

Governors of Oswald Road Primary School

Full Governors Meeting

Tuesday 27th September 2011

1. Present and Apologies

Present:	Peter Attfield	Chair	Parent Governor
	Sharon Campbell		Headteacher
	John Hegarty, Kathryn Whalley		Staff Governors
	David Bell, Sarah Benjamins,		
	Janet Doherty		Parent Governors
	Sheila Newman, Clare Taylor-Russell		LA Governors
	Dominic Broadhurst, Helen Dobson, Rayna Miller		Community Governors
	Suzi Willis		Associate Governor
In attendance:	Jenny Adie		Clerk

Apologies: Emma Dawkins Parent Governor

Apologies formally accepted.

Absent: none

The Chair welcomed Helen Dobson and Rayna Miller, new Community Governors.

This meeting was in the new extended Foundation Stage building; each Meeting is held in a different classroom so Governors can get to know more about the School environment.

AGM

2. Completion of the Pecuniary Interests Register for 2011/12

All Governors present signed the 2011/12 Pecuniary Interests Register.

ACTION	Clerk	To obtain Emma Dawkins signature to the Register at the next Meeting.
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Declaration of any Pecuniary Interests in the items on this agenda

No interests declared.

3. Election of the Chair and Deputy for the 2011/12 School year

No advance nominations received - to be taken at the Meeting

Peter Attfield was nominated as Chair - for the final year.

Dominic Broadhurst was nominated as Deputy Chair

PA and DBr left the Meeting while a vote was taken.

Peter Attfield unanimously elected as Chair;
Dominic Broadhurst unanimously elected as Deputy Chair.

4. Appointment of the Clerk

Jenny Adie appointed as Clerk.

5. Governors**5.1 Full Governing Body****Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct**

Emailed with papers; standard LA documents, unchanged from last year.

Governors agreed to adopt the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct.
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The Chair signed the Code of Conduct.
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5.2 Governing Body membership**5.2.1 Parent Governor election**

Nominations close Thursday. There are 2 nominations so far.

5.2.2 LA Governor vacancy

SN said that the process has changed; interviews are no longer used, candidates are now invited to an event and discussion before appointment. The Clerk told Governors that the process does not seem to be happening for other Governing Bodies' nominees at present. Nothing has been heard about a possible candidate for Oswald Road.

ACTION	SN	To chase with GTSU.
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5.2.3 Associate Governor end of term

Suzi Willis was originally appointed as Associate Governor for a one year term, which ends in October. SW left the Meeting while the appointment was discussed.

Governors agreed to reappoint Suzi Willis as Associate Governor for one year.
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5.3 Governor training

The Chair recommended New Governor training to the new Community Governors. Both have already signed-up.

Other training needs will follow the decision on subcommittee structure.

ACTION	PA	To put training needs on the agenda for a future Finance meeting.
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6. Governors subcommittees - Report from Working Group

Janet Doherty reported.

All the Working Group members, except SC, were relatively new members of the Governing Body and in a good position to ask why the present organisation and take a fresh look.

The Group looked at possible structures and arrived at a paper for discussion.

The proposal is for a FULL Governing Body meeting once a term, with an annual cycle of purpose and longer meetings, half for statutory monitoring and half for discussion of development.

There would be only one subcommittee, meeting 6 times a year, with the Chair, Deputy, headteacher, SLT, Governors with specific responsibilities, and all others invited to attend.

JD invited comments:

it could make more-effective use of time; the present subcommittee structure is rather rigid and does not depend on what actually needs discussing at that point;

the Governing Body role is strategic planning, not detail;

the structure would be more responsive;

the model is related to decision responsibility levels;

the proposed model would be more strategic and support Staff in their work;

is 3 FGB Meetings enough? will people prefer longer meetings?

one subcommittee could mean a few Governors having a lot to do, and a lot of responsibility;

it would be a good fit with using Link Governors and individuals more;

if everyone else can come to subcommittee meetings, will it just be another round of FGB meetings?

all or nearly all Governors could have a role; attendance at a subcommittee meeting would

depend on what was being discussed.

