

# Exeter Children's Federation

Meeting of the Full Governing Body

Meeting Minutes

Clerk: Neil Keen

Date: 6 February 2017	Venue: Montgomery Primary School	Time 18:30
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Present:

Peter Vickery	Local Authority Governor (Chair)
Michaela Young	Parent Governor
Martyn Boxall	Executive Head Teacher
Chris Neads	Co-opted Governor (Vice Chair)
Lisa Sayers	Co-opted Governor
Emma Bowler	Co-opted Governor
Gill Brown	Associate Governor (no voting rights)
Marion Phillips	Associate Governor (no voting rights)
David Coven	Staff Governor
Grace Williams	Co-opted Governor

## 1 **Apologies Received**

None

## 2 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Agreed and accepted as an accurate record.

## 3 **Multi Academy Trust Update**

MB had recently met with the Regional Schools Commissioner and they considered the request to form a multi academy trust. They had a good look over the schools profiles and are very knowledgeable with regards to the current situation. Ultimately, there are 6 current MAT's operating within Exeter and the RSC is very much of the thinking that this is enough for the City and would expect the school to now seek to join one of those MAT's. The costs of forming a MAT could be costly.

MB explained that this now leaves the following options on the table

- 1 – Cease the work that has already been done with the trust and separate back to individual schools
- 2- Look at forming a corporate trust board which is a hybrid model.
- 3 – Join a local MAT already operating within the Exeter area.

4 – Hard federation of the schools that have been working together on forming a MAT.

PV explained that governors are not expected to make a decision here, but need to start giving some thought as to the future direction of travel and then discuss and agree in the near future at an extraordinary meeting of the full governing body.

Due to the time of the year and the fact that budgets are close to being finalised, there would need to be a decision by April at the latest.

#### 4 **Budget Monitor**

CN has recently met with MB and set some challenges regarding the budget position. CN distributed the latest budget positions for both schools.

MB explained that the funding formula is changing and any school with more than an intake of 45 will lose money under the changes (both schools).

Figures are currently rough, but Montgomery will see a 1.3% cut to the budget this year and then 1.4% with Wynstream experiencing a 2.6% reduction this year and then 2.7% the following year. This is due to increase in pension contributions, the apprenticeship levy and cuts to the age weighted pupil funding.

The difficulty in setting the budgets is that they have to be based on planned money coming into the schools and not based on the current carried forward positions.

MB has been able to adjust the budgets accordingly to ease some of the pressure on Montgomery's budget. There is also some monies to come into the budget from some of the NLE work that MB has been carrying out. When the budgets are closed down shortly, the position will become a lot clearer.

Longer term the catering arrangements need to be looked at as the schools are paying nearly £200k for these services. MB is going to work on this and will report back to governors.

Staff that have recently left Wynstream have eased the pressure on the Wynstream budget.

PV asked if the £120k final position in the budget is recurring money. MB confirmed that it wasn't.

GW asked about the pay reviews and MB explained that a worst case scenario has already been factored into the budget position.

Governors discussed how the federation could look at ensuring it retains the best talent within the staff base. DC added that he personally believes that the greatest way of ensuring staff retention is making sure that the staff feel that their efforts are highly valued and this costs nothing.

PV signposted governors to the government petition around the cuts to schools funding and urged governors to sign this

#### 5 **Head Teacher Reports (Focus on school improvement plans)**

##### **Wynstream**

GB explained that the reports are now more focussed and aligned to the school improvement plans.

GB explained that the APS score in Mathematics was 103 and at Wynstream this was 95, so the gap isn't too bad as this was the first time these children had sat a paper.

Reading was where the biggest gap was last year and where boys outperformed girls. The gap was 11, but the school is focusing heavily in this area, working on re-taking them and working slowly in chunks to start with and now starting to work on the pace of the tests

Writing is not a problem, the school are just working on the borderline children, making sure everyone gets over the line to expected levels of achievement.

MB asked if GB could drill down as to why the gap has closed so much. GB believes this is because of how well children are now being tracked a lot closer as well as additional teaching time for this current cohort, who are 2 small classes, who are split into 5 small teaching groups of a morning.

