

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Body of The Albert Pye and Ravensmere Schools Federation held at **Ravensmere** on **Wednesday 31st January 2018** at **5.30pm**.

Present:

Phil Tate (Chair), Melanie Mills (Headteacher), Gillian Lee, Sally Brooks, Katie Rattenbury, Jeanette Kershaw, Sam Burton, Jen Burch (Deputy Headteacher, Ravensmere), Emma Plane (Business Manager / Clerk to the Governors)

1 **Welcome and Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Jodie Poll and Helen Nicholson.
- 1.3 Consent was given to both absences.

2 **Pecuniary and Other Interests**

- 2.1 There were no declarations of any pecuniary or other interests with regard to items on the agenda.
- 2.2 Those governors present have all signed the register of Pecuniary Interests for 2017/18.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange for Jodie Poll and Helen Nicholson to sign the register of Pecuniary Interests for 2017/18.

3 **Minutes**

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th December 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting and were duly signed by the chair.
- 3.2 Matters arising from the minutes not already covered on the agenda were discussed.

1	Helen Nicholson, Sam Burton and Jodie Poll to sign the register of Business Interests	Helen Nicholson and Jodie Poll still to sign the register
2	To report the results of the NGA Skills Analysis	To be covered at the next meeting
3	Budget links to be added to the SDPs	These have been added by the Business Manager
4	Invite Helen Nicholson, Sam Burton and Jodie Poll to attend training day with Tony Whatmuff on 19 th February 2018	
5	To carry out a monitoring visit to school to see how Year 6 Maths groups are working	Maths Governor to carry out

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		once groups are embedded
6	To think about the next area for Governor training	To be discussed later on this agenda
7	To repeat Science monitoring visit later in the school year	Science Governor to visit later in school year
8	To report on the progress of the creation of a Wellbeing strategy at the Personnel Committee	Headteacher will report at the Personnel committee meeting on 26 th February

The Headteacher informed governors that the 'No parking' A frames have already had an impact on parking safety outside the entrance to the Albert Pye.

Governors asked whether there is a succession plan in place for the SENCO. The Headteacher explained that there isn't a succession plan in place and that the role has to be done by a qualified teacher but the SENCO works very closely with the Pastoral Support Team and there would be a comprehensive handover if the SENCO were to leave.

4 **Academy Improvement**

4.1 The Headteacher report was circulated to governors in advance of the meeting and governors were invited to ask questions regarding the information.

Governors queried why the PIXL tests have been done 6 months earlier than last year. The Headteacher confirmed that the Active Learning Trust (ALT) have asked for this and have set dates to be used by all the ALT schools for consistency across the Trust.

Governors noted that the phonics results are currently low because the phase 5 sounds haven't been taught yet. The Headteacher explained further that this is a conscious decision and phonics are deliberately taught this way within our federation. Our results are consistently very good and so this is the way we will continue to teach phonics here as it is successful. The Headteacher confirmed that ALT have challenged senior leaders over the low results but were happy with the explanation given.

Governors questioned how our year 6 PiXI results were compared to other schools. The Headteacher explained that PIXL have compared the results from all their schools (200 schools). This is important information as expected standard is decided using scaled scores for the SATs papers based on results across the country. It is a strong picture for our year 6



cohort, as in every area the children have done better than the PIXL average. Staff are particularly pleased with reading results, given that this is a weaker area for this cohort. Although this is a strong position, we're still working hard to make the gains needed. 14 children in the cohort are vulnerable in just one area. **Governors questioned whether March is too late to be starting the Breakfast booster groups.** The Headteacher explained that it is counterproductive to start them too soon because the children get tired and it loses momentum. Children are invited to booster groups based on need.

The Headteacher confirmed that the teaching of year 6 maths groups is underway but that it is very different from last year because the cohort is so different. Andy Adcock is teaching year 5 three mornings per week in order to release Mrs Everett. She is working with the key marginal group but this year those children need to make higher gains to reach expected standard. There are only 5 children this year in the SEN group working with Miss Lane (SENCO).

Governors noted that key marginal children for greater depth have been identified and that these are being targeted to reach greater depth

Governors noted the improvement in GAPS, which was a weaker area in 2017. The Headteacher explained that this suggests impact of the no nonsense spelling approach that is being used in school but advised that we can't be definite about this until results are received in the summer.

The Headteacher confirmed that we are seeing impact of the PiXI techniques being used and explained that PiXI is now also being used in years 3 and 4, as well as years 5 and 6.

