

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

**The Russell School
Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held on
Monday 22 May 2023**

Constitution, Membership and Attendance

LA - 1	PARENTS - 2	CO-OPTED - 3	STAFF 2
Mr. Rob Woolner (RW)	Ms Claire Smith (CS)	Mr Neil Cutting (NC)	Miss Rebecca James Acting Headteacher (BJ)
	Mr Coulter Patton (CP)	Mr Tom LLOYD (TL)	Mrs Nicola McCann Teacher and SENco (NM)
		Mr. Brian Miller (BM)	

bold = absent

Apologies: CS

Clerk: Amanda Bungey

1	Welcome and Apologies for absence:	Actions
	The Chair welcomed Governors to the forth meeting of the FGB for 2022- 23.	
2	Declarations of interest: No declarations of interest were declared.	
3	AfC presentation – Preparing for Ofsted Effective Governance and Ofsted Presented by Emma Smith (School Improvement Partner for the Russell School) Governors had previously see the slides of this presentation with links to various useful documents. ES: The Headteacher will receive a call from Ofsted, before mid-day, the day before an inspection. They will be asked what will be a suitable time for the Headteacher to speak for up to two hours to the Lead Inspector. There will be a chance for the Headteacher to negotiate what she would like the Inspectors to see and the “deep	

dives” they should focus on. There will probably be two to three inspectors for two days.

30% of schools had graded inspections last year.

If the inspection is ungraded, Ofsted will come again in four years, assuming it is a good school.

If graded, the school will get individual grades for each of the six judgement areas. The main focus now is on curriculum, quality of education, intent, implementation and impact. They will look at data, children's books, etc.

Governor question: Is it true that one of the things about the new Inspection Framework is that we should not be over-reliant on data?

ES: Yes, Ofsted looks at the IDSR dashboard. They will look at extremes and the data on the website. They will, however, turn away any data that they would not have seen before, if a school tries to provide it.

They will be looking at triangulation, behaviour, children at play and ask them about lessons etc. They will ask staff about safeguarding.

Governor question: Is it more qualitative rather than quantitative? Much more about evidence and consistency?

ES: Yes, data generates questions, but doesn't give answers.

34 schools in the borough are due from this term, but there is no way they will get through all of them.

There are four outcomes of the ungraded inspection to see if a school is “good”, and then the school will be inspected again in four years time. As a “good” school you can't get “outstanding” with this framework. However, if there are safeguarding issues, a school can drop below “good”.

The terms “gaming” and “off-roading” were made clear – it is where schools exclude pupils at an alternative provision or put on a reduced timetable to avoid the inspectors seeing them, due to their behaviour issues. (This happens more commonly in secondary schools).

Governor question: Is there a list of things which the Inspectors look at?

ES: Some things are very relevant for Governors eg parent view website, results of surveys. Anyone can Google “Ofsted Parent View” anytime to see.

Parent surveys need to be completed by 11am on day one and inspectors will need at least 100 responses. Any dissatisfaction is normally around SEND.

Governors should look at the questions. Inspectors will look at data from IDSR which will shape "Deep Dives" which will start on day one. Inspectors like to meet Leads on reading and writing and maths and probably two other areas, which the Headteacher can steer.

Day two will be a "Shallow Paddle" - 15 minutes with three other subject Leads, and then they will see lessons. The school won't know which areas the Inspectors will focus on.

Governor question: Do they look at Foundation subjects or, for example, PE?

ES: Foundation subjects. BJ is keen for music to be one of them and probably history.

Governor question: why would you pick those BJ?

They are strengths in the curriculum and the Lead knows them very well. Flow and progression is very good.

Governor comment, this is about triangulation and consistency, so it's good to look at it from that perspective.

ES: BJ would also put forward a developing area, not just a strong area.

Governor question: As Governors, are we likely to be asked about the curriculum?

ES: Yes, whether you are confident it is designed to meet the needs of the community. Whether it ensures long-term learning for children.

Questions are in six categories:

Curriculum, safeguarding, wellbeing, vision and ethos, pupil groups and access.

There will need to be a minimum of two Governors and maximum of five Governors (if sitting on different committees).

Methodology won't just focus on one area. They will talk to children. Teachers and Leaders should get used to doing that with children to help prepare them for Ofsted questions.

Parents of children with SEN are most likely to give the most negative responses. Governors should be asking how is the school catering for SEN children in order for them to meet their full potential. Ofsted inspectors are trained to look through the eyes of children with SEN. It is important to really think about learning for

children with second language or Pupil Premium pupils. Is teaching adapted for them or are they not engaged?

