

**Finance & Resources Committee Meeting**  
**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 5.30 p.m.**  
**Queen Emma School**  
**Minutes**

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Governors present:

Richard Baldwin  
 Sarah Jarman (EHT)  
 Sean Lang (CoG)  
 Harriet Phillips (Chair)  
 Nicole Wilson  
 Richard Wilson  
 Stanley Wilson

Others present:

Julia Neal  
 Cath Stubbs  
 Zoe Vassiliou (Clerk)

	Item	Supporting Paperwork	Notes	Actions
1	Apologies for absence (Clerk)		All governors are present and the meeting is quorate.	
2	Elect Chair (Clerk)		Harriet Phillips was unanimously elected as Chair of the Committee. This was proposed by Richard Wilson and seconded by Stanley Wilson.	
3	Declaration of Interest (Chair)		None declared.	
4	Agree Minutes of the last meeting	Minutes 24.06.2024	The minutes were agreed.	
5	Matters Arising		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The minutes amended by the Clerk with regard to the Flexible Working Policy.</li> <li>2. The local authority were advised of the cost of mat leave cover.</li> <li>3. Richard Baldwin has joined the Governing Body and was welcomed onto the Committee. Richard works at AstraZeneca and had responded to an advert to become a governor.</li> <li>4. With regard to the trees overhanging a local residents garden we have not heard anything further from Richard Rice at the Local Authority.</li> </ol>	
6	Review Terms of Reference (Committee)	Terms of Reference 2024	The committee reviewed and accepted the terms of reference.	

7	Personnel Up-date (SJ)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interviews start tomorrow for the Federation Business Manager and Richard Wilson is joining the interview panel. 4 candidates were shortlisted for interview, with two interviews taking place tomorrow and one further interview on Monday. The candidates are high quality with school and business manager experience.</li> <li>2. <b>Governor question: When will they be available to start?</b> Candidates may need to work a notice period depending on who we might appoint.</li> <li>3. 3 TAs at Queen Emma, working 1:1 with children, have handed in their notice and we will need to recruit to replace them. We are currently interviewing candidates.</li> <li>4. S27 changes in both nursery settings have taken place; we are fully staffed at Queen Emma but continue to advertise for a part-time L2 TA at Queen Edith. This role is currently being covered by existing staff.</li> <li>5. Previous DH at Queen Emma has now taken early retirement.</li> <li>6. <b>Governor challenge: Is the staffing plan presented at end of last year school year, which was approved by the RIG (now FIG), what we are moving ahead with?</b> Changes take place all the time particularly with regard to new pupils joining us who have SEND, so we plan staffing to the best of our ability. With the TA resignations the number of employees will stay the same but their names will change. Any changes will be shared with the FIG.</li> <li>7. <b>Governor challenge: Has there been pressure from the local authority to not replace these staff?</b> No there has been no pressure to not recruit for permanent members of staff; the local authority is pressurising us not to use agency staff, which is understandable but not always practical. For example a TA we appointed in the Summer decided to take a better paid job and not join us, so we have had to put an agency TA in place for a child with an EHCP at short notice.</li> <li>8. <b>Governor challenge: Are you keeping a summary of all that you have asked them about staffing and which they have agreed is necessary?</b> Yes.</li> <li>9. When recommending that a member of staff is not replaced, or an alternative is put in place, the EHT as previously will always bring the recommendation to the committee to discuss and decide what is in the best interests of the Federation.</li> <li>10. <b>Governor challenge: Do TAs all have a common reason for resigning?</b> Many TAs joined us some years ago to complete interventions, which we are now less able to do given staffing constraints. TAs are now expected to work with children where physical interventions are more commonly required. Also their salary is not competitive given how much they are asked to do, and they can find a far less stressful job for the same, or more, money. This reflects the national debate on provision for children with high</li> </ol>	
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			<p>level needs who require specialist settings and are unable to find a suitable school.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. <b>Governor challenge: Have parents noticed a negative impact on SEND support being provided to their children?</b> Most parents are appreciative of the support provided to their children by our TAs. However there is an impact of scarce resources on pupils including some SEND children who are now sharing a TA instead of having 1:1 support. The local authority has asked us to work on a bare minimum staffing and we do have concerns that they will continue to ask us to further reduce current staffing, particularly those posts who provide support to our most vulnerable children and families which will have the biggest impact on our pupils.</li> <li>12. These staff also provide cover and support across play and lunch time and with the DHTs in class at Queen Emma they are no longer able to pick up lunchtime supervision.</li> <li>13. <b>Governor challenge: do any of the EHCPs specify that a child at our schools is entitled to a full-time one-to-one TA?</b> No this is not specified in any of the EHCPs across our two schools.</li> </ol>	
8	Budget Overview (SJ) (pending SBS being operational)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cumulative Expense Analysis Report</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Over the summer the local authority has been working with SBS to provide an up-grade for schools. This was expected to be completed in readiness for September. Unfortunately this is not the case and many schools across Cambridgeshire, including our schools, still cannot gain financial over-sight. Therefore you will notice that there are no SBS reports being shared with you at this meeting.</li> <li>2. The EHT and Finance Manager have not yet received their login details from the local authority.</li> <li>3. In the meantime the LA have asked all schools to share the CEA which is taken from FMS (the software that we put our information into).</li> <li>4. <b>Committee challenge: all governors on the committee wish to complain to the Local Authority about this lack of over-sight. With schools required to always seek best value it seems that this has not applied to the local authority as SBS is not a best value product and since it's introduction it has been a shambles.</b></li> <li>5. The CEA provides our financial position as at the end of August 2024.</li> <li>6. Under <i>ledger code</i> you will find anything that is budgeted for (01 = QED, 02 =QEM).</li> <li>7. <i>Remaining</i> is what's left.</li> <li>8. <i>Allocated</i> – this generates what we're predicted to spend by the end of August.</li> <li>9. The headline is that we've spent £154,002 but were budgeted to spend £181,178 so are in credit by £27k at the moment.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>To note:</u></b></p>	<p><u>CoG to draft letter</u></p>

