



Thornton Heath Nursery School
Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting
Held on
Monday 19 September 2016 at 6.30pm

Present:

Ms Jo George	Head of Nursery
Mrs Kathleen Harballou	Co-opted Governor
Ms Ruth Nolan	Staff Governor
Ms Sophie Richardson	Co-opted Governor
Mrs Patricia Salami	LA Governor, Chair
Ms Lynne Sampson	Pegasus Academy Trust, Executive Principal (LS)
Ms Deidre- Ann Toney	Co-opted Governor

Absent:

Mrs Aracelly Idowu	Parent Governor
--------------------	-----------------

In attendance:

Ms Mel Brown	Governance Clerk (minutes)
Mr John Fennell	School Finance Manager (item 12)
Mrs Laura McRoberts	Best Start Manager for Early Years, Accessibility and Standards (items 9 and 12)
Mr Jolyon Roberts	Pegasus Academy Trust, Executive Principal (JR)

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Clerk welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked Laura McRoberts and John Fennell for attending.

Aracelly was absent from the meeting. Governors noted the discussions at the last meeting in this regard, and the Clerk agreed to contact Aracelly to see if she wanted to continue as a governor.

Action: Clerk

2. Confirmation of Quorum

The meeting was declared quorate with 7 of the 8 Governing Body members in attendance.

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Clerk asked for nominations for the role of Chair for 2016/17. The Head of Nursery nominated Mrs Salami for the role which was seconded by Ms Sampson. Mrs Salami was duly elected to the role of Chair.

Mrs Salami took the Chair and suggested the election of two vice chairs. Mrs Salami explained the rationale for continuing to appoint two vice chairs was that the responsibility could be shared, and would also assist with succession planning. The Chair nominated Ms Toney and Ms Richardson for the role which was seconded by Mrs Sampson. Ms Toney and Ms Richardson were duly elected as joint vice chairs.

4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Governing Body members were asked to declare any personal or pecuniary interests relating to the agenda items for this meeting. None were declared.



5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 July 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2016 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair. The minutes were passed to the Head of Nursery for the minute book and to upload to the nursery website.

6. Matter Arising from the Minutes

1. Deliver training session in financial strategy and planning

Potential dates will be circulated via Doodlepoll.

Action: Jolyon Roberts / Clerk

2. Governors to contact Chair with names of potential governors

Interest from one potential candidate was being followed up. Parent elections would be held after discussions with Aracelly. Chair confirmed Octavo Partnership were helping to sourcing new co-opted governors.

Action: Chair / HoN / Clerk

3. Aracelly to decide if she wished to remain as a governor

The Clerk agreed to contact Aracelly.

Action: Clerk

4. Forest Hill Pilot (known as 'Little Explorers')

Update contained in the Head of Nursery.

5. Invite Laura McRoberts to September meeting

Complete.

6. Upload results of questionnaire and display posters

Complete.

7. Contact payroll to confirm NJC pay award

Complete. In response to a question, it was confirmed that staff had received the backdated pay in August.

8. Invite John Fennell to September meeting

Complete.

9. Advice on cleaning contract

Jo agreed to cancel the meeting with the contractors and to reschedule another one with Patricia and Jolyon present. It was agreed that the contractor would be given advanced notice of the reason for the meeting.

Action: Head of Nursery



7. Governing Body Membership and Key Responsibilities

The composition of the Governing Body was discussed and all vacancies considered. Governors noted that Ms Nolan has been a Board member for several years and asked whether another member of staff wanted to take on the role. The Clerk agreed to check when Ms Nolan's term of office ended

Action: Clerk

The following responsibilities were agreed for the forth coming year:

Responsibility	Name
Child Protection / Safeguarding	Deidre-Ann Toney
SEN and Disability	Sophie Richardson
Health and Safety	Lynne Sampson / PAT
Children Looked After	Deidre-Ann Toney
Training and Development	Kathleen Harballou
Data Analysis / Attainment and Progress	All governors
Finance	Patricia Salami
HR	Deidre-Ann Toney
Curriculum	Lynne Sampson, Jolyon Roberts and Kathleen Harballou

Governors were reminded of the responsibilities pertaining to these roles, and that training was available via Octavo (item 16). It was also noted that any parent governors should be selected with the view of on taking on one of the roles above.

8. Governing Body Business

Standing Orders

The Standing Orders were approved and signed by the Chair.

