

**Orleans Primary School**  
Hartington Road, Twickenham TW1 3EN

**Minutes of Full Governing Body meeting held on  
Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 7.15pm at the school**

**Constitution, Membership and Attendance – (Bold=absent)**

LA – 1	PARENTS - 4	CO-OPTED-7	STAFF – 1 + Headteacher
Alan Blackbeard – AB	Matthew Engelke (Vice-Chair) - ME	Clare Taylor - CT	Jane Evans (Headteacher) - JE
	Mark Dickinson - MD	Yeing-Lang Chong – Y-LC	Loretta Lau – LL
	Alex Axiom - AA	Rhian James – RHJ (Chair)	
	Rebecca Gibbs – RG	Rebecca Johnson - RJ	
		Ally Salisbury - AS	
		Roy Vella – RV	

**Apologies:**

None

**Absent without apologies:**

None

**Also attended:**

Rebecca Mole (RM) – Deputy Headteacher/SENCO  
Fiona Whiteside (FW) – KS2 SENCO  
Vicki Prince – Clerk

1.	<b>Apologies:</b> There were no apologies.	<b>ACTIONS</b>
2.	<b>Declaration of Interests:</b> None declared.	
3.	<p><b>Coordinator Presentation: Preparing for Change in Special Needs and Disability</b> RM and FW outlined the changes to SEN provision scheduled to become law in September 2014, emphasizing that, as it was still being debated in the House of Commons the final detail was still unknown. Richmond LA was, however, pushing for borough schools to be ready. <b>Action: SENCOs to bring to Q&amp;S and F&amp;P when finalized.</b> The chief known changes were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of Needs is to be replaced by the Education Health &amp; Care Plan which would apply to individuals from birth to the age of 25 instead of just the period of time they are in education.</li> <li>• Funding will change and will be based partly on place and key factors relating to each school e.g. historical nature, attainment at the end.</li> <li>• Children/young people will be allocated personalized budgets, the intention being that parents and children will have more control over and choice about the support provided by schools and Health Dept.</li> <li>• Schools have to develop a 'Local Offer' of support and services they can provide and Orleans was currently in the process of working with LA and other schools to develop a template for that local offer.</li> <li>• Schools have to work closely with Healthcare, the aim being to offer more integrated support across all departments. RM and FW cautioned, however,</li> </ul>	<b>SENCO</b>

that Orleans will only be able to work with Richmond and Kingston Health Care Departments so that - although there were none currently - any pupils living in Hounslow would receive their healthcare entirely through Hounslow with which the school could have no dealings.

**Q:** So will all local schools offer the same services?

**A:** No, the content of each school's local offer may be different but they should have the same format. SEN Governor will need to have oversight of the local offer, which will have to be published on the school website.

*RV arrived at 7.25 p.m.*

To prepare for the different way in which the budget will be delivered, schools have been recommended to work out all the additional costs over and above the usual classroom costs. The funding will have 3 elements to it, £6K of which will be available to schools but will no longer be ring-fenced for SEN hence the importance of identifying costs. The third part – Top Up Funding – is the only part in which parents have an active say in how it can be used *as long as it is evidence-based and cannot destabilize the school*. An Orleans family has also been identified to trial the personalized budget in order to reduce the risk of conflict with families when allocating resources. Draft documents for communicating these changes to families were ready for when the changes become law. It was noted that, in reality, the funding for SEN will be reduced so it was very important to manage parents' expectations well. As a result of this preparatory work, this locality was more ready than many others for the new SEN provision.

*YLC arrived at 7.35 p.m.*

FW warned about being careful as to what the school advertises on the website with regard to the local offer. While wanting to attract families to Orleans, it was important not to lay stress on areas that were staff-dependent e.g. expertise the school might have as a result of one particular staff member as the school may not be able to deliver this in the long term.

**Q:** In terms of the local offer, is there any pressure on the school to offer specialized provision?

**A:** No, there was no pressure from the LA although it will give extra funding for specific provision if the school had an expert in that area. The sorts of things one might mention on the website are the disabled toilets, the hoists, after-school clubs etc *but* taking into account the number of children already using those facilities.

**Q:** How big a risk is there to funding?

**A:** There is a risk if, for example, a child joins halfway through the school year that it might be difficult to access the £6K or appropriate portions thereof for that child. This is why it is so important to identify the SEN costs.

**Q:** Given that no scheme is perfect, is there one thing about the proposed plan that you are both particularly excited about and one thing that frustrates you?

**A:** It is good for the individuals to know they will be supported until the age of 25 and the principle of the holistic approach sounds exciting in principle but it is not clear how practicable it is to arrange for all parties to meet.

