

Archway School: Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes of Meeting held on 11th December 2019 at 5pm in A8

Present: Colin Belford **CB**, Anne-Marie Delrosa **AD** (Chair), Natasha Rolls **NR**, Sarah Warner **SW**, Pam Swindell **PS**, Martin Ansell **MA**, Christopher Berry **CBE**, George James **GJ**, Julie Brindle **JB**, Nicola Farrow **NF**, Anna Ellis **AE**, Gill Ferry **GF**, Stewart King **SK**

Apologies: Nigel Cooper, Barnes Clutterbuck, Gavin Townsend

1. **Declarations of Prejudicial Interest**

There were none.

2. **Quality of Education – responding to the new Ofsted Framework**

Presentation by Kay Young, deputy headteacher

(presentation powerpoint emailed to governors separately from minutes)

At the end of the presentation, **KY** reminded the governors that the school's Curriculum Intent can be found on the school website. All departments have their own 'departmental curriculum intent' and link governors need to be aware of these when carrying out subject visits.

The SLT and the governing body are aware of the need to be able to justify the school's decision to operate a three year KS4. A governor asked if there are any legal issues arising from this decision. **KY** explained that she has received an email from the DfE confirming that the school's national curriculum coverage does meet requirements. The recent Survey Monkey parent questionnaire indicated strong parental approval and support for the school's approach.

It was noted that the current Y11 is the first year group to go through KS4 with all the new GCSE exam specifications in place. However, it was also noted that there have, as yet, been no improvements in results since the introduction of the three year KS4 so 2020 will be crucial in assessing its impact.

3. **Election of New Governors**

Gill Ferry and Stewart King were elected as co-opted governors (nominated by **PS**, seconded by **MA** and agreed by all present).

4. **Ratification of decision regarding interviews for new Headteacher**

AD outlined the rigorous process undergone in preparing for the headteacher interviews which had taken place during the week. She thanked **NF**, **BC**, **PS**, **AE**, **MA** and the local authority representatives for their support with the various interview panels and Jayne Thorley for organising all aspects of the process.

AD explained that although three candidates had been nominated to be taken through to Day 2, one withdrew at the end of Day 1 and one other had withdrawn at the beginning of Day 2. Consequently, it had been decided to recommend that an appointment should not be made.

The governing body confirmed that the whole process had been conducted in a fair and rigorous manner and ratified the decision of the interview panel not to appoint on this occasion.

AD felt that lessons had been learnt from the experience:

- Candidates need to have time to talk to the senior team so that they can obtain a clear picture of the school's current position.
- Governors need to ensure they shortlist sufficient candidates to take into account potential withdrawals

The governing body considered the potential options for recruiting a new headteacher in 2020 and eventually decided that a September start appointment would be preferable with a new advert to be placed in January and interviews scheduled for February.

As **CB** will be retiring at Easter, an interim arrangement will need to be put in place. The governors considered four possibilities:

1. An acting head appointed from the current SLT - Kay Young as the senior deputy head supported by a mentoring arrangement agreed with the local authority in order to ensure SLT capacity is maintained.
2. The appointment of an external acting head.
3. An existing head teacher to act as a part-time executive head.
4. Ask **CB** to continue in post until the end of the school year.

After discussion, it was agreed that option 1 was the preferred arrangement, with option 2 the second choice.

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

The minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 9th October were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Item 7: so that governors can ensure that they take into account the Ofsted requirements when monitoring the Strategic Plan objectives assigned to each committee, **AD** has produced a monitoring matrix spreadsheet which will be sent out to governors.

