

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CHAPEL END INFANT SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON THURSDAY 14 JANUARY 2016
AT 7 P.M.
AT THE SCHOOL**

Present: Mr Alistair MacLellan – Chair (Local Authority Governor)

PARENT GOVERNOR

Mr Grant Jacobson

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

Mr Craig Leither

Mrs Ludi Capelan – Mrs Capelan arrived at 8.30 p.m.

HEADTEACHER - voting

Ms Theresa Martin

Also present: Mrs Debra Noakes, Deputy Head Teacher – papers only.
Ms Joan Smith, Office Manager – Ms Smith arrived at 7.35 p.m.

Clerk to the Governors: Julie Cornelius

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 All present were welcomed to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Ms Kate Williamson, Mrs Claire Jane Fear and Mr Terry Toomey.

Mrs Ludi Capelan and Ms Milena Lacheva had advised they may be arriving late.

1.3 Apologies for absence not accepted

Apologies for absence were not received and were therefore not accepted from Mrs Antoinette Strydom.

1.4 Quorum

The Clerk confirmed the meeting was not quorate – five Governors are required for a quorum; only four Governors were present. In anticipation of those Governors arriving late, the Board agreed to discuss items of business and defer any decisions until a quorum was achieved.

1.5 Notice of Any Other Business/Confidential items

The Chair raised the following items.

1. Governors' training log.

It was noted that Governor Services had sent an e-mail regarding the availability of on-line training.

2. An invitation to the Chair to join Chapel End Junior School, as a Co-opted Governor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Governors to declare any interests they have in any of the following agenda items

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. GOVERNING BODY

3.1 Clerk to confirm Governing Body membership – noting current vacancies and identifying members whose term of office will end before the summer term 2016

3.1.1 The Clerk confirmed there are no Governors whose term of office will end before the summer term 2016.

3.1.2 The Clerk confirmed there is one Parent Governor vacancy.

The Headteacher said, just before Christmas, a request for nominations for the post of Parent Governor, was issued. Nominations were received and voting papers have now been distributed; the deadline for receipt of votes is 4 p.m. on Friday 22 January.

4. MINUTES

4.1 To receive the Minutes of the Governing Body meetings held on 22 October 2015 and 26 November 2015 respectively

Governors received the Minutes of the Governing Body meetings held on 22 October 2015 and 26 November 2015.

*[Upon the arrival of Mrs Ludi Capelan at 8.30 p.m., the meeting was quorate. At that juncture, Governors **approved** and **agreed** the Minutes of the respective Governing Body meetings held on 22 October 2015 and 26 November 2015.]*

4.2 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 22 October 2015

Unless noted below, all action points have been completed or appear as an agenda item at this meeting.

4.2.1 **Minute 9.2 – Appointment of Training Link Governor:** Following discussion, Mr Craig Leither agreed to become Training Link Governor.

*[Upon the arrival of Mrs Ludi Capelan at 8.30 p.m., the meeting was quorate. At that juncture, Governors **approved** and **agreed** the appointment of Mr Craig Leither as Training Link Governor.]*

4.2.2 **Minute 12.1.6 – ACTION point regarding the letter of support to Cllr Mark Rusling in relation to the Fairer Funding issue:** The Chair said he had received a response from Cllr Rusling, stating that he would be in touch once the Government consultation had ended; the consultation is scheduled to close at some time in 2016.

4.3 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 26 November 2015

Unless noted below, all action points have been completed or appear as an agenda item at this meeting.

4.3.1 **Minute 4.11 – questions in relation to the monthly budget monitoring report:** It was noted that no questions were raised but that this would be discussed as part of the items related to finance on this evening's agenda.

4.3.2 **Minute 6.5 – embedding of the new system of assessment in EYFS and continuing to improve accuracy in making assessments:**

ACTION: Agenda item for the next Governing Body meeting – ‘Special books’

4.3.3 Minute 7.6 – key priorities and milestones:

ACTION: Agenda item for the Governing Body meeting on 10 March 2016 – review of School Improvement Plan 2015/16

4.3.4 Minute 9.4 – review of Safeguarding Policy: The Headteacher said the Borough’s model Safeguarding Policy is still not yet available. Debra Noakes has e-mailed the Local Authority to establish when the Policy will be ready.

It was noted in December last year that both the Headteacher and Debra Noakes had attended Designated Safeguarding Lead training.

