

Archway School: Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes of Meeting held on 4th October 2017 at 5pm

Present: Colin Belford **CB**, Pam Swindell **PS**, Vic Lewis **VL**, Anne-Marie Delrosa **AD**, Sarah Warner **SW**, Gavin Townsend **GT**, Nigel Cooper **NC**, Barnes Clutterbuck **BC**, Natasha Rolls **NC**, Anna Ellis **AE**

1. Apologies

The governing body was asked if it would be happy to accept apologies from Georgia Boon for the next six months (Curriculum Committee and FGB meetings) as she is unable to attend meetings due to a clash of work commitments on Wednesday evenings. This written request was discussed and accepted.

Action: PS agreed to explore the possibility of swapping the days of the Curriculum and Welfare & Discipline committee meetings as another governor has also been experiencing difficulties due to work hours.

Apologies were received and also accepted from **CHA, LR, AP** and **BU**

2. Declarations of Prejudicial Interest

There were none.

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

PS proposed that **AD** should continue in the role of Chair. This proposal was seconded by **NC** and approved by all present.

Prior to the meeting, **SW** had declared that she intended to stand down as Vice Chair. **NR** proposed that **BC** should be nominated for the role. This was seconded by **AE** and approved by all present. **AD** thanked **SW** for her support as Vice Chair over the past year.

4. Minutes from previous FGB Meeting and Matters Arising not covered elsewhere

The minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 5th July were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

None.

5. Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. **CB** distributed a summary of progress made in meeting the success criteria for the Strategic Plan's Priority Objectives.

CB also drew attention to the following issues from his report:

- The summer examination results indicated that there has been a concerning drop in the Progress 8 measure. The SLT has been analysing the data but as yet has not been able to identify any clear pattern, although the following three factors certainly contributed: the drop in GCSE English Language 'pass' results, which were down on the previous year, probably because of the demands of the new syllabus; the fact that 23 students in the year group had not joined the school at the start of their secondary education, and the under-achievement of middle ability boys. In response to this last issue, a decision has been taken to create a boys only tutor group in Y11, with the aim of encouraging aspirations in order to prevent a repetition of this persistent cohort characteristic.

- In response to a governor query, **CB** confirmed that the Narrowing the Gap meetings scrutinise the attainment of under-achieving pupils across all their subjects. Departments are held accountable for the effectiveness of their targeted interventions at fortnightly line management meetings.
- A governor asked when predictions relating to this year's GCSE performance will be firmed up. **CB** explained that it is difficult to establish accuracy as many subjects are in the process of moving from letter grades (A*-G) to number grades (9-1) and there is considerable uncertainty about this transition.
- Another governor asked if there are any concerns about standards of marking and assessment across departments. **CB** replied that, overall, standards are much improved, although some colleagues need constant reminders about the need for consistency and rigour.
- On a positive note, the summer Science results showed an encouraging improvement and the new term has started well. The first four weeks show BfL referrals and exclusions to be significantly down from the same period last year.
- **CB** outlined the changes which had been made to SLT responsibilities: Dominic Salmon has taken over responsibility for Pupil Premium from Rachel O'Bryan whose remit now includes Teaching and Learning.

AD thanked **CB** for his report and commented on the usefulness of the new contextual information he had provided in the 'Start of Term' section. She also thanked him for the Strategic Plan 'Success Criteria' summary and asked if the FGB could continue to receive updates in the Head Teachers report about progress towards the strategic plan.

Action: CB to continue to include contextual introduction to HT report and a summary of initiatives taking place in relation to the strategic plan.

6. Strategic Plan

The various priorities which make up the Strategic Plan had been reviewed during the last round of committee meetings and progress in meeting the success criteria for each priority had been considered. Progress had been judged to be satisfactory for priorities 1, 2, 3 and 5.

Action: The Chairs Group will review the success criteria for Strategic Plan Priorities 4 and 6 at its next meeting in November.

AD reminded the governors of the School Vision section that precedes the Priorities. This had been re-visited at the Governance Workshop the previous month. **AD** expressed disappointment that not all governors had completed their self-evaluation form and governance skills audit in advance of this workshop.

Information from these annual audits provides vital information about training needs and the completed returns indicated the data remains an area where governors feel they could do with additional training.

Action: Refresher training on understanding and interpreting data will be organised.

A governor made the point that failing to complete the annual self-evaluation and audit showed a lack of respect towards the Chair, especially as a number of reminders had been sent out. It is important that the FGB can fully demonstrate that it is fully functioning and committed to its role.

7. Code of Conduct

The Governing Body agreed to adopt the recently updated National Governors' Association Code of Conduct. This will immediately replace the current Code of Conduct.

8. **Terms of Reference and Standing Cycle of Activities**

The revised Terms of Reference and Standing Cycle of Activities for 2017-18 had been reviewed at recent committee meetings and were accepted by the FGB.

