

TURNFURLONG INFANT SCHOOL

MINUTES of the meeting of the FGB Finance Focus meeting of Turnfurlong Infant School held at the school on 1ST February 2024 at 4.30pm.

PRESENT:

Mrs C Austin

Mrs H Burnett

Mrs G Emmanuel

Mrs G Hudson

Mr M Mardawan (Chair)

Mrs R Ochiltree
(Headteacher)

APOLOGIES:

Mrs L Arnott

Mrs K Henry

Mr R Lloyd

Mrs K Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs C Darling (Bursar)

Mrs R Weymouth (Clerk)

ACTION

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair opened the meeting and thanked Governors for attending. Apologies were noted and accepted.

2 NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following items would be discussed under Any Other Business;

- Governor Attendance and Code of conduct
- Nursery Sustainability and 30 hours
- Bucks Awards

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs G Hudson advised she is Vice Chair at Turnfurlong Junior School (TJS), is an employee at the PRU and sits on the Management Committee at the PRU.

Mrs Burnett advised she is the Programme Lead at Ashmead ITT and train trainee teachers for Aylesbury and the surrounding area.

4 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Circulated prior to the meeting, Governors reviewed and agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th December 2023.

4.1 MATTERS ARISING

Minute 2 – The FGB Chair advised that an EFGB had taken place to review the Turnfurlong Junior School Admissions Policy Consultation. EFGB happened.

Mrs Hudson withdrew from the meeting at 16.46pm.

The FGB Chair advised;

- The consultation proposes to change admissions priority criteria so that children of staff are priority 3 which would put children in this category above children in catchment and children with siblings at the school.
- After discussion, the board have written to the Junior School and asked if they would consider placing siblings and staff in catchment at priority 3.

The Headteacher advised that she had received a communication from the Headteacher at the Junior School. The Governors have met and discussed that the letter was received after the date that the consultation ended. It is expected that the school will be asked to amend its Admissions Policy to be in line with the Junior School. The Headteacher advised she would provide an update once further information was received.

Mrs Burnett left the meeting at 16.49pm

Mrs Hudson returned to the meeting at 16.51pm.

Minute 9 – The FGB Chair advised she would discuss a template for Governor biographies with the school office.

5 FINANCE MATTERS**5.1 BUDGET REVIEW SUMMARY AND COMMENTARY**

Circulated prior to the meeting, the Bursar presented the Bursar Report and Period 9 Financial Variance Summary. The Bursar advised;

- Grant Income - The teacher pay grant was received and some EYFS funding adjustment.
- There has also been an increase in Pupil Premium Grant Income.
- SEND Funding has also increased with additional HNBF and EHCP's that have been agreed with backdated funding.
- A meeting has taken place with schools and Buckinghamshire Council's (BC) finance team to answer questions and queries which was useful.
- Other income includes lettings and insurance claims. The year end forecast includes letting income that has not yet been received.
- In terms of expenditure all figures have been included for teacher annual pay reviews and appraisals which are included in the salary modeller.
- Supply staff has increased slightly due to 1-1 support required for a child but will be offset.

Is it offset completely? Responding, the Bursar advised no as the school have to pay for the first 13.5 hours of support and the funding received tops this up to the number of hours of support the child requires.

The Headteacher advised that there are a number of children with EHCP's in Year 2 which will move on at the end of the academic year. There are less in Year 1, so agency staff are used to avoid a redundancy situation. The SENCO is very good at securing funding but recruitment for TA's remains challenging.

Is there a connection between this the school having higher than average support staff in the benchmarking data? Responding, the Headteacher advised that the benchmarking data is not comparable as the school has been benchmarked against primary schools rather than other infant schools. As children move into KS2 they attract more funding per child and therefore this is not comparable.

- Water services that form part of premises costs have increased this year. It has been challenging to budget as the water bill is paid by Turnfurlong Junior School who bill the school for 50%. There have been issues with billing for the last year and this is the first year that the schools are receiving regular invoices.
- Premises costs also includes purchases for the Opal Project which will be offset by the Sports Premium Grant.

Mrs Burnett returned to the meeting at 17.01pm.

- The energy forecast has reduced slightly for year end. Last financial year the school continued to be very prudent, and it is hoped there will be some savings. The school are receiving invoices regularly for electricity but there remain issues with billing for gas. An estimate has therefore been made.
- ICT Resources has increased since the forecast to fund the new server. This will be offset by the funding the school have received from the William Harding Trust.
- There has been an increase to Brought in Services for Opal which again will be offset by the Sports Premium Grant.
- Other expenses include administration for new staff such as DBS checks and non-curriculum professional services. There have been a number of new staff and changes for Pupil Premium children attending breakfast, after school club and drama therapy but these are offset through the Pupil Premium Grant.
- The school are in the process of forecasting the provisional 24/25 budget and 3-year forecast which will be circulated to Governors once complete.

