

GRANTA SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

THURSDAY 7th February 2019 6.00pm
AT THE SCHOOL



Present:

Governors: Caroline Ilott (Chair)(CI), Lucie Calow (Headteacher) (LC), Jeff Andrews (JA), Lucinda Billington (LB), Steve Hannington (SH), Paul Ilott (PI), David Jones (DJ), Paula Nixon (PN), Tony Orgee (TO), Chris Seaton (CS), Alison Walker (AW). *VERMIST*

Associate Governors: Sarah Crouch (SC), Tanya Seaton (TS), Linda Alefounder (LAF).

Ann Abineri in attendance as Clerk.

Ian Wilson (IW) CI

The meeting was quorate

DJ left the meeting 19.40. The meeting remained quorate.

TO left the meeting 8pm. The meeting remained quorate.

1. Welcome and Apologies for absence.

Not present: Ian Wilson, Vanessa Yeoman

2. Vanessa Yeoman was welcomed as Co-opted Governor.

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest: none declared

4. Minutes of Full Governing Body meeting 29th November 2018

Agreed and signed as a true record.

Matters arising

Chair's 360 degree review: **Action: CI.**

Training: Governors reminded to inform TO when they complete/ attend online or face to face training. In addition Governors asked to recommend particularly useful training to other Governors.

Committee 'job descriptions': **Actions; Committee Chairs.**

Learning Walk visual presentation: **Action: LC next meeting.**

Links with other maintained Special Schools: LC reported that this is ongoing and Jon Lewis has shown enthusiasm for this.

School Nursing and Educational Psychology: LC reported that Jonathan Lewis (Director of Education) is looking at strategies to improve links and share models of practice. The Chair commented that this is positive news.

5. Committees

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21/3/19

Membership Review: for Away Day Agenda.

F&GP meeting 21st January 2019

Minutes circulated.

TO highlighted key points. No questions.

Curriculum meeting 15th January 2019

Minutes circulated.

PI highlighted key points. It was noted that review of ASC Policies can be postponed until ASC funding for next financial year has been confirmed.

A Governor commented on the Achievement postcards. LB confirmed that more have been sent and these continue to be well received by pupils and families.

A Governor commented on the excellent wording of the Prospectus and stated that it would be particularly useful to potential families.

LC reported that Sharon Collins has attended training on post looked after children and had returned with further information for school to consider. This will be further discussed by the Curriculum Committee (5th March 2019.)

HR meeting 15th January 2019

Minutes circulated.

A query was raised over a wording error regarding the options discussed in this meeting.

Action: Clerk to check with LC and make amendment.

It was confirmed that the HTPM (Head Teachers Performance Management). Review has been completed.

6. Governor training and briefing sessions

CI and the Clerk summarised the Governors Termly Briefing.

It was noted that staff well-being and workload should be considered by Governing Bodies and that Granta FGB is already addressing this within the HR Committee.

The Clerk passed on Chris Meddle's recommendation that section 128 checks must be done on all new Governors and retrospectively on all Governors. **Action: LAF**

7. Head's Report and progress on links with other special needs schools.

7.1 Staffing structure and school expansion

143 predicted enrolment, PANN 130. LC explained that our funding is based on a flat rate per child plus further amount based on specific needs of each individual pupil.

In response to **a Governor question**, LC confirmed that the LA could insist that schools will take 3% more pupils with no extra funding. However the LA is currently paying the extra.

LC explained that the building is at capacity. **A Governor asked** if there are legal guidelines on minimal space and LC explained that these have been changed and we are within these.

LC explained the health needs of many pupils in Fitz Zebra mean that there is insufficient space for responses to health and care needs. Further space is available but another teacher would be required to operate in this space. Requests from the LA to admit more pupils have been received. **A Governor asked** how another teacher would help and LC explained that leadership is needed in both rooms and at

 21/3/19

present teacher time is being spent supporting health needs rather than on education.

Governors expressed concern about the stress this situation puts on pupils and staff.

A Governor asked if further TAs are required if a second class is formed and LC explained that TA allocation is to individual pupils.

