



OLD TOWN INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WHOLE GOVERNING BODY

Held on Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 5.30 pm

Present: Doug Gubbins (DG), Lesley Hole (LH), Caroline Chase (CC), Mel Searle (MS), Jay Eastwood JE (Virtual), Jeff Adams (AJ), Peter Farrington (PF)

In Attendance: Martine Whittle (Clerk), Jill Turner (SenCo)

		Action
1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Peter Farrington welcomed as new governor. Meeting advised of resignation of Rebecca Braunton.</p>	
2	<p>Presentation on SEN – Jill Turner</p> <p>Two handouts were issued at the meeting which JT explained in more detail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEN at OTIS is at 20% with an increase seen since September, once new children have been assessed. • The process of assessing children was explained. • Currently assessment is undertaken for children in Reception, with nursery children being included in the next academic year. <p>Comment – the assessment is not particularly EAL friendly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New arrivals in school, in all year groups, have needs. • JT meets teachers termly to discuss all children. • Nine EHCPs at present, four more to be confirmed. <p>DG comment – these figures are double the national average.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress – Bsquared is used to assess children’s progress. • JT is aware of children not making progress and can work with them. • EAL – 37% of children in school are EAL. Although some parents do not declare this is child is born in the UK however, it is decided by what language is used at home. <p>Question – what is the main language?</p> <p>Bangladeshi and Malayalam are two of the main ones.</p> <p>DG comment – OTIS to consider pathway for EAL in new SDP. Also, will make a policy for EAL to help with planning.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tracking – termly meet to monitor. Some children have been removed from SEN register. BSquared, Bell Assessments (EAL), Wellcom in Reception. JT maintains records to monitor. <p>DG comment – there is a need to consider capacity for SENco role. JT currently works 2 days and will increase to 2.5 days from September. Extra hours can be worked as required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Referrals – lots of referrals are received in school. There is a 10-18 week wait for first acknowledgement. 6+ weeks wait for triage and 2.5 years before first appointment at hospital, by which time the child would have left OTIS for another school.Health visitors are helping with pre-school children by putting in referrals early. This can speed up the process. Each referral takes 2.5 hours to complete.SALT – not accepting any referrals. They are offering to train school staff to complete the work. Outreach is working well.EP completing private work with children. Two children have already been seen and another visit is due in July. <p>Question – does this EP work with TA’s in school?</p> <p>Answer – Yes, the EP works with children in the morning and then conducts workshops with TA’s in the afternoon. Confidential feedback is given to DG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">JT started an action plan in September when new to the role. This has been completed and updated.Parental engagement has included coffee mornings for SEN parents. <p>Question – how do these sessions get communicated to parents?</p> <p>Answer – school email.</p> <p>Question – is there an issue with parents understanding about these sessions, in particular EAL?</p> <p>Answer – an interpreter will be used for meetings as required. Some parents help others in less formal sessions.</p> <p>Question – has the book look been completed?</p> <p>Answer – yes, some staff do need to tighten up. Training will be given to teaching staff on June inset day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">JT has put some information leaflets in foyer for parents and the information is also on the website. <p>Question – regarding EAL parents, are there any local groups who can help them with understanding and accessing services?</p> <p>Answer DG – there is a standard translation for important documents. Families are linking and supporting each other.</p> <p>Question – is there any provision with BCP for EAL families?</p> <p>Answer – not any longer but JT has contacts.</p> <p>Question – could school formalise any groups?</p> <p>Answer – This is something that could be looked at going forward.</p> <p>DG – EHCPs are completed at random times throughout the year and this makes it difficult to change staffing straight away.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Robust discussion around quality of SEN support from teachers in school and the effectiveness of TA’s, checking what is being delivered during interventions.DG advised the meeting that there is a need to consider the progress and succession planning for JT, school will require a plan for when JT retires.	
--	---	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently a TA is shadowing for one day per week, having expressed an interest in expanding their knowledge. • JT added that a new action plan would be needed to include the proposed changes in September. <p>Question – does the school have a register of TA training and is there any training to cover EAL?</p> <p>Answer – yes, all training is recorded. Bell provide some training.</p> <p>Comment – MS SEN governor – it is noted how hard JT has worked to bring SEND up to date in school and the extra hours it has taken.</p> <p>CoG thanked JT for the work and the presentation.</p> <p>Action – standing item on agenda going forward to cover SEND.</p>	
