

Record of Meeting

GOVERNORS' MEETING

22nd February 2010

Present:

Peter Mitchell (PM)	Lorna Caldicott (LC)	Philip H Smith (PHS)	Uthel Laurent (UL)
Mark Duke (MD)	Brian Rabe (BR)	John Kerr (JK)	Charles Hampshire (CH)
Yvonne Wheeler (YW)	Alan Kilpin (AK)	Nicolas Heslop (NH)	Kevin Wilson (KW)
Lesley King (LK)	Caroline Raine (Clerk)		

#	Subject	Actions
1	Apologies for Absence The Chair accepted apologies from Dr Ann Limb.	
2	Declarations of Interest None	
3	Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising The minutes of 07/12/09 were reviewed, agreed and signed as a true record of the last meeting. <u>Parent Teacher Association (PTA)</u> – LC reported she had started to investigate forming a group akin to a PTA.	
4	Principal's Report including Key Performance Indicators (KPI) PHS asked what the expectation was in terms of Academy progress at this point. LC said student attainment was expected to be judged as low, but would be mitigated against by students making faster progress than at Sir Frank Markham, or by being closer to national averages. LC explained the major focus of work was on improving the quality of teaching. PHS said that action needed to be taken quickly to address this. PM added that the bulk of teachers could get better, but that swift action should be taken against those unable to improve. KW noted that a key consideration was staff motivation and that it would be very difficult to achieve the changes needed without highly motivated staff. PM asked how motivated staff were. LC replied that she had a clear view of teacher quality, which was mixed across departments, and that a number of strategies were in place including: concerns meetings where appropriate, appointment of Lead Practitioner roles and all-teacher training sessions. She felt the vast majority of staff were hard working and motivated, but that there may be a huge journey ahead for some teachers. PM noted that often the most de-motivating factor was being let down by colleagues. He added that it was important for people to know that, taken as a whole, teaching was not good. AK, as Staff Governor, said that generally staff were quite motivated, and where they were not so, that this was often down to the actions of colleagues as PM had indicated. PHS noted that a footprint was being set at this point and that all efforts must go into improving the quality of staff. In answer to a question from UL, LC said that each Learning Village had Student Council representatives and that there were plans later in the year to seek student opinion on the quality of teaching.	

	<p>PM raised the issue of motivating the children and of the children's behaviour. He had recently spoken to some Year 11 girls who had said they felt behaviour was improving since being at Sir Frank Markham. LC said that the quality of behaviour was directly reflected by the quality of teaching. She said the Senior Team had a very accurate view of behaviour and cited the hotspots initiative, the behaviour support rota, Year 8 (generally), Years 9 and 10 (when on their breaks) and students in the Science open teaching area as particular areas of focus. She added that positive re-inforcements such as the praise postcards were proving popular and that staff were reminded to use them. UL felt that the postcards were used too often when bad behaviour had improved, rather than for consistent hard work and good behaviour.</p> <p>PHS had observed improvements in Academy-wide behaviour, e.g. running and litter, but he would like to see an analysis of how the quality of teaching was impacting behaviour. MD said that fortnightly staff briefings were to begin in Term 4 and these, along with concerns meetings and lesson observations were all providing valuable feedback for teachers. LC said that in June a review, akin to a mini-Ofsted inspection had been commissioned to provide further feedback. PM summarised by saying that there was a lot of work to be done and that Lorna and her team were working hard on it.</p> <p>In answer to a question from KW, LC said that work was starting on using links to business and community to provide student and staff motivations. She agreed that the team could think more about motivations related to ethnicity. ACTION 1001 LC to report back in May on ethnicity related motivations.</p> <p>KW stated that long term, the Academy would succeed by its reputation in the community.</p> <p>LK said that the Principal's Report indicated a relentlessness of effort to make changes and that everything was being tackled. She offered to share her research on white working class boys doing well at a future meeting.</p> <p>NH thanked LC for the comprehensive report on incidents of bullying.</p> <p>YW said the DCSF appreciated that the Academy had just opened and that some difficulties would be encountered before progress was shown.</p> <p>PHS noted that business involvement with the Academy was starting to emerge.</p>	<p>ACTION LC</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><u>Budget Monitoring 2009-10 including DCSF financial review</u></p> <p>CH reported that he could not foresee any financial problems this year. BR asked about the high spend on security, which appeared to be ineffective. CH explained that guards were in place initially to counter theft of new equipment, but conceded that the service was no longer fit for purpose. He said that guards were due to be replaced soon by access cards, and use of magnetic locks for certain areas and the burglar alarm.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the balance between the need for site security, particularly with regard to student safeguarding, and the need to be a welcoming place for the local community. KW felt that the link with the Leisure Centre was important and CH announced that the Centre was about to provide a lettings supervisor in the evenings. LK noted that staff including support staff such as caretakers were valuable ambassadors for the Academy outside school hours. AK noted that visitors coming to the student entrance were not met and LC explained that new procedures were to be in place from Term 4 to ask visitors to use the front entrance. Signage would be improved.</p> <p>PHS noted his concerns on the budget figures as presented; that evaluation was difficult due to</p>	

