



OLD TOWN INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WHOLE GOVERNING BODY

Held on Wednesday 31st January 2024 at 5.30 pm

Present: Doug Gubbins (DG), Lesley Hole (LH), Caroline Chase (CC), Mike Randall (MR), Jeff Adams (JA)

In Attendance: Martine Whittle (Clerk)

		Action
1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies received in advance from Mel Searle. Mel provided relevant update via email. • No reason – Robert Ayres, Rebecca Braunton, Jay Eastwood. 	
2	<p>Presentation on Science – CC</p> <p>Unfortunately CC was unable to attend due to illness. Her presentation was made available to governors and DG gave a brief overview of the Science curriculum in school. Full presentation will be loaded to Hub.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DZ will complete a deep dive into science on 21st February. DG explained the deep dive process – and how the school ensures children retain the information. Flashback used to recap at the start of each lesson. <p>Question – do the foundation subjects use this principal? Answer – yes</p> <p>Discussion around progression of skills and testing at start and end of each topic to show progression.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MR gave a brief overview of how a subject visit is planned. • MR commented that the recent governor visit for science went very well and the good work being undertaken. Noted the inclusion of SEN in planning. (An example of this was shown to the meeting). <p>Question – are school's vision and values incorporated into the curriculum yet? Answer – not yet but this is the long-term plan.</p> <p>Question asked about how teachers prepare the scheme of work. Answer – directives come from DfE and the school finds ways to implement these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors asked DG to thank CC for the presentation, which she had prepared. Very impressive. 	

3	<p>Business Interests declared.</p> <p>No new interests declared.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of meeting held previously on 29 November 2023:</p> <p>All minutes agreed as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising. Actions 1 & 3 completed. Action 2 in progress (LH overseeing)</p> <p>Action - MR to contact absentee governors.</p>	
5/6	<p>Head Teacher Report</p> <p>Since the last school status report was submitted, there have been a number of changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four LADO referrals made, (DG outlined the details). All now closed. <p>Discussion around the referrals, governors agreed that using LADO provides further professional advice. Governors acknowledged DG's efforts.</p> <p>Staffing has been a challenge in recent weeks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One TA appointed to start on 20th February. • 1 TA on long term absence, (being managed under school's policy). They are a skilled member of staff and the absence in being felt in the classroom. It will need to be backfilled. • One TA vacancy being advertised. This may be covered by a casual post in the short term. • One MDSA appointed to fill a vacancy and a casual MDSA also appointed to help as needed. <p>Behaviour – there is a pocket of poor behaviour in school. Some escalation has been seen in year groups. DG gave examples of individual behaviour/challenges and how the school is managing the situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question – is there any progress with using play therapy? <p>Answer – No, although only a few weeks in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are being moved around to try to find a balance. • Parents are starting to ask questions about the behaviour in classes. • Within reception one class has high SEN but low behaviour issues, whilst the other has low SEN and high behaviour issues. • In Year 1 there are two children requiring attention, one has been hitting staff. DG has a warning letter ready and internal exclusions and sanctions are being used. <p>Discussion around context of events and how incidents are logged. Staff wellbeing now needing some attention. It is important that staff see incidents being dealt with promptly.</p> <p>Question – what exclusion facilities are there in school? Answer – there is no specific room, most will sit in DG's office.</p>	

Question – have staff been consulted about sanctions and alterations to the behaviour policy?

Answer – not yet.

Comment – care needed with any wording so that parents are clear around exclusions etc.

Question – what would determine an exclusion?

Answer – premeditated harm to another child or adult.

- Discussion around exclusion and SEN child in this situation.

DG has to contact Trust for advice on any exclusions.

Question – is there an issue with staff and heightened awareness around behaviour?

Answer – Team Teach training will take place on 19th February, this will cover 20% physical and 80% strategy and de-escalation techniques.

Mostly support staff being trained.

In January, behaviour training was delivered to a number of staff although, it was felt that not a lot of new information was gained from this.

Trying to use supply to buffer absence and behaviour.