3	<p>Business Interests declared.</p> <p>No new interests were declared.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of meeting held previously on 22nd May 2024:</p> <p>All minutes agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting. No matters arising.</p> <p>All actions completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MR thanked LH for chairing the meeting. • MR noted the need for parent governors following resignations. Clerk to complete parent governor elections after half term. • MR asked for an update on Phonics. • DG advised that 76 – 78% is the expected pass rate for Year 1. The retakes are not expected to be so positive due to the number of new arrivals in school. 	
7	<p>Visits reports</p> <p>Debbie Zachary has recently visited for a deep dive into Art in school. The report is available on Governor Hub.</p> <p>Question – will visits continue now that Ofsted have reviewed the visits?</p> <p>Answer – yes, planned visits for DT and music. It is good CPD for subject leads.</p> <p>Comment – these visits can be used as monitoring reports and shown to Ofsted.</p> <p>Question – when was the last writing review?</p> <p>Answer – this is a continuing item and school has just signed up to Kinnetic letters from September. Current teaching is based on latest Ofsted report and is the weakest area in school.</p> <p>Question – what has been done to close the gap?</p> <p>Answer – there is a systematic approach, cursive writing is no longer used. Grips and fine motor skills and letter formation is a focus. Year 1 and Year 2 have a writing focus each lesson.</p> <p>DG gave more details and discussed concern about results in one class and what is currently being implemented to try to resolve the issues.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDP – MR confirmed governor links within the SDP and asked PF to take over Writing. Agreed. • MR asked a governor to attend the next meeting with Parent Focus Group if possible. • Staffing – recent teacher interviews resulted in one appointment immediately and a further offer made. The offer is being considered. The interview process was very good. 	
6	<p>Behaviour Strategy</p> <p>This document was uploaded to the Governor Hub. Staff meetings have been productive, discussing the process and revising at each meeting before the document was finalised. Behaviour has been an issue in school, DG outlined the strategy. CLP Behaviour Policy remains but the OTIS Behaviour Strategy will run alongside it.</p> <p>Comment – it is good to have consistency around behaviour.</p> <p>MR & DG asked governors to comment on any behaviour seen around school during governor visits.</p> <p>Staff will have training in September.</p> <p>Action – invite governors to training.</p> <p>MR thanked DG for the work on this issue.</p>	
5	<p>Head teacher report – DG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant information has been added to Governor Hub. • IDSR was released in March. • DZ advised that there was nothing highlighted for concern. • Persistent absence could be a concern, DG highlighted how OTIS stands against national figures. Attendance policy and school processes are used to manage absence. <p>Question – is there a way to inform parents about attendance before the need for a meeting?</p> <p>Answer – parents can see the up to date figure on the Arbor app.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One suspension for 1.5 days due to physical assault to peers/adults. • Governors held a discussion around absence and suspension. 	
2 cont'd	<p>SEND update and feedback from meeting with Councillor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG updated governors about the meeting held with LA SEN team and Councillor on Tuesday to discuss the situation at OTIS with SEN admissions in September. • DG reminded meeting about the expected numbers of SEN children and the staffing implications. • Following the meeting, the LA required a bid to be made within 24 hours for the proposed SEN resource base. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight children would be placed here with a Teacher, HLTA & 2 TA's. • Winchelsea will provided expert advice. • Limited time to get this base ready. • Funding is an issue, school will be expected to contribute £6000 per child from SEN funding. <p>Question – will the children be in the base all the time? Answer – they would access their learning in the base but would access outside learning areas to gain social development.</p> <p>Question – could other EHCP children be added to Year R? Answer – Yes, in theory but would need to be discussed.</p> <p>Question – with regard to the HLTA role, would it be possible to recruit someone who is training for the role?</p> <p>Governors held robust discussion around BCP decision and school requirements.</p> <p>MR thanked DG for work so far on this situation. DG to update governors on any changes.</p>	
8	<p>Policies</p> <p>Trust approved policy details given on Briefings emailed through</p>	
	<p>Date of Next meeting;</p> <p>Wednesday 26th June at 5.30pm</p>	
	<p>Key Message for Trust:</p> <p>None at this time.</p>	

Meeting concluded at 19.10 hours

Signed (Chair) Date

Actions:

1. Standing item on agenda going forward to cover SEND.
2. Invite governors to behaviour training.