In response to **a Governor question**, LC outlined teaching costs (in the region of £45,000 pro rata) that would result from the new class but pointed out that it is not possible to predict the needs of the pupils that the LA would place and therefore the top-ups received.

A Governor asked about the effect of this on the Budget and LAF explained that in common with most schools at present, it is highly unlikely that we will be able to set a balanced budget and we need to make the position clear to the LA and strive to provide the best service we can for our pupils with safety as paramount.. It is predicted that we need to realise a carry forward of £140,000 to achieve a 0 budget but at present £80,000 carry over is predicted. **A Governor expressed** agreement with LAF's comment that the LA must be made aware. **A Governor pointed out** that if school goes into deficit the LA requires a three year recovery plan although special measures are a risk.

LC explained that funding could change in future but in the current economic climate, it is likely to be cut.

A Governor commented that the school should be offering pupils the best possible education and another **Governor pointed out** that the responsibility of a Governing Body is to put the safety of the pupils and staff first.

A Governor asked if data could show a baseline for pupils' educational attainment now to demonstrate the impact of change. LC agreed although pointed out that data of this sort is complicated as the pupil's needs are changeable due to the nature of specific needs.

A Governor pointed out that in light of the evidence presented, it is the duty of the Governors to make a decision that supports the HT in the best interests of the school.

A Governor stressed the need for documentation to record risk assessment in this situation.

A Governor also pointed out that creation of a new KS2 class for Granta and separate Sixth Form provision possibly linked with other county special schools should be seen as the way forward. **Action: A discussion point for the Awayday.**

Proposals

Option 1: Keep it as it is

Option 2: Split Fitz-Zebra Class into two. A new member of teaching staff would be required. This would enable prospective pupils with specific needs to be admitted. The current space can be adapted.

Option 3: New Class for KS2 SLD pupils. New member of teaching staff. A classroom is available for this but it would increase pressure on the lunch hall, pool etc. This would also enable increased admissions.

In response to **a Governors' question** LC clarified that the LA are looking for places for peoples and she is pressing them to confirm these admissions.

Option 2: unanimously agreed.

Staff Structure



Information was presented regarding discussion at HR Committee on 15th January 2019.

This was subject to a Confidential Minute.

It was unanimously **agreed** that this matter is referred back to the HR committee for further consideration at their next meeting (5th March 2019).

7.2 Updated Ofsted Inspection Framework

LC had shared information prior to the meeting.

LC confirmed that Special School Heads have responded to the consultation in relation to the needs of special needs pupils in mainstream education. In response to a **Governor question**, LC explained that mainstream schools will no longer be able to 'off-roll' children whose needs they feel they cannot meet.

Governors were encouraged to respond as individuals.

Action: LC to update at next FGB

8. School Development Plan including discussion on new Mission Statement

Mission statement: LC reported that she is collating the responses received.

Action: LC to bring this to next FGB.

9. Report on Granta school Facebook site

LAF summarised Emma Jennings analysis which had been circulated. A typical Facebook site of a special school was viewed.

A Governor asked about involvement of pupils and LAF responded that pupils younger than 13 should not be using social media and controls would be in place.

The possibility and implications of negative comments were discussed.

It was noted that a closed group would not engage with the wider community and a Governor commented that engagement in other media could also be improved.

Actions agreed:

Trial of a Closed Facebook Group with no comments to begin Sept 2019.

Communications Officer to prepare items for local print media.

Action: LC to inform Communications Officer of these actions.

10. Policies Review

Equality & Diversity Policy- adopted subject to updates

Freedom of Information publication scheme – adopted subject to updates

11. LVC issues: LB reported that some pupils are attending sports sessions.

12. Friends of Granta School (FOGS) AGM

CI reported that a new committee is in place and a lot of initiatives are underway.

Winter Fair raised £1300. Next year's Winter Fair 30th November 2019.

13. School Council

LB reported that the next meeting is 13th February 2019.

Voiceability will be meeting with the School Council.

14. Any Other Urgent Business: none raised

15. Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 21st March 2019 at 6.00pm

Meeting closed: 8.10pm.

