



## THE GOVERNING BODY OF JOHN BALL SCHOOL

Minutes of a meeting held at the school on **Tuesday 5 March 2013 at 7pm**

### **Present**

Rose Ballantyne, Ian Blight, Angela East, Matthew Fields, Sarah Gilbert, Kate Jenkins, Kathy Moss, Prerna Patel, Michael Roach (Headteacher), Jocelyn Shaw (Chair), Jo Young, and Linda Yue (Vice-Chair) (3 vacancies)

### **Also present**

Julia McCrossen, Deputy Headteacher  
John Odam-Adjei (for AOB)  
Sue Bishop, Clerk

### **1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apoloies for absence were received with consent from Elizabeth Smith.

Governors were reminded that they must declare conflicts and pecuniary interests before items are discussed, and must withdraw from the meeting while the item is under discussion.

### **2. TO AGREE THE BUSINESS FOR THE MEETING**

The order of the agenda, items of urgent business and items to be classified as confidential were agreed as set out on the agenda.

### **3. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

The Headteacher introduced his report which contained information on numbers on roll; pupil attendance; numbers of pupils with SEN; financial information; staffing changes; progress towards the attainment targets for 2012/13; progress towards the seven SIP targets; updates on the subject leaders' action plans; the outcome of the Challenge Partners review of learning and teaching (see minute 5 below); a premises update; and a summary of medical incidents requiring further treatment.

The report also advised that there had been no racist incidents and no major bullying incidents since the last report.

In relation to the budget, it was noted that there would be a slight surplus in 2012/13. A draft budget for 2013/14 had been considered by the Finance and Co-Ordinating Committee and although it would not be possible to continue to provide additional PPA time, it was anticipated that current staffing levels could be sustained.

Governors asked a number of questions about the progress of the SIP. It was noted that as part of the IPC curriculum (target 1), pupils would be video conferencing with a class at an international school in Vietnam when a member of staff from John Ball leaves in September to take up a post there. It was noted that one of the tasks in the subject leader plan for English was to promote a reading for pleasure culture across the school and governors asked how this would be achieved. Several examples were given, such as improvements to the displays in the learning zone, encouraging children to talk about their reading, and providing more resources. It was noted that one of the parents *is drafting a bid for several thousand pounds towards the purchase of books which may be submitted for approval*, and that the books in the library were being systematically classified to enable more to be lent out.

### **4. HEADLINE DATA PICTURE**

The headteacher's report (see minute 3 above) had included details of the changes in how the DfE will calculate the 2012/13 KS2 results and governors noted that reading and writing will now be reported

separately, rather than combined to give a result for English overall. Under the previous system, a low level for writing could be offset by a high level for reading, resulting in, say, a level 4 overall for English. Governors were pleased to note that the most likely outcome (MLO) for pupils achieving KS2 level 4 was 100% in reading, and 98.33% in writing and maths (ie one child may not reach this level). This pupil was being provided with support but was not being pushed beyond the level appropriate for her, and governors supported this approach.

The headteacher circulated a report from the PiXL Club (Partners in Excellence) on a visit carried out by a PiXL Associate on 7.2.13. The report confirmed that the implementation of PiXL principles was having a significant impact on key marginal pupils, and on the professional development of teaching assistants. The headteacher explained that teaching assistants now felt ownership of the progress of year 6 pupils, and the system had also been implemented in year 5 since Christmas. It was noted that the headteacher and deputy headteacher had been invited to become PiXL associates and support other schools.

## **5. FEEDBACK FROM CHALLENGE PARTNERS REVIEW**

A report on the outcome of the Challenge Partners review was included in the headteacher's report (see minute 3). It was noted that the review had been led by a senior Ofsted inspector and the preliminary judgement was very close to being outstanding overall. The final report was expected on 8.3.13. Governors asked what action was being taken to move the two teachers judged as "requiring improvement" and were advised that meetings had been held with them to discuss the way forward and action plans were being developed. Staff would be paired up and would observe each other.

