



GOVERNING BODY

Thursday 14th May 2015 at 6.30pm

GOVERNORS (* indicates present):

| <u>Parent</u> | <u>Co-opted</u> | <u>Authority</u> | <u>Trust</u> | <u>Staff</u> |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| * Ms P Dixon | * Mr M Dixon | * Mr C Kitson | Ms R Bynon | * Mrs K Wheeler (HT) |
| Ms R Medwynter | * Mr S Gascoine | | * Mr T Williams (Chair) | Ms K Henderson |
| * Ms M Thomas | * Mrs E Humm | | * Mr J Blair | |
| | Ms A Ross | | | |
| | Ms B Whelan | | | |
| | * Mr T Wilkins | | | |

In attendance:

Ms A Money, Business Manager and Clerk to the GB
 Mr M Beresford, Minuting Secretary

MINUTES

| Min | Summary of Action Points or Matters Arising for next meeting | Action |
|----------------|---|---|
| 34/15.2 | Trust Board - Nominations still sought from Governors for 1 vacancy | All Governors |
| 34/15.4 | Admissions policy - on agenda of the first GB meeting in the Autumn term. | Clerk (Autumn 1 agenda) |
| 41/15 | Communications: | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email newsletters to all Governors in future | Clerk |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email all Governors about re-start of Communications Committee, first meeting on 25th June at 4 pm | Clerk |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership to include Governors Kitson and Wilkins, Governor Ross invited | C Kitson, A Ross, T Wilkins, Clerk |

Governors' comments, queries, or challenges during debate are highlighted in these minutes in italic underlined text, with responses and debate following in italic text.

31/15 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Action

Apologies were received and consented from Governors Gascoine (at the last GB) Henderson, Medwynter, Ross, and Whelan. Apologies were also received from the Heads of Primary and Secondary, Jackie Bowers-Broadbent and Moazam Parvez. Governor Bynon was also absent.

32/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest on items on the agenda or receipt of gifts or hospitality.

33/15 MINUTES OF THE GB MEETING HELD ON 26th MARCH 2015

The minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

34/15 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS OUTSTANDING

1 Minutes 19/15.2 and 27/15 - Signing of December GB minutes and approved statements / policies

It was confirmed that the December minutes plus policies and statements approved at the last GB meeting had been signed by the Chair.

2 Minute 19/15.4 - Trust Board: continuing request for nominees for vacancy

The Chair reported that he had still not received any nominations for the one remaining vacancy allotted to Buxton. There was a board meeting next week and he again asked all Governors to consider putting themselves forward.

**All
Governors**

3 Minute 19/15.6 - SEN policy

The revised version would be considered on the agenda of Inclusion and Diversity Committee on Monday 18th May.

4 Minute 23/15 - Admissions

Governor Wilkins pointed out that it had been agreed when the school became a Trust that it should follow LA policy on admissions, and asked if this had changed. The HT confirmed that policy had not changed at present, but Buxton had to make its own decision about certain issues (e.g. whether higher priority should be given to nursery applicants eligible for pupil premium and children of members of staff), and conduct its own consultation, the timing of which would now be out of step with the LA's process.

It was agreed that Admissions policy would be considered as an item on the agenda of the first GB meeting in the Autumn term.

Clerk
(Autumn 1
agenda)

35/15 CHAIRS' ACTION

1 Minute 24/15 - New building - authorisation of Chair to take appropriate action

The Chair reported that he had signed a letter to the Education Funding Agency agreeing that school would meet the shortfall of £684,000 on the budget for the new building.

36/15 COMMITTEE UPDATE

1 Performance Committee 1st April 2015

The minutes of this Committee had been circulated with the agenda. The HT drew governors' attention to the following:

- Teaching & Learning policy: as stated at the end of the policy document circulated with the agenda, 3 additional sections were to be added about the role and input of students, parents, and Governors. These were not available for this meeting but would be circulated to Governors in due course.
- Reports concerning pupils leaving Buxton and assessment without levels were to be brought to the next Performance Committee on 21st May
- RAISE on-line information: the minutes contained a summary of pages that were particularly relevant to Governors and had been reviewed at the meeting.
- The Improving Teacher programme was being brought to a wider audience in and outside Waltham Forest

Governor Blair pointed out that he was not a member of the Committee, but his absence had been recorded. The Clerk said he would be invited to Inclusion and Diversity Committee.

