

IEB and Parent Meeting – 3rd July 2018 – 1800 Hours

Brief Outline of Items Raised in Meeting

Panel consisted of:

- Patricia Davis from Local Authority
- Sarah Curtis – Interim Headteacher
- Mark A’Bear – Chair of IEB

Introductory Comments

- A set of slides were run through and will be provided to all parents to refer to
- Local Authority are working closely with the school at this time
- This is a closed meeting – anyone present not a parent/guardian or involved with the school requested to leave the room

Patricia Davis – LA Discussed Ofsted Process

- How Ofsted interrogate the Governing Body and Head Teacher at their visit
- Ofsted met with children, leaders, teachers and based a view on the entire school
- Ofsted talk to the LA and ask why there is an Interim Executive Board (IEB) in place and why there is an Interim Head
- Once the Ofsted Inspector makes his decision (in this case – serious weaknesses) the inspector is then questioned by their Head Office and all of the evidence that has been gathered throughout the inspection is reexamined to ensure that the correct decision has been made
- After quality assurance the report is then issued to Miss Curtis who then has 5 days to check the factual accuracy of the report; No wording can be changed.
- The whole process from inspection to publication is quite long hence the time it takes to issue the report to parents.
- Whilst Serious Weaknesses is the rating judgement provided this must be seen as a positive. The school did not receive Special Measures thanks to OFSTED recognising the capacity to lead improvement from the IEB and Interim Head.
- The serious weaknesses judgement reflects the progress made in a short space of time to take the school forward



- It must be remembered that Miss Curtis was only in post for 5 weeks before Ofsted came into school
- Good news provided from the report was that Safeguarding, and Leadership & Management was identified as strong
- The school has lots of school to school support including Frays, Cippenham and Whiteknights.
- The Department of Education (DFE), Ofsted and the Regional Schools Commissioner are here to ensure impact is made
- There is no option other than becoming a sponsored Academy and now we must focus on looking at providers
- Patricia Davies will work with Miss Curtis and the IEB to choose the right provider for the school
- We can only make recommendations on the provider; the decision will be made by the DfE and Regional Schools Commissioner
- We look at locality of the provider and how they have positively impacted upon the schools they have previously worked with. ~~what is on their record of schools they are working with, what impact has been made, etc.~~ We would also examine their staffing structures to ensure they have the capacity to support Beechwood and the expertise to ensure Beechwood rapidly improves.

Mark A'Bear – Chair of IEB Issued Headlines from Report

- There are 3 areas which Ofsted recognised as-stronger than serious weaknesses, those being; Early Years, Leadership & Behaviour
- We are asking that you do not dwell on the report. We want to move on and avoid the report becoming a distraction
- We accept the report as it stands. The school leadership focus is on creating sustainable and rapid progress
- No blame, no excuses, let's just commit as a group, including parents, to make as much progress and improvement as possible.
- Both the school and the LA must put an action plan together and submit to Ofsted for approval. If Ofsted are not happy with the plan it is sent back for revision.

Steps taken so far include the following items:

- Appointment of two new assistant Head Teachers
- Career development for staff who are fully committed to Beechwood School
- We are establishing processes now to give us a fast start in September term
- Develop a shadow governing body. We would like to take this from the parent and wider community.
- Ideally a unit of 10-12 Governors which would include a staff governor, LA representative, 2 parent governors and other co-opted governors based on skills
- Now we have an Academy order we are looking at Easter 2019 for this transition and currently Frays are a strong contender.



Sarah Curtis – Interim Headteacher – discussed what actions have been taken

- Miss Curtis is now in week 10 and has total faith in the school
- We have a specialist safeguarding expert on the IEB
- There is a weekly newsletter being issued to parents
- Miss Curtis has worked hard on improving the planning and developing consistent classroom practice
- The children will all be sitting new baseline tests so in September we are able to target children from where they are now not where we think they are
- We have a new SENCo, have opened the new nurture room and have begun our SEN parent regular coffee mornings
- With regards to attendance of disadvantaged children, Miss Curtis completed a review of attendance and has stepped up the challenge to increase this
- The school attendance records are now shared with parents
- Appropriate behaviour is being reinforced and manners and respect are the major focus
- The environment of the school has been improved ~~on the~~ displays are brighter, furniture has been sorted and a general tidy up has begun
- Communication to parents has vastly improved
- Staffing restructuring has taken place and been the key to strengthen leadership

From the report we get the opportunity to start afresh and have the expertise and plans in place. These include:

- Marketing policy
- Culture of the school
- Changes to ensure sustainability
- Distribute leadership
- Quality training of staff
- Ensure a broad but balanced curriculum
- Provide a tidy and organised school

The report has been filed, it's what we do now that matters, and actions speak louder than words.

