

Barley Lane School- Extraordinary Full Governing Board Meeting (Part 1 Minutes)

Date / Time:	8 th April 2021 at 17.00	Location:	Microsoft Teams
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Attendees:	Initials:	Governor Type:	Arrival time
Raz Miah	RM	Staff	
Liz Shinn	LS	Local Authority	
James Martin	JM	Co-Opted	

Attendees:	Initials:	Governor Type:	Arrival time
Jenni Palmer	JP	Parent	
Damian Furniss	DF	Foundation (Chair of Governors)	
Helen Crossfield	HC	Co--opted	

Sanctioned Apologies:	Initials:	Governor Type:
Katrina Campbell-Crocker	KC	Foundation

Unsanctioned Apologies:	Initials:	Governor Type:
Phillipa Ansell	PA	Parent

In Attendance:	Initials:	
Helen Rimmer	HR	Clerk to Governors

Minutes To:
Full Governing Board

This was a virtual meeting using the Teams online platform.

It was an extraordinary meeting called with a single agenda item:

Ratify the interview panel's recommendation for appointment of substantive Headteacher.

Meeting started:17:12

DF said there are 3 questions the Governing Board should be interested in;
Was it a robust and full process?
Was there a full outcome leading to a preferred candidate?
Was this candidate appointable, in the view of the panel?

Process;

DF said there were 4 applicants after 14 expressions interest. He had initially been disappointed but another special school, Lampard school, was also interviewing the same day and after having 2 candidates initially they were down to 1 candidate. The current climate is affecting recruitment of positions across varied settings across the country, not just in education.

A panel shortlisted applicants to 3 candidates, who were invited to interview. Unfortunately at the weekend 1 had to drop out due to a health related reasons. DF said it had not been appropriate to delay the interviews as it had become apparent that for personal reasons it was not the right time for them to be applying for a Headteacher position.

The candidates have taken part in a 2-day process, including;

- An in-tray exercise,
- Verbalisation exercise of sex and relationships education for PHSE in an all-boys SEMH setting,
- JP led a parent/carer session,
- RM and LS led questions from pupils,
- There were video led observations,
- A conversation with staff and governors led by JMa,
- Full panel interview including Diana Denman, special schools advisor who was representing DCC and Keith Bennet, the Headteacher a Marland School who is also Vice Chair of the SENitent Trust. Together with LS, JMa and DF. 3 of the 5 panel members were either serving or previous Headteachers,
- Role playing exercise based on talking to governors and members of the Senior Leadership Team who had just had challenging Ofsted,

DF invited the lead of each exercise to give a summary;

JP – lead of parent/carer exercise – JP said it had been learning curve for her but a good experience. Both candidates were good. Both raised different points for differing questions.

RM & LS– lead of pupil questions – RM said she met with a group of pupils in school and they came up with questions for the candidates. Out of the initial group, 3 went on to be the panel to ask the questions to the candidates. RM said it was a good process. The pupils were insightful and asked good questions. The candidates’ interactions with the children were very good. The session brought LS to tears. LS said she was just so proud of the pupils.

LS – lead on video clip exercise – LS said the candidates were shown a 4½ minute video clip prepared by Diana Denman. Candidates were asked to feedback the strengths of the lesson in the video and suggest development points. The candidates gave accurate feedback and it was a good way to distinguish between the candidates and show how good they would be at developing staff in their team.

JMa – lead on staff panel exercise – JMa said this exercise was a discussion around the ethos and values of BL school, the ethos of an SEMH school. How this resonated with the candidates’ own ethos and values. And asked candidates, if they were successful, for their vision for school in 1 year’s time. JMa said both candidates were nervous but connected well with the 3 different staff members in both sessions. Staff were intense

in their 'grilling' of both candidates. Sessions with both candidates overran. There was a good discussion and both candidates participated well, both had strengths and weaknesses.

DF – lead on scenario exercise and verbal presentation exercise - DF said the candidates were given a scenario the evening before, which was that they were a Headteacher returning to school after a conference to find various negative scenarios, including an abscond. The candidates were also asked to deliver a verbal presentation about sex and relationships.

DF – full panel interview – DF said both candidate's panel interviews lasted over an hour. Each panel member asked 2 questions each, so 10 questions in total.

DF - Group exercise – DF said there was a role play exercise, he has mixed feelings on how it went but it did deliver some insights and the panel learnt from it, but he always finds role play exercises seem a bit unreal.

DF said that to help ensure the process was robust and fair, there were 2 independents on the panel and Diana Denman was involved in both days. He said Diana Denman will report back to the Local Authority and the Director of Education. When she spoke to DF at the end of the process, she said she felt the process had been full and fair.

DF invited questions on the process, from the other members of the Governing Board, so they could content themselves that the process had been robust and fair.

HC was pleased to hear there had been a good range of exercises. She asked DF if he was confident that both the external and internal candidate had been treated fairly and could both perform and there had been no bias towards the internal candidate. DF said they had done all they could to make the process transparent and fair and involve the whole school community. He acknowledged that people can carry a bias but said this [in principal] can work for and against a known internal candidate. He said it is difficult not to bring in knowledge from outside the process but those involved did all they could to avoid this. And mindful of the potential for bias, this is why 2 independents were involved, to ensure the process was fair.

