

## Darell Primary and Nursery School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held at the School on  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 7.00 pm

### Constitution and Membership

Membership Category	Appointed By	Name	End of Term of Office
LEA (1)	LEA	<b>David Linnette</b>	Nov 18
Parent (2)	Election	Fiona Booth Alan Hamilton	Feb 18 Mar 21
Headteacher		Karen Bos	N/A
Staff (1)	Election	Vacancy	
Co-opted (9)	Governing Body	Janet Deboo Anna Gilbert Luke Martyr Jenny Mikkelsen (Vice-Chair) <b>Tracey Mullins</b> <b>Kate Scally</b> Joanne Winship Susanna Zotov (Chair) Vacancy	Dec 18 Sept 21 Dec 21 Dec 19 Jun 18 Dec 18 Dec 18 Sept 21
Associate Members	Governing Body	<b>Jane Spencer</b> Anthony Dunn	Sept 18 Dec 18

**bold = absent**

Also attended: Assistant Headteacher Emma Claridge, Kate Nepstad (Clerk)

		<b>ACTION</b>
	<i>It was agreed that item 10 would be taken after item 5.</i>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence were received from governors David Linnette, Kate Scally, Tracey Mullins and associate member Jane Spencer. These apologies were accepted by the Chair.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> No new interests were declared by the governors present at the meeting.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Appointment of new co-opted governor</b>  Susanna Z proposed that governors should appoint Luke Martyr as a co-opted governor. Luke's interests range from modern languages (French and Russian) to European real estate. His experiences working as a Teaching Assistant in a primary school have helped to kindle his interest in governance: he is keen to give something back to the community. Luke has already observed a Resources committee meeting and he is looking forward to contributing to this committee.	



<p><b>5.2</b></p> <p><b>5.3</b></p> <p><b>5.4</b></p> <p><b>5.5</b></p> <p><b>5.6</b></p>	<p><u>Achievement &amp; Curriculum Committee.</u> There has been one meeting this term so far (on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017); the second meeting takes place next week to align with the school's data collecting processes. The last meeting included a presentation from Assistant Headteacher Paul Gilbert on Cornerstones Curriculum. Cornerstones is a substantial package of resources for teachers and will be used widely across the school. The last meeting also examined the start of term benchmarking and discussed the reason for the new focus on 'middle prior attainers'. There will be a continuing focus on disadvantaged pupils (via the PPG working group, see below) and children with SEND (via the SEND working group, see below).</p> <p><u>PPG Working Group</u> A meeting took place on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017. The new PPG Strategy document was discussed and approved for publication on the school website. The extra detail on the in-house version of the same document was scrutinised by governors. Barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged children were discussed and explored, especially the lack of access to quality books at home. The working group also looked closely at PPG data and noted that the current Yr 6 has a high incidence of both PPG and SEND. Governors learned that an additional staff member has been recruited to support these children 4 days a week.</p> <p><u>SEND Working Group</u> A meeting took place on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017. The working arrangements for the group were agreed and terms of reference formalised. The format of the termly SEND report to governors was approved and this report will come to Achievement and Curriculum committee each term.</p> <p><u>Butterfly Class Steering Group</u> Governors noted the circulated papers and asked the following question:  <b>Q Are you confident that you can cover the Butterfly Class teacher's maternity leave while continuing to raise standards?</b> Yes, two teachers will be covering the current class teacher's maternity leave: one is a very experienced SENCo and will be working 4 days a week. An existing teacher will cover the final day.</p> <p><u>Welcome Committee</u> At the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 a small steering group was set up to identify ways of increasing pupil numbers and parental engagement has been identified as significant opportunity for improvement. Chair Alan H is holding regular meetings with Emma C and Associate Member Anthony D's input has been very valuable. Next term there will be a renewed focus on attendance, which continues to be a whole school priority.</p>	
<p><b>10</b></p> <p><b>10.1</b></p>	<p><b>MAT update</b></p> <p><u>Complaint by parent</u> Governors received a verbal update and time-line from Susanna Z. Last month the complainant received a response from the GB and also a copy of relevant communications, as requested. The complainant has confirmed receipt of the</p>	

letter.

