

GOVERNING BODY FOR GARDEN SUBURB INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 1 DECEMBER 2016

MEMBERS

LA GOVERNOR

*Jane Harris (Vice Chair)

PARENT GOVERNORS

*Shivangi Smythe (Junior)

*Elisabeth Tacey (Infant)

HEADTEACHERS

*Sarah Sands (Infant Headteacher)

*Eileen Bhavsar (Junior Headteacher)

STAFF GOVERNORS

1 Vacancy (Infant Support)

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

*Julia Chalfen (Junior Support)

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

*Francoise Wagneur (Chair)

*Julia Sanitt

Katalin Barcza-McQueen

*Ruth Beedle

Michael Kkafas (Infant Parent)

*Gerard Wiseman (Infant Parent)

*Omar Shah (Junior Parent)

*Adrian Hodgson (Junior Parent)

*Robert Wood (Junior Teacher)

3 Vacancies (1 res. for Inf Tchr)

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS

*Lisa Berger (Junior DHT)

*Liz Cormack (Infant DHT)

*Alexia Dobinson (Infant Support)

*denotes member present

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr George Peradigou (Clerk)

Part I

16/112 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting.

A discussion ensued regarding Governor vacancies. There were three Co-opted Governor vacancies, one of which was reserved, through a statement of intent, for an Infant School Teacher. Two potential governors had expressed an interest in being co-opted. The Clerk undertook to send the Co-opted Governor nomination form to the Headteachers.

Action: Clerk and Headteachers

The Staff Governor position was also vacant. While the Schools usually aimed to alternate occupation of this position, it was **AGREED** that an Infant School representative would be once again elected to avoid disruption. The Clerk

undertook to draft election papers and send them to the Infant School Headteacher.

Action: Clerk and Infant School Headteacher

16/113 ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted on behalf of Michael Kkafas and Katalin Barcza-McQueen.

The Chair announced that Mary Ogle had resigned her governorship and read aloud the resignation letter received from her. Governors joined the Chair in recording thanks to her for her many years of service and her strong commitment to the School. The Headteachers recorded thanks to Mary Ogle for supporting and constructively challenging them for over 12 years. A card was circulated for signing and the Chair undertook to arrange a thank you dinner dedicated to her in the new year.

Action: Chair

16/114 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

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

16/115 CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

After reviewing three nomination forms, Governors shortlisted two candidates and decided to form a small panel to meet them and asses their credentials based on the desired skills identified in the Governing Body's skills audit. The panel would then make a recommendation to the Governing Body ensuring that each candidate had read and understood the Governors' Code of Conduct.

Action: Chair and Interview Panel

16/116 PART I MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2016, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were confirmed, initialled and signed by the Chair, subject to minor amendments.

16/117 MATTERS ARISING

16/90 Headteacher Reports: Improve Attendance

When questioned, the Headteachers explained that attendance was being monitored by the Schools' Educational Welfare Officers (EWOs).

16/90 Headteacher Reports: Communication with Parents

Governors were reminded about the challenge in getting parents to engage with the School's website. It was noted that this would form part of the discussions related to the School Improvement Plan (SIP), parent survey and Named Governors.

16/91 Headteacher Reports: Key Stage (KS) 1 Performance Data

An extraordinary Curriculum Committee meeting was scheduled to be held on 7 December 2016 as the previous meeting had only had sufficient time to scrutinise the Junior School's performance data. Governors **AGREED** that two committee meetings would be required in the autumn terms moving forward.

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

16/118 INFANT SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S REPORT/UPDATES

The Headteacher informed Governors about various updates since her last report. The Report, School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Self Evaluation Form (SEF) had been circulated prior to the meeting. Arising from the discussion:

SIP Timing and Content

In response to a query regarding the timing of the SIP, the Headteacher confirmed that it was usually updated by half-term in the autumn term as indicative results were known in the summer term. This allowed time for the School to analyse the summer term's performance data and would then feed into an attainment review with the Local Authority (LA), the suggestions from which would feed into the SIP.

A Governor **CHALLENGED** the Headteacher to ensure that the SIP was updated earlier in the autumn term in future. The Headteacher explained that the slight delay in updating the SIP for the current year was because there was a new Leadership Team in place and that sections of the plan were allocated to particular leaders. This required additional time for leaders to familiarise themselves with the new process. The Headteacher assured Governors that the Leadership Team worked extremely hard and that this was reflected in the level of detail in their plans.

In response to a further query, the Headteacher explained that the SIP was focused on improving performance data and did not address issues such as community involvement. However, this did not mean the School did not engage in community involvement.