Governors noted the minutes and ratified Performance Committee's decisions.

2 Resources Scrutiny Committee 19th March and 14th May 2015

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th March had been circulated with the agenda. The Chair of the Committee, Governor Mike Dixon, briefly summarised the business considered at the Committee held immediately prior to this GB meeting, including an update on posts and staffing, the scheme of financial delegation, outturn 2014-15 and budget 2015-16 (also on this agenda, see minute 39/15 below).

Governors noted the minutes and ratified Resources Scrutiny Committee's decisions.

37/15 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

The HT's report had been circulated with the agenda accompanied by the Spring 2 update of pupil performance (Buxton School "Data Dashboard") and the school's detailed attendance statistics for half term 3. The HT drew Governors' attention to the main points of her report and highlighted the following:

1 Achievement

Y11

- The fourth data collection for the year was predicting 67% for 5A*-C including English and Maths, 70% after disapplying pupils. This was substantially up on the last report, around 9% higher than last year's Y11 at this stage, and looked like exceeding the 68% target. This was very positive given that this year group was weaker, on prior attainment, than both the previous year and the one before that.
- If this outcome were achieved, it would mean that rapid progress had been made since the end of Y10, when just 48% were achieving 5A*-C including English and Maths. A lot of hard work had been put in on the part of both pupils and staff.
- However, there were reasons to be cautious about the prediction: it was based on staff assessment and their perceptions could be influenced by a number of factors. Moreover tensions were appearing among pupils about the demands of taking concentrated "linear" series of exams for the first time this year.

KS2

- The data at KS2 was also positive, indicating rising performance, but the HT emphasized that predictions were not as secure at KS2 because staff worked with Y6 pupil data for shorter periods and they had less scope to learn from past experience as they are a new team to Y6. This problem had shown up last year when Reading results turned out to be surprisingly higher.
- The proportion of pupils achieving level 4B+ was 47%. The HT pointed out that the concern was the DfE proposed to use this measure as a new floor standard, but with an expected level of 85%+.
- Advice from the School Improvement Partner had been sought on KS2 progress and action plans.

Early Years and KS1

- KS1 SATs were currently in progress, and Early Years' assessments were undergoing moderation.

Y10

- 54% of Y10 were achieving 5A*-C including English and Maths, compared to 48% of this years' Y11 at the same juncture last year
- Attainment 8 score was 4.83 (equivalent to a grade C) and the Progress 8 score was 0.81, indicating strong progress. As the school's weakest year group, Y10 had had to make more progress, and their current attainment was very good.

Y10 Science predictions seemed low when they should be a strength?

The figures for Science tended to be current attainment, and a more accessible course was no longer counted as part of the result. Consequently pupils would find it harder to achieve target levels. The HT agreed that this indicated a need to find additional ways to help pupils boost results.

2 Attendance

Attendance overall was the same as Spring 2 report levels last year, with slight differences between Primary and Secondary. Attendance was gradually improving towards the 96% target, 2014-15 attendance to half term 3 having risen to 95.1% from 94.5% the previous year. A report to April's Performance Committee had detailed the actions being taken to tackle attendance, including letters to all Reception parents with attendance under 96%, targeting Education Welfare services with the LA, new attendance tracking system and officers, and awarding attendance cups in KS2. However, the attendance pattern of a large number of children had to change to achieve small percentage improvements.

3 Exclusions

The higher numbers in 2014-15 related to incidents in September, and only 1 further student had been excluded for 1 day since the last report. We had had one serious behaviour situation just prior to the meeting but exclusion had not been used as Y11 were about to start exams. Governor Kitson had been asked to conduct "Governor interviews" for a small number of pupils as part of our behaviour policy.

