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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS OF UPLANDS INFANT SCHOOL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 26th JUNE 2019 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Mr S Aziz – Staff Governor
Mrs F Gelu – Parent Governor
Miss N Hussein – Co-opted Governor
Mr K Mahmood – Chair of Governors, Co-opted Governor
Mrs F Mayat – Co-opted Governor
Mrs M Orton – Head Teacher
Mrs S Orton – Co-opted Governor

In Attendance:

Miss J Marshall – Clerk to Governors
Mrs R Conway – Deputy Head Teacher

Blue indicates comments, questions or challenge

Description

1. Governing Body Business

a. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs Alimohamed, Miss Keshav, Mrs Gelu and Mrs Kalra. *Mr Sabir sent his apologies following the meeting.*

b. Governor Interests

The Chair asked for any interests in the business to be discussed. There were none declared.

c. Governor Roles Expiration – ZA, PK, FM, RR and new Co-opted Governor Nazreen Hussein

Governors appointed Miss Hussein as a Co-opted Governor. Governors reappointed Mrs Alimohamed, Miss Keshav and Ms Mayat as Co-opted Governors. The Chair noted that flowers had been sent to Mrs Rinde to thank her for her work as a Parent Governor. Governors noted that Mrs Kalra had resigned from her role.

The Clerk informed the governors that there was now a Co-opted and Parent Governor vacancy. A parent election would be run in the autumn term. The Chair suggested an individual to come on-board as Co-opted Governor and would contact them to garner interest.

ACTION: Chair

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair noted that there was currently no Vice Chair in place and he was looking to step down as Chair due to a number of commitments. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the details of what was involved as Chair and Vice-Chair for governors to put forward their nominations in time for the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

d. Link Trustee

Mrs M Orton explained that as the school is part of Attenborough Learning Trust, there were two link Trustees for the school; Pankaj and Hanif. [Miss Hussein asked about their connection to the school?](#) Mrs M Orton explained that they had been appointed as Trustees and had been chosen to link with the school to build the connections between the Board and the schools within the MAT. They may attend governor meetings to understand the school better and feedback to the Board of Trustees. They were likely to attend one meeting per year. This would also be a way for the school to feedback to the Trustees about any issues etc. [Miss Hussein asked what control the Trustees have?](#) Mrs M Orton explained that decisions were delegated to the schools unless the school failed on key performance indicators such as finance and results in which case Trustees would intervene. Mrs M Orton explained that those key performance indicators were created by the Headteachers of the founding schools.

e. Any Other Business Notification

None.

f. Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising Not Covered Elsewhere

The minutes of the meeting held on **13th March 2019**, having been previously circulated to all governors, were taken as read, confirmed and signed (copy filed herewith). Governors approved that a copy of the minutes be published on the website.

ACTION: Clerk

- Commendations – All staff had been sent a thank you card from the governors.
- The Clerk confirmed that the minutes had been published on the website.
- Attendance had been separated into statutory and non-statutory school age.
- Gifted & Talented had been removed from the Headteacher's report.
- Staffing absence information had been enhanced.
- The SFVS had been submitted to the Local Authority by the deadline.

g. Meeting Dates Next Year

Governors revised and agreed the meeting dates for 2019/20, having been previously circulated to all governors (copy filed herewith). The Clerk would communicate these dates to the Trustees and update the website.

ACTION: Clerk

h. Policies

Governors approved the following policies (having previously been circulated):

- Breakfast Club
- Staff Induction
- Social Networking/ Social Media

Governors noted that the following policies had been approved by the Headteacher (having previously been circulated):