QUESTIONS RAISED IN MEETING WITH RESPOSNES PROVIDED

- With regards to becoming an Academy – are you advising that you do not choose the provider you can only recommend?
Yes, this is correct, we can only complete the due diligence and make recommendation
- How many local providers are there?
There are around 5 – 6 local providers



- What are you doing in future to ensure the validation of the Heads to avoid serious failings of the school?
As soon as the Local Authority became aware we took immediate action.
That is not true, I called a year earlier as parents and the situation was ignored!
As soon as Patricia Davis was made aware a formal notice was placed and the IEB were brought in.
- How do you annually appraise Headteachers to stop this situation happening in the first place? Where is your evidence that this has been carried out?
All Headteachers have performance management meetings, however, it is not down to the LA to manage it is the responsibility of the Governing Body. The experience of the IEB will ensure that this process is rigorous, with Headteacher objectives cascaded down to other members of staff.
- Are the Headteacher reviews only completed annually?
There are interim reviews throughout the year. Objectives are typically set in September and reviewed throughout the year.
- What happens if none of the available trusts want to take the school on board?
We already have some trusts that are serious contenders so that is very unlikely.
- So, you have started speaking to Trusts already?
Yes absolutely, as soon as we knew the outcome we had to start the process to avoid any unnecessary delay.
- Can an Academy set its own term dates?
Yes, they can but they are unlikely to change.
- Do you have full staff for September?
We have one vacancy left to fill
- Our daughter is starting Year 6 in September. What plans are in place to ensure they have the best chance of SATS?
We have the new Assistant Head leading the upper KS2. It is his expertise and a year 6 teacher. We will use the baseline testing to ensure we have the support in place for each child. We can then target set and will meet with Year 6 parents to show where their children are now and what we are going to do to improve their development.
- When are the baseline tests being done?
We are doing tests now but will do the same again in September as we want to check the loss of learning over the summer holidays.



Beechwood Primary School

- As a parent can you tell me why a reading test was done with my daughter without an SEN in place?
We unfortunately cannot specifically however, you would need to speak to the individual teacher and if not satisfactory please see Miss Curtis
- The attainment levels so far which exist, what confidence do you have on those?
Unfortunately, not much confidence at all, within the next couple of weeks we will be totally secure on year 2 and 6 and we are completing baseline tests across all year groups now.
- So, by the end of the Academic year they will be accurate?
Yes, the first of the baseline tests are this week and as said we will repeat the procedure in September
- You have done nothing to ensure this won't happen again at another school! I want proof this won't happen again?
We are concerned and focusing on Beechwood school not other schools
- I cannot see that you have learnt any lessons from this and allayed fears I have as a parent that this is not going to happen again in another school?
We can assure you lessons have been learnt and we re-iterate again this is regarding Beechwood School only
- What are the implications during the transition period between Miss Curtis and the new appointed head? And can the new Head come in and change everything?
**Miss Curtis has committed to stay at Beechwood until summer 2019. This would allow for a smooth transition from Easter 2019 when the school is likely to become an academy. In the longer term the new Trust will determine the leadership arrangements. The good news is that we have continuity for the next year.
The Trust may bring some changes, but these are most likely to be related to policies and procedures as opposed to uniforms, time of the school day, etc.**
- With the SATs being done in April and changing Head this will be a worrying time for parents?
Whilst we cannot guarantee it is very likely that Miss Curtis will still be here this time next year.
- There are lots of teachers leaving in September, are the new teachers going to be committed for longer?
We cannot tie a teacher down to a time-specific contract, but they are all aware of the position of the school and chose to come here. We were unable to share the report with the new teachers, but we showed that the school is challenging and needs support. We will ensure that staff hit the ground running.
- Will you be taking on more staff and TA's?



Beechwood Primary School

We have recognised the children in school with special education needs. We reviewed the timetable and re-built it to better support SEND children. These children now have 1-2-1 teachers so that the TA can spend time with the rest of the children.

