



## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS OF UPLANDS INFANT SCHOOL HELD ON THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2013 AT 5.00PM.

### PRESENT:

Mr N Sabir – Chair, Authority Governor  
 Mrs S Dirieh – Parent Governor  
 Ms K Grant – Vice Chair, Authority Governor  
 Miss P Keshav – Staff Governor  
 Mrs S Makda – Staff Governor  
 Mrs M Orton – Head Teacher  
 Mr O Ali – Parent Governor  
 Mr Z Patel – Parent Governor  
 Mr D Shirley – Community Governor  
 Mrs A Shirley – Staff Governor

Miss J Marshall – Clerk to Governors

Item	Description	Action
1.	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Ismael and Ms Mayat. The Clerk had written to Mr Nour to ask him to explain the reasons for his non-attendance but no reply had been forthcoming. The Governing Body agreed that the Clerk should write to Mr Nour once more and advise him that further non-attendance would result in his removal from the Governing Body.</p> <p>The Chair advised the Clerk that he would be late to the meeting. The Vice-Chair, Ms Grant, chaired the meeting in his absence.</p>	Clerk
2.	<p><b>Governing Body Business</b></p> <p><b>a. Declaration of Governors' Interests in the business to be transacted</b></p> <p>Nil.</p> <p><b>b. Committee Arrangements including delegation of Policies</b></p> <p>The Governing Body considered and approved a proposal to delegate policies to the Head Teacher, Finance and Health &amp; Safety Committees as appropriate. Mrs Shirley agreed to join the Health &amp; Safety Committee. It was agreed that all new policies should be circulated to Governors ahead of approval to</p>	

	<p>give the opportunity to provide comments.</p> <p><b>c. Vacancies and impending terms of office ending</b></p> <p>The Governing Body considered two applications for the vacant Community Governor positions. The Governing Body unanimously voted to appoint Mr V Patel and Mr F Tayjeeb as Community Governors. The Clerk would write to them to invite them to the next meeting and inform the LA. Mrs Shirley and Mrs Makda kindly agreed to act as mentors for the new governors.</p>	Clerk
3.	<p><b>Items for Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Nil.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting.</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013, having been previously circulated to all Governors, were taken as read, confirmed and signed (copy filed herewith).</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013, having been previously circulated to all Governors, were taken as read, confirmed and signed (copy filed herewith).</p> <p><b>The Governing Body formally congratulated Mrs Orton on her appointment to the position of Head Teacher.</b></p> <p><b>The Governing Body also formally welcomed Mr Ali as a new parent governor.</b></p>	
5.	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes (26<sup>th</sup> September):</b></p> <p>Item 2e – The Clerk confirmed that the 20 questions worksheet had been circulated to the Governing Body. The Governing Body also agreed to hold an OFSTED role play training session on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 5pm. Mrs Orton also discussed the possibility of liaising with the Governing Body of St Barnabas Primary School as their governance has been judged outstanding a number of times. Mrs Orton agreed to organise this following the OFSTED role play training.</p> <p>Item 5 – The Clerk confirmed that Mrs Gohil’s resignation had been formally submitted and a suitable gift had been purchased to thank Mrs Gohil for her work at the School.</p> <p>Item 6 – Ms Grant confirmed that she had met with Mrs Orton regarding attendance and would report on the visit later in the meeting. Mr Patel spoke about parents raising a petition against the new legislation about attendance. Reports made have</p>	Head

suggested that the LA have said it is the school's decision. Mrs Orton confirmed that this is not the case. Exceptional Circumstances are at the discretion of the Head Teacher but these are for emergencies only.

Item 7 – Mrs Orton confirmed that promotion of FSM would take place ready for September 2014.

Item 11 – The Clerk emailed the latest opportunity for training following the last meeting.

Item 15 – The Clerk confirmed that all staff who had submitted requests for leave or contractual changes had been informed, in writing, of the Governing Body's decision.

## 6. Head Teacher's Report

The Head Teacher's Report, having been previously circulated, was received and considered (copy filed herewith).

