

**Castle Vale Nursery School & Children's Centre
Full Governing Body Meeting 12th February 2019**



MINUTES

Present:

Mark Phillips (MP)- Chair of Governors
Sally Leese (SL) – Head Teacher
Aimee Hartley (AH) – Staff Governor
Tracy Quirk(TK) – Co-Opted Governor
Kerri Treasure (KT) – Parent Governor
Kelly Berry (KB) – Parent Governor
Lauren Hampshire (LH) – Co-Opted Governor

In Attendance:

Debra Norman (DN) – Deputy Head Teacher
Niamh McCorrison (NP) - Clerk
Jackie McCorrison (JAMC) - Clerk

Apologies

Sue Martin (SM)
Sue Martin is at a Child Protection meeting and cannot attend today, but she regularly contacts school.

The Apologies were accepted

1) Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

MP welcomed everyone and introductions were made around the table.

MP informed governors that Aimee Hartley is now a member of staff at the Nursery and can no longer be Chair. AH has put herself forward as staff governor and was appointed – she replaced Christina Meakin who has gained a position in another school.

Hayden Sheldon and Hassan Saleh have resigned from their roles as parent governors. The governors thanked them for their support. SL introduced Kerri Treasure and Kelly Berry as our new Parent Governors and she also welcomed Tracy Quirk as our new Co-Opted Governor.

Co-Opted Governor Appointment

Governors noted that there are still vacancies for Co-Opted Governors SL has liaised with the Head of Topcliffe. The nursery and Topcliffe primary school work closely together so it would be beneficial for both schools to have a member of staff on the Board, and Kirsty McElroy-Stringer has agreed to undertake the role.

It was unanimously agreed that Kirsty McElroy Stringer be appointed as a Co-Opted Governor.

There is still another vacancy and Governors were asked to let SL know if there is anyone appropriate who has a skill set to compliment the current composition of the Board, it would be beneficial to have someone with a Health and Safety Skill Set or who work in a local business. She will then invite them into the school for a meeting.

Action:- Governors to seek to appoint another Co-Opted Governor

2) Election of Chair and Vice Chair

As AH is a Staff Governor, she can no longer be Chair.

The Clerk asked for nominations for the Chair of Governors.

Mark Phillips - Proposed by Sally Leese
Seconded by Aimee Hartley

There were no other nominations and Mark Phillips was appointed as Chair by a unanimous decision.

MP asked for nominations for Vice Chair

KB volunteered to fulfil the role of Vice chair to the Governors. She has experience of this role as she is Chair at the Cadets Committee

Kelly Berry Proposed by Mark Phillips
Seconded by Aimee Hartley

There were no other nominations and Kelly Berry was appointed as Vice Chair for a period of one year.

SL informed governors that they need a governor for Safeguarding, SEND, Prevent, EYPP and training.

The new Governor from Topcliffe has volunteered to fulfil the role of the SEND governor.

Action: Appointment of Safeguarding, Prevent, EYPP and Training Governor to be agreed at the next meeting

3) Written Declaration of Business Interests Forms

Forms had been signed by all present and there are no changes since the last meeting.

4) Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 20th November 2018 were approved, SL said they will be scanned and uploaded to the portal.

a) Matters arising

SEND Governor

The SEND Governor has been agreed.

Admission forms.

SL informed governors that the admission forms have not been changed to ask whether children will be staying for 1 or 2 years and/ or if parents plan to move their children to another setting.

Action: Admissions forms to be reviewed prior to the next Governors meeting.

SDP

SL reported that the School Development Plan has been uploaded to the portal. SL explained to the new parent governors how the SDP is written in line with OFSTED.

Ofsted Inspections.

SL reported that Ofsted have changed from 1 day to 2 day inspections for Nurseries and we will be expecting our next Inspection in 2021.

5) Feedback from the Finance & Personnel Committee.

The F&P Committee have just met and MP fed back, all of the detail is in the Minutes.

The Finance Report and Budget Update was discussed and it shows that there is a forecast carry forward surplus of £40,000. At the start of the year the forecast was there will be a considerable deficit. The nursery has worked extremely hard to align budget and expenditure. The carry forward is partly due to a member of teaching staff leaving and replacement staff being from a lower grade band. SL assured governors that the quality has not suffered and the team are working exceptionally well.

Governors discussed the preliminary forecast for 2019/2020 showing an in year deficit of £26,000. The deficit includes the carry forward of £40,000 from this year.

Action: SL to look into different models with other schools to create savings and reduce the predicted deficit for 2019/2020.

