who had shown an interest in joining Woodlands Mead but did not have any legal experience.

After some discussion, the FGB felt it would be prudent to explore their options before co-opting the last governor. They clarified that the quorum would be based on the number of governors in post.

7. Headteacher's Report (GP)

The governors thanked GP for her excellent and very detailed report. Questions were raised regarding the complaints from neighbours and governors were anxious that these were

dealt with efficiently and sympathetically. DA confirmed that Wilmott Dixon were now on site and was optimistic that the complaints were being addressed.

On questioning about the recent 'accidental' fire alarm, Governors were pleased to learn that the fire brigade would shortly be visiting to guide the school through best procedures. GP followed up her report with huge praise for the leadership team and staff in their work to ensure the three Court Meadow classes had moved and settled so well into the College. Governors asked for their thanks and congratulations on the achievements to be conveyed to staff.

8. Finance Report & Changes to SEN Funding (DA)

DA briefed the governors on the current budget and that spending authorised to ensure the safety of pupils meant the budget was very tight. He confirmed he would report fully through the Staffing and Finance committee.

JL/MO left the meeting.

9. Matters carried over from TGB

i. Buildings (DA)

Governors had enjoyed a tour of the college site prior to the meeting. KB led them round and they were delighted to talk to staff who were so positive about the new site. DA confirmed plans for phase 2a and 2b were close to being finalised and that at this stage it was hoped phase 3 would be completed by October though the school were prepared for a four week delay on this date. Governors were pleased that staff were optimistic about the plans and that Stirlands had worked so well up to this point. DA confirmed staff could look at the plans and that neither the school hall or food tech room would be out of operation during term time.

The Premises, health and safety committee would discuss buildings and progress of both sites and report back to the FGB.

ii. Land Transfer (JC)

JC explained the procedure for the transfer of land and buildings to the FGB. He confirmed that the Solicitors the TGB had instructed continued to advise the FGB before the handover was formalised. GP confirmed that the Head of Oakmeeds had indicated that they would be happy for the footpath to be their responsibility.

iii. Staffing (see confidential minute)(BT)GP, KB, AS & DA left the meeting for this item.

JC left the meeting.

10. HT Performance Management Report (BT)

BT confirmed that she and SS along with the external adviser, Jayne Wilson, had carried out GP's performance management for the first term at Woodlands Meed and targets had been set for the next two terms.

11. Annual Safeguarding Report (GP)

GP confirmed the dates governors had undertaken child protection and safer recruitment training to complete the annual safeguarding report. To be forwarded to Rosemary Terry at WSCC and emailed to LR for distribution. LR highlighted the training available through WSCC for safer recruitment. (See attached.)

12. AOB

i. CRB

Governors asked for clarification on CRB checks. LR pointed them towards the guidance in the latest Leadership & Governance briefings. It was agreed to add CRB checks as an agenda item to the next FGB meeting.

13. Date of Next Meetings

- Staffing & Finance, Monday, 4th February at 4.30pm, School
- Learning & Wellbeing, Wednesday, 6th February at 4.30pm, College
- Premises, Health & Safety, Wednesday, 13th February at 4.30, School
- FGB: Monday, 11th March at 4.30pm, Woodlands Meed School

ACTION GRID January 2013

4i	Employer obligations to Governors	LR to source information & distribute guidance SS had found.	LR
4ii	TA pay scale	To be discussed at Pay Review Committee. Membership to be confirmed & date found.	Cttee/LR
4iv	Governor run Clubs	Monitoring to be undertaken. Agenda L & WB	Cttee/LR
4v	Website	Governor to monitor website to be appointed.	FGB
4vi	Governor Training	All governors encouraged to attend. Link Governor to be appointed at next FGB.	FGB
4vii	Lanyards	Available from School Office	All
6i	School Systems GP/BT weekly meetings Code of Practice Accountability of Governors	Meeting with Leadership Team to familiarise governors with school systems to be considered. To be recorded & distributed to governors Adopted. To be reviewed at September FGB. LR to source information from TGB minutes.	LR/BT
6ii	Committees Individual Roles	Governors to stipulate preference for committees. Dates to be set and agendas & terms of reference to be distributed. LR to allocate policies to committees. Governors to indicate areas of interest and appointments made at next committee/FGB meetings	All/LR/BT All
6iii	Governor Minutes	Confidential until approved at next meeting & then put on notice board & school website.	School
6iv	Governor Expenses	Policy to be drawn up at S& F committee	Cttee
6v	WSGFL	LR to forward details of login	LR
6vi	Partnership Governors Co-opted (staff) governors Co-opted governor vacancy	LR to confirm partnership governors & invite to meetings. School to begin appointment process. FGB to explore options and discuss at next meeting.	LR School All
7	Court Meadow move	Thanks conveyed to staff for excellent achievement.	GP/KB
8	Budget Report	To S & F meeting	DA
9i & ii	Buildings	Progress/snagging and land transfer to be reported to Premises, H & S	DA/JC
11	Annual Safeguarding Report	Emailed to LR for distribution	GP/LR
12i	Governor CRBs	Agenda at FGB	Agenda

Chairman's Signature

B. Temple

Date: 17/4/13