



The STEINER ACADEMY Hereford

Governing Body Meeting 2

Friday 14th November, 2008, 13.30 – 15.30

ATTENDEES:

Name	Role
Alistair Pugh (AP)	CHAIR
Ann Addison (AA); Jo Fishley (JF); Lindsey Garner (LG); Lawrence Keen (LK); David Keltie (DK); Carol Lennard (CL); Greta Rushbrooke (GR); Julia Sibley (JS); Sylvie Sklan (SS);	Governors
Trevor Mepham (TM)	Principal (ex-officio Governor)
Averil Clothier (AC)	Clerk

MINUTES:

Item		Action By
1.	Apologies	
	Richard Temple	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting – 3rd October 2008	
	The minutes were agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chairman.	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
	None.	
4.	Correspondence	
	The following correspondence was noted: Herefordshire Council – Governor Services – Notice of termly meetings for Chairs of Governors. Herefordshire Council – Governor Services – Notice of a Training Day for New Governors on 31 st January 2009 Herefordshire Council – Children and Young People’s Directorate – Attainment & Attendance Targets for 2010. DCSF – Notice confirming the Secretary of State is content with the school’s name change to Steiner Academy Hereford. DCSF – Notes from the first visit of the School Improvement Partner. Anthony Collins Solicitors – Quotation for legal services.	



Item		Action By
5.	Governance Matters	
	<p>SS outlined ideas for Best Practice governance. The full Board of Governor meetings are a place for business to be noted, to meet legal requirements, to keep an overview, to concentrate on strategic planning and to consider matters within the overall context. Board meetings are not a discussion forum and a governor's role is not to be involved in the everyday running of school.</p> <p>As the Governing Board is such a new pioneering role for all involved, Governors need to be there initially to support those in school in dealing with the changes that come with Academy status. Hence the need for fortnightly meetings of a working group of governors. SS asked for the governors' mandate to continue with the smaller fortnightly meetings. Governors all agreed and the fortnightly meetings will be re-assessed in the New Year.</p> <p>DK asked for a future meeting of the whole Board of Governors to agree on an overall philosophy and vision for their governance.</p>	
6.	Finance	
	<p><u>DK gave a verbal report:</u></p> <p>Academy Finance – The capital budget is still uncertain. Requirements for new buildings are not yet finalised. The Bursar is looking at Start Up funds with a view to aligning them to the needs of the School Development Plan.</p> <p>Hereford Waldorf School debt – must be paid off by August 2009. Reduced from £200,000 to £150,000 already. The community is on track to pay most of the debt if all arrears and pledges are paid in full and are committed to meeting any shortfall through fund raising. The Finance Committee and Class Reps have set a target of £30,000 to be raised in school fundraising before August 2009. SS thanked the committee on behalf of the governors for their work on chasing arrears & pledges.</p> <p><u>LK gave a verbal report:</u></p> <p>There is a need to prioritise putting the right financial systems in place first so that problems don't arise in the future. LK therefore proposed that the following 4 issues are deferred for full consideration until the spring:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start Up Funds – School has a 5 year time frame to spend this money. Delay spending as much as possible until spring – all agreed. 2. Risk Register – Main operational risks have been considered and procedures are in place. Other risks to be dealt with in the spring – all agreed. 3. 3 Year Budget – difficult to do as no history. Will be reviewed again in the Spring – all agreed. 	



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	<p>4. Scheme of Delegation – an expenditure authorisation control system needs formalising in the spring – all agreed.</p> <p>The Academy is required to hire external auditors via tender process – all agreed.</p> <p>Current revenue budget – There will be a £7,000 deficit this year as a result of having 14-15 fewer pupils because of space constraints. Next year’s budget will be based on the pupil census figure in January. Need to increase current pupil numbers to avoid a shortfall next year. Staff costs have already reached the 85% revenue ceiling.</p> <p>ACTION: AP requested solutions for these difficulties for the next Governors’ meeting.</p> <p>LK requested guidance on whether a teacher’s request for the school to purchase copies of a book written by that teacher represents a conflict of interest.</p> <p>DECISION: not a conflict of interest if College judge that the book fits the purpose, is reasonably priced, and the number of copies being requested is not excessive.</p> <p>■ expressed concern that a 4th kindergarten would create an admissions problem. TM explained that we need 4 kindergartens because 3 kindergartens do not create a full class 1 and to avoid the legal situation where demand for places from rising 5 year olds would have to take precedence over demand for places for the youngest children in kindergarten.</p>	<p>FINANCE COMMITTEE</p>
7.	<p>Premises</p>	
	<p>JS had circulated a report to governors and made the following further comments. There are 3 separate working groups: new build, transport and refurbishment. Governors expressed their appreciation of the work that Toni Fagan & others have done, that has resulted in a successful management of school traffic as part of the new travel plan.</p> <p>ACTION: Need to have a formal written report and audit that shows that the school is complying with disability access legal requirements, by next meeting if possible.</p> <p>GR reported that the architect will visit school next week for 3 days and will talk to pupils about new buildings and plans.</p> <p>JS thanked JF for speaking up on behalf of the school at the recent planning meeting, when the decision was narrowly made in the school’s favour to allow the temporary portacabins to be installed.</p>	<p>PREMISES COMMITTEE</p>
8.	<p>Personnel</p>	
	<p>LG had circulated a report to governors and spoke further around this. One</p>	



