

**Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Great Chesterford (Church of England)
Primary Academy held on 16 September 2015.**

Membership		Office	Term
* Mr Mike Johnson	Parent Governor		25/03/2018
Ms Elfreda Tealby-Watson	Parent Governor		12/03/2017
Reverend Jeremy Parsons	Incumbent		Ex-Officio
Mrs Natalie Starbuck	Co Opted Governor		21/09/2018
Mr Andrew Taylor	PCC [Great Chesterford]	Chair	30/09/2015
Mrs Jennifer Fullerty	PCC [Littlebury]		TBC
* Mr Bob Rust	CDET** Governor		TBC
Mr Gary Benn	CDET** Governor		31/12/2016
Mr Alastair Blythe	CDET** Governor		13/11/2016
Ms Janet Menell	CDET** Governor		11/06/2017
Mr David Boatman	PCC [Little Chesterford]		TBC
Mrs Lisa Jeremy	Co Opted Governor		12/11/2017
Mrs Fiona Keys	Staff Governor	Link	16/03/2017
Mrs Sarah Mitchell	Staff Governor		16/03/2017
Mr Henry Weir	Principal	Headteacher	Ex-Officio

* indicates absence

** Chelmsford Diocesan Education Trust

The Rev. Jeremy Parsons opened the meeting with a prayer

Action

1/15 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mike Johnson and Bob Rust

2/15 Election of chair

The Clerk took the Chair and reported that Andrew Taylor has indicated he was willing to stand for election as the Chair of Governors for 2015/16. No other nominations had been received prior to the meeting and following a proposal by Natalie Starbuck, seconded by Elfreda Tealby-Watson, Andrew Taylor was unanimously elected Chair.

Andrew Taylor took the Chair

3/15 Election of vice chair

David Boatman had indicated that he was willing to stand for election as vice chair of Governors for the Academic year 2015/16. No other nominations had been received prior to the meeting and following a proposal by Andrew Taylor, seconded by Gary Benn, David Boatman was unanimously elected Vice- Chair.

4/15 Membership

The Chair reported that Jonathan Worrall had taken the decision to stand down as a CDET Governor to spend more time with his family.

The Chair had approached Jan Menell and Bob Rust who had expressed an interest in becoming governors.

Jan has a background in health, children's work and safeguarding. Her grandchildren attend the academy.

Bob Rust used to work for ECC Education and has experience in relation to finance and property.

Clerk

It was **agreed** that they be recommended to the Chelmsford Diocese for

nomination as CDET governors and the Clerk would send the appropriate forms for Jan and Bob to complete.

The Chair's term of Office as the PCC [Great Chesterford] Governor was due to end on 30 September 2015 and the PCC had agreed to extend it for a further four years.

5/15 Register of Business Interests

- a) The Governors present updated the Register of Business Interests and it was **agreed** the Clerk would forward forms to those governors absent to complete.
- b) No governor declared a potential conflict of interest on any item to be discussed at the meeting

Clerk

6/15 Standing Orders

The meeting received and approved the Standing Orders for the Governing Body.

7/15 Notification of any other business [AoB]

- Teachers' pay awards

Main Business

8/15 Policies

a) **Anti-Bribery Policy**

The meeting received a previously circulated Anti-Bribery Policy and it was **agreed** to adopt the policy and that the Finance and Premises Committee would review it in due course.

Chair F&P

b) **Governors Code of Conduct**

The meeting received the previously circulated Governors Code and it was **agreed** to adopt the policy and that the Personnel and Admissions Committee would review it in due course.

Chair P&A

9/15 Headteacher's report

The Headteacher introduced his previously circulated report for the Autumn term and highlighted the following points:

The new curriculum was firmly embedded in all the required years and would now be rolled out to Years 2 and 6.

Following the Government's decision to abolish levels, the current method to measure children's progress, the staff had been working on implementing a new assessment programme based on children taking seven tests where the average pass mark would be 100. The new assessment programme would create additional work for teachers.

The Academy's Key Stage 2 [KS2] results would be published on RAISEonline in October/ November, which would allow the Academy to compare its results nationally.

The KS2 results for the Academy had been exceptional when compared to the nationally expected standards for most 11-year-olds, i.e. 4 levels of progress.

The Governors congratulated the Headteacher and Leadership Team on achieving the excellent results and asked the Headteacher to convey the Governors' appreciation to all the teaching staff for all their hard work in achieving such an excellent set of results.

