



Valley Road School

Valley Road,
Henley-on-Thames
Oxfordshire, RG9 1RR

Head Teacher: Mr Tim Coulson

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body Monday 11th July 2016, 7.00 pm

Governors present:

Will Burfitt (WB) – Co-opted
 Tim Coulson (TC) – Head
 James Dejode (JD) – Parent
 Dan Herbert (DH) – Co-opted
 Steve Holland (SH) – Co-opted
 Sarah Laing (SL) – Co-opted
 Susanna Reay (SR) - Parent
 Mary Selvester (MS) – Co-opted – CHAIR
 Rod Simmons (RS) –Local authority

In attendance: Helen Batten (HB) – Clerk

1.	<p>Introduction</p> <p>1.1 Quorum was confirmed.</p> <p>1.2 Absences: An apology was received and accepted from Laura Phillips (Staff). Rachel Moffatt (Co-opted) was absent without apology.</p> <p>1.3 Additional business: Staff leave request.</p> <p>1.4 Declaration of interests: No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item.</p>	
2.	<p>Previous FGB, 16th May 2016</p> <p>2.1 Minutes: Minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair for filing in school.</p> <p>2.2 Matters arising: None that would not be covered by the current agenda.</p>	
3.	<p>Committee reports</p> <p>3.1 Leadership & Management: Minutes of 1st July had been circulated.</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governors asked for assurance that all staff members are aware of policies relevant to their work. TC explained that policies are included in the staff induction process and are referenced in the Staff Handbook. Staff meetings include regular examination of a number of key policies. ○ Behaviour and Whistle Blowing policies and the British Values statement have been updated and will be circulated for information. ○ TC will be reviewing a number of policies over the summer. In respect of HR policies, for which Valley Road adopts the LA models, the most recent versions will be checked and incorporated into school records. ○ The October FGB will look at incorporating all requirements into a rolling programme to ensure that committee responsibilities are defined and reviews are completed as necessary. • Finance: A report had been circulated. DH explained that due to additional funding it has been possible to reverse some TA employment decisions. More SEN funding than originally anticipated has been received. The budget will be re-cast in September. • Staffing: MS confirmed that in the autumn L&M will look in detail at the staff appraisal process including performance-related pay decisions. <p>3.2 Environment: RS highlighted key points in the report to 10th July which had been circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing: The height of the new fence will be reduced to 1.2m and the section of hedge will not be replaced, however this has not significantly reduced the expected cost which is likely to be around £7,000. The work will be put in hand when the installation schedule for the new build is confirmed. • Roofing: Some good-quality previous repairs have now failed with age, and as some of the resulting leaks are quite old it is likely that further investigation will reveal secondary problems. We cannot afford to replace the whole roof so are looking at another guaranteed repair and taking further expert advice to move this forward. • Health & safety: JdJ has completed the H&S walkround with Rachel Herbert which identified no significant concerns. The H&S audit report has been examined and action taken on a number of minor points. <p>3.3 School: Minutes of 29th June and SEND and KS2 link governor reports had been circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports premium: A report on use of this funding will be prepared for the website. • Curriculum: LP will present information on delivering the curriculum at the September meeting. 	<p>TC</p> <p>TC</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New parents: Instead of attending the new parents' meeting, governors will look for an opportunity to meet new parents, possibly at the PTA BBQ early in the autumn term. 	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Head's report: TC highlighted key points from the circulated report:</p> <p>4.1 Permanent exclusion: TC explained the decision taken and process followed.</p> <p>4.2 Data: Information which had been circulated was discussed:</p> <p>(a) KS2: TC emphasised that the school aims to ensure that each child will do as well as they can. Although everyone has worked very hard the data is disappointing in a number of areas following tough tests at the end of a difficult year. There is a wide range of standardised scores, some well above 'average' but also many well below. We will learn from this but will also continue to ensure that children receive balanced schooling without over-emphasis on test preparation. Governors then asked further questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Did children make the expected progress?</i> TC confirmed that this is generally the case. We were not expecting particularly high results with this cohort but the effects of the new arrangements have depressed results further. In general the children who found the tests difficult were as we expected and although we would previously expect to get a number of these children up to level 4 the new tests did not allow them to show all they know. 53% achieved the required standard in reading, writing and maths. • <i>How does our performance compare with other schools?</i> There is a varied picture across the partnership based on informal information. • <i>Will children be tested again in Y7?</i> We expect secondary schools to look at test results, teacher assessments and their own CAT scores. As part of the transition process the class teacher has discussed each child's needs in detail with the receiving school. • <i>How have children been affected by the new requirements?</i> Thanks to the skill of teachers the children have not been badly affected or unduly stressed by the testing process. • <i>Do we still have to publish data?</i> Yes but it is not yet clear how this will look. There will be a Raiseonline-type document but we do not yet know what form this will take. Due to the changes it will not be possible to compare with previous years initially. Following a separate data briefing for governors the data group will examine published data in detail in the autumn. • <i>What information will the school provide to parents?</i> Individual scores and standardised scores will be provided. TC has also provided information about the new-look results and will continue to update parents. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is the purpose of the changes?</i> The UK did not appear to be doing well in comparison to other countries although it has also been acknowledged that some comparisons were flawed. The aim was to improve this picture but it is generally felt by the teaching profession that changes were introduced too quickly and without sufficient discussion. <p>(b) KS1: Results are very good although there is nothing to compare them against. These were teacher assessments and will not be published.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How will these results inform planning for next year?</i> We will look closely at cohorts and the aspects that children found hardest this year, such as maths, and include appropriate actions in the SDP. <p>Governors thanked TC and all staff for their hard work this year in difficult circumstances.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Governing body business</p> <p>5.1 Vacancies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JdJ has notified he will be stepping down as parent governor at the end of term due to the pressure of other commitments. Governors thanked him for all his efforts on behalf of the school. The vacancy has been publicised to parents and attracted some initial interest. An election will be run in September. • MS confirmed that potential candidates for the co-opted vacancy are being followed up. It is hoped to recruit some expertise in health & safety and safeguarding with either of the new appointments. <p>5.2 Training: MS reminded all governors that the 2016-17 Governor Services schedule is now available on the Hub. All governors should complete induction training as early as possible. Options to host training in exchange for free participation will be investigated.</p> <p>5.3 Committee schedule: MS reminded committee chairs to set their dates to report in to FGBs, and include the schedule on the Hub calendar.</p> <p>5.4 School visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors will attend Curriculum Day on July 19th to observe activities in different classes run by Y6. • A governor morning in school will be scheduled in October. • Governors will attend a joint session with staff at the January 2016 inset. 	<p>MS</p> <p>MS</p> <p>MS</p> <p>SL, MS, RS</p> <p>MS</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Safeguarding: JdJ confirmed that he as updated the actions list with TC. There are some minor items to be picked up but there are no current safeguarding concerns.</p>	

