

Archway School: Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes of Meeting held on 30th November 2016

Present: Colin Belford **CB**, Nigel Cooper **NC**, Vic Lewis **VL**, Lesley Ryall **LR**, Anne-Marie Delrosa **AD**, Natasha Rolls, **NR**, Alan Potter **AP**, Pam Swindell **PS**, Gavin Townsend **GT**, Kerry Davies **KD**, Barry Upward **BU**, Georgia Boon **GB**, Emma Bradshaw **EB**

Apologies: Sarah Warner **SW**, Clare Hankey **CH**, Anna Ellis **AE**

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from **CH**, **AE** and **SW**

2. **Welcome**

A new parent governor, Emma Bradshaw, was welcomed onto the FGB.

3. **Declarations of Prejudicial Interest**

There were none.

4. **Minutes from previous FGB Meeting and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous FGB meeting (12th October 2016) were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Item 11: Governors were reminded about the deadline for sending completed subject visits reports to **SW**.

Item 17: The NGA conference which **AD** had been due to attend was cancelled.

5. **Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. In addition to drawing attention to some of the key points within the report and giving a brief staffing update, **CB** also provided details of the school review which had taken place during the previous week. The following strengths were made by the inspection team (two Ofsted trained inspectors and Linda Peck (Local Authority)):

- *The school felt rightly buoyant and the strong relationships that exist between students and adults continue to define the essence of Archway School.*
- *Evidence from lesson observations and learning walks suggests good progress is being made in many areas by many groups and the tireless and effective work of the pupil premium lead is having a positive impact.*
- *Students' ability to talk about their progress is good. Most are clear about how they have improved and can see clear improvement in their reading and writing compared to what they could do at Primary school.*
- *The strongest subjects seen were English, geography, languages, music, drama, art and PE.*
- *In the best lessons, there were many instances of thoughtful questioning, little time wasted, appropriately differentiated activities showing that students are known well and are stretched and high quality marking that was having an impact on students' progress.*
- *Good progress was seen in many books. Presentation and care is still variable and very much corresponds to the expectations set, demonstrated and demanded by the teacher.*
- *Students are positive about the teaching they receive at the school. The increase in stretch and challenge was evident this review.*
- *Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare continues to be a strong and positive aspect of Archway School. The conduct seen when students arrived at school was positive and this continued during the day.*

- *Behaviour in lessons is generally good and on the rare occasion that it isn't, it is as a result of weaker teaching.*

Key Recommendations

Strengthen leadership by:

- *Deepening the evaluation of progress and attendance of all groups and sub-groups to determine (or rule out) patterns to sharpen improvement planning for those groups.*
- *Developing middle leaders including seconds in department to hone their evaluation skills including lesson observation skills to deepen their ability to deconstruct learning and give accurate and useful feedback to colleagues.*
- *Developing the skills of leaders so that they are better able to hold their teams to account.*
- *Ensuring that internal scrutiny of work and books is rigorous and conforming to the high expectations established by senior leaders and governors.*
- *Share the good practice that exists in marking and in work generally in English; consider rolling out best practice to become common practice across the school to help reduce the in-school variation that the school has identified.*
- *Ensure that where there are common expectations that they are adhered to e.g. should all teachers be using HTI (how to improve). If so, ensure that this is being done and that teachers know that this will be checked and they will be held to account.*

Conclusion

This review confirms the judgements held by the school that Archway School continues to be a good school overall and all four key judgements were 'good'. The Sixth Form is 'good' and, given its outcomes using a variety of indicators, has elements of outstanding.

The following additional points were made in response to governor queries:

- The review had been more rigorous than an Ofsted Inspection in that it took place over two days, rather than the one day Ofsted allocate to schools previously judged as 'good'. In addition, there were three, rather than two inspectors.
- The Inspection team had been satisfied that good progress had been made with the recommendations made in last year's review.

CB confirmed that the RAISE online data and analysis will be brought to the next FGB meeting.

6. Strategic Plan Update

The relevant sections of the new Strategic Plan will be brought to all committee meetings for monitoring purposes throughout the school year.