It was noted that the Named Governor schedule outlined which Governors would link to each part of the SIP and the leaders they were linked with. This would provide the platform upon which Governors would focus their attention to their linked area.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):

EYFS New Ways of Working:

A Governor **CHALLENGED** the Headteacher to ensure that the changes to teaching and learning within Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) did not make it more like a nursery as this would not help prepare pupils for the transition to KS1. The Headteacher explained that the changes brought about more structured learning and purposeful play and invited her to visit the School and see this in action. The Deputy Headteacher added that the changes implemented were based on what was considered to be best practice in EYFS nationally. The Headteacher also assured Governors that the named Link Governor for EYFS would be kept informed about the impact of interventions.

Action: Liz Tacey

EYFS Parents Week:

A Governor enquired as to whether Parents Week could be implemented in all year groups. The Headteacher explained that Parents Week was currently an initiative in EYFS as this was where parental engagement was most challenging for the School. However, this could be rolled out to other year groups in the future.

Narrowing the Gap in EYFS:

Following a Governor's suggestion, the Deputy Headteacher undertook to add information regarding the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers into the SEF. For the record, she stated that 60% of pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD), compared to 75% for their peers. Governors were pleased to note that, while this was a gap, it was less than the gap nationally and within Barnet.

Action: Deputy Headteacher

EYFS Health and Self-Care, moving and Handling and People and Communities:

When questioned, the Deputy Headteacher explained the meaning of health and self-care, moving and handling, and people and communities. In response to a Governor's query, it was noted that performance in these areas was graded using the professional judgements of teachers guided by descriptors within 'Development Matters' (Government-issued guidance for schools).

Learning Behaviours

A Governor enquired as to how behaviour interventions were being implemented into normal classroom practice. The Deputy Headteacher

explained that learning objective set out in the Teaching and Learning Policy (collaboration, curiosity, creativity, independence, perseverance and resilience) were taught to whole classes as well as being customised for individual pupils. Certificates awarded to pupils each week were also used to focus on the learning behaviours.

When questioned further, the Deputy Headteacher explained that progress within EYFS was measured by the professional judgements of teachers whilst being guided by the descriptors within the DfE's Scale.

The Deputy Headteacher confirmed that positive learning behaviours were evidently emerging from these methods of working. She explained that these would be profiled through displays, assemblies, and certificates and that, while challenging, efforts would be made to convey these positive outcomes to parents.

A Governor enquired as to whether it would be possible to re-introduce Philosophy for Children. The Deputy Headteacher explained that, while this would fit in well with promoting positive learning behaviours, it would be difficult to do so currently given that new teachers would have to be appropriately trained first.

Quality of Teaching

It was noted that the TA part of the SIP linked in with the English as an Additional Language (EAL) and PPG parts. The School were managing such cross-overs through the SLT structure. SLT members, including Inclusion Managers and Subject Leaders, were focused on ensuring Quality First Teaching.

Teaching Assistants (TAs)

In response to a Governor's query, the Headteacher explained that the use of TAs was monitored based on the effectiveness of their delivery of intervention programmes and the quality of their interactions within the classroom (for example, the use of questioning and feedback). When questioned further, she confirmed that most interventions were monitored termly (unless they were short term interventions). It was noted that, while TAs were included in the formal appraisal process of all staff, they were also observed during classroom observations, learning walks, work scrutiny.

EAL

A Governor **CHALLENGED** the Headteacher to ensure that adequate training for staff was provided on teaching EAL pupils. The Deputy Headteacher confirmed this was in place and outlined the various training sessions scheduled for the spring term. These included staff meetings, INSETs, and training for TAs. Training included the use of consultants provided by the Barnet Partnership for School Improvement (BPSI) and visits to other schools to review good practice.

Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)

The Headteacher explained that the Pupil Premium Plan focused on removing barriers to success at pupil, community, and whole school level. This meant ensuring that teachers were familiar with their PP pupils and related interventions and were allocated enough time to monitor their progress. Inclusion Leaders would oversee this process and provide support where necessary.

Two pupils were in receipt of PPG due to them being adopted. When questioned about whether the school received appropriate training, the Headteacher confirmed that she had recently been on training for attachment and on becoming an attachment-friendly school. She added that Schools in Barnet received support from the LA's Virtual School, which monitored the progress of all Looked After Children (LACs) within the borough, but the children in our school didn't fall into this category.

Assessment for Learning

In response to a query, the Headteacher explained that 'assessment for learning', as outlined in the SIP, reflected the use of assessment on a daily basis to interact with pupils and progress their learning. When questioned further, the Deputy Headteacher explained that using feedback appropriately allowed for assessments to progress pupil's learning, as well as assess it.

Funtime Holiday Play Scheme

Following an enquiry regarding the Funtime Holiday Play Scheme, the Headteacher explained that the School had resolved the clash in the timetable which caused a lack of take up for the play scheme during the holidays. She announced that the scheme would run from 8am-6pm during school holidays. The Chair referred further discussion to the Pupil Wellbeing Committee.

