



Queen's Park Primary School: Governing Body Meeting

Date: Wednesday November 22nd 2023 16.00 - 18.00

Please arrive at 15.50 for a prompt start at 16.00

- **Welcome and apologies** (Chair)

Present: Ingrid Laycok IL (Chair) , Naomi Gosling NG,(Vice Chair) Peter Osborne PO, Cheryl Hassell CH (via Teams) ; Emma Gale EG (Headteacher), Kirsty Murray KM , Kelly Bassett KB .

Apologies from Jonathan Burnill JB, Tamara Hoodless TH, Lynne Thibaut LT.

There were no declarations of interest.

IL noted that, although there was much on the agenda, it was important for Governors to focus on safeguarding at this meeting. This point was elaborated upon by NG and EG.

- Actions from previous meetings

Still uncompleted -Action 1 Please can governors complete their Prevent and cyber security training and inform the school (and cc the Clerk) Please can Governors confirm by email to the school that they have read Annexe A to KCSIE.

- Terms of Office

Governors noted that IL's and TH's terms of office expire this term; Governors agreed to reappoint IL as a co-opted Governor . Action 2: Clerk to notify Governor Services

- Organisation of the governing body and succession planning

IL and EG have been discussing with the school's SPA (Simon Chandler) how the Governing Body might become even more effective, and this will be discussed further at future meetings.

Elections for parent governors will need to be held in the Spring Term Action. 3 Chair, headteacher and clerk to plan these elections.

IG - we need to be seeking other co-opted Governors from e.g., Secondary Schools; Coffee at the Gate - Governors to come along . Date tbc.

EG - we also want a range of Governors with other experience outside education

NG - Governors from the wider LA?

PO - Amex / Albion in the Community?

Action 4 PO will write an article for the December newsletter on being a Governor

- **Matters for Approval** (Chair)
- Minutes of 20/09/23 & 19/10/23

Both sets of minutes were approved.

- Policies
 - the following were approved: Parent Code of Conduct Action 5 minor formatting edits EG; Child Protection & Safeguarding ; Early Careers Teachers ; Health & Safety ; PSHE .

Two Governors raised questions on the PSHE policy and EG addressed their points in detail. A point was also raised about consistency in the use of fonts in policies and on the website.

- Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher (EG) elaborated on her report and Governors had an extensive discussion on the key issues:

- **Attendance:** the school is taking a firm and persistent approach when working with families to improve attendance and the Governors expressed their support for the school's approach
- KB informed governors about the change from SIMS to ARBOR
- EG asked about the attendance of particular subgroups such as: Boys / PP / SEND and whether we can learn from other groups such as Girls/ EAL
- It was also noted that taking a firm line around behaviour may cause pupils with SEND attendance issues
- It was also noted that poor attendance is a safeguarding issue and governors supported the school in tracking this issue very carefully
- There was a discussion about the use of fixed penalty fines with a view that their impact was minimal

- There was also a question which EG has raised consistently with the LA over the legality of the LA template re. attendance; EG noted that she still awaits an answer to her queries
- **Behaviour:** there was an extensive discussion relating to behaviour issues
- It was noted that there were some complex behaviour issues in Year 1 - staff were logging everything and support measures were in place
- Governors noted and praised the work the school was doing around a nurture group which showed an imaginative and caring response to the issue but Governors also recognised that this was costly in terms of staff resource and staff time
- There are instances of verbal aggression against staff and behaviours such as throwing a chair at staff
- Governors gave clear support to the Headteacher in terms of her firm but fair approach to setting boundaries for behaviour and recognised that the school had to balance the needs of an individual pupil against the needs of the rest of the class- this is not easy but Governors recognised that firm action needed to be taken
- **Other points:** Governors praised the recent newsletters; Governors supported the decision to go with FSE in terms of the website; Governors noted that this website company could provide text translation which is important for the school; work is on-going on the logo but needs to be linked to the school's ongoing work on Vision & Values;
- **School Development Plan:** the Governors' financial section will be finished in January 2024 **Action 6: Chair**

- **Matters for report**

- Update from finance committee meeting - postponed to January meeting (Chair)
- Strategic Discussion: **Safeguarding.** (NG)
 - a) Safeguarding Audit
 - b) Culture of Safeguarding and governor responsibilities
 - c) Behaviour: Safeguarding and reputational risk

There followed a lengthy and important discussion on one of the Governors' top five themes for 2023 - 24 - in this case Safeguarding - and it was led by the Governor with safeguarding oversight (NG). It covered the three areas on the agenda above. NG's powerpoint is saved on the Governor drive for reference. Some of the key points from the discussion were:

- It (serious safeguarding issues) could happen here
- Pupils' needs come first
- Important to recognise the importance of 'neglect ' in safeguarding
- Maintaining high expectations around safeguarding
- All staff are responsible
- Identify early help for families
- Children absent from school are a safeguarding issue

- Professional curiosity
- The tension and relationship between safeguarding and behaviour

The headteacher noted that there was a degree of push back from the LA when the school reported safeguarding. The deputy headteacher noted a hint of an 'accusatory tone' when early help referrals sought. Governors echoed the concerns expressed to them by the headteacher.

Action 7 Governors asked the headteacher to keep them regularly informed about this issue and for it to be discussed again Spring 2024" ?

Further discussion covered:

- Filtering & Monitoring
- Audit
- Chrome Books
- The rise in significant incidents in Year 1 and both targeted and collateral violence in classrooms
- Two suspensions of Year 1 children which were taken with a very heavy heart; Governors supported the headteacher's actions and her proactive response in terms of a nurture group
- None of the children in the nurture group have an EHCP which is interesting
- Two governors made the point that all children and indeed staff have a right to feel safe at school
- CH asked about the response of the LA and LA provision for children with SEMH needs
- EG talked about the impact of Behaviour on staff recruitment and retention and well-being
- The Chair explored the possibility of linking up with other Chairs and headteachers on this important issue
- If a pupil's needs are so complex we may need to push back to the LA on our capacity to meet need
- Many pupils have a deficit in play skills and social interaction
- Chair stated that it was important that staff knew that Governors understood this crucial issue and that they had Governors' support
 - Governor Training (Clerk) Clerk reminded Governors about the range of excellent courses available through Governor Services

AOB

1. Key date Monday Nov 27th at 18.00 - parents meeting re Schools Reorganisation - all Governors strongly encouraged to attend

2. Key Date Thursday Nov 30th - on line parents meeting - time yet to be confirmed

The Chair noted further that other schools were lobbying strongly and we should do the same. We need formally to submit our opposition by the closing date in December **Action 8 : Chair**

Meeting closed at 18.10

Date of next meeting: January 10th at 16.00: Data and Quality of Education.