**10.2** Every Child, Every Day Trust

Chair of Trustees Frank Kitson has explained that the Trust is currently pursuing three different strands of activity as part of its plans to expand. Darell's application is one of those strands and the other two are the application of a secondary school in the borough, and also the possible addition of another small MAT in a nearby borough. This MAT comprises two secondary schools and one primary school and ECED have been involved with them for over a year. It was noted that Darell's application is not dependent upon these other relationships.

**10.3** Risk Assessment

Governors considered the revised risk matrix and the following was agreed:  
A new risk needs to be added: the capacity of the Trust to support Darell, given the additional schools likely to join the MAT in due course. However, it was noted that taking on another local primary school may be a mitigating factor.

The local nature of the Trust had been a large factor in its original selection. Governors need to consider whether taking on schools in another borough makes the Trust less attractive to Darell. Governors would like to understand how the expansion will impact Maggie Bailey's role.

Governors asked Karen B for her view on this apparent change in strategic direction:

**Q How does the expansion of the MAT impact Darell's application to join?**

Karen B reminded governors that as a Teaching School, Grey Court has relationships with many other schools and receives money from the DfE to support the work. The relationship with the cluster of schools out of borough was therefore pre-existing. Karen B has met with Maggie B to discuss how the MAT's expansion would affect Darell and she received assurances that:

1. The proposal is the Trust has two 'clusters', a local cluster and a cluster in the other area
2. The Trust is still committed to support local schools and two other local primaries are now considering the MAT
3. The Trust will still have the capacity to support Darell
4. The Trust is holding a meeting in January to set out its plans for working with the new schools joining the MAT. Darell will be invited to join if their application has been submitted.

**Q How does the MAT view Darell's delayed application?**

Although Darell has received a lot of support from the MAT over the past year, this will not continue to be provided until the school is ready to commit. From the MAT's perspective, taking on a school with a small positive budget is preferable to taking on a school in deficit: this would be a liability for the MAT. It was noted that the delay was not solely due to Darell: there has been a mutual slowdown which has enabled further diligence to be carried out by both sides.

**10.4** Office of the Regional Schools' Commissioner (RSC)

Susanna Z explained that the RSC had requested three things:

	<p>1. A resubmitted application form  2. Some more details on the GB's consultation process  3. A clear statement of how joining the MAT will benefit the school.</p> <p><b>Q What examples can be given of the practical support that the MAT has already provided?</b>  Karen B provided some examples: Restorative Justice training was paid for by the MAT last year. This year it will cost £500. Ofsted preparation was provided by MAT staff for free. The School Improvement Partner was able to provide 2 days' support for SLT and this time was put into the school's SEF and was enormously beneficial. This time with a SIP was a substantial increase on the support available from LA SIP in the same time.</p> <p><b>Q How do you envisage staff retention to be improved after joining the MAT?</b>  The chief advantage will to be able to afford to offer Middle Leaders professional development (via Grey Court, which is a Teaching School) without leaving the school. This means that the more ambitious staff will be motivated to stay and the school will benefit from their skills for longer.</p> <p>Governors noted that these benefits must be noted in the documentation for the RSC, which will be completed in conjunction with the MAT.</p> <p>A recent article in Schools' Week noted that The National Schools Commissioner is offering schools the option to join academy trusts as "associate members" so they do not relinquish their legal independence. Governors discussed the fact that leaving the LA was not something that could be reversed after a 'trial period' so it was likely that this option is for schools which are stand-alone academies but are not sure which MAT to join, rather than for maintained schools considering converting to an academy.</p> <p>Governors agreed the following actions:</p> <p><b>ACTION: Complete the application form and additional documentation and submit before end of term. This will include the anticipated benefits of joining the MAT.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION Susanna and Jenny to invite Frank K and the Trust's new COO to a working session to discuss key issues, such as Scheme of Delegation.</b></p>	<p>SZ</p> <p>SZ/JM</p>
6	<p><b>School Development Plan 2016/17</b></p> <p>Governors noted the completed SDP 2016/17. The detail of the SDP has been scrutinised at committee level – see filed minutes for details.</p>	
7	<p><b>Vision for Darell</b></p> <p>This vision-writing process began with a parent meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017 and was continued with staff at different levels during the Autumn term Inset day. It was also discussed separately with SLT and MLT. Three weeks ago SLT attended a vision-setting training session which helped them create the draft document circulated to governors.</p>	