The variance is around 2% of the original budget which is good. Could pay awards be budgeted? Responding, the Headteacher advised that this would be difficult as pay awards are often announced in the summer break.

The Bursar advised that BC have advised schools to put the proposed Bucks Pay Award for support staff into the salary modeller when forecasting the 24/25 budget. This will not be funded.

What is the 2% calculation of the variance based on? Responding, the Bursar advised original budget and budget to date.

Should it be on the original budget? Responding, the Bursar advised it is better to use the actuals as there are a lot of changes throughout the year and therefore this gives an accurate reflection. BC also advise to compare the original budget for budget setting purposes.

DFCG and Capital

The Bursar advised that the school received £7,339 in capital funding this year which gave a total DFCG of £55,422. This has been used to repair land drains completed over summer, fire door replacement and to refurbish the library. There is £10,000 left which will be carried forward to next financial year with some commitment to use this to

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| | | ACTION |
| | <p>replace chairs in the staff room and an upgrade to the computers in the ICT suite.</p> <p><u>Financial Implications of staffing</u></p> <p>All costs for grade reviews have been updated into the salary modeller and the support staff pay award will be profiled in the provisional budget for next academic year.</p> <p><u>Lettings update</u></p> <p>The Bursar advised that lettings income is projected to be £18,358. There have been no changes to hires this term, one has had to cancel some classes this month which may have a small impact.</p> <p><u>School Fund Accounts</u></p> <p>The Bursar advised that the School Fund is currently being finalised by an independent examiner and will be tabled at the next FGB-Finance.</p> | |
| 5.2 | SFVS AND REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PROCEDURES MANUAL | FGB – F Agenda |
| | <p>The Bursar advised that the school have received the SFVS template. The Chair, Headteacher and Bursar agreed to meet to complete and review the document.</p> <p>All Governors had been provided with a Financial Skills Matrix to complete that would accompany the SFVS on submission. All Governors were reminded to do so if they had not already.</p> <p>Governors noted that the Financial Procedures Manual had been reviewed and agreed at the last meeting.</p> <p><u>Benchmarking</u></p> <p>Circulated prior to the meeting, the Headteacher advised that the report from the DfE provides comparison data against other schools with similar SEN and FSM cohorts. Benchmarking also forms part of the SFVS and allows the school to select better criteria to make comparisons.</p> | Chair/HT/Bursar |

5.3 CONTRACTS AND LEASES TERMLY REVIEW

The Bursar advised there are 3 contracts due for renewal;

ICT Support – The school would like to remain with the current company due to the new server being fitted and some new work that is required. Governors agreed.

Washroom services – The school would like to remain with the current company as the cost is reasonable and service good. Governors agreed.

Purple Mash – The Headteacher advised the school would like to retain this software as it provides most of the Computing Curriculum which staff are familiar with. Governors agreed.

5.4 PUPIL PREMIUM GRANT (PPG) STRATEGY

The Headteacher advised that she had met with the Pupil Premium Governor to review the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) Strategy. As discussed at previous meetings disadvantaged and vulnerable children perform well at the school, but it would be interesting to understand how this compares nationally.

Some of the PPG will be used to purchase welly boots for children can access the field for Opal play.

5.5 BC INSURANCE SERVICES

It was agreed that the Bursar would ask BC for a list of services that the school purchase for Governors to discuss when contracts are due to expire.

5.6 CHARTWELLS UPDATE

The Headteacher advised that the food provider have confirmed they will be able to offer a halal option.

Some further work is required in the kitchen including replacement ovens, dishwasher, and work surfaces. There is also a concern about the capacity of the electric circuit, and it will need to be increased. This will be completed over half term. IT will not be impacted as the IT provider can shut the server down remotely.

The full change to the new service will begin in the summer term.

5.5 ARP EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Circulated prior to the meeting, the Headteacher advised that BC are taking expressions of interest for schools that would be interested in opening an Alternative Resource Provision (ARP). This is to try and tackle the SEND crisis both locally and nationally and provide provision for children who would have been placed in a special school but either parents are choosing for them to remain in mainstream, or they can't get a special school space.

The SENCO is keen to apply but there are positive and negatives to this.

Previously, BC contacted both schools and suggested an ARP across both sites, however as the schools are not federated discussions could not continue.

There is a big gap in SEND provision for children identified at age 2 as having additional needs and where they can attend before they can access a special school or a Reception class. Pre-schools are also forced into closure as their model is not sustainable. Staff would need to be considered in any further discussions.

Do BC have any case studies of schools that have implemented this?

Responding, the Headteacher advised the school could ask if they have any schools with provision for under 5's.

Would this be a condition? Responding, the Headteacher advised that BC will suggest that the schools federate and open an ARP. Currently the school don't qualify for what BC are looking for.

Governors discussed that provision for under 5's is a valid point but would require further discussion.

