

# **WHINMOOR St. PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **Governing Body Meeting Minutes – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at 2.00 pm**

### **1. Opening Remarks**

Following Ofsted inspection of the school on 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013, an extraordinary meeting of the full Governing Body committee was called at short notice to discuss the findings of the report due to be published on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013, and devise an action plan to address the issues raised.

Alan Glasby was welcomed to the Governing Body having very recently been approved as a Foundation Governor by the P.C.C.

Apologies from Sue Barley, Sarah Dowse and Sue Marhraoui were accepted.

Whilst the results of the Ofsted report were disappointing, in light of the recent Self Evaluation Form(S.E.F) compiled by the school prior to inspection by Ofsted, the findings of the report have reluctantly been accepted – albeit against the backdrop of the School's own self-criticism as detailed in the S.E.F.

The report was analysed and points discussed in order as presented by Ofsted;

### **2. Areas Requiring Improvement**

**2.1 Writing** – As identified in the recent S.E.F. the Head Teacher, Mrs Storey and the Governing Body accept that writing is generally, an area of weakness across the school.

**Agreed Action** - A detailed literacy development plan has already, recently been put in place for the current academic year. Indeed, this had been discussed at the recent full Governing body meeting in September and has already been implemented. The plan has not (and did not at the time of the Ofsted inspection) have enough time to develop, mature and the outcomes manifest themselves in results as required by Ofsted. However, it was agreed that Rod Watson assume the role of Governor with specific responsibility for writing to ensure that the development plan is adopted and implemented.

**Governor Action:** Take responsibility for oversight of writing in the school  
ensure the development plan is adopted and implemented

**By whom:** Rod Watson

**Timeable:** Ongoing

**Account to:** Governing Body at subsequent meetings

**2.2 Quality of Teaching** – The findings of Ofsted were accepted on the basis that the lessons observed by the inspectors at the time of their visit did warrant the 'requires improvement' assessment. Members of the school management team were present during the lesson observations in question and were surprised at the quality of teaching they had seen; this was not in keeping with other lesson observations previously conducted as part of the school's regular assessments with the School Improvement Advisor, Jean Hirst.

It was noted that in 28, previous lesson observations, 86% were found to be either 'good' or better and all lesson observations that were previously unsatisfactory, action had been taken and lessons followed

up. (Not taken into account by Ofsted). Quite why the standard seen by Ofsted was not in keeping with previous observations is difficult to comprehend; nervousness was highlighted as a possible reason. However, the Governing Body accept that teaching standards must improve as those seen by Ofsted at the time of their visit were not to an acceptable standard.

**Agreed Action** - With immediate effect, the number of unannounced lesson observations will increase significantly, as will Head Teacher 'drop in's' into classes to observe lessons in progress. Any required action or intervention will be dealt with by Mrs Storey in keeping with current Union restrictions. The Head Teacher will need to monitor existing planning to what is actually happening in lessons.

**Governor Action:** Receive and consider HTs report at subsequent GB meetings  
**Timetable:** Ongoing

**2.3 Inconsistent Marking** - The Ofsted findings were accepted (already highlighted by the School in the S.E.F.)

**Agreed Action** – The school 'marking policy' is to be re-visited with all members of staff. In addition, exchange of best practice is to be adopted; Ofsted were aware that some areas of marking within school were exceptional, the teachers concerned would be used as a benchmark for other members of staff in order to bring consistency across the School. Peer review assistance to other staff would be provided where appropriate in this area.

In addition, marking of work was and is due to be addressed via work scrutiny plans put in place (detailed in the aforementioned S.E.F.) Work scrutiny is a cornerstone of the S.E.F. the need for which has simply been reaffirmed as a result of the Ofsted visit and their report.

**Governor Action:** Receive and consider HTs report at subsequent GB meetings  
**Timetable:** Ongoing

**2.4 Governing Body** – Criticism of the Governing Body was accepted. There have been numerous occasions in the past where the Governing Body have questioned the Head Teacher which has not been recorded in detail in meeting minutes. Teacher's performance has been inadequately questioned.

**Agreed Action**–Head Teacher is to devise a new document 'Performance Management and Overview Activities' which will include;

- Details of lesson observations, outcomes and actions
- Details of learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- 'Drop in's'
- Discussions with staff & pupils

Performance management of teachers will now form part of the Governing Body responsibilities as required by recent changes in legislation introduced in September 2013 (not yet implemented in School).

**Governor Action:** Receive and consider HTs report at subsequent GB meetings  
**Timetable:** Ongoing

Ofsted recommended that Governor's undertake training in order to develop a better understanding of how the Head Teacher should be held to account. The Governors and Head Teacher welcome this suggestion and will seek outside assistance. Alan Glasby agreed to take responsibility for exploring the most suitable body for examining current needs of the Governors and providing appropriate training and assistance. (National Body of School Leadership & Association of School Governors were all suggested as potential providers). Increased use of Fisher Trust Foundation data, RAISE online data and Focus education were also suggested.

**Governor Action:** Explore possible agencies for conducting of external review  
**By whom:** Alan Glasby  
**Timetable:** ASAP  
**Account to:** HT and Chair

Valerie Vanni agreed to take responsibility for overseeing & co-ordinating Governor Training.

**Governor Action:** Oversee and co-ordinate governor training  
**By whom:** Valerie Vanni  
**Timetable:** Ongoing  
**Account to:** Subsequent GB meetings

### **3. What the School Needs To Do To Improve**

Raising Attainment –The majority of this section of the report has been addressed above. However, the new tracking system launched in September 2013 will continue to be utilised. (Following further consideration at the request of Mrs Storey, Ofsted accepted that the data for last Year's Y6 pupils should be changed from 'Satisfactory' to 'Good' when the data for five specific children with complex SEN requirements was taken into account).

