

Balfour Primary School
Full Governing Body Meeting
Wednesday 3rd May 2023, 6pm

Present: Kirstin Baker (KB), Alan Gunn (AG) - Head, Jessica Sullivan-Wrenn (JS), Erin Moore (ER), Shelley Baker (SB), Ray Leeke (RL), Katie Wood (KW), Alun Price (AP), Marcus Odair (MO) and Carolyn Bristow (CK)

Apologies: Anna Hudson-Young (AH)

In Attendance: Dawn Loader (DL) – Deputy HT and Kris McCulloch (KM) – Clerk

Quorum: 10 out of 11 governors were present so the meeting was quorate (at least 50% of governors present)

Item	Discussion and decisions	Action
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies KW welcomed all governors to the meeting, including SB who was attending virtually. Apologies are noted above.	
2.	Declaration of Business Interest forms No additional business interests on the meeting agenda were raised. The agenda order was altered.	
4.	Presentation on Equalities / Anti-Racist strategy at Balfour DL confirmed that work started on the strategy following the Unconscious bias training that took place a couple of years ago. As there was a lack of resources DL has researched what is available and built the strategy and action plan from this. Several points were highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was acknowledged that pupils are not receiving a rich, diverse learning. - When looking at terminology DL held a parent forum which was well attended and productive in finding out what our parent's perception is. - Work has been done on what diversity looks like in the classroom and a model respect for diversity in classroom has been developed. - Clear messages for staff have been developed on ways to create a diverse classroom. - A diverse curriculum is being worked on. Next steps – the action plan is being worked through in 3 areas – leadership, which includes the assembly programme which has been successful, Teachers and Subject leaders/teams. DL added that Pupil leadership roles will continue to be looked at to ensure opportunities are provided for all groups. Governors asked whether parents have been invited to come in to talk about their experiences. DL confirmed a couple of assemblies have been done but more needs to be arranged. Governors questioned how the impact of the action plan will be measured. DL stated this will be done through various methods such as pupil voice, input from parents and staff and also tracking racial incidents in school. DL gave an update on bullying incidents this year. Governors asked when the action plan will be completed. DL confirmed this has already been done and is being updated as actions take place and added work will be ongoing. The action plan will be shared with governors along with the presentation and other relevant documents. AG stated the SDP vision is about Belonging which is a key focus for Balfour culture. Governors asked about the Equalities policy on the website which has objectives from 2019/20. DL confirmed this needs to be reviewed.	DL

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	<p>Governors thanked DL for attending the meeting and for her presentations.</p> <p>(DL left the meeting at 6.30pm)</p>	
3.	<p>Update on Budget & Approval</p> <p>The budget was circulated to governors shortly before the meeting and hard copies were also tabled to review at the meeting. AG highlighted the main points from the budget, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a £270,000 in year deficit. All cost centres have been cut as much as possible while still ensuring the school can function. - The main concern is the Supply budget – the amount allocated in this cost centre is low considering what was spent during the last financial year. - The falling pupil numbers across the school have also impacted the budget, first the already reduced PAN and the low birth rate across the city which will continue to affect admissions. - There is no inflationary income built into the budget which may improve the situation a little. <p>Governors asked how other schools are finding their budgets. AG stated that almost every school in the city is in a similar situation to Balfour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional income streams will continue to be looked at – the school is already well used. <p>Governors queried whether we should look to reduce the PAN again. AG stated this would not solve the issue as Balfour is a large school with other overhead costs maintaining the building.</p> <p>Governors questioned whether there is a speculative plan in place. AG confirmed the SLT are working on other options such as having one office, one kitchen etc but there are logistical problems with these kind of changes.</p> <p>Governors asked if the HTs in the city are lobbying the government for help. AG confirmed a letter has been sent to the DfE from HTs in city. AG added there needs to be a strategic plan from the LA but the responsibility has been left with individual HTs.</p> <p>Governors queried how long the school can run with a deficit. AG stated this is as long as allowed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - as long as the LA are happy to accept the risk. <p>Governors questioned whether the reductions made are sustainable and AG confirmed they are just about. This is new territory for Balfour as there has always been a good carry forward. The fundamental changes are the living wage pay increase which is not funded and the teacher's salary increase which is also not funded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restructuring will be done when staff leave rather than making redundancies which are costly. <p>Governors agreed to accept the budget. KB signed this as well as the SFVS.</p>	
7.	<p>Head teacher's Verbal Report</p> <p>AG updated governors on what has been happening in school since the last meeting, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance is improving – this week is 95.7% (1.8% about national for primary schools) - Persistent absence is less than 9% (this is 18.5% nationally for primary schools) – work being done by the Attendance team is getting results. - Work continues with Teaching & Learning on school pedagogy, developing a link on the culture in school. AG confirmed there is no change in the assessment of teaching and support is being provided where needed. - The big focus on the SDP is refining the curriculum to focus on depth of learning rather than quantity, to build links between subjects and for child led learning to take place and to incorporate the environment. <p>Governors asked when the refined curriculum will be ready to implement. AG stated this will take time but by the end of next year there will be much more space in the curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Another focus of the SDP is Belonging which ties into the curriculum. It was agreed that more information will be given to governors at the July FGB meeting. 	KM