HT

The biggest issue facing the Academy was admissions. There were now no year

classes with less than 30 pupils and the number of pupils in Year 6 was 34. The reason for the classes being oversubscribed was the number of parents winning appeals against the Academy's decision not to offer a places at the Academy on the grounds that all classes were at full capacity. Essex CC had stated that they felt class sizes of up to 32 was OK but would not confirm that this total would not be increased in the future. Local Authorities had the power to direct schools to take pupils but for Academies had to make a direction through the Secretary of State for Education. Essex CC was currently making a direction through the Secretary for the Academy to take another child and another appeal was scheduled for the end of the month.

Essex CC had predicted that only 20 children would be seeking a place at the Academy next year, which the Leadership Team felt was highly unlikely.

Joe Chells, the Locality Community Commissioning Officer for Education and Lifelong Learning at Essex County Council, had visited the school and seen the size of the school and classrooms. A representative from Cambridgeshire County Council had also visited.

David Boatman felt the biggest strategic challenge facing the Academy was the ability to offer places to children of families moving into the current catchment area.

In his opinion, there were no controls left over the number of pupils that the Academy could admit. It would be unlikely the Secretary of State for Education would override the Local Authority directions for the Academy to take on additional pupils.

A lot of families were moving to the area due to the number of outstanding schools at both primary and secondary levels.

There were two ways the Academy could try and overcome the problem of classes exceeding 30 pupils and the potential deterioration in academic standards.

The first would be to reduce the intended number of admissions to say 27 to 28. This would reduce the number of spaces available to pupils in the outer catchment area but would allow the Academy to offer places to the children of families moving to catchment. It was noted the school had set a lower intended admissions number in the past for this reason.

Secondly, the Academy should do everything to prevent that standard of education falling as a result of the larger class sizes. Large Class sizes created extra work for teaching staff and the Academy should ameliorate the additional pressures on the teaching staff. If the average number of pupils in each class exceeding 30 was 2, the Academy would receive an additional per-capita funding in the region of £50k. The Academy should consider how best to use this additional funding to effectively reduce the increased pressure on the teaching staff.

If teachers were not provided with support to help with the extra pressure, there could be an increase in teaching staff turnover.

The Academy should also seek capital funding to provide more teaching space for the larger class sizes and break-out areas for more targeted teaching.

Gary Benn reported that guidance on applying for capital funding would be published in June and the Academy would be able to make two bids to the Education Funding Agency [EFA] for capital funding. Planning permission had to be obtained before the EFA would consider an application to fund projects altering the building, which was also listed.

The Academy could not use the Health and Safety Regulations on the minimum

amount of space needed for the number of pupils, as the regulations were only guidelines for schools and academies.

The Academy had reserves that it could use to provide additional space, but also needed to consider using reserves to cover falling income and increasing costs in the longer term.

It was **agreed that**:

- a) The Finance and Premises Committee would review the current amount of teaching space and identify options for increasing it;
- b) The Personnel and Admissions Committee would consider the different entry totals that the Academy could set and the impact on the finance and teaching resource for each one;
- c) The Leadership Team would consider and provide a plan on how the additional funding could be used effectively to reduce the extra work and pressure on teachers;
- d) The Personnel and Admissions Committee would follow up on the appeal to be made on the refusal to admit another child because there were no spaces available; and
- e) The Curriculum Committee would review the impact on the standard of teaching and how extra support could help maintain the teaching and learning standards.

Chair F&P

Chair P&A

HW

Chair P&A

Chair Curriculum

10/15 School Development Plan [SDP]

The meeting received the previously distributed SDP 2015/16.

It was noted that Sarah Mitchell may wish to amend the plan to reflect her own priorities once she has taken over as Headteacher in the New Year.

It was important the plan included the strategic issues currently facing the Academy such as the need for additional space and the impact on teaching from the additional number of children in all year groups.

11/15 Safeguarding

No safeguarding issues arising since the last meeting were reported. It was **agreed** that the governor responsible for safeguarding, should visit the Academy to review and sign off the new safeguarding records and procedures.

12/15 Risk Register

The meeting received the previously circulated draft risk register prepared by Alastair Blythe. The risk register was designed to help the Leadership Team and governors manage those areas that could have a strategic impact on the Academy's operations and would also demonstrate to Ofsted good leadership and governance practice.