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Kitchen Staff (Row 69 to 70)</i> – we didn't budget anything for kitchen staff as catering has been sub-contracted, but in the last column you will see an overspend of £3k. We are looking into this but believe costs for nursery cover staff have accidentally been recorded under this ledger code. The finance manager is working with RB to undo this.</li> <li>2. <i>Technician staff pay (Row 40)</i> – we have had no ICT technician in role since May 2024. Costs from March 2024 to May 2024 haven't been split between the two schools so it looks like an overspend. This will be corrected.</li> <li>3. <i>Travel allowance</i> – We have a £200 budget and have gone over this amount. A member of staff who claims travel through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party (the Maths Hub) so we will receive that money back.</li> <li>4. <i>Governor training (Row 85)</i> – The finance training provided to governors hadn't been budgeted for.</li> <li>5. <i>INSET supply (Row 104/105)</i> – This has been used to pay for cover for people who have gone on a course. However we don't think that the member of staff has covered courses on all these occasions and the cost is being recorded in the wrong ledger code. The finance manager is looking into this.</li> <li>6. <i>Agency staff pay (E27)</i> – we budgeted to have agency teaching until the end of Summer term and on top of that we asked the LA if we could appoint a teacher through an agency and this is the cost.</li> <li>7. <i>Cleaning materials (134)</i> – overspent against prediction as at the start of the year we do a huge order so this will balance out over the next months.</li> <li>8. <i>Row 116</i> – This is the funding statement and is being checked by the finance manager as we think it might not be accurate.</li> <li>9. <i>Health and Safety</i> - is overspent according to where we should be at the end of August as we had to pay the Local Authority Service Level Agreement. This will balance across the financial year.</li> <li>10. <i>Building maintenance</i> – is overspent compared to budget as we have many issues across both schools.</li> <li>11. <b>Governor challenge: Are the LA confident that the information provided in the CEA is satisfactory for governors to be able to fulfil their role of financial over-sight of the Federation?</b> The SBS is a lot more accurate and the CEA does not include the 5.5% up-lift for teachers and any support staff pay review. It does show you the here and now but does not forecast forwards three years, which we are being asked to do, and it doesn't provide us access to our current financial position. RB does have access to SBS and we continue to inform him of any amendments that need to be put into SBS. Also</li> </ol>	<p><u>MA to amend</u></p> <p><u>MA to amend</u></p> <p><u>MA to look into and amend</u></p>
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			<p>under S27, nursery expenditure has been separated from school expenditure so we are unable to make any forecast with regard to nursery expenditure.</p> <p>12. We are meeting with RB to put together some financial scenarios so that we have some understanding of our financial position. It is however, impossible to make forecasts.</p> <p>13. A financial audit of both schools will take place on Thursday; they had requested our 3 year recovery plan which we have been unable to provide due to problems with SBS.</p> <p>14. The FIG requested our current financial position for the meeting next week which we are unable to provide, which they however, can access through RB.</p> <p>15. <b>Governor challenge: Is there an overlap between the financial audit and the FIG?</b> There is an overlap and we will be advised on better financial practices and they will make recommendations for the Business Manager. They have flagged up some areas that they would like to look into further; they will trawl through audit trails look at minutes, invoices, BACs payments and authorisations.</p>	
9	Audit for first HR Committee of the academic year	Audit 2024 - 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This audit has been completed by the Clerk and is the EPM model template. It is good practice to complete this for the first committee meeting of each year.</li> <li><b>Governor challenge: Do we not have a Managing Organisational Change policy?</b> There is a policy ratified in 2022. Clerk to check current policy against EPM model policy and bring to the next Committee meeting. Also to amend the audit.</li> </ul>	<u>Amend policy and bring to next meeting</u>
10	Policies for review and ratification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health &amp; Safety Policy</li> <li>Staff induction policy, no up-dates at EPM</li> </ul>	<p>Names of personnel have been up-dated including 3-day first aiders. Page numbering looks to have gone astray – Clerk to amend.</p> <p><b>Governor challenge: What is the role of the classroom H&amp;S checklist?</b> This details the expectations upon teaching staff to ensure that their classrooms are safe environments; storing scissors, trip hazards, storing at height. The site manager and school secretary have recently conducted a H&amp;S walk based upon this proforma which is available to all teaching staff to take note of.</p> <p><b>Ratification: The Health and Safety Policy was ratified by the Finance and Resources Committee.</b></p> <p>Clerk to remove the name of the Federation Business Manager. <b>Ratification: Staff Induction policy was ratified by the Finance and Resources Committee.</b></p>	<u>Clerk to amend</u>
11	Teacher's pay award for 24/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPM Advice Note</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher pay award of 5.5% is still out for consultation. RB had included a 3% pay award in our budget, unfunded. Although we are to understand that the 5.5% pay award will be funded by the government.</li> <li>However the Support staff pay award, currently under consultation will not be funded so</li> </ul>	

