

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST
HELD ON TUESDAY 15 JULY 2014
AT THE LANSDOWNE CLUB, LONDON**

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Ms L. Adams Mr D. Bateson Mr J. Beswick
 Mr C. Bush Mr M. Kerr Ms M. Lloyd
 Mr G. Peile Ms M. Toft (Director)

ALSO PRESENT: Ms K. Jarvis (Company Secretary & Clerk to the Board)
 Mr I. McEwan (Head of Finance)

HEADTEACHERS: Mr L. Abbott (Hillside Primary School)
 Ms A. Hall (Grove Primary School)
 Ms W. James (Sidegate Primary School)
 Ms H. Madsen (Fen Park Primary School)
 Ms J. Tomlins (Kingsfield Primary School)

MINUTES

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ms Adams opened the meeting by welcoming all present. No apologies for absence had been received.

2. REPORTS FROM HEADTEACHERS

Ms Adams explained that the headteachers from Hillside PS and Sidegate PS had been invited to present reports to the Board. All directors confirmed that they had received copies of the reports prior to the meeting. Headteachers had been asked to include a brief background, history of exam results and predictions for the current year.

HILLSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr Lee Abbott, talked directors through, and answered questions relating to his report. Additional points discussed included:

- Hillside had been in 'Special Measures', but had improved to such an extent (particularly the quality of teaching & learning) that this category had been removed.
- Improvement in Key performance indicators shown
- KS2 results have remained below floor level, but this may change with appeals being submitted
- The focus for next year will be quality of teaching
- Recruitment is a challenge, but Mr Abbott has confidence in appointments made for September
- A new School Business Manager and Site Manager have been appointed

- Pupil mobility is a big issue at Hillside, but interventions, particularly with EAL, are encouraging
- Attendance is improving. Ms Toft is confident that attendance targets will be met
- Mr Abbott is aware that numbers enrolling in the nursery are low, and aims to use marketing strategies to resolve this
- Extensive building work is currently being undertaken

Mr Abbot concluded his report by stating that he is confident that improvement can be sustained. On behalf of directors, Ms Adams thanked Mr Abbot for his report.

KINGSFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ms Jo Tomlins talked directors through, and answered questions relating to her report. Additional points discussed included:-

- Ms Tomlins became Headteacher in January 2014
- She was not surprised when an Ofsted visit placed Kingsfield in 'Special Measures', with all areas graded inadequate except from behaviour
- Past data has proven to be unreliable, but Ms Tomlins is now confident data is accurate
- Role sharing has been alleviated as far as possible
- New staff have been employed for September, following resignations, but recruitment has been a challenge
- SATS results are poor
- Parents and children are happy, but the issue of low aspirations needs addressed
- Ms Tomlins looks forward to working with other local ALT schools to strengthen links
- Despite being under their own management, the nursery at Kingsfield will be made more accountable under Ms Tomlins, with lines of management firmly established from September

Ms Tomlins concluded that she is encouraged by the improvements made and the engagement of staff, but she recognises that there is "a long way to go". On behalf of directors, Ms Adams thanked Ms Tomlins for her report.

3. REPORTS & BUDGET SUBMISSIONS FROM HEADTEACHERS

Ms Adams explained that, in addition to reports as per Agenda Item 2, the headteachers from Fen Park Primary School, Grove Primary School and Sidegate Primary School, had been invited to present their 3 year budget plans for 2014/15 to the Board. All directors confirmed that they had received copies of the reports & budgets prior to the meeting.

FEN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ms Heather Madsen talked directors through, and answered questions relating to her report. Additional points discussed included:-

- Fen Park is in the second most deprived area in Suffolk, having five headteachers in five years, before Ms Madsen joined two years ago
- Problems had been identified in all areas
- SLT has been restructured, and new staff employed
- Staff have developed through CPD
- The curriculum has been revised
- High mobility and low aspirations are common, but being addressed through incentive programmes

- Interventions introduced are showing impact
- An Ofsted grading of 'Serious Weaknesses' is in place
- Parental support has improved – a Seeing Is Believing walk has been introduced
- Ms Toft talked about her experience of Fen Park, stating that the children love school

Ms Madsen took directors through the budget for Fen Park, pointing out areas of concern, and where additional funding has been allocated for best impact. Following a question from Mr Peile, it was decided that Lowestoft heads would consider whether the Pyramid Group (Partnership of schools) is good value. It was noted that sufficient capital funding has been allocated to a roof repair project.

Ms Madsen concluded her report by informing all present that Fen Park will be renamed as Red Oak Primary School from 4th September 2014.

The directors present formally approved the 2014/15 budget for Red Oak Primary School.

GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ms Andrea Hall talked directors through, and answered questions relating to her report. Additional points discussed included:-

- Ms Hall has been head of Grove for two years
- Thirteen weeks into her post, Ofsted visited and placed Grove into a 'Requires Improvement' category
- Although Grove has a PAN of 45, single year group classes have been established to improve teaching and learning
- Parents have responded well to improved communication and complaints have fallen dramatically
- Celebrating success is key at Grove
- Standards have been raised, with results now above floor level
- CPD has been received well by the majority of staff – those not responding have resigned
- Poor attendance is being addressed and exclusions are low
- New systems have been received well by staff, pupils and parents
- It is hoped to secure a bid to adapt an unfit-for-purpose atrium into a useful teaching area
- Pupils are excited and proud of an Eco-classroom recently built

Ms Hall took directors through the proposed budget for Grove, highlighting increases in spending. Although a deficit carry forward is showing in year 3, it was noted that circa £53,000 is expected from the Local Authority carry forward.

The directors present formally approved the 2014/15 budget for Grove Primary School, taking into account the expected carry forward from Suffolk County Council.

SIDEGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ms Wendy James talked directors through, and answered questions relating to her report. Additional points discussed included:-

- The whole of the teaching staff at Sidegate has changed over the last three years, which has led to parents showing concern

- Ms James explained succession planning, with 3 x graduate interns last year increasing to 5 this year
- 5 x NQTs have been employed for September 2014
- Recruitment has been a challenge, with one teacher post unfilled for September due to a late resignation
- SLT has been restructured
- An additional teacher employed for Maths intervention has had a positive impact
- SATS results were disappointing, with teacher assessments not supported by exam results
- Interventions introduced by ALT consultants have been well received
- Staff are eager to implement curriculum changes in September
- SLT are considering a change in nursery opening hours in order to address parental need
- Sidegate was taken out of the 'Serious Weaknesses' category recently

Ms James took directors through the proposed budget for Sidegate. She concluded her report by stating that she was excited about the future. Although SATS results were disappointing, Ms James is confident that the improvements made will start to support progress already made.

The directors present formally approved the 2014/15 budget for Sidegate Primary School.

Ms Adams thanked the headteachers for their time and for their presentations. Directors expressed their pleasure at being able to meet the headteachers in person and proposed that each meeting include an agenda item where heads be invited to report.

The headteachers left the meeting at this point

It was agreed that Reports from Headteachers be an agenda item for future meetings.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 MAY 2014

The minutes were accepted as a true record

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES HELD ON 1 MAY 2014

47(ii) Directors confirmed that they had received a revised expenses/mileage claim form.

Mr Bush informed directors that Ms Paula Brenchley (VP at Neale-Wade Academy) is in the process of analysing KS2 results for all ALT primary schools.

50 (v) Mr Ian McEwan was formally welcomed to Active Learning Trust as Head of Finance. Ms Adams informed directors that she has received an email from Dr Jeff Deakin tendering his resignation with immediate effect. Mr Bush has written to Dr Deakin thanking him for his past support. Ms Lloyd reminded directors that Dr Deakin's resignation means that a new Chair is needed for the local Governing Body at Neale-Wade Academy. Mr Bush will discuss the situation with Mr Jason Wing, Principal at Neale-Wade Academy.

6. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

- (i) ***The Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 10 June 2014***
Directors accepted the minutes of the Finance & General Committee Meeting held on 10th June 2014. There were no points raised relating to the minutes.

7. OPERATION OF THE BOARD & ITS COMMITTEE

Directors were referred to a paper prepared by Mr Peile relating to the membership of the Board and its committees, which concluded with the recommendation that the board consider the addition of members to the Finance and General Purposes and Audit Committees as set out in the report.

The Board agreed with the recommendation as set out, and the committee memberships are adopted as follows:-

Finance & General Purpose Committee: Mr Beswick, Ms Toft, & Mr Bush
Audit Committee: Ms Adams, Mr Kerr and Ms Lloyd

8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Mr Peile: circulated a Progress Report on the Isle of Ely School that directors found informative.

Mr Peile: asked for the Board's permission to approve the budgets for Hillside and Kingsfield Primary Schools, on the Board's behalf, when they are available.

The Board approved that Mr Peile be given permission to approve budgets for Hillside and Kingsfield Schools to enable EFA deadlines to be met.

We noted that Mr Peile, in consultation with our Chair, had taken two decisions under urgent action:

All Health and Safety policies have been reviewed and updated. Updates have been sent to all schools asking them to review and amend their own versions.

A local Government Pension Scheme Discretions Policy has been written and approved in line with a requirement of the LGPS that employers have to declare their Discretions Policy.

9. NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Board meeting was agreed as Tuesday 14th October 2014. It is hoped to co-ordinate this with committee meetings.

The date of the following meeting of the Board and of the AGM of the Trust was agreed as Tuesday 9th December 2014

Both meetings would start at 2pm and the preferred venue was the Lansdowne Club in London. Ms Adams thanked all for attending before closing the meeting.