Pecuniary Interest Form

All Governors who had not completed their forms, were asked to return the completed forms to the Clerk or Head of Nursery.

Action: Governors

Skills Audit

All Governors who had not completed their forms were asked to return the completed audit to the Clerk or Head of Nursery.

Action: Governors



Code of Conduct

Governors approved and signed the updated Code of Conduct.

Visiting Policy

The Visiting Policy was approved and signed by the Chair.

Governors Allowance Policy

A discussion was had about whether there was a need to clarify the scope of 'reasonable expenses'. It was agreed to add a statement to the policy to advise that 'all reasonable expenses required prior approval from the Chair'

Action: Clerk

Subject to the above, the Governors Allowance Policy was approved and signed by the Chair.

9. Strategy

Laura gave governors an overview of her role which was to ensure there was high quality places across the borough. Governors were advised that the Local Authority (LA) hoped to strengthen relationships with PAT, and ensure they could effectively fund their education strategy going forward. It was explained that there was a reduction in budgets across the board and that the expectation was for more to be done for less money.

A consultation on nursery schools would be published in the Autumn, following which the LA would need to review its strategic direction in this area. The LA would not be able to provide a clear picture or framework until the funding issues had been resolved. The immediate aim was to secure funding with PAT for 2016/17.

Governors expresses disappointment that the 2016/17 budget had not been agreed. Laura agreed there was an urgent need to have a signed formal arrangement in place and explained that the new SLA and draft budget had been sent to Jolyon Roberts earlier in the day.

In response to a question, governors were reminded that the previous SLA ran up until September 2016. Governors asked whether the new SLA would be similar to the previous one, and were advised that it was, and that the reduced budget would be reflected in the updated arrangements. Governors noted that the new SLA should have been signed on 1 September 2016, but were encouraged by the fact that there would be no major changes.

Governors expressed concern about the absence of a long-term strategy and wondered about the possibility increasing the term of the SLA to two years. Laura responded that that the LA set their budgets on an annual basis and so this was not possible. Governors asked whether a clause could be added to the new SLA which stated that the Agreement was "subject to changes in financial arrangements". Laura agreed to find out whether this was possible.

Action: Laura McRoberts

Laura explained that there were financial implications for nurseries, with schools being encouraged to become Academies. The LA had raised this concern with the DfE, and this matter was now being included in top level funding discussions.



Governors asked about the timescales for resolving the 2016/17 budget and SLA, and were assured that these matters would be resolved by the end of September 2016.

Questions were asked about whether the SLA was a two-party Agreement (LA and PAT) or whether it also included the governors, and were advised that the Agreement was between the LA and PAT, with a schedule of responsibilities (spec) for governors to review and comment. Jolyon Roberts agreed to circulate the spec for governors to review.

Action: Jolyon Roberts

Governors asked for details of how the LA were monitoring the SLA and were advised that it was being done via the results of the teaching and learning visit the previous November, assessing progress against the KPIs and looking at the overall journey (progress). In response to a question, governors were advised that Octavo were paid to carry out the teaching and learning assessment.

Governors expressed concerned about the lack of proactive monitoring of the SLA by the LA and asked for this to be strengthened. The LA were invited to attend more governing body meetings. Laura agreed to report back in this regard and invited governors to attend the two monitoring visits due to be undertaken by the LA for this academic year.

Action: Laura McRoberts

Post meeting note:

The first monitoring visit has been arranged for 21 November 2016 at 1pm. The second will be arranged in the Summer term.

An update was requested on how the nursery would directly benefit from a new contract the LA had recently been awarded. Laura gave an overview of the contract and explained that the money would broadly be spent on initiatives such as developing learning, community peer to peer support and the development of a practitioner learning network. The idea was that the funds would be used to build work which had already been started.

Laura was thanked by the governing body for attending the meeting.

10. Head of Nursery Report

The Head of Nursery gave an overview of her report and advised that work was being done to improve the presentation of the data, and the recording of progress measures for pre-nursery children. The Head of Nursery agreed to design a new way of showing progress and welcomed any comments to improve the presentation. Lynne Sampson agreed to assist.

