

THE BRAMPTONS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held at 7.00 p.m. on Thursday 24th March 2011
in school

Chair : Mrs. Mellish

PRESENT: Mr. M. Adamson (MA – Headteacher); Mrs. D. Hart (DH); Mr. J. Hickman (JH);
Mrs. G. Howarth (GH); Mrs. L. Hunter (LH); Mrs. M. Jackson (MJ);
Mrs. B. Mellish (BB – Chair, arrived at 7.15 p.m); Mrs. H. Popham (HP);
Mrs. D. Rhodes (DR); Ms. J. Schumacher-Smith (JS-S).

APOLOGIES: Mrs. K. Brades; Mrs. E. Cooke; Mrs. J. Macmain. (Accepted)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. Sandra Turland – Local Authority Clerk

ACTION

Ms. Schumacher-Smith, Vice Chair, began the meeting due to the fact that Mrs. Mellish had been delayed having been subjected to the vagaries of the rail system from London.

1. **APOLOGIES** – as above.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in respect of any items on the agenda.

3. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3rd FEBRUARY 2011**

These were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Vice Chair. A copy of the signed minutes handed to Mr. Adamson for the school's governors' file.

MA

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

From Page 2

Road Safety: Mr. Hickman stated that the road safety locals are now using hand held cameras. These are being operated on the brow of the hill at Church Brampton catching traffic coming up – the police decide where the traffic checks are to be carried out. Traffic Awareness Co-ordinator for the Bramptons Parish Council to be contacted again regarding repositioning the checks.

MA

From Page 2

Terms of Reference: to be looked at in more detail – ongoing.

**Community/
Safeguarding
Ctees**

From Page 2

8 (b) Local Authority Induction programme for new governors is still overbooked – ongoing.

GH/DR

From Page 2

Profile/pen portrait/photographs: some of these are still outstanding. All to be completed by the next FGB meeting.

**ALL
to note**

From Page 2

Performance Management Training: Mrs. Hart stated that she had still been unable to book a place on this training – ongoing. Mr. Adamson added that this had been discussed at recent Headteachers' meetings and the matter was being taken to Schools Forum as a number of governors' courses are either overbooked or have been cancelled.

DH

From Page 2

11. Governors' Curriculum Role: Mrs. Jackson agreed to be the Science governor.

From Page 3

Improvement Partners: governors had attending a meeting with Brian Kite on 14th March to establish what type of questions he asked of Mr. Adamson as governors will have to cover these once the role of SIPs cease. Mr. Hickman stated that this had been a first class meeting. Mr. Kite had indicated that he would be happy to take on a consultancy role with the school/cluster. The area cluster group has put aside sufficient money to cover 1½ days consultancy.

7.15 p.m. Mrs. Mellish joined the meeting.

The Clerk was thanked for her explanation of Aspire which had appeared in the minutes.

From Page 5

Buildings (b): Asbestos check: this was carried out during half term but at the time of this meeting no report had been received. Three different surveys had been carried out by – structural surveyors, internal surveys and asbestos specialist.

From Page 5

Policies and documentation: Mr. Adamson had produced, and circulated, a school's policy register at the Standards Committee meeting on 17th March and highlighted the items that are a statutory requirement for the school to have. A list is shown in the committee minutes of which committee should undertake the review of specific policies. Recommendation for ratification of policies to be made at the next FGB meeting.

From Page 6

School Pay Policy: this had been slightly reworded as requested at the meeting on 3rd February. Mrs. Mellish had also questioned the fact that the policy included pay for a day off school re house moves. Mr. Adamson said that this was normal in his experience. Mrs. Hunter agreed that most schools allowed for this. Re 32.2 the time off school for staff to look after children due to illness or other emergency to also include time for those who are carers for adults. With these comments noted it was agreed to ratify the policy.

***Proposed by Mrs. Mellish
Seconded by Ms. Schumacher-Smith
Agreed unanimously.***

Attendance Policy: these had also been amended in the light of the above changes and it was agreed to ratify this policy also.

**Proposed by Mrs. Mellish
Seconded by Mrs. Hart
Agreed unanimously.**

From Page 7

11. Governors' Teas/Cake meeting: Mr. Adamson stated that he had recirculated a list of dates along with a bullet point summary of what is expected of governors but not much response had been received from governors. Mr. Adamson to recirculate email.

MA

7.25 p.m. Mrs. Mellish takes over the chairing of the meeting.

