

**Isle of Ely Primary School
Local Governing Board
Minutes of the Meeting
held on Tuesday 3rd May 2016**

Present: Mr S. Dove Mrs S. Hogger
Dr D. Knox Ms M. Lloyd
Mr D. Marriott Mrs K. Marriott
Mr A. Perry Mr A. Sanderson
Mrs B. Surtees (Head) Ms C. Amory

In Attendance: Mrs J. Sanders (Clerk)

Item	Notes	Action
1.	Welcome & Apologies for Absence Ms Lloyd welcomed all present. There were no apologies for absence	
2.	Declarations of Pecuniary & Non-Pecuniary Interest Mr Dove declared an interest in an item on the Agenda under Any Other Business.	
3.	Chair's Action Ms Lloyd reported that there were no Chair's Actions carried out since the last meeting.	
4.	Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising The minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 17 th March were confirmed as a true record. There were no matters arising from the last meeting.	
5.	Academy Improvement Mrs Surtees referred governors to her reports, which had been circulated prior to the meeting to allow for questions to be forwarded. Questions and answers included: Could you give us some detail on activities which boost GLD and Phonics levels coming up this term? When do the assessments happen and how long do we have to hit the target? <i>The children are tracked really carefully, and the phonics teaching here is very good with children really enjoying it and making good progress. Those not quite on track have interventions in place; Hayley has made a huge impact with her phonics support. Activities such as Easy Read and Bearing Away are also helping. There are some interventions in place in EYFS for writing. There are plenty of opportunities for writing immersed in the provision and curriculum.</i> <i>EYFS moderation by the County is expected within the next 2 weeks. They come in and verify our own judgements. This is a service that the school buy into and there is a cost to the</i>	

school for this. Final assessments are due at the end of June to the beginning of July so that gives us approximately 10 weeks. The Phonics screening tests are on 14th June 2016.

Do you expect Place2Be to support the progression of pupils with EAL? *This is not what Place2Be is about. Place2Be is a counselling service where those pupils with social or behavioural difficulties can go and talk. Pupil Premium pupils are targeted for this service, which may well include EAL pupils but not specifically for them.*

What impact does transition have on pupil's development? *In respect of the move of schools I don't think it will affect development. There are some children who have found the change in space & routine hard but I expect that to settle. We do sometimes find that over the summer break some children do 'go back' and maybe lose a little momentum starting the new year. It is planned to introduce some 'phased meetings' to help get the children ready for their new classes.*

You mentioned in the last meeting that safeguarding may potentially be an area for development for the school. Do you have a particular strategy in place to address those aspects? *Safeguarding is not an area I am particularly worried or concerned about as a whole. All DBS checks are in place; there is one I am still waiting on a copy of. I am just more conscious that as a new school that still has building work ongoing that safeguarding is something we need to be aware of.*

With reference to your comments in your report that the move went smoothly but that some children found the transition tough, do you feel that there were any useful lessons to be learned from the move, the run-up to it and preparing the children and parents? *The one thing I have learned is that I don't want to do it again! We are so relieved to finally be in. I don't think there is anything different really that we could have done. Many elements of the move were out of our control, and we communicated progress to the parents as much as we were able to. The children think that the playground is boring! We have to remember that this is just the start of a long journey and we need time to build the character of the school. The children can be instrumental in that. Here we have 'Champions of Change' which is similar to a School Council. This gives the opportunity for the children to share their thoughts about what they would like for the school. Now that we have secured the services of the resident artist, we hope that together we will start to form the school's identity.*

With reference to the RAP report, are the children still on track to meet the summer targets in maths, reading and writing? Are there any areas where you feel that the targets may not be achieved? *I admit that I have set quite challenging targets (90%). However, I believe that the teaching staff here are so brilliant at what they do that we can most certainly get very near to this. At the moment 77% of children are on target to achieve GLD and 83% of Yr. 1 are on target to pass the phonics screening. These results are increasing all the time. We currently have 59 children in Reception and 43 children in Yr. 1. There are some that I think won't hit GLD. Mrs Surtees was then asked whether or not there were any common characteristics of those children not achieving GLD. No I don't think so. Three children involved and different characteristics involved such as summer-born children, SEN children, but nothing necessarily common linking them.*

Can you please say a little about what "Circle Time" is? *Circle time is exactly what it sounds like. We take the children and all sit in a circle. We give the children a topic to talk about e.g. being a good friend, and then go around the circle giving each child the chance to express their views and feelings about the topic, and also to listen to what others may think about it as well.*

The "hospital beds" assessment sheets look very interesting. Is this method of assessment new to the school or something that you have been using for a while? *We started using this at Christmas last year. We have found it very useful to have all of the information in one place. The teachers know exactly what is being said about their lessons and how this links into their CPD. The impact this has on Teaching and Learning has been observed. 'Points to Ponder' (EBI – Even Better If) given for reflection and implementation purposes in order to secure the outstanding teaching we already have here.*

What affect might the shorter term have on pupil attainment? *I don't think that the shorter term has affected pupil attainment. The majority of children are where they should be in terms of age-related expectations. It may appear that not as much progress has been made as the data collection points are closer together. I am happy about the number of pupils in the 40-60 developing range. We are confident that we will see more children moving into the 40-60 secure range over the longer summer term.*

Why is rapid progress through Early Years important? *Reading and writing are usually the Early Learning Goals that are most difficult for the children to achieve. Writing is often linked to fine motor skills and control which can take longer to develop. Rapid Progress is not about 'rushing' the children through their stages, but more about keeping up the momentum of the learning and aiming to come out exceeding expectations rather than just being on track.*