4 Quality of Teaching and Learning

The latest results indicated 88% Good or better teaching had been sustained.

38/15 BUILDINGS DEVELOPMENT

A Project Summary Financial projection had been circulated to all Governors with the agenda which set out how capital and revenue reserves would be required to supplement the PSBP (Priority Schools Building Programme) funding from the EFA (Education Funding Agency) phased over 2016-17 and 2017-18.

The EFA had rejected the school's appeal to fund the shortfall, so to make sure the project proceeded, the school had decided to commit to funding the additional space. However, the shortfall would be more than just the £684,190 for building works, and possibly as much as £1m after taking account of costs for additional resources and floodlighting. A costed bid for additional resources was under preparation, and LA had agreed to form of a working group to consider the business case for extra funding to be submitted by the school. The outcome of this was anticipated during the next half term.

Public consultation on the scheme had been conducted. Only 15 people had looked at the plans and were generally happy with the scheme, although one person had objected. 2 planning applications for the temporary and permanent buildings were due to be submitted to WF Planning Department next week. If Planning Committee gave approval the scheme would be on schedule to commence in September.

39/15 BUDGET PLAN 2015-16

The 2015-16 budget report had been circulated to all Governors with the agenda, accompanied by a detailed commentary. This showed a breakdown of income and expenditure by revenue and spending heads and included the outturn position for each year since 2012-13. The budget documents had already been considered and approved by the Resources Committee just prior to the GB meeting. Governors agreed to ratify the decision of the Resources Committee and the 2015-16 budget was approved unanimously.

40/15 POLICIES

1 Teaching and Learning Policy

The revised policy had been circulated to all Governors with the agenda. As minuted at 36/15.1 above, this was approved at the Performance Committee of 1st April 2015, subject to certain additions. The HT reminded Governors that these additions were new and concerned the responsibilities of Governors, students and parents.

Governors approved the Teaching and Learning policy unanimously, noting that a further section about the role and responsibilities of Governors, students and parents would be added in due course.

41/15 GOVERNING BODY CONFERENCE 25th APRIL 2015 - OUTCOMES

3 documents had been circulated with the agenda:

1. Extracts of a proforma for GBs: self-evaluation against the OFSTED criteria, published by the Key for School Governors
2. School leaders and Governors: what do we expect? A publication encompassing the views of ASCL (the Association of School and College Leaders), the Local Government Association, NAHT (National Association of Head Teachers), and the National Governors' Association (NGA).
3. Governor Conference priorities

Where had the priorities come from in Governor Conference priorities (Document 3)?

The HT explained that the list of items had been selected from 160 points in a template for Governors to evaluate performance against the OFSTED inspection framework. BLT had taken out areas already being tackled, and Governors at the Conference had identified priorities from the remainder. She emphasized that school was already doing some of these things, but the phrasing used was negative so that attention focused on what was needed to progress to outstanding status.

What was happening about actions and responsibilities in Document 3?

These were currently blank columns in Document 3. The HT explained that the priorities were now for further review by Governors but would be incorporated in the School Development Plan, and actions and responsibilities would be stated in that.

One priority identified was improving the school web-site. Governor Blair had visited the web-site manager and made a brief report. This and related discussion is recorded at Minute 43/15.1 below.

What should Governors do?

Dominant themes were that Governors needed to increase their involvement in school activities, visibility with students and staff, and to improve communications. For instance there was a proposal for Governors to attend parents' evenings. The HT asked Governors for suggestions and offered help with whatever was required.

Other schools displayed Governors' photographs - why not Buxton?

It had previously been proposed to put these on the web-site but many Governors had not provided the brief biographies required.

