

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Friday 9th December 2022 at 7.45am

Governors present: Reem Al Rasheed, Anne Canning, Mark Chapman (*Chair*), Jo Davey (*Co-headteacher*), Helen Da Silva, Pat Dugdale, Tessa Hauswedell, Rachel Howarth, Zoe Judge (*Co-headteacher*), Ian Macaulay, Antonia Shortall, Wendy Sloane

Staff present: Aftab Ahmed, Darrel Barsby, Emily Brooks, Florence Herrero, Stewart Hesse, Kirsty Holder, David Robson, Kirsten Sullivan

Also present: Sam Murray (*Clerk*)

The Chair welcomed everyone and introductions around the table were made.

1. Declaration of interests

There were no meeting specific declarations of interest made by anyone present.

2. School Improvement Plan 2021-22 Final Evaluation

Governors received a copy of the RAG rated evaluated SIP 2021-22. The CoHeads highlighted the following areas:

Teaching & Learning has progressed well and key areas are completed as planned. Some work still to complete on cross curricular links between subjects.

SEND progress has some items evaluated as amber but the exam outcomes were good and reassuring.

Covid feels a long time ago but the impact is still being felt across the school, in some year groups more than others.

Extra-curricular activities and opportunities for parents to come into school are increasing.

Operations & Finance has some areas delayed but these are incorporated into the SIP 2022-23.

3. School Improvement Plan 2022-23 Presentation

Governors received a copy of the SIP 2022-23 with a supporting commentary document linked to the SIP for ease of reference. The CoHeads highlighted the following areas:

Assessment will provide reliable and rigorous data to inform interventions and support. All staff will consistently apply the policy.

Teaching & Learning policy launched last year; this year will see a focus on consistent application by all staff.

CPD, training and staff development underpins all the planned work.

Pastoral review has a broad scope and will report to the FGB in May 2023.

Sixth form operational and educational elements to be reviewed by the Director of Sixth Form.

New management information system to be introduced with support from external providers.

In response to a governor question about the pastoral review, CoHeads outlined the scope of the review which has been seen by the Chair and AC. The Chair will consider

how the review fits with the programme of link governor work as it touches all areas of the school. The Chair will share the terms of reference with all governors.

Action: Pastoral review terms of reference to be circulated to governors (MC)

A governor asked how the SIP addresses the point from the Ofsted inspection report about checking students' understanding of their learning. CoHeads explained that this is covered in the sections that relate to the teaching and learning policy implementation. SH outlined all staff training on retrieval practice and how this will be monitored and support provided to any staff who need it. There are multiple mechanisms for monitoring including lesson walks, observations, work scrutinies and surveys. Reporting to the FGB will be via the CoHeads' Report and SIP reporting. CoHeads suggested adding a specific section to their written report.

Action: Add a section to the CoHeads' report to cover Ofsted updates (ZJ & JD)

In response to a governor question on mixed ability lessons and progression of learning, SH responded that all teachers must move their classes on and it is important that teachers know their students well and know how to adapt their teaching strategies to meet the varied needs of their students to enable progression.

A governor asked what had been learnt from the delay to publication of last year's timetable. CoHeads responded that a review had highlighted earlier preparation and issues around communication.

CoHeads outlined plans for the migration to a new MIS and how this would be managed in the absence of a Director of Operations including the appointment of external project managers. CoHeads believe this approach will ensure the project is completed according to the timetable.

Priorities within Behaviour and Safety were outlined in the commentary document including work on persistent absence and the development of the school's strategy on this in conjunction with Haringey LA. The pastoral review will look at the requirements in the recent DfE Behaviour Guidance, school policy and consistent application. Finch (AP) will trial key stage 4 provision from January 2023.

In response to a governor question, KS outlined the different strands to the school's approach to managing attendance including persistent and severe absence. The number of students in these categories is small but there are often very complex and challenging personal circumstances behind the data. KS explained that the new DfE Attendance Guidance puts new duties on the local authority Attendance Team to lead on supporting schools with PA.

Priorities under community cohesion including a review of parent engagement and communications and plans for staff well-being and increasing the student voice were outlined.

Governors noted and agreed the SIP 2022-23 as presented. Link governors will monitor their areas through their programme of meetings and discussions with SLT.

4. Maths Setting - briefing paper

Governors had received a briefing paper setting out the rationale and the structure of maths teaching. CoHeads noted that concerns have been received from some parents in response to the new mixed ability approach adopted by the maths department. CoHeads reassured governors that the policy is being closely monitored and will be reviewed and changes made if it isn't working as planned.

Governors had also heard parental concerns via the governors' surgery and the Chair feedback on the main issues raised. CoHeads accept that the implementation and communication of the policy change could have been handled much better which would have helped to allay some of the parental concerns. There are learning points for the maths department and the school and these will be addressed.

In response to governor questions, SH explained the evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation that sits behind the rationale for the change and how the school will monitor the impact of the policy.

In response to a question about the views of maths teachers and the delivery of mixed lessons, SH explained that the maths department have processes in place for training and support of staff in delivering the teaching and the Head of Department is closely monitoring implementation in the classroom. The maths department accept the errors in the roll out of the policy but believe firmly in the rationale behind the change.

