

GOVERNING BODY FOR GARDEN SUBURB INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON
THURSDAY 19 MAY 2016**

MEMBERS

LA GOVERNOR

*Jane Harris (Vice Chair)

PARENT GOVERNORS

*Omar Shah (Junior)

*Adrian Hodgson (Junior)

*Shivangi Smythe (Junior)

Michael Kkafas (Infant)

*Gerard Wiseman (Infant)

*Elisabeth Tacey (Infant)

HEADTEACHERS

*Sarah Sands (Infant Headteacher)

*Eileen Bhavsar (Junior Headteacher)

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

*Julia Chalfen (Junior Support)

STAFF GOVERNOR

Alexia Dobinson (Infant Support)

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

Julia Sanitt

*Francoise Wagneur (Chair)

*Mary Ogle

*Evelyn Thomas

*Katalin Barcza-McQueen

Ruth Beedle

*Emma Woolston (Infant Teacher)

*Robert Wood (Junior Teacher)

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS

*Lisa Berger (Junior DHT)

Liz Cormack (Infant DHT)

*denotes member present

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr George Peradigou (Clerk)

Part I

16/44 **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting and extended a special welcome to Junior School Assistant Headteacher, Robert Wood, the new Co-opted Governor.

16/45 **ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted on behalf of Michael Kkafas, Julia Sanitt, Alexia Dobinson, Liz Cormack, and Ruth Beedle.

16/46 **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no pecuniary interests declared by Governors within the current agenda.

16/47 **PART I MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 MARCH 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2016, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were confirmed, initialled and signed by the Chair subject to minor amendments

Elisabeth Tacey joined the meeting at this point.

16/48 **MATTERS ARISING**

16/07 Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty

Governors commended and recorded thanks to the Junior Headteacher for having organised the Prevent Duty INSET training. Governors who had attended the INSET were Mary Ogle, Omar Shah, Elisabeth Tacey, Adrian Hodgson, Evelyn Thomas, and Katalin Barcza-McQueen, along with the Chair and Vice Chair.

16/30 All-Weather Sports Pitch

It was noted that a working group had been established to oversee proceedings related to the all-weather sports pitch. The working group was due to meet on 26 May 2016.

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

16/49 **INFANT SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S REPORT/UPDATES**

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

Staffing

The Headteacher tabled and circulated a document which outlined the new staffing structure of the School. She recorded thanks to Governors on the recruitment panel which helped the School fill various vacancies. While the response to advertisements was low, the panel had managed to recruit three experienced teachers and one newly qualified teacher (NQT). Appointments had been made to all leadership posts.

Governors suspected that the low response to advertisements was due to the fact that teachers seeking jobs in London would usually opt for those paying the London weighting. It was noted that this problem was on the School Improvement Partnership's agenda to discuss possible joint-solutions. The Chair requested that this item be kept on the Staffing Committee's agenda.

Action: Staffing Committee

Key Stage (KS) 1 Assessments

The Headteacher reported back to Governors following the KS1 assessments and recorded thanks to staff for their hard work during this period.

In response to a Governor's query, the Headteacher confirmed that it was evident that the assessments were more challenging.

A Governor enquired about any feedback received from parents. The Headteacher explained that feedback had been positive and that parents were well aware of the increasing challenges posed by assessments as this had been well publicised by the School. The Headteacher gave an example of feedback received by reading out a letter received from a parent. The letter conveyed thanks to the Infant School for its approach to the new challenges – for well publicising changes in the curriculum and increased challenges through the new assessment regime; for successfully nullifying pupils' potential anxieties regarding tests (a Governor remarked that avoiding words such as 'exam' had helped with this); for focusing on teaching the new curriculum in the most effective way possible; for generally rising to the new challenges as opposed to remaining passive; and for using various teaching methods and interventions (such as 'booster' and 'brighter spark' stickers) to help encourage pupils. Governors applauded the letter and were pleased to note that parents had recognised the hard work carried out by staff.

The Prevent Duty Training

The Headteacher assured Governors that, staff who were unable to attend the Prevent Duty training session held by the Junior School, had undertaken the online training available from the same organisation. It was **AGREED** that both Schools would ensure that new staff undertook this online training.

