

Governors of Fairisle Junior School

Minutes of a Meeting of the Whole Governing Body Tuesday 15 May 2018, 4.00pm

Governors present:

1. Steph Thurston (Chair)
2. Peter Howard (Headteacher)
3. Allison Powell
4. Phil Chapman
5. Mike Dant

Associate members present:

Bev Bessey

In attendance:

Connie Boler (Y6 Teacher)
Andrew Clark (Business Manager)
Sophie Lee (Clerk)

1) Apologies

Jess Planter-Dixon, Nikki Webb.

2) Declarations of Interest

Declarations relating to today's agenda: none. Changes to the annual declaration of business interests register: none.

3) Budget 2018/19

Andrew Clark presented the 2018/19 budget, including the outturn report which is not totally up-to-date but is accurate to February. Gary Wooldridge believes the balance brought forward is correct at £103,535.

Question from AP: Do the actuals shown include March salaries?

Andrew Clark confirmed that they should do but we have not had the final confirmation from the LA.

The infant school receives all bills for services and we are recharged. We have not received the water recharge yet but it will be around £4k.

Question from ST: We are expecting to spend £74k of our carry forward within the year, what is that being spent on?

Andrew Clark explained it will be spent on running costs, including increased pension and national insurance costs. Around £40k of the carry forward is for capital works on the playground etc and will be carried over separately.

Andrew Clark noted that the budget is sufficient this year but will be tighter next year as our running costs will not go down and staff costs, which form the majority of our expenditure, will not reduce. MD stated that in his view we should spend the surplus on the children this year.

Question from MD: Why not run a deficit budget? It is permitted if we tell the council.

Andrew Clark stated we could try and it would be the Headteacher's decision, but we do not need to do that this year.

It was noted that our funding is based on the pupil census and is not adjusted between each count, so for six months we will have more children than have been funded.

Question from MD: Why are there more children later in the year?

The Deputy Head said we have four classes coming to us in autumn 2018, not three. Andrew Clark explained that we get the allowance halfway through the next year so we are always running six months behind in terms of pupil numbers.

The LA are giving us £27k to fund the extra class, but the cost to FJS is closer to £50k-60k.

MD said that this lag in funding comes up every year and we should take a stand against it. It is a national agreement but governors could make representations to the council and AP could review it as finance governor.

Last year our carry forward was around £140k. The ongoing balance for 2018/19 is £29k, but this rises to a projected £58k in 19/20 and £124k in 20/21 as funding catches up with pupil numbers again.

The permitted carry forward is 8%. We have been allowed an extra capital carry forward for the extension work but our total carry forward is still under 8%. The Headteacher's job is to make sure the school is a going concern and spending the surplus on items such as redecorating or more computers will not improve outcomes.

MD asked for his objections to be registered and chose to abstain from the vote to ratify the budget.

Question from PC: What is agency-purchased teaching supply?

Andrew Clark explained it is supply staff; we put all supply teaching in code 1030. One staff member on the payroll does some supply but there are no plans to continue using her so the budget figure goes under 1030.

Question from PC: What is education support staff?

Andrew Clark said this is the librarian.

Question from PC: Why is teacher sickness insurance at £0?

Andrew Clark explained we are not buying this insurance again as our two claims last year were rejected. This will save £4k.

The vote to ratify the budget was delayed until item 8.

(Andrew Clark left the meeting.)

4) Update on the Extension

Paul Atkins had agreed to provide monthly updates on the extension but unfortunately did not attend.

5) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes from 17 April 2018 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

6) Matters Arising – Including Action Points

All actions from 17 April are complete except those listed below.

No sets maths has been discussed in staff meetings with mixed views so far. PC has discussed setting with the children.

Action A: Send survey to staff on no sets maths.

BB

ST and NW met the Headteacher about the debt management policy and are happy we are doing enough to recoup money. We do not want to stop pupils having dinners. If a debt is over £30 office staff phone home and write letters to chase big debts.

Question from PC: Do we use the threat of no dinners to recoup money?

The Chair noted that office staff do not need to do that at the moment. There are a couple of large debts we are struggling with but the children will leave the school and the debt drops completely as city catering will not chase them.

Connie Boler spoke to all year groups to see if spelling is revisited consistently. In Y3 they revisit spelling rules but not the lists as there are so many and they are difficult. Y4 revisit rules and keep all spellings on display. Y5 revisit everything. Y6 revisit rules and also revisit lists for SATs in boosters and early morning quick work, although they are not explicitly taught again.

