

**Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Great Chesterford (Church of England)
Primary Academy held on 10 November 2015.**

Membership	Office	Term
Mr Mike Johnson	Parent Governor	25/03/2018
Ms Elfreda Tealby-Watson	Parent Governor	12/03/2017
* <i>Reverend Jeremy Parsons</i>	<i>Incumbent</i>	<i>Ex-Officio</i>
Mrs Natalie Starbuck	Co Opted Governor	21/09/2018
Mr Andrew Taylor	PCC [Great Chesterford] Chair	30/09/2019
Mrs Jennifer Fullerty	PCC [Littlebury]	TBC
Mr Bob Rust	CDET** Governor	05/11/2019
Mr Gary Benn	CDET** Governor	31/12/2016
Mr Alastair Blythe	CDET** Governor	13/11/2016
Ms Janet Menell	CDET** Governor	01/09/2019
Mr David Boatman	PCC [Little Chesterford]	08/09/2019
Mrs Lisa Jeremy	Co Opted Governor	12/11/2017
Mrs Fiona Keys	Staff Governor	Link
Mrs Sarah Mitchell	Staff Governor	16/03/2017
Mr Henry Weir	Principal	Headteacher
* <i>indicates absence</i>		Ex-Officio
** <i>Chelmsford Diocesan Education Trust</i>		

The Headteacher opened the meeting with a prayer

Action

24/15 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from the Rev Jeremy Parsons.
The Chair welcomed Bob Rust to his first meeting of the Full Governing Body.

25/15 Notification of AoB

None.

26/15 Notification of business interests

Mike Johnson advised the meeting that his wife was acting Headteacher for R A Butler Primary School.

MAIN BUSINESS

27/15 Admissions Policy

Lisa Jeremy, the Chair of the Personnel and Admissions Committee, reported that, as requested by the FGB, the Committee had considered the issues of the current admissions policy in great detail and had decided to consult with parents and the local community on the proposal to reduce the admissions number from 30 to 28 from the year 2017/18.

The local Parish Councils, Saffron Walden County High School, Parochial Church Councils, the Diocese and Local Authority had also been included in the consultation and asked to provide their comments and views on the proposal.

It was felt that if Essex CC agreed with the decision to reduce the intake, it was unlikely to change its view on how many children constituted a full class and may continue to allow appeals from parents against the academy's refusal to admit

children when classes already had 30 children in them.

The FGB needed to have a meeting soon after the end of the consultation period to consider all the responses and to make a decision. When considering their decision, the FGB should also consider the impact of the new houses being built in Great Chesterford. It was noted that, contrary to some beliefs, no right was given to families living in Littlebury, when the school in Littlebury was being closed, that they could send their children to the Great Chesterford school.

It was **agreed** to hold the meeting at 19:45 on Wednesday 13 January 2016.

All to note

28/15 Headteacher's report

The Headteacher highlighted the main points of his previously circulated Autumn Term report.

The major highlight had been the pupil's KS2 results published on Raiseonline, which again had been of a very high standard with the results for all years and different groups of pupils being equal to or above the National average figures. These results were achieved through the high standard and work rate of staff at the School. The School had an exceptional committed team of staff and it was important to maintain that level of commitment and morale.

The Headteacher also acknowledged the support given to Academy by governors who provided a wide range of talent, skills and experience.

It was noted this would be Henry's last Headteacher's report and the governors expressed their sincere thanks and appreciation for the work Henry had done in turning the school round from a school that was not a "happy school" when he first arrived to be a highly successful, happy and outstanding academy now.

The meeting noted that Sarah Mitchell was making good progress preparing herself to take over as the Headteacher in January. She had attended a number of courses, had been working with Henry on leading the staff, re-allocating some teaching staff to ensure classes had the right staff for each class. Sarah had visited a number of other schools and had had regular meetings with Anne Fisher. A mentor was being appointed to provide advice and support Sarah once she had taken over. The mentor would be a headteacher from one of the primary schools within the soft federation of primary schools that the Academy worked with.