4.3.5 Minute 11.2 – Lone Working Policy:

ACTION: Deferred until future meeting due to inquorate meeting.

4.3.6 Minute 11.3 – Health and Safety walk: It was noted that Ludi Capelan will organise for this to take place this year.

ACTION: Ludi Capelan to confirm a date for this to take place.

4.3.7 Minute 11.4.5 – Emergency/business continuity plan: The Headteacher noted that the service provided through the London Borough of Waltham Forest had provided the quote of £1500 for a business continuity officer to visit the school to develop a plan and provide training. Given the school building encompassed the Junior School, it was felt advisable to establish how continuity plans for both the EYC, Infants and Junior school could be coordinated to ensure any duplication and expense was eliminated.

ACTION: Headteacher to liaise with her counterpart at Chapel End Junior School and report back to Governors.

4.3.8 Minute 14.2 – Skills audit:

[Completed Action: The Clerk has requested Governor Services to notify the Chair and Headteacher with regard to which Governors, if any, have not yet completed the skills audit. Governor Services to e-mail the skills audit to said Governors.]

ACTION: Those Governors who are required to complete the skills audit, to do so prior to the Governing Body meeting in February.

4.4 To receive the confidential minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 26 November 2015

This item will be discussed at the end of the meeting, under confidential items.

4.4.1 Any matters arising will be discussed under confidential items.

5. CHAIR’S ACTION

The Chair had nothing to report since the last Governing Body meeting held on 26 November 2015.

[Agenda items 9. and 10. were brought forward.]

[Joan Smith, Office Manager, arrived at 7.35 p.m.]

9. SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD (SFVS)

9.1 The Office Manager noted that the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is required to be completed every year and that the Governing Body must be confident that appropriate financial controls are in place. The SFVS was due for final sign-off by 31 March 2016 and this item was put before Governors for the purpose of review ahead of final sign-off in March 2016.

9.2 **Q. Referring to item 18. and in relation to the focussed audit in November 2015, during which there were no significant findings, the Chair asked if a written report from Internal Audit had yet been received?**

A. Joan Smith said the school is still awaiting a response.

The Chair noted that Governors would require formal notice from Internal Audit that no significant issues had been identified before the SFVS was signed.

ACTION: Joan Smith to e-mail the Local Authority in respect of this and to report back to Governors

9.3 Whistleblowing Policy

Item 20. referred to the Whistleblowing Policy. It was noted that all staff are aware of the policy and to whom they should report concerns.

It was the intention that Governors agree the Whistleblowing Policy and that this be signed off at this evening's meeting.

*[Upon the arrival of Mrs Ludi Capelan at 8.30 p.m., the meeting was quorate. Governors' attention was drawn to the minor amendments to the Policy. Following review, Governors **agreed to ratify** the Whistleblowing Policy.]*

9.4 To conclude, Governors discussed the possibility of a smaller group of Governors convening to discuss financial elements in greater detail. Mr Grant Jacobson, Finance Link Governor, suggested that at this time of year, when budget setting is approaching, this would be prudent.

The Chair said he is keen to spend more time in school and hopes to schedule visits at least once a month between Governing Body meetings. The Headteacher advised that visits to the school during the school day would also provide an opportunity for the Chairman to meet with the Office Manager. The Deputy Chairman said, where necessary, he would be able to attend school earlier on the evenings of Governing Body meetings.

9.5 It was agreed that the SFVS would be further scrutinised by the Headteacher, Officer Manager, Finance LINK governor and Chairman outside of the meeting prior to it coming back to the full Governing Body for approval.

ACTION: The Chairman, Finance LINK Governor and Headteacher to scrutinise the SFVS outside of the meeting ahead of its submission to the full Governing Body for sign-off.

10. FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION

Joan Smith presented Governors with the following documentation:

1. Chapel End Infant School & Early Years Centre Statement of Internal Control.
2. Notes for Governing Body meeting – Financial Regulations
3. Chapel End Infant School & Early Years Centre – School Fund Constitution
4. Chapel End Infant School Fund – End of Year – 2014-2015.

10.1 Statement of Internal Control

10.1.1 Governors discussed the Statement of Internal Control. The Statement issued to Governors relates to the internal control for the year ending 31 March 2016. The document states the Governing Body's responsibility for ensuring the school keeps proper accounting records and maintains and operates an effective system of internal control, to safeguard all the resources delegated, granted or otherwise entrusted to the school and to ensure they are used cost effectively.