Governors could look at spelling as some children are poor spellers and there is a cohort who do not get a rich vocabulary at home.

Question from AP: Can we target those children?

The Deputy Head replied that they are targeted in classes. Staff magpie words they hear when reading and write them on the boards.

We may need bigger boards in class and a more proactive approach to spelling. Y6 have had small spelling boosters in assemblies for children who are Greater Depth writers but poor spellers; these have been very positive. Spelling has had a higher profile this year with assemblies, Southampton university visitors and training.

Action B: Discuss whether spelling will be a key area of development for governors in September.

All govs

Action C: Meet the science leaders to discuss their report.

MD

Action D: Visit school to look at computing (computing leaders to suggest dates).

All govs

Action E: Meet maths leaders.

PC

Action F: Look at progress in book bands within the FFT English interventions. Rachael Woods to suggest a date.

ST

Action G: Look at rewards.

All govs

Action H: MD to read with able children/Rachael Woods to share her introduction to being a reading volunteer with MD. Email rwoods@fjsslive.net to arrange.

Rachael

Action I: Watch the OFSTED online safety webinar on fjsslive.net under welfare and attendance > e-safety > videos.

W/MD

All govs

Action J: Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance (first assembly on 10 July at 2.40pm).

All govs

Action K: Act on agreed changes from the 360 review.

Write the termly newsletter paragraph.

PC

Staff governor to give feedback to colleagues.

C Boler

Attend the INSET day on 25 June.

All govs

7) Discussion of OFSTED Framework – Behaviour

The Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare section of the OFSTED framework was discussed to see how we can move to Outstanding. Grade descriptors for Outstanding include "Children are confident, self-assured learners" and "Children are proud of their achievements and the school". Most FJS pupils are proud but we would like more confident, self-assured learners.

Question from PC: How do you pinpoint difficult pupils?

Connie Boler reported that for a challenging pupil to reach Outstanding they need to really care about the work and want to push themselves which is hard to achieve.

Our OFSTED inspectors highlighted three incidents in lessons where children were sat back and not engaged and teachers had not said "Let's get started".

Question from PC: Could pupils all face the front to make them more visible?

Connie Boler noted that children do also have to work together and still want to learn.

We need to reflect on whether lessons are motivating enough. A very small proportion of pupils are not involved and need to be.

Question from PC: How many children in each class are challenging on average?

Connie Boler explained it depends on the class but she has one challenging child in her class. He cannot work with others without causing problems so he is isolated. He does not focus in maths because he does not enjoy it.

Question from PC: Could you go back to the basics and concrete methods of teaching?

The Deputy Head said that some work could be too easy or hard so the children become disengaged. We need to empower pupils to say if it is too easy or hard. Connie Boler said her challenging child just does not want to do the work.

The grade descriptors are not a checklist, but inspectors look for a close fit. A number of comments on behaviour in our recent OFSTED report fit the Outstanding descriptors but it was attitude to learning in two classes that was the weakness.

The Respect, Ready, Safe rules and strikes systems are working well. However, the Chair noted that in her conversations with Y5 children they did not like the strikes system and thought it was inconsistent from teacher to teacher. They said it was confusing as to whether you received a warning or an automatic strike.

They thought strikes did not work for everyone so some pupils disrupt the whole class. PE teachers barely use strikes. The class next to the Deputy Head said they are put outside the door so she will see them. They thought a two minute strike penalty works better than one minute.

(Peter Howard entered the meeting.)

We need to ensure consistency and consider the next steps, such as what punishment is bigger than a strike. At the moment three strikes leads to a form, usually staying in to redo work and a follow-up by SLT. We also need to look at persistent offenders. Some Y5 children have been taken into a Y6 class to learn about expectations for their behaviour next year.

The school deals with bullying really well, including restorative meetings. There are not many bullying incidents but they are dealt with thoroughly.

Action L: Ensure strike rules are consistent, teachers are consistent in giving strikes (inc. PE/support staff) and review what is bigger than a strike.

BB

8) Ratification of 2018/19 Budget

As the Headteacher had entered the meeting governors returned to the budget discussion. MD explained his objection, in that every year we carry over money that we should spend on the children this year and we could ask to run a deficit budget.