6. **Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. At the meeting, the following points were also made:

- In response to a governor question about the new, research based approach to CPD, **CB** confirmed that lesson monitoring visits will continue throughout the school year on a once every half term basis. Six key principles related to effective teaching have been adopted and the focus of monitoring visits will be on one of these each time, but only moving on to the next when it is felt that delivery is secure. The aim will be to reach principle 4 ('stickability') by the end of the summer term. Formal monitoring visits are followed up by informal discussions with teachers where issues of concern have been identified.
- In addition to the scheduled monitoring visits, the SLT are out around the school every day, dropping in informally to lessons. Heads of Departments are now more involved in the regular monitoring of staff in the curriculum areas.
- The Science department is to be subject to 'deep dive' monitoring during this year with support from the local authority. Where it is felt to be necessary, other departments will also be subject to a 'deep dive' scrutiny.
- **CB** explained that the high number of f/t exclusions in Term 1 had been as a consequence of the new Disruption Free Learning approach to behaviour management. The Inclusion Centre is now being used for interventions with those students who have had multiple exclusions since the start of the school year. It was noted that permanent exclusions are down compared to this time last year and it is anticipated that this decrease will be sustained.
- In response to a governor query, **CB** confirmed that students in isolation are given age appropriate work covering the core subjects.
- A governor noted that whilst the report states that improving students' literacy skills is a major focus, the percentage of student with very low reading scores has remained unchanged from Year 7 to Year 10 as measured by the National Group Reading Test for some years. It was agreed that if the various strategies, which include the use of the Lexonik Leap training programme, do not result in an improvement after the next annual reading test in the summer, a review of the interventions will be urgently needed.

7. **Committee Reports**

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

Chairs' Group

- Nothing to add to the minutes.

Finance & Staffing Committee

- **BC** will continue as Acting Chair during this school year.
- The FGB was informed that the committee had reviewed the Conduct, Capability, Staff Attendance and Freedom of Information policies. None had needed to be amended.
- An overview of how the school's Budget Plan is put together is to be presented at the next FGB meeting.

Curriculum Committee

- **MA** is to invite the Head of English to give a short presentation at the next committee meeting.

Welfare & Discipline Committee

- **BC** is to review the governing body's Induction for new Governors statement and bring suggestions/recommendations to the next committee meeting.
- The committee are recommending that the FGB adopts the revised Equalities Policy, which will be sent out to all governors early in the new year.

Action: The revised Equalities Policy will be emailed to all governors early in the new year with a request to indicate approval that the policy should be adopted to the Clerk of Governors unless there are objections to doing so.

8. **Succession Planning**

AE is resigning as a parent governor so this was her last meeting. **AD** thanked her for enthusiasm, support, unwavering commitment and invaluable contributions in a variety of different roles within the governing body.

There will be parent governor elections in January for two vacancies following the resignations of Georgia Boon and Anna Ellis.

9. **Subject Visit and Link Governor Reports**

AD thanked governors for their most recent subject visit reports. It was pleasing to see a good spread of subjects covered during this round of visits. All link governors were able to confirm that they felt that Heads of Department had a secure grasp of the new Ofsted requirements.

CBE and **AE** presented their Pupil Premium and Sixth Form Link Governor reports.

10. **Stakeholder Voice**

AD presented a summary of the feedback obtained from the focus group session held on 27th November. Three topics had been discussed: the changes implemented in September; the three Year KS4 and the EBacc.

Concern had been expressed about certain aspects of homework checking. **CB** explained that Dominic Salmon (deputy head) is reviewing current arrangements and will report back to the Curriculum Committee in February.

A further Parents' Focus Group session will be held next year and will ask for feedback regarding the school's approach to relationships and sex education. The online staff survey will take place in March.

11. **Health & Safety**

Nothing to report.

12. **Training**

- Finance: An overview of how the school's Budget Plan is put together is to be presented at the next FGB meeting.
- An in-house Pupil Premium training session has been booked for 4th March 2020.
- An in-house **Exclusions** training session is to be arranged. Date and details to follow.
- The governing body now has a subscription to the National Governors' Association 'Learning Link' which offers flexible e-learning to help governors to develop their governance skills and knowledge. **AL** will email access details.

13. **AOB**

None.

The meeting ended at 7.25pm. The date of the next FGB meeting is 26th February 2020.

Actions

*Item 7: **Action: The revised Equalities Policy will be emailed to all governors early in the new year with a request to indicate approval that the policy should be adopted to the Clerk of Governors unless there are objections to doing so.***

AL Clerk to Governors