- Community Cohesion
- Sex and Relationships – *Ms Mayat asked about the recent changes in guidelines?* Mrs M Orton explained that the changes would not come into force until 2020 and primary schools do not have to teach sex education, but health education and relationships. Mrs M Orton added that the only nuance would be to explain to children that families have different make-ups. The policy would be reviewed again prior to the new implementation date to ensure it was up to date. Governors were satisfied that the school had an appropriate policy in place. *The Chair mentioned that a lot of parents were concerned; what should be done? Miss Hussein said that concern was high and wondered if it should be addressed?* Mrs M Orton said that all parents were welcome to speak directly with her, it would be mentioned at parent welcome meetings and she confirmed to governors that any issues already raised with her had been addressed. The policy was available on the website.
- EAL/ New Arrivals

2. Oracy Update

Mr Aziz provided a briefing to governors on Oracy as part of the school improvement plan and the journey so far. Mr Aziz provided a handout to governors (copy filed herewith) and explained that how Oracy developed language by providing opportunities for purposeful speaking and listening; learning TO talk (teaching discreet skills) and learning THROUGH talk (discussion opportunities with the children during teaching). The aim was to provide confidence and a safe environment for children to express themselves. The government were conducting a parliamentary enquiry to give Oracy the same status as maths and English as its impact on all facets of children's life was significant. Research indicated that by the age of 5, children from disadvantaged backgrounds have been exposed to 30 million less words than those not disadvantaged and so the potential for

the word gap was huge. This impacted on academic achievement; those struggling at 5 years old were 6 times less likely to achieve the standards in English at 11 years old. The school therefore wanted to provide the best opportunities to help them succeed later in life. Mr Aziz explained that Speech and Language difficulties have a significant impact on behaviour as children are unable to express themselves and this is borne out in poor behaviour. 7 of the top 10 skills in the workforce are oracy-linked. Ensuring that their voice is valued and heard and teaching them how to express their dissatisfaction in an appropriate way was essential. Mr Aziz explained the four strands of Oracy – physical, linguistic, cognitive and social & emotional.

Mr Aziz explained the journey undertaken so far by the school as part of the Voice 21 project and the training received. This was a 3-year project in Leicester which involved training teachers, leading and delivering Oracy within the school setting and finally supporting other schools to grow their oracy skills. Miss Lyall was also working on Oracy with Mr Aziz as champions, they have delivered a staff meeting to raise awareness. Mr Aziz reported that with some tweaking to teaching, this was able to fit into the teaching at the school. A school assembly had also been held and linked with the school's ethos and values. This was supported by a provided a break-down of steps required to meet the four strands of Oracy within school and to provide teachers with the support to embed Oracy in their teaching. Mr Aziz added that this would complement the school's change to its teaching approach through its implementation of continuous provision. The next steps would provide more opportunities for discussion and feedback for the children as well as extra-curricular activities to support more able children, perhaps in the form of a debate club. There were also plans to provide an ideas bank for teachers to provide resources to use within their teaching. The school was also part of a hub to work together to form a network.

Ms Mayat asked how the hub would work? Mr Aziz explained the schools would work together, audit each other and share ideas to develop Oracy practice within all schools within the hub. The hub was then linked to a Triad who would meet three times a year. **Governors were delighted to learn about the progress made and how Oracy was transforming practice within school.** **Miss Hussein asked if this would be a separate lesson?** Mr Aziz said it would be a mixture of teaching those skills but also embedding within existing lessons. Mrs Conway added that it fitted well with the redesign of the curriculum within the new continuous provision and so Oracy could be easily embedded within that provision to support the children. Mr Aziz added that part of the Early Years curriculum required children to achieve Early Learning Goals and some of those required the mastery of language in order to reach these. **Miss Hussein asked how it would be monitored?** Mr Aziz explained that assessment would be reviewed and it would be based on teacher knowledge but how it would be recorded was still under review.

The Chair asked who was funding the project? Mrs M Orton explained that it came from the Closing the Gap initiative which had already been paid for. She added that for language, Leicester was one of the lowest authorities in England for early year's language.