Governors noted how committed the staff had been in preparing for the review and congratulated the school on the very positive comments received and the overall judgements of "outstanding" for learning and teaching, and school improvement strategies, and "good" (or possibly "outstanding") for achievement.

## **6. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

The governing body considered the joint guidance from the NGA/ ASCL/ and NAHT on "What governing bodies should expect from school leaders and what school leaders should expect from governing bodies", and the Ofsted subsidiary guidance on what they are looking for when inspecting the governance of a school, as reported on page 26 and Annexes C and D of the spring term Governors' Information Pack. The Chair explained that all governors needed to be confident about their knowledge of the school, and their ability to demonstrate this to Ofsted if they were involved in an inspection.

Governors discussed how they would be able to confirm, for example, the judgements on the quality of teaching and learning provided to them by the headteacher. They agreed that this would be based on a wide variety of knowledge including the reviews carried out by Challenge Partners and the PiXL visits, by their own involvement in reporting progress on the SIP targets, by their understanding of the quality assurance process and how weak teaching is dealt with, and by their involvement in the recruitment of teachers when comparisons were made of the lessons taught by candidates.

Governors then divided into groups to work through the self-assessment checklist in Annexe C and RAG rate the governing body against each of the points listed. Each group then fed back in a plenary session on those points they had rated as "red". These included:

- are challenging and supporting leadership in equal measure
- understanding how the school makes decisions about teachers' salary progression
- are performing well and not contributing to weaknesses in leadership and management

There was then a discussion on evidence which would demonstrate how the governing body was addressing these areas including:

- the challenge given to the headteacher on data the previous year, and how the headteacher had been held to account for this and also given support
- the rigorous performance management process which is filtered down to all teaching staff
- the discussions at governing body meetings on data
- the discussions which individual governors have with curriculum and area leaders as part of their responsibility for monitoring progress on SIP targets, and how they report back on these to the full governing body

Governors also noted that they had delegated responsibility for overseeing the pay policy, performance management processes etc. to the Finance & Co-ordinating Committee and to the Personnel Committee and that it would be useful to consider how the Committees report back to the full governing body.

**RESOLVED** that the RAG rating exercise be repeated in two terms' time.

#### **7. SIP TARGETS 2013/14 – DRAFT**

See minute 8 below.

#### **8. INSET DAY MAY 2013**

It was noted that a joint INSET day for staff and governors would be held on Friday 24 May 2013 to carry out a review and agree the SIP targets for 2013/14. Governors were asked to advise the headteacher of their availability for the day.

#### **9. PARENT AND STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES**

Governors congratulated the school on the positive feedback from both staff and parents, both of which were better than the previous year. The headteacher reported that a pupil focus group had also been carried out by the SIP, with positive results, and that pupil views would also be obtained through phase group feedback when the new Inclusion Manager takes up her post after Easter.

The analysis of responses indicated that the only area that parents were in disagreement with was whether their child receives appropriate homework for their age, and governors noted the steps being taken to address this. It was also noted that, although 22% of parents said they did not know whether the school dealt effectively with bullying, this was because their child had not experienced bullying, and it was therefore felt that this was a low level issue.

Governors welcomed the several areas where the numbers of staff in agreement had increased, but asked what was being done to address communication which continued to show as an area for improvement. The headteacher explained that support staff were now starting slightly earlier two days a week (with time off *in lieu* given) so that they could spend time with their class teachers and this was already helping to improve communications.

#### **10. GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS**

Governors considered a proposal from the headteacher to change the annual programme of meetings to fit better into the school self-evaluation/ assessment cycle.

**RESOLVED** that

i) from 2013/14 onwards, the second governing body meeting in the autumn term be moved to early January, and that a second meeting be held in the summer term immediately after the Easter holiday; and

ii) a schedule of meetings be submitted to the next meeting for approval.