6 PREMISES UPDATE TO INCLUDE;

6.1 PREMISES ACTIVITY/ISSUES

The Headteacher presented the Premises Manager Report to Governors.

During Lockdown Drill the panel did not isolate correctly. Has this been rectified? Responding, the Headteacher advised that the Junior School had some work completed on their site which set off the alarm at the infant school. This was a user error and there is no fault with the panel.

6.2 LETTINGS UPDATE

This item had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY TO INCLUDE;

7.1 TERMLY ACCIDENT REPORT OF ANY ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS AND DANGEROUS OCCURANCES

Governors noted the Health and Safety Report circulated prior to the meeting.

7.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY WALK REPORT

This item would be tabled at the next meeting (FGB-F).

FGB (F)

8 OTHER ITEMS;

8.1 STAFFING UPDATE

The Headteacher provided the following Staffing Update;

- Additional SEND income has been received and therefore recruitments have been made on a temporary basis.
- A member of staff in Year 1 is on unpaid compassionate leave. This is being covered by agency staff 3 days a week.
- In Reception some additional funding has been received for a child that requires 2-1 support and 1-1 support for 2 other children. 2 of these are full time agency staff.
- A 0.6 TA has been appointed to work in Reception.

Why does the child need 2-1 support? Responding, the Headteacher advised that the child has SEMH needs that require more support. 2-1 allows for staff to have adequate breaks from the work. The SENCO is great at getting funding, but recruitment remains challenging. Reduced timetables are reviewed regularly.

8.2 GOVERNOR TERM OF OFFICE – MR R LLOYD

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Mr Lloyd regarding his term of office.

Clerk

Mrs Hudson advised she would be interested in the role of Vice Chair.

9 POLICIES

There were no policies for review at the meeting.

10 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Spring Term:

7th Mar 24 – FGB-C

21st Mar 24 – FGB

Summer Term:

16th May 24 – FGB-F

5th Jun 24 – FGB-C

27th Jun 24 – FGB

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nursery

The Headteacher advised that the school received a placement request to see if the nursery can meet the needs of a child. The family want specialist provision as the child has profound physical and language needs. The child is of nursery age, would start in the summer term before Reception in September.

The school declined to admit the child as their needs cannot be met by the school.

Last academic year the school were directed to admit a child with a high level of SEND when the provision was not full. The child is now attending specialist provision.

As the school were directed to admit the child with high level needs this impacted other spaces available in order to ensure that ratios are safe for all children. The school have had to advise some families that there are no spaces, and this creates a financial issue.

The school's financial reserves are declining each year and nurseries are challenging to staff. The 15 hour a week model will run at a loss as there has to be a qualified teacher in a mainstream nursery.

Consideration needs to be given to how the nursery can fill its places quickly and offering 30 hours may be a way to do this. This would have a financial impact on staffing, but other local nurseries fill quickly as they are able to offer 30 hour places.

When this was discussed previously the challenge was the staffing costs which could be more than the income? Responding, the Headteacher advised there would be a charge for 1 hour a day to cover lunchtime. The school would also require an administrator to assist.

How many children are in nursery? Responding, the Headteacher advised 30 full-time equivalents, and 5 are funded 2 year olds which the school would want to retain spaces for.

Would parents be able to choose between 15 and 30 hours? Responding, the Headteacher advised it would be 30 hours for all.

Governors discussed it would be useful to discuss the current nursery income against possible income under the 30 hours model.

Mrs Burnett left the meeting at 17.58pm.

It was agreed that this would be discussed further at the next meeting.

Governor Engagement

The FGB Chair advised that the Headteacher had asked to meet with her regarding the lack of Governor engagement which was disappointing.

The Chair proposed that within the Governor Code of Conduct setting a minimum number of meetings for Governors to attend per year would be beneficial. This sets an expectation for all Governors and anyone considering becoming a Governor.

Governors agreed.

The FGB Chair advised that it is also important that Governors respond to requests on GovernorHub and via email so that school business can continue in a timely manner.

The Headteacher advised that it is recognised that the Governor role comes with a high expectation. If Governors feel they are unable to commit the time required resignations can also be discussed.

It was agreed that the FGB Chair and Clerk would review the Governor Code of Conduct to include a minimum number of meetings that Governors should attend.

12 IMPACT OF MEETING

Governors discussed the following impact of the meeting;

- Review of current budget
- Contracts agreed.
- SFVS plan for completion agreed.
- SEN/ARP discussion
- Nursery discussion
- Governor Code of Conduct discussion

13 CONDUCT OF MEETING

Governors confirmed that the meeting was conducted in an open manner and that all governors were invited to participate and contribute to discussions. It was confirmed that all members of the Governing Board would have access to these minutes ***(with the exception of any Restricted Confidential Minutes).***

The meeting closed at 18.40pm.

Signed Date

CHAIR