SIR JOHN CASS’S FOUNDATION PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Governing Body held on 07 December 2016 at 4:00pm

Membership

Mr D Alexander  Parent
Mr J Fletcher  Local Authority
Mr C Henry *  Foundation LDBS
Ms A Godas*  Parent
Mr D Hogben*  Foundation - Sir John Cass’s Foundation
Deputy H Jones*  Local Authority
The Revd L Jørgensen*  Foundation - ex-officio
Mr E Keene *  Foundation - Deanery Synod
Ms H Khan  Staff
Mr A Mullee  Foundation - Sir John Cass’s Foundation
Mr M Piper*  Foundation Parent – St Botolph’s PCC
Mrs J Welsh*  Support Staff
Mr T Wilson*  Head
Mr D Williams*  Foundation
Mr A Wright*  Foundation Parent - LDBS
Vacancy  Foundation Parent – Sir John Cass’s Foundation

*denotes attendance

In attendance

Mrs R Basit  Clerk to the Governing Body
Mr M Paddon  School Business Manager
Ms Alex Allan  Deputy Headteacher

PART A: PUBLIC ITEMS

1. Opening prayer

The meeting was opened with prayer by Mr David Hogben.

2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The nominations received were circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Clerk announced that one nomination had been received for the role of Chair of Governors; that nomination was for Revd. Laura Jørgensen.

Resolved – There being no other nomination, Revd. Laura Jørgensen was duly elected as the Chair of Governors.

The Chair announced that one nomination had been received for the role of Vice-Chair of Governors; that nomination was for Mr Matt Piper.

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Resolved – There being no other nomination, Mr Matt Piper was duly elected as the Vice-Chair of Governors.

The Chair also thanked Andy Wright for his contribution during his time as Vice-Chair.

3. Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr J Fletcher and Mr A Mullee.

Resolved – that the apologies were accepted.

The Chair said attendance at meetings, in particular the Committee meetings, was a concern. Governors discussed that as a rule they will not accept apologies.

Resolved – that the Governing Body agreed to not accept apologies going forward.

The Headteacher requested biographies from governors who were yet to supply the information. The Headteacher said that it was a requirement to upload this information on the website.

Action: Governors to send biography to the Headteacher

The Clerk confirmed that signed non-confidential minutes will also need to be uploaded on the website. The Clerk will forward minutes to Graham Watson.

Action: Clerk

4. Declarations by Governors of any personal and pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda and Annual Business Register (circulated)

The Clerk reminded governors that they need to complete and return the register of business forms.

There were no declarations of interest in relation to the agenda items.

5. Dates of forthcoming meetings

The dates for forthcoming meetings and events were circulated in advance for governors to note.

6. Minutes of the previous meeting; minutes of committees and updates (Circulated)

a. Minutes of the autumn term Finance Committee meeting

David Williams said he knew of an opportunity to for fundraising. David Williams will speak to the Headteacher outside of this meeting.

b. Minutes of the autumn term Curriculum Committee meeting

Correction [Item 8 Pupil Attendance - page 6] – the visits to secondary schools will be limited to a maximum of three visits.

The above minutes were received and noted by the Governing Body.
c. Minutes of the Children Centre Advisory Board and associated documents
   The above minutes were not available.

d. Minutes of the full governing body held on 29 June 2016 and matters arising
   There were no matters arising.

   Resolved – that the minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

e. Minutes of the extra-ordinary full governing body meeting held on 5 October
   2016 and matters arising

   Matters Arising:
   There were no matters arising.

   Resolved – that the minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

7. Governance and monitoring

a. Terms of reference of committees
   It was confirmed that the quorum for committee meetings was 3 governors need to
   be in attendance.

   The Chairs/Vice-Chairs of the Committees was reviewed:

   Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee

   Resolved – that Andy Wright was elected as the Chair of the Finance Committee
   and Henry Jones was elected as the Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee.

   Curriculum, Pupil Achievement and Pupil Affairs Committee

   Resolved – that John Fletcher was elected as the Chair of the Curriculum
   Committee and Matt Piper was elected as the Vice-Chair of the Curriculum
   Committee.

   The Clerk will circulate a list of Committee members prior to the next meeting.

   Action: Clerk

b. Committee Attendance
   The Chair said that attendance at Committee meetings needs to improve and
   reminded Governors that the expectation was attendance at Full Governing Body
   meetings, Committee Meetings and at least one visit per year.

c. Skills Audit (circulated)
   The Clerk reminded governors to complete and return the Skills Audit form as a
   matter of urgency.

   Action: all Governors

d. Visit Forms
   Visit forms were circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors were also invited to
   the Nativity Play.
Andy Wright had completed a visit to the school and reviewed the Single Central Record.

The Chair informed governors that the Headteacher's Performance Management review had been completed.

The Headteacher said that governors had provided feedback on the school dinner and how the lunch times were managed. The Headteacher said with the new catering Manager the lunch experience had improved overall.

e. Verbal training update
The Chair had completed the Headteacher performance management training. Matt Piper had completed the ‘Taking the Chair’ training.