The scores measuring the likelihood and impact from a risk arising were subjective and it was key governors should visit the Academy and carry out assessments on the risks for which they were responsible and cross reference their assessments to the risk register.

All

It was important the register should include all the current strategic risks facing the Academy and was owned by the whole school. Lesser important risks had not been included on the register as they were treated as normal business activities.

It was **agreed** the committees should review the risk register to ensure all the strategic risks had been included; any changes would be collated and presented for review at the next FGB meeting.

All Committee Chairs/ HT

Routine Business

13/15 Committee terms of reference and membership

a) Committee terms of reference

It was **agreed** to adopt the previously circulated terms of reference for each committee as they stood and that each committee would review their own terms of reference at their first meeting and advise the FGB of any changes they wish to make.

All Committee
Chairs

b) Committee membership

The meeting received and noted the previously circulated committee membership list for 2015-16 and **agreed** that Elfreda Tealby-Watson should not be a member on the Personnel and Admissions Committee.

It was noted that Sarah Mitchell would attend all the committee meetings as part of her induction as the new Headteacher.

14/15 Governors with Special Responsibility

The meeting noted the responsibilities that had been provisionally delegated to individual governors. It was agreed the responsibility for safeguarding should be carried out by a non-staff governor and Jan Menell, who had a background in safeguarding, had agreed to take on the responsibility.

JM

Sarah Smith, an independent School Consortium Finance Officer, was the Responsible Officer and reported to the Finance and Premises Committee.

It was **agreed** Fiona Keys would take on the responsibility for Numeracy and the Curriculum Committee would select a member to take on the responsibility for Literacy.

FK
Chair
Curriculum

15/15 Financial Regulations

It was **agreed** to approve the 2015/16 Financial Regulations as they stood and the Finance and Premises Committee would review them at their first meeting and advise the FGB of any changes they wished to make.

Chair F&P

16/15 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2015 were **approved** as a true record of the meeting.

17/15 Matters arising

The following actions were noted:

Minute 93/14 - Multi Use Games Area [MUGA] – The Finance and Premises Committee were currently reviewing the proposal and a couple of issues that had been identified.

Minute 105/14 - Minutes/reports of committees - Personnel and Admissions Committee

The advert to recruit a new KS2 Teacher to replace Sarah Mitchell's teaching responsibilities once she takes over as the Headteacher had been placed with a closing date of 5 October 2015.

Minute 106/14 – Governor visits

Jennifer Fullerty had agreed to visit Year 6.

It was **agreed** to check that all governors were receiving notifications of all upcoming school events

HT

David Boatman **agreed** to visit the school to talk to staff about staff morale.

DB

18/15 Chair's action
No urgent action had been taken by the Chair or Vice Chair since the last meeting.

19/15 Correspondence
No correspondence relevant to the Governing Body was reported.

20/15 Governor visits
It was **agreed** the committees should identify members to carry out governor visits and to include them on a timetable of visits for 2015/16.

**All Committee
Chairs**

21/15 Governor training

a) Report from the Link Governor

Fiona Keys provided an oral report on governor training and reported that the two recently appointed governors would go be attending Governor Induction training courses.

It was **agreed** the Academy should sign up to the governor training courses offered by Cambridgeshire CC and that all governors should review the courses on offer and advise Fiona of courses they would like to attend.

HT/All

Instructions on how to use the Governor E-Learning (GEL) online courses were provided.

b) Courses attended by governors since the last meeting

The Chair reported he had completed a number of GEL online courses.

All governors were asked to advise Fiona of all courses completed so she could update the Staff/Governor Training Log.

All

22/15 Date/time of future meetings

- 10th November 2015
- 26th January 2016 [Joint governor/ staff meeting (TBC)]
- 22nd March 2016
- 7th June 2016

Committees to organise their meetings to feed into these meetings
Henry Weir and Sarah Mitchell left the meeting

**23/15 Any other business
Teachers' Pay Awards**

It was noted the new pay awards were effective from the start of the new academic year but could be backdated to allow time for the proposals to be fully considered and agreed.

It was **agreed** the Personnel and Admissions Committee should review the proposals in more detail and had delegated authority to make a final decision.

Chair P&A

Closure 19:30 hrs

Signed _____ **Date** _____
Chair