

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS OF MOUNT GRACE SCHOOL, held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009

Present	Peter Baker (Head) Lesley Bloomfield Christopher Cardell-Williams Peter Bonner	Colin Daniel (Chair) Vicky Horn Christine James Diane Merrill	Elaine Moore Dave Redington John Taylor Tracey Willetts
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In attendance: Robert Blythe (Clerk)

<p>These minutes remain confidential until approved at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>5. To receive the annual report on Child Protection from Barbara Crawford:</b></p> <p>As the school's Designated Senior Person, Barbara tabled her report and drew attention to the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many governors need a training up-date, as recommended by DfCSF. They are welcome to attend a staff event on 26<sup>th</sup> November at 9:30 lasting 2 hours. Governors also need to know the procedure for allegations made against the staff and/or Headteacher</li> <li>• Of the 5 referrals of emotional neglect, 3 were for drug related incidents</li> <li>• She has attended frequent core group meetings involving professionals that track on-going cases</li> <li>• Strategy meetings often involve the police</li> <li>• The school has its own counselling service provided by one full time and one part time counsellor.</li> <li>• The school can no longer contact social services on a 'what if' basis.</li> </ul> <p>Questions to Barbara covered the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ofsted's role in monitoring safeguarding procedures: A school's grade will be limited by the grade given for safeguarding children. The school has a good track record, including good, regular training. All concerns are reported via Barbara.</li> <li>• The efficiency of CSF (Children, Schools and Families): Generally good. Barbara reports all concerns to CSF and she follows them up.</li> <li>• CRB checks for governors: Yes, all governors are CRB checked, when they take up office and at each 4 year renewal period. The school received 5 stars for its Single Central Record, due largely to the efficiency of Dawn Gamble.</li> </ul> <p>The papers were returned to Barbara who was thanked for her report before leaving.</p>	<p>Governors to attend staff CP training, 26<sup>th</sup> Nov.</p>
<p><b>1. Welcome and to receive nominations for the post of Chair of Governors for the 2009/10 academic year:</b></p> <p>Nominated by Peter Bonner and seconded by Lesley Bloomfield, Colin Daniel was elected as Chair of Governors unopposed.</p>	

<p><b>2. To receive apologies for absence and to note the need to declare any conflicts of interest that arise during the meeting:</b> The Chair opened the meeting by reminding governors of the need to declare conflicts of interest.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Jan Southwell, Meghan Bentley and Leah Lewington-Pearce.</p> <p>Clare Nowak and Fadeke Ayoola were recorded as absent. The clerk will write to both members to clarify their membership.</p>	<p>Clerk to action</p>
<p><b>3. To elect a Vice Chair of Governors:</b> Proposed by Colin Daniel and seconded by Dave Redington, Lesley Bloomfield was elected as vice chair unopposed.</p>	
<p><b>4. To receive notification of Any Other Business</b> One item was raised, namely the need for governors to receive the final School Improvement Plan. The Head agreed to distribute it to governors.</p>	<p>Head to action</p>
<p><b>6. To Approve the Minutes of the Last Meeting (6<sup>th</sup> July, 2009):</b> The minutes were approved without amendment.</p>	
<p><b>7. Matters Arising from those minutes:</b></p> <p><b>Item 5: Governors' Handbook:</b> Lesley and Tracey reported that it was ready apart from needing the new governors' details and the chair of Human Resources committee. They will circulate it after the Nov 9<sup>th</sup> HR meeting.</p> <p><b>Item 5: Governors' Visits:</b> Elaine Moore wished to have her Governor Visit report on English discussed again as there was an important point omitted when it was discussed in her absence.</p> <p><b>Item 7c: Internal Discipline Meetings:</b> The discussion on this matter, perhaps with Barbara Crawford, will be forwarded to the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Item 8: School Uniform:</b> Vicky Horn agreed to remind Meghan and Leah to provide definite proposals on school uniform via Student Voice for the 9<sup>th</sup> November meeting.</p>	<p>GB agenda item</p> <p>Vicky to action</p>
<p><b>8. Governor Business:</b></p> <p><b>i) Governing Body Membership up-date and appointment of Associate Members:</b> Steve Wright has agreed to join as a Partnership Governor, leaving one partnership vacancy, two parent vacancies and one staff governor vacancy, with the school taking action to fill the latter two categories.</p> <p>Associate members were confirmed as follows: Ann Lawrence, Ann Pickford, Phil Freeman and the Head Prefects.</p>	<p>Head to action.</p>

**ii) To review the structure of Committees, committee membership and clerking arrangements:**

Two committees have already met, with Vicky Horn appointed as Chair of Pupil Achievement and two persons appointed for Resources because Premises may well split from Finance.

Shirley Lee will continue to clerk the committees.

The Clerk will send an up-dated membership list round for everyone to check their committee membership.

**iii) Governing Body Appointments:**

Appointments were agreed as follows:

SEN: Diane

Child Protection: Colin

Governor Training: Diane

Safeguarding: Lesley (to liaise with Dawn Gamble and to look out for training)

Governors were reminded that they are welcome to attend a training event on Building Schools for the Future taking place at the school the next evening.

**iv) To up-date on the Register of Pecuniary Interests:**

The clerk received returns from all members present.

**v) Safer Recruitment Training:**

The Head explained that only governors with training in this area can take part in the selection process. With vacancies likely to occur at senior leadership level, we need more governors trained in this area. Dave, Chris, Peter Bonner, Tracey, Diane and Elaine expressed an interest in this training.

