

**Minutes**  
**Meeting of the Governing Body of**  
**ARCHIBALD FIRST SCHOOL**  
**Held on Monday 11 March 2013**

**Present:**

Dr John Davison (Chair)  
Ms Annabel Cornish, Mr Peter Crabtree, Mr John Hulme, Mrs Vicki Jefferson,  
Mr Richard Johnston, Mrs Sarah Lee, Mr Mark Moss (Associate),  
Mrs Rebecca Turner, Mrs Angela Ward (Associate)

**Quorum:**

Governors in post = 11: Quorum = 6: Governors in attendance = 8

**The meeting was quorate.**

**In Attendance:**

Mrs Catherine Parkin - Governor Services

The meeting opened at 5.35pm.

**2.1 Welcome and apologies for absence**

Dr Davison welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were **accepted** from Mrs Julia Bayes, Ms Katherine Denham and Mrs Sarah Graham.

**2.2 Declaration of Interests**

Governors were invited to declare any business interests in relation to any of the meeting's agenda items; no interests were declared.

**2.3 Identification of urgent items not on the agenda**

Mrs Bayes had circulated copies of her Head teacher's report to Governors; it had not been included as an item on the agenda. In her absence, Governors **agreed** to forward any questions to Mrs Bayes. The report would be dealt with under item 2.9.

The Ofsted School Data Dashboard had been circulated; it would be dealt with under item 2.16.

**2.4 Appointments / membership update**

Governors **agreed** to defer the election process for the Parent Governor vacancy until the autumn term; the Governing Body membership would be reviewed at the summer term meeting.

**Action: Governor Services**

It was noted that Miss Lee had been elected as the non-teaching Staff Governor during the autumn term. Angela Ward was no longer eligible to be a parent governor. She attended as an associate deputising for Sarah Graham as teaching staff governor.

**Action: JD to clarify with Sarah Graham whether she wished to remain as staff governor or remit role to another staff member.**

## **2.5 Draft minutes of previous Governing Body meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2012 were **agreed** as a true record of the meeting subject to the following amendments:

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#### **Item 1.5 Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson**

Mr Hulme and Mr Johnston had agreed to 'shadow' Dr Davison during the coming year.

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#### **Item 1.6.3 Committee Membership, Remits and Responsibilities**

##### **Attendance and Welfare Panel (Working Group)**

Mrs Jefferson stated that she had not been part of the membership of the group, however, she **agreed** to remain as a member. Mrs Bayes would be advised to include Mrs Jefferson in the meeting date communication for the panel.

**Action: Mrs Bayes**

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#### **Item 1.11 Head teacher's Report**

##### **Staff**

Miss Kelly Exley's name would be corrected in the minutes; it was noted that she had since got married and was now Mrs Kelly Nelson.

## **2.6 Matters arising from the above minutes**

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#### **Item 1.5 Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson**

Dr Davison would discuss leadership planning with Mr Hulme and Mr Johnston.

**Action: Dr Davison / Mr Hulme / Mr Johnston**

#### **1.6.1 Governing Body Handbook**

Ms Cornish would forward the Governing Body Handbook to Dr Davison.

**Action: Ms Cornish**

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#### **Item 3.8 Head teacher's Report**

##### **Safeguarding**

It was noted that Mrs Jefferson required a CRB.

**Action: Mrs Jefferson / Governor Services**

Ms Cornish and Mrs Jefferson would complete the Safeguarding training and bring copies of their certificates to School; Governor Services would forward details of the Governor Services training sessions. Dr Davison and Dr Moss had completed the training at Brunton First School.

**Action: Ms Cornish / Mrs Jefferson / Governor Services**

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#### **Item 1.15 Policy Review**

Mrs Jefferson advised Governors that she had reviewed the Complaints and Compliments Policy and had forwarded it to Mrs Bayes earlier that day. A discussion took place about Parent View; Mrs Jefferson would amend the Policy to include compliments at the beginning then she would circulate it to all Governors.

**Action: Mrs Jefferson**

Governors **ratified** the Equality and Diversity Policy that had been circulated by Mrs Bayes on 16 October 2012, and agreed at the Leadership Support Group.

## **2.7 SEF update / review**

It was noted that Governors had received their passwords at the last Teaching and Learning Group to access a read only copy of the SEF. The Group would review the sections of the SEF and provide an update at full Governing Body meetings. Governors **agreed** that all Governors should have access to the site; Mrs Ward would discuss access with Mrs Bayes. An email from Evalusaur providing login details would be sent to governors up to the maximum the system would allow.

**Action: Mrs Bayes and Mrs Ward**

## **2.8 School Development Plan update**

Governors **agreed** to defer this item to the summer meeting to be able to link it with the SEF. Mrs Bayes would circulate the document in advance of the meeting.

**Action: Mrs Bayes**

Dr Davison offered Governors the opportunity to ask questions; no issues were raised.

## **2.9 Reports**

### **Head teacher's Report**

Copies of the report had been circulated. In the absence of Mrs Bayes, Mrs Turner presented the following highlights:

### **Ofsted**

It was noted that an Ofsted inspection was expected during summer 2014. Mrs Bayes and Mrs Turner would meet regularly to discuss progress. The governing body agreed that an earlier invitation to inspect the school was not indicated in the context of current staffing shortages at SMT level.

### **Attendance**

Overall attendance had reduced to 95% during the spring term. It was suggested that illness and pupils leaving the school without providing notification had impacted on the figures. A discussion took place about the period of time before children could be removed from the roll; it was suggested that the school request advance written confirmation of the duration of any period of time away from school.

### **Pupil Numbers**

It was noted that the school was at capacity. Mrs Turner had analysed the data for Nursery and Reception before Christmas and the results were positive going forward.

### **Achievement to Date**

There had been some anomalies in Year 2 and Year 4 that had been picked up in planning and in the ongoing progress meetings. The end of term data would provide an update on progress; it was unknown if the higher than expected absence rate would have impacted on achievement. It was noted that staff had provision maps in

place and would identify any individual children who were not making expected progress.

Governors were offered the opportunity to ask questions; the following points were addressed:

- Governors should be aware of how Pupil Premium funding was allocated. It was noted that Mrs Bayes had added a Pupil Premium page to the website.
- A discussion took place about the deferred Ofsted inspection and the possibility of requesting an earlier inspection. It was suggested that staff would be working towards the expected inspection during summer 2014 and would appreciate the time to expand their current methods and practice. Governors may review the position at another time.

It was noted that Dr Davison had discussed the report format with Mrs Bayes; a synopsis of actions had been included. Governors were asked to forward any feedback to Mrs Bayes.

### **Leadership support, 7 November 2012**

The minutes of the meeting had been circulated by Mrs Bayes; Ms Cornish would forward a copy to Governors.

**Action: Ms Cornish**

Governors had reviewed the following items at the meeting:

- Policies and procedures
- Performance Management Review
- Uniform
- Website management
- Business Continuity Plan
- Attendance Welfare Group

It was noted that the Head teacher's Performance Management Review had taken place in December 2012.

Governors were advised that a further meeting had not taken place; the next meeting was scheduled for 18 March 2013 and the date had been circulated. Ms Cornish asked Governors to forward any agenda items to her. Mrs Turner's apologies were noted.

### **Teaching and learning, 6 February 2013**

The minutes of the meeting had been circulated; the following points were highlighted:

The group had discussed accessing Year 6 data from the middle schools; the data had been received from Junior High and Central, but not from GEMS.

There was mixed feedback from the Split Week that had taken place in October 2012, where the boys had been taught separately from the girls. Staff had been encouraged to review their methods and informal staff feedback indicated that they would gauge more of the children's responses in future. Ongoing thinking about different learning styles within each class was taking place and had led to a more

creative curriculum with the addition of a 'PLOD's board' (Possible Lines of Discovery) to each classroom that would develop during the term with the children's questions and ideas. The school also had curriculum teams instead of co-ordinators to allow staff to share workloads.

### **Governor Curriculum Monitoring – Mathematics, 17 January 2013**

Dr Davison had circulated his visit report. It was noted that he had met with Miss Kym Scott, the curriculum coordinator, before completing a curriculum walk where he had visited all classes.

The visit had been the first monitoring session to take place. The format would be discussed at the next Leadership Support Group meeting as there had been a lot of information to take on board along with focusing on the key questions and speaking to the children. It was suggested that more than one governor be involved in each visit.

Dr Davison would share his report with Miss Scott then it would be shared with staff. Early feedback had indicated that the visit had gone well and the objectives had been achieved.

A formal visit would take place once during a term and the focus would be changed according to the areas identified for improvement. The next area would be decided for the summer term.

**Action: Leadership Support Group Meeting to be arranged to seek feedback from staff on perspective on the new process.**

### **2.10 Finance update / Budget preparation / approval**

Governors were advised that the Finance / General Purposes meeting had been postponed this week. The next meeting would take place on 19 March. Miss Lee gave her apologies for the meeting; she would be added to the email circulation group.

**Action: Ms Denham**

### **2.11 Health and Safety issues**

It was noted that the Legionella testing had been carried out; the issues that had been identified would be addressed.

Mr Johnston would arrange a date to complete the annual Health and Safety visit.

**Action: Mr Johnston**

### **2.12 Gosforth Working Together Group**

A variety of Trust documents had been circulated. Dr Davison advised Governors that the original Gosforth cluster had formed to review resources and this had developed into looking into a more formal arrangement. The following options were outlined:

- Remain as an LA maintained community school
- Form an Academy with the other schools in the Gosforth Pyramid
- Acquire Trust status
- Become a Cooperative Trust school

A discussion took place about the options and a number of queries and concerns were raised over the financial benefits and sharing of resources, timescales, political elements of the options available and the LA's involvement.