What are the consequences if the council are unable to make payment in time? What contributed to the overspend? Was this foreseen? *The Council are holding a pot of money for us in order to equip the school. The crux of the matter is that the money is in their account not ours so we have to purchase and pay for the equipment, then invoice them to repay us. So far we have spent £41k and claimed £26k so we need to invoice as soon as possible as we don't have the cash flow to wait for payment. ALT have suggested that we ask to invoice for all the funds and have the money in our accounts. I am unsure as to whether this is possible. It would be advantageous if it was, as I don't want to be in a situation where the council tell us there is no money for us.*

Overall, impressive looking stats – what do you attribute the significant upticks to? *It's quite simple – quality first teaching. This is on top of everything else. Those at the lower end of the scales have all the relevant interventions in place and we will keep on working with them. The children love being at school, they love being taught and are so enthusiastic which also helps with their attainment.*

What are the consequences for pupils in their ongoing engagement as the attainment spread widens? *If a child doesn't pass their Phonics in Yr. 1 they can re-take it in Yr. 2. We constantly track the children's progress and identify where the gaps are in relation to them*

achieving their GLD and put the necessary interventions in place straight away. New children in Yr. 1 and Reception will obviously change the dynamics re. data results but all we can do is to keep doing what we are doing, which we do outstandingly well. Again, our quality first teaching will set the children in good stead.

What have we learnt about the persistent absentees and what else might be done to address the situation? *We do not authorise any requests for holiday's etc. during the term times. All absences are marked, be they for sickness or any other reason, and talks with the parents have helped them to see that even these types of absences contribute to the overall attendance figures. I think that some parent's think 'oh that's ok, I've phone him/her in sick', so they have been surprised, which may help the situation.* Ms Lloyd then asked how many of the persistent absentees have younger siblings at home and whether any of these may be joining the school soon – would this help? *Ms Amory explained that having siblings could possibly exacerbate the situation i.e. if one child is ill then the parent will keep both children off. Letters home sometimes helps and there will be an increase in letters home as the children turn 5. It is often about trying to break the parents' behaviours. The EWO is very supportive and is working with the school to address the persistent absenteeism which relates to 7 children.*

Incidents of racial harassment – did the school policies aid in resolving the situation? Can we ask how the incident was dealt with and what's been done/being done to reduce the likelihood of them happening again? *The incident I referred to was in relation to a flippant remark made by one child about/to another. Because of the nature of the remark, I raised it as a racial incident in case of any comeback. The child in question has been spoken to as have the parents of the child.*

6. **Public Sector Equality Duty**

We have a duty to be open and transparent about our Equality and Diversity and our objectives in addressing any issues.

Mrs Surtees explained that she had looked at the staffing at the Isle of Ely school and shared the following observations:

- The bulk of the staff at the school at the moment are women. The site supervisor is male, and the newly appointed staff in the Nurse and Early Years is male (Carl Spicer).
- Currently, all of the staff at the school are of a white ethnic origin.

This situation has not happened purposefully. All job advertisements clearly state that applications are welcome from all. There is a specific sentence in all adverts which states this. Ms Lloyd requested if this information could be clarified – Mrs Sanders to request this from Jan Steel (Head of HR at ALT). It was agreed that at all times it should be the best candidate, providing the 'best fit' for the school, which should be offered any position. Nobody should be offered 'just because' of any particular characteristic in order to fill a gap. The board agreed.

Mrs Surtees went on to say that advertising for teaching is can sometimes prove somewhat difficult as the 'pool' of potential staff is quite small. Mrs Surtees also said that it is also possible that the positions are not advertised in a wide enough catchment. Currently vacancies are advertised with EPM mainly due to cost. To place an advertisement with TES

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	(which could reach more people) costs £1000. Mrs Surtees is aware that an E & D action plan needs to be drawn up which she will do and email out to the LGB.	BS
7.	<p>Educational Visits</p> <p>Is the Soham trip in addition to the Wicken Fen trip agreed at the last LGB? <i>The Wicken Fen trip is now not taking place. Yr. 1 are now going to Soham to visit a farm.</i></p>	
8.	<p>DfE Information</p> <p>Mrs Surtees reminded governors that the DfE website was available to assist governors in their role.</p>	
9.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr S Dove wanted to request that he be allowed to make a regular letting of space in the school on Sunday's in order to establish a church group. <p>At this point, Mr Dove left the meeting so that the LGB could discuss as this constituted a pecuniary interest.</p> <p>Mrs Surtees explained that in fact she has had many requests from community groups wanting to hire out space in the school, and that this could become a good source of income for the school. However, at the moment the issues are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who would hold keys? Is there anyone prepared to work during evening and/or weekends in order to open up the site and to lock up the site afterwards? Who could actually manage the day-to-day co-ordination of lettings management? There is no firm policy or process in place at the moment in relation to lettings. <p>After much discussion, the Board decided that at this moment in time, the school is not in a position to offer up a regular lettings schedule. It was felt that it would be seen as 'unfair' to let some people have access and not others. It was agreed that the Business Manager will look into this area and come up with fair and transparent processes and policies with a view to moving this forward.</p> <p>Mr Dove was informed of the Board's decision and accepted this.</p>	
10.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Future meetings were agreed as follows:</p> <p>Finance Committee: Thursday 12th May – 12.00pm – moved from 4.30pm</p> <p>Personnel Committee: Thursday 9th June – 5.30pm</p> <p>Local Governing Body: Thursday 7th July – 6pm</p>	