	<p>The three key words in the draft vision are Inspire, Enjoy, Achieve.</p> <p><b>Enjoy</b> - enjoyment is at the heart of the school which embodies togetherness and community.</p> <p><b>Inspire</b> - enriching the lives of all children, especially those disadvantaged.</p> <p><b>Achieve</b> - we have strong aspirations that children will improve while at the school.</p> <p><u>Governor feedback:</u> Some governors felt that the values encapsulated by Enjoy and Inspire were very powerful but that 'Achieve' (currently a buzz word in schools) could be misconstrued. Karen B acknowledged the point but explained that achievement is the correct technical term which was understood by teachers. The reason for including it was that feedback on the previous vision was that the school lacked a strong commitment to children's academic outcomes. Governors suggested that SLT are clear about what they are actually trying to 'achieve' but there is a danger that this is interpreted as a sole focus on academic results, whereas the expression of the school's ethos is more about achieving resilience and respect.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Governors to provide feedback on the draft vision and 3-5 year plan to Karen B by Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December.</b></p> <p>Once governor feedback has been incorporated, the draft will go back to staff on the next Inset day (Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2018). After that, parents will be invited to a coffee morning to consider the draft and the vision will be tabled for approval at next FGB in February.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Add approval of vision as an agenda item for Feb 2018 FGB meeting.</b></p>	<p>All</p> <p>SZ/KN</p>
8	<p><b>School Improvement Plan 2017/18</b></p> <p>It is intended that the next School Improvement Plan will become a three year plan, after this last annual cycle. The format remains the same as last year, with a balance of detail and strategic objectives. As before, committees will monitor progress against the targets on the SIP at their meetings each term.</p> <p>The school's strategic priorities are five targets for improving standards, as developed with the School Improvement Partner, Charis Penfold. The targets are each linked to one of the GB's committees and it is here that the scrutiny will be carried out. Susanna Z commented that although this year's 5 targets were mostly about improving standards, future targets should include other key issues such as increasing pupil numbers, updating facilities etc.</p> <p>Given that it is now a third of the way through the year, the school improvement plan has been agreed by the Governing Body so that the school can continue with its plans. The focus of the GB should be on developing the 3-5 year plan, starting next term. Comments and feedback from individual governors can be given to KB by end of term.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Comments and feedback about the SIP and strategic priorities</b></p>	<p>All</p>

	<b>document should be forwarded to Karen before the end of term.</b>	
9	<p><b>School Improvement: Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>Karen B provided a verbal report due to her sickness absence the previous week. Governors received separate detailed reports on the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Teaching and Learning</li> <li>. Admissions and Leavers</li> <li>. Attendance</li> <li>. Safeguarding.</li> </ul> <p>Karen B highlighted three areas of current concern: pupil numbers, staff sickness absence and teacher retention/recruitment, see below.</p> <p>In some year groups, classes are very small (for eg Yr 5 has 19 and 17 children in each class). A class needs 27 pupils to be viable, any less than that and the cost of the teacher is not covered by the income from pupil numbers. It was noted that at Nelson Primary School (part of Latchmere Academy Trust), a class per year group has recently been closed due to low numbers. Governor David Linnette has set up a meeting with Councillor Susan Chappell (Cabinet member for Children's Services and Schools), to discuss Darell's pupil numbers.</p> <p>Karen B noted that improving standards is very difficult when staff sickness absence is high: this is now an area of concern. The insurance that helps school to pay for supply staff has nearly run out and thereafter, buying in supply staff will come out of the school's budget.</p> <p>It was noted that parents do not understand the school's policy for covering classes when teachers are sick. Generally on the first day of unplanned absence at KS2, the class is divided up and overseen by other class teachers. Supply staff are brought in from the second day of unplanned absence.</p> <p><b>ACTION: SLT to explain this procedure to parents in a letter at the start of the Spring term.</b></p> <p>The final area of particular concern was recruitment and retaining good teachers: it has proved very difficult to find a Yr 1 teacher and it may be necessary to consider paying for a visa to enable an overseas teacher to stay. This would have the advantage of guaranteeing that she is retained for 3 years, but it would cost around £3,000.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Karen B to put the request to pursue support a visa application into an email to Anna G to be considered by Resources Committee.</b></p>	<p>SLT</p> <p>KB</p>
11	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p><b><u>Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy</u></b></p> <p>This policy document is now the borough's recommended format. The document was circulated with some sections highlighted in yellow: these were to draw attention of staff and governors to some details. Governor approved the revised policy (subject to the removal of the yellow highlights) and</p>	

