

The Court School

Full Governing Body Meeting - Minutes

31st January 2024

Date:	Wednesday 31st January, 2024
Venue:	The Court School
Present:	Cllr, Garry Hunt (Chair), LA Governor Amy Griffiths (AG) (Vice Chair), Parent Governor Cllr. Jon Shimmin (JS), LA Governor Naveed Chaudhry (NC), LA governor Ceri Gibbon (CG), Community Governor Chloe McBratney (CM), Community Governor Emma Powell (EP), Parent Governor Glynis Webb (GW), Staff governor Jamyn Beesley (Headteacher) *parent governor vacancy
Not in attendance:	Sarah Jenkins (SJ), Teacher governor - due to attend by Teams, but tech issues Christine Murrell, Parent Governor - due to attend by Teams but tech issues
Also present:	Gethin Howells (GH), Improvement Partner Ross Fitzpatrick (RF), DHT, Observer
Apologies	Denise Sargent (DS), Community Governor

Ref:	Item	Owner
1.	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
1.1	Chair welcomed governors to the meeting, also welcoming Gethin Howells Improvement Partner and Ross Fitzpatrick DHT.	
1.2	Chair invited introductions from governors and GH.	
1.3	Apologies received from DS who had a family engagement to attend.	
1.4	Headteacher tried to dial SJ into the meeting remotely but was unable to due to technical difficulties. New parent governor was also unable to join remotely	
2.	<u>Declaration of interest on items on the agenda</u>	
2.1	Headteacher declared his interest in item 16 on the agenda.	
3.	<u>Approval of minutes of previous meeting</u>	
3.1	<u>Accuracy</u>	

J. H. 7.6.24

3.2	Page 4- item 7.7 replace has with "had"	
3.3	Page 5 - item 8.3 "the school is working closely"	
3.4	Page 5 - item 9.2 "Angela all the best".	
3.5	Governors agreed minutes as an accurate copy.	
4.	<u>Matters arising</u>	
4.1	Item 10 – CB agreed she would share with SJ at the next meeting, the template for healthy eating questionnaires.	
5.	<u>Review of governing body membership and terms of office</u>	
5.1	Clerk informed governors that following Sally Deverson's resignation as parent governor in December 2023, there were two parent governor vacancies on the governing body.	
5.2	Clerk advised that following the election of Christine Murrell parent governor, there is still one vacancy.	
5.3	Headteacher advised that the parent governor process had taken place three times but only one parent governor had been elected.	
5.4	Headteacher asked governors if they knew of anyone with children of primary school age who might be interested in joining the Court School Governing Body. Headteacher asked governors to inform him or the Clerk if so.	
5.5	A governor asked if there is a requirement for the prospective parent governor to live in the same area as school. CB advised that they would just need to have a child in a Cardiff school.	
5.6	Action: Headteacher would like governors to inform him or Clerk of any parents with primary school age children who may be interested in joining the governing body.	ALL
6.	<u>Governor training and development including compliance</u>	
6.1	Clerk confirmed that CM is booked onto mandatory training to be completed next month and that the new parent governor will also need to complete mandatory governor Induction Training and Data Training.	
6.2	Clerk advised that the new parent governor will be required to undertake Safeguarding training level 1 together with NC who had been unable to attend today's training with RF, as he was attending the Finance Sub Committee.	
6.3	Chair queried his compliance with safeguarding training. Clerk will follow this up with governor services.	
6.4	Action - Ross to provide safeguarding level 1 training to new parent governor and NC before the next FGB meeting.	RF
6.5		