We have modelled future years' budgets on the actual numbers of children we will have, which is why there is a drop to £29k ongoing balance in 18/19 but then an increasing projected ongoing balance in 19/20 and 20/21.

The Headteacher noted that we are below the 8% permitted carry forward and it is sensible to have a surplus as we are not insured for all eventualities. Schools should not set a deficit budget unless there is an absolute reason to. We have set an in-year deficit budget for 18/19 and we are working the carry forward down. The LA have discussed taking back schools' surpluses but did not implement this.

Finance governor AP noted we have done everything we can with our budget and we are getting good value out of the premium budget and doing what we need to with it.

We lose 68 children in 2018 and gain 111 in September but they will not be financed, so we will have to finance the extras until the census.

Governors ratified the 2018/19 budget; MD abstained due to the objections recorded above.

9) Agree newsletter updates on the budget, decisions and governor roles

PC will write the newsletter paragraph for this term.

10) Governor Visits

Behaviour Y4, 1 May

PC spoke to Y4 pupils who said most staff deal with behaviour in the same way. All pupils knew about the three strikes rule. Some teachers count down to maintain silence, some clap. Some teachers take pupils to one side before a strike but some do not. PE staff rarely give warnings before strikes.

Children thought a strike should mean a five-minute detention. They thought the school dealt with naughty children properly but a few children do not conform with strikes. One child thought three strikes should mean losing all of the lunch break.

Maths Y4, 1 May

PC heard that most pupils thought sets were better than no sets; they behaved better as they did not know each other and worked with those of equal ability. Two wanted no set classes as they could communicate better with children they know and spent less time moving classes.

Two thought maths was easy; an extra task could be put on the whiteboard for gifted children. Only one Y4 pupil knew the full times tables and BB has discussed this with staff. Part of the homework is to do times tables every night and from next year this will be logged in planners.

Half said they got help with times tables at home. One said seating arrangements could be improved and another wanted his own desk so he could concentrate without interruption. PC suggested gifted children could be segregated, although pupils do need to work collaboratively.

Behaviour Y5

ST found that four out of six Y5 pupils did not think punishment was consistent or harsh enough. They thought the Deputy Head was used to make them behave and strikes were not enough for the naughtiest children. They thought PE staff were kinder to them and gave no strikes. They recognised behaviour was not as good in PE but thought it was not as noticeable because strikes were not being given.

PE staff have been given separate A4 sheets for their clipboards and reminded that they have to use the strikes system. The PE staff do not keep children in themselves.

Pupils thought it was particularly unfair to be banned from lunchtime activities, as only a small proportion of children were misbehaving and they then cannot play with friends from other years. (This punishment only occurred on one day.)

Suggestions from pupils included an initial warning for some behaviours, eg: unconscious behaviours, whereas for example talking should be straight to a strike. Some wanted behaviour monitors from Y6 in each year group (the infant school has monitors). They said the lunchtime supervisors did not manage behaviour well.

Pupils said some children mess about during toilet breaks. They thought children should lose their lunchtimes for a whole week if they are really naughty and want longer

punishment time for strikes.

Question from PC: Is only one child allowed to go the toilet at a time?

The Deputy Head said yes, if the teacher is sensible.

SATs Week, From 14 May

ST came in yesterday and PC came in this morning. PC was very impressed with the well-controlled SATs. ST found that children loved the section in the morning and saw fantastic work in the computer room. PC observed one adult to three children.

Behaviour Y3, 27 April

AP found that most Y3 pupils thought staff were consistent but the Deputy Head was stricter. They knew how teachers deal with behaviour, including sending them to the Headteacher. They were not sure about the consistency of PE staff.

They said we were more nurturing than their parents' generation. Some wanted stricter rules and a reward for zero or low strikes.

The Deputy Head noted we give out more certificates than ever before. The Headteacher said we do not give rewards for behaviour as good behaviour is something we expect from children, but we do praise for incidents like good behaviour on trips.

Jo Knight, Head of Schools Finance, 27 April

AP met Jo Knight with PH/Andrew Clark. The LA finance package Agresso is outdated and slow and the LA hope to upgrade. Our broadband can be slow as our ISDN is shared with the infants.

Question from PC: Could we explore fibre optic broadband?

The Headteacher said it may go out to market again in the future. We have changed our provider from BT to Virgin.

