

Full Governing Body Meeting
Monday 29th April 2024, 6.00p.m.
Queen Edith Primary School
MINUTES



Governors Present:

Ambili Nair
 Fran Hughes
 Harriet Phillips
 Joanna MacKenzie
 Nicole Wilson
 Richard Wilson
 Sarah Jarman (EHT)
 Sean Lang (Chair)
 Siobhan Dickens
 Stanley Wilson
 Steve Rothwell

Others Present:

Cath Stubbs
 Hayley Brooker
 Julia Neal
 Nicki Simmons
 Rachel Holman
 Zoe Vassiliou (Clerk)

Item	Supporting Paperwork and notes	Notes	Actions
1	Apologies for Absence (Clerk)	Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Catherine Monument, Craig Dyer, Hannah Lewis and Sulochana Subramaniam.	
2	Declaration of Interest (Chair)	None declared.	
3	Agree minutes of the last meeting (All)	Minutes agreed subject to amendments to be made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 4 – Chair to meet the “pupil lighthouse team”. Item 5 (21) – detail that funding for Forest School is at Queen Edith. Item 5 (22) – detail that QEM Y6 to visit AZ in June. Item 5 (23) – remove confidential information. Item 6 (6) – amend that to “than”. 	Amendments made by Clerk 30.04.2024.
4	Matters arising (All)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PSFA at both schools have agreed to fund the Leader in Me programme for one year. NS continues to provide support as Acting Head at Over. It had been planned that she would provide 2 full days and 2 half days of support this term, however, as someone has been found to provide a day of support, NS will now provide support for 2 full days and 1 half day. 	

5	Approve Budget 2024-2025 (All)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QED Draft Budget 2024-25.19.04.2024 • QEM Draft Budget 2024-25.19.04.2024 • QF Joint Draft Budget 2024-25.19.04.2024 • Summary of YE 2023-24 and explanation of draft budget 2024-25 • Protocol on deficit budgets • Deficit Licence Application 2024-25 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chair confirmed that the significant over-spend in 2023/24 was in large part caused by insufficient funding for pupils with SEND needs and very unusual levels of long term sickness, which had a significant impact on spending at Queen Emma. 2. The issue of funding for SEND pupils does sit with the Local Authority, who continue to allocate spaces at our schools to children with high level SEND / behavioural needs without us having the proper resources (money and staff) to fund their support. 3. The failure to implement the new SBS system in a timely fashion providing training for relevant staff also made it very difficult for governors to access the information they needed to monitor spending, although they were aware of the overspend on agency spending and this was discussed at F&R and FGB meetings. This was particularly the case at the Queens' Federation as the FBM and FM didn't have working passwords until six months of the financial year had elapsed. 4. The Chair and EHT met with Tom Kelly who did concede that the implementation of SBS had not run smoothly. It also appears that the Local Authority had been aware of the supply staff overspend but had not raised this with the Federation, but it was not clear why this had not happened. 5. The draft budgets have required considerable savings and as staffing is the greater part of our expenditure this is where savings have been made. 6. A few further tweaks have been made to the draft budgets since they were shared with the FGB at our extraordinary meeting on 23.04.2024. 7. The joint position for the Federation for 2024/25, as the draft budget currently stands, is a deficit of £173,366 which is made up as follows: £56,015 at Queen Edith and £117,551 at Queen Emma. In summary this means that we need to make further savings of £173,366 across the Federation in order to be able to set a balanced budget for 2024/25. Should we not be able to get the budget to balance in year, we will need to apply for a deficit licence by 10th May 2024. 8. The position of the Local Authority is that we have to make the in-year deficit of £173,366 disappear and to repay the 2023/24 deficit over the next 3 to 4 years. 9. Challenge: Do the RIG have the power to vary this? The first meeting with the RIG takes place tomorrow so we will find out more. 10. Challenge: How could we make further savings for 2024/25 to tackle the in-year deficit? The Local Authority are keen for us to have governor-lead provision in our nurseries which means that they would not need to be staffed by teachers. From September to March this would represent a saving of £12k at each school. This saving is off-set against the cost of 2 L2 TAs who would need to be employed and redundancy costs. Only 33 offers have been made for Reception 2024 at Queen Emma; if we could run only 1 class at Queen Emma we 	
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			<p>could make considerable savings on teaching and support staff costs without having to make redundancies. The ICT Technician has resigned today and will not be replaced which saves £11k. In total these savings amount to c. £75k so we are still short by £100k.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Challenge: What do the local authority imagine we should do? We hope that this will be discussed at the RIG tomorrow but it is clear that any further cuts to staffing would impact the health and safety of our pupils and leave us unable to meet our statutory duties. The LA have suggested that non-teaching staff should be in class, which we have already accounted for in the draft budget. 12. Challenge: is it possible to combine Reception with year 1 at Queen Emma? We have considered this but there are too many children in year 1 for us to be able to do this. 13. Due to long-term sickness in Cubs Room (2 year old room at QEM) we don't have L3 nursery assistants in class and are not meeting our statutory duties. We have contacted the Early Years team at the LA to seek advice about alternative staffing arrangements; they are currently suggesting that we cut our wrap-around care and holiday provision. We have concerns about this as it is not the direction of travel being promoted by government and it would significantly reduce our income. 14. Challenge: how do we register our concerns about funding for SEND children and the lack of special school provision? Governor minutes will be shared with the RIG and Sean Lang and Harriet Phillips will be attending the meeting tomorrow. 15. Challenge: what does governor lead nursery provision mean? It means that the nurseries are registered separately and have separate Ofsted inspections. Staffing requirements are also different and no teacher needs to be in class. 16. Challenge: Consider that before we can move to governor lead nursery provision, governors need to undertake a proper systematic review of early years provision and strongly oppose that we should move to this model during this financial year. Governors need to be clear on savings that could be made by changing our very successful staffing model against the cost of redundancy. This will be for governors to decide when agreeing the draft budget. 17. Challenge: With regard to moving to one form entry for Reception year 2024 have you considered how this would impact staffing as the year progresses through the school? This could be managed without redundancies and we have considered the impact. 18. Challenge: If we are to push for one form entry then this does need to be implemented by place planning quickly, in order that no further offers are made. This does seem to be the least harmful way of making significant savings. We have seen Reception numbers for local schools and there are spaces available at Queen Edith, Morley and the Spinney. 	
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			<p><u>Governing body votes:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Do governors consider that we should move forward with governor lead nursery provision before conducting our own review of early years provision and understanding cost savings that might be made by moving to this staffing model? Governors unanimously voted NOT to move forward with governor lead nursery provision ahead of any review they can conduct and for the duration of this financial year. Do governors consider that we should make clear to the RIG that we wish to move to one-form entry in Reception 2024 at Queen Emma to make a £38k saving this financial year (this figure not including TA costs)? Governors voted unanimously to move to one-form entry in Reception 2024 at Queen Emma School. Do governors vote to accept the draft deficit budget? Governors voted unanimously to accept the draft deficit budget? <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The application for a deficit budget has to be submitted by 10th May 2024. A small working group, including EHT, SL, HP and RW was established and a meeting date of 8th May at 4pm was agreed in order to complete this application. Meeting to be virtual.</i> <i>In the absence of the FBM we need to speak to RB, our financial advisor, to ask who we can rely upon to provide advice to us during this process. RB will attend RIG tomorrow.</i> <p><u>Capital Budget information</u></p> <p>Governors were informed that we have a carry forward of £75,908.85 from 2023/24 (this couldn't be spent as we had insufficient funds in the bank). We will receive a further £16,976 in 2024/25 so a total of £92,884.85. With this money we plan to renovate the swimming pool, repair the leaking rooves (Studio kitchen at QEM and mobile classrooms at QED), pay for the new servers and use money remaining to cover any unexpected expenditure over £2k.</p>	
6	School development plan priorities – April 2024 to March 2025 (FLT and governors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School development priorities April 2024 to March 2025 Leadership and Management 	<p><i>SDP priorities are aligned with the financial year and were shared with governors.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Our key curriculum priorities are to refine and hone previously reviewed subject areas to ensure the planned curriculum reflects key skills, knowledge and vocabulary. Also to ensure that the EYFS curriculum feeds into learning the core foundation subjects. In EYFS we are keen to further develop our forest school provision and a grant for 	