Action: Pupil Wellbeing Committee

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

16/119 JUNIOR SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S REPORT/UPDATES

The Headteacher informed Governors about various updates since her last report. The Report, School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Self Evaluation Form (SEF) had been circulated prior to the meeting. Arising from the discussion:

Premier Pathways

The Chair enquired as to the impact of Premier Pathways, a work-based teacher training programme for potential new teachers. The Headteacher explained that, as one new teacher had left the School part way through this

training, the new approach was to avoid this by first testing the commitment as Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) before investing in this training for them.

The Headteacher highlighted the benefits of the programme. It was noted that at the end the programme, the School would have a more skilled teacher and that, upon completion of their year-long Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) would be employed directly by the School with no additional fees from their agency.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Chair **CHALLENGED** the Headteacher to ensure that the School was developing the skills and understanding of staff in identifying and supporting children with SEND and medical conditions.

The Headteacher stated that training for staff to support pupils with SEND and medical conditions was ongoing (although the latter had become increasingly difficult to find given budget cuts to national healthcare training providers). She gave examples and explained how the School had been supporting pupils with acute medical conditions and maintaining contact with the relevant external agencies.

It was also noted that a SEND In Service Training (INSET) had been planned for the spring term for the benefit of new staff and as a refresher for existing staff.

Leadership Link in Year 5 Not Appointed

The Vice Chair **CHALLENGED** the Headteacher as to why a leadership link had not been appointed to Year 5 and highlighted the potential negative impacts of this on performance and behaviour. The Headteacher explained that the decision had been taken to manage this gap internally. She assured Governors that this was being managed effectively as Year 5 had within it some of the most experienced staff, a very experienced Year Group Leader and an additional Literacy Support Worker.

Learning Logs

The Vice Chair enquired as to the learning logs for more able pupils. The Headteacher explained that this was an initiative which was commended by the HMI Inspector when the School was last inspected. The log was an open-ended diary-like tool which encouraged pupils to be creative in reflecting on what they had learned during the school day.

A discussion ensued and it was agreed that, while the initiative did not suit every pupil, it was very useful for the self-motivated learner.

The Headteacher invited Governors to visit the School and review examples. The Chair suggested that examples also be shown to the Curriculum Committee.

Action: Junior Headteacher

SIP Timing and Content

In response to a query regarding the timing of the SIP, the Headteacher confirmed that the Junior School's SEF would be updated and brought to the first autumn term Governing Body meeting, while the SIP would be brought to the second meeting of the autumn term.

The Headteacher thanked the Chair for preparing the Named Governors document, which she would attach to the SIP as an appendix.

A discussion ensued regarding the level of detail in the SIP. The Headteacher explained that the aim of the SIP was to outline goals even if it was not fully known how they would be achieved at the time of writing. She reminded Governors that her termly reports outlined progress towards SIP goals.

Bicycles

A Governor enquired as to the School's current use of the bicycles it had purchased after having previously received a grant to teach pupils to cycle. She explained that there was no current funding available to provide this teaching for all pupils. However, the bicycles were being used by the Schools Motor Skills Support Assistant. Furthermore, the School's PHSE Co-ordinator had recently begun to involve the School in the 'Bike It' Scheme which linked into its sustainable transport agenda.

When questioned, the Headteacher confirmed that the school was engaging with parents, through a bikers coffee morning and a bikers breakfast, to reassure them as to the safety of the scheme.

The Headteacher undertook to ensure that the School Travel Plan was updated to include the new cycling scheme, especially as the School aimed to achieve the Gold Mark for its Travel Plan.

Action: Junior Headteacher

When questioned further, the Headteacher confirmed that an LSA could be targeted to support disadvantaged PPG pupils in learning to cycle. Gerard Wiseman volunteered to assist with this if required.

School Dinners

It had been previously agreed with caterers that the Junior School would seek the opinion of pupils via the School Council regarding the frequency of sugary puddings served during lunch time. The Chair referred further discussion to the Pupil Welbeing Committee.

Action: Head Teachers & Pupil Wellbeing Committee

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

16/120 **POLICY RATIFICATION**

Staff Code of Conduct

The Staff Code of Conduct 2016 was presented to Governors, a copy of which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Although the policy was not statutory, the Chair recommended that the document be ratified by the Governing Body as it fitted in with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

Upon a show of hands it was resolved that the Policy be **RATIFIED**. It was noted that the Staffing Committee would decide on the disciplinary action taken if staff failed to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Action: Head teachers & Staffing Committee

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy was presented to Governors, a copy of which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Having been reviewed 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**, subject to the updating of the section on Disqualification by Association.

16/121 **PUPILS, PARENTS AND STAFF SURVEY**

A discussion ensued regarding the company which should be used to issue surveys in the spring term.