The Chair asked about the fact that children are now continually connected to the internet; how do we get involved in that to ensure that we make the most of it and utilise it to support children

in Oracy in this way? Miss Hussein felt that it was about getting children away from technology to help them be more social. Mrs M Orton said that it should only be used to enhance the teaching. Mr Aziz said that they might develop the skills but it's the ability to understand, for example, waiting for somebody to stop speaking, to look at them whilst you talk to each other etc. Mrs M Orton said that technology would be used for e.g. research skills in a debate about the rainforest. Mr Aziz added that the opportunities were there for research and ICT skills.

The Chair asked about the challenges involved; what was the biggest barrier in implementing this policy? Mr Aziz and Mrs M Orton agreed that the staff were crucial in buy-in to the principles of Oracy. Mrs Conway added that it was to ensure that all staff were adequately trained and that there was a whole school ethos. Ms Mayat added that in primary schools, it should not be about reinventing the wheel as talking is already present but enhancing that is the key. She added that this would fit in really well with the new curriculum. It should be easy to implement through modelling and a bank of resources provided. Mr Aziz added that he had changed his own practice and had been able to demonstrate the impact it had along with any pitfalls along the way which he intended to share with colleagues in the school. The Chair asked when the project was completed, how it would it be sustainable? Mrs M Orton explained that the approach would be embedded within the whole school approach.

Governors thanked Mr Aziz for his presentation.

Mrs Gelu joined the meeting at 6.24pm.

3. School Improvement Plan/ Head Teacher's Report

Governors received a copy of the SIP/ Head Teacher's Report having previously been circulated.

Governors were asked for questions regarding the contextual information. The Chair asked if the attendance data for children had improved? Mrs M Orton explained that it was broadly the same and had suffered a dip due to Eid celebrations. Miss Hussein asked if the data for Eid had to be included in the records? Mrs M Orton explained that it did. She added that attendance was an area of concern flagged by the Trustees. It was due to the extended holidays that the school was unable to do anything about.

The Chair asked if there was anything required by the governors to do for the safeguarding referrals? Mrs M Orton explained that all incidents had been recorded. Mrs Conway added that there was a weekly safeguarding meeting that reviewed all incidents on CPOMS.

Governors expressed their sincere condolences for the loss of Mrs Brotherson.

Governors were invited to ask questions regarding the school improvement plan. Governors were satisfied that actions were either completed or rolling over to the next year. The Chair asked if

there were any major concerns? Mrs M Orton shared the latest data (copy filed herewith) with governors for discussion.

The GLD was 72.3% which was 0.9% lower than the previous year but should still be in line with national. The biggest concern was phonics as this was now a 5 year downward trajectory. The school had set a target to improve.

Mrs M Orton explained that 21 children had joined Year 1, 15 of which were New Arrivals. She explained that phonics was a 3 year programme. Of those 21, only 11 joined in the autumn term with the remainder joining after Christmas meaning that time was limited. In the same year group, 11 children who would have passed the test had left the school. The target was 85%. The result was 75.6%. However, there was clearly work to be done and so the Assistant Headteacher had been tasked with reviewing phonics; the impact was being driven from the very start in Nursery and so what was being taught was having a year-on-year impact on the delivery and therefore achievement in phonics. Whilst the school followed KTC (a phonics framework), this had been adapted by a number of teachers making it ineffective and adding inconsistency in coverage.

Ann Smalberger, the KTC architect, had visited the school to support the improvement of phonics. This had included a learning walk and helped the school to unpick and create a comprehensive action plan endorsed by a phonics expert. Mrs Conway added that the small suggestions made that were already implemented had made a positive impact. Ann would be visiting and working with year group leaders on 1st July. Staff had been informed that the KTC method would be formally used, without amendment. Ms Mayat asked that if the 17 children had not been included, would the school have reached 85%? Mrs M Orton said that it would not have. The target had not been met. Mrs M Orton explained that two children failed who should have passed.