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	Action - Clerk to follow up GH mandatory safeguarding training with governor services.	PC
7.	<u>Headteachers Report</u>	
7.1	Headteacher report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting taking place by email.	
7.2	Headteacher provided a detailed overview of the Headteacher Report.	
7.3	Headteacher advised governors that he and Chair have a meeting with the Director of Education, Mel Godfrey, and Head of Inclusion, Jennie Hughes, to discuss the budget.	
7.4	Headteacher stated that he is very grateful for the continued support of staff.	
7.5	Headteacher explained that there had been three exclusions the day prior, 30th January 2024 and that a line had been crossed in terms of violence against staff.	
7.6	NC asked if incidents are recorded? Headteacher informed governors that all incidents are recorded on online system Behaviourwatch.	
7.7	NC asked what will staff do differently next time in this situation. Headteacher explained to governors that staff always reflect post incident, and that they always think about the composition of staff, the topic that visitors are delivering, when there are visitors to school. The headteacher explained that on reflection there were two members of staff who were out who may have supported. The Headteacher advised that what they do in these situations will depend on the individual pupil and situation	
7.8	Headteacher advised that the school has not had any psychology students this year, but there are two who will work with the school next year and another coming in the next couple of months.	
7.9	GW asked whether psychology students will have an effect on supply staff. Headteacher advised that it will and that having a student can save potentially £30k over the year.	
7.10	Headteacher advised that he has agreed to attend an inspection day with Estyn on March 13 th and that the school will receive backfill in terms of pay for this. Chair advised that this date will clash with the next FGB meeting. Headteacher and Chair to discuss the date outside of this meeting.	
7.11	ACTION: Headteacher and Chair to discuss next FGB meeting date.	JB/GH
7.12	Headteacher invited governors to attend a meeting to discuss pupil progress and a RAG rating exercise. AG agreed to attend and date is TBC	
7.13	ACTION: Headteacher to confirm date of pupil progress meeting with AG to confirm attendance.	JB/AG
7.14	Headteacher noted that the statistics around behaviour and exclusion require updating and that there have been 11 days exclusion.	
7.15	Headteacher advised governors that attendance is improving overall noting that whole school attendance for the term was 78.14% and that attendance	

J. W.

<p>7.16</p> <p>7.17</p> <p>7.18</p> <p>7.19</p> <p>7.20</p>	<p>for pupils who attended full time was 91%. Headteacher informed governors that attendance for pupils who were supported with a PSP was 44.19% but that the disaggregated figure for pupils who were supported with a PSP was 82.79%.</p> <p>EP informed governors that she had attended training last week and that Adoption UK (?) would be really interested in engaging with schools with attendance problems. Adoption UK want to know about school strategies where they have CLA or adopted pupils. EP advised that they would be keen to engage with the Headteacher. Headteacher welcomed engagement explaining that attendance is a complex problem, but that The Court creates an environment where learners want to be.</p> <p>Headteacher drew governors' attention to the actions that have been undertaken since the last FGB meeting on the SIP which are identified in italics, and invited questions from governors.</p> <p>AG expressed interest in supporting with the recruitment process for Teaching Assistants.</p> <p>NC asked if there is anything that can be done to improve the environment of the current site. Headteacher advised that he is supposed to have a monthly check in with LA on how they can support the school in the current Category D end-of-life building site, in order to ensure that they can remain in the building until the end of tenure. Headteacher advised that unfortunately these meetings have not taken place.</p> <p>NC asked if an agenda can be put forward to the LA to expedite the new building? Headteacher advised that the Chair is taking things forward from a Finance perspective, and that JS is taking things forward from a Health and Safety perspective and also gathering the support of the Health and Safety officer, though acknowledged that visits can be difficult to coordinate, as well as meeting with Director and Head of Inclusion on 22nd February.</p>	
<p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>8.4</p> <p>8.5</p>	<p><u>Committee reports</u></p> <p><u>Performance Management Committee</u></p> <p>GH gave a detailed overview of the context behind the Headteacher Performance Management process explaining that it is a statutory process that sits with the governing body.</p> <p>GH explained that the Headteacher is set performance management objectives in line with School Improvement Priorities. These were:</p> <p><u>Performance Management Objective 1 -</u> Developing leadership structure, effective coaching and mentoring and clarifying roles and responsibilities,</p> <p>GH explained that as the school is developing into two sites, the Headteacher needs to develop the leadership structure and clarity of roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>GH informed governors that during the performance management meeting, the Headteacher showed that he was clear on the targets set and provided evidence to demonstrate how each objective was met. <u>Performance</u></p>	