There had been some good applicants for the KS2 teacher vacancy that would arise when Sarah took over as the headteacher.

29/15 School Development Plan/SEF

The Headteacher reported good progress was being made on implementing the 2015-16 School Development Plan and that Sarah Mitchell would be reviewing and issuing a revised plan in the new year that reflected her ideas and what she saw as the Academy's key priorities.

30/15 School performance

The pupil targets for 2016-17 needed to be agreed. The academy had not received any guidance of the assessment framework for KS1. The new assessment framework for KS2 had been implemented, which was about

preparing pupils for moving into secondary education. Anne Fisher was providing an oversight from other schools.

31/15 Safeguarding

Jan Menell had recently taken over the governor responsibility for safeguarding and was in the process of reviewing and updating herself on the Academy's safeguarding procedures. It was noted a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check was carried out for all volunteers.

ROUTINE BUSINESS

32/15 Membership

There were currently no vacancies on the Full Governing Body.

33/15 Chairman's action

The Chair and Vice- Chair had not taken any urgent action since the last meeting.

34/15 Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 16 September 2015 were approved as an true record of the meeting subject to the following amendment:

Minute 9/15 – should read “Gary Benn reported that guidance on applying for capital funding would be published in ~~June~~ October and the Academy would be able to make two bids to the Education Funding Agency [EFA] for capital funding.”

35/15 Matters arising

Minute 21/15 – Staff Training – It was confirmed governors could attend the governor training courses offered by Cambridgeshire CC on an individual member basis, which the Academy would pay for. The Academy would review the range and quality of courses offered before deciding whether to sign up as a school.

All other matters arising from the meeting had been completed or had been included on the agenda of the meeting for discussion.

36/15 Minutes/reports of committees

a) Finance and Premises

The Chair of the Finance and Premises Committee, Alastair Blythe, highlighted the main points of the minutes of the last meeting of the committee.

The Committee had spent a lot of time reviewing and updating the risk register relating to Finance and Premises and had allocated the ownership and responsibility to manage risks under the Committee's remit to individual members.

The Committee had reviewed its terms of reference of agreed they reflected its responsibilities and did not need amending.

The meeting had reviewed the Financial Regulations for 2015/16 and were waiting for Price Bailey, the auditors, to provide their report on where they could be improved.

The Committee had reviewed the 2015-16 Budget that showed a year end surplus of £75,000 and had **agreed** to recommend the budget to the FGB for approval.

The Committee had received the draft Audited Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2015 together with the auditors Management Report setting out the audit approach, audit findings and recommendations. The Auditor had raised a concern on the level of internal controls on using journals to post transactions in the accounting records. Alastair would follow this up at a meeting with the Auditors on Thursday 19th November 2015. The Committee had **agreed** to recommend that the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2015 should be approved and signed by the Chair, on behalf of the all the governors, before being presented to at the Annual General Meeting to be held in the New Year.

The Committee had **agreed** to recommend that Price Bailey be re-appointed as the Academy's auditors for a further year.

The meeting had agreed to carry forward to its next meeting the review of teaching space and large classes.

It was noted that Friends (PTA) were keen to raise funds for specific projects and it was agreed to draw up a list of projects to fund.

It was **agreed** to accept all the Committee's recommendations.

b) Curriculum

As agreed at the previous meeting of the FGB, the Committee had reviewed the risk register relating to its area of responsibility and noted that the only major risk would be the impact on the Academy of a teacher shortage and the need to fill vacancies without delay.

The Committee had reviewed its Terms of Reference and had **agreed** to make one recommendation, to amend the provision for the election of the Committee Chair, who was now appointed by the FGB.

The Committee had reviewed the pupil attainment results published on RaiseOnline that once again were significantly above National averages.

The Academy was involved in 'The Big Write', a new dynamic way of teaching the new National Curriculum. It had been designed to engage pupils in writing techniques including SPAG and also provided a basis for achieving consistency in the teaching of writing and SPAG across the Academy.