7.	<p>Happy Valley update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SH reported it has been necessary to alter the exact position of the installation to quality as permitted development. The building will be the same size and design but will now be slightly further down the slope and will not require planning permission. There are some issues with tree roots and drainage to be resolved but no major problems are anticipated. Trades will be starting on site shortly with a view to completing the work over the summer. • Governors discussed access to toilets and the need for children to be supervised when moving between buildings. It was agreed to look at providing a canopy to connect the new building with the existing to avoid this requirement. • Governors thanked SH and WB for all their recent work to move the project forward, and also particularly to Kerry Emanuel who has led effectively on fundraising. A letter of thanks will be sent when the project is complete. 	
8.	<p>Governing body development</p> <p>8.1 Review of GB plan: Governors split into groups to look at progress this year against previously agreed activities and provide suggestions for next actions. These were briefly fed back and will be collated for discussion at the next meeting.</p> <p>8.2 Skills audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL reminded all governors to return the audit to her. The collated results will be discussed at the next meeting. • It was agreed to create a survey based on the themes covered by the skills audit. Both documents will be used to create a new governing body plan for 2016-17. 	<p>MS</p> <p>All govts.</p> <p>DH</p>
9.	<p>AOB</p> <p>9.1 Governor information updates: The noticeboard will be updated in September. Rolling updates of website information will be provided as governors change.</p> <p>9.2 Extraordinary leave request: TC reported a request for leave at the end of the autumn term for a staff member to travel to the USA for Christmas. TC confirmed that this absence can be covered internally at no additional cost and the request was approved.</p> <p>Next meeting: Monday 11th July 2016, 7.00 pm.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>HB</p>
10.	<p>Date of next meeting: Monday 3rd October 2016, 7.00 pm</p>	

MS thanked all governors for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.

Signed

Date

FGB 11th July 2016, agreed actions:

Minute	Action	Who	By when
3.1	Circulate final versions of Behaviour and Whistle-blowing policies and British Values statement.	TC	October FGB
3.1	Check most recent versions of LA model policies adopted for use in school.	TC	October FGB
5.1	Organise parent governor election.	MS, HB	September
5.1	Follow up interest in co-opted governor vacancies.	MS	ASAP
5.2	Investigate options to host governor training sessions.	MS	October FGB
5.3	Set schedule of committee meetings and include on Hub calendar.	SL, MS, RS	ASAP
5.4	Provide date for October governor visits.	MS	ASAP
8.1	Collate feedback from review of governing body plan.	MS	October FGB
8.2	Return completed skills audit to SL.	All governors	ASAP
8.2	Prepare governor questionnaire for circulation and discussion at October FGB.	DH	Early autumn term
9.1	Update governors' notice board.	SR	September
9.1	Provide updated governor information for website.	HB	September

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Date