



VICTORIA PARK NURSERY SCHOOL & CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 24th November 2015

Present:

Patrick Mitchell (Chair/co-opted governor)	PM
Fiona Bridger-Wilkinson (Headteacher)	FBW
Louise Griffiths (assistant Headteacher)(Co-opted governor)	LG
Sally Lawson (associate governor/children's centre cluster manager)	SL
Vicky Murray (assistant Headteacher/associate governor)	VM
Gwen Mason (Vice-chair/Co-opted governor)	GM
Catie Colston (Co-opted governor)	CC
Louise Moores (Co-opted governor)	LM

Apologies: Anne Pirouet (Nursery Nurse/ staff governor) AP

Minutes: Helen Rogers - Acting Clerk HR

Agenda Items

Actions

1. Welcome, Declaration of Interests and Any Other Business

Meeting commenced at 7.15pm. All were welcomed to the meeting with formal introductions around the meeting. There were no declarations of interests. Any other business items were added to the agenda (item 10)

Apologies received from Anne Pirouet (AP)

The meeting was quorate

2. Farewell to governors who have left

Previous governors, Sean, Marcus, Kay and April, were thanked for their time and support whilst on the governing body. None of them were able to attend the meeting but were given the opportunity to do so.

3. Any items to be tabled for AOB, not included in the agenda

- Register of authorising officers (PM)
- Lighting to path/front of VPN (GM)
- Request for parental leave (FBW)
- Consultation (SL)
- Finance for CC (SL)

Signed by Date



4. Governor Elections

The clerk received one nomination for the role of chair from PM. Overwhelming show of hands for those in support and PM was formally appointed as Chair of Governors for a period of one year with effect from the date of this meeting, or until the next officer elections if called sooner.

The clerk received one nomination for the role of vice chair from GM. Overwhelming show of hands for those in support and GM was formally appointed as Vice Chair of Governors for a period of one year with effect from the date of this meeting, or until the next officer elections if called sooner.

Appointment of new members

CC has agreed to join us on temporary basis to assist with work of the governing body given her previous governing experience. CC will be a co-opted governor.

GM will now be a co-opted governor (previously a LA governor)

LM will now be a co-opted governor as she no longer has children at VPN so moved categories from a parent governor.

PM discussed further governor recruitment and has registered with agencies (inspiring the future) and SGOSS (School Governors one stop shop) with the aim to successfully recruit further governors. PM has been contacted by inspiring the future who will now follow up leads on our behalf. GM suggested PM contact a previous supporter, ex local Councillor Roger Hunneman.

PM

We now have 3 vacancies on the governing body, (two parent governors and one LA governor).

Parent governor elections – PM talked about the election process and FBW was appointed the returning officer. FBW to start the recruitment process as soon as possible.

FBW

Review of Governor Roles – PM suggested this was deferred for a larger discussion when we have recruited to all our vacancies but agreed to temporarily assign roles due to governing body workload.

Safeguarding governor - GM

SEN - GM

LAC- GM

Health and Safety - PM

Finance Committee Members (minimum of 3 members) PM, LM, CC and GM - Finance committee will meet three times a year/meetings may be held in the day, but this will be agreed.

All these roles may be reviewed once new governors are appointed.

Signed by Date



Governor's focus groups:

Early Years Pupil premium/Free School Meals, Ever 2's, English as Additional Language, Special Educational Needs, Boys and Girls, Challenge, Pupil Premium Grant, Looked After Children - ideal to have external perspective but the staff governors have detailed knowledge on these subjects so it is important to get their input .

EAL – LM
PPG – Patrick

Register of business interests/Pecuniary interests – PM asked all governors present to complete a new form and there was a discussion around what information should be detailed on the form. The clerk to retain and file these. These will be reviewed at each meeting.

Pay panel meet to review decisions made by HT after staff performance management. Governors agreed that this should be delegated to the Finance Committee.

Head teacher performance panel meet to set targets and review HT performance against targets. The panel set objectives in October/November and review in March each year. This is a mechanism for support and challenge. Training can be provided by Avril Allenby (1 hour). Appointed GM, PM & LM to panel.

PM (to arrange training)

Appeal Panel required to hear grievance submitted by VPN staff member. GM, LM and CC appointed to this panel. Human Resources to support and guide panelists. PM to submit documents to HR and they will provide packs to panel. Human Resources to contact panelists shortly.

PM

5. Minutes of previous meetings (June, July, November 3rd 2015)

Minutes of 16th June 2015 – Page 5 – part 2 Minutes available – LG requested minutes be amended to clarify where staff left the meeting so that part 2 minutes were recorded. Minutes to be amended to show that staff were asked to leave the meeting at *private minutes available* (AP, SL, VM and LG left the meeting) PM to amend and bring back to next FGB (Full Governing Body) Apart from above the minutes were formally approved and will be signed as a true record by the FGB (Full Governing Body), once amendment made at next FGB.

