

Hemlington Hall Academy

Notes taken from the Governor review meeting Wednesday 15th July 2015 3.15p.m.

Present: Dave Elliot (Chair) Catherine Simon, Emma Cook-Smith, Vicky Walker, Charlotte Thompson, Joanne Tickle & Kay Braithwaite (note taker)

Apologies were received from Jo Marchant

Dave welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the reason for the meeting was twofold: to look back at the previous year to assess the impact of Governors and to look forward to where we are going as a Governing Body. He said that in the first part of the meeting assessing impact was key and asked Governors to consider this point. He stressed that it is not important the number of times a Governor visits the Academy but what they actually do when they are in the Academy. He stated that as Chair he appreciates all Governor's work.

Dave pointed out that to assist Governors a file had been created to keep together important information around Governors, Governor visits and Governor impact. It was to be kept in the office and updates/details of visits could be added by Governors at any time.

Review of the year

- a) **Training** – Dave asked Governors to share the benefits and impact on their work of any training they had attended. Vicky outlined the EHCP training which had given her a great awareness of what is involved in the assessments and plans that affect a child. As SEND governor she feels she has more knowledge and is more confident about this area. Charlotte had attended initial governor training and although being a member of staff she knew a lot of what was taught she still found it interesting and useful and made her consider her governor role in a different light. Emma had attended Raising achievement in boys seminar. She found it thought provoking being a mum of boys she recognised some of what was being said. She emphasized the need to push boy's strengths and highlighted some of the negative ways that boys are portrayed – even in emblems their clothing. There was a strong focus on stereotyping and gender specific activities and that it was important to show both sexes engaged in activities 'normally' associated with the other e.g. display boards to include boys cooking. The case studies were good and the impact has been she is now very aware of the subject and she will be interested in if this is evident in KS2 more than in KS1. She wondered if there was any evidence of poorer boys performance in the SATS results

ACTION Dave to ask Karen to break down results by gender and circulate to governors.

Dave and Kay both commented on the relevance of the Governor Forums they had attended Dave gave the benefits of hearing of the experiences of a Headteacher on a recent OFSTED inspections and

Kay commented on the importance of networking to share and hear about best practice from other Governors.

Catherine asked if she should include her staff training and Dave assured her that this too was relevant to her role as a Governor. Dave asked that if we do attend training to give a brief summary for other Governors and thanked those who had already done this. Sharing information was important.

- b) Link Governors – Dave confirmed all were happy with Governor links to the school.. Catherine said that having link Governors had a positive impact on both the staff and the children. She said that it was lovely to see that the children knew who we are and were keen to show off their work and to share their successes. Charlotte commented that from a staff point of view there was a lot to learn from Governors from their professional point of view and it was good to be able to talk to someone else to get an opinion. She said that staff valued the trusted critical friend aspect of talking to governors and that staff had also commented that governors were accessible and approachable. Parent governors present were content not to be associated with their child's year group.
- c) Committee meetings. Dave asked if Governors were happy with their membership of committees and all present were. He stated that the Raising Achievement committee would continue with a careful review of it's timing so that members could attend. Finance will include Alex whose professional accounting skills will be greatly valued and will give Governors the extra reassurance that the Academy funds are being well managed.
- d) Individual tasks - Data champions are Kaz and Alex. Pupil Premium champion is Chris.
- e) The impact report, previously circulated, was reviewed together with the Governors 10 Key points. All present felt that they agreed with both documents
- f) Dave summed up that the impact Governors have on the life of the Academy was considerable and they used their individual talents to great effect. He sensed that every Governor sincerely cared about the Academy and had a real passion for improvement and in supporting the life of the Academy.

Future planning

- a) Governors present had found the three monitoring weeks of great benefit. It was suggested that Safeguarding, Health & Safety ; Pupil premium and a Maths focus be the three topic areas for 2015-2016. Emma commented that she felt that we needed more feedback from the Academy on the monitoring re the H&S visit – what happened as a result info. **ACTION** Dave will ask Karen to give that follow up. Emma had also found a DfE classroom checklist on H&S aimed at teachers and Charlotte said it would be useful as a reference for staff. **ACTION** Emma to forward checklist to Karen for staff information.

ACTION Dave will get dates for monitoring visits fixed asap and circulate to Governors.

- b) Training needs- A discussion took place around the changes in presentation of data **ACTION** Dave to ask Karen for an annual refresher on data and stats once the new term has begun. Joanne commented that EYFS data had not been circulated **ACTION** Charlotte agreed to ensure Governors got a copy. Training on 'Engaging parents' had been cancelled and Governors considered whether this would be beneficial. Vicky stated that a common 'moan' from parents was over 'communications' - too much info, wrong info and changing info/dates. Charlotte said she sometimes thought that there were too many ways to communicate with parents and that sometimes she gets letters too late in the date which means that they don't go out that day. It was thought that the new website provider Itchy robot may provide facilities for teachers to update only their parents. All felt that the progress postcards were an excellent idea. Charlotte said that the phonics, maths and science parent workshops were being repeated in the new year and it was an opportunity for parent governors to meet parents – perhaps finish the session 15 minutes before end of school invite parents for a cup of tea and talk to them. **ACTION** Dave to suggest this to Karen.
- c) Radicalisation. All governors aware. Joanne said that there was e training available **ACTION** Joanne to circulate the link. **ACTION** Dave to ensure that it is a standing item on the FGB agendas. **ACTION** Kay to circulate the 'Prevent' information she has.
- d) What are our aims? - All felt that the Governing Body is passionate about what is happening in the Academy and that our aim next year we should strive to continue the professional and supportive challenge that we present to the staff and Headteacher in order to further improve the learning environment for our children.
- e) How do we enable our aims to be achieved? Joanne suggested that we good at sharing information and should consider (without information overload) how we can best keep each other informed about our work in the Academy.

AOB

Academy website

It was agreed that we ensure that itchy robot is delivered quickly and that we get full value and full use of it's facilities. **ACTION** Dave will ask for date and some training for governors. He will also ask KAZ if she will be the link Governor for the Academy website.

Agenda items for FGB

Dave clarified that items for the agenda should be sent to him at least one month before the FGB (AOB is not ideal at the end of a meeting)

It was agreed that the Review meeting had been very useful to focus Governors on the impact they make to the life of the Academy and that this meeting should be an annual event.