**Q:** In terms of the local offer, might it not be a disincentive to schools to attract statemented children if the finance will be a nightmare to arrange?

**A:** Despite the practical difficulties, I see the benefits of having children with different needs in the school.

**Q&A:** Governors expressed concern that at the moment statemented children bring extra funding with them but, with reduced funds, it might force the school to make hard decisions. Governors cautioned against boasting specialisms which might push against the concept of building provision for children within the local community,

	<p>proposing rather that the school say what it could do for the children within the local community. Governors also had worries about the practicability of shared control of the budget, suggesting that, to manage expectations, there be an education process leading up to the introduction of the EHCP.</p> <p>RM and FW were thanked for their comprehensive presentation and noted, in particular, that they were fortunate to have FW's up-to-date knowledge to draw on, as she was currently doing a Postgraduate Qualification in Special Needs.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Membership and Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RG and LL confirmed that they have both now completed Conflict of Interest forms.</li> <li>• RG and AA have done training in How to Be a Parent Governor.</li> <li>• AA was half-way through Getting to Grips with Governance.</li> <li>• Chair has done Safer Recruitment Training and YLC has done Performance Management training.</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>Minutes of the last Meeting and Matters Arising</b></p> <p>The minutes were passed subject to several amendments. All Actions Arising had been completed and dealt with.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Committee Reports</b></p> <p><u>Quality and Standards:</u> The minutes of the meeting having been circulated, ME highlighted the discussion around Orleans' mid-year monitoring of pupils' work in relation to last year's cohort, which other schools do not do. The committee had discussed the different ways of tracking progress (e.g. cohort comparisons versus individual predictions and attainment) and, for their next meeting, had requested the Headteacher to provide for their review the data in terms of sub-levels of progress of individual children and in relation to the children's Autumn predictions. It was drawn to MD's attention that he has an Action Point to monitor the setting of individual targets for Science for September.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A:</b> Regarding the difficulty in finding a specialist Maths teacher, Governors challenged the Headteacher about the fact that it had not been advertised to parents, some of whom might have had Maths expertise or known somebody who did. Asked whether it had been advertised as a Temporary or Permanent contract, Headteacher advised that it had been advertised first as Temporary and then as Permanent, which had not generated any more interest. However, she said that, starting after Easter, she had now solved the problem in the short-term by using existing staff as there had not, in any case, been the budget available for this year. When challenged about the fact that, she had demurred when Q&amp;S Governors had suggested using existing staff, she explained that use was being made of a very competent staff member already in a particular class. RM, who had Maths expertise and was not attached to any particular class, was also being utilized.</p> <p><u>Personnel:</u><b>Q&amp;A:</b> The minutes of the Personnel meeting having been circulated previously, Finance &amp; Premises Governors asked for clarification of <b>action for F&amp;P</b> with respect to Service Level Agreements and were advised that they were to <b>examine to see what SLA contains and evaluate whether should seek another provider for Best Value.</b> Governors asked for clarification with regard to item on Parent Exit Interviews and were informed that these Exit Interviews with staff members had always been done but that the Questionnaire has been modified with additional questions and prompts. Reports will be made to Personnel Committee, who were trying to formalize the process, to see whether anything could have been done to prevent them leaving.</p>	<p>MD</p> <p>MD</p>

**Finance & Premises:** MD confirmed that the previous decision to discontinue free milk to Nursery school children had been reversed as it had resulted from a misunderstanding. The F&P minutes having been circulated for scrutiny, he highlighted the fact that only certain key line items in the existing year's budget had been examined in detail e.g. the water leak. Thames Water has refunded the £23K but, as the source of the leak has not yet been identified, F&P Governors were very concerned that there would continue to be very large water bills that somebody would have to pay and, moreover, that the leak was starting to affect the new building. AB confirmed that he had noticed visible damp in the new building. The Headteacher added that there was a concern that the leak may be occurring where Quinn had added new pipes to existing pipes and that it would be very difficult to identify and reach the source of the leak if it was under the new building. She confirmed that the School Business Manager (SBM) had written to LA emphasizing the danger to property and noted that it had been necessary to speak very stringently to the Thames Water representative to prevail upon them to take this seriously. They were due to come in this week to excavate. MD said F&P had also discussed ways of minimizing the leak by turning off the water over night but the Headteacher interjected that the Site Manager had concerns that this might affect the boiler adversely.

**Q:** How is this being tracked?

**A:** Crona Spicer (SBM) is following up with Claire Briggs, Building Development Officer at Richmond LA who is handling things now that the LA Project Manager has left. SBM was seeking assurance in writing from LA that they were responsible for the costs and, once Thames Water have dug the hole and identified the cause, next steps can be decided.