- What do you need from us as parents?
We will have initial meetings with parents in September showing the targets we will set for your children. We ask that you as parents support us with that. We will also be doing a homework survey so that we can try and find the right balance for all year groups by asking parents what they think would support and develop Year 1-6. We also ask parents to engage in classes with teachers and to come to parent evenings. We are trying to open the school more to parents.
- I believe there needs to be a change of TA's as they're not taking their role seriously?
Miss Curtis has the most dedicated TA's and will refute anybody saying differently.
- Do you have full staff for September?
We have one vacancy left to fill.
- As a parent I wasn't aware of open mornings?
Please contact the school office and check your details because the school was full, so other parents were aware. We also issued the information in our newsletter two weeks running.
- I would like clarification on consistency as I was advised in Foundation my child was great, good in year 1 and then below average in year 2. Where is there consistency in this school?
As noted previously we have advised we are not confident on the current figures hence why we are completing the new baseline testing.
- More of a request than a question but many of the parents are full time working and whilst it is fantastic to have coffee mornings, some of us feel a little left out as we are unable to get involved. Could there be anything late afternoon after school possibly?
We can investigate options yes.
- When I read the report it talked about disadvantaged children, so my question is what are you doing for those at neither end of the spectrum?
We now have a new tracking system in place. This will allow us to put the children into groups of higher, middle, and lower groups. It will also allow us to split into SEN, PPG, etc. Every child is of paramount importance and we will not be giving any special focus on any on set that could have a detrimental effect on another.
- Are the Year 5/6 children far behind where they should be? As a parent of a Year 4 this concerns me.
No, plus we will have the new baseline figures to work with on each and every child come September.
- When do we know who the teachers will be for the new year?



Once we have finalized we will ensure you are all advised.

- At the moment I am looking to change schools as I am not happy about this report?
We have already shown vast improvement and new processes already. You will see on the slides we are going to issue that we have moved forward at a rapid pace already.
- When the new Governing board is built why is there an LA representative if we must be an Academy?
We are building a shadow Governing Body, and this doesn't mean the LA disappear totally, they still have a responsibility for each child in the Borough and their education.
- What is the impact of an Academy in terms of funding and applying?
There is no problem with admissions and they can adopt the same policies. The funding remains the same amount although comes from a different agency. Curriculum responsibility lies with the Headteacher and the Trust.
- Will Ofsted return, and do they cover Academy inspections?
We have an action plan and 10 weeks to complete. Her Majesty's Inspector will check progress. Once we are an Academy we become a new school so effectively the judgement disappears and in 3 years we will receive an inspection.
- We will be receiving a monitoring report as parents?
You will receive a letter with an update and the progress made.
- What is the purpose of a Shadow Governing Body?
It is a local governing body focusing on school improvement. All HR, finances and premise are usually done with the trust which allows the body to focus on the progress of the children.
- I give credit to the IEB sat at the front who are all working hard but what assurance do we have to ensure we don't have this problem a year on?
Hence, developing a shadow governing body, so they can be put through the training and learn to hold the school to account and take the school forward.
- So, if a new Headteacher comes in what power do they have over the Governing Body?
It is the governing body who holds the Head to account. The LA will ensure a skills audit is done to get the right governing body in place and the Trustees also hold everyone to account.
- Following from above, who holds the Trustees to account?
The members of the Trust and the Regional Schools Commissioner / DfE
- You mentioned Frays – how many schools do they have and at what level?
They currently have 5 and they are all at good or outstanding.
- Is that a large amount in terms of a Trust and are they local?



Beechwood Primary School

It is relatively small. They based in Hillingdon but they are the Wokingham Borough Council teaching school.

- How are behaviour issues being addressed as my son has had problems with bullying which have been ignored including physical abuse?
We offer 1-2-1 support on this and if parents are not openly updated it is because it is a sensitive nature and dealt with directly with those involved. If you are a parent with a child involved, then of course you are updated. If this is not the case, please come in and see us so that we can look at your case specifically.
- With regards to Sex Education. Some of us have different cultures and this has not been considered at all.
We wrote to all parents regarding the curricula for this and offered parents to come and see the material.
Parental opinion varied, so the school will investigate the situation and improve correspondence in the future.
- The SEN is 3 days a week – is there funding for an additional SENCO to support the additional 3 days as we have been waiting 6 weeks just for a phone call?
Our new SEN is receiving full support in organizing new processes and procedures to ensure every child who needs support will receive it. We have not investigated additional SEN due to challenges we already face financially but please bear with us whilst we streamline the system to make the process much quicker.
- Have the children been told anything?
No, we do not feel that it would be fruitful and would be unsettling for them.
- There is not enough communication, what do you intend to do about this?
Parent asked how they would like to be communicated with as we currently use facebook, we have a website, we use email, newsletters, etc.
One parent said he would like one method of communication. Other parents totally disagreed and were not accepting of that response. IEB member also stated that a parent survey was carried out to find the preferences and most of them opted for media. The parent was then asked to contact the school office and check his details if he was receiving no communication.
- Last point made was from a parent who said her other children attend an academy school and it is amazing and very positive.