9. **Subject Visit Guidelines and Subject Visits 2017-18**

The Subject Visit Guidelines had been reviewed at the last Chairs' Group meeting. They were accepted by all present.

It was agreed that governors should focus on exam results when they undertake their subject visit and ask departments what their priorities are in ensuring that all pupils achieve their expected levels of progress.

Action: AD will circulate guideline questions for governors to use when carrying out their subject visits and give a deadline for the completion of reports, which are to be emailed to SW, who will collate the information and produce a summary report with NR.

NC agreed to undertake the English department subject visit.

10. **Succession Planning**

There are vacancies for two parent governors due to the resignation of Emma Bradshaw and the forthcoming end to Sarah Warner's term of office. Letters inviting nominations from parents will be sent out 11th October, with a deadline for return by 20th October.

CB will approach the staff again to seek nominations for an elected staff governor to replace Kerry Davies, who resigned in July. If there are none, another possibility would be for one of the existing co-opted staff governors to put themselves forward for election.

The FGB formally agreed to NC being elected to a further term of office as the nominated local authority governor.

11. **Government Education Policy Update**

CB distributed a paper giving details of the most recent information regarding the National Funding Formula for 11-16 students. Archway looks likely to gain £50,000 (1%) although given the fact that the teachers' pay award is also 1%, this would leave the school no better off unless the pay award is funded by central government.

The Finance & Staffing committee reviews the budget forecast at each meeting and is aware that tough decisions may need to be made in future in order to deal with a likely decrease in funding.

12. **Safeguarding**

At the last FGB meeting, the governing body agreed to adopt the revised Safeguarding Policy and AD had reminded governors of the importance of this policy and the need to familiarise themselves with governing body responsibilities regarding Safeguarding. A quiz testing knowledge of the Safeguarding policy was completed and returned to AD who provided the answers at the meeting.

In-house Safeguarding training has been arranged for Wednesday, 1st November from 6-8pm.

13. **Stakeholder Voice**

The following governors will be attending Parents' Evenings (4.30pm start):

- 23rd November Y11 AE
- 10th January 6th Form AD

- **BC** will attend the Narrowing the Gap meeting on 22nd November (BC to contact KY by email to let her know he will be attending.)
- **PS** will attend the Drugs Information Evening on 20th November

CB informed the FGB that primary liaison links are currently very positive. Contacts with primary schools are now being expanded to reach a wider geographical area and taster sessions are being arranged at strategic times in the school year.

On the subject of marketing, a governor asked whether enough is being done to promote Archway by involving parents in the decision making process regarding the choice of secondary school. He made the point that many local parents still have misconceptions about the school and it is only when they visit to look around that they develop a fresh, positive perspective. It was suggested that more could be done in association with the local press to promote Archway and using student or parents as case studies

Action: CB will explore the use of parent interviews/comments in promoting the school and approach the local newspapers.

14. **Committee Reports**

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

Chairs' Group

- Nothing more to add to beyond information in the minutes.
- **AE** volunteered to attend the next Chairs' Group meeting on 8th November.

Finance & Staffing Committee

- On the recommendation of the committee, the FGB agreed to formally adopt the 1% Pay Award for the teaching staff.

Curriculum Committee

- Attention was drawn to the policies which had been reviewed at the meeting.
- **PS** commented that the committee had been concerned about the summer examination results and the drop in the Progress 8 measure.

Welfare & Discipline Committee

- The FGB was informed of the review of policies and the decision to defer the review of the Learning Difficulties and Disabilities policy until the next meeting.
- The committee is recommending that the school produces a policy on promoting and supporting the mental health of staff and students.
- **NC** drew attention to the DfE's recent guidelines on exclusions which put greater responsibilities on governing bodies.

15. **Health & Safety**

No new information beyond that included in the recent Finance & Staffing committee minutes.

16. **Governor Training**

Safeguarding: Wednesday, 1st November 6-8pm in school

Exclusions: Wednesday, 24th January 6- 8pm in school.

17. **Chairs' Correspondence**

AD will attend the NGA conference on 18th November and report back at the next FGB meeting.

18. **AOB**

- **CB** has been contacted by Callowell School, which is looking for an experienced governor.
- Crypt School is looking for a governor to sit on an independent review panel regarding a permanent exclusion. Anyone interested should contact **CB**.

The meeting ended at 7.15pm. The date of the next FGB meeting is 29th November 2017.

Actions

Item 1: Action: PS agreed to explore the possibility of swapping the days of the Curriculum and Welfare & Discipline committee meetings as another governor has also been experiencing difficulties due to work hours.

Item 5: Action: CB to continue to include contextual introduction to HT report and a summary of initiatives taking place in relation to the strategic plan.

Item 6: Action: Refresher training on understanding and interpreting data will be organised.

Action: The Chairs' Group will review the success criteria for Strategic Plan Priorities 4 and 6 at its next meeting in November.

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AL Clerk to Governors