	<p>start-up costs not being shown separately and that he would wish to have seen month by month figures.</p> <p>The Governors held a discussion on the merits of creating a Finance Sub-Committee and voted unanimously to explore the possibility of setting up such a committee. ACTION 1002 CH, with input from PHS, to draft terms of reference for a Finance Sub-Committee for the May meeting.</p>	ACTION CH
6	<p><u>Indicative Budget 2010-2011 and budget choices for Governors</u></p> <p>PM asked YW to formally note that having no budget from the DCSF at this stage in the year made it very difficult to plan financially. PHS said there was a need to create a budget even if government guidance was not forthcoming.</p> <p>ACTION 1003 CH to present a full 2010-11 budget at the May meeting.</p> <p>KW and LK made the point that other sources of income should be investigated, aside from the DCSF stream. BR noted the need to spend more on good quality teachers. In answer to a question from AK, LC said that she was looking at the possibility of employing Advanced Skills Teachers in Maths.</p> <p>ACTION 1004 CH to find out what percentage of budget is spent on staff salaries in established successful Academies.</p> <p>LK added that enrichment activities for students should not be let go. AK recommended that Governors watch the 'Shift Happens' video on <i>YouTube</i>.</p>	ACTION CH ACTION CH
7	<p><u>Risk Register – review of the register and agreement to its use as a tool going forward</u></p> <p>CH explained that Governors had a legal responsibility to review risks annually. KW noted that the biggest risk would come when the Academy was no longer considered a new school. PHS identified five key risk headings: Finance, Reputation, Quality, Community and Communication. JK noted it was important for the Governing Body to own the register.</p> <p>ACTION 1005 CH to re-group risks under key headings recommended by PHS, with a top level of detail and a comprehensive level underneath.</p>	ACTION CH
8	<p><u>Any other business</u></p> <p><u>Pedestrian access</u> – KW raised a concern about access / welcome of people at the front gate and asked that some thought be given to people's experience of coming to the Academy. PM noted that this was linked to difficulties in making telephone contact, which LC acknowledged and assured the Governors was being addressed.</p> <p>ACTION 1006 LC to report on how the Academy remains secure but welcoming at the May meeting.</p> <p><u>Travel Plan</u> – CR notified the Governors that the Academy was to write a Travel Plan to apply for a local authority grant to provide a package of measures to improve health, safety and encourage the use of more sustainable transport. PHS said that in the next 12 months the Governors should look at a carbon reduction policy.</p> <p>ACTION 1007 LC to find out how a carbon reduction grant had been used during the Academy build.</p>	ACTION LC ACTION LC
9	<p><u>Date and time of next meetings</u></p> <p>All day meeting on 24th May 2010 from 10am. Venue to be decided. The day would include training on the new Ofsted framework.</p>	
10	<p><u>Principal's Performance Management</u></p> <p>LC, MD, AK and CH left the meeting at this point. The notes for this agenda item are deemed</p>	

	confidential and have been circulated under separate cover to those present for the item.	
11	<p><u>Safeguarding Training from Browne Jacobson LLP</u></p> <p>A one hour training session was held for Governors, led by Katie Michelson from Browne Jacobson. The company was recommended by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. Members of staff with specific safeguarding responsibilities also attended: Helen Craddock, Kayleigh Garcia, Kath Garcia and Barbara Catchpole.</p> <p>ACTION 1008 KW to look into how the Academy is represented on the local Safeguarding Children Board.</p> <p>ACTION 1009 LC to report on how the Academy is working on safeguarding with other agencies for the May meeting.</p>	<p>ACTION KW</p> <p>ACTION LC</p>

These notes are a true record of the meeting.

Signed by Chair _____

Date _____