5. CORRESPONDENCE – Nil.

6. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND ANY ITEMS OF URGENCY – Mr. Adamson

- (a) There was no written report for this meeting but an update was given to the last report.
- (b) **Number of pupils on roll** = 52 as one child was relocated and one is to start after the Easter holidays. Two other children have asked for places but there is a complex background. The school requires an additional 12 to 13 children in order to breakeven year by year as numbers really need to be in the mid 60's. Pupil recruitment is an issue and needs to be monitored closely. To consider doing another leaflet drop. New poster to be produced. To consider advertising in the local magazine if the cost is not prohibiting. Community and Safeguarding Committee to take forward in time for Reception allocation notification in May.
- (c) **Red Nose Day:** the school raised approximately £800 which is an incredible amount for a school of this size. The event had been organised by the School Council and write-up appeared in the Chronicle & Echo. The governing body acknowledged this splendid achievement.
- (d) **School Open Day:** there have been more visitors this year to the school open day than ever before. There will be no information from the Admissions Team until 11th May with regards to the number of pupils expected to start at the school in September 2011.
- (e) **Mrs. Howarth had visited the EYFS** and had found this to be a nice, happy environment with all the pupils being keen on what they were doing and everything seemed very positive. She stated that she will make these visits on a regular basis and also help with reading.
- (f) **Grounds:** money was still available in repairs and maintenance and so some outstanding jobs have been completed e.g. fencing, heating boiler repaired today, trees along the boarder and school to be trimmed and reduced in height – work to be carried out next week as this presents health and safety issues. The maintenance of the trees will be on an annual contract.

Comm.
Cttee

- (g) **Parish Council:** it was agreed that the parish council should be invited to school events in order to try and foster relationships.

7. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – Mr. Adamson

- (a) Following the headteachers' briefing in January/February, regarding implications for governing and schools under the new regime, Mr. Adamson had met with Mrs. Mellish and Ms. Schumacher-Smith and decided that a management committee needed to be formalised in order to manage the transition of the changes in the local authority with more responsibility being passed to the governing body. This will not be a closed shop – any governor can be involved. Papers were circulated and explained by Mr. Adamson.
- (b) The aim is to set up the timetable of issues for the governing body's oversight and responsibility. The Management Committee has an administrative function and is not a decision making authority.
- (c) The four key areas for Ofsted inspections in the new regime are:
- achievement of pupils;
 - quality of teaching;
 - quality of management;
 - leadership and behaviour and safety of children.

A copy of the governing body school improvement cycle was also tabled.

- (d) The objective is to build the new priorities into measurable outcomes that the governing body can understand, oversee and verify or question in documentation, information and governor visits into school.
- (e) Also discussed at that meeting had been:
- training levels of the governing body members;
 - opportunities to further 'skill-up' governors by partnering with other governing bodies or specialist governors of cluster school/high performing governing bodies;
 - rotation within committees;
 - clear role descriptors for specialised governors highlighting when inputs are required for school development plans/self evaluation forms etc.
- (f) The top copy of the School Development Plan was circulated which summarised the top priorities in the school. Governors were asked to read this and feed back any comments direct to Mr. Adamson. The School Development Plan is a working document, a full copy of which is available upon request from Mr. Adamson.
- (g) **The five key outcomes: these statements identify where the school wishes to be entering into 2014, when a new three year plan will need to be developed:**
- i. **Leadership and Management:** The Bramptons Primary School will follow an annual school improvement cycle with staff, parents, pupils and governors all engaged in self-review and forward planning so that the school meets the requirements of the new educational

environment and continues to make progress towards being a good and then outstanding school.

The Bramptons Primary School will have agreed a sustainable model of leadership and management.

- ii. **Curriculum and Pedagogy:** Children at The Bramptons Primary School experience a rich and diverse topic based curriculum that promotes independent, personalised learning and which is meticulously planned against agreed skills grids and standardised assessment material developed in light of the new curriculum orders to be published from 2012 onwards. (OFSTED priority issues)
At The Bramptons Primary School the vast majority of teaching (in excess of 80%) is at least good and often outstanding.

- iii. **Community:** Children at The Bramptons Primary School regularly and frequently contribute to and engage with their local community. They have a good understanding of the wider community in which they live and respond positively through their actions and attitudes.
The school as achieved Gold International School Status.