**vii) Governor Visits:**

Speaking to her written report, Lesley informed governors of her visit to the Vocational Studies faculty, this time focusing on KS3. The department were overcoming some staffing difficulties partly due to a maternity leave taking place. Business Studies in Years 7, 8 & 9 were being supported by the use of workbooks that were helpful to less experienced teachers. The government funded Special Diplomas scheme was being implemented through our Applied Learning status and is equivalent to three and a half A-levels. The Head would like to discuss this at the next PA Committee meeting. KS4 results were 100% A-C for Social Care and 94% for Business Studies, but less good for ICT. Lesley concluded by saying it was a positive visit.

Governors were reminded that their Visit Reports are to be sent first to the Head so that he can discuss it with the members of staff concerned, before it

Clerk to action.

Jan Southwell to forward Pecuniary Interest form to Shirley Lee

Diane to investigate Safer Recruitment training.

PA Committee Agenda Item

can go for circulation via Shirley Lee.

Governors discussed and agreed that they can send e-mails among themselves on issues that might be discussed at future meetings.

**viii) To review policies:**

The Chair explained that last year was a busy one for renewing policies. He has received a policy review schedule from Shirley Lee and will copy it to Chairs of Committees so that they can include relevant policies in their meetings.

**ix) Reports from Committees that have met:**

**a) Pupil Achievement Committee:**

They have met and discussed:

- Behaviour, with Martin Tate making a presentation. The school's behaviour policy is being reviewed.
  - Exam results, with the Head presenting the Curriculum Response document
  - Teaching observations, via a presentation from Ann Lawrence
- Discussion of the SIP will take place at their next meeting, on 1<sup>st</sup> March, to which all governors are welcome to attend.

**b) Resources Committee:**

The meeting covered:

- 1<sup>st</sup> quarter finances
- H&S policy
- Squash Club lease, where progress has been slow, but the school's ideas regarding traffic calming measures have been received favourably

Their next meeting is 1<sup>st</sup> February.

**c) Human Resources Committee:**

Their next meeting is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> November.

**x) Governors' Expenses**

The Chair explained that governors are entitled to claim expenses, for example to cover travel and child care expenses if the school has a policy scheme. Discussions covered the following points:

- There is a model scheme available
- The money would come from the school's delegated budget
- Having the scheme might encourage someone to join the Governing Body who might not otherwise
- Governors already give up their time

It was agreed that the school would have such a policy, to be agreed via the Resources Committee.

Chair to send Policy Schedule to Chairs of committees.

Resources Committee Agenda Item

**9. To receive the Headteacher's Report on the 2009 Results, Raise on Line and the Curriculum Response Document:**

Referring to the Curriculum Response Document which he presented in considerable detail to the PA Committee, the Head talked governors through the document, using the science section as an example, making the following points:

- The Document demonstrates the school's commitment to learning from exam results to benefit pupils in the future
- Individual governors should look at their own linked faculty in more detail. This should include arranging a focused visit to meet and discuss outcomes with staff
- Each section contained the actual results, the results against predictions, results against CAT scores, and the Residuals (comparisons with students' performance in other subjects)
- P43 has a report from the Head of Learning who is heavily involved in discussions with faculties about their results

Discussing the science A level results, the Head stated that he would defend the situation whereby a student has had the chance to study science and has gained from the course even though he did not pass the exam, rather than exclude students from taking courses if they have not achieved a high enough GCSE grade.

The Head referred to a document confirming the school's published results, whereby the Contextual Value Added from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 for 2009 is 1016. This is well above the national average and shows that the school does indeed add considerable value to the students.

Comments and questions from governors established the following points:

- The school's results received local press coverage
- Comparisons with local schools are not possible because their results are subject to verification
- There are concerns over the outcomes for ICT. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the PA Committee meeting but that it could not wait until March. Consequently, the Head and Chair will arrange a meeting before the end of term and circulate details to all Governors.
- The school does not offer economics among its 28 subjects although some aspects are covered within Business Studies.

Governors to make faculty visits

Head & Chair to arrange extra PA meeting

**10. To up-date on Swine Flu':**

The Head confirmed that pupil attendance has not been affected by Flu this term but it is anticipated that it will. Staff have been offered normal flu' jabs and will be offered Swine Flu jabs when they become available. Only if staffing numbers are drastically affected would the school close.

<p><b>11. Exclusions:</b>  The Head and Chair explained that during the summer, the school was unable to find governors able to sit on an Appeal Hearing for a permanent exclusion. This nearly resulted in the pupil having to be re-instated. It is imperative that we have sufficient governors trained in this area.</p> <p>Consequently, Chris, Diane, Peter Bonner, Tracey, John and Jan (in his absence) expressed an interest in attending training on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2010 at Watford Boys School, which Lesley will co-ordinate.</p>	<p>Governors to attend Exclusion training.</p>
<p><b>12. To discuss any other business:</b>  Elaine's report on English will be discussed further at the next PA committee meeting.</p>	<p>PA Committee Agenda Item</p>
<p><b>13. To confirm the date of the next meeting:</b>  This was confirmed as follows:  <b><u>Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010</u></b> at 6 pm</p> <p>Subsequent meetings are:  29<sup>th</sup> March, 24<sup>th</sup> May and 5<sup>th</sup> July.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8:22 pm.</p>	

Robert Blythe: Clerk to the Governors [rblythe@hotmail.com](mailto:rblythe@hotmail.com) 01727 751694