

## LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE

### Gilbert Colvin School

#### Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board Held at 6pm on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019

**Present:** Kathryn Davey  
Mark Helmsley Headteacher  
Carel Buxton Chair  
Marianne Agwada  
James Clements  
Ilyas Natha  
Mali Govindarajan

**In Attendance** Anne Fitzpatrick DHT  
Greg Robbins Clerk

**Apologies:** Kerry Simpkins  
Rajpal Padam

#### **244) Declaration of Interests**

There were no new declarations of interest.

#### **245) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Kerry Simpkins and Rajpal Padam which were accepted and their absence condoned.

#### **246) Membership**

##### **a) Parent Governor**

Marianna Agwade was welcomed to the meeting as a newly elected parent governor.

##### **b) Co-opted Governor**

James Clements works in a local school and was willing to stand as a governor.

**Agreed: James Clements was appointed as a co-opted governor.**

##### **c) Co-opted Governor Vacancy**

The headteacher would discuss with Shabana Tasleem to enquire if she would like to be co-opted as a governor so the skills she had learned and her commitment would not be lost.

##### **d) Expiry of Period of Office**

The meeting thanked Mali Govindarajan for all her contributions as her term of office was due to expire before the next meeting. There would need to be a call for nominations and an election before then.

Mali Govindarajan would consider whether she would like to stand or might be prepared to be appointed as a co-opted governor.

#### **247) Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

##### **a) Election of Chair**

The clerk took the chair for this item.

The chair said that she had agreed to take the role until July 2020, but would like someone

who lived more locally to take over the role after that.

**Agreed: Carel Buxton was proposed and seconded and as the sole nomination duly elected as chair for one year.**

**b) Election of Vice Chair**

Rajpal Padnam and Ilyas Natha had both expressed an interest in standing as vice-chair. Ilyas Natha explained why he would like to put the experience he had gained to greater use. The chair explained some of the initiatives Rajpal Padnam had been involved in and his responsibilities at work. Rajpal Padnam and Ilyas Natha left the room for this decision.

**Agreed: Rajpal Padnam was appointed vice chair for one year.**

**248) Minutes of the Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

**a) Item 232 I – LB Redbridge has an apprenticeship levy.**

The amended minutes were approved and signed by the chair.

**Matters Arising**

**b) Item 231 b #1) – Only one person had responded after the headteacher circulated the code of conduct.**

**c) Item 231 b #2) – All staff are expected to complete the safeguarding course and refresher. New governors especially would be asked to complete this. This would take about one hour, though this need not be in a single session.**

**Agreed: Governors agreed to complete this by the next meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

**Action: The headteacher would circulate this to all governors on their personal email.**

**i) Governors asked if this was tailored for governors. This is for education professionals and a bespoke one for governors might be produced in future. It would be useful for all governors to have completed the same course.**

Governors were asked to check with the headteacher if they had not received the email by the end of the week.

**d) Item 231 b #3) – All governors have a school based email, but personal emails would be used to inform governors when documents are placed on Governor Hub, a new GDPR compliant cloud based secure system.**

**e) LBR is considered a high risk area for parental action over SRE and the authority has advised schools that they should wait for a borough wide model policy and approach to teaching SRE.**

**Action: The headteacher would pursue this with Adrian Loades, LBR Director of People.**

**249) Headteacher's Report**

**a) Staffing**

Recruitment and retention is again an issue. Two teaching staff had been promoted elsewhere and replaced; one with a permanent teacher and one with a long term supply teacher. An overseas trained teacher had completed her assessment only route and gained QTS (qualified teacher status), graded with outstanding outcomes. It was hoped that she could be fast-tracked to complete her NQT year in a single term. The headteacher explained other staffing changes. Extra funding for high needs students had been put towards appointing an additional TA. Two staff would be taking maternity leave later in the year and one would be returning from maternity leave. The school has a cover teacher 0.6fte.

**b) Contextual Information**

Data on the demographics of the student population was presented. There had been rises in the numbers of students with EHC plans and eligible for pupil premium. There were about sixty vacancies in the school, though this was repeated in schools across London. This would affect the school's funding by about £150,000.

**c) Attendance**

Attendance is improving as students move through the school and improving overall.

**d) Admission**

The school cease home visits for nursery and reception students. There had been positive feedback as parents were able to see their children in the school environment. This year the authority had been offering places in a less directed way, which had meant many families visited and placed their child and then changed their minds and moved school. The school would need to ask if the approach had been changed. The mobility appeared high as of the 14 leavers, some had joined only briefly beforehand, whereas the 10 joiners were all still on the school roll.

i) Governors asked if the catchment areas were not taken into consideration. This was no longer a consideration, rather there were other criteria, such as having a sibling at the school or distance that children might travel, that apply.

**e) School Fund**

This was £19,291 at 3/10/19.

**f) Peer Review**

This was funded through REP for the first year. School leaders visit other schools and share ideas about schools may improve. It is not an inspection and should be positive for all schools taking part.

**g) School Ping**

A new online payment facility had been rolled out called School Ping. Some parents were still paying cash at the office as well.

