

Castle Vale Nursery School
Full Governing Body Meeting 26th April 2023



MINUTES

Present:

Mark Phillips (MP)- Chair of Governors
 Sally Leese (SL) – Head Teacher
 Kate Bateman – Staff Governor
 Kirstie McElroy-Stringer (KMS) – Co-Opted Governor
 Sara Hartshorn – Co-Opted Governor
 Anneka Anwar (AA) – Parent Governor

In Attendance:

Christina Meakin – Deputy Head Teacher
 Jackie McCorrison (JAMC) - Clerk

Apologies

Caroline Hopkins (CH) – Parent Governor
 Kirsty Harper (KH) – Community Governor

The Apologies were accepted

1) Welcome, Apologies & Declaration of Business Interests (Pecuniary Interests)

MP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

SL reported that Tracey Quirk has sent apologies for the meeting today but has also said she will need to step down as a Governor due to work commitments. This will leave a position on the Governing Body. TQ has offered to signpost someone who works in Compass Support as a potential new Governor

There are no changes to Pecuniary Interests since the last meeting.

2) Minutes of the Last Meeting

SL proposed and MP seconded the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on February 16th 2023.

Matters arising

Matters Arising have been addressed as follows:-

- SL has reported back via GovernorHub on the decision of the LA regarding the offer to pilot a new way of working with children under 5 with SEND.
- The Nursery Pupil Numbers will be discussed during the meeting.
- Staff Wellbeing will be discussed at the next meeting.

All other Matters Arising have been covered.

4) Feedback from the Personnel & Finance Committee – Budget Approval

The Finance Committee have just met and discussed the budget and MP fed back as follows:-

It was noted that the Budgets for maintained Nurseries and schools with Nursery classes are not yet ready and therefore the budget has been set on indicative figures.

Governors said that this presents difficulties with regards budget planning. Governors cannot set and manage the budgets if the information is not available.

MP said it is a concern that the school is still waiting for the 2021 – 2022 actuals. The Governors recognise that there is an issue with Oracle and if this is not rectified by the next meeting then they agreed to make their concerns known to the LA.

The predicted cumulative surplus for 2022/23 has increased by £94,847 since the previous financial analysis report and the Minutes from the Committee meeting detail the reasons.

A cumulative surplus balance of £292,976 is predicted to remain at the end of 2022/23, this equates to 32.47% of the schools in-year funding.

MP reported that the Committee discussed the fact that the overall funding has increased by 4%, but the pay increase for teachers is expected to be 5% and 8% for Support Staff. Inflation is approximately 11% and the budget has set this as 8%. This means that the funding is increasing at a slower pace than the costs and this accounts for the anticipated in year deficit that is in the report of £176,000.

In addition, there is an anomaly on the pupil numbers in the report, there are only 77 pupils in the Spring Term, but the number in the census was 109. Therefore school are keeping their own records own records.

MP said that there is an expectation that there will be more EY funding and also increased funding for SEND pupils.

The monitoring of the budget is very robust by SL and NL. MP reported that there are still problems with Oracle. School still cannot accurately monitor income or expenditure

If the funding is not rectified at the end of this term is was agreed to contact the LA.

MP recommended that the FGB approved the budget

Governor actions are –

Approval is required for the allocations to the budget headings in Appendix A.

Signed Copies of Appendix A need to be forwarded to SFS by 31st May 2023

Signed copy of the budget needs to be kept in school

Action: - The FGB unanimously recommended approved of the School Budget for 2023– 2024. All agreed.

The SFVS was also discussed and approved.

5).Head Teachers Report.

This has been added to GovernorHub.

SL reported that the Castle Vale not a pilot, not a resource base is not going ahead. The LA seemed to think it was no different to the EY DLP project, they felt it was expensive and essentially a resource base. SL has spoken to Jas from Education Infrastructure and registered her disappointment and stated the intention to go ahead regardless and she has agreed to dual fund a portacabin.

School cannot put existing children in there so will use the additional space to better support the children with complex additional needs, while also meeting the needs of our mainstream children. This will have a staffing implication

Action:- SL to update Governors via GovernorHub following the meeting on 27th April regarding the Castle Vale not a pilot, not a resource base

Closure of PVI settings

The last PVI setting on Castle Vale, Barmpots, closed on the 31st March. This means there is now a deficit for Nursery provision for children under 5 on Castle Vale.

The Governors noted that the children from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with SEND have the most to gain from access to early education and they stand to lose the most from these closures. This will exasperate existing social inequities.

SL had spoken to Kevin Caulfield (BCC EY Sufficiency) and he was initially very supportive. Since then, SL has spoken to the LA and we cannot increase our PAN as that would be seen as the position of last resort.

Concerned parents had already contacted CV Cllr Ray Goodwin and Erdington MP Paulette Hamilton and she emailed both. The response has been that there is no interest in extending provision and that the families can access provision in the ward, but this is in places like Pipe Hayes / Minworth

Governors noted that it is a concern that the LA seem to be pushing and promoting businesses that make a profit rather than supporting their own schools

PVI's and childcare establishments depend on combined income from childcare fees and government payments for childcare. The income from childcare fees played a vital role to stay in business, but this is an expense more and more families simply cannot stretch to, and the take up of placements at nurseries means that they are closing.