- iv. **Premises:** Internal modifications and changes to policy mean that the school is a visually stimulating, tidy and suitably modernised environment that promotes high standards of learning and behaviour. There is effective storage and proper working areas for both pupils and staff.
The outside environment has been altered to support the wider curriculum and independent learning agendas.

NB: premises are being looked at as a three year aspiration.

- v. **Environmental Learning:** The Bramptons Primary School has achieved Green Flag Eco-School Status and is recognised as a centre for environmental learning.
The school has established an activity afternoon once per week that promotes applied learning in or connected to the outdoor environment.

- (h) Mr. Hickman stated that he thought this was a good paper and that the management committee should feed back to governors what they want them to do.
- (i) Management Committee to consist of: Mr. Adamson, Mrs. Mellish and Mrs. Schumacher-Smith who will feed back to the FGB. No decisions will be made by the committee outside the FGB.

8. LEADERSHIP MODEL OPTIONS – Mr. Adamson/Mrs. Mellish

- (a) Mrs. Mellish reported Martyn Webb had spoken to most governors in December 2010 as to what Federation would look like and the possibility of starting discussions. The governing body now needs to look at the possibilities or agree for the school to stay as it is and look again in 12 months time. A discussion took place with comments made as follows:
- A number of governors indicated that they thought Federation was something they were open to, but that there was a need to know more about the nature of any school that The Bramptons might consider.

- There was the need to consider the impact of our decision on Mr. Adamson. The school does not want to go down this route and lose him. It was noted that such potential conflicts would need to be sorted in advance.
- The Local Authority is not currently in a position to force the school into a federation but there was concern that this situation may change in the future. It might therefore be best to move on this now while the governing body retains the decision making power. At the moment the Local Authority can only direct federation if the school is in a category after inspection and the governing body is seen as inadequate. This could be either a hard or a soft federation.

Note from the Clerk:

Hard federation

A Hard Federation is an arrangement under **Sections 24, 25 of the Education Act 2002** by which two to five schools share a single governing body. Federations can involve a mix of primary and secondary schools. Within the federation each school retains its separate legal identity in respect of its budget, admissions and performance tables, and each is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.

Soft Federation or collaboration

A Soft Federation, or collaboration, is a formal arrangement under **Section 26 of the Education Act 2002** by which two or more governing bodies share elements of governance or establish a joint strategic committee with delegated powers. Under these arrangements each school retains its individual governing body. Soft federation can involve a mix of primary and secondary schools and is based on the principle of allowing governing bodies and joint committees freedom to determine their own arrangements within an agreed framework. It can cover a range of operational models from an over-arching committee delegated to take strategic decisions on behalf of two or more governing bodies, to setting up single-issue committees such as premises or curriculum committees.

- Governors wanted to know what the staffs' view on the idea was and whether they had much say in the final decision. It was explained that there are no statutory right for staff agreement as the decision rests solely with the governing body, although it should be noted that staff and parents have representation on the governing body and as such their views would be formally considered. However, good practice and common sense dictated that full consultations would be held with staff and parents. No consultations have taken place so far as there is no proposal to discuss.
- It was felt that as a parent some governors loathed the idea but as governors they could see that it was the only way forward.
- Federation may give the school longer term stability.
- Federation was considered seven or eight years ago when the school was being pushed that way but the other school stopped it. This time we are in a better position as we are not being pushed.

- Another school is known to be considering federation as a possibility but at the time of the meeting their governing body had not reached a decision and they may well choose to pursue another route. The first approach would need to come from them as the school with the vacancy.
- (b) After the discussion it was agreed that in principle governors had a high level of interest and wanted to pursue at the initial stage. If the Chair of Governors from the other school contacts Mrs. Mellish governors agreed to her asking for information, which was then to be fed back to the FGB immediately – Mrs. Mellish was to make no decision on behalf of the governing body. If the proposal was serious, then Mrs. Mellish is to call an additional FGB meeting. Mrs. Mellish reminded governors that as Chair she has no greater authority than any other governor.

