



The Fields Nursery School, Galfrid Road, Cambridge, CB5 8ND

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body**  
**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 at 6.30pm**

<b><u>Present:</u></b>	Mrs Gloria Reed	GR	Chair of Governors
	Dr Valerie Ashton	VA	Parent Governor
	Ms Florence Blagden	FB	Co-opted Governor
	Mrs Ruth Holman	RH	Staff Governor
	Mrs Rebecca Mack	RM	Co-opted Governor
	Mr Simon Sykes	SS	Co-opted Governor
	Ms Rikke Waldau	RW	Head
	Rev Dr Roger Williams	RWi	Co-opted Governor
	Mrs Rebecca Wylie	RWy	Co-opted Governor

**In Attendance:** Mrs Gwyneth Barton                      GB              Clerk

**1. Welcome-** GR chaired and welcomed Governors to the meeting, especially RW after her period of absence. RW thanked RH and RM for the cover they had provided whilst she had been away.

The meeting was quorate.

**2. Apologies-** Accepted from Ann Abineri (AA), Sarah Moynihan (SM), Luisa Pedro (LP), Carmile Trancoso-Gordon (CTG) and Dawn Willis (DW).

**3. Declaration of Interests-** There were no new declarations of interest.

**4. Open and Confidential Minutes of the Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019-** The open and confidential minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were confirmed as correct records.

All matters arising were covered on the agenda.

**5. Head of Centre's Report**

The joint consultation by the Cambridge Nursery Federation (Brunswick and Colleges) and The Fields on The Fields joining the Federation had closed on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019. RW briefed Governors on the responses to the consultation. Three documents were tabled:

- A summary of consultation responses prepared by Emma Dean, the local authority officer supporting the process
- The response submitted by the Cambridge National Education Union (NEU)
- One copy of the identical responses submitted by the 21 staff at The Fields who opposed federation.



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Governors noted the following points:

- 48 responses had been received. Of these, 15 agreed with the proposed change (31.3%); 5 did not have a strong view on the proposed change (10.4%); and 28 did not agree with the proposed change (58.3%).
- The Cambridge NEU was opposed to the proposed change.
- 22 members of staff at The Fields had submitted a response, approximately 75% of the total number employed. 21 of their responses had been identically worded and did not agree with the proposed change. 1 member of staff had supported the proposed change.
- 8 parents at The Fields had responded, from a total of approximately 120 families. 5 parent responses agreed with the proposed change, 2 did not and 1 did not express a strong view.
- Very small numbers of staff and parents at Brunswick and Colleges had submitted responses; of these, some were in agreement, some were opposed and some did not express a strong view.

Key points of the Cambridge NEU response included:

- Criticism of the consultation because it did not make clear the severity of the financial situation and cuts that were the underlying reason for the federation proposal
- Criticism of the consultation because it was not explicit about the potential impact on staffing
- Opposition to any change to current staff members' contracts of employment to require working across multiple sites
- Opposition to the abolition of The Fields' Governing Body and questioning of how The Fields' presence in the community could be sustained by a single Governing Body for the Federation.

Key points of the response submitted by staff at The Fields opposed to federation included:

- Recognition of the sustained efforts made by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body to secure funding and a sustainable future for The Fields
- Concern that federation and the loss of The Fields' current Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body would undermine the offer made by The Fields as a distinct, standalone community resource
- Concern that there had been no formal meetings arranged with parents and staff to discuss the proposal and that steps had not been taken to overcome possible barriers to participation in the consultation, such as low levels of literacy or English as an additional language.

Governors noted that a formal reply to the consultation responses would be prepared in consultation with Emma Dean.



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**6. Chair's Report-** GR updated Governors on developments since the last Governing Body meeting.

*[This item is covered in more detail in the confidential minutes.]*

## **7. Committees/Policies**

**Discussion about Committee structures-** RW proposed that the current Finance and Personnel Committees be amalgamated and the Curriculum and Equalities Committee be strengthened, to include a greater emphasis on SEND. She asked RWy to consider whether she might take on the role of SEND Governor.

Governors agreed to consider these proposals further at the next Governing Body meeting.

**Safeguarding-** Governors were asked to approve the E-Safety Policy, which had been circulated by e-mail to the Safeguarding Governors. The E-Safety Policy was ratified by all.

**8. Governor Visits-** RH proposed a programme of Governor visits for the remainder of 2019/20. The following Governors agreed to undertake the proposed visits:

- Spring term visit 1, Curriculum walks (prime areas, Willow) – FB and RWy
- Spring term visit 2, Curriculum walks (prime areas, Cherry) – FB and RWy
- Summer term visit 1, School transition – RWi and VA
- Summer term visit 2, Community engagement – SS and AA (subject to AA's agreement).

Dates would be arranged in due course.

## **9. Any Other Business**

**Caroline Hart-** Governors noted with great sadness that Caroline Hart, a former Governor who had been associated with The Fields for over 20 years, had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Governors' thoughts would be with Caroline and her family.

**10. Dates of Future Meetings-** It was agreed to replace the Governing Body meeting currently scheduled for Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 6.30pm with two new meetings, both to be held at The Fields:

- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 6.30pm
- Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.