Action: Headteachers

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Sporting Events

A Governor drew the Headteacher's attention to the various local sporting events organised for SEN pupils, such as that organised by the Saracens Rugby Team at Allianz Park. The Headteacher undertook to investigate the possibility of taking part in such events.

Action: Headteachers

School Improvement Plan (SIP) 2015/16

The SIP updated for 2015/16, a copy of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, was reviewed by Governors.

In response to a Governor's query relating to page 5 of the SIP, the Headteacher explained that cross-curricular weeks and integrated days were both used to ensure that teaching of core subjects was maximised while retaining a broad curriculum. For example, during the forthcoming Wateraid

Week, science and geography would be the main focuses. This allowed for focus to be shifted to science and geography and temporarily away from the regular teaching of maths and English.

Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) – May 2016

The updated SEF, a copy of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, was reviewed by Governors. The relevant updates were noted.

Chilli Challenges

A Governor enquired about “Chilli Challenges”, which were a choice of challenges chosen by pupils. The Headteacher remarked that this would be set out in the School’s Teaching and Learning/Curriculum Policies. She said that, principally, rather than designing three or four group activities at different levels where pupils stay within their groups, the teachers set a progression of three challenges (mild, spicy and hot) and the children choose their entry point. This was so that they could decide on the level of challenge they felt they could cope with on entry and then progress to more challenging tasks. They were therefore not restricted by the task/group they were in. Governors commended the approach and noted that pupils had responded positively to the competitive and self-challenging nature of this system. This was evident in certificate assemblies and lesson observations.

Learning Behaviours

In response to a query, the Headteacher circulated a section of the draft Curriculum Policy which explained what was meant by ‘learning behaviours’ and how these would be used to progress the values of the School, which included:

- Respect and Responsibility
- Friendship and Tolerance
- Democracy & Rule of Law

Governors noted that this would also be set out in the School’s Teaching and Learning, and Assessment Policies.

The Policy also outlined how the School’s values were aligned with the British Values.

Behaviour and Learning

The Chair enquired as to how behaviour and learning would be monitored moving forward. The Headteacher explained that the School had drafted an assessment/tracking sheet and that this would be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee initially. She said that it would then be appended to the Assessment Policy.

Performance Appraisal Targets

Governors noted that performance appraisal targets were linked to raising standards. The Chair enquired as to whether mid-year reviews were conducted for teachers and how helpful they had proven to be. The Headteacher confirmed that mid-year reviews had been conducted and had proven useful in reminding teachers about their targets.

Interventions Review

Governors noted that interventions were reviewed frequently to ensure that they were effective and having a positive impact on progress for targeted pupils. When questioned by the Chair, the Headteacher explained that, while the impact of various interventions was occasionally evident through monitoring workbooks, it was often difficult to determine which interventions had benefitted pupils as multiple interventions were in place at any given time.

The Headteacher explained that the School was in the process of reviewing its interventions and making the necessary changes.

Governors were also referred back to a table which had been included in a previous SEN Report presented to them, which showed how the School would be measuring the effectiveness of interventions at the end of 2016.

Attendance

The SEF continued to refer to 85% or below attendance as the threshold for persistent absence.

Governors were referred to page 5 of the SEF where it was noted that frequent periods of absence were identified and parenting support had been put in place as this was often the cause. Governors were pleased to note that the number of pupils with persistent absence had decreased over the previous three years from 7% in 2012/13, to 5.9% in 2013/14, to 3.7% in 2014/15.

Legionella

In response to a query, the Headteacher explained that there were no concerns about Legionella and that checks carried out and logs were maintained under cyclical maintenance as a matter of routine. The School would produce a policy for this as a result of a Health and Safety audit carried out by Capita.

Reading and Writing

The Chair enquired as to whether the School had noticed significant progress in Reading and Writing, given the particular focus on the two subjects for the year. The Headteacher explained that it was difficult to make comparisons under the new assessment system and without levels. She added that all of

the Headteachers that she had spoken to had expected a drop in the number of pupils meeting expected levels due to these factors.

