

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS OF MOUNT GRACE SCHOOL, Held on 19th May 2008

Present	Peter Baker (Head) Lesley Bloomfield Kevin Daley	Colin Daniel (Chair) Vicky Horn Claire Nowak Dave Redington	Ashley Russell John Taylor Judith West Tracey Willetts
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In attendance: Robert Blythe (Clerk)

Prior to the meeting, governors were shown a DVD presentation on Extended Schools Services.	
<p>1. Presentation by Barbara Crawford on i) the Annual Report on Safeguarding and ii) Report about Taking Students' Views into Account.</p> <p>At the last minute, Barbara was called away and so this item will be carried over to the next meeting. However, her report on Safeguarding was tabled at the meeting.</p>	GB Agenda item.
<p>2. Welcome and Declaration of Any Conflicts of Interest:</p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting at 6:07pm. New governors Vicky Horn (English teacher) and Ashley Russell (Head of Maths) were welcomed and introduced.</p> <p>The Chair informed governors that Russell Ramshaw has resigned as he has moved from the area. He also circulated a card from Barbara Pilch thanking governors for their farewell card and gift.</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were declared.</p>	
<p>3 To consider and consent to absence:</p> <p>Apologies were received from Elaine Moore, Peter Bonner and Christine James to whom consent for absence was granted. Christine James is the new non-teaching staff member. She is an Extended Schools Co-Ordinator.</p>	
<p>4. To receive notification of Any Other Business</p> <p>The Head and the Chair each raised an item to be taken later.</p>	
<p>5. To receive a presentation from the Head on Extended Schools:</p> <p>The Head tabled the latest edition of Amazing Grace, pointing out that the final 4 pages feature Extended Schools items and information. At the next meeting, Christine James will make a full presentation to governors.</p>	GB Agenda Item
<p>6 & 7. To Approve the Minutes of the Last Meeting (4th February 2008) and Matters Arising from them:</p> <p>The minutes were approved without amendment.</p> <p>Matters Arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 9: Admission Arrangements 2010/11: The working party has not yet met. The next step is to hold a meeting with the LA to consider the 	

<p>needs to turn to agency staff who do not often manage the students as successfully.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the catering has improved in recent weeks, it was agreed that there is further room for improvement and needs to be monitored closely. • The Head finished by inviting any feedback on the report format by e-mail from governors. If acceptable, he will look for input from each of the members of the Senior Leadership Team on an annual basis. 	
<p>9. To Approve the 2008/9 School Budget: Speaking to the proposed budget previously circulated, Judith West explained that the Resources Committee have gone through the information in considerable detail. They have produced a balanced budget whereby the predicted overspend of £113,000 is equivalent to the actual carry forward from 2007/8. The increase in pupil numbers will be reflected in next year's budget.</p> <p>The Proposed Budget was approved.</p> <p>The Governors recorded their thanks to Ann Pickford and the finance team for their good work including the clarity of information produced. Thanks were also recorded to Judith West and the Resources Committee.</p>	<p>Budget Approved.</p>
<p>10. To Discuss School Uniform: The Head informed governors that the LA has withdrawn the uniform grant of about £80 for students from families in financial difficulties. Although he has protested, they are unlikely to re-instate it and this has resulted in him reviewing the cost and the way in which uniform is supplied. The current supplier is Lee Joy and, for example, their prices for a boy's black blazer is £35 compared with £19 from a leading high street retailer.</p> <p>Discussions established the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniform includes sports kit, some items of which get little use from some students. Particular mention was made of the tracksuit, although it was recognised that it looks very good when teams represent the school. • Our uniform is well regarded and we do not want to reduce the standard of appearance that it creates • There is likely to be a demand for selling nearly new/second hand uniform • Perhaps the number of 'branded' items could be reduced so that parents can buy more items from a range of shops • Giving parents the chance to buy uniform on line would be beneficial to many • A different supplier could be sought • The overriding aim is to reduce the cost without compromising appearance. <p>It was agreed that the Human Resources committee will take this forward.</p>	<p>Human Resources Agenda Item</p>

