

**Islington Futures - Federation of Community Schools
Minutes of the FEDERAL ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE
Thursday 16 January 2020, 4.30pm at Beacon High School**

Present:

Pauline Edgar Chair	Chair, Co-opted Governor
Sarah Beagley	Head EGA, Ex-Officio Governor
Mary Berrisford (from 5.55pm)	Co-opted Governor
Jo Dibb	Executive Head, Ex-Officio Governor
Denise McCarney	Head Vittoria, Ex-Officio Governor
Jill McLaughlin	LA Governor
Amardeep Panesar	Head Copenhagen, Ex-Officio Governor
Diane Stirling	Co-opted Governor
Alan Streeter	Head Beacon High, Ex-Officio Governor
Nikki Khoshkbary	Media Resource Officer
Lesley Pearson	Interim Clerk

Agenda Item		Action
1.	<p>Apologies and Consent</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Alex Bols, Rebecca Thompson and Louise Simmons.</p> <p>Apologies for lateness were received from Mary Berrisford.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were also received from Tina Southall, Observer.</p> <p>Resolved: To consent to the absence of Alex Bols, Rebecca Thompson, Louise Simmons.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2019 were previously circulated.</p> <p><u>Amendments:</u></p> <p>Item 7, Pastoral Systems and Structures, page 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. First paragraph: delete last sentence (<i>noting that...</i>) ii. Second paragraph: delete last two sentences (<i>AS realised...</i>) <p><u>Matters Arising:</u></p> <p><u>Item 3, Minutes and Matters Arising, page 2, Schools Review SDPs</u></p>	

	<p>Parent versions of the Federation’s SDPs to be made available.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To agree the minutes, as amended, of 15 October 2019. as amended ii. To draft SDPs for parents 	Heads
4.	<p>Good Practice in Early Years - Presentation</p> <p>Governors received a presentation from Asma Begum and Sonya Prentice, Early Years Lead Practitioners at Copenhagen and Vittoria Primary Schools, handouts for which were tabled for the information of governors.</p> <p>In response to governor questions the following was clarified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the main children started below age related expectations. • At the end of last year, the reception children had been assessed to be broadly in line with National and Islington’s ELG (early learning goals), both of which were 70%. • Children were usually assessed during the first six months of starting EYFS, after which appropriate interventions would be put in place to address identified gaps. • Photographic and video evidence is available for parents. • Parent communication is strong; child development at school impacted on home and vice versa. • Comparable schools and children’s centres in the local vicinity had been visited to look at practices, including an outstanding nursery school. • Initiatives to encourage parental engagement, particularly shared reading, included weekly library visits and a phonics reading scheme whereby books were sent home. Both schools had well stocked libraries and at the end of the academic year, reception children were introduced to Yr1 books as part of the transition process. Both schools were also members of the Toy Project, the aim of which was to promote intergenerational learning. • Early Years children usually moved through school. Occasionally children left at the end of nursery, however, this was usually due to the admission policy criteria. • Early years’ progress could be monitored via the data dashboard. <p>The Chair thanked the Early Years Lead practitioners for their informative presentation.</p>	
5.	<p>Staff Workload and Wellbeing</p> <p>JD spoke to the Staff Workload and Wellbeing report (previously circulated for the information of governors) and drew governors’ attention to the following:</p>	

- SLT must be aware of staff workload and pay attention to their wellbeing.
- Staff must be aware of their value and enjoy going to work (failure to do so may impact negatively on their ability to do their best).
- Schools should acknowledge that they are currently at different places; schools which have experienced a lot of turbulence may have different priorities.

In response to governor questions, the following was clarified:

- **The confidential DfE Workload Survey was carried out on site.**
- **There was never a ‘right time’ to carry out a survey; Beacon High teachers had completed a survey prior to the DfE’s release, therefore, out of respect they were not asked to complete the DfE survey. AS had worked through iTIPS (Islington Trauma Informed Practice in Schools) and used the survey results to develop initiatives to support staff.**

In response to a question from JD, a governor felt it would be useful to present cross school survey results to Achievement Committee, highlighting the main developmental areas for each school.

The Chair was of the view proposals/actions taken to address concerns would be best considered by individual School Committees.

AS proposed School Committees considered staff workload, whilst Achievement Committee considered the workload of SLT, which in his view, tended to get side-lined as they carried out the surveys. The Chair agreed the workload of the SLT shouldn’t be neglected, however, she felt the Achievement Committee should consider the broader concerns of the schools.

JD was of the view headteachers should take responsibility for the workload and wellbeing of their staff and pointed out that governors had a clear responsibility to consider the work life balance of headteachers. Though the immediate responsibility for the well-being of the headteachers lies with the Executive Head.

JMCL stressed the importance of ensuring work life balance remained an agenda discussion item and suggested consideration should be given as to how the information could be produced in a form that was easy to monitor but not labour intensive.