LS said during the panel interview with the pupils, the pupils were mindful they may have a preference and they [articulated this beforehand] and tried their best to be fair. LS and RM felt the pupils succeeded in this and were fair.

JMa said that for the exercise he oversaw, he had concerns beforehand because the staff knew the internal candidate. However, staff gave both candidates the same level of challenge. They challenged the internal candidate on past events and how to make different decisions in hindsight. Whereas the external candidate was asked questions on how to deliver in an SEMH school. Although the candidates were asked different questions, JMa felt the process was fair and unbiased.

DF said that he had been absolutely committed to going with process and it's outcome. With the assurance that checks against there being a bias on the panel were provided by the external involvement. He did what he could to ensure the process was robust and fair. He said the 2 candidates' feedback, as to whether they found the process to be robust and fair, will be interesting and he said he would seek their feedback when he contacted them to inform them of the outcome.

	<p>DF said the next question is, <u>was there a clear, preferred candidate and would the panel recommend appointing them?</u></p> <p>DF said there was a clear preference for Dave Jones (the internal candidate). As regard to scores – DJ did not win on every question with every panellist, but he won or was level on every part of the process.</p> <p>DF said the other candidate had been a Headteacher of a primary, previously, the reason they are not a headteacher now is due to caring responsibilities. But [during the process], there was emerging concern about their depth of experience in special education and SEMH. They had worked in special education but only briefly. They had worked in primary, secondary and post 16 level, they had had a diverse and unusual career directory, which had included working in SEMH roles. The panel felt the other candidate has a bright future and may become a headteacher again. There will be positives in feedback given to them, but it was felt the depth wasn't currently there for this role in an SEMH school.</p> <p>The panel's clear recommendation was to appoint Dave Jones as substantive Headteacher of Barley Lane School.</p> <p>DF wished to highlight a couple of things from the pupils. One pupil, when asked what to look for in a Headteacher, replied someone like Mr Jones. Another said, 'if it ain't broke why fix it?' DF said the school community feels things have been going well for the last 2 terms and there would have to be strong reasoning not to give Dave Jones the opportunity to build on this.</p> <p>DF said they will give feedback about Dave Jones's development and how to support him. Dave has views on the future leadership structure, which DF expects to discuss at the next Full Governing Board meeting. DF said he would like to see Dave given the opportunity to make longer term changes in line with his vision for the school.</p> <p>The Governing Board agreed to ratify the panel's recommendation to offer Dave Jones the position of substantive Headteacher of Barley Lane School.</p> <p>LS asked what the start date for the substantive post should be.</p> <p>DF suggested Dave Jones should start as substantive Headteacher from the 1st day of next term (Summer Term 2022).</p> <p>The Governing Board agreed that Dave Jones should be offered the substantive Headteacher position starting 1st day of the Summer Term 2022.</p> <p>DF said the other issue to discuss was salary. DF suggested offering DJ a 1 point increase as this will still allow 'growing room' to set future challenges. He sought the opinion of those governors who sit on the Headteacher Appraisal panel; JP, HC and LS. There was a discussion. JP asked what salary was on the job advert, DF replied between spine point 21 – 27. HC felt that it was right to offer 1 point increase in recognition of what DJ has done for the school [during the time he has been interim Headteacher]. She said he has done a lot, which she can see clearly.</p> <p>The Governing Board agreed to offering DJ 1 point increase (and to giving DF the flexibility to offer up to 2 spinal column points).</p> <p>DF said that Diana Denman has offered to give both candidates in-depth feedback at a later date.</p> <p>ACTION - DF will phone both candidates and let them know the outcome, immediately.</p>		
		DF	asap

	<p>ACTION – DF will write to staff to let them know of the outcome, as soon as he has spoken to DJ. So, they know the outcome before the Easter break.</p> <p>ACTION - DF said he will communicate the outcome to parent/carers at the start of the next term and communicate with DJ about best way of doing this.</p> <p>ACTION - DF will let the Governing Board know if there is an issue when speaks to DJ and otherwise copy them into his email to staff.</p> <p>HC asked for confirmation, that even if DJ turned down the appointment, the panel would not be confident to offer the job to the other candidate and it would then become necessary to advertise the role. DF confirmed that the panel would not be confident to offer the job to the other candidate.</p> <p>LS said she would like to write to the pupils to thank them for their involvement. DF said the candidates said they enjoyed their interaction with the pupils and the pupils should also be passed this positive feedback.</p> <p>LS thanked RM for being involved, even though she is not very well.</p> <p>RM thanked all the governors who were involved in the process. She said there had been lots to draw together and she knew there had been highs and lows.</p> <p>HC also said thank you to all those who were involved in the process.</p> <p>LS wished to thank JF on behalf of the Board, for all her hard work in the recruitment process.</p> <p>DF said he will also thanking VS for looking after the school during the 2 days the interview process took.</p>	<p>DF</p> <p>DF</p> <p>DF</p>	<p>asap</p> <p>asap</p> <p>asap</p>
	<p>Meeting ended 17:40</p>		

Next Meeting:			
Date / Time:	17.30 Thursday 28 th April 2022	Location:	Barley Lane School

Agreed as a true record	Date
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KEY

Challenges and queries from Governors

Decisions made

Recommendations

(name of documents referred to)