Terms of Reference and definition of roles still have to be developed; the Working Group was waiting for response to the ideas.

The Chair said there was a broad consensus of agreement to the proposed structure, and suggested the Working Group meet again, then report to the Autumn 2 FGB Meeting, to start the cycle as Meeting 1.

The Scheme of Financial Delegation, and possibly other Policies relating to structure, may need to be amended when new powers are defined.

ACTION	JD	To set-up Working Group meeting to draw-up Terms of Reference, roles of Link Governors etc. to bring to FGB.
ACTION	Clerk	To put on to next agenda.

6.1 Disciplinary subcommittees

To be dealt with after subgroup meeting.

ACTION	Clerk	To put on to next agenda.
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Ordinary business

7. Minutes of the meeting on 19th July 2011

sent out with papers

Minutes agreed and signed as a correct record.

8. Matters arising from the Minutes

Item 7.1 Owl Club - The person SC has to contact is away in Canada.

ACTION	SC	Still to contact Owl Club to negotiate charges, then report back to Finance.
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9. Headteacher's verbal Report

9.1 draft Summer Report from School Improvement Partner

emailed and sent out with papers

There are some inaccuracies; SC has sent corrections to Margaret Papworth.

The re-marks of SATs papers gave children more marks, but not enough for a Level 5.

9.2 new extended Foundation Stage building

The Governors meeting was held in the completed building. SC reported that the Contractors, Bramalls, were a fantastic team; the work was done on time and with good communication. Helen liaised over the summer and senior Staff did not have to project-manage or be out of class. There are snagging issues, with the boiler, and the site back wall needs rebuilding, which has to be negotiated with the Funeral Director.

SC proposed extending Helen's role until December so senior Staff do not have to be called away from their work.

Parents' feedback on the new building is good. Staff were planning that other children should visit the new building, but while the new Nursery children are settling-in is not an ideal time.

There will be 63 children in the Nursery when they are all in. Staff are still going through the list, as some families are not easy to contact to ask if they want to take up the place.

Governors agreed the extension of Helen's role for this term.
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Governors wished to minute thanks to Staff and to Bramalls.

9.3 new School Development Plan

emailed in advance of the Meeting

SC has tried to link the Plan to everything happening in School, including the Ofsted recommendations that are still being worked-on. The Plan is organised according to the SEF framework; outcomes/effectiveness/Leadership and Management/Early Years. The organisation will probably be different next year when any new organisation to follow the SEF is known.

School is waiting for Fischer Family Trust data.

Actions from the Visioning will be brought into the Plan.

Ofsted is expected some time this year. There is training on the new Ofsted framework available for Governors.

ACTION	PA	To check and circulate Ofsted training details.
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10. School Vision Working Group Report and recommendations

The Vision had been emailed to Governors.

Sarah Benjamins reported on the key findings of the work the group did, and the priorities which came from the School community. Governors looked at surveys, Ofsted, general comments from the School community, before drawing-up the questions for the Consultation Day. They were checking the perception of what the School is now, and what the community would like to change, and then set up the Vision based on the community's hopes, expectations and fears.

Hot topics were:

the dress policy - with many comments for and against uniform;

SEN provision - parents thought the School was doing better but the process takes a long time;

use of out door space, and improving both the space and its management;

the growth in numbers in the School, and concern about the suitability of the buildings for increased numbers;

curriculum changes;

home/school communications - parents thought this had improved, and offered suggestions.

The diagram is of how people see the School now, with the print size reflecting the number of responses in the area.

Childrens responses showed that they generally like learning, being with their friends, and lessons, particularly ICT.

Their concerns were mainly about management of structures outside lessons, and they would like more practical subjects.

200 children thought that Sportspoint should be optional;

there were comments that DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) interfered with Best Time - Staff explained that this is a misunderstanding; these are separate activities on a Friday afternoon;

a large number of children did not want a uniform, far more than did;

children's confidence in their ability drops as they go up the School - this may be the case in all schools.

The positives should be made very clear; maybe not everyone knows about the School's inclusiveness, for example.