**h) Asbestos**

Most of the asbestos in the school is in the corridor ceilings. This is safe and secure and monitored regularly. During the summer holidays some patches which were flaking were stripped and repainted to ensure that the asbestos remained secure.

**i) Key Future Actions**

Old school whiteboards would be replaced. It would cost about £30K to replace them all, however.

There would be a canopy in the reception outdoor space to give full access to the outdoor learning environment year round. This would be about 9x5m. Some fund raising might be needed.

A classroom outside door needed to be replaced.

Vegetation would be removed from the 'wild' area at the rear of the school field.

**j) Fire Drill**

Students evacuated the building in less than two minutes and were all accounted for within five minutes.

- i) Governors asked if the school was ensuring that families in pre-3, nursery or reception had applied for free school meals to be eligible for PP. They are asked to apply, but as meals are free in any case, not everyone who is eligible applies. The school cannot force families to apply, even if it knows they would benefit.

**250) Budget / Financial Report**

Expected income this year would be £2,299,000 compared with £2,200,000 last year. Salary costs had risen higher than the funding formula. The school had built 2.5% cost of living increase into its budget and 2.75%. The school budgeted for a surplus of £81,000 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and the current rate of expenditure predicted a surplus of £85,000. There had been some staff appointed on permanent contracts rather than through agencies. Apart from an error in billing for water supplies (now resolved) there were no significant areas of variation that needed to be commented on. Budget holders had been warned that if they had significant unspent money then this might go towards whiteboards or the reception canopy.

Governors hoped that further funds would be made available by government.

**251) Committees and Working Parties**

There had been no committee meetings. A pay committee should be called to confirm decisions on staff pay. Anonymised outcomes of performance management/appraisal would be presented along with recommendations.

The committee would be Mark Hemsley, Carel Buxton, James Clements, Marianne Agwada.

This was provisionally set for Thursday 31st October 2019 at 6:30pm.

**252) Inclusion Report**

A report had been provided by Neena Begum. There were 20 children with speech and language needs and six of these children had EHC plans. Overall 10% of the school population has some SEND.

There had been a significant number of safeguarding and SEND issues this term.

The school was below national averages for children achieving expected standards for children with SEND at KS2. At KS1 none of the SEND children achieved 'expected standards'. The report also set out the interventions in place and CPD provided for staff.

Attendance is slightly lower for SEND students (94.79%) than the overall cohort.

- i) Governors asked how long it would take to be clear what a child's needs are. Children may begin with diagnosed needs or may have their needs identified by the school. Support is put into place, whether there is an EHC plan in place or not. It is entirely dependent on the child's needs, however, and timescales vary considerably.
- ii) The meeting asked if the school received support from the NHS. The school has access to a nurse and person visits one afternoon each week to provide counselling, funded from the budget for inclusion.
- iii) Governors asked if students had dedicated one-one support. This was something of a misnomer as the authority would say that there was some funding within the budget already and EHC plans very rarely cover 32 ½ hours. The school only receives a proportion of the cost of a one-one LSA.

- iv) Governors asked how the high needs block is funded. If a child was given an EHC plan, that would be seen as an additional cost so the authority would make an additional payment, based on those EHC plans. The funding formula includes amounts for the SEND students each school has.

Governors thanked Neena Begum for the report and the work she is doing.

### **253) Link Governors**

This would be reviewed outside the main meeting.

### **254) Overview of End of Key Stage Outcomes**

The annual statistical report (ASR) was available on the portal.

73.5% of students achieved a good level of development in EYFS, above national average.

Phonics results were still lower than would be liked.

KS1 results were at or slightly below national averages and, while these had had historically lower EYFS outcomes, the school wanted to ensure they catch up with where they should be or better.

KS2 outcomes were above national averages, especially for reading, writing and maths combined. Reading and writing were much improved and progress in maths was above national expectations.

SEN outcomes were increasing and were now slightly above the borough average.

A lot of work was taking place within the school that would underpin future progress.

- i) Governors asked what the impact of these results would be. Data does not change results, so the school will be using peer review to identify new strategies
- ii) Governors asked why teaching was below expected levels. This is the key issue which the school is investigating. The aim will be to have more students reading at greater depth.

### **255) Safeguarding**

Every governor is required to read part 1 of KCSIE 2019. There had been some changes from last year. All staff must sign to say they have read it and governors were asked to do this too, before or at the next meeting.

Copies were shared with governors.

### **256) School Development Plan (SDP)**

This had been shared on the portal. The school was approaching the SDP in a subtly different way. The focus would now be on 'why' the school would do what it does, rather than an objective. The 'intent' is therefore the reason, on which key questions would be posed, then implementation and impact/success criteria. This would be a two year plan and a working document.

There was a strong focus on quality of teaching and learning, space for wellbeing of staff and an emphasis on how children learn to inform how teachers teach. Behaviours for learning emphasise what will help children learn. The school would be aiming for P4C silver and a healthy schools London award.

Priority 6 would be strengthening governance and would be discussed on the next governor day which would be on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

The revised document would be a working document.