JD considered it useful for governors to be presented with the current level of information; whilst schools were at different stages, all were looking at staff wellbeing and workload.

The Chair thought it would be helpful to know the extent to which middle managers were aware of their responsibilities with regard to ensuring

	<p>staff were not overburdened and that strategies for sharing workload were implemented.</p> <p>In response to further governor questions, the following was explained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Ofsted framework placed huge expectations on middle leaders. It was important to note that every additional task took time away from something else, therefore added value should be considered when decision making. • It was more difficult in one form entry schools to work collaboratively. <p>JMcL stated that whilst the report demonstrated staff wellbeing and workload was being taken seriously, staff stress was not always evident and felt it was important to be aware of the importance of interpersonal staff skills across the board.</p> <p>RECEIVED</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Parental Engagement <u>Presentation</u></p> <p>Governors received a presentation from NK, the MRO responsible for the development of communications across the federation, on the results of a recent Parental Engagement Survey (a copy of which will be available on Governor Hub).</p> <p>It was pointed out that parents of all year groups had not been invited to participate in the surveys at this stage.</p> <p>Having received the presentation, governors felt the following information would be useful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of responses as a percentage. • A question regarding parental engagement via email • A question regarding the reasons parents contacted school. <p>JD reported that in the main secondary school parents contacted school to report an absence or raise a complaint. Primary school parents, however, frequently contacted school. It was the general view that a breakdown of the reasons parents visited school would be useful.</p> <p>In response to a governor question, it was confirmed that generally teachers did not want to be contacted directly by email.</p> <p>The Chair felt there were advantages to responding rapidly to parental enquiries; quick answers often diffused situations. Staff wellbeing also needed to be sensibly managed. Generally, people became frustrated if they did not receive an immediate response, which in turn was stressful for members of the admin team responsible for dealing with telephone enquires in the first instance.</p>	

Governors thanked NK for her presentation which highlighted the importance of continuing to look at ways to encourage positive dialogue with parents and carers.

Parental Engagement Report

JD presented on a previously circulated report regarding Parental Engagement 2019/20 and highlighted the following:

- An improvement in parent attendance at Beacon High events and trips so far this academic year, compared to 2018/19.
- The importance of continuing to look at ways of improving parental attendance at meetings/events, thus improving parental engagement.

JMCL stated that in order to effectively monitor the impact of parental engagement initiatives, further information on attendance data and trends would be useful; comparisons between secondary and primary school statistics for example, would provide some context.

Whilst the significant improvement in parents' attendance at Beacon High events/meetings, particularly in the lower years, had been noted, disappointingly only 33% of parents had attended the Year 10 Settling in Evening. AS pointed out that there had been no pressure for parents to attend and that it followed on very quickly from Academic Planning Day.

In response to governor questions, the following was clarified:

- **Parents that failed to attend parents' evenings tended to be the 'hard to reach' and those that felt engaged with school life due to the amount of time they spent in school.**
- **Copenhagen School arranged a 2nd meeting for the 'no shows'; the figures in the report were post chase up.**
- **Parents were aware of the expectation around attendance at parents' meetings etc. The expectation was detailed in Beacon High's Home School Agreement which parents signed up to.**
- **Parents knew what to expect at parents evening, albeit time was limited.**
- **EGA often combined events with parent evenings in an attempt to encourage attendance. Despite this, there were still a number of working and hard to reach parents that failed to attend.**

Vittoria is considering reviewing their parent evening format which was often chaotic due to the number of unsupervised children.

AS fed back that parents considered academic planning days to be of more value than the 5 minutes spent with teachers they managed to visit during parents evening and questioned whether parents evening, in the current format, should be scrapped.

	<p><i>(MB arrived)</i></p> <p>In response to a governor question, AS felt there were a whole suite of opportunities throughout the year for parents to engage with school. Whilst AP considered the parent evenings to be of value she pointed out that some parents were unable to attend after school due to work commitments but supported their children’s learning by attending meetings and events during the day.</p> <p>The Chair stressed the importance of continuing to provide parents with a number of opportunities (at various times of the day) to engage with school, of monitoring attendance and of considering ways of engaging with ‘hard to reach’ parents (for whatever reason).</p> <p>JMcL stated that whilst the Federation should be clear about the benefits of parental engagement on pupil progress, provided there is added value it is not necessary to be too rigid in its approach. The Chair agreed and expressed the view that parental engagement needed to be defined and statistics available so that its impact could be monitored. Staff, however, should not ‘beat themselves up’ when parents failed to attend a particular meeting, so long as they were engaging with the school.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To monitor parental engagement throughout the year, consider ways in which to engage with ‘hard to reach’ parents and report back to Achievement Committee on future developments/initiatives.</p>	TS
7.	Teaching and Learning Deferred to next meeting.	All
8.	AOB There being no other business to discuss, the meeting closed at 6.30pm	

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting	
Chair’s signature	
Chair’s name	Pauline Edgar
Date	15 December 2020