BM

9. BUDGET/SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS FOR 2001/2012 – Mr. Adamson

- (a) The school's budget had only been received from Schools Finance on Monday 21st March.
- (b) The school will receive an increase on last year of £30k, just short of £12k of this amount is statement funding which goes in and out. Initially the budget looks positive and the staffing structure will be kept for the academic period 2011/2012
- (c) Cathryn Walker, Senior Finance Officer, visited the school in February and reported that she felt based on the figures available at the time the budget would balance for this year and possibly next provided that pupil numbers do not fall.
- (d) Money will be extremely tight as the school will be expected to do more with it than before.
- (e) Minutes of the Finance and Personnel Meeting held on 8th March 2011 circulated. It was agreed to accept the finance recommendations as listed which included the buy-back SLA for the Clerking Service.
- (f) Ratified school budgets need to be back with Schools Finance by 6th May. In view of this it was agreed to hold an additional FGB meeting solely to ratify the budget at 3.30 p.m. on Tuesday 3rd May 2011 at which the Local Authority Clerk is not required to attend. The Clerk reminded governors that this meeting needs to be (i) quorate, (ii) clerked correctly by someone who is not a member of staff and (iii) the name of the person who makes the proposal and seconder to be listed. Mr. Adamson to circulate the budget proposals to all governors, and clerk, prior to this meeting.

MA

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- (a) These were accepted as previously circulated and received by governors with no questions.

11. TRAINING & LINK GOVERNOR'S REPORT – Mrs. Popham

- (a) Mrs. Jackson reported that she had started the new governor induction training with only one more session to attend before it is completed. Mrs.

Jackson stated that she had learnt more from other new governors than from the PowerPoint presentation.

- (b) A system will need to be put in place to establish the amount of money available, and left, in the budget for governor training. Governors are asked to check there is money still available before booking on a course. Mrs. Popham to take this forward as Link/Training Governor.
- (c) The Clerk is frequently circulating copies of The Northamptonshire Governor and The Director's Report.

HP
ALL

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Letters to parents – Mrs. Howarth

- (a) Mrs. Howarth asked if letters to parents from the school could be emailed. Mr. Adamson responded by saying that he had asked parents before and very few had indicated that they wanted to receive letters this way but that he will ask the question again. Mrs. Hunter added that hard copies of letters would also need to continue to be sent home as some parents do not have access to emails.

MA

Staff governor vacancy – Mr. Adamson

- (a) Mrs. Macmain's term of office as a non teaching staff governor comes to an end on 26th April 2011. Reappointment or a new appointment to be made before the next FGB meeting.

MA

Resignation – Mrs. Mellish

- (a) Mrs. Mellish informed governors that as from September 2011 she would be resigning from the governing body owing to the pressure of work. This will mean that the Clerk will need to seek a new Authority Governor and a new Chair of Governors will need to be appointed under the usual process at the first meeting in September. A transition process will need to be put in place. Governors expressed their sadness that Mrs. Mellish would be standing down but fully understood her reasons.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.00 p.m. Wednesday 18th May 2011 **(please note the change of day).**

Agenda to include:

- Ratification of policies – as recommended by specific committees.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15 a.m.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____ 2011

ACTION TEMPLATE

Minute Page	Action Required	By Whom and date for completion
Page 1	Terms of Reference to be looked at in more detail and circulated once revised.	Community/Safeguarding Cttee – before next meeting.
Page 1 8 (b)	New governors' induction programme (LA). To book direct on line once vacancies arise.	Mrs. Howarth and Mrs. Rhodes – a date convenient.
Page 2	Outstanding governors' profile/pen portrait/photographs to be completed.	ALL – outstanding ones to be sent to Mr. Adamson before the next FGB meeting.
Page 2	Performance Management Training.	Mrs. Hart – to book a place at the first availability.
Page 3 11	Email to governors re governors' tea/cake meeting to be recirculated.	Mr. Adamson – as soon as possible after the meeting.
Page 3 6 (b)	To look at ways recruiting more children to the school.	Communications Committee – to discuss various options and take forward.
Page 7 8 (b)	If contacted by the Chair of Governors from X school and information received re federation to feed this back immediately to the FGB.	Mrs. Mellish. – with a view to calling an additional FGB meeting
Page 7 9 (f)	Budget proposal to be circulated to governors and clerk.	Mr. Adamson – prior to the meeting on 3 rd May 2011.
Page 8 11 (b)	System to be put in place to establish the amount of money available for governing training.	Mrs. Popham – to put in place and monitor accordingly. Governors to liaise with Mrs. Popham before putting their names down for courses.
Page 8 12	To establish if parents wish to receive letters from school via email.	Mr. Adamson – before the next FGB meeting.
Page 8 12	Non teaching staff governor – to establish reappointment or appoint a new governor when Mrs. Macmain's term of office ends on 26.04.2011.	Mr. Adamson – before the next FGB meeting.

Minutes taken and transcribed by
Sandra Turland – Local Authority Clerk to the Governors