

GRANTA SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

THURSDAY 25th April 2019, 6.00pm
AT THE SCHOOL



Present:

Governors: Caroline Ilott (Chair)(CI), Lucie Calow (Headteacher) (LC), Jeff Andrews (JA), Lucinda Billington (LB), Paul Ilott (PI), Tony Orgee (TO), Ian Wilson (IW), David Jones (DJ) Alison Walker (AW)

Paula Nixon (PN) joined the meeting at 6.30 pm.

Associate Governors: Sarah Crouch (SC),

Ann Abineri in attendance as Clerk.

The meeting was quorate

- 1. Welcome and Apologies for absence were received and accepted from:** Chris Seaton (Governor) and Linda Alefounder and Tanya Seaton (Associate Governors)

Not present: Vanessa Yeoman.

- 2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and notification of AOB:** no declarations of interest.

3. Governance Update

1.Membership:

Steve Hannington has resigned. CI has written to thank him for his time as a Governor. This creates a vacancy for a Parent Governor. It was suggested that an election be left until the autumn term. The Clerk pointed out that the updated Governance Handbook (22nd March 2018) emphasises the increased importance of parental engagement including Governorship. A discussion took place on the many ways parents are involved in Granta School and their children's education and it was clear that the spirit of this section of the handbook is being met. It was agreed to start to make parents aware of the vacancy (**Action LC**) and run a Parent Governor election in September 2019.

2. Clerk to give a brief outline of changes in the Governance Handbook (updated March 2019)

The Clerk explained that new additions in the handbook cover:

- Parental engagement
- Staff Workload (including Dfe documents making Data Work and Dfe Workload Reduction Toolkit
- Requirements for Clerks (we meet these)

- Analyses School Performance (which as replaced Raiseonline) Governors are now entitled to a log in to view anonymised data
- Link between Finance Governors and School Business manager (who in our case is an Associate Governor)

Upcoming changes:

- New statutory Guidance is going to make it compulsory for primary schools to teach relationships education, secondary to teach relationships and sex education and all state funded schools to teach health education.

Updates to existing requirements:

- Section 128 checks on prospective Governors now recommended (we already do this.)
- Safeguarding to follow requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018
- Pre-employment checks
- FGBs can remove parent and staff Governors by majority decision
- Statutory careers Guidance advice to be followed
- Fire safety requirements to follow Regulatory reform (Fire Safety Act) Order 2005
- Curriculum to be published online
- Gender pay Gap recording (**Action: LC to look into this**)
- Designated member of staff for Looked after Children
- Changes to eligibility for free school Meals
- Maintained schools must follow School Food Standards
- Misconduct referrals to go to Teaching Regulation Agency (National College of Teaching and Leadership now closed)
- GDPR deadline for complying with subject access requirements is now 1 calendar month rather than 40 days.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

Set date for 'Away Day' Thurs 29th August 2019. **Action; Clerk to circulate date.**

4. Minutes of Full Governing Body meeting 21st March 2019 including matters arising not included on this agenda

Agreed as a true record and signed on behalf of the governing Body.

Matters arising:

Elaine Lewis: prospective Governor for Sept 2019. **Action: LC to keep in touch with her.**

Mission statement: to be further discussed at Away Day

Links with other Special Schools: CI and LC to meet with Castle and Samuel Pepys Heads and Chair on 8th May 2019. **Action: LC to check if the invitation applies to other members of our GB.**

LC reported that the maintained Special Needs Schools heads have met with Jonathan Lewis, Service Director for Education, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and further meetings are planned.

5. Discussion of budget with a view to ratification

LC responded to **comment from a Governor** about potential in-year variations. LC stressed that these are possible scenarios but not decided at this stage.

LC also responded to **a Governor question** about what the carry forward would be without the windfall (Government funding for school's increased costs and 'little extras')

LC reported that an email was received today from Rob Cottle, Finance Advisor regarding the final budget figures. This variance is caused by payroll dates. Rob Cottle did not flag this as a concern.

A Governor asked about premises costs relating to water heating systems. LC explained that to the best of her knowledge no urgent work is expected (based on property reports.) The Government windfall has added to the Capital sum. **A Governor commented** on the importance of improving systems with a view to longer term sustainability and reduction in costs. **Action: JA to consult Jo Clarke re heating systems.**

LC pointed out that there is ebb and flow in Special School budgets and the appearance of an increased carry-forward is not as straightforward as it appears. **Several Governors** commented that they understand that the figures are subject to change and that prudence has been observed.

LC pointed out that our carry forward is small compared with our nearest out of county statistical neighbour but Cambridgeshire schools receive less funding than schools in other counties.

Governors commented that it is hoped that 2021-22, more funding may be available. **A Governor commented** that Government departments are occupied with Brexit and changes in funding are not anticipated.

A Governor asked if funding was sufficient for learning resources and LC explained that spend has to be according to the wide variation of needs in our children.

A Governor asked if there is a case for moving money from capital to revenue and LC explained this would need to be approved by the Local Authority.

A Governor identified a possible error in the figures and LC agreed to check this.

A Governor asked about the minibus situation and LC and SC explained that the older, larger vehicle is used less due to licence category. Minibuses were identified as a possible focus for donations. **(Action IW to progress)**

LC reminded Governors that Fitz-Zebra is being split into two classes and following interviews from a strong field, an appointment has been made. Costings for an induction phase were discussed. TO proposed that the induction phase is offered to the appointed person, PI seconded, unanimous agreement.

TO, as Chair of F & GP, confirmed that F & GP recommend this budget to the FGB.

TO proposed its approval subject to amendment to reflect induction costings discussed. AW seconded.

Unanimous agreement.

Action: LAF to submit Budget.

6. Any Other Business

IW passed on a donation to FOGS

DJ reported that unfortunately Colleges Joint Playschemes did not receive funding from recent bid but it had raised awareness of the organisation.

7. Date of next Meeting: Thursday 23rd May 2019 at 6.00pm

Meeting closed 7.10 pm.