	<p>confirmed that they had read and understood the policy document. The policy will be published online and at school.</p> <p><b><u>SEND Information Report</u></b> Governors approved the report which will now be presented at FGB in the Autumn term on an annual basis. The report is published on the website.</p> <p><b><u>Admissions arrangements for 2018/19</u></b> Governors noted that they will continue to follow the borough's admissions arrangements. Kate N pointed out that there is one proposed change to the admissions criteria for community schools which is to include priority for children of staff from 2019/2020. Details of the consultation can be found on the borough's website.</p>	<b>KN</b>
<b>12</b>	<p><b>IMPACT analysis: how are we improving outcomes for children?</b></p> <p>Governors agreed that the forward-looking vision statement with a coherent 3-5 year plan will provide clarity for both parents and staff. This in turn increases the school's ability to focus and commit to ensuring that all pupils achieve the best possible outcomes.</p>	
<b>13</b>	<p><b>AOB</b> <u>Public Indemnity for governors</u> In response to a question from a governor, Susanna Z confirmed that governors are covered for public liability by the school's insurers, Zurich. This cover includes official indemnity, liable and slander when governors are acting in their capacity as members of the GB.</p> <p><u>Safer Recruitment training</u> Kate N advised that two governors should complete Safer Recruitment training. It was noted that the available AfC training is a whole day course. Karen B recommended alternative training which is online and could be completed over a series of sessions, at governors' convenience.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Karen B to forward the details to all governors. When completing the training, governors should let Kate N know, so that a record can be kept.</b></p>	<b>KN</b>

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Signed by the Chair \_\_\_\_\_

## Full Governing Body Actions

Updated as of 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2018

Meeting/ Minute	Action	Assigned to	Update	Completed?



27/6/17 3	Evidence of impact should be gathered and submitted to Richmond Parish Lands	SLT/FB	Roll over to next meeting	
12/9/17 5	Meeting at 9am on Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> Sept to decide on practicalities and working structures for comms/wgs.	SZ, JM plus chairs and vice chairs	Working structures have been put into place	Done
12/9/17 7	Share SLT/MLT responsibilities matrix with SZ and JM.	KB	Matrix has been created and shared	Done
12/9/17 8.1	Speak to Frank K and Phoebe C (details from Jane S) and confirm time line for conversion on 1st Sept 2018.	SZ/JS	Susanna Z is in contact with both Frank K and Phoebe C	Done
12/9/17 8.2	Agree governor attendance at parent meeting on 26 <sup>th</sup> September	KB/SZ/JM	Meeting took place	Done
12/12/17 10	Complete the application form and additional documentation and submit before end of term. This will include the anticipated benefits of joining the MAT.	SZ	Application form submitted Jan 2018 and supplementary information provided when requested.	Done
12/12/17 10	Invite Frank K and the Trust's new COO to a working session to discuss key issues, such as scheme of delegation	SZ/JM		
12/12/17 7	Governors to provide feedback on the draft vision and 3-5 year plan to Karen B by Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> December.	All	Done – governors gave feedback by email	Done
12/12/17 7	Add approval of vision as an agenda item for Feb 2018 FGB meeting.	SZ/KN	Done	Done
12/12/17 8	Comments and feedback about the SIP and strategic priorities document should be forwarded to Karen B before the end of term.	All	Done	Done
12/12/17 9	Explain how teacher sickness absence is covered in a letter to parents at the start of the Spring term.	SLT		
12/12/17 9	Put the request to pursue support a visa application into an email to Anna G to be considered by Resources Committee.	KB	Done	To be considered at Resources Committee on 30 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2018.
12/12/17	Forward the details of online	KB	Done – Janet and	Done

13	safer recruitment training to all governors. When completing the training, governors should let Kate N know, so that a record can be kept.		Luke to undertake training	
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