

VICTORIA COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL
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BOARD of GOVERNORS

14th APRIL 2016

Together we aim for the stars

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held at Victoria School on
Thursday 14th April at 6.00PM.

Members Present:

Miss Christine O'Callaghan, Chairperson
Cllr. Rhiannon Birch
Mrs Rebecca Connor
Mrs Samantha Daniels
Mr Simon Husband
Mrs Judith Jones
Mrs Nikki Lacey

Mr Dave Lawrence
Mrs Sonia McLaughlin
Mrs Cath Newman
Mr Mark Petherick
Mrs Amanda Reynolds
Cllr. Mark Wilson
Mrs Helen Moreton

Apologies

Mrs Helen Kerr
Miss Jeanette Minns
Mrs Clare Price
Mr Rhys Taylor
Mr Kevin Sullivan

Apologies were given and accepted by Governors.

Welcome

C O'C welcomed governors – the majority had met earlier to discuss the three key questions relating to the school improvement plan.

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 26th January 2016

Matters Arising:

See below:

***Traffic Update**

CO'C voiced concerns regarding traffic in the back lane. **SD** confirmed that it should be monitored daily; however that hasn't always been the case. **SD** proposed a staff rota for the occasions when either she or **SH** were unavailable.

***Annual Report to Parents**

The report had been made available to parents – no requests had been received for a parents meeting.

***HWB**

This was an agenda item for the current meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on Tuesday 26th January were approved by the Governors; proposed by **JJ**, seconded by **DL** and signed by the Chairperson.

Victoria Playing Field

CO'C advised that an email had been sent to school following a complaint received by Mark Haynes at VOGC regarding a fallen tree in the field. The caretaker had investigated but could find no evidence. **CO'C** had responded to Mark Haynes accordingly.

SH gave historical information. The field is an asset to the school and is used for various activities when the weather permits. However, in recent years there has been an increase in the number of complaints from local residents. These range from litter, overgrown trees, anti-social behaviour etc.

The previous head teacher had met with a representative from the VOGC. They had suggested that it might be possible for the school to have access to the field but VOGC would take responsibility for dealing with any complaints etc. The school would pay a peppercorn rent to use it and for any marking for sports days etc. However, we would no longer have ownership of the field. Although this sounded favourable – governors wanted to know what was the legal position? The main concern was that unless there were written guarantees could the land be sold off at a future date to developers?

A discussion followed – issues raised being:

*Prospective parents could view the field as an asset – would the lack of it deter people from applying to the school?

*Current parents would not be happy to lose the field – very contentious.

*The importance of sport and outdoor activity is often raised in the media – not to have the field would be detrimental.

*A precedent would be set – other schools could be affected by our decision.

*The school is currently maintaining a public area – this is an unfair financial burden.

*What are the health and safety implications for us if a member of the public has an accident at the field?

CO'C asked for a vote – should we keep the field? Governors were unanimous – yes.

However, governors requested that an urgent meeting with VOGC be arranged to clarify some of the above points. It is imperative that both the school and VOGC are aware of their rights and responsibilities. **MW** will arrange a meeting. In the meantime it was suggested that the caretaker be asked to monitor the field on a weekly basis.

Feedback from Health and Safety Committee

DL reported that prior to the GB meeting there had been a Health and Safety walk around. The focus had been on the Nursery and Foundation Phase areas. There were many positives but a few negatives had been highlighted such as:

*Rugs with curled up edges – caretaker already aware and will tape down

*Accessibility of cleaning products

*Untidy computer cabling

*Build-up of cardboard

*Uncovered/overcrowded food in fridge

*Cracked Perspex window on outdoor shed

SD reported that staff would be responsible for ensuring that their own work areas were kept safe and reviewed half termly - any issues/concerns should be reported. It was decided that the next Health & Safety meeting would focus on documentation and the caretaker would be invited to attend.

Policies

Prior to the meeting updated policies had been sent to all governors. **SD** advised governors that many of the policies originated from VOGC and had been drawn up following consultation with HR and trade unions. It was agreed that all such policies should be accepted and adopted – the alternative being that the school would have to write their own policies.

SD did advise that she would shortly be sending out an updated 'Charging and Remissions' Policy for governors to look at.