The Governing Body were invited to ask questions arising from the report.

**QUESTION:** Ms Grant asked about the change in format. Mrs Orton confirmed that this was a recommended format from the School Improvement Advisor. The report covers the four areas considered by OFSTED and can be treated as a portfolio of evidence.

**QUESTION:** Queries were raised about the apparent low eligibility for FSM. Mrs Orton explained this was why the school would be promoting FSM in the autumn term to new starters.

Stability was discussed – this may be due to the increase in demand for school places and the subsequent overfilling of places amongst Leicester city schools.

Mrs Shirley expressed the importance of scrutinising the Head Teacher's report as it is essential that the Governor's understand the data contained within it.

Ms Grant supported this and asked that if Governor's did not understand something within the report they should ask. In terms of achievement, OFSTED look at RAISE online which is the previous year's data. They use this data to interrogate and ask questions based around this.

**QUESTION:** Mrs Dirieh queried the ethnicity section and the use of the term Black Africans. Did this apply to Black Somali within the school? Mrs Orton confirmed that it did include this group and for Uplands it specifically meant Black Somali.

**QUESTION:** Ms Grant asked why the group Any Other Asian Background was the highest attainers. Mrs Orton explained this was a strong cohort and there were no children with specific learning needs.

Mrs Orton confirmed that the report discussed the current characteristics but included last year's data. The data revealed strengths and weaknesses that the school then used to target improvement.

**QUESTION:** Mrs Dirieh raised a query about those children in Year 1 who had failed phonics. Was this why phonics was worse in Year 2? Mrs Orton explained that the school had addressed this issue by looking at the individual children and putting support in place. Mrs Dirieh queried whether it was specifically SEN children. Mrs Orton confirmed the group were of mixed ability, some may not have carried out phonics before as it was a new national test. Mrs Orton confirmed that Mrs Ashdown was working with Year 2 on phonics.

**QUESTION:** Mr Shirley asked whether the Gypsy Roma parents were fined and whether this absence was due to the travelling culture? Mrs Orton confirmed that the parents were fined and they were not travellers.

**QUESTION:** Mrs Shirley discussed the summer born children as a group and whether the results within the report were indicative of a norm for that group of children. Mrs Orton said it was not. Mrs Shirley asked what we could do as a school to help improve them? Mrs Orton talked about the developmental aspect with summer born children and that this can contribute to their achievement; the fact that they are younger than their peers does sometimes affect them. Mr Patel echoed this with his own experience at school and with his children; there were clear differences. Mrs Orton explained that pupil progress meetings were taking place with year group leaders to target those children requiring further support.

**QUESTION:** Mr Patel asked whether FSM was used as a means to justify the lack of education and just because those children received FSM didn't necessarily mean they were any worse than their peers academically. Mr Patel queried whether the use of this group label meant that bad results were justified? Mrs Orton explained that this was not the case. It was to ensure that equal opportunity was in place for all children.

Mrs Dirieh discussed the feeling felt by some members of the Somali parent community at school. It was felt that there was a low expectation in achievement for their children. Mrs Orton said that this was not true and there was a high expectation for all

children at the school. In fact, the school has had some high attainers within the Somali group. Mrs Orton was keen for those parents to come and discuss their concerns with her.

The Governing Body echoed Mrs Orton's comments and felt it was very important that those feelings were explored. The Governing Body were genuinely shocked at the feelings reported by the Somali community.

Mrs Orton queried what could be done to help. Mr Shirley suggested a questionnaire about whether parents felt valued at school and what could be done to change this opinion. Without such information, the school could not act. Miss Marshall expressed the importance of tangible actions arising from any questionnaire or discussion.

Mr Ali shared his feelings about joining the school and coming from a different culture and ethnicity, at first he found the school difficult but felt things had improved since then.

The Governing Body were all very surprised at these feelings expressed as they felt the school was very inclusive and celebrated diversity. The Governing Body agreed that the school should discuss this further including how to move forward to change such viewpoints.

Mrs Orton confirmed that she had been attending coffee mornings and will speak to Somali parents to confirm that expectations for their children are high.