Data going into the tracking system needs to be rigorously monitored for accuracy with documentation to be produced for all matched children.

On current projections and assessments, 75% of current Y6 children are expected to achieve more than 2 levels of progress (2 levels are required as 'floor' standard).

Links are already established with another local School (via our School Improvement Advisor) in order to monitor 'moderation' across schools and ensure consistency and accuracy of marking and assessments.

### **4. Inspection Judgments**

**4.1.1 Pupil Achievement** - The Governing Body accept that there are grounds for more children to be identified as appropriate for attaining 3 levels of progress, and that there needs to be more differentiation of able children and that they should be challenged accordingly. Again, this is an area already identified and action implemented as part of the S.E.F.

**4.1.2 Nursery Skills** – The criticism levelled by the inspectors is considered very unfair. At the time of the inspection the inspectors spent 10 minutes in the outside area, arriving outside just after a large amount of equipment had been put away! Nor did the inspectors look at the children's profiles which

include photographic evidence of the writing the school has been criticised for not having. In addition, the evidence of Head Teacher performance management in this area was overlooked.

In future, further photographic evidence will be available and provided for inspection purposes in case a similar situation arises (i.e. inspectors fail to make adequate observations).

However, the Governors do accept that more opportunities for outside writing could be provided. The Head Teacher will identify and go to look at a School with 'outstanding' outdoor features in order to gain some ideas in this area in a way which is also costs effective and within budget restraints.

**4.1.3 KS1 Writing** – Again this is an area which has been highlighted in the school S.E.F. prior to the Ofsted visit. The writing curriculum is to be audited and reviewed. Mrs Benyon-Tullett recently attended a writing improvement course, and will take responsibility for sharing this with other members of staff, this area will also form part of the writing responsibility allocated to Rod Watson (see above). In addition, two members of the school staff team are due to attend moderation courses in this area which will be subsequently shared with all staff.

With regard to Point 5 (inspection judgements – the achievement of pupils), a 'challenge' course has also been booked as part of staff continuing personal development.

**4.1.4 Maths (Point 6 inspection judgements – the achievement of pupils)** – The maths co-ordinator will be asked to provide evidence of the use of maths skills in other subject areas.

**4.1.5 Sport** – Staff are currently working in the area of gymnastics and taking support in other sporting areas from outside providers. Miss Benyon-Tullett will take responsibility for P.E. in the absence of Miss Milner who is on maternity leave. She will be asked to establish a formal system to evaluate the activities covered in school.

## **4.2 Quality of Teaching**

As discussed earlier in the meeting, Ofsted findings are generally agreed. Mrs Vanni wished to clarify that teaching is to be reviewed and monitored across the school, Mrs Storey agreed that this was the case. The comments made by Ofsted in this section of the report were noted and discussed, they were addressed earlier in the meeting.

With regard to teaching assistants, the comments made by Ofsted were also noted. The good practice of Teaching Assistants is to be shared across the school via discussion, meetings and peer review.

## **4.3 Behaviour and Safety of Children**

This area of the report was particularly surprising and in many respects, considered to be somewhat contradictory in view of other comments made by inspectors where management of particularly challenging behaviour was found to be very good. Indeed, much of this section of the report is positive (despite the 'requires improvement' assessment!)

However, it was discussed and agreed that parents would in future only be notified of bumps and scrapes to children where medical attention has been provided. Governors commented that parental approach and attitude to minor bumps will vary quite significantly.

The schools audit of behaviour is robust; it has recently allowed staff to identify that the number of KS2 children allowed to play in the main yard in any one time should be reduced from 4 to 3 classes, one class will be required to play in the quad (thus reducing the number of children running around in the yard from around 120 to 90). Behaviour monitoring highlighted the need for this change with Y3 children in particular accounting for a significant number of incidents.

#### **4.4 Leadership and Management**

It was accepted that 2013/14 performance management has not yet been completed, and presented to the Governing Body (a new requirement from September 2013). Targets are now to be set for standards and the curriculum in relation to;

- Writing
- Teaching
- Curriculum Responsibility

Governors will be informed and the Head Teacher challenged accordingly in this area going forward.

The comments made by Ofsted in recognition of the exceptional challenges recently faced by the school were noted. However, it was also noted that in reaching their conclusions, the inspectors did not look at evidence relating to previous years results.

<b><u>Governor Action:</u></b>	Receive and consider HTs report at subsequent GB meetings
<b><u>Timetable:</u></b>	Ongoing

#### **5. Conclusions and meeting Closure**

The results of the Ofsted report were generally accepted. The Head Teacher and Governors understand the areas where improvement is required having volunteered and identified them for Ofsted prior to their visit!

There are many areas of the report which are positive and generally the school is considered by the Governing Body to outstanding. In particular, it was noted that inspectors found very positive feedback from staff and children they had spoken to in the course of their visit.

The absence of Mrs Storey for a large part of last year (and the significant absence of other staff members last year for lengthy periods), should not be underestimated. The following factors were also taken into account;

The cohort of children has changed to the point of being unrecognisable in comparison to previous, recent years

Over 25% of children now classed as SEN (above national average)

The school now has 9 'looked after' children, some with very challenging behavioural, emotional and learning difficulties

Additional funding has only been provided for one of those children

The Head Teacher and Governing Body recognise that there is a lot of work to be done but the areas for improvement identified are certainly achievable.

It is hoped that within 12 months Whinmoor St. Paul's will be in a position to invite Ofsted back into the school confident that an assessment of at least 'good' can be attained.