The Governors asked whether the deficit for 2019/2020 includes the supplementary funding

MP confirmed for Governors that the deficit does include supplementary funding .
At the next meeting a budget will be presented.

The Governors discussed applying to other places and organisations for funding. KB suggested looking into funding from the HS2 project. The HS2 are providing considerable grants to local organisations who have requested them for specific projects / areas of need. However, the biggest expenditure the nursery has is on staff- very few grants fund staff

KB said she has experience applying for HS2 grants as Chair of the Cadets, and has been successful in getting over £75,000 in grants over the last 18 months. She reported that Cllr Webb is on the Cadets Committee and also IM Properties.

Action:- KB to assist SL in applying for funding.

KB informed governors that previous grants have been rejected as the money does not reach enough residents in the community. Grants for the nursery would reach a large number of people in the community

The governors commented it would be useful if the grants could fund Forest School or building work (e.g Canopies)

SL said that this would need to be looked into.

Action:- Governors asked that consideration be given to inviting Cllr Suzanne Webb to the Nursery to speak about funding possibilities.

MP reported that the SFVS (School Financial Standard) was reported to the Committee and was recommended for approval.

The FGB unanimously approved the SFVS portfolio.

The Governors were also shown the LA Monitoring Reports and they approved the content.

SL reported that there was a confidential staffing issue discussed at the Finance Committee meeting.

Governors were informed that the nursery are changing finance software. The Nursery currently use SAGE but are moving to AFE. AFE is cost effective and easy to use. It is cloud based so the nursery would not need to buy a new fuse board and server. AFE works for the future.

TQ agreed to join the Finance and Personnel Committee

The FGB approved the feedback from the Finance Committee.

7) Head Teachers Report.

This Head Teacher report has been uploaded to the portal and the content was discussed.

SL reported that the majority of nursery place are full and the nursery has limited spaces to offer after Easter.

Governors asked why the position is so different this year – it is much more positive than last year when numbers were lower?

SL said that there are fewer children leaving to go to other schools and we have a lot of new children, especially 2 year olds. This does mean additional staff are needed (1:4 ratio for 2 year olds) but it means that numbers are positive for the future. The additional staff members were recruited from the current cohort of students and volunteers. This is beneficial as they have an understanding of the nursery's ethos and expectations.

SL informed governors about the campaigning that has taken place at parliament. There is still no confirmation on the continuation of the Maintained Nursery School supplementary funding. The APPG asked at the previous meeting for parents, staff and governors to complete a petition. This was presented back to parliament on 5th February. Lucy Powell chairs the APPG and knows Castle Vale and the Nursery very well and she declared the petition. The speeches were very supportive and the HT Report contains the speech from Lucy Powell.

SL discussed the Back bench debate held on 31st January. Jack Dromey MP presented petitions on behalf of the 4 Erdington Nursery Schools. This is still going forward and all present said they feel it is very positive that maintained nursery schools have been spoken about in parliament.

Birmingham has the largest number of nursery schools, all 27 are Good or Outstanding. SL said that when the feasibility study is completed it will be presented at an APPG in Westminster with MP's

SL said she is trying to get confirmation that supplementary funding will not end in 2020.

SL received an email from Early Education and Lucy Powell's office so ask if she would do a press release. She has also appeared on the BBC and ITV and there are links with The Mirror Newspaper.

SL reported on Staff training and Development.

Before Christmas all staff assessed all of children who were returners in September 2018. Staff then used this data to highlight gaps in learning. They prioritised the gaps and planned for whether they could be met through direct teaching, objective led planning or through child initiated provision (areas of learning planning) and parent workshops. This was shared as a group and staff picked up on where elements linked into their performance management.

Staff looked at the children due to start Reception class in July and created an action plan to ensure the Leavers make adequate progress before final assessment.

In a staff meeting, staff with shared PM targets worked together and planned parent workshops to support the learning we want to focus on. These will take place throughout the rest of the school year.

Staff will assess the leavers and new children before Easter.

Lisa and Jess (student) will be carrying out training around Montessori approach.

SL reported that there are 21 children who have 30 hours full time placements. This is a high number, some of the children are eligible for Pupil Premium and others are paying to top up hours.

SL informed governors that there are 4 children with an EHCP and 2 in draft.

The governors questioned how many of the children with EHCPs are returning

SL commented that 2 children are Reception Age and have stayed with us in Nursery. The nursery has provided as much support for the children and families and are supporting them with the process of applying for school places. However SENAR are saying that the schools are full and are sending EHC's to parents asking for permission to change the provision from a named place to put as 'TBC'.