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	<p><u>Management Target 1 – Leadership and Management</u>. GH continued to explain that professional learning had been put in place and that the Headteacher had carried out work around clarifying roles and responsibilities which meant that there has been no impact on the running of school as the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have been able to pick up in the additional work in the absence of Caroline Joy (2nd DHT). GH advised governors that the panel felt that this objective had been <u>fully met</u>.</p>	
8.6	<p><u>Performance Management Target 2 - Pupil progress</u></p> <p>GH explained to governors that this target is in relation to the effective assessment arrangements for pupils. GH informed governors that the Headteacher was able to provide evidence of how he has kept the governing body informed of developments, tweaking of the curriculum offer at The Court, the development of immersion weeks, the development of AOLE leads which is a strong focus in the school development plan, the development of assessment arrangements and collaborating with other schools. GH advised governors that the panel felt that this objective had been <u>fully met</u>.</p>	
8.7	<p><u>Performance Management Target 3 - Development of the school</u></p> <p>GH informed governors that the Headteacher had worked with the LA and wider stakeholders to develop leadership and develop values into the new build, and that the governing body had allowed the Headteacher to attend planning meetings on their behalf. GH concluded that what has come back from the LA is a building that they will be very proud of and which will improve the environment. GH was clear that the panel felt that this objective had been <u>fully met</u>.</p>	
8.9	<p>NC asked GH if there are any upcoming challenges for the Headteacher. GH explained that the assessment of the curriculum is a challenge because the Welsh Government has created a curriculum model but not informed schools on how to assess progress. GH explained that there are progress measures built into the Curriculum for Wales but there is a piece of work to be done here. GH further explained that pupils at The Court school sit between two progression models; some will be below for some elements of the curriculum and some higher up so that piece is a challenge, but is already being done through collaboration within the sector.</p>	
8.10	<p>NC commented that he observed commitment and consistency on a recent visit to the school and that it is a very difficult situation especially with the building environment. NC saw true dedication from the Headteacher and staff and commented that they are amazing.</p>	
8.11	<p>JS explained to governors that one concern he had was ensuring training for the senior leadership team that will operate across two future school sites as the Headteacher will be on one site at any one time. JS went on to say that recently, when the Headteacher took a leave of absence due to sickness, the ELT was able to step in and this is because of the training and additional responsibilities that the Headteacher has put in place for them.</p>	

8.12	GH was clear that each of the three performance management targets had been met and that the Headteacher had proposed three more targets which the Performance Management Panel had agreed were appropriate. GH advised governors that they are linked to what is needed and the SIP.	
8.13	<u>Performance Management Target 1</u> - Create coaching and mentoring culture	
8.14	<u>Performance Management Target 2</u> - Development of reading	
8.15	<u>Performance Management Target 3</u> - Retaining and developing the middle leaders	
8.16	<u>Finance Committee</u> Chair provided an update following the finance subcommittee this afternoon. Chair reminded governors that a deficit budget had been agreed in April 2023 and that the current deficit is £77k	
8.17	Chair informed governors that he and the Headteacher will be meeting with the Director of Education, Mel Godfrey and Head of Inclusion, Jennie Hughes, on 22 nd February 2024.	
8.19	Chair assured governors that the finance officer had assured him that there is no concept of the council considering the deficit position to be mis management but that it is the position that many other schools are also in and that he is happy with the decisions made by the school.	
8.20	Chair advised governors that he had made it clear to the finance officer that the school would continue to retain the levels of Teaching Assistants at the school and that was accepted by the LA.	
8.21	Chair explained that the new budget would be announced soon, and that there was likely to be a deficit budget, more than already,	
8.22	GW asked whether supply staff could be employed via Cardiff Works rather than commercial employment agencies. Headteacher explained that they could, but that Cardiff Works do not have anyone suitable, and that it would be a protracted system to ask agency staff to change agencies to Cardiff Works.	
8.23	<u>Reflections on governor open day</u> AG observed that it was difficult to get the pupils from the Pry-Copyn class to engage in the science experiment although one pupil wanted to engage, he didn't have enough praise for being calm and wanting to engage, because another child was taking up staff. AG informed governors that there were four pupils and four members of staff in the class. AG had observed that the class was very well managed. Headteacher advised governors that the class that AG observed is one with significant emotional need and that the level of need in the class is very significant. Headteacher continued that at present the class is staffed with a teacher and 4 teaching assistants supporting in the class (very high level of support required). Headteacher explained that the infrastructure they have at this end of the school is really poor compared to the bottom end of the school as the area is not enclosed so when the children are dysregulated, they can go to different areas of the school building.	