The Chair invited further comments and suggestions. In discussion the following ideas were raised:

- Ensuring follow-up of staff morale (element of Staff Development priority)
- Making individual priorities regular monitoring items on the agenda of the relevant Committee.
- Holding Governor "surgeries". Realistically it was thought parents were unlikely to attend surgeries unless they had a complaint, but there might be more concern /curiosity once the new building programme started, e.g. where there would have to be mixing of children of different ages

How were Governors to be made aware of what was happening in school?

This was being done through the school calendar and newsletters, which were put onto the web-site every Friday. As regards expectations information (document 2), Governors were receiving emailed updates from the NGA. The Conference had also suggested that Communications Committee meetings be re-started.

It was agreed:

1. To email newsletters to all Governors in future
2. To re-start Communications Committee meetings, commencing 25th June at 4 pm, Clerk to email notice to all Governors
3. Governors Kitson and Wilkins to join Communications Committee, Governor Ross to be invited

Clerk

Clerk

**C Kitson, A Ross,
T Wilkins, Clerk**

42/15 SOUTH AREA PARTNERSHIP (SAP) / SECONDARY CHALLENGE

The Chair reported that there had been a meeting of the SAP Chairs recently at which a they heard from a Chair from an outstanding school. He did not feel Buxton's current practice differed significantly. The HT said that Secondary HTs remained committed to the partnership and a further school (Frederick Bremer) was joining the South Area Partnership as part of the Secondary Challenge, the borough now dividing into 2 areas rather than 3.

As an OFSTED Inspector the Head of Secondary school, Moazam Parvez is sharing good practice with other schools in the group and particularly working with requiring improvement schools in preparation for OFSTED.

43/15 GOVERNOR FEEDBACK

1 *Link Governor Reports*

Governor Blair reported that he had visited the school on 30th April partly for familiarization, and had taken part in voting for candidates for Head Boy and Girl as well as meeting a parent. He had spent some time with the web-site manager to review development of the site. He was impressed by the developments proposed, which he felt were ambitious and aimed at using the potential of technology across the curriculum and engaging pupils accustomed to social media, e.g. by publishing a "blog", posting images of work, etc. The HT commented that a key issue was keeping information up-to-date.

Do we teach pupils computer coding, and did a "Code Club" exist?

This had started for the youngest pupils but was at an early stage. A Code Club and other suggestions as to how it could be developed were welcome.

2 & 3 *School related events attended & Governors' contributions to school life*

None reported.

4 *Training planned or undertaken*

An updated record of Governor training undertaken had been circulated with the agenda. The Chair reminded Governors to take up the training available and suggested it would be most useful for Governors to undertake RAISEonline training. He also suggested another skills audit should be carried out.

44/15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1 *Publicity for Buxton*

Governor Wilkins expressed the view that Buxton should receive more positive publicity that seemed to be given to other schools in Waltham Forest such as Norlington, Lammas and Walthamstow Girls especially given its results. The HT commented that publicity following OFSTED had upset other schools.

2 *Testing of pre-Reception children*

The Chair asked about the timescale for this. The HT explained that Buxton had decided to implement testing this year using Early Excellence. This system (which had had been reviewed by Performance Committee) was the Early Years' staff choice and measured pupils' starting point for school based on teachers completing a checklist of everyday activities.

Would this be used for judging performance at Y6?

This was not proposed at present, but could change.

Like phonics, wasn't this subjecting young children to an unacceptably high level of testing?

Tracking performance was the norm, and phonics testing had increased knowledge of phonics, but the HT concurred that the school needed to ensure data was used in the right way, i.e. to focus on development of the whole child.

3 *Biometric fingerprint recognition system*

The HT explained that the school struggled to maintain a record of which staff were present on the school site, and a fingerprint recognition system was the preferred option for tracking staff entry and exit. The alternative was a card-reading system which obliged people to wear cards, but the core system for recognizing fingerprints was already in place.

Had unions expressed opposition to this?

There was no opposition but some concern that the system could be used for monitoring time and attendance rather than the intended use of knowing accurately who was on or off site.

What were the costs?

As the recognition part of the system was already in place the main costs would be for installing fingerprint readers.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 20.05