PM

Minutes 14th July – The previous clerk has failed to produce these and PM has frequently asked her to produce these. We have a legal duty to file these and PM to ask Michele Blain what we do about this. We agreed that the FGB may have to look at the agenda for that meeting and re-agenda those items so we are confident we have captured all information and any resulting actions.

Clerk/PM

Minutes of 3rd November 2015 – VM should be listed as an associate governor. PM intends to have an actions list rather than rely on minutes to ensure actions are completed quickly. Minutes were formally approved and signed as a true record by the FGB (Full Governing Body).

Signed by Date



6. Governors standing orders

PM referred to the standing orders document circulated via email. PM asked that the FGB agree the blue highlighted areas. **Question- on page 3 Alternative arrangements – can decisions made via email?** No.

Question - Why are we having an April meeting? Budget must be signed off by 01 May so the April meeting will be solely for Budget decisions. It was agreed that we would not have a meeting in September as this is the start of the academic year and there may not be many items for the agenda. This can be reviewed if the FGB decide a meeting is required.

Clerk/PM

Minutes of FGB meeting - PM agreed that minutes will be sent to Chair within 10 school days and sent to FGB members within 20 school days but may look to alter these in line with improving/aspiring/ good practice. Review this annually. The minutes are not normally seen until next meeting when formally signed off - hence the introduction of the actions list to improve good governance.

Election of chair/vice chair - If a tied vote what we do? This has never happened at VPN so agreed not to have a different process.

The Governors Standing Orders should be amended to reflect committee membership.

Clerk/PM

Other than a few amendments the Governors Standing Orders were agreed and adopted. To be reviewed October 2016.

7. Summer Term Data - Presented by VM

Exit Data from Summer 2015 based on 2 separate cohorts
N1 (nursery 1) These children are due to start school in September 2016
N2 (nursery 2) These children would have been eligible to start school in September 2015 most have moved onto school now but a few have remained at VPN

Most children start at VPN as N1. VM explained the data and how it relates to different groups of children (boys, girls, ever-2, SEN, EAL) The data can track achievements and gaps in attainment. Most children are on target in PSE, Physical, Communication and Literacy with a good level of development. Areas in red show a tolerable amount and what staff are doing to address that. Staff are trying to maintain focus on developing communication skills with pupils. VM attended an end of Foundation Stage data meeting for West Berkshire Council. There is a reduction in speaking and communication skills in young children despite initiatives such as ECAT Every Child A Talker). This is matching the national trend.

Question - Why is speaking and communicating amongst young children reducing? Both VM and LG listed the reasons, primarily this is because parents are not talking to children and not knowing how to communicate, increase in use of technology (smart phones etc). LG detailed how VPN are encouraging parents by using talking tips in newsletters and

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signage around the nursery. Encouraging conversations, eye contact, forward facing buggies, encourage parents to turn off smart phones etc. Wider discussion around subject as with smaller homes without dining table families don't always eat and chat together, central heating in homes allows people to be in separate rooms, so not communicating. There is some data that suggests a child's communication/speaking skills can be assessed at the age of 2 and this can predict their GCSE results. Children who do not communicate well will see this impact on other attainment levels.

Question - What will/can VPN do? ECAT screening (at risk of delay) identify those who need extra support, this starts with the funded 2 year olds so they can start to develop language, Staff have received Level one I-Can training, staff encourage children to develop vocabulary one word at a time, developed communication friendly areas, encourage parents to reduce background noise (turn off TV), we host rhyme challenge (children learn 5 rhymes per term), parental reading talk per term. Parental engagement is key. Children's Centre promote speaking and communication by book start, rhyme time, ECAT, imagination library.

Question- Does it make a difference if EAL? – Not really as they develop a pattern in their home language then they are likely to pick up another language using same pattern. In Private schools in India you are taught English so it is aspirational to have English as a second language. Indian families who cannot afford private schooling still attend school but are not taught English, so our Indian families are keen for their children to learn English.

N2 data follows more of a pattern. The attainment gaps are smaller which shows that the longer children have been at VPN the better the results. End of N2 most children are above average. Girls outperform boys but this follows the national trend. Data is not collated nationally for nursery children so unable to compare/track/benchmark our data. Meeting agreed data was really impressive and thanked VM for hard work. It is important that we monitor, analyse and target data. Meeting agreed that Ofsted will find this data useful.

Discussion moved onto reading and how to support families not reading with their children. Staff at VPN did library talk and walked to library with families. Some families will attend reading sessions and work with Children Centre to encourage reading development. VPN is also supporting families by finding books that interest children and encourage discussions around it. On our SEF (School Evaluation Form) we rated this outstanding based on a good level of development.