The papers listed 5 measures that when seen will show that the Vision has been achieved.

The suggested actions from parents and children have been separated into quick-wins and longer-term actions.

Q. How was it decided which were which?

Just on the information; not too much work or money is a quick-win.

SB proposed, after the feed-back today, meeting with the Headteacher to allocate actions, and Leads for actions, and incorporating the work into the SDP; also looking at how the Vision sits alongside or replaces the present Mission Statement and Aims.

There was discussion:

There is some tension about what people want, for example on uniform; small-scale actions are not strategic, and not for Governors; the implementation will be passed to the SLT or a task-and-finish group.

Staff asked if the measures of success are open to revision, and can the findings be phrased more positively? Staff had felt discouraged on reading the paper; the positives are left out, and should be included; If the emotive language is taken out the words become immediately not negative. There was general agreement that rewriting to remove emotive language and include positives, not changing the facts, but the presentation, should be done. Also there is nothing about achievement, or the importance of the individual.

Information has been captured in a creative way, but are the 'measures' in fact measurable? Should the information go into the SDP, or is it strategic direction, bigger than a Plan.

The Vision has to be presented to the wider community, when the words are polished. There is the statement, then the delivery. The statement should go to parents and Staff, then the actions to the Headteacher to decide priorities. The actions need Staff involvement and agreement and commitment. SB volunteered to present the amended statement to a Staff meeting.

ACTION	SB	To take statement back to a Working Group meeting for polishing. To take amended statement to a Staff meeting. To bring back to FGB.
ACTION	Clerk	To put on to next agenda.

Uniform

The Chair said that parents are still asking about uniform; a decision from Governors is needed to settle the issue. The decision on a dress code is part of the Vision, and has waited for it, but can be made now the development of the Vision is almost complete.

There was brief discussion, then agreement that a decision on the School dress code will be on the next agenda, and papers sent out for the discussion following the parent consultation should be recirculated. Parents' opinions for and against a uniform are strong but almost equally divided; more children are against having a uniform; Staff views must also be taken into account. Whatever is decided, some people will not like it, but it is important that the process of discussion and decision-making is transparent.

ACTION	Clerk	To put the decision on the School dress code on to the next agenda. To re-send consultation information and SB's letter.
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11. Internet Access Audit

ACTION	SC	To email information to Governors.
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12. School Crossing Patrols

SC had sent an email to Governors and received responses; Governors are very concerned about losing the crossing patrols and traffic management. SC suggested drawing-up a letter to be sent to the LA on behalf of the Governors. She will liaise with St John's, who have already written to the LA.

SN told Governors that the COuncil has had a huge cut in funding; the decision has been taken to fund Crossing Patrols until next March then look to schools for funding. The cost is about £700,000 per year, between about 100 schools with Patrols. There will have to be a solution for the whole City.

Q. Travel Plan money came from Central Government and was not totally delegated to schools. Is there any money left?
Funding has finished now.

13. Policy Review update

Policy Review will pass to the new subcommittee.

14. Correspondence

None.

15. Any other business to be notified to the Chair in advance of the Meeting

15.1 FORS

Rayna Miller had attended the FORS AGM.

FORS are still concerned about on-site storage, to keep equipment used for the Fairs they run. They will be doing focussed fundraising linked with playground work. They want to continue to build on relationships with Governors and Staff. They are trying to recruit more volunteers, as they had difficulty staffing stalls at the last Summer Fair.

Q. Who does the green space over the road belong to? Could it be a car park and the playground be a green space?

The school owns the land but cannot sell or tarmac it; it has to be kept as green space.

It was proposed that the Governors should respond to FORS request for storage as recognition of their work. The School has no spare storage space, but commercial storage would only cost about £9 per month. Governors approved this suggestion.

ACTION	PA	To feed back to Ruth about green space, and commercial storage offer.
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Next Meeting:

6th Dec, 2011

Dates of Meetings for the year - as set last year - subject to amendment according to requirements of new FGB/ single subcommittee structure

7th Feb, 2012

27th Mar

29th May

17th July