Senar have 60 children out of school and 80 placed in provision that is not appropriate and does not meet their needs.

Staff attendance was discussed and the Governors queried why BSS/Lunchtime supervision percentage is so low at 76.9%

SL reported that this is due to a member of staff who was absent due to ill health, They have since retired but their data is included in the figure

BAMNS

As a part of BAMNS the nursery are considering looking into a shared leadership model across 3 nursery schools- Osborne, Featherstone and Castle Vale

The head teacher of Featherstone Nursery School is leaving in July and the Deputy Head has already left. Castle Vale SENDco is also working at Featherstone 1 day per week.

SL reported that this shared leadership model is in its first stages and that more information will be shared with governors when it is known. There are considerations for group buying and sharing costs.

The Governors asked what Osborne and Featherstone Nursery were rated by Ofsted?

SL said that both have been rated as 'Good'

8) Chairs Action/ Correspondence/ Training

Training

AH received governor training in her previous role. She attended official governor training but this training was not directly related to nursery schools and some of it was not relevant.

SL proposed offering a bespoke training day for governors in the Summer term.

The training will include the roles and responsibilities of Governors, what the nursery aims to achieve and why, and the ethos and values of the Nursery. AH also suggested there could be a learning walk undertaken and for governors to revisit the nursery's vision statement.

Action:- SL to arrange a date for bespoke Governor Training.

The governors were informed about training at Sladefield School. The training targets effective challenge. This training is taking place on 6th March at 6pm and costs £50.

The governors asked whether this training would be beneficial for nursery school governors

SL confirmed that this training would be beneficial and it is delivered from Governor support. The cost is also low in comparison to other training events.

Action:- SL and KB to attend the Training at Sladefield School.

The LA also distribute a Friday Update every fortnight and this has items of communication and details the training on offer.

9) Policies

These were uploaded to the portal.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.

Governors need to read this and indicate that they have read and understood it.

Admissions policy

There are no changes to the Policy and this was approved.

Safeguarding and CP Policy

This is policy from the LA which has been personalised.

This was approved

Whistleblowing and serious misconduct policy

This is policy from the LA.

This was approved

At the meeting in November, staffing policies on the HR Portal were approved. These include:-

Disciplinary Process

Capability for teachers

Grievance procedures

All of the above Policies were approved.

10) Any Other Business

DN delivered the SEN update to the governors

There are 22 children who are on the SEND register (Census January 2019). Currently 4 of these children have a diagnosis of ASD- all of which have EHCPs in place.

Two children have remained at Nursery due to parental requests for deferred entry to school.

There are two more children who are waiting for a diagnosis from the Child Development Centre. These two requests for EHCP are about to reach draft stage.

Catherine Steele is the nursery Speech and Language therapist. She supports 19 children with speech, language and communication needs. This includes the four children with ASD and the two other children awaiting diagnosis. Her support will be continued for as long as affordable .

DN reported that Catherine has up-skilled current staff and liaises with parents. She has supported new staff members who are working with children with SEN. With her support staff members are confident and effective in supporting these children.

SL informed governors that children do not get funding until EHCs are in place. All the provision and support is not backdated.

Legally, Nursery needs to provide SEND support but have not been provided financial support. The nursery has ISEY (Inclusion Support for Early Years) funding to help support 4 children which funds 7.5 hours per child per week. It is a long and difficult process to follow to apply for minimal funding

The governors questioned whether the nursery received support from the Children's Centre

SL said that there has been no support offered.

WellComm

Wellcomm is an S&L screening tool recommended to use. It has aided with learning groups.

One child has been identified with hearing impairments alongside other needs. Advice has been sought from the HI Team.

Early support

Helen Brennan continues with early support. 8 children continue to have SEN and Early Support Plans in place

SL said it would be an advantage if the Nursery could be an Assessment Centre, working alongside the CDC. Staff in Nursery see the children every day over a long period of time and look at their behaviour and characteristics, they would have a lot of evidence to support the children and this would lead to a less stressful process for parents.

It was noted that many of the EHC's submitted by the Nursery are successful, due to the amount of evidence provided.

SL referred to Payment by Results, Nursery can look at Early Help Assessments from 2015 onwards and submit a claim for £250.

DAF funding.

Any children with DLA (special section on census) can get Disability access fund. This funding is from central government. It is general funding and does not need to be spent on a specific cause, It can be used to support children with disabilities or special educational needs. The DAF aids access to Early Years places by, for example, supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their provision.

11) Date of the next Meeting

Tuesday 7th May 2019

9.30 – 10.30 – Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting

10.30 – 12.30 – Full Governing Body Meeting