Head

The issue of translation amongst the Somali community was raised. Mrs Orton agreed to investigate if there were any issues with this and look at possible resolutions.

Head

Mrs Orton stated that everybody's attainment matters.

Mrs Shirley suggested that inclusivity and the question of value should be considered as a whole school involving every community and to ensure that parents knew how to tell the school if they were unhappy.

Mr Patel felt that parents also need to take responsibility. If parents have felt like this for many years, why had this not been raised before?

Mrs Dirieh said she was unsure where the feelings came from but would try to find out. Ms Grant thanked her for bringing the issue to the attention of the Governing Body.

**QUESTION:** Ms Grant queried the meaning of the letters on the

	<p>SEN chart on page 15 of the report. Mrs Orton explained what these meant (Statement, School Action, School Action Plus). There are 29 children on the SEN register in total. Mrs Shirley commented that this was well below the national average. Mrs Orton confirmed that the school did not refuse children who have a need as others sometimes do. The school intervenes and provides children with the support they need; an effective SEN register has children moving on and off it regularly as the school ensures children's needs are met as they arise.</p> <p>Mrs Orton referred to the Provision Map provided as an appendix to the report detailing interventions carried out at school. Mrs Orton also confirmed that the SENCo, Mrs Odedra, had recently had her work moderated and was judged to be outstanding. Mrs Odedra's work had been praised by the LA and was being shared with other schools as good practice.</p> <p>The Vice-Chair thanked Mrs Orton for her thorough, clear and informative report.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Pupil Premium Report</b></p> <p>Mrs Orton confirmed that all teachers were aware of who their Pupil Premium children were. Mrs Adam had been employed as a teaching assistant to support those not achieving throughout F2 to Year 2. Mrs Adam is a highly skilled individual and the arrangement was working very well.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>Sports Premium Update</b></p> <p>Mrs Makda confirmed that the SPG was being used effectively. The needs of the school were assessed using a questionnaire to teachers and it was agreed that confidence in gymnastics would be a target. A consultant was currently working with the school team teaching teachers to increase their PE skills.</p> <p>Mrs Makda explained that the school was part of a primary PE network which enabled the school to provide a basketball after school club free of charge. The network enables schools to share costs and expertise.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Mr Patel asked about what was covered in PE. Mrs Makda confirmed that the school followed the national curriculum for PE including the necessary lesson plans and assessment. This included using the hall and the outdoor area to fulfil the statutory requirement of a minimum of 2 hours physical activity per week. Mrs Makda explained that the room available in school was minimal and so after school clubs were another way to increase that provision.</p>	

	<p><b>QUESTION:</b> Mr Patel questioned whether the local community centre could be used. Mrs Orton explained that it was usually booked by other local schools and schools are usually expected to use after school to help ease timetable/space issues for PE. Mrs Makda confirmed that the school linked with Moat Community College for large events.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Mr Patel asked about the capacity to increase the number of children involved in after school clubs. Mrs Makda explained that this was difficult due to the size of the hall, availability of coaches etc. Mr Patel was surprised there was such a demand for the clubs given the impact of Madressa. Mrs Makda agreed that initially the school had thought there would be limited demand but the clubs were proving popular.</p> <p>Mrs Orton informed governors that the school would be starting a homework club in January. Mr Ali queried whether children would be able to receive more homework in this session. Mrs Orton clarified that this session would be an opportunity for children to bring their homework set by the teachers and ask for help if needed. It would take place on a Tuesday to give parents the time to review the homework and assess if extra support is needed. How often the club runs will be dependent on demand. Mrs Dirieh suggested that the focus lean more towards reading than homework initially to encourage more children and parents to attend.</p>	
<p><b>9. Premises Presentation</b></p>	<p><i>The Chair joined the meeting at this point.</i></p> <p>Miss Marshall gave a presentation about the school premises and the conclusions reached by her team that the premises were no longer fit for purpose. The Governing Body agreed to support Miss Marshall's request to start raising this issue formally with the Local Authority.</p> <p>Mr Patel suggested that parents are brought on board perhaps via a petition for a new building. The Governing Body agreed this was a good idea.</p> <p>A working party was formed. The first task would be to devise a plan of action. The working party would comprise Mr Shirley, Mrs Shirley, Miss Marshall, Mr Ali, Ms Grant and Mr Patel. It was also agreed that visits conducted by the working party could be recorded as a visit and filed accordingly. Miss Marshall would arrange a meeting in due course.</p>	<p>SBM</p>