The following points were noted:

- Group meetings focusing on structure and vision were taking place with Ray Steele and Mike Quincy, LA representatives; support would be available from the LA for schools who decided to pursue Trust status.
- A number of schools across Newcastle and North Tyneside were joining together to form Trust partnerships.
- The completed process could take four months to one year to complete and the suggested implementation date was September 2014.
- All of the 11 schools in the cluster had shown interest in pursuing the discussion regarding Trust status.
- Governors were advised that a Trust did not have to include local geographic neighbours.
- It was noted that the Governing Body had previously pursued the academisation of the school and had decided not to go ahead, in the interests of the school. Governors would be able to withdraw from the process until late in the process and it would be possible to withdraw from the Trust but not back to a community school.

Governors **agreed** for Dr Davison to write to John Collings, Executive Director of Children's Services, to indicate the Governing Body's intention to consult on the Trust status proposals. It was noted that the letter did not indicate a decision had been made to commit to Trust status.

**Action: Dr Davison**

Governors **agreed** to invite Ray Steele to speak to the Governing Body during the first half of the summer term to give Governors the opportunity to find out more information and to ask questions. Ms Cornish would circulate some available dates and further information regarding the memorandum, timescales and DfE guidelines, in advance of the meeting with Mr Steele.

**Action: Mrs Bayes / Mrs Turner / Ms Cornish**

It was noted that the Governing Body would need to agree to sign up to the Trust status discussions once the Vision Statement and Memorandum of Understanding had been finalised; an extraordinary meeting may need to be arranged. Each school involved in the process would communicate the same information to their stakeholders as part of the consultation process.

*At this point Mr. Crabtree left the meeting (7.20pm).*

## **2.13 Governor Mark**

Dr Davison had circulated the web link to Governor Mark, an independent association that provided external evaluation of the quality of governance in a school. Following a query, it was noted that the process to obtain accreditation would take six months and would involve providing evidence of Governors' activity as well as identifying any areas for improvement. It was suggested that the Governor visit

process would need to be developed.

Governors **agreed** to form a task and finish group to determine what evidence would be needed and to gather the information. The membership of the group would include Mrs Jefferson, Mrs Turner (on her return after maternity leave on 1 July), Mrs Ward and possibly Mr Crabtree. Mrs Jefferson would coordinate the group and provide an update at the next Governing Body meeting.

**Action: Mrs Jefferson**

## **2.14 Dates and times of future Governing Body and Committee meetings**

Governors **agreed** the following dates:

Leadership Support Group, 18 March at 5.30pm

Finance Committee, 19 March and 8 May

Teaching and Learning Group, Wednesday 22 May

Full Governing Body, 10 June 2013 at 5.30pm

Extraordinary meeting – to be confirmed

## **2.15 Local Authority Reports – Spring Term 2013**

The LA reports had been circulated; Governors noted the following issues:

### **Update on HR Issues**

#### **Safer Recruitment – Changes**

- The provision of the 'Safer Recruitment in Education' training had been transferred to the Department for Education.
- It was noted that the five year validity on the certificate had been removed but the LA recommended Governors continue to undertake refresher training using the five year period as a guideline.
- Governors were advised that it was a mandatory requirement to have at least one member of every interview panel who had completed the training.

Governor Services would forward access details to Ms Cornish and Mrs Turner.

**Action: Governor Services**

### **Newcastle Living Wage**

- It was noted that the City Council had introduced the Newcastle Living Wage from 1 November 2012, for the lowest paid members of staff; this included support staff within Community Schools and Voluntary Controlled Schools within the City.
- Voluntary Aided Schools, Foundation Schools and Academies, as separate employers, had been asked to consider implementing the Newcastle Living Wage for their support staff.

### **School Improvement Service (SIS) support in the context of change**

- This report updated Governors on SIS support in the context of the key changes the LA was managing.
- It was noted that Newcastle featured positively in the recently introduced local authority league tables.
- Governors were invited to consider and comment on the strategy and the principles underpinning the support offered to schools.

## **2.16 Any other business**

### **Ofsted School Data Dashboards**

Dr Davison had circulated the School's Data Dashboard. It was suggested that the Dashboards had generated a lot of controversy and they provided a restricted view of school data from RAISEonline. A discussion took place over the comparison of data against other schools and the value of the information that was readily available from the Ofsted site.

### **Parent View**

A letter had been circulated to parents during this academic year and during 2011-12. Dr Davison and Mrs Bayes had discussed promoting the website again. It was suggested that it would be valuable to have feedback through the website and from the Parent Survey that the school had circulated during the last academic year. Raising the governance profile would be added as an agenda item to the Leadership and Support meetings after 1 May.

There being no further business, Dr Davison thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.52 pm.