7. Collaboration with Coln House

It was explained that in order to proceed with the collaborative support arrangements with Coln House, the Local Authority requires the governing body to sign the collaboration document which had been circulated prior to the meeting. A discussion took place about whether to agree to the request for impartial help from the Archway governing body. A governor did express reservations about the amount of time which might be involved and whether this could prove to be a distraction. It was pointed out that support would probably only involve two governors for one or two meetings and that schools involved in collaborative support with other institutions are regarded positively. The fact that Archway had been approached was an indication of the view held within the county that the school has a strong, robust governing body with the necessary skills for giving impartial, carefully considered support.

The decision regarding the collaborative arrangements with Coln House was put to the vote. Governors voted unanimously to agree to the terms of reference. **AD** will now request further information, including dates of the meetings.

8. **Government Policy/Academy Status Update**

CB gave details of the government's Green Paper, 'Schools that Work for Everyone'. The consultation proposes "a series of reforms to encourage high performing institutions - independent schools, higher education institutions, selective and faith schools - to help improve the quality of school places in the mainstream and state sector." The proposals are broken down into four categories: independent schools, universities, selective schools and faith schools.

GASH (Gloucestershire Association of Secondary Heads) will be responding to the Green Paper. The consultation runs until 12th December and governors were encouraged to put forward their views.

Regarding academisation, **CB** informed the meeting that there has been criticism of MATs (multi-academy trusts) which have taken on challenging schools but failed to turn them around. It is also evident that those MATs without any challenging schools in their chain have been reluctant to take any on. Archway has not yet been approached by any MATs and there was a general consensus amongst the FGB that at the moment it would not be in the best interests of the school to consider such a move. Although Archway could consider setting up its own MAT, this would entail taking responsibility for the finances of all the schools which became affiliated and given the budget uncertainties facing the majority of schools over the next few years, this could represent a considerable liability.

9. **Succession Planning**

NR was re-elected as parent governor for a second term of office. There is one remaining parent governor vacancy. This will be advertised in the New Year.

10. **Pupil Premium Update**

CB informed the meeting that in last year's 6th form summer examinations, the Pupil Premium students had out-performed the non-PP students with the highest achieving student in Y13 being PP.

Action: LR will give a Pupil Premium update at the next FGB meeting

11. **Stakeholder Voice**

The following arrangements were agreed for governor representation at future Parents' Evenings:

Y8: 18th January **NR**

Y9: 8th February **AD**

6th Form: 28th February **GB**

12. **Committee Reports**

(Minutes of all the recent committee meetings had been circulated prior to the FGB meeting: additional points below)

Chairs' Group

- **AD** asked governors to read the SEF (school evaluation form) which had been circulated by email earlier in the month. It is a very useful document which will help governors to feel 'Ofsted ready'.
- **AD, SW** and **PS** are to meet to discuss ways in which the governing body can best prepare for a future Ofsted inspection.
- **AD** asked all governors to ensure that they do sign in at reception whenever they make a school visit. This information is important for the effective monitoring of attendance.

Finance & Staffing Committee

- The school budget projections are being closely monitored by the committee in view of the financial constraints which are already beginning to have an impact. The 3 Year Plan is to be reviewed at the January meeting.
- The committee has approved the commissioning of an external financial audit.

Curriculum Committee

- Nothing to add to the minutes.

Welfare & Discipline Committee

- The governing body had been sent the Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Policy which has undergone significant changes. This was accepted and re-adopted in its revised form.
- The governors' expenses statement had been reviewed and amendments agreed. The revised statement will be sent out to all governors.

13. **Health & Safety**

The SLT had been asked about risk assessments during the recent school review. **CB** reported that the inspectors had been impressed with the departmental risk assessment arrangements they had been shown.

14. **Governor Training**

Governors should contact **AD/AL** if they have with any training requests.

15. **Chairs' Correspondence**

AD will now contact the local Authority regarding the request for collaborative governance panel arrangements between the Interim Executive Board of Coln House School and the Governing Body of Archway School. She will confirm that the governing body have agreed to the terms of reference.

16. **AOB**

None.

The meeting ended at 6.30pm. The date of the next FGB meeting is 1st February 2016.

Actions

Action: LR will give a Pupil Premium update at the next FGB meeting

Action: Amended Governors' Allowances statement will be sent out to all governors with the minutes

AL Clerk to Governors