The Chair asked why had it taken the school so long to identify that the problems had emerged at Nursery? Mrs M Orton explained that phase 1 training had not been available until this academic year; staff were teaching the right things but not in the right sequence. Mrs Gelu asked what the sequence entailed? Mrs M Orton explained how the teaching of phonics should be delivered so that children can build up to blending and segmenting. Miss Hussein clarified that this was Nursery children, under 4? Mrs Conway confirmed it was the case and explained the process of the teaching of phonics across Early Years and Key Stage 1. It was important that children were secure before moving onto the next phase of the phonics causing delays in achieving secure knowledge fast enough. There was therefore a need to spend longer teaching to fill those gaps that had emerged which would have a knock-on effect. Mrs M Orton added that the mobility in the school had been high; there had not been a full cohort in the past 3 years but she was clear that there were issues that needed to be addressed and this would be included in the school improvement plan for 2019/20.

The Chair asked for assurance from Mrs M Orton that the gaps had been identified, challenge and a strategy was in place to address the issue. Mrs M Orton confirmed that she had.

Mrs M Orton explained that writing was predicted to be 6% lower than the previous year; again there had been work undertaken to address these issues and the change in the approach to teaching would support this in the next academic year. Mrs Conway highlighted that in the course of a year, Year 2 children had doubled their results from entry. Mrs M Orton added that boys were also a focus. [The Chair remarked that in comparison to schools in the Trust, these results were not troubling and he was confident that Mrs M Orton had identified strategies to improve going forward.](#)

Governors thanked Mrs Orton for her report.

4. Sports Premium/ Pupil Premium Update

No update.

5. Finance – Current Position & Budget Report

Miss Marshall circulated a copy of the current school budget (copy filed herewith). She explained that the new style of report represented the change in accounting now that the school was an academy. [Mrs S Orton commented that this was how private sector accounts were laid out.](#) Miss Marshall explained that it was a new system and so some budgets had been allocated to incorrect codes at the beginning as there was a rush to get the system up and running in time for conversion. She was able to confirm that the school was in-budget and the Director of Finance & Operations was happy with the school's financial position. [Mrs S Orton asked about the commitments column and why this had been included?](#) Miss Marshall confirmed she would come back to her with a response.

ACTION: Clerk

6. CFR 2018/19 Final Report

Miss Marshall presented the final 2018/19 CFR accounts for governors to approve. Governors approved the report, having previously been approved by Mrs M Orton. Miss Marshall would send this to the Local Authority following the meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

7. Quote Approval – Toilet Refurbishment

Miss Marshall presented three quotes as per the purchasing requirements to governors for approval to refurbish two sets of toilets (old Humm/ Bumb toilets). Governors discussed all three quotes and approved Top Class as these were the most competitive and had been recommended by other schools. [The Chair noted it was good to have a different supplier as he had noted the same supplier being used routinely in schools.](#) Miss Marshall confirmed that she would arrange for the toilets to be completed during the October half-term.

ACTION: Clerk

8. Governor Question: What is our schools' curriculum intent and how does it meet the needs of all children? How do we know?

Mrs M Orton asked that all governors research this question and present back their answers at the next meeting. All governors agreed to research this ready for the next meeting.

ACTION: All Governors

The Chair asked what the school was doing about the environment? Mrs M Orton explained that the Student Governors were working on an eco-schools project and would invite Miss Thakrar to a governor meeting to talk about this.

ACTION: Clerk

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 9th October at 5.00pm. The meeting closed at 7.05pm.

Summary of Actions	
Contact interested party about Co-opted Governor Vacancy	Chair ✓
Run parent election	Clerk ✓
Circulate Chair and Vice Chair roles	Clerk ✓
Publish approved minutes on website	Clerk ✓
Amend meeting dates, circulate to governors and trustees and update website	Clerk ✓
Address question regarding commitments in management accounts	Clerk ✓
Return signed CFR report to Local Authority	Clerk ✓
Arrange for toilets to be completed during October half-term	Clerk ✓
Governors to research and complete answer to question	All Govs
Invite Miss Thakrar to a meeting to discuss environmental work	Clerk ✓

Signed as accurate:(Chair of Governors)

Date: