

GOVERNING BODY FOR GARDEN SUBURB INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON
THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2015**

MEMBERS

LA GOVERNOR

*Jane Harris

STAFF GOVERNOR

*Alexia Dobinson (Infant Support)

PARENT GOVERNORS

*Omar Shah (Junior)
Adrian Hodgson (Junior)
Michael Kkafas (Infant)
*Gerard Wiseman (Infant)
Elisabeth Tacey (Infant)
1 Vacancy (Junior)

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

*Julia Sanitt (Chair)
*Francoise Wagneur (Vice Chair)
*Mary Ogle
*Evelyn Thomas
*Katalin Barcza-McQueen
Ruth Beedle
*Emma Woolston (Infant Teacher)
*Javoneh Daneshpay (Junior Teacher)

HEADTEACHERS

*Sarah Sands (Infant Headteacher)
*Eileen Bhavsar (Junior Headteacher)

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS

*Lisa Berger (Junior DHT)
*Liz Cormack (Infant DHT)

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Julia Chalfen (Junior Support)

*denotes member present

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr George Peradigou (Clerk)

Part I

15/105 **WELCOME AND APPOINTMENT OF ASSOCIATE MEMBER**

The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting.

15/106 **ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted on behalf of Adrian Hodgson, Michael Kkafas, Elisabeth Tacey, Ruth Beedle and Julia Chalfen.

The Chair informed Governors that Lisha Taylor had resigned. Thanks were recorded to her in her absence for her dedication to the Governing Body and her hard work as a member of the Curriculum and Special Educational Needs (SEN) committees.

It was noted that a Parent Governor election would be held during the next term to fill the vacancy which had been created. Governors **AGREED** to specify in the election letter that the Governing Body sought skills related to

finance, information and communication technology (ICT), and public relations (PR).

15/107 **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

It was noted that there were no pecuniary interests declared by Governors within the current agenda.

15/108 **PART I MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2015**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2015, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were confirmed, initialled and signed by the Chair, subject to minor amendments.

15/109 **MATTERS ARISING**

15/88 Headteachers' Reports/Updates: Infant School

In response to a Governor's query, the Chair and Headteachers explained that past reports could be presented as required. It was **AGREED** that, henceforth, Headteachers' reports would be uploaded to the Governors' secured section of the School's website.

15/89 The Prevent Duty: Safeguarding Policy Ratification

Governors had previously **CHALLENGED** the Headteacher to ensure that all policies had been updated to reflect the School's protocols in relation to The Prevent Duty.

The Infant School Headteacher stated that the Safeguarding Policy, a copy of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, had been updated accordingly and that the Lettings Policy was due to be updated. It was noted that the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance, 'The Prevent Duty, June 2015', had been used as a reference tool when updating the policy.

The Infant School Headteacher explained that she had attended the relevant training on The Prevent Duty. Jane Harris undertook to send the Infant School Headteacher her notes from a recent training session on the topic.

Action: Jane Harris

In response to a Governor's query, the Infant School Headteacher explained that concerns were recorded by teachers in the record of concerns and referrals were made to the LA's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

A Governor queried some of the language used within the policy. The Infant School Headteacher explained that this was retained from a Government model policy.

Having been reviewed in full at committee level, the Chair recommended that the document be ratified by the Governing Body.

Upon a show of hands it was resolved that the Policy be **RATIFIED**.

It was noted that all other actions had either been completed or were on the agenda to be discussed.

15/110 **HEADTEACHERS' REPORTS/UPDATES**

Infant School

The Headteacher informed Governors about various updates since her last report. Arising from the discussion:

Trips and Events

Governors noted the various events and activities which had taken place and were scheduled for the near future. They commended the Headteacher for ensuring that the broad curriculum was being supported by the various school trips and activities.

The trips had included: Year 1 visits to places relevant to their projects on Julia Donaldson's books and a Diwali assembly which was funded by Gift Aid; and a visit from The Rainbow Company who held a workshop on the great fire of London, which was also funded by Gift Aid. A Year 1 trip to the Arts Depot to see a play had also been scheduled.

Curriculum Morning for Parents

Curriculum mornings continued to be held for parents and they had also been invited to observe lessons. When questioned, the Headteacher confirmed that feedback from parents had been extremely positive and that participants had gained a better understanding of the efforts made by their children and had witnessed a snap-shot of how the School's curriculum was delivered on a daily basis.

Staff explained that the lesson observations were difficult to manage at times and tended to interrupt teaching. Thus, while the curriculum mornings would continue in some format, they may no longer include attendance for a full lesson.

School Improvement Partnership

The Infant School Headteacher reminded Governors about the joint Chairs and Vice Chairs Improvement Partnership meeting taking place at 6.30pm on 3 December 2015.

In response to a query, the Headteacher explained that the Schools occasionally pooled funds and shared resources.

Staffing

The Headteacher informed Governors that all staff appraisals and pay decisions had been completed and submitted to the LA's Human Resources department.

Governors joined the Chair in thanking the Headteacher for her informative updates.

Infant School Improvement Plan (SIP) 2015-16

The Headteacher presented the SIP for 2015-16 to Governors. Arising from the discussion:

Rationale

The Headteacher highlighted the rationale for the new SIP. She explained that this was broken down into four sections:

1. Ensuring that the school curriculum was of a high quality:

This involved ensuring clarity about what defined the school's curriculum, facilitating progression of curricular skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage (KS) 1, promoting cross-curricular working to support maximum coverage, and ensuring that the school environment enriched teaching and learning.

2. Promoting Effective Learning Behaviours:

The Infant School Headteacher explained that this encapsulated the aims of the School's curriculum and involved promoting the development of core learning behaviours and their progression, and ensuring teaching of core learning behaviours was evident in planning.

A Governor enquired as to what an effective learning behaviour consisted of. The Headteacher explained that this was currently being debated by staff and that a set of criteria was being agreed.

3. Communication Skills

Communication would include oral and written communication skills and would be developed by embedding a consistent delivery of Speaking and Listening as developed in the previous SIP, and ensuring consistency in the vocabulary used across the School.

4. Progress

Progress would be promoted through ensuring that all staff were clear about their roles and the importance of high-quality Assessments for

Learning in developing effective learning behaviours and promoting progress. Progress would also be promoted through the effective use of summative assessment that was efficient and supports progress and attainment.

A discussion ensued regarding the challenges faced by schools in demonstrating progress in the absence of levels.

In response to an enquiry from the Chair, the Headteacher explained that the raised expectations of young children by the new curriculum was putting pressure on the time allocated in the teaching of the creative arts. However, she assured Governors that the school is committed to maintaining a broad and creative curriculum.

It was noted that assessment data without levels would become far more qualitative when compared with the previous focus facilitated by levels on quantitative data.

Following a further query, the Headteacher confirmed that the School would be communicating information regarding the new assessment systems with parents in due course.

The Chair recommended that the Infant School SIP for 2015-16 be adopted by the Governing Body. Upon a show of hands it was resolved that the Plan be **ADOPTED**.

Junior School

The Headteacher informed Governors about various updates since her last report. Arising from the discussion:

Trips and Events

Governors noted the various events and activities which had taken place and were scheduled for the near future. They commended the Headteacher for ensuring that the broad curriculum was being supported by the various school trips and activities.

The school journey, which had taken place early in the new academic year, had been to the Isle of Wight. When questioned, the Headteacher confirmed that parental feedback following the trip had been very positive. She added that parents had commended the timing of the event, early in the academic year, as it facilitated social interaction and helped pupils build new friendships.

Governors joined the Headteacher in recording thanks to the Deputy Headteacher and all staff who were involved in managing the School Journey.

Governors also commended the School for raising an estimated £1,500 for Children in Need.

Curriculum

Governors noted that the School had recently celebrated Black History Month. The Headteacher explained that the School was working hard to deliver a broad curriculum. She said that it had thus far been successful in achieving a high level of attainment among its pupils whilst retaining its teaching of the creative arts and cultural diversity.

E-Safety Training

The Junior School Headteacher notified Governors of a jointly funded E-Safety training session in partnership with Brookland Junior School and invited Governors to attend:

- 7.30pm on 9 December 2015 at Brookland Junior School
- 9.15am on 14 January 2015 at Garden Suburb Junior School

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Programme

In response to a Governor's query, the Headteacher confirmed that further pupils had been withdrawn from the SRE programme by their parents. Governors expressed concerns regarding this as the SRE programme contained safeguarding elements which were important for pupils to be aware of. When questioned further, the Headteacher confirmed that parents had been invited to review the SRE programme resources and could visit the SRE Co-ordinators at any point in time for advice.

Staffing

The Head Teacher drew Governors' attention to the various staffing changes and cover/support arrangements in place. The Headteacher explained that one of the two teaching vacancies had remained vacant following a recruitment advertising campaign.

Governors agreed with the Headteacher's concerns that the School's recruitment challenges resulting from a long term sickness and a maternity resignation may have an impact on teaching and learning, particularly the literacy interventions in place. However, due to forward planning satisfactory cover arrangements have been implemented.

The Headteacher informed Governors that all staff appraisals and pay decisions had been completed and submitted to the LA's Human Resources department.

Governors joined the Chair in thanking the Headteacher for her informative updates.

Junior School Improvement Plan (SIP) 2015-16

The Headteacher presented the SIP for 2015-16 to Governors. Arising from the discussion:

Attendance

The Vice Chair enquired as to how the School planned to increase attendance to 96% by July 2016. The Headteacher explained that a range of strategies would be used which included the authorising of fixed penalty notices (FPN). She added that the School aimed to reduce the amount of authorised absences in order to deter parents from taking their children out of school for family reasons.

Governors noted that only two FPNs had been authorised as the School was working hard to maintain good community relations.

In response to a further enquiry from the Vice Chair, the Headteacher tabled and circulated a summary from the DfE which benchmarked the School's attendance data against local and national averages. The data showed that the School's overall absence was above both LA and national averages.

Governors **AGREED** that the data presented suggested that the School was required to manage authorised absences more effectively. Governors **CHALLENGED** the Junior School Headteacher to remind parents of the detriment to pupils' learning caused by missed school days.

Action: Headteacher

When questioned, the Headteacher confirmed that documentary evidence was always requested before absences were authorised. She gave examples of doctors' notes, copies of flight bookings, and so on.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Training

The Vice-Chair enquired as to whether all teachers were receiving the necessary training in dealing with specific learning difficulties and other SEND. The Headteacher confirmed that the relevant training was ongoing and included the use of external consultants with the necessary expertise. She also informed Governors that a handbook was being composed for staff based on the new code of practice for SEND.

Pupil Premium Expenditure Report 2015/16

A Governor stated that the Governing Body was responsible for overseeing Pupil Premium funding and that the funding was intended to be used to narrow the gap in attainment between the School's disadvantaged pupils and their peers. The Governor observed that the School had been using the Pupil Premium fund to support all pupils and that the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their peers had not been narrowed. She

CHALLENGED the Headteacher regarding this and enquired as to how this would be viewed by Ofsted or any other auditing body.

In response to this enquiry, the Headteacher tabled and circulated the Pupil Premium Grant Expenditure Report 2015/16. She highlighted the program of interventions in place which targeted under-achieving pupils and explained that attainment for pupil premium pupils was above national expectations in almost all subjects. She also highlighted that the provision of high quality teaching was the first priority of the pupil premium funding, regardless of whether the interventions in place also benefitted the peers of the disadvantaged pupils targeted by the funding scheme.

Governors were also reminded of the letter received from David Lawes MP which congratulated the school on its effective use of the pupil premium funding to increase attainment for disadvantaged pupils since 2011.

The Chair recommended that the Junior School SIP for 2015-16 be adopted by the Governing Body. Upon a show of hands it was resolved that the Plan be **ADOPTED**.

15/111 **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Finance

The committee minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2015, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

Curriculum

The committee minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2015, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

Premises

The committee minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2015, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

15/112 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF GOVERNING BODY PRIORITIES**

The Governing Body Priorities for 2015-16, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were reviewed and **RATIFIED**.

15/113 **EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AUDIT, NOVEMBER 2015**

The Effective Governance Audit, as at 26 November 2015, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, was reviewed and **AGREED**. The Vice Chair undertook to submit this to the LA.

Action: Vice Chair

Governors joined the Chair in thanking the Vice Chair for completing the draft version of the audit on behalf of Governors.

15/114 **GOVERNOR SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING AND VISITS LOG**

The Chair commended the Governor Support and Development Programme, to which the School subscribed, and urged Governors to attend courses as part of their development.

Training and Visits Log

Governors completed the training and visits log in order to retain a record of their training and development undertakings.

The Junior School Headteacher invited Governors to Level 1 Safeguarding Training which would be held at the School at 2.30pm on 14 December 2015.

15/115 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Community Relations

A debate ensued as to the extent that the School should be consulting with the local community regarding events held at the School. The Headteachers acknowledged these concerns and undertook to inform the local community of any major events which could potentially cause any disturbance (for example, increased parking on surrounding streets).

CCTV

Governors were pleased to note that the LA had confirmed that it would install CCTV around the School due to known parking violations.

15/116 **DATES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The following committee meeting dates were confirmed:

Staffing:	29 January 2016 at 8.30am
SEN and Pupil Wellbeing:	4 March 2016 at 8.15am
Curriculum:	To be announced
Premises:	To be announced
Finance:	To be announced

15/117 **DATES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

The next meetings of the Governing Body were confirmed as:

Spring (1): Thursday 21 January 2016 at 6.00pm

Spring (2): Thursday 17 March 2016 at 6.00pm

Non-Voting Observers left the meeting at this point.

15/118 **MOTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

It was **RESOLVED** that, because of its nature, the business to be transacted, be treated as confidential and not for publication.