10.1.2 The Statement of Internal Control will be agreed and signed off prior to the end of March 2016. This requires the signature of the Headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and where applicable, the Chair of the Finance Committee (in this case the Finance LINK Governor).

10.2 Financial Regulations

It was noted that the Local Authority Finance department has responsibility for issuing the financial regulations.

The following points, from within the notes issued to Governors, were referred to and discussed.

10.2.1 **Point 4.3 – Whistle Blowing Policy:**

The Headteacher said there are some minor amendments to make to the Policy.

10.2.2 **Point 15.2 – Focussed audit:**

- Previously, the Local Authority conducted an audit every three years. There are however, no longer any guidelines regarding the frequency of audits. Joan Smith suggested this is something Governors should discuss in terms of deciding whether or not to conduct an audit. The Chair said, if it is three years since the last audit, he would suggest it would be sensible to demonstrate good practice and to proceed with organising an audit.

ACTION: Agenda item for the next meeting: Audit discussion

ACTION: The Office Manager will investigate the cost of conducting an annual audit and will report back to Governors.

10.2.3 **Point 15.5 – School Fund:**

- The Office Manager advised these are funds which are separate from the official funds.
- It is usual practice for the Headteacher to decide how these funds are spent. Expenditure could include for example, presents for children at Christmas; purchase of the school Christmas tree.
- Revenue sources for the school fund include: money raised from sponsored events, cake sales, etc.

10.2.4 **Point 23.4 – Use of card policy:**

ACTION: The Chair will discuss and review this with Finance Link Governor.

ACTION: The Chair and Finance Link Governor to report back to Governors.

10.2.5 **Point 22.5 – school bank accounts:** At present, the school has two bank accounts but the Early Years Centre account will be closed by the end of this financial year. The school bank account signatories are the Headteacher, Debra Noakes (Deputy Headteacher) and Clare Lapps. The Bank mandate shows that two out of the three signatories are required; with the Headteacher being a mandatory signatory.

Until the closure of the Early Years Centre account, the current signatories are the Headteacher, Karen Wishart and Linda Murray.

10.3 End of Year – 2014/15 record of financial accounts

ACTION: To be agreed by the Governing Body at a future meeting.

10.4 School Fund Constitution

This document has been amended as follows:

- For expenditure under £1,000, the agreement of the Headteacher is sufficient. For purchases over £1,000, the approval of the Chair of the Governing Body and the Finance Link Governor must be obtained. This authorisation may be confirmed via e-mail but must be reported to the Governing Body at the next scheduled meeting.
- Cheque signatories are: Mrs T Martin, Mrs D Noakes and Miss C Lapps.

*[Upon the arrival of Mrs Ludi Capelan at 8.30 p.m., the meeting was quorate. At that juncture, Governors **approved** and **agreed** the School Fund Constitution.]*

10.5 Best Value Statement – to discuss and review

10.5.1 Governors to authorise signatory list for orders.

*[Upon the arrival of Mrs Ludi Capelan at 8.30 p.m., the meeting was quorate. At that juncture, Governors **agreed** that orders in excess of £10K must be countersigned by the Finance Link Governor.]*

10.5.2 **ACTION: The Headteacher will send to Governors, copies of policies referred to in the ‘Financial Regulations’ notes issued to Governors.**

ACTION: Chairman and relevant LINK Governor(s) to review the policies prior to the next Governing Body meeting.

10.5.3 *[Upon the arrival of Mrs Ludi Capelan at 8.30 p.m., the meeting was quorate. At that juncture, Governors **agreed** the value above which assets should be recorded on the school’s inventory, is £100.]*

10.5.4 *[Upon the arrival of Mrs Ludi Capelan at 8.30 p.m., the meeting was quorate. At that juncture, Governors **agreed** the value above which discrepancies in the inventory should be reported to the Governing Body, is £100.]*

10.5.5 Nursery fees

The Office Manager said Governors need to review nursery fees in advance of September 2016 admissions.

ACTION: Agenda item for Governing Body meeting in March: discussion of nursery fees.

ACTION: Agenda item for Governing Body meeting in May: Agreement of Nursery fees.

[Joan Smith left the meeting – the time was 8.20 p.m.].