MB asked GB to explain about the Pupil Dialogue Meetings that have just taken place, after the assessment point 2 data drop. These meetings look at all pupils, meetings with assistant heads, senco and teachers. The focus is on looking where the children should be with regards to all previous assessment points and then they are tracked forward to see where they should be at the end of year 6. The meetings are used to map needs and ensure the children are with the right staff and groups in order for them to achieve the best possible outcomes. PV asked if this was all children? And GB confirmed it was for every child and every subject (Writing, Reading & Mathematics).

EB added that it ensures that every child has an action plan in place.

GW asked if the gap of 16.5 will be reduced this year. GB was confident that it would and the data presented in November indicated the gap was closing already. This is about keeping children on track for a few more months. GW asked who is assessing the teachers' judgements. GB explained the school are using standardised tests and assessments.

PV thanks GB for the report

## **Montgomery**

### **MP presented her report for Montgomery.**

Unfortunately the data doesn't look as good as Wynstream, but reading, maths and writing have all increased. This has been a very rapid increase due to the reorganisation of the year 6 classes.

Staff were re-distributed in January, drilling down looking at children, and groups as well as bespoke teaching. If the increase continues then the schools will go up dramatically at the next standardised assessment.

GW asked MP why the school were in the situation in the first place. MP explained that there were staffing and standards issues which have now been resolved.

PV – 5/6 always been taught together, so big shift to put them into separate classes. LS asked what the impact of these changes would have on the year 5 children. MP explained that it will enable the teachers to drill down into the year 5 cohort and see the gaps earlier and intervene. MP explained that for this group of children, this is definitely the correct decision that has been taken by the leadership team.

Reading is going really well now with experienced teachers, a high level teaching assistant and a D grade TA all supporting this. Children are becoming much more engaged through all this as well as feeling successful again.

PV explained that to him the writing attainment sticks out like a sore thumb, MP yes – put together 3 points in the year for children to hit certain points to remain on track. DC that includes hand writing, and spelling assessments.

MB challenged governors to pick up on anything that is worrying them and come into the school at test it, by speaking to the teachers, digging deeper.

DC added that nobody wants to be successful more than year 6 teachers, as this data reflects on them ultimately, DC is satisfied there is not a thing more the school can be doing to support the children to make the best progress possible.

MP wanted to mention achievements of year 1 phonics, been split from year 2's for phonic teaching 81 percent already on track. And year 2 retake scores are up.

PV felt reassured that things are being put in place and moving in the right direction and looks forward to the next set of data.

## 6 **Learning Walk Feedback**

PV had been in to carry out some learning walks prior to Christmas and feedback his findings.

Both learning walks were focussing on year 6. PV explained that mathematics was an area of concern.

DC added that some of the processes around multiplication are not being picked up in years 3,4 and 5 and are leading to difficulties in year 6. The school are now trialling a new learning platform to address this. The school are trying to build a culture that times tables are cool as well as ensuring all children stay on track across all monitoring points.

GW is going to go into both schools to focus on writing and MY is going to go in to both schools to focus on reading.

## 7 **Policy Renewals**

The following policies were adopted by the full governing body following their distribution prior to the meeting

Pay Policy, Probation Policy, Maternity Policy, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Health and Safety Local Arrangements, Support staff appraisal policy, Finance Policy and Capability Policy

Governors wanted Dave Woodland to check the social media policy before adopting it. NK has forwarded this to him.

LS queried the flexi working policy and who it applies to. NK will seek some clarification from HR.

## 8 **Safeguarding Update**

MY verbally update governors regarding safeguarding across the federation. MY still in regular contact with both safeguarding leads. Dave is busy working on a new policy at the moment and hopes to have this ready for the next meeting of the full governing body.

Schools are doing a lot of work around online safety and there has been lots going on this week with it being internet safety week. MY would like to see more awareness for the children and parent/carers of KS1 children.

MB asked MY to email him with her proposals and he will ensure this happens.

MY would also like to look at doing a questionnaire/survey.

## 9 **Solar Power/Energy Update**

LS presented a report of the annual returns for the LTD company. Lots of money being generated but money can only be spent on maintenance and repairs. LS will revisit the articles of association to see if possibly monies could be spent on expansion of the energy saving panels across other sites.

All maintenance costs have come out and these were minimal.

## 10 **Dates of next meeting**

27<sup>th</sup> March at Wynstream

12<sup>th</sup> June at Montgomery

17<sup>th</sup> July at Wynstream