- i) Governors asked if fines for lateness and absence would be automatic. The headteacher would use discretion, but he was not making himself popular with parents who were persistently slightly late.
- ii) Governors asked if the school does cancer awareness or similar. The school council would be asked to support a charity for a year that there could be education about and that there could be visitors for.
- iii) Governors asked what the school is doing for Black/BME history month. The school is trying to plan the different specific 'weeks' so that these events are built into the curriculum so it is integrated and high quality, so little was specifically done for the month itself.
- iv) Governors asked where the homework policy was on the website.  
**Action: The headteacher would see how easy it was to find on the website.**
- v) Governors asked if homework was formally assessed. It was not, because its purpose was to reinforce and, while it informs teachers, deep marking is done on the work done in class.

#### 257) Governance

This would be addressed through the discussions on the SDP.

#### 258) Policies

These had been circulated and/or previously discussed.

##### a) Draft TOIL Policy

The policy was approved.

##### b) Lockdown Policy

- i) Governors asked if all doors have locks on them. Not all internal doors do and the school did not intend to install locks. The aim was to slow intruders down and the building overall could be secured.
- ii) Governors asked if there were panic buttons. Key people would call critical numbers – there was no intention to turn the school into a prison-like building.  
The policy was approved.

##### c) Positive Behaviour Policy

Changes were highlighted in yellow. The language emphasised expectations rather than 'rules' and were age specific. Rewards were being discussed with children. There were letters to parents for those incidents that fall between minor and major incidents.

- i) Governors asked if the letters would be stage one or two and what would happen if it was repeated. If they were repeated there would be more direct contact with home.  
The policy was approved.

##### d) Charging and Remissions Policy

Trips could be cancelled if there are not enough voluntary contributions. Some trips would be chargeable and letters set out if there is remission of this for some pupils. Parents need to pay the £5 insurance charge for musical instruments to be able to take them home. Instead of individual tuition there is whole class teaching.

The school would make a £25 charge per child for a teacher to support an application to enter the independent educational sector, which would be passed directly to that school.

The school would charge £25 for passport applications, but there is no expectation on staff to do it. There would be no charge for letters of attendance to support visa applications or nationalisation etc.

The school had not yet acted on this, but the policy allows the school to charge parents who leave children for over ten minutes more than once per half term £15 for every fifteen minutes late. There would need to be some discretion over how this is applied in practice.

- i) Governors asked how the amount had been set at £25 to support school and passport applications. This was the amount set already and seemed average for Redbridge schools. Completing reports does take time, however.
- ii) Governors asked if this would involve the education welfare service. As this is a school policy and the school was providing supervision, any fines would go to the school.

**Agreed: Governors would support the headteacher where he judged that parents were taking advantage of the school and lateness was not acceptable, following a warning letter. This section would be re-worded accordingly.**

The policy would be redrafted and circulated for approval by email.

**e) Attendance Policy**

The main change was to absences requested at the beginning or end of school holidays would not be authorised unless there is medical evidence of illness or an airline provide evidence that the original flight was delayed. There could be a fine where unauthorised absence exceeds three days, which could be £60 per child per parent.

The policy was approved.

**f) Leave of Absence Policy**

Only minor changes had been made to reflect internal routines.

The new policy would allow staff to request unpaid leave to attend recognised and specific events at their children's school where it would not impact negatively on the school.

The policy was approved.

**g) Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

This was based on the model Redbridge policy with school specific information provided.

**Agreed: Marianne Agwada was appointed safeguarding link governor.**

The policy was approved.

This would be discussed further at the next meeting.

**h) Social Media Policy**

This key emphasis was on not bringing the school into disrepute. The school would not itself have a Twitter or Facebook account and the school website would remain the online presence of the school with School Ping providing communication. The PTA does have a Facebook page, however, and this could be useful in reaching an outside audience for fetes etc. The school should be aware who has administrator rights and whether these people change when officers change.

The policy was approved.

**Action: The headteacher and DHT would discuss the PTA Facebook page with the chair of the PTA.**

**i) Online Safety Policy**

This was an updated policy from LGfL

**Agreed: Marianne Agwada was appointed online safety link governor.**

The policy was approved.

**j) Confidentiality Policy**

This restated what is in the governors' code of conduct and staff contracts. Staff and governors would be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

This was an updated policy from LGfL

The policy was approved.

**259) Compliance Calendar**

This was noted.

**260) Chair's Action**

There had been no chair's actions.

**261) Governor Training**

Some governors were not sure they were receiving details of NPW/TES training by email. The clerk was enquire if all were on the mailing list.

The chair recommended the annual Newham governor conference to all who could attend.

**262) Future Meetings**

The next meeting would be 1:30pm on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Governors would be asked to attend from 9:30am – lunchtime to view the school and work on strengthening governance for the SDP.

**Autumn**

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 1:30pm (Governors' Day)

**Spring**

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 6pm

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 1:30pm (Governors' Day)

**Summer**

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 6pm

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 1:30pm (Governors' Day)

**Meeting closed at 8:55pm.**