Governors asked what Question Level Analysis is. The Headteacher explained that all data is submitted to PIXL in terms of whether the child got the answer right, wrong or didn't attempt the question. PiXI analyse this on a question by question based and this highlights the areas that need to be focussed on. **Governors questioned why the year 4 and 5 results were low for reading.** The Headteacher explained that it is partly because they have not yet developed the reading stamina required to do well in these tests but also results are influenced by how interesting the texts are to the children.

The Deputy Headteacher at Ravensmere explained that they held a reading café today with parents. At the firework share in the Autumn term, parents gave feedback that the session was really useful for parents for knowing how to support their child with reading at home. The session today involved parents reading for half an hour with their child then they are given tea/coffee and biscuits and the opportunity for discussions. Positive feedback was received from parents again today and so it is intended to run this type of session once per term (3 times per year) alongside normal shares. **Governors were very supportive of these sessions being held.**

The EYFS leader explained that EEXAT (Early Excellence Assessment Tracker) is used to assess children in EYFS but that there have been



technical issues and the reports are confusing so it is taking a long time to analyse.

Governors questioned whether staffing changes are expected to have an impact on outcomes this year and asked how confident senior leaders are that we can achieve what we need to. The Headteacher explained that a good appointment has been made in EYFS. She now needs to have the training that other staff in the federation have received. Senior leaders have been working hard to upskill staff. All new Teaching Assistants are inexperienced but they have received training on phonics from Jo Verrall. The HLTA from Ravensmere is now being used across the federation, which has been a change but staff have embraced the changes really well and the Teaching Assistants at Ravensmere are very experienced.

4.2 Miss Burch gave a verbal update to governors regarding LAL Advanced training programme that she is undertaking with ALT this year.

She explained that the focus of her LAL Advanced is the curriculum and that she has a strong background in curriculum development. She explained that there are lots of brilliant examples of curriculum happening throughout the federation but it was lacking a bit of coordination and consistency. She started with a staff meeting enabling teachers to reflect on the current provision. This involved assessing whether each topic and area of learning is having an impact. Staff valued the time to do this evaluation and reflection. They then considered how expertise could be shared across the federation. When joining the federation in 2016/17, Miss Burch had made changes to the KS1 curriculum so it was useful to reflect on those changes at this stage. Then another staff meeting was held to share long term plan overviews. The goal is to see good progression of skills across the year groups, ensuring no gaps. The next task was to break each topic down into skills to be learnt. This is taking a long time. The new curriculum doesn't stipulate what to teach when, so this must be agreed as a federation. Miss Burch questioned the subject leaders to identify what attainment and progress looks like for different subjects and whether the subject is being covered progressively. Miss Burch felt that her conversations with subject leaders were really enlightening. All subject leaders are passionate and have the drive to take this forward.

Governors asked what the subject leaders need in order to be able to progress with this. Miss Burch explained that they need time

Miss Burch has also been working on the curriculum information on the websites. Whilst there is still more to be done, improvements have been made and long term plans were added this week. Miss Burch has standardised the format of the Curriculum newsletters, so that all include a maths focus, topic, upcoming dates and ways to help at home. The aim is to communicate more with parents and to give them ideas of ways to support their child at home.

Governors supported the work that Miss Burch has been doing and felt that it is good to continually ensure relevance. The new curriculum gives more scope for developing it as schools wish because it is the skills being taught that is focussed on rather than the specific knowledge.



ALT values a rich curriculum.

Governors asked whether there was any negativity from staff about making changes. Miss Burch explained that there was some initial concern as staff hadn't done this before but staff are understanding this now and are on board.

Miss Burch explained that staff are keen to progress the idea picked up from the Claire Gadsby training on 26th January that children should always go home excited about something that has been going on at school that day.

Governors asked why some of the year 5 and 6 sparkling sheets are from 2015/16. Miss Burch confirmed that she is systematically working through the websites to ensure that the information is current but that this is taking time.

Governors confirmed that they have seen the new curriculum maps on the website. They agreed that this is a really beneficial piece of work that should be celebrated.

Governors thanked Miss Burch for attending the meeting and updating them with regards to her LAL Advanced.

4.3 The Headteacher updated governors with regards to the School Development Plans.

She confirmed that the staff meeting schedule reflects what is in the plan.

On the PD Day on 26th January, all teachers and teaching assistants from the North Suffolk Hub accessed training from Claire Gadsby on Assessment for Learning. The training was really positive and staff met in phase teams at the end of the session. Claire is working in school on 16th March and leading a staff meeting after school, with a view to revising the marking and feedback policy. Staff really valued the CPD and anticipate high impact.