8. Approve policies and Statements from committees
The following policies were previously circulated and were approved by the Committees:
   1. RE Curriculum overview
   2. RE and Collective Worship Policy
   3. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
   4. The SEN Policy
   5. Anti-Bullying Policy
   6. Pay Policy
   7. Letting Policy

Resolved – that the Governing Body ratified the Committee decision to adopt the above policies.

Health, Safety and Welfare Policy
The Health, Safety and Welfare Policy had not been reviewed by the committees. The Policy was circulated in advance of the Governing Body meeting. The Headteacher said the Policy was an amalgamation of other health and welfare related policies. The Headteacher said that policy included healthy food policy; the School’s acceptable PE uniform i.e. appropriate footwear; security and access to the building; administration of medication; positive handling; and attendance.

The Headteacher will amend the date on the front-sheet accordingly.

Resolved – that the Governing Body approved the above policy.

   8. Pupil Premium Impact Statement 2015/16
   9. Sport Funding Impact Statement 2016/17

The Governing Body received and noted the above statements.

9. School Expansion
The Headteacher reported that he and four other Tower Hamlets Headteachers had met with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) to share their concerns regarding the lack of correlation between Free schools opening, particularly in relation to the Free School advertising as opening on the Commercial Road, and the
areas with a demand for schools places. This impacted on the existing schools and had resulted with some schools not filling their reception places and carrying a number of vacancies. The Headteacher said that it was a positive meeting and the RSC had listened to their views.

In addition, the Headteacher reported that the data predicting the number of Reception places required did not come to fruition for that particular area of Tower Hamlets. The Headteacher said that it was a positive meeting and the RSC was taking on board the Heads’ concerns.

The Governing Body noted that a new school was opening on Commercial Road called the Livingston Academy, from the academy chain Aspirations Academy and was expected to open in 2019. Marketing in relation to the school opening was taking place. It was possible that this may impact on school places in the area. Governors commented on the lack of outdoor facilities at the new Free Schools/Academies.

The Headteacher said there was a waiting list for the bulge class and it would be possible to fill the class however the school needs to think about its long term strategy.

Governors commented that as long as the school remains Outstanding it will continue to remain popular. There were currently families coming from afar as they liked the school.

It was suggested that the school should look at marketing strategies and this was deferred to the Finance, Personnel and General Purposes Committee.

**Action: Clerk (agenda item for FP&GP)**

**School Expansion**
The Chair said that Cass Foundation would not consider making a decision until the data on the demand for school places in 2017/2018 was analysed and the need was established.

At the last Tripartite meeting Cass Foundation confirmed that it was committed to the school. Fairer Funding for the school was also discussed and the funding from the DfE was questioned. The City and the Cass Foundation will discuss the funding at their next meeting. Further information will be available in March 2017.

The Headteacher said that the school should not accept another bulge class on the previous terms. The resource offered as part of the previous bulge class was not sufficient. The Headteacher said to accommodate additional children then physical adjustments to the building needs to take place and therefore consideration needs to be given to the longer term strategies. It was suggested that if the decision was not to expand the school at this stage, then the school needs to draw a line on the bulge class too.

The Headteacher said that a 2FE school would be more viable in the long term, especially in the current financial climate.
Governors commented that the school expansion had been discussed over the last 2 years without a resolution and needs to be drawn to a close. Governors agreed that this should be taken off the table unless there was further information or a change that required the Governing Body attention/decision. Until such time the City and the Cass Foundation can continue with their discussion on the school expansion.

Resolved – that the Governing Body did not agree to a bulge class at this stage, as a resolution had not been reached on the school expansion by the Cass Foundation. It was accepted that both decisions need to be agreed in tandem.

10. Reconstitution
The Chair said that the Cass Foundation’s meeting was not quorate on the 19th October; however an email received from the Clerk to the Cass Foundation commented that the trustees of the Foundation were not minded to accept the draft Instrument with the suggested changes from the last GB meeting of 5 Cass Foundation Governors and 4 Church Foundation Governors.

The Chair had asked at the tripartite meeting that if the Foundation were not minded to agree that they put forward a concrete suggestion of what would be acceptable. This will be discussed at the March 2017 meeting.

11. Headteacher’s Report (circulated in advance of the meeting)

The Headteacher highlighted key points from his report.

The Headteacher said that he had received excellent feedback from parents following the ‘eat with your child’ initiative.

The grant from the Cass Foundation had been underspent due to the recovery of the VAT and the Headteacher will write to the Cass Foundation to put the monies toward other use.

David Williams said that a Livery Company may contribute to the outdoor garden and will speak to the Headteacher outside of the meeting.

The Headteacher reported that funds from the Helical Bar had been received.

Governors noted that the school had 30 permits to issue to parents and the school will be asking parents to apply for the permits, which will allow them 15 mins to park on Mitre Square.

Governors enquired whether emergency services can access the school building, given the works taking place in the Square. The Headteacher confirmed that the emergency services had been briefed and had full access to the building.