Question - How does this compare to last year/year before? This is fairly new so patterns will emerge. Staff supportive of this and want to see how cohorts progressing when they update their data. The key people have knowledge about children in their groups – are they PP or EAL? Hungerford Nursery using similar system – might we compare? Perhaps, In the future. However we have very different geographical and economic areas.

Early Years Pupil premium funding is being used to target those children to try to reduce the achievement gap.

Question - What are we doing as an outstanding setting (i.e. what differentiates us as an

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outstanding setting)? - Children should make rapid progress. Progress data available to key workers – having regular meetings and discussing options. Further development is to look at children’s communication and keep embedding I-Can work. Focus for next term is on mathematics – January 2016 INSET training day planned for staff. **Question - How can we track children that use the Children’s Centre and attend VPN?** Data showed the children who accessed CC services and VPN made rapid progress. VM has this data from last year in similar format. **Question - What do we mean by accessing CC?** Evaluate the time they’ve been supported/attended groups, we must not underestimate the value of the CC as investment in early years can greatly improve attainment levels in later education. **Question - Can you track children after they leave VPN?** Almost impossible as they go to a number of settings and although each child has a Unique Pupil Number there are no resources or motivation to do this nationally. This would show the value of nursery schools.

**FBW/SL/VM/
LG**

Action to work with SL in Children’s Centre (link with family support worker and ensure we capture children’s data – who attends what sessions etc)

8. Annual safeguarding audit

GM and FBW completed the audit and submitted the annual safeguarding audit. It was reported that domestic abuse training was completed by staff last year. GM has completed FGM and child abuse training. Safeguarding to be permanent agenda item at every FGB meeting. Safer recruitment training has been completed by PM, CC, SL, VM, FBW, GM and Sarah Beeson.

GM/FBW

West Berkshire Council has developed a model child protection policy and the governing body agreed to accept and adopt this.

9. Policies to Review

- Looked After Children policy updated in June 2015 (model policy from WBC) – meeting couldn’t easily identify changes apart from attend termly designated teachers network meeting. LAC pupils are automatically Early Years Pupil Premium. Agreed and adopted policy
- H&S – based on model policy from WBC – Mark to continue as key holder, remove VM and add Sharon Pearce (family support worker from Children’s Centre). The organisation chart at the rear of the policy has 2 blank boxes (insert intentionally blank). There are a few amendments but FGB agreed to adopt policy – needs to be signed.

10. Any other business

The register of authorising officers was sent to schools accountancy but they queried which cost centres each signatory could sign. The Governing Body agreed unanimously that all signatories could sign off against all cost centres. Agreed sensible to have enough signatories listed and this was signed and authorised by PM.

**Clerk to
pass to
business
manager**

GM to contact Newbury Town Council to discuss pathway and lighting outside the Nursery and Children’s Centre. There was a consultation with residents but no further

GM

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developments. The pathway is uneven and can be an access issue for those with mobility issues but also causing puddles etc. Lighting could be improved to provide better security.

Request for parental leave from a staff member at VPN. It would be 2 weeks prior to February half term. FGB thought this was a reasonable request and it would be unpaid. Staff member is 0.3FTE. **Question- can VPN cover this absence?** Early years settings all struggle with staff, could WBC help? Sarah Watmore to discuss at Early Years Meeting maybe creating a list of temp staff (but not endorsing them). Agreed and approved request. PM to contact staff member.

**PM
FBW/VM/LG
(to arrange
cover)**

West Berkshire Council Current Consultation on reorganisation and rationalisation of Children's Centre services. At the last meeting it was agreed that SL would look at the consultation document with FBW and agree a response. SL to email draft response to members of FGB, please reply within a week. SL to collate responses. **Question – should we respond as a group or is it better as individuals?** Agreed that we should submit a FGB response then individuals can respond separately.

SL/AII

There are a number of West Berkshire Council Current Consultations and governors were encouraged to view all consultations as there are a number that may affect our children. In particular there consultation on Pre-school teacher counsellors - they support families with children who have SEN – funding cuts will affect this valuable service.

AII

Children's Centre (ChC) financial concerns. Due to staff grievance submitted and the appeal process being delayed there has been limited finance support for Children's Centre, nothing has been posted on system since September 2015. No admin contracted to ChC at present where previously there was 4.5 hours per week. Once the appeal has been heard we can move forward with financial activities. SL wanted concerns noted. Discussion around practical solutions (temp staff, ask WBC for support or wait for outcome of appeal) Background to this issue is complex and the details were not discussed at the FGB meeting.

PM/FBW

Current vacancy for Senco/teacher as Karen Hewitt leaving at Christmas – FBW confirmed a number of people had expressed interest in the vacancy

Meeting closed at 9.30pm.

**The next full governing body meeting will be held at 7:15PM on 15th
December 2015 in the meeting room of Victoria Park Children's Centre.**

Signed by Date