[The agenda returned to its original order.]

6. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

6.1 Due to lack of time, the Headteacher's Report was deferred to the next meeting. The Headteacher noted any relevant issues would be dealt with under Item 8 (School Items).

6.2 **ACTION: Deferred Agenda item for the next Governing Body meeting: Pupil Premium funding, linked to school improvement.**

7. RAISEONLINE 2015 SUMMARY REPORT AND UNVALIDATED 2015 OFSTED INSPECTION DASHBOARD

ACTION: Deferred to next meeting

8. SCHOOL ITEMS

8.1 The Headteacher said Cllr Rusling from the Local Authority, will be visiting the school next Tuesday.

Q. What has prompted this visit?

A. The Headteacher said Chapel End Infant school is one of the few schools within the Local Authority that Cllr Rusling has not yet visited. The Chair said he would endeavour to make himself available during this visit.

8.2 Following the school monitoring via the Local Authority, the school has been awarded a green BRAG rating.

8.3 Interviews took place last week for the post of Literacy Co-ordinator. Kate Williamson, Co-opted Governor, joined the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher on the interview panel. On this occasion, no appointment was made.

[Ludi Capelan arrived – the time was 8.30 p.m.].

The meeting was now quorate.

8.4 Q. Are you finding recruitment challenging?

A. The Headteacher said this was the second time the post was advertised and it has now been agreed that the TES should be used for future advertising and that the content of the advert should be revised.

The Headteacher said, a supply teacher currently in post, will remain at the school until the end of the summer term, at which time, the post will then be re-advertised; for the successful candidate to join the school in September.

8.5 Three posts were offered today to supply Midday Assistants.

8.6 Year 2/3 transfer

The Headteacher said she had recently received an e-mail from the Local Authority Admissions team, advising that Year 2 parents had to apply to the Local Authority to

transfer their child to Chapel End Junior school. The Headteacher subsequently spoke with the Headteacher of the Junior school and with Rhona Long in the Borough's Admissions department. Rhona Long had advised that as long as the Admissions Policy at the Junior school states that children transfer from the Infant school to the Junior school, parents would not be required to apply via the Borough's Admissions department.

- 8.7 The Key for School Leaders – Summary RAISEonline data for Governors
For information, Governors were issued with a copy of this document.

11. SCHOOL POLICIES

The Headteacher said the following policies are model policies generated by the Local Authority.

- 11.1 Probation Model Procedure for School Support Staff
ACTION: Deferred agenda item

- 11.2 Organisation Change & Redundancy
This Policy was sent to Governors for information.
ACTION: Deferred agenda item

- 11.3 Sickness Absence Management
The Headteacher highlighted the key points.

Governors **agreed** the trigger points as defined in the Policy.

Governors **agreed to ratify** this Policy.

- 11.4 Leave of Absence
The Chair had discussed this Policy with the Headteacher.

Governors will need to agree the maximum allowance of unpaid special leave; 5 days paid and 15 days unpaid is the Local Authority's current recommendation.

The Chairman noted that an appropriate avenue of appeal had to be maintained for staff seeking to appeal a decision of the Headteacher. Governors agreed to amend the policy to allow staff to appeal to the Governing Body; the HR Link Governor would abstain from such appeals so that they could instead provide advice to the Headteacher in coming to an initial decision on individual requests for Leave of Absence.

ACTION: Leave of Absence Policy approved subject to the stated amendment.

12. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

- 12.1 The next meeting will take place on Thursday 11 February 2016 at 7 p.m. at the school.
- 12.2 The Chair said he would be attending the Governors' briefings to be held on 25/2/2016 and 16/6/2016 and would be circulating a note of those briefings to the Governing Body for information.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Training courses attended by the Chair

The Chair advised he had attended the following training.

26 November 2015 – Being a Governor in an Early Years Setting

1 December 2015– Being an Academy Governor

3 December 2015– Being a School Governor (delivered by City of London Corporation)

3 December 2015 – PREVENT and Radicalisation

7 December 2015 – RAISEOnline

13.2 This item is noted under confidential items. All Governors remained present.

13.3 To approve the confidential minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 26 November 2015

[Mrs Debra Noakes and Mr Craig Leither left the meeting – the time was 9.10 p.m.].

This item was discussed under confidential items. The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2015 were **agreed**.

The meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.

Signed.....

Date.....