Governors noted that the City of London had awarded £50,000 to support air quality improvement initiatives. The School was currently working on proposals. Governors were informed that the studies on air quality were taking place and local residents were encouraged to take part in the study.
Governors noted the information presented on admissions.

The Headteacher reported that there were no plans to seek conversion to academy status. The Headteacher said that the expectation was any school in the LDBS will move to the LDBS’s Academy Trust as this is necessary. Arrangements for our own school would need to be approved by Sir John Cass’s Foundation.

The Headteacher shared the school roll numbers and said that there was a reduction in the number of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium. The Headteacher said that this could be due to underreporting. The School were actively pursuing this to ensure that they captured all eligible children and were accessing the accurate funding level.

The Headteacher reported on the Special Educational Needs. Governors noted that the most significant areas of need were speech, language and communication needs, as well as specific learning difficulties. Governors asked why there was an increase on speech, language and communication. It was noted that this may be down to the iPad culture in recent years.

Alex Allan said that a piece of work was taking place with a group of identified children from the Children’s Centre. This was work was in conjunction with the Anna Freud Centre. The programme was world renowned and was enabling children to build positive relationships from an early age. In reply to a question, governors were informed the service was paid from the Children’s Centre Budget.

The Headteacher said that the school was developing its School Council. The School Council will be invited to a future GB meeting.

Attainment and Progress
Governors noted that the attainment and progress at KS2 was significantly above the national average. Attainment in KS1 was in line with national average; however progress on the new measures was below the national average for some groups.

Training on RaiseOnline was taking place.

The Governing Body noted the targets for 2017. The Headteacher advised that the targets were challenging for the cohort.

In relation to the behaviour and safety report, governors enquired about Class 4. The Headteacher said that one child in particular had been excluded on a fixed-term basis. The Headteacher reported that there were improvements in behaviour and attitudes to learning during the second half of the term.

The attendance figure for last year was 97.3% overall.

The Governing Body noted that there was no inadequate teaching taking place. All lessons were either Good or Outstanding. The Headteacher said that the school was working towards achieving Outstanding in teaching across the school.
In reply to a question about the assessing the quality of teaching, the Headteacher said that progress of children’s learning and the quality of marking was looked at. Teachers were also observed by SLT members. Judgements were monitored and validated.

Governors further questioned how teachers’ performance was managed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Alex Allen said that feedback was provided after lesson observations and on all aspects of teaching. The Headteacher added that the quality of teaching was tracked and monitored.
Governors enquired whether the school was improving science in the school. The headteacher said that they were tracking science in the school as there was a new system. The school was conducting sampling exercise with Year 5 and gaps in performance to be identified.

In reply to a question regarding pupil numbers, the Headteacher said all vacant places will be filled by January.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher for his report.

12. School Improvement Plan Review

a. Strategy and Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) 2015-2018  
b. Single Year Plan

The Headteacher said that both documents had been reviewed by the Committees and the comments from Committees had been incorporated.

Targets had been set for every year groups and were included in the SEF. In reply to a question from Governors, the Headteacher said that prior attainment and information from RaiseOnline were included in the documents.

Governors asked whether there were any particular groups that were identified that required intervention or additional support. The Headteacher said a small group of girls in this cohort required additional support in Maths and there was also a need to push the arithmetic aspects of the Mathematics curriculum.

Resolved – That the Governing Body approved the above documents as presented.

13. Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)

The Headteacher said that as a Church of England school the SRE was taught in line with the Christian ethos. However, the School was mindful that it served a diverse community. The Headteacher advised that the subject was progressively built up across the year.

The Headteacher said that previously there was a disclosure made during one of the SRE lessons and as a result the school had considered teaching SRE earlier. Governors asked about the contents of the subject. The Headteacher explained that the subject content for KS1 classes would be age appropriate and were about positive relationships.
In reply to a question the Headteacher said that a question box was available during the lessons and children were able to ask questions anonymously. Teachers would answer the questions in an age appropriate way and children were asked to discuss issues at home where they can be informed about culture and religious expectations. The Headteacher added that the school did not want to take on the parent’s responsibility on SRE.

The Headteacher said that one of the outcomes from moving to teach SRE earlier on in the school was to safeguard children. The Headteacher said that there was an expectation on the school to ensure that they were teaching children about forming positive relationships.

The Headteacher advised that the discussion today was to produce a plan and teaching scope and timetable. The Headteacher confirmed that the Science aspects of SRE were compulsory but the social/emotional aspect wasn’t.

Governors asked what the school was currently using. The Headteacher said that the school was using approved resources in Year 6. Calvin Henry said that most schools were teaching SRE earlier on in the school.

Headteacher said that SRE will be discussed with staff and parents and then the formal proposal will be presented to the Curriculum Committee at its next meeting. Once approved by the Committee the proposal will be presented to the Governing Body.

Action: Headteacher and Clerk

14. Any other business
None

[The Chair thanked all and closed the meeting at 6pm]

Signed ______________________________ Date ________________

Chair