MD also highlighted the significant overspend on electricity, noting that, although historically bills had fluctuated considerably, this year's bill had been exceptionally high. The £20K budgeted for next year assumed an aggressive saving programme.

**Q&A:** Asked whether anybody had checked whether the Kilowatt reading was very different from previous years, MD replied that they had ascertained that the large increase had not been a result of price hikes but of increased usage.

**Action: Headteacher to ask SBM to check Kilowatt usage.**

**Q&A:** Asked why there were 3 different providers and whether competitive quotes and the possibility of discounts for bulk use should be investigated, it was **agreed** to ask SBM for clarification.

MD drew Governors' attention to the Charging Policy, the wording of which was being strengthened to address the issue of parents who do not pay regularly for lunches or school trips. This had become an issue because of the forthcoming much more expensive residential trips for which the school could not bear the cost.

**Q&A:** Governors, on asking for clarification of the process, were told that SBM initially writes to parents outlining what they owe and follows this up with a phone call if no payment is forthcoming. The Headteacher would always invite parents in genuine difficulties to discuss the options in strictest confidence. For school meals, lunchtime registers were being taken more consistently as 30 additional meals that were not paid for were being taken by children every day.

Referring to the 2014/15 Budget which had occupied the bulk of the meeting, MD highlighted the activation of the Top-Up Funding payment which indicated that the school's income was down 1.5% and the fact that the carry-over for Years 2 and 3 were artificial numbers in that they do not incorporate the 2 extra classes, for which the incremental income will exceed the incremental expenditure. He emphasized that the budget had been very tight this year and every budget line had been scrutinized for possible savings e.g. it had been necessary to assume a zero salary

HT/SBM

	<p>increase as a 1% salary rise risked an additional £19K. The ICT budget line, which would have to reviewed again, was deliberately tight and assumed an aggressive drive to save money in ICT (e.g. sourcing second-hand desktops or laptops) and energy costs. However, F&amp;P had ascertained that there were sufficient funds to pay for the playground.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A:</b> There was general discussion about the importance of driving home to parents and staff how tight income was and ways in which this might be achieved. The Headteacher and Staff Governors confirmed that it had been raised at Staff meetings. <b>Action: The Headteacher to include this in termly update to parents and to bring up with Class Reps.</b></p>	HT
7.	<p><b>SFVS</b> This was circulated to all Governors for scrutiny. <b>Action: Governors to read and send all comments to SBM by end of week. Deadline for submission was 31<sup>st</sup> March.</b></p>	All Govs
8.	<p><b>Governors' Self-Evaluation</b> The 20 Key Questions for Effective Governance for Good Schools and Governors' Skills Audit had been circulated. Governors discussed ways in which they might improve communication with parents and the local community. Governors suggested that, following a GB meeting, a bulletin from the Chair be included in the school newsletter, highlighting key topics covered at the meeting. It was <b>agreed</b> that it was important to heighten awareness of what the governors' role was while being cautious about wording. <b>Action: Chair to write and submit bulletin to Headteacher by w/e 28 March.</b></p>	Chair
9.	<p><b>Annual Review: Whether to Convert to Academy</b> Chair had discussed with GBS who confirmed that it was more financially viable to convert as a group of primary schools. It was <b>agreed</b>, therefore, that there seemed no immediate benefit to converting and to review next year. <b>GB Agenda Item March 2015</b></p>	Clerk
10.	<p><b>Governor Visits</b> Governors were asked for their views on the template for reports. The Headteacher observed that she found them helpful and that they had been very favourably received by OFSTED. Richmond's Principal Inspector of Schools said they make it clear what governors do and the links to the School Development Plan show how a subject has been progressed. From a teachers' point of view, a teacher could add a positive report to his/her portfolio for Performance Related Pay reviews. It was <b>agreed</b> therefore not to change them.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> There was no other business.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b> The next meeting will be at 7.15 pm on 21<sup>st</sup> May.</p>	

The meeting ended at 9.35 p.m.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Actions Arising:**

<b>Item number</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible person</b>
3	Bring final details of SEN changes to F&P and Q&S	Rebecca Mole
6	Monitor target setting for Science	Mark Dickinson
6	Review SLAs and evaluate what are offering and whether best value	F&P
6	SBM to look at Kilowatt usage	Crona Spicer
6	Raise need for economizing in termly updates to parents and at meetings with Class Reps	Jane Evans
7	Read and send all comments for SFVS to SBM ASAP	All Govs
8	Write bulletin about GB meeting for newsletter	Chair

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