Inspectors will go to the gate and talk to parents and children (parents will have had a letter before).

They will talk to early careers Teachers (they will want to validate the 2 year programme – and will look at whether the school gives them an effective induction).

They will talk to pupils, look at surveys, data that shows bullying, attendance and finance.

(For a school to be “outstanding” in a graded inspection, every teacher has to deliver an outstanding lesson).

As a group of Governors -you need to think about what you would say in response to questions. Does it reflect what the Headteacher and children might say?

Who is the team to meet the inspectors? There should be an A team and B team in case of absence. Work should be done on the six areas and write bullet point points under each area. Spend time with BJ to discuss. Governors can help plug gaps during inspection.

Governor comment: This is good advice to have received. We should work through the questions as the Governing Body.

ES: Key questions:

What is the vision for the school?

What is the ethos you want to promote?

What is the ambition for the curriculum?

Governor comment: The front page of the pack for Headteacher recruitment encapsulates those three areas.

ES: Make sure you showcase everything you want to.

Effective governance you should show clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction, holding executive leaders to account (the senior team) and overseeing finance to see that money is well spent.

Governor question: What if any areas are identified as “inadequate”?

ES: The only area is safeguarding, which if it isn't “good” in an ungraded inspection, could change the grade from “good” to “inadequate”. In a graded inspection, the quality of learning and leadership and management must be good. Some areas could

have “requires improvement” but this wouldn't necessarily change the grade from “good”.

Inspectors will ask the Headteacher about the effectiveness of Governors. They will scrutinise the following: minutes of meetings, Terms of Reference, the committee structure, the website. They will talk to groups of Governors, and talk to Leaders about visits from Governors. They will also look at reading and curriculum provision, Equality Act, Safeguarding and RSHE.

“Access to learning” is the term that has replaced “differentiation” - teachers using questions appropriately rather than giving different tasks.

Governor comment: Getting Quality First Teaching right?
ES agreed.

ES: Governors should look at the website, culture within the school, improvement planning, the CPD plan for Governors and the impact of that.

Governor comment: We should focus on eternal training provision available through AfC as this counts towards the inspection.

ES: Also look at lines of accountability, minutes - do they show robust challenge? Impact on provision is accountability leading to quality. Making sure money is well spent – prioritisation, making the most of Pupil Premium funding, sports funding etc. Are decisions well informed? Are pupils' best interests served?

Governor question: How the school budgets and how it spends is linked to how Governors assess the school development plan. Is that right?

ES: Yes.

Governor question: Would it be unwise to mention that Governors have had to make difficult decisions?

ES: This would not be unwise.

ES: A schedule should be in place for reviewing policies.

BJ: Peter Cawley has audited the website and the results are expected soon. **Action:** BJ to report back.

ES: When the Headteacher receives a call from Ofsted, she will have to send messages to NC and ES.

There will be a meeting with Governors, as many as possible to attend.

BJ

Feedback will be about 4.30/ 5 pm on day 2 for one hour. The Inspection result at that stage is confidential.

Governance is likely to be reported on.

In recent years, where schools have declined a grade it has been mostly to do with the curriculum, consistency, individual subjects, reading etc.(See presentation slide for the whole list).

Common governance issues in Inspection reports are over-reliance on information from the Headteacher. So, systematic visits to schools are important.

BJ: maybe Governors should have a meeting without BJ and NM present?

Governor question: As Governors, is effective challenge happening?

ES: Looking at the SIP report as external validation is important.

Governor comment: Rachel N's contribution was also external validation. Also the Headteacher recruitment helped with validation.

ES: The current Ofsted priorities are:

- Accessing learning -90% of learning through Quality First Teaching and 10% through intervention. (Although it is diluting learning when children are taken away from the qualified teacher).
- The design of the curriculum- are children secure before moving on.
- Adaptive lessons is a buzz word, teachers being responsive to the needs of pupils.
- Focus on the bottom 20% of class -do teachers know who they are and what progress they are making.

Governor comment: Thanks to ES for the helpful presentation, as it demonstrated the role the Governors have to play and what the school will be going through during the inspection. It is important to feel ready and competent to respond to questions. It is important to populate answers to questions beforehand, making what is intrinsic, extrinsic.

Governor question: Do SIPs have to provide these presentations to all schools on the red list?

ES: Some schools have requested it.