There is always a delay in the finance system and council staff can be slow to input information. School staff do not input delivery notes locally which is also a disadvantage. We need to retrain staff so delivery notes are done as standard.

The LA plans to streamline purchasing systems so invoices within the tolerance level of the order value are paid automatically. The LA have shelved plans for auto-authorisation of school invoices as primaries said they did not want this.

An email regularly sent out by the LA lists chargecard transactions for all users and is not confidential; it should only contain data for each user. We have asked the LA to tell us the likely amount of internal recharges rather than forcing them through.

The funding for the additional class is £27k which is insufficient. Some items we buy are not bought via official order channels, eg: buying bottled milk is cheaper than buying the cartons.

Jo Knight will check if direct debit facilities can be provided as schools are not currently allowed to use direct debits or standing orders.

Action M: Investigate input of delivery notices to Agresso.

AP/PH

11) Safeguarding

A report for 13 April to 14 May shows 74 safeguarding incidents. Safeguarding incidents take up a considerable amount of staff time and most relate to out-of-school issues.

Question from MD: Is there assistance we can get to reduce the number of incidents? Does the education and welfare officer help?

The Deputy Head said the number of incidents is low compared to some schools. There is not really assistance unless it is in the children's homes. We know where to go to get those families support. FJS has four designated safeguarding leads. The Headteacher explained the EWO role has narrowed to school attendance issues.

12) Equality Duty Statement

The equality duty statement has been updated in line with the general data protection regulation, pupil data, attendance and equality objectives.

Question from PC: Do we have any gender-neutral children?

The Deputy Head said we do not to her knowledge.

Governors approved the equality duty statement.

13) AOB

13.1 A governor health and safety course is on 7 June.

13.2 The need for greater liaison and continuity with the infant school was discussed, including the fact that we do not know how they teach maths or the vocabulary they use which means there are large gaps in Y3. Times tables could be a good way forward.

FJS maths leaders do meet with the FIS leaders and the deputies and assistant heads also meet. Governors from both schools could meet twice a year with a shared agenda.

Action N: Meet the FIS Chair of Governors and Headteacher to discuss collaborating.

ST/PH

(BB and Connie Boler left the meeting.)

13.3 Jess Planter-Dixon is returning to work on a phased return from 21 May. She will be asked if she wishes to resume the staff governor role.

14) Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next whole governing body meeting is on Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 4pm; AP gives her apologies.

The meeting closed at 6.00pm.

ACTION POINTS FROM 15 May 2018			
	Action to be completed	By whom	By when
A	Send survey to staff on no sets maths.	BB	12 June
B	Discuss whether spelling will be a key area of development for governors in September.	All gov's	10 July
C	Meet the science leaders to discuss their report.	MD	12 June
D	Visit school to look at computing (computing leaders to suggest dates).	All gov's/ Computing Leaders	Summer 1
E	Meet maths leaders.	BB/PC	Summer 1
F	Look at progress in book bands within the FFT English interventions.	ST	Summer 1
G	Look at rewards.	All gov's	Summer term
H	MD to read with able children/Rachael Woods to share her introduction to being a reading volunteer with MD. Email rwoods@fjsslive.net to arrange.	Rachael W/ MD	12 June
I	Watch the OFSTED online safety webinar on fjsslive.net under welfare and attendance > e-safety > videos.	All gov's	12 June
J	Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance (first assembly on 10 July at 2.40pm).	All gov's	Penultimate week each term
K	Act on agreed changes from the 360 review. Write the termly newsletter paragraph. Staff governor to give feedback to colleagues. Attend the INSET day on 25 June.	PC C Boler All gov's	10 July
L	Ensure strike rules are consistent, teachers are consistent in giving strikes (inc. PE/support staff) and review what is bigger than a strike.	BB	12 June
M	Investigate input of delivery notices to Agresso.	AP/PH	12 June
N	Meet the FIS Chair of Governors and Headteacher to discuss collaborating.	ST/PH	12 June
Agenda Items for Future Meetings			Date
	Agree newsletter updates on the budget, decisions made and governor roles	All gov's	Once a term
	Discussion of OFSTED framework areas: Quality of Teaching	All gov's	12 June
	Updates on the extension	Paul Atkins	Ongoing
	Safeguarding (standing item, to include CPOMS reports and safeguarding meeting summaries)	PH	Ongoing