The Chair requested that Governors review the questions drafted for each survey.

Action: Governors

Governors raised various suggestions including the use of the same company as the previous year, Survey Monkey, or You Gov (a voluntary sector). Julia Sanitt undertook to prepare a price-comparison.

Action: Julia Sanitt

16/122 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Finance

The committee minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2016, 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 16 November 2016, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors. It was noted that a follow up meeting was scheduled for 7 December 2016 to continue with the analysis of performance data.

Having been unavailable at the previous meeting, the updated terms of reference for the Curriculum Committee was presented to Governors, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors **ADOPTED** the Terms of Reference as presented. The Chair undertook to send an electronic copy of the document to Alexia Dobinson in order for it to be uploaded to the secure area of the School's website.

Premises

The committee minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2016, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors. Arising from the discussion:

The committee was continuing to review the Health and Safety Policy and the Contingency Plan, both of which were due to be brought to the Governing Body for ratification.

The Chair of the Committee gave an update on building works as highlighted within the committee minutes.

It was noted that an underspend in the LA's budget at the end of the financial year could mean that money was available to schools, although a bid would have to be ready to submit with minimal notice.

A Governor enquired as to proceedings regarding the all-weather sports pitch. The Committee Chair explained that the School had been advised to re-lay grass on the pitch. It was noted that this would be mainly funded by the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), to which Governors recorded thanks. However, it was debated as to whether this was the responsibility of the LA.

16/123 NAMED GOVERNOR SCHEDULE

The updated Named Governor Schedule was presented to Governors, a copy of which was had been circulated prior to the meeting. Arising from the discussion:

The schedule had been updated by the Chair to support the objective set out within the SIP. It was **AGREED** that visits from Named Governors would review progress towards SIP objectives within their allocated area.

The Headteachers undertook to arrange Named Governor visits, while Governors would inform them of available timeslots.

Action: Headteachers and Named Governors

16/124 **OFSTED PREPARATION UPDATE**

The Chair announced that an Ofsted preparation folder was being compiled and recorded thanks to the Vice Chair and Shiv Smythe for their help with this. She explained the importance of ensuring that all policies along with the School's website were up to date. She proposed that Governors form an Ofsted Working Group to oversee such matters. While this usually comprised of the Chair and the Chairs of the Curriculum, Finance and Staffing Committees, Governors who were confident in their knowledge of the School were welcomed to volunteer before the membership was confirmed in the spring term.

Action: Chair

16/125 **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 ongoing development.

Governors reported back on courses they had attended. These included Premises Management, the Role of the Curriculum Committee, and Ofsted Preparation.

The Governor Training and Visits Log was circulated to Governors. Governors were asked to update their entries and return them to the Infant School Office.

Action: Governors

16/126 **GOVERNOR SKILLS AUDIT**

The Chair had sent all governors the Governor Skills Audit to be filled in & returned before the end of term. The Chair reminded all governors of the importance of the Skills Audit. Arising from the discussion:

Governors noted the importance of the exercise in order to be aware of the Governing Body's strengths and training needs as well as providing a better understanding of the skills it wishes to recruit through elections.

It was **AGREED** that the Governing Body would not take part in the LA's annual Effective Governance Checklist for the current year due to workload.

16/127 ACADEMISATION

The Chair and Vice Chair had attended recent briefings regarding academisation. While the School was no longer under statutory obligation to convert by 2020, the Government continued to encourage schools to convert to academy status or federate with another school. The Chair explained that consideration would need to be given to this when strategically planning for the next five years as Government funding for schools was decreasing.

The Chair and Gerard Wiseman stressed that it was vital to find time to plan & ensure the long term sustainability of the schools.

The Headteachers stated that, with the high volume of work and various other changes impacting on the School, they had not had an opportunity to give this proper thought. However, there had been ongoing discussions on making savings through pooling resources with other schools within their School Improvement Partnerships.

16/128 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Clerking

The Chair, Vice Chair, and Headteachers informed Governors about proposed changes to the LA's clerking service whereby the advice and clerking elements would be separated for Schools wanting a cheaper clerking service without the advice element. The Chair explained that an overwhelming amount of Chairs and Vice Chairs objected to the proposals at a recent consultation meeting where it was proposed that changes would take effect from the spring term 2017.

Post Meeting Note: the LA had decided to postpone proposed changes until the summer term 2017.

16/129 DATES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The committee meeting dates were agreed as follows:

Finance committee: 26 January, 16 and 26 March 2017

Curriculum committee: 22 February 2017

Premises committee: 7 March 2017

Staffing committee: 3 March 2017

SEN & Pupils Wellbeing committee: 8 March 2017

16/130 DATES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING

The next meetings of the Governing Body were confirmed as:

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.

16/131 **MOTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

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