	<p>Governor question: Are you happy BJ that this presentation helps? BJ: I wanted us all to be on the same page, especially as we have new Governors. It would be good to have a core group of Govenors to be available for inspection and others who could step in.</p> <p>Governor question: There has been criticism of Ofsted earlier this year. Are there any signs they are reacting to this? ES: Colleagues have said there is no focus to change.</p> <p>ES: It is a big ask to get there. COVID time lost means it's hard to respond to the new framework.</p> <p>Governor comment: Ofsted Governor team need to arrange to get together to put together responses to questions in the presentation and to take three questions each to focus on.</p>	<p>NC, TL, CS</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Previous minutes:</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate record and the Chair agreed his signature. (He has recently had surgery so was unable to physically sign).</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Matters arising:</p> <p>See update on other matters arising from the FGB meeting on 22 May 2023 at the end of the minutes.</p> <p>The following items were closed:</p> <p>Item 3 update: BJ has provided a potential candidate for Co-opted Governor, Louise Allen. NC has arranged to meet her in London. She has not been a Governor before. She is very keen. She has very interesting, relevant and different skills. She lives in Hampton. She advises people in government policy including education. NC will report back after meeting.</p> <p>Item 4: The Curriculum Display evening went very well. A variety of work was displayed. Lots of parents and children attended. Year 5 did a Wax Museum of famous people which was a nice interactive element. This went down well. There was a very positive reaction from parents. Item closed.</p>	<p>NC</p>

	<p>Governor question: Is there any written feedback from parents about this?</p> <p>BJ: It would be useful to put it in the end of year survey. Item closed.</p> <p>Item 5: Linking trips to subjects will be in the bigger report next term. Item closed.</p> <p>Item 6 update: Grey Court links with subject leaders still to do. BJ has been speaking to Chris at Grey Court but he has some staff turnover. It may be better to be planned for the Autumn term. He was in last week to discuss transition with Year 5.</p> <p>Item 7: Curriculum Committee meeting is planned for 23 June and will be a low-key learning walk. Item closed.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Health Safety and Wellbeing:</p> <p>BJ: In the Autumn, there will be a joint Safeguarding training session with the other two local schools in order to share expense. (Meadlands and St Richards). This will happen on one of the inset days.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Headteacher's Report:</p> <p>Attendance is generally good. There are the same persistent absence families. Meetings are scheduled with the EWO. She has been helpful in trying to give family strategies.</p> <p>Governor question: Does the EWO have access to other services?</p> <p>BJ: It sits within SPA so she has other branches she can talk to.</p> <p>Governor comment: EWOs work with family support social workers. They have links with CAMHS, so there is a multi-disciplinary aspect to it.</p> <p>82 multi-lingual, 37% of children 31 languages including German, Cantonese, Turkish and Czech.</p> <p>Whole school attendance is 95% in the summer term, whole year is 96%.</p> <p>No exclusions.</p> <p>FSM 30 (ever 6), 13% of children.</p>	

	<p>The Mayor's free school meals are likely to go ahead in the Autumn.</p> <p>The school will have a different approach to applying for PPG, as this affects funding. If families know that they will get the meal free anyway they may not apply, so the school will approach them to apply.</p> <p>No looked after children. One adopted child.</p> <p>Numbers on role look good. There are waiting lists for some of the years and several on the list for Year 2. Reception and Nursery are the only ones not finalised. 23 have accepted for Reception so far. Nursery still has applications coming in.</p> <p>Governor comment: The latest Ham and Petersham magazine had a targeted article about the Nursery. Has there been any response yet to this?</p> <p>BJ: It has only just been circulated.</p> <p>Governor comment: It may be useful to find other channels to advertise in, for example, Richmond and Twickenham Times. It may be worth looking at the cost of the advert?</p> <p>AB to find out the cost. Action</p> <p>Governor question: Do we do Brite boxes?</p> <p>BJ: Yes, we have five boxes, which go to four families.</p> <p>Racist incidents – none.</p> <p>Three SPA referrals. EWO related.</p> <p>SEN 29. 7 EHCPs, 2 recently and 3 going through statutory assessment. 2 Year 6 EHCPs will be leaving and 1 reception child will be going to Strathmore, so the school will be losing 3.</p>	<p>AB</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>School Development Plan Review Meetings (Governor Feedback)</p> <p>BJ: The School Development Plan is capturing what we are doing in terms of Governor's visits in the school. Daniela M was going to run the Curriculum Committee, but no meetings took place.</p> <p>Feedback from meetings:</p> <p>SDP meeting:</p> <p>CP had a meeting on Friday with BJ.</p> <p>CP: This was a learning curve as a new Governor. The school has a progressive attitude in terms of learning. There are lots of green</p>	