The School had subscribed to a reading intervention called 'Project X Code' from which books would be used for a daily reading group. The Headteacher was also sending a teacher and a Teaching Assistant (TA) on Better Reading Partners training.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Governors were reminded of the Government's agenda and the Schools responsibilities around dealing with potential cases of FGM.

Action: Pupils Wellbeing committee

Whole-Class Maths

When questioned, the Headteacher explained that whole-class maths had increased coverage. The current Year 2 cohort had had one year of this increased coverage, while the current Year 1 cohort would have a full two years of increased coverage by the time they reach the end of Year 2. She explained that the aim was for maths to be creative and fun. While there would be less integrated teaching, the School had planned to retain the cross-curricular and creative elements. She referred Governors to the use of cross-curricular days and weeks, which had been previously discussed as a method of ensuring this balance.

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

16/50 JUNIOR SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S REPORT/UPDATES

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

Staffing

The Headteacher drew Governors' attention to the various staffing changes and cover/support arrangements in place as set out in the Headteacher's report. In response to a Governor's query, the Headteacher explained that staff who had left, left due to uncontrollable circumstances.

Key Stage (KS) 2 SATs

The Headteacher reported back to Governors following the KS2 assessments and recorded thanks to staff for their hard work during this period.

In response to a Governor's query, the Deputy Headteacher explained that all schools within the School Improvement Partnership agreed that all End of KS2 assessment papers were more difficult. In particular, she explained that

the reading assessment paper was more challenging. The Headteacher explained that, due to this increased challenge with assessment papers, a higher shortfall was expected in the number of children reaching national expectations.

In response to a Governor's query, the Headteacher confirmed that two pupils were excluded from the KS2 SAT test in Reading and Grammar due to recent arrival from overseas and being at the very early stages of learning English.

The Deputy Headteacher confirmed, when questioned, that positive feedback had been received from parents regarding the readiness of their children for the assessments.

School Improvement Plan (SIP) 2015/16

The SIP updated for 2015/16, a copy of which had been circulated prior to the previous meeting, was reviewed by Governors.

The Prevent Duty

In response to a Governor's query, the Headteacher explained that the Prevent Duty was adhered to within the School through ensuring that the necessary safeguarding measures were in place. This enabled staff to identify potential safeguarding threats and equipped pupils with knowledge of what to do if things went wrong in their relationships. When questioned, the Headteacher confirmed that parents were involved and that online safety was covered extensively.

Reading Groups

The Headteacher confirmed, when questioned, that pupils who were taken out of assembly to participate in reading groups were generally less able readers. This was an intervention to help narrow the gap between the more and less able readers.

Pupil Premium (PP)

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 reminded all that, previously, the Headteacher had shown that, while progress among disadvantaged pupils was improving, attainment was not. She enquired as to whether new strategies had been employed to raise attainment for Pupil Premium supported pupils, whom, at present, would appear to be failing.

The Headteacher confirmed that the School's gap between targeted and non-targeted pupils was in line with national expectations. She added that the School now had an increased number of more able children who were in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.

It was noted that it was now difficult to assess progress and attainment given the removal of levels. She explained that such benchmarks would become comparable again by the end of the year, at which point the School would be able to review the age-related expectations and attainment levels of Pupil Premium targeted pupils. She also highlighted that, in Reading at Level 4 the previous year, there was no gap between vulnerable pupils and their peers.

The Headteacher explained that the School used Pupil Premium funding to increase the quality of teaching overall, regardless of whether this also benefited non-targeted pupils, as well as implement more targeted interventions to remove barriers preventing vulnerable pupils from progressing. An example was given of how financial support to a vulnerable family helped to ensure the attendance of a vulnerable pupil, which was a targeted intervention to overcome a barrier to their progression. She reiterated that, as had been discussed in previous meetings, the provision of high quality teaching was the main priority of the pupil premium fund. Governors joined the Vice Chair in commending this approach.

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.

Following her attendance at a recent Governor Training course on Pupil Premium, a Governor highlighted the importance of raising the quality of teaching and learning through better feedback and marking and challenged the Headteacher to ensure this was in place. The Headteacher assured Governors that this was a part of teachers' continued professional development and was being pursued through pupil progress meetings. She also highlighted that the updated Assessment and Marking Policy included details of this and had been reviewed at committee level.

Fundamental British Values

In response to a query, the Headteacher explained that various initiatives, such as themed assemblies on the Houses of Parliament, House of Lords, rule of law, democracy, and tolerance, had been arranged in order to promote British Values. Further activities had been used to facilitate culture sharing. As the School already was culturally diverse, pupils were familiar with this process.

The Headteacher explained that British Values were also taught in Religious Education (RE), which was taught weekly through PPA provision when teachers were released to focus on planning. This ensured that the topic was embedded into the curriculum. Governors commended this and agreed that it linked in with spiritual and moral development. The Headteacher remarked that HMI Inspectors, who had previously visited the School, had also approved of this approach.

Years 5 and 6 Football Teams

The Headteacher confirmed, when questioned, that the School was aiming to continue to run the Year 5 and Year 6 football teams following departure of the two members of staff who had previously taken responsibility for this. Football had proven to be a motivating factor for many pupils.

School Improvement Partner Walkabout

The Headteacher explained that the recent School Improvement Partner walkabout had proven to be very useful and yielded some insightful suggestions, which the School was now implementing. One of these suggestions was to ensure that pupils working outside of the classroom in intervention groups were overseen by the class teacher or the SEN Co-Ordinator (SENCO). This helped to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils were not overseen by the least experienced staff. Governors agreed with this suggestion.

Action: Headteacher

It was noted that the School Improvement Partner was impressed by the high standard of teaching, behaviour, pupil displays, and the evident high expectations within the School.

Reading and Writing

The Chair enquired as to whether the School had noticed significant progress in Reading and Writing, given the particular focus on the two subjects for the year. The Headteacher explained that it was evident that the new approach to reading had had a positive impact. The Assistant Head Teacher/Literacy Co-ordinator explained that Positive feedback had also been received from the School Council, which also requested that a section of the website be allocated to book recommendations among pupils. This was being progressed.

A governor suggested the possible use of e-books and tablets. However, Governors were concerned about the durability of tablets as well as the logistics around multiple log-ins, page-savers, and so on. Another governor suggested that the schools set up a scheme for parents to sponsor books. This would help with the regular purchase of new books.

Action: Headteachers

Art Club

When questioned about the Art Club, the Headteacher confirmed that it was a well-attended club where pupils were generally invited randomly. However, a certain amount of places were reserved for vulnerable pupils who could not participate in other clubs.

Attendance

The Chair challenged the Headteacher and enquired about the increased level of persistent absenteeism. The Headteacher explained that the criteria for persistent absenteeism had changed. The previous threshold having been 85% and below, this had risen to 90% and below. This meant that more pupils were being recorded as persistently absent. Governors noted that the School's Educational Welfare Officer had confirmed that the School's attendance was in line with other similar schools.

Homophobic/Racial Incident Reporting

In response to a Governor's query regarding abusive incidents, the Headteacher confirmed that this was a very rare occurrence at the School. There were no reports of persistent offence. She explained that mechanisms were in place to manage pupils who were seen to be abusive to others.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Sporting Events

A Governor drew the Headteacher's attention to the various local sporting events organised for SEN pupils, such as that organised by the Saracens Rugby Team at Allianz Park. The Headteacher confirmed that, while the School had often participated in local sports events, they had not recently taken part in events aimed at SEN pupils. She commended the idea.

Action: Headteachers

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

16/52 **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Finance

The committee had not met since the last Governing Body meeting. A meeting would be arranged.

Premises

The committee meeting was held on 24 May 2016. Copies of the minutes had not yet been circulated. The Chair of the Committee gave a verbal update. Arising from the discussion:

Governors noted a brief update following a recent walk around to review asbestos and dry rot.

Curriculum

The committee had not met since the last Governing Body meeting. A meeting was arranged for Wednesday 8th June 2016.

16/53 **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.

The Governor Training and Visits Log was circulated to Governors. It was updated and returned to the Infant School Office for the record to be retained.