- **School statistics** – 21% SEND, 43% PP, 34% EAL.
- **Finance** – a reasonable picture at this point. Spending being kept to a minimum in most areas. Closing reserves are expected to be higher than previously anticipated.
- Supply cover is however costing a lot, so important to fill vacancies.

Action – letter from governors to CH (supply for HS) to thank her for her work (she is due to leave in Spring 2)

Data – governors given an update on latest figures, league table from Trust shown.

- Y1 phonics – children are tested in May/June but prior to this mocks are undertaken in December and March.

Question – OTIS does not use a validated scheme – why?

Answer – a validated scheme costs a lot of money and specific books. At OTIS a systematic approach/reflective learning is used.

- DZ has completed phonics reviews and is happy with system used here.

Discussion around CLP league tables.

Question – is DG worried about data?

Answer – yes, because it could be better. Concerned over children who don't have needs but aren't reaching targets.

- From Spring 2, there will be two phonics lessons each day for all year groups.
- DG wrote to parents to explain Phonics along with some home learning for the Christmas holidays. A very poor response with a low return rate.
- Looking ahead, from September, parents will be asked to sign a home learning agreement.
- Year 2 have had 10 new to school, all EAL with no English who are unlikely to pass phonics.

Question – do new parents know/understand about Phonics?

Answer – no, their own ability/language is limited.

	<p>Question – could parents be invited to observe a phonics lesson? Answer – this has been done previously but not yet this year. Discussion around options and data.</p> <p>Question – what obstructions are there for teachers not being on board for teaching 2 phonics lessons each day? Answer – all teachers are passionate about their subjects and the wider curriculum. However, everyone understands the reasoning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception data is showing good gains in each area but literacy is at the lower rate. <p>Discussion around the data capture and results.</p>	
7	<p>LGB Business - MR</p> <p>Monitoring teaching and learning – important for named governors to visit and report back on their areas.</p> <p>Comment – it is important that governors do not take up too much teaching time.</p> <p>LH next visit will be less structured and more involved with children. JA will be assisting DG with safeguarding audit throughout Spring 2. JA offered to assist with Pupil voice.</p> <p>MR reported back on his visits to meet PCW and Science lead.</p> <p>Training – governors to let MR know if any extra training is required.</p>	
8	<p>Policies</p> <p>Governors advised that all policies approved at Trust level will be noted on the bulletin for their information.</p>	
9	<p>H & S Update</p> <p>Update delivered on behalf of site supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Drill completed successfully. It was undertaken during the lunch time period to test the MDSA's and also when children were out of normal routine. It was noted that the fire bell could not be heard in some of the outside areas. Quotes obtained to rectify this matter. • All services carried out on boilers, lift and expansion vessels. • Quarterly checks on fire alarm systems completed. • Radiator leak over Christmas caused some internal damage and system had to be drained and repaired. There have been a number of plumbing works undertaken. • Hard wiring checks are due to be completed in half term. • Multiple roof leaks are being investigated and may be covered by insurance claim. • Flooring in Y1 classes also being considered by insurance claim. 	

10	<p>School Improvement Plan</p> <p>SLT minutes are now posted – MR thanked DG for this action. Question – who sets the agenda for SLT meeting? Answer – DG. Meetings are each Tuesday 3.45pm – 4.45pm. Staff meetings are held on Mondays. SIP – each priority has a governor allocated and this should be considered when visiting school. Question – is everything on track in the SIP? Answer – Most, but some areas have been delayed due to staff absence. DG also spending time with children and has less time to complete paperwork tasks. DG also feeling the effect of only have a part time assistant head and part time SenCo. Comment – staff are aware of what DG is doing to ensure absences are covered and behaviour being dealt with and appreciate the effort.</p>	
12	<p>Date of Next meeting;</p> <p>Tuesday 19th March @ 5.30pm – includes training with Deborah Zachary.</p> <p>4th March – All governor event (virtual) – details will be sent out by Sue Bennett.</p>	
12	<p>Key Message for Trust:</p> <p>None at this time.</p>	

Meeting concluded at 19.30 hours

Signed (Chair) Date

Actions:

1. Letter of thanks to CH-D - MR (Spring 2)
2. Contact absentee governors - MR