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There have been no staffing changes. AG updated governors on changes happening at the end of the academic year. - Yr6 SATs take place next week. AG confirmed the staff and pupils have worked hard and they are in a much better position than at the start of the academic year. - AG informed governors that the Yr6 base classroom is being used by Varndean Yr11 GCSE pupils who are not able to cope with big exam halls. 	
5.	Approval of last minutes The minutes from 29 th March 2023 were circulated prior to the meeting and were approved.	
6.	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate presentations from March 2023 FGB meeting (KM) – this has been done. • Update Phonics on a page with lines for Disadvantaged & SEND (SG) – this is still to be done. • Arrange for Presentations on Reading and Writing to be given at future FGB meetings (AG/SG) – It was agreed to move these presentations to the next academic year and have presentations on Belonging and also Disadvantaged pupils at the July FGB. KB to speak to Sandra Mulholland to arrange this. • Complete Skills Audit (KB / CKB) – these are still outstanding. • Review the options for capping pupil numbers in an individual year group (CKB) – this is no longer relevant. • Add Review of Parent Voice questionnaire to the next FGB agenda (KM) – this has been done. • Arrange for a 'Writing on a page' sheet to be completed for governors (AG) – this is still to be done. • Revisit subject crib sheets on Ofsted 365 (All) – governors were encouraged to ensure these sheets have been completed / updated. • Circulate the Health & Safety policy to governors for approval (KM) – this has been done and as no issues were raised via email this policy has been approved. 	SG KM/ KB KB/ CKB AG All
8.	Feedback from Parent Voice Questionnaire The feedback from the questionnaire was collated and shared with governors prior to the meeting. AG highlighted several points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of parents who responded was disappointing and work needs to be done to engage with parents and for them to understand how important their feedback is. The main issue with anonymity is that no additional information can be gained. - It is a baseline to work from. - The SLT have reflected on how much of what parents have said is known or how much of it is felt as there was some contradiction in the responses. - Communication and how things are shared with parents was an important thing to come out from the questionnaire. <p>Discussions took place over ways to increase involvement, including sending questionnaires directly from class teachers. It was also suggested that feedback is given to parents using phrases such as 'as a result of...' and 'this is what we've heard, is this right?'. AG will put something together based on these discussions.</p>	AG
9.	Ofsted preparation discussions KB circulated the questionnaire that has previously been worked on. This is a live document that will continue to be updated. AG talked through how the process of the Ofsted inspection runs and the involvement of governors. Governors asked about parent feedback. AG stated there is a link that is sent to parents the night	

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	before Ofsted come in for them to complete. Governor monitoring this term – several visits have already taken place this term and other visits have been booked in. It was agreed to arrange monitoring visits for the next academic year at the FGB in Sept. Governors asked about the feedback from ‘speed dating’. AG will check whether this has been fed back to staff and will provide the information for governors.	KB AG
10.	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none">- AG noted that 7th May is the Children’s parade in Brighton.- 10th June is Community Day at Balfour- Meetings for next year – KB asked if it would be possible to move FGB meetings to Thursdays next year. This was approved and dates for meetings 2023/34 will be circulated shortly.	KM

Date of next meeting:	FGB – Wed 5 th July 2023 6pm
Time closed:	8pm

Agreed as a true record and approved for circulation:

Signed:  (Chair of Governors)

Date: 5th July 2023