			savings from the fully funded 5.5% pay rise teachers will be off-set. Support staff Unions are still balloting their members.	
12	Premises (SJ)		<p><b>Queen Edith</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rubberised paint will be applied to the bottom of the Queen Edith swimming pool at a cost of £2k. This expenditure has already been planned from our capital budget. The wrong paint was applied last time. It has been difficult to find people to do the job and they won't provide a guarantee. The sides of the pool seem okay currently. Our favoured option is to line the pool but this is too expensive.</li> <li>2. The single mobile which is unsuitable for use remains on site. The disposal is down to us but quotes for this are very high. CKC, who provide before and after school care were interested in expanding their provision and had proposed that they would install a new mobile classroom for which they would cover the cost, including the removal of the old mobile and installation of the new mobile, but it was too expensive so this not going ahead.</li> <li>3. The larger mobile which houses two classes has a number of leaks in the roof. This is for the Local Authority to maintain. The site manager has been so concerned that he has had PCM out to visit who have advised that it requires a new roof and has requested that the local authority come out to complete a survey.</li> <li>4. A quiet area in the KS2 playground with wooden benches and trellis fencing is starting to rot. We have had to cut the trellis down and this remains an on-going area that we are looking at.</li> <li>5. PSFA are looking into replacing trim trail equipment in KS1 play-ground.</li> <li>6. <b>Governor question: What is the capital budget?</b> We have £9k per school.</li> </ol> <p><b>Queen Emma</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The main roof is leaking every time we have rain. PCM have plugged some gaps but after heavy rain water has leaked into classrooms and wet the desks. We have contacted the local authority to alert them to the fact that we will need a new roof.</li> <li>2. The Hall floor is wearing down and the sheen has been removed exposing rough wood with splinters. This will be resealed during the October half term.</li> <li>3. Our CCTV has gone kaput and we have had a quote of £2k from our existing provider who can replace the cameras as the hardware is fine. We have contacted PCM to ask if it invalidates our insurance and to ask how long it will take until we get it done.</li> </ol>	
13	Health and Safety	Queen Edith H&S Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Battery system for fire alarm has all been repaired.</li> </ul>	

		minutes 17.06.2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCTV – EHT will follow up CCTV concerns with AB and DR; apparently the hard-drive is full and the disk couldn't be cleared.</li> </ul>	
14	What is the impact of decisions made during this meeting upon the standards and improvement of the Federation?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of reduced staffing on SEND provision.</li> <li>• Impact of not having access to SBS on financial oversight for governors.</li> </ul>	
15	Safeguarding		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff received safeguarding up-dates and the safeguarding compliance documents including the up-dated KCSIE and safeguarding and child protection policy.</li> <li>2. Completed the MyConcern audit which was presented to FGB in July. We have drafted some guiding principles for the system and these have been shared with DDSLs.</li> <li>3. TAs have received training and feedback on the quality of reporting on MyConcern.</li> <li>4. Nicki Simmons has completed training as a DDSL.</li> <li>5. Following the attack in the Summer we have reviewed security for afterschool clubs provided by third party providers; often the main door lock is de-activated so people can come and go and we are not happy with this. We have drafted a letter to all third party providers and it is their responsibility to have a fob and let their clients in making sure that the main access remains locked. We are looking at how to ensure only certain zones within our schools are available to them.</li> </ol>	
16	Correspondence Circulated		<p>Biographies Pecuniary interest Safeguarding compliance documents</p>	
17	Items to be reported to parents			
18	Any other business		Harriet Phillips and Joanna MacKenzie have conducted a governance audit which will be presented at the next FGB.	
19	<b>Date of next meeting:</b>		<b>25<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 5.30pm</b>	

Signature:



Dated: 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024