Governors asked about the September admissions.

SL said that for September we have:-

68 x 3 year olds

11 x 2 year olds returning

The waiting list has 40 x 3 year olds.

39 x 2 year olds

17 x rising 3's.

SL said she needs to sit and map this out as some will be full time/ become full time. Even now, school are having to say no to children each day and are turning away children with SEND and other needs.

The Governing Body discussed the Admissions Policy and acknowledged that we have a commitment to the children on Castle Vale who are deprived 2 and 3 year olds with 15 hours eligibility. They agreed that the 3 year olds on Castle Vale need to be prioritised as they are the children who are due to start school the following year. If there are any children who do not get a place then they asked SL to direct them back to the LA.

SL said that this will undermine all that the DLP has done over the last 2 years if school take mainly 3 years olds.

SL is having a meeting regarding the Portacabin and this will free up space to support children with SEND. It is separate and different provision, and the children will be considered additional to the PAN.

Governors asked about parental choice?

SL said she has been told to direct families to other provision, she used to direct families to Barmpots but this has since closed. Many families said they wanted their children to come to our school, Barmpots was run from a church hall and parents said that the provision was not the same as what is offered at our school.

SL said that some families have said that they will keep their children at home if they cannot get a place in Nursery. There is also a concern that if families do access other provision that they may not come back and this could impact future numbers.

AA said she is speaking from experience and said that it is important to still look to take children on an individual basis if they have SEND. It gives more time to build up the evidence for them to get an EHCP plan and to be placed in an appropriate setting for Reception, if a child starts at 3 then there is not time for this to be put in place and they are often placed in a setting that does not meet their needs. There is a vast difference between a child with SEND and one without.

SL said she has tried to explain this to the LA and they do not understand and AA has articulated what she has been trying to explain.

The LA do not want children out of setting for Reception and KS1

They do not want parents to have to fight to get a place for their children and they do not want children in the wrong provision.

However, this will not happen.

Specialist partners e.g. the CAT team / Ed Psych are no longer able to state that specialist provision is needed even if it is – they can record their needs but not recommend Specialist Provision. The children are not able to remain in Nursery so this will mean that there will be more children out of setting in September and parents will have to fight for their child's place or elect for them to be home schooled.

Action:- SL to update Governors regarding September Admissions and the use of the Portacabin.

Developing Local Provision

SL said that the future of the DLP is unclear. There have been many different messages shared in different meetings/briefings etc. but nothing shared directly with the DLP EY District leads.

SL has added the update for the DLP reference group to GovernorHub.

There is a concern about KPI 7 as this is one of the focus KPIs for the LA. There were 8 x KPI's for the project and the impact is detailed in the presentation.

KPI 7 is about the number of children who have accessed DLP support taking up their full entitlement in Reception by October half term. The project will be extended long enough for a report on this KPI in the Autumn term.

There are some questions – the DLP outreach does not work with individual children, so it is unclear what children will be identified as “DLP supported children” for transition to Reception data.

Once identified, it is not clear how the DLP can track these children from setting to school and whether schools and settings will be willing/able to information share. The DLP children are not high-level SEND children e.g. EHCP, SSPP.

PVI's and Nurseries can only share information if the parents agree, there are instances where schools receive children with no information from a PVI as parents are given the information and need to share it with the primary school but they do not pass it on. Sometimes a PVI has put a lot in place to support a child but the parents want them to have a fresh start and do not want this shared with the school.

SL said it will be difficult to find this information, there will be children out of setting in September and it is important that the EY DLP is not blamed for this.

Stronger Practice Hubs.

SL reported that school launched the Heart—Midlands Early Years Stronger Practice Hub at a series of online events. There is a website for more information.

[https:// www.birminghamearlyyearsnetworks.org/stronger-practice-hub](https://www.birminghamearlyyearsnetworks.org/stronger-practice-hub)

Ofsted

SL reported when Ofsted do a return visit to Nurseries they want to see detailed provision maps

Staff have worked hard and looked at research to identify the best way to teach children. Intent statements have been stripped back and are very clear.

Staff training is developed over time and embedded, Izzie is overseeing a programme of CPD that isn't just training, it involves modelling, supporting and team teaching.

Staff are benefitting from a consistent approach and high expectations and a focus on quality of interactions.

Action:- SL invited all Governors to visit school in the Summer Term to see the teaching in practice.

Educational Visits.

SL reported that Broomey Croft has closed and she is looking for other options

Action:- MP will support the visit if needed

Wellbeing Update

This will be discussed in the Summer.

Governors said that they are mindful of the wellbeing of staff and especially SL, given the different projects she is involved with.

SL said that Kate Bateman is part of the wellbeing staff team and staff know their wellbeing is important and they are supported where possible.

6) Policy Approval

None

7) Any Other Business

End of Term.

SL reported that the end of term is Tuesday 25th July.

Staff stay after school on a Monday for training and with this in mind SL suggested that they break up on Monday 24th July.

The Governing Body agreed that staff should have Tuesday 25th July 2023 off in lieu of the additional training that they have undertaken.

8) Date of the next Meeting

Thursday 13th July 2023

- 9.30am Finance Committee
- 10.30am Full Governing Body