		development plan (draft)	<p>development of this area at Queen Edith will be received in the new school year from the developer, KULA.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Under personal development and with a challenging financial position we will use advice from professionals to provide the best possible access to the curriculum for children with complex needs, within existing resources. 4. Continued use of the Leader in Me programme will ensure it is well-embedded and that we build leadership opportunities for all pupils. 5. Leadership and management (including governors) will engage with the RIG process to ensure that savings are made to secure the Federations' financial sustainability without compromising standards. All leaders (budget holders) should very closely monitor all spending against their planned budget to ensure that there are no in-year overspends. 6. Governors will closely monitor the financial work of the Federation and the FBM has developed an internal controls monitoring schedule for governors. She will also liaise monthly with the Chair of the F&R committee. 7. Given staffing changes that are being made in response to our financial situation governors are keen to closely monitor the impact on standards and provision across the Federation and on staff well-being. 8. Note that the equality objectives have also been up-dated and these will appear on the website. 9. Our priorities will be shared with the RIG at tomorrow's meeting. <p><i>SDP – draft Leadership and Development plan was shared with governors.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Leadership and development plan breaks down the key priorities termly and sets out a plan of action that sits behind the priorities overview. 2. Governors noted that they should attend relevant finance training so they are able to carry out their financial monitoring role effectively; the Clerk has checked for training opportunities during the Summer term, but there are none scheduled. When the governor training schedule is shared in September the Clerk will alert governors to relevant training opportunities. 3. Governors noted that they will carry out monitoring of budget activities in line with the schedule that has been developed by the FBM and has been shared under Item 8 of tonight's meeting. 	<p><u>Clerk share training schedule 2024</u></p>
7	School data reports (NS/CS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen Edith data report • Queen Emma data report 	<p>Due to the length of discussions around budget DHTs for curriculum and data at each school provided governors with key up-dates about Spring term 2 data.</p> <p>Queen Edith</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. % of pupils achieving greater depth is above national outcomes based on 2023 figures in all 	