Pupils at the Academy had been involved in a music workshop with Nicola Benedetti.

Mike Johnson would be visiting the Academy to help update the safeguarding Policy to include 'The Prevent Duty' provisions on radicalisation and to review the assessment and marking policies.

The FGB noted the Committee's comments that the Academy needed to be more proactive in communicating its strengths and achievements in being an outstanding school to curb a recent increase in criticism and negative comments from parents.

It was **agreed** to accept all the Committee's recommendations.

c) **Personnel and Admissions**

Lisa Jeremy, the Chair of the Personnel and Admissions Committee, highlighted the main points of the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee.

As requested by the FGB, the Committee had reviewed and **agreed** its terms of reference and the Code of Conduct for the Governing Body Policy. The Committee had also reviewed the risks on the risk register relating to its area of responsibility.

At a recent Essex CC Admission Appeals hearing, the Headteacher and Sarah Mitchell had had a discussion with the Clerk of the Appeals panel about the Academy setting up its own Appeals Panel. It was felt that in light of the amount of resources required, both in time and cost, to set up an independent panel of qualified individuals to hear appeals was not viable and it was felt the Academy should continue with the current arrangements.

The committee had discussed how best to support the teaching staff who were teaching classes of more than 30 children. It had **agreed** that extra funding should be provided to pay for Teaching Assistants to work additional hours to take over some of the teachers' tasks and to provide them with the necessary time to plan and execute the new curriculum.

The committee had reviewed the teachers' pay scales and had unanimously **agreed** to uplift them by 2% to reflect the level of performance in teaching and learning achieved in the past year and the additional workload from teaching larger classes.

The meeting discussed the change in the Essex CC School transport policy that now only provided free travel to pupils to attend the nearest school to where they lived. This was causing problems to parents when the nearest school was not the same school within their catchment area, which included children living in Littlebury. It was noted that the Dame Bradbury Education Foundation wanted to raise the issue and illogical change in policy and it was **agreed** to provide a written statement to help raise the awareness of the issue. It was noted that the Foundation considered applications from parents to provide funding to help with transport to schools.

It was **agreed** to accept all the Committee's recommendations.

37/15 Governor visits

Jan Menell had visited the Academy and had observed the children in Reception being taught. She had been very impressed on how well the teachers and volunteers worked together and was planning to visit and observe Year One next week.

Natalie Starbuck had also visited Reception in July and reported good progress had been made over the year and the children had settled in well and knew the daily patterns and routines.

Mrs Davies and Mrs Howes had carried out home visits for all the children that had joined Reception in September 2015. This had been a new initiative and the results from an anonymous questionnaire had shown an overwhelmingly positive

response to the new initiative, so it had been **agreed** to continue with the home visits.

Gary Benn had visited the Academy to review the property statutory compliance records and reported that they were all up to date and in order.

David Boatman had visited the academy to speak to the staff and to report that the governors appreciated all the hard work they were all doing, especially in light of the current high number of pupils at the school.

It was **agreed** that all governors should use a proforma visit report and send completed visit reports to Natalie who would maintain a log of visits. It was **agreed** to email a copy of the proforma visit report to all governors.

Lisa Jeremy and Elfreda Tealby-Watson had attended Assembly and Elfreda had visited to observe the school's cross country race.

Andrew Taylor had also attended Assembly and had set up regular fortnightly meetings with Henry and Sarah.

38/15 Governor training

Janet Menell had completed the Safeguarding course and would be undertaking a governor's induction course with Bob Rust.

39/15 Date/time of future meetings

All meetings commence at 19:45

13th January 2016.

26th January 2016 [Joint governor/ staff meeting (TBC)]

22nd March 2016

7th June 2016

Committees to organise their meetings to feed into these meetings

40/15 Any other business

None.

Signed by Andrew Taylor [Chair] on the 13th January 2016