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	<p>informal committee meeting had taken place, with plans for more in place. Policies & a handbook for volunteer workers need to be developed.</p> <p>ACTION: SS asked TM to prioritise personnel issues for Personnel governors to deal with.</p> <p>TM reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Contracts of employment need to be re-issued as there is a mistake in current contracts with date of start of employment. b. Accurate agreed definitions of full/part-time staff including a clause which clarifies that a full-time teacher may be called upon to undertake 'additional duties', as reasonably requested by the Principal, in consultation with the College of Teachers c. The Salaries Group have agreed salaries with College of Teachers and this information will be forwarded to the Personnel committee. 	<p>PERSONNEL COMMITTEE</p> <p>PRINCIPAL</p> <p>PERSONNEL COMMITTEE</p>
9.	Teaching & Learning	
	<p>The Teaching & Learning Committee has not formed yet.</p> <p>ACTION: A report will be brought to the next Governor's Board meeting.</p> <p>GR reported that the teachers are feeling the impact of Academy change. While the teaching & Waldorf curriculum remains the same, there is increased paperwork and assessment work. The current physical dismantling of the school is affecting the younger children and how classes are conducted. AP proposed that the Premises Committee take responsibility for preparing teachers beforehand regarding specific stages of development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ACTION: GR proposed a meeting between Governors & College on <u>27th November 2008, 5 - 6.30 p.m.</u> Suggested topics for discussion: assessment of pupils learning; decision-making; role of college. <p>AP wished to re-assure college, on behalf of all the governors, that college is still at the heart of the school, even if its status has changed to that of an academy.</p>	<p>TEACHING & LEARNING COMMITTEE</p> <p>PREMISES COMMITTEE</p> <p>GOVERNORS & COLLEGE</p>
10.	Community	
	<p>There is a proposal for a Community Committee but it has not fully formed yet. AA reported that the first Open Forum of the Academy had taken place and was well attended. The Community Committee will look at how parents can continue to be involved in school and make a contribution.</p> <p>While building work takes place and parents are now more restricted with meeting at school, there is a need for a new spirit of community to be re-born as the new school develops.</p>	<p>COMMUNITY COMMITTEE</p>



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11.	Principal's Report	
	<p>TM had circulated his report and made the following further comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parental involvement <i>is</i> still very evident around the school with the many volunteers working with reception, Friday Flyer, working groups and other groups. b. The School is receiving interest at national and international level at the moment with our unique state-funded Steiner Academy status. While the school sits in a small, local environment it is also now part of a much wider context, and is a pilot for future educational study. <p>TM asked for feedback from governors about his report to be sure he is providing the information they require.</p> <p>SS asked if TM would like governors to feedback on any aspects of his report. LK proposed that items should be highlighted at top of reports for decision-making. (This was done, in fact)</p> <p>TM reported that the Academy has a legal duty to administer the SATs tests at Class 5 and governors have a statutory duty to ensure the tests take place and the information is fed back to DCSF.</p> <p>College will need to demonstrate and articulate how pupils make progress in their learning. GR reported that some teachers do a lot of "testing" that is internally generated and authored, while the SIP report noted that "thorough" and "detailed" assessment takes place at school already.</p> <p>SS asked TM why a sixth qualification, equivalent to a GCSE, is being introduced when there is only a requirement to do 5 GCSEs or accredited equivalents? TM explained that college wanted to ensure the children are computer literate when leaving school, so the European Computer Driving Licence course is being introduced. It is modular and it is possible to complete parts only.</p>	<p>ALL GOVERNORS/ COMMITTEES/ PRINCIPAL</p>
12.	School Development Plan	
	<p>TM summarised this at the beginning of his Report. SS asked that sections of the SDP are apportioned by TM to the committees, so that governors can link up requirements for the SDP, SEF and reports to the Governors Board meetings.</p> <p>ACTION: TM will consult with Clerk to divide SDP requirements between committees.</p>	<p>PRINCIPAL/ CLERK</p>
13.	A.O.B.	
	<p>School name change – SS explained that this is necessary, because of the confusion caused by the other academy choosing such a similar name. An EGM is required</p>	



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	<p>to formalise the name change. This will take place on 1st December 2008 at 8 pm and be followed by an Open Forum meeting.</p> <p>SS highlighted the difficulties with achieving a quorum of a third of members. This means that 90 members must be present before a General Meeting can proceed. This may prove unworkable in the long-term.</p> <p>Appointment of Solicitors – Governors agreed to continue working with Anthony Collins Solicitors as legal advisers to the Academy. All governors agreed that David Keltie would replace William Braid and that Sylvie Sklan would continue as the official contact with solicitors regarding any legal matters.</p>	
14.	Date of next Board of Governors meeting	
	23rd January 2009 – 1.30pm, to include AGM.	