8.24	Chair advised that he had observed transport duty and the arrival of learners at the start of the day. Chair remarked that there was a welcoming environment, with staff moving towards youngsters and immediately engaging with them. Chair joined SJ's class and spoke to most youngsters.	JS
8.25	Chair was impressed with the quality of leadership and management of the class that SJ showed, how she worked with the TAs and how they engaged with her. Chair observed that SJ knew exactly what was going on in the classroom and that it was particularly good how she kept the interest of each learner and was aware of each learners' need. Chair commented that he wouldn't have been surprised if it was a mainstream class as it was managed so well. Headteacher informed Chair that the class he observed was a very high tariff class. Chair concluded by informing governors that it didn't seem like teaching was taking place, although it was, that but there was seamless movement from playing and teaching, excellently controlled and manipulated.	
8.26	<u>Health and safety Committee</u> JS advised governors that following the last governing body meeting, the Local Authority had put forward a date to meet but which was unfortunately, subsequently postponed by the LA. JS advised that he will follow this up.	
8.27	JS advised that the structurally sound wall that doesn't look safe and needs work is something that Richard Portas is taking forward.	
8.28	JS advised that there is a fence post on the boundary perimeter that needs replacing. Headteacher advised that this has been reported through the One Front Door system and explained to governors that boundaries and security is something that Estyn will look at. JS will follow this up with the LA	
8.29	ACTION: JS to contact LA to follow up on the meeting that was postponed and follow up on the replacement of the fence post.	
8.30	Headteacher provided an update on the school heating advising that they had to close the school for a day as the heating broke down. Headteacher explained that the school uses temporary boilers that the LA are required to maintain.	
8.31	Headteacher advised that. Sonic alarms came out to change the timing and add a maglock at the bottom of one of the doors on the back of the building, to make it more efficient.	
9.	<u>Update on CLA</u>	
9.1	RF shared data sheet with governors and explained that the school uses a piece of software called Taith 360 which is a tracking system to track data on behaviour, wellbeing and attendance.	
9.2	RF provided a detailed overview of the data that the system captures.	
9.3	A governor asked how this data is generated. RF explained that staff update data fortnightly during PPA time and gather data from pupil voice.	
9.4	Ross invited comments from governors.	
9.5	There were no questions from governors.	

10.	<u>Child protection/safeguarding</u>	
10.1	Headteacher informed governors that he had shared the schools Estyn Safeguarding evaluation with the Chair and EP (safeguarding governor) and that they will have a meeting to look at it.	
11.	<u>Update on healthy eating and drinking</u>	
11.1	SJ was not able to join the meeting remotely to give an update on healthy eating and drinking, due to technical issues. Governors agreed to add this to the next FGB agenda.	
12.	<u>Policies</u>	
12.1	Governors approved the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data protection • Educational visits • E-Safety • Pay 	
12.2	Headteacher advised that the school prospectus had been updated for this academic year.	
12.3	AG asked if there was a child friendly version of the prospectus. Headteacher advised that there isn't but it is something that can be taken forward. Action: Headteacher to create a child friendly version of the school prospectus.	JB
12.4	Headteacher advised that the Education Visits policy is a new policy based on LA policy which has been amended slightly for the school's purposes.	
13.	<u>AOB</u>	
13.1	JS provided an update to governors on the Neurodiversity Strategy that he is involved with, advising that the group is working with the council and has arranged an event in March which will include speakers and charities. JS asked if the Headteacher would attend as Chair of the Cardiff Special Schools group.	
14.	<u>Correspondence</u>	
14.1	None	
15.	<u>Confidential</u>	
15.1		

	<u>Headteacher pay review</u> Items 15.2 - 15. 4 discussed under confidential Headteacher left the room.	
16.	<u>Date of next meeting.</u>	
16.1	13 th March 2024 – Date TBC due to JB attending Estyn inspection and decision circulated to governors.	