			<p>subject areas and in all year groups.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Writing continues to be the key focus as we strive to raise attainment in all year groups. Y6 continue to have their SPAG booster sessions to have rapid impact on writing outcomes. Teaching staff and SLT continue to identify gaps and implement interventions to raise attainment, although this becomes increasingly challenging due to the impact on staffing of the financial constraints. Progress in Y6 is lower than expected which could impact SATs results this school year. However progress in Y5 in reading and writing is above expected levels. Pupils are on track in Reception and Nursery with good progress being made in Reception. Work will take place with Reception pupils to support their transition into Y1. <p><i>Queen Emma</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> % of pupils achieving greater depth is at or above national outcomes based on 2023 figures in all subject areas and in all year groups. Writing continue to be the area that needs to most improve across the school. We are working with an LA EYFS advisor to develop provision in EYFS to target and support increased outcomes in Communication and Language and Literacy. Great progress has been made in this area with this support. Using our NTP funding writing intervention work continues to be provided by Karen Ebenezer with individual children and small groups. 	
8	Adopt Scheme for Financing Schools (SJ/CM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cambridgeshire Scheme for Financing Schools – published April 2024 Internal control checks schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors were provided with a copy of Cambridgeshire’s Scheme for Financing Schools which was published in April 2024. This provides all financial rules and regulations for maintained schools and outlines the minimum standard expected. FBM has developed an internal control check schedule following guidance detailed in the Scheme for Financing Schools. Visits will take place half-termly with a member of the F&R Committee. 	<u>Governors to arrange monitoring meeting</u>
9	Feedback from governance working group (SL, HP, JM)	Governance review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Leadership and Management SDP plan has been shared with governors and this is to feed into the working group so they can undertake their self-evaluation to review effectiveness, including the constitution. Working group to develop an annual schedule of meetings to ensure that the governing body is fulfilling its’ statutory duties. 	<u>Working group to feedback at the next FGB</u>
10	SFVS Action Plan (SJ/CM)	SFVS Action Plan	The SFVS was approved at the last FGB meeting but the actions to be taken were not approved. The action plan has now been shared with governors:	

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Half-termly internal financial control checks will be carried out by governors, covering areas on a rota basis. 2. Governors will attend additional financial training. 3. Federation business manager will report BMR monthly to F&R Committee Chair. <p>This to be reviewed at every F&R meeting.</p>	
11	Safeguarding up-date (SJ)	<p>Federation Safeguarding Visit Report (JM / SL)</p> <p>SCR Visit – Queen Edith (JM)</p> <p>SCR Visit – Queen Emma (SL)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding governors had visited to meet with staff and to discuss how safeguarding works in practice across both schools and a visit report was shared with governors. • Safeguarding governors had visited their respective school to monitor the SCR in Spring Term 2. Reports to be shared at the next FGB. 	<u>SCR reports at next FGB.</u>
12	Up-dated policies for review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care experienced children (HB/RH) • Policy for children with health needs (HB/RH) 	<p>Ratification: The policy for care experience children was ratified by the FGB.</p> <p>Ratification: The policy for children with health needs who cannot attend school was ratified by the FGB</p>	
13	Safer streets (SJ)	Notes on Safer Streets meeting – 24.04.2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EHT received communication from safer streets suggesting that a no vehicle zone would be introduced on Godwin Way and Bosworth Close and met with the safer streets co-ordinator to find out more. 2. Further funding has now been made available for this scheme which was introduced during the pandemic. 9 schools rolled out the programme in Cambridge City at this time and 3 continue with these arrangements. 3. Bosworth Close has been taken off the identification list but Godwin Way has been identified as a potential site. 4. It relies on volunteers being willing to enforce the safer streets area and any delivery vehicles, bikes, or other vehicles wishing to access the school site at the beginning and end of the school day has to be escorted onto the site by volunteers. 5. A consultation with residents would have to take place and then have to be agreed by the school. 6. Governors agreed that there is no capacity to be involved in this scheme at the current time and requested that this is put on hold. 	
14	Feedback from Governor Training, Governor Visits and Link Governor Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maths Visit – Craig Dyer (26.04.2024) • Phonics Visit – Harriet Phillips (26.04.2024) • Leader in Me Visit – Sean Lang (26.04.2024) • Report back from 	Visit reports to be carried over to the next FGB.	<u>Governors to share visit reports with Clerk ahead of next meeting.</u>

		governor training		
15	What is the impact of decisions made during this meeting upon the standards and improvement of the Federation? (All)		Budget agreed. Views made clear that can be shared with RIG. Equality objectives are up-dated and will be shared on the website.	
16	Receive Minutes of Committee Meetings	22.04.2024 Standards & Improvement (CD)	These were received.	
17	Items to be reported to parents		None currently	
18	Correspondence Circulated		None circulated	
19	Any Other Business		None raised	
20	Date of next meeting:		Monday 8th July 2024, 6.00pm	

Signed: S. F. Lang
(Sean Lang, Chair, Full Governing Body)

Dated: 8th July 2024