HWB

SM reminded governors that this was a free website, funded by the WAG. Staff, pupils and parents can all have access to it. The site has a governors' page where all documents can be posted. It is a secure site where information can be shared among the GB. **SM** distributed login details and hwb email addresses to governors. It was suggested that governors set up their accounts – if anyone experiences any problems please contact **HM** and a training session will be offered.

NB - would governors please activate their HWB accounts before the next GB meeting.

Following the May meeting all agenda's, minutes etc. will be posted on the HWB governor page.

Head Teacher Report

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting. **SD** highlighted a few points:

***Data Analysis** - Analysis of autumn term data highlighted a small percentage of children who are not making expected progress in one or more areas of learning. Interventions and support have been put in place to ensure that these children make the expected progress for the spring term.

***School Improvement Plan** – Governors had met prior to GB meeting to look at the three key questions.

SLT have carried out 'learning walks'. From September there will be a change to the learning environment – every class will have learning prompts appropriate to their year group. The corridors and halls will reflect achievements and events to be celebrated.

***Checking & Evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning** - at VPS there is a collaborative approach to monitoring. During staff meetings/phase meetings, staff will participate in moderating levels, standardisation and work/planning scrutiny.

All members of staff are currently participating in lesson studies, focusing on engaging and challenging pupils through effective questioning and feedback (focus chosen as a direct result of lesson observations in Autumn term and ESTYN recommendation).

A work scrutiny carried out by SLT and challenge adviser highlighted the positive impact on the new marking and feedback procedures, but also highlighted a few inconsistencies. As a result of this, FADE reports were completed, a staff meeting has been earmarked to address inconsistencies and the new policy has been updated; providing more explicit examples.

The school's current judgement of the T& L is **good** with some evidence of **excellent**.

*** SEN/ Pupil Wellbeing** – **SD** advised that there was excellent Sen support. Extensive in-house training has taken place – interventions are proving effective.

***Staff Development** – All training and development is linked to the SIP.

***Premises** - Improving the learning environment, both inside and out, remains a focus. Staff have worked hard to make immediate improvements to working areas, however SLT are currently writing a three year plan to utilise all spaces as learning environments.

***Support Services** – the school cleaning service continues to be effective. Some minor improvements are needed on the catering front, but this will be part of a whole action plan for the canteen. A quick-fire questionnaire will be sent to all children receiving school dinners. **SM** advised that HWB provide free surveys which might be of use.

***Health & Safety** – **SD** has completed all risk assessments for pregnant members of staff. The Health & Safety officer for VOGC is meeting with **SD** to look at accessibility for a Year 1 child.

***Budget** – this should be finalised within the next two weeks – following which the Finance Committee will meet to approve and ratify. Staffing levels will be maintained.

***Final Comments**

It has been a very busy and very exciting term. Staff continue to work hard to ensure that all children are making expected progress, whilst benefiting from engaging, first hand experiences. We have set ourselves, and the children, very challenging end of year targets, but are determined that we will meet them.

As we move into the summer term, our priority will be to implement the new curriculum and familiarise ourselves with Donaldson's recommendations – a wonderful opportunity to review and improve our current curriculum offer.

Correspondence

Email regarding fallen tree – as discussed. **CO'C** reminded governors that she has a glossary of acronyms.

Any Other Business

JJ wanted to place on record how impressed she was with the Eisteddfod. There was a lovely atmosphere and the children were completely engaged. **CN** also commented that it was a privilege to be part of the celebrations.

NL wished to acknowledge the staff who attended the residential week with the year 6 children. Governors asked for their thanks to be passed on to staff – their commitment was appreciated and not taken for granted. **SD** advised that there was a waiting list for staff who wished to attend the PGL week and also the weekend visit to Llangrannog!!

CN wondered if the staff were aware of the 'daily mile' initiative which has been trialled in Scotland? **SD** responded that a parent had brought it to her attention however, she had wondered about the logistics of it for our school. After some discussion it was suggested that perhaps a class or a year group could trial it and the results fed back. **SD** will discuss at the next staff meeting.

CO'C informed governors that the school council would attend the next meeting. The groups looking at the key questions would next meet in July. **SD** apologised that the March meeting had been rescheduled but she had to attend an important meeting regarding funding.

Matters Confidential

None

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 10th May
5.30PM Governing Body