#### **11. COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND LINK GOVERNORS**

##### **a) Any points for discussion from committees**

- Personnel Committee 5.2.13 – The notes of this meeting were received
- Co-ordinating and Finance Committee 12.2.13 - The notes of this meeting were received.

##### **b) Any points for discussion from working groups**

Governance working group – the group reported as follows:

- Governors' handbook/ policy document – this had been deferred for future discussion
- Size and composition of governing body – options had been considered, but it was felt that any decisions be deferred to enable the new Chair to have an input, and that in the meantime, the parent and staff vacancies continue to be held open pending any decisions on future size
- Committee structure and terms of reference - deferred for future discussion

Succession planning working group – the group reported that a prospective new Chair had been identified who was willing to take on this role.

**RESOLVED** that i) the headteacher advise the Executive Director for Children & Young People of the prospective candidate; and  
ii) the Chair and Clerk liaise to progress the appointment of the candidate to the local authority vacancy on the governing body.

Support staff appraisal policy

The policy is still being negotiated following an issue raised by the trade union, and arising from a misunderstanding that teaching standards would be used to judge support staff. The new policy will enable CPD to be linked directly to the needs of support staff. The working party is continuing to seek an agreement.

Data protection and information security

Angela East and the SBM have attended training and are aware of the issues to be covered in the policy. The headteacher agreed to contact the company that had produced the model social media policy (iTeaching) to ask if they had a model DP policy.

Charging and remission policy

A draft policy had been circulated along with a copy of an email from a parent who had raised some concerns about fund raising, and in particular the circumstances in which pupils would be asked to contribute towards goods, and the use of outside companies. Governors noted that these points had been specifically addressed in the policy.

**RESOLVED** that i) governors send any comments on the policy to the Chair of the working group; and  
ii) the policy be amended as appropriate and resubmitted to the next meeting for approval.

c) **Training, meetings attended, or other activities** – None reported

**12. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING & MATTERS ARISING**

a) **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11.12.12**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11.12.12 be agreed and signed.

b) **Matters Arising (not included elsewhere on the agenda)**

Attendance policy (minute 3) – It was noted that this had been revised to cover children with medical needs.

Staffing structure (minute 6a) – A detailed staffing structure had been circulated showing the senior leadership team, extended management team, subject/ area leaders, and senior midday meals supervisors and admin staff. The roles and responsibilities of key posts were also detailed.

The headteacher explained that phase leadership posts were not affordable at this stage, but phase leadership responsibilities had instead been incorporated into the two assistant headteacher posts.

Governors discussed whether responsibility for health and safety should be moved from deputy headteacher to headteacher level.

**RESOLVED** that the Personnel Committee be requested to consider and agree the level at which responsibility for health and safety should rest.

SFVS (minute 6a) - Kathy Moss reported that the questionnaire had been completed and returned to the local authority. There was plenty of evidence to support the judgements made, and no issues had been identified.

### **13. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was noted that the next governing body will be at 7pm on Tuesday 2 July 2013.

#### **AOB**

##### **Vote of thanks**

The Chair paid tribute to John Odam-Adjei whose term of office as a parent governor had recently come to an end. She thanked him for his support for the governing body and in particular his advice on IT issues, and his input to various working groups.

There were two items of confidential business.

The meeting ended at 10.10pm.

**Chair** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date: 2 July 2013**

*Discussion of the items below is confidential, as are any papers relating to them. The minutes of the confidential part of the meeting are not available to the public.*

**14. CAPITAL/ EXPANSION PLANS**

A plan produced by Baileys was displayed and Ian Blight outlined the options that were being considered. It was noted that the plans would be shared with the staff and the Working Group would meet again on 18.3.13. It was intended to submit a planning application in the summer term, and go out to formal consultation in the autumn, with a view to construction starting in summer 2014. Ian Blight agreed to contact the Blackheath Society to brief them on the proposals.

**15. STAFFING MATTER**

The Chair informed the governing body that, following a hearing by governors, an Unfair Dismissal tribunal hearing would take place in public at the end of the month.

**Chair** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date: 2 July 2013**