<p>The Head then outlined the difficulties distinguishing between black shoes and black trainers now that many top sports trainer brands produce black 'shoes.' He suggested that the uniform guidelines be adjusted such that boys may only wear footwear that is entirely black, has no logos and must be a change of shoe from that which is worn for PE. This would be clear and therefore enforceable.</p> <p>After some debate, this was agreed.</p> <p>NB: At this point, Clare Nowak left the meeting.</p>	<p>Change to Uniform guidelines agreed.</p>
<p>11. Governors' Business: To receive reports from: i) Pupil Achievement Committee: Speaking to the minutes tabled at the meeting, the Chair drew governors' attention to the committees discussion on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year Group reviews • Homework • Ratification of the Attendance Policy and Behaviour Policy <p>Changes to the membership of the committee meant that there were some gaps for 'Linked Governors.' They were filled as follows: Business: Lesley Bloomfield PE: Tracey Willetts Humanities: Kevin Daley</p> <p>ii) Resources Committee: Judith West informed governors that they have met twice, on the 17th April to look at the third quarter/year end and on 15th May to look at the Budget and the Five-Year Plan.</p> <p>She drew governors' attention to the section in the minutes on the Squash Club lease. The Club has 14 years of a 50 year lease left to run. The school receives a small income but has the use of its facilities for squash, badminton and dance. The school has concerns to do with security and access.</p> <p>After some debate, it was agreed that the Resources Committee will negotiate the terms of a new lease with the Squash Club, but that any other governors are welcome to join the committee for these discussions. The aims will be to improve site security, continued use of the facilities and an increase in revenue. No date for these negotiations has been set.</p> <p>NB: This was the item which the Chair wished to raise under AOB.</p> <p>iii) Human Resources: The Committee has not met but will do so on 9th June.</p> <p>iv) Ratification of policies: As agreed at the last meeting, all the policies ratified in committee have</p>	<p>Resources Committee to negotiate new lease.</p>

been sent to the Clerk to enable the Chair to sign them so that a signed copy can be kept in school as part of the Governors' Public Record file. The Chair reminded governors that whenever they agree a policy, a copy should be sent to the Clerk (via Shirley Lee if they wish) Similarly, the Clerk should be sent each set of committee minutes by e-mail.

v) Governor Training:

The Chair reminded governors that are invited to attend training at the school on Wednesday 21st May at 7:30pm on 'Being a Critical Friend.'

He has also arranged for School Governance to run an event in September for students on how they can present their 'Voice' to governors. This evening's meeting contained two items in particular (uniform and catering) where the students' views are of great importance.

12. Work-Life Balance in relation to Governor meetings:

The Chair reminded governors that whenever the date and time of a meeting is agreed, consideration should be given to the work-life balance of staff and governors. For example, PA committee meetings are scheduled to end after one hour. Resources committee meetings vary the start time although it was noted that their meetings are often too long because additional agenda items are inserted that are beyond their control.

It is also important that governors come to meetings having read any documents circulated in advance and that papers are circulated in advance of meetings.

13 To discuss any other urgent business:

- The Head read out a letter from the Department for Children, Schools and Families in which the school was congratulated for being identified as a High Performing School. This means it can apply for a second specialist status and will receive additional funding. Staff will be informed of this tomorrow. Governors congratulated the Head and staff for this achievement.
- John Taylor presented a best-selling book to the school, written and signed by the authoress, a former pupil of Mount Grace. It was agreed that John should write a small article on this for Amazing Grace and offered to write on a regular basis about school life 50 years ago.
- John Taylor requested that Amazing Grace should be e-mailed to former pupils via the database which he produced. The Head said that the school was looking to do this.

13. To confirm the date of the next meeting:

This was confirmed as follows:
 Monday 7th July 2008 at 6pm
 The meeting closed at 8:12 pm.