Liz Gibbs has been in school to work on Maths, giving training in specific year groups, particularly on fractions. Staff were released to watch her.

Learning talks have been held with children on art and history and there were some excellent comments from children.

Mental Health awareness week is happening across the federation next week (w/c 5th February). The Wellbeing Policy will be developed following this.

ACTION GL to meet the Pastoral Support Leaders to review this.

There are concerns with the current year 5 cohort and senior leaders will keep a close eye on this.



The current year 6 cohort is on track, whilst continuing to receive a rich curriculum.

Ravensmere

Some staffing changes have been necessary. The HLTA has been redeployed to Albert Pye. This has meant that changes have been made to writing groups.

Reading café was held today, as Miss Burch explained earlier.

With regards to federation team building, the staff meeting next week is a team building session for EYFS and KS1 to be held at Ravensmere.

ACTION – Headteacher to update governors on the success of this at the next meeting

Governors commented that the work that Miss Burch has been doing on developing the curriculum demonstrates good development of working across the federation.

- 4.4 An update on current progress in year 6 was given during the Headteacher's report.

5 Governor Development and Training

- 5.1 Each governor was given a pack of useful questions that will assist them to ensure that they are effectively questioning the Headteacher.

The Headteacher recommended that governors watch the podcast from Paul Brooker (Ofsted).

- 5.2 The clerk reminded governors that the federation purchases the governor training service through Schools Choice and that she can book places for governors on any of the courses if they would like to attend. The clerk highlighted some sessions that may be of interest.

The governors discussed the focus for the training session being run by Andy Redman on 21/2/18 and all agreed that it would be helpful to have a 'Preparation for Ofsted' session to that governors know what the aim is.

- 5.3 The Chair confirmed that he will present his report on the Governors Skills Audit at the next meeting.

- 5.4 The clerk informed governors that the North Suffolk Hub schools have jointly purchased GovernorHub, which is an online tool that supports the organisation, preparation and storage of governance information. Once up and running, this will be the method of sharing and storing all governance documents. Governors will receive invitations to join GovernorHub soon.

At 7pm Sam Burton left the meeting.

6 Governor Monitoring

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- 6.1 Sally Brooks presented the report from the monitoring visit carried out by her and Helen Nicholson on 29/11/18.

They carried out a learning walk at Ravensmere, focusing on the displays.

They were pleased to see that displays were used to celebrate pupils work. Of particular note was the Diwali display. The children's work on display was evidently from a range of abilities which shows inclusivity.

The staff governor pointed out that it is difficult to find the balance between show casing children's work and having a crowded learning environment that ends up being a distraction.

- 6.2 Phil Tate and Helen Nicholson confirmed that they are able to attend both the Reading Deep Dive days on 5th February at the Albert Pye and 6th February at Ravensmere. Katie Rattenbury confirmed that she is able to attend on 5th February and Sally Brooks confirmed that she is able to attend on 6th February. The Headteacher will determine the schedule for the days and circulate to governors by the end of the week.

7 Approval of Documents

- 7.1 The governors adopted the Federation Safeguarding policy without amendment.

8 The Knowledge

- 8.1 The Chair drew the governors attention to the following items from the Knowledge:

- Ofsted Autumn Governance Webinar Recordings – this has the link to the webinar recommended for governors by the Headteacher.
- Bold Beginnings – the EYFS leader commented that it is unusual for Ofsted to publish this kind of report and it is not in line with the vision and values of many EYFS settings.
- DfE Single Departmental Plan: Improving Social Mobility Through Education – this is high on the governments agenda and worth noting

9 Date of Next Meeting

- 9.1 The next meeting will be held on Monday 19th March 2018 at 5.30pm at the Albert Pye.

There was no further business and the meeting ended at 7.30pm.



Agreed Actions

1	Helen Nicholson and Jodie Poll to sign the register of Business Interests	Clerk
2	To report the results of the NGA Skills Analysis	Chair
3	To carry out a monitoring visit to school to see how Year 6 Maths groups are working	Maths Governor
4	To repeat Science monitoring visit later in the school year	Science Governor
5	To report on the progress of the creation of a Wellbeing strategy at the Personnel Committee	Headteacher
6	To meet with the Pastoral Support Leaders to review Mental Health awareness week	Gillian Lee
7	To update governors on the success of the team building staff meeting held at Ravensmere	Headteacher

These minutes are confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.


..... Chair of Governors, FGB 19/03/2018