A governor asked how the students felt about the change and shared feedback they had heard that students were expecting to be in sets in September. CoHeads assured governors that the student voice would be included in the policy review process.

Governors suggested a communication to parents as a way of updating and reassuring them that the policy will be reviewed.

Governors noted their concern in relation to the communication of a major policy change and **agreed** that CoHeads will report back to the FGB following their review. Link governors will also monitor this area through their meetings with SLT partners.

Action: CoHeads to report back to the FGB following their review of the maths setting policy

5. Director of Operations Report (AA)

Governors received a written report providing an update on business and operations across the school. Link governors had met with AA to discuss key areas prior to the FGB meeting. The report covered the following:

5.1 Financial Position – Budget figures to November 2022 were shared and variances were considered. The current position shows a predicted year-end deficit of £294K because of the unfunded teacher pay award from September 2022. Schools are awaiting more information from the DfE on potential funding for this. AA reported that all schools are in a similar position. The Chair commented that other chairs across the borough are pushing this back to Haringey to take up with the DfE at a national level.

5.2 Risk Register - AA shared an updated risk register document with governors. Governors noted the following:

Governance is low risk and should be green not yellow.

School building related risks should be more red.

The document needs more depth on the impact of what would happen at Fortismere rather than in general terms.

ICT related risks including cybersecurity risks need to be expressed more clearly.

Action: Director of Ops to reflect governors' comments in the risk register

5.3 Income Generation – Fundraising and development income is on track. AA shared details of the FundEd database being used to increase income from grants. Crowdfunding for the Place2Be counselling service has raised £31k so far.

5.3.1 Vivify proposal: AA has met with a school hire company (Vivify) to explore the potential benefits of outsourcing the management of school lettings. A proposal document sets out the details including figures for potential increased income. Governors discussed the pros and cons of outsourcing lettings with AA. In response to a governor question, AA confirmed that safeguarding requirements were all in place and compliant.

AA recommends the proposal. Governors accept the recommendation subject to (1) a contract that allows a review after year one and (2) that the school take up references from others that have used Vivify. **Governors agreed the proposal subject to the two points above**

5.4 Building and Compliance - Following works in the summer Haringey carried out an asbestos review and identified some areas that require further work to be carried out during the Christmas holidays. Governors requested an update after the works to ensure that all the required actions have been taken and that monitoring is in place.
Action: Governors to receive an update on asbestos review actions

AA shared a compliance tracker and noted that the school follows the DfE's Good Estate Management principles to ensure that relevant health and safety compliance checks are in place. Haringey had recently carried out a health and safety audit. Link governors to discuss this in their meetings.

5.5 Staffing Update – Governors received an update on staff recruitment since Sept 2022 and noted current vacancies. AA is reviewing agency costs to try to reduce the impact on the budget and analysing current recruitment methods.

KS reported that the school is not always seeing the quality they want at interview and is using trainee teacher schemes to try and find potential early on, this is working well for the school.

5.6 Management Information system (MIS) project – The school's current MIS (CloudSchool) contract ends in August 2023. Governors received costs for three new system providers. The CoHeads reported that SIMS is very widely used but would require some other investment to ensure that all school systems link together.

A governor asked how the project would be managed after the Director of Operations leaves at the end of term. AA outlined the timetable for the project and how external consultants will be used to support the project and the data migration. Governors noted that this is a major project on a tight deadline that requires significant resources. CoHeads are confident that it will be completed on time. Link governors agreed to meet with the CoHeads to prepare some of the groundwork for the project.

Action: ICT/Ops link governors to meet with the CoHeads to discuss the project plan

AA also updated governors on the replacement of electrical cables. The school is working with Haringey as the corporate landlord on this large-scale compliance project.

5.7 Voluntary Fund Accounts – Governors received a copy of the externally audited accounts for the funds held within the journey and voluntary account. There were no issues or risks raised by the auditors. **Governors approved the accounts.**

5.8 Policies for approval

Charging & Remissions policy – this has been reviewed and updated to include asking parents to pay for damage to school property caused by their child's inappropriate behaviour. **Governors approved the policy.**

Lone working policy – this is a new policy for the school. Governors commented that the policy needed to be more specific and more tailored to Fortismere's particular circumstances before approval.

Teacher Pay policy

Disciplinary policy & Practice Notes

Menopause in the workplace policy

These are all Haringey policies and have been through union consultation and are recommended for approval. **Governors approved the above three policies.**

6. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the full governing body meeting held on 17 October 2022 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

6.1 Matters arising from the last meeting

Safeguarding training – A further reminder for all governors to undertake safeguarding training.

Governors are also required to read the *KCSIE 2022 Guidance Part One*. A confirmation statement will be added to GovernorHub.

Action: All governors to confirm on GovernorHub that they have read KCSIE Part One 2022

7. Any other business

7.1 The **CoHeadteachers' performance review meeting** had taken place. A panel of governors had worked with an external School Improvement Partner to review and set targets for the academic year.

7.2 The **Pay committee** had met to agree pay progression recommendations.

7.3. The Chair would like to arrange a date for governor visits to enable all governors to see lessons, assemblies, and other activities in person.

Action: Clerk to arrange a date with the CoHeads

Meeting closed