	<p>on the list, but a bit of yellow to action. All areas looked at show progress. Some areas will be ongoing as it is a two-year SIP. Another meeting has been booked in on the 22 June.</p> <p>Governor comment: It is worth reviewing what has been achieved and what needs to be continued to take forward. There is a need to consider collectively, to make sure areas are properly drafted as a target.</p> <p>TL and CS are going to arrange another meeting with Heather Clarke this term.</p> <p>Resources committee: BM has prepared a note of his last meeting of the Resources Committee on the 11 May. These are an appendix to the minutes. The cost of a trip was mentioned as coach prices are so high - double that of last year, so parents are driving children to Walton Firs this year.</p>	<p>TL, CS</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Resources Update:</p> <p>The final outturn for the year improved by 31 March. However, £20,000 of costs will be added to the next year budget.</p> <p>The Business Manager and BM are having a meeting on the 22 June, which will agree the budget to go to the FGB. BM will email the Governing Body as the Committee will need to have as many Governors as possible to read the budget and approve it.</p> <p>AfC have been kind and only requested a shortened version of the Recovery plan to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reasons for deficit 2. Financial forward planning 3. Income drivers 4. Cost savings. <p>A discussion took place about Richmond Council Area 10 Report, which is a report on the future of school places. This is based on projected roll numbers due to the reduced birth rate. It was proposed that the school take a proactive approach to try and find out as much as possible about the implications. Governors agreed mixed age group teaching should be avoided.</p>	<p>BM</p>

<p>10</p>	<p>Confidential Section:</p> <p>Headteacher's Report on Complaints and Exclusions (Reports on Parental Complaints, Pupil Exclusions, or any other Confidential Matter)</p> <p>None reported.</p> <p>Headteacher's report on Racist Incidents (Governing Body to agree any action deemed necessary)</p> <p>None reported.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>Any other Business:</p> <p>BJ: The consultation period for redundancies has finished. TL and BJ are to meet at the end of the week. Discussions are on-going. One part time person has offered to take redundancy but further savings are needed.</p>	

The Russell School

Update on Matters Arising from the Governing Body meeting held on

Monday 22 May 2023

	Matter Arising	Date raised	Responsibility	Due	Update
1	Governor vacancies		NC	03/07/23	NC to report back on possible new Governor appointment. NC still to circulate Skills Assessment to all Governors and new Governors to fill out so that it is up to date.
2	Audit of website	22/05/23	BJ	03/07/23	BJ to report back after website audit.
3	Ofsted Inspection Governor Team	22/05/23	NC, TL, CS	03/07/23	To meet to put together responses to questions in SIP's presentation and take 3 questions each.
4	Advertising Nursery vacancies	22/05/23	AB	03/07/23	Find out cost of advertising in Richmond and Twickenham Times.
5	SDP meeting	22/05.23	TL and CS	03/07/23	To arrange meeting with Heather C.
6	Health Safety and Wellbeing	21/11/22	NC	03/07/23	Change title as regular item on the agenda to "Safeguarding and Wellbeing".

Signed by the Chair _____

Date _____

Next Full Governors Meeting date: Monday 3 July 2023 at 7.00pm

Appendix to FGB minutes 22.05.23

Diary Note. On meeting of 11 May .

Subject. Discuss SIP Strategic Intent Point covering curriculum offer and its impact on love of learning deepening children's knowledge and skills.

Present J Youness, J Mead, R Woolner, B Miller.

There are regular meetings with Subject Leaders. Every subject leader produces subject folders for all staff. There is a power point prepared and disseminated to all staff. All subject material is topic based to raise interest levels.

There are Subject based material displayed in the corridor and classrooms illustrating the pupil progression from EYFS to Y6.

School Council has had a successful start with high pupil engagement. Pupil Voice has been more deeply imbedded with KS2 children encouraging KS1 children to speak.

There has been a improved library offer being combined with the use of Little Wandle Phonics across the school.

Parent Voice has been introduced with a high level of parental involvement and engagement. Home learning and Parental Support has improved post Covid

Subject Focused Learning walks have been beneficial and terms of both pupil engagement and CPD opportunities for staff.

French and geography offers are being are being improved to strengthen the curriculum offer.

Reduced budget allocations has meant that some school trips cannot be afforded. Ways to rethink the trips provision are being reviewed.

Brian Miller

15 May 2023