Action: Head of Nursery / Executive Principal (LS)

Governors noted that the attainment data was high across the nursery and that the progress data was satisfactory / good. Progress was showed as being limited as many of children had been in the nursery the previous year, and had already benefited from staff input. It was important to show the progress (and value added) to demonstrate that new children to the nursery also made good progress. This was required if the nursery was to be graded as outstanding,



Governors asked how baselines are measured and were informed that this was via lots of observations and baseline assessments. The results of which were compared with national development bands.

Governors asked whether all areas of progress were tracked and were advised that this was the case, but that only the main areas were recorded in the report.

Governors were pleased to note the outcome of the parent questionnaire and the update on the Forest School (little explorers) Project.

The Head of Nursery was asked whether there had been any feedback regarding the home learning packs. The Head of Nursery advised that the packs were due to be distributed over the coming weeks and that each pack would contain a feedback form for parents to complete. Governors asked for all feedback to be monitored.

Sophie Richardson gave an update on key worker week, the outcomes of which were very positive. Sophie agreed to circulate the report. Governors noted that Sophie had helped devise a new way of presenting the questions (by scale) which was easier to record

Action: Sophie

The Nursery Improvement Plan (NIP) was discussed and it was noted that additional contributions were required from governors. It was agreed that fascination should be added to the teaching and learning section of the plan. Kathleen agreed to attend the staff meeting on fascination on 4 October 2016, and to translate the learning into a measurable action, with success criteria, that could be monitored via the NIP.

Action: Kathleen Harballou

Governors were encouraged to send any contributions to the NIP to the Head of Nursery.

Action: Governors

Governors were pleased to note the new lunch time staff lunches were working well and had created a better working environment.

11. Self-Evaluation Framework

Governors received the report and noted that it was complete and contained the most recent data, Jo highlighted that PAT presented the data in a different way and was hoping to align the reports. Jo invited governors any comments, and governors advised that there were a few things that had not been included in the report which included the gardening project, the support provided to staff (coaching and PSP), and the impact on staff having an hour for lunch, as it demonstrated that the nursery was responding to comments made by the staff. Following a discussion, Jo asked governors to email any additional comments

Action: Head of Nursery/Governors

12. Finance

John Fennell gave an overview (and rationale) of the three different versions of the budget which had been circulated with the papers. The Board expressed concern that the 2016/17 budget was not ready for approval and tasked Laura with ensuring the situation was rectified as soon as possible.

Action: Laura McRoberts



Governors asked about the reduction in SEN funding and were advised the SEN budget for the previous year was based on two terms forecast over the year.

Governors asked about the differences between this budget and the one presented at the last meeting which showed a deficit, and were informed the latest version was based on the money PAT was hoping to negotiate with the LA.

The governing body approved the 2016/17 quarter 1 budget monitoring report which had already been submitted to the LA, and the April – June 2016 virements.

13. Governor Visit Report

There were no governor visits to report.

14. Nursery Improvement Plan

Jo George presented the updated plan and Governors noted the achievements and the areas which required additional work.

Governors noted the high success rate of the plan and agreed from September onwards the plan needed to include the work and actions being undertaken by the Governing Body.

Governors were asked to present their ideas at the next Governing Body meeting. All meetings from September onwards would focus on an area of the plan. Jo was asked to ensure the review dates were added to the plan.

Action: Head of Nursery

15. Correspondence to the Chair

The Governing Body noted the Chair had received an email from Laura McRoberts (item 8), and a letter from a parent asking if the nursery was involved in the strike. Governors noted the strike went ahead and that THNS had opted out.

16. Governor Training and Development

Governors received the 2016/17 training programme, as circulated with the papers, and were encouraged to attend courses relevant to their responsibilities. The following courses were discussed and recommended; Effective Challenge for Governors, Effective School Visits, and Prevent.

The Chair gave an overview of the Chair's meeting which took place on 12 September 2016.

The Clerk agreed to recirculate the briefing relating to the Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Action: Clerk

17. Meeting Dates

The remaining dates for 2016-17 were noted as:

Monday 14 November 2016

Friday 9 December 2016 (Remuneration Committee – starts at 10.00am)

Monday 6 February 2017



Monday 27 March 2017
Monday 10 July 2017

Governors noted the key nursery events for 2016/17.

18. Publication of Minutes

It was agreed that, following approval by the Chair, Part A minutes could be made available for publication and uploaded on the website.

19. Confidential Staffing Matters

There were no confidential staffing matters for discussion.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed by _____ Chair of Governors. Date _____