Action: Alexia Dobinson

The original date, Tuesday 24th May was **AGREED** although it was noted that not all Governors could attend. It was also **AGREED** that another Open Day would be organise in the Autumn term on a Thursday or Friday to accommodate Governors that could not attend at the start of the week.

Action: Headteachers

16/54 **PLANNING 2016-17**

Internal Governor Survey

The Chair proposed that the Governing Body arrange an internal Governor survey to be completed by Governors by the end of the summer term. It was **AGREED** that this would be useful and the Chair undertook to draft the survey.

Action: Chair

School Improvement Partnership Joint Headteachers and Chairs Meeting

Governors noted that the Chair would propose a joint Chairs meeting with the other schools within the School Improvement Partnership to take place in September 2016. Governors commended the proposal as a means to agree on joint ventures (for example: joint-training). The Chair undertook to progress this along.

Action: Chair

Three-Year Strategy

The Chair reminded Governors of the proposals to produce a 3 Year Strategy in view of a number of forthcoming challenges.

16/55 **EDUCATION AND SKILLS DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Report of the Director of Education and Skills Summer Term 2016, a copy of which had been distributed previously, was noted by the Governing Body. Arising from the report:

1. The Education White Paper and academisation

The report outlined the Governments proposals for all Schools to convert to academies by the end of 2020.

2. The National Funding Formula

It was noted that the Government was working on a new funding formula, to be in place by April 2019, which ensured a consistent and fair approach to funding schools based on needs rather than historic patterns of expenditure.

3. Barnet with Cambridge Education

Governors noted the update on the new partnership between Cambridge Education and the local authority (LA) which began on 1 April 2016.

4. School Improvement Partnerships

This item listed the various School Improvement Partnerships which had been formed among schools in Barnet. It also outlined some examples of partnership activities.

5. Maintained School collaboration across partnerships

Within School Improvement Partnerships, Schools were able to form joint committees, such as Complaints Panels, using Governors from a collaborating Governing Body within their School Improvement Partnership. It was noted that the School Improvement Partnership would first have to agree this.

6. Attendance in Primary Schools: a Barnet Issue

This item outlined the Barnet ranking for attendance when compared to other boroughs and recommended for improving attendance.

7. Mandatory Disclosure and Barring Service checks for School Governors

Governors noted that the Government had published amended legislation on 18 March 2016 to make Enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks mandatory for school Governors.

The Chair advised that the Alexia Dobinson was in the process of progressing this.

8. Governor Info to be published on Edubase

Governors were informed that information, including name and appointment dates, would be published on Edubase, a public database managed by the Department for Education (DfE).

9. School Organisation Guidance

The item outlined the protocol for local authorities and governing bodies to follow if proposing organisational changes, including enlargement of premises, changes of category, and change or age range.

10. Statutory timelines for Maintained Schools, Academies and Free Schools

It was noted that, as from 1 September 2016, Governing Bodies of federations would be limited to only two Parent Governors from across all the schools within the federation.

The Clerk presented his proposed reconstitution model. Governors undertook to consider the proposal and adopt or amend it by the next Governing Body meeting.

Action: Governing Body

16/56 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

Omar Shah gave his apologies and left the meeting at this point.

16/57 DATES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The following committee meeting dates were confirmed:

Staffing:	10 June 2016 at 8.30am
SEN and Pupil Wellbeing:	24 June 2016 at 8.15am
Curriculum:	8 June 2016 at 8.00am
Premises:	16 May 2016
Finance:	To be announced

16/58 DATES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING

The next meetings of the Governing Body were confirmed as:

Summer 2: Thursday 7 July 2016 at 6.00pm
Autumn 1: Thursday 6 October 2016 at 6.00pm
Autumn 2: Thursday 1 December 2016 at 6.00pm
Spring 1: Thursday 2 February 2017 at 6.00pm
Spring 2: Thursday 23 March 2017 at 6.00pm
Summer 1: Thursday 11 May 2017 at 6.00pm

Summer 2: Thursday 6 July 2017 at 6.00pm

Non-Voting Observers left the meeting at this point.

16/59 **MOTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

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