<p><b>10. Minutes/ Reports of Committees and Working Groups</b></p>	<p>a. The Governors received the Finance Committee Minutes dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The Chair of Finance reported that the Committee had ratified the Autumn Outturn statement; this was endorsed by the Governing Body. The Finance Committee had also discussed and agreed the Best Value Statement.</p>	
<p><b>11. Governor Visits</b></p>	<p>a. Ms Grant provided a report of her visit to school to discuss attendance. A copy of the report form was filed with the Clerk. Mr Patel provided a report of his visit to school to discuss safeguarding and complete an audit. A copy of the report form was filed with the Clerk.</p> <p>b. All Governors were asked to make contact with the School to arrange a visit during the spring term. Mrs Orton will send out a timetable to Governors for the spring term. Planned visits included ICT (Mr Shirley) and SEN (Miss Keshav). Miss Marshall welcomed anybody who wanted to come along for a premises visit, phonics and environment.</p>	<p>Head</p>
<p><b>12. Governor Training Opportunities</b></p>	<p>Mrs Dirieh reported that she had undertaken RAISE online training via GEL and recommended the course to other governors.</p> <p>As discussed earlier, the OFSTED role play will take place on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014.</p> <p>Governor Conference – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014 – more details to follow.</p> <p>The OFSTED Data Dashboard was discussed, it was agreed that this information would be sent to Governors.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Clerk to set up a Governor training record. This would include any courses, mentoring and processes that resulted in increased skills and experience.</p> <p>The Chair and Ms Grant thanked Miss Marshall for the Governor Handbook which was distributed at the meeting. This would be updated yearly.</p> <p>It was agreed that for new governors an initial visit would be beneficial to get to know the school.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>



<p><b>13. Policies for Approval</b></p>	<p>The Governors approved the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Leicester Approved Pay Structure (Revised)</li> <li>b. Attendance</li> <li>c. Classroom Observation Protocol</li> </ul> <p>Governors also ratified the policy on School Meal Payments and Arrears at the last Finance Committee. A copy would be circulated to all Governors.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>14. Correspondence</b></p>	<p><b>a. Parent Complaint</b></p> <p>The Chair discussed a complaint from a parent he had been dealing with. The father who is separated from the mother was not happy with the lack of contact about his child's progress and had requested a report at the end of the year. Mr Sabir had written to Mr Ingham to request that this report be sent but for some reason the report never left the school. Mr Sabir was happy to report that Mrs Orton had addressed the issue and the parent now felt the matter was resolved. Mrs Orton confirmed that this issue had flagged up how the school logged the need for extra reports to separated parents. For parents evening, both parents are now contacted and the parent concerned received a full copy of the report and a telephone conversation with his child's teacher. The parent is now happy.</p> <p><b>b. Navigate</b></p> <p>The Chair discussed the invoice received from Navigate following the Head Teacher recruitment process. The Finance Committee had sent its concerns to the Chair to discuss with Navigate as they felt best value had not been achieved and the service received was below the acceptable standard. The Chair confirmed that Navigate had offered a £250 reduction on the final invoice. After discussion the Governing Body agreed that this was not a sufficient reduction and would ideally like to see a 20% reduction in the final invoice. The Chair agreed to go back to Navigate and discuss further.</p>	<p>Chair</p>
<p><b>15. Any Other Business</b></p>	<p>Nil.</p>	
<p><b>16. Date of Next Meeting</b></p>	<p>Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February at 5pm in the School Hall.</p>	

**Signed as accurate:** .....(Chair of Governors)

**Date:** .....