

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of
Garden Suburb Infant and Junior Schools
Held on Thursday 28 March 2019**

MEMBERS

LA GOVERNOR (1)

Vacancy

PARENT GOVERNORS (2)

Ruth Henrywood (Junior)* (Co Chair)

Sanaz Saifohali (Infant)*

HEADTEACHERS (2)

Sarah Sands (Infant Headteacher)*

Eileen Bhavsar (Junior Headteacher)*

STAFF GOVERNORS (1)

Alexia Dobinson (Infant Support)*

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Julia Chalfen (Junior Support)*

**CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (12:
2Teachers; 2Parents from each Sch)**

Francoise Wagneur*

Vacancy

Adrian Hodgson

Gerard Wiseman (Junior Parent)*

Omar Shah (Junior Parent) (Co Chair)

Biljana Elia (Infant Teacher)*

Janina Quinn (Junior Teacher)

Ziya Kocabiyik*

Aneka Grover (Infant Parent)*

Tara Ward Ammoun (Infant Parent)*

Paola Riddle*

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS

Lisa Berger (Junior DHT)*

Sarah Jowsey (Infant DHT)*

*Denotes attendance

Part I

19/20 **Welcome**

All Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

19/21 **Acceptance/non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Adrian Hodgson, Janina Quinn and Omar Shah.

19/22 **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

19/23 **Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019**

The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were **CONFIRMED**, initialled and signed by the Chair, as a fair representation of the meeting, subject to minor amendments.

19/24 **Matters Arising**

These had been actioned or were included within the current agenda.

19/25 **Infant Head Teacher's Report/Updates**

The IHT provided Governors with a verbal update.

She noted that the School had appointed a new NQT for September, Anisa Ali. This had been discussed in detail at the Staffing Committee meeting. The recruitment had been facilitated through a Barnet Scheme which used an agency called Teach Now. The aim of this collaboration was to specifically attract NQTs to Barnet.

There were two different options open to a school when recruiting via this route. One of these was to offer a conditional place if there was not an actual vacancy at the time or a firm offer if there was.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the School had paid £3,000 for this service (one advert cost £1,000). She confirmed that Governors had been involved in the appointment and formal observations had been undertaken.

The first year of the NQT was similar to a probationary period which involved frequent observations, diligent evidence collecting and termly reports on progress towards the Teacher's Standard.

NQTs were out of class on Tuesday afternoons attending various trainings. Their classes were covered by the Music Teacher, the IHT and DHT.

A Governor enquired into whether the Canadian teacher at the School had found it difficult to adapt noting the difference in teaching between Canada and England. The IHT explained that the individual joined the School as a new teacher and so was provided with the same level and type of support as the English NQTs.

The IHT added that the School had received approximately £1,400 through the School Travel Plan funding. This would probably be used for the purchase of new bikes.

The School had also put in a bid for balance bikes. The School had received six of these and a member of the bike scheme had visited the School on 27 March to train the staff. The bikes helped to build the confidence and capability of the children.

The JHT added that Y3 were also part of the bike ability scheme.

After Easter the School were trialling new school meal plates focused on promoting healthy eating. They had specific sections for each food group with fruit each day and a treat on Fridays.

Reception classes had performed their annual performance on 27 March, which was very successful.

Approximately £200 had been raised for children in Kenya. Children chose their favourite book to send to Kenyan children who would in turn, send pictures of them reading the books.

A Governor noted the rising measles cases and enquired into whether the School had any power to require up to date immunisations for children offered places at the School.

The Headteachers noted that this was not feasible. The IHT however had sent out a letter to parents from the Public Health Organisation, which had further information on Measles etc.

The IHT was thanked.

19/26 **Junior Head Teacher's Report/Updates**



The JHT provided Governors with a verbal update.

She noted that the School had partaken in a number of activities that helped to further heighten their wide and broad curriculum.

The Minimasterworks Art Exhibition had been very successful and had raised £566. Janina Quinn was thanked for all her hard work on this project.

A Governor suggested that if the company were used again, the School explore the potential for generating more funds, for example through negotiating levels of commission.

One piece of Art work from each class had been bought by the School to display.

World Book Day had been very successful and the Book Fair had raised over £1,000. The library had been refurbished; there were photos of this on the School website.

A number of class assemblies had been held based on British values; a new way of exploring this area. They had been very well attended by parents.

Online safety training had been held at the School for all staff and parents.

The JHT added that referrals for families to get early help had increased. The system for this through Child Services had noticeably improved.

A Governor enquired into whether the offer of early help could be made more generally available for parents noting that there may be a greater impact if the whole parental community were aware.

The JHT explained that the School had an emotional health practitioner that provided support and that with the Junior School, the help needed to be more targeted. There was a lot of individual parental support undertaken at the School, making it more of a partnership between the two parties. More general parental workshops were held in the Infant School where they were more appropriate.

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that Teachers would raise potential problems with parents in the correct context. Parental engagement could be measured in a number of ways for example whether the child had the correct uniform on, whether they had completed their homework or if they brought their PE kit in. These factors were however quite objective and not a significant issue at the School.

If any of these occasions occurred, letters were sent home with the child to give to the parent with follow up conversations held if necessary.

The JHT noted that she continued to add sections on parental responsibilities to the School newsletters.

The JHT noted that Science week had been very successful with displays around the School and parents with scientific backgrounds attending to give talks.

The girl's football team had won their league and the School had come fifth in the Sports Hall Athletics. The use of a sports coach every lunchtime had also helped with behaviour.

A focus on Fairtrade was scheduled for the following week. This was a new initiative lead by the coordinators.

The meeting with parents for Y6 SATs had been very well attended. It was agreed that this would become an annual session, with Y5 parents invited the next time.

An Inset Day had been held focused on Maths. This had been attended by Sian Thomas.

The Writing project lead by A Rosenberg had been very well received.

The JHT was thanked.

19/27 Policy Ratification

Governor attention was drawn to the following policies, circulated prior to the meeting:

- **Health and Safety**
- **Infants Educational Visits**
- **Accessibility Plan**
- **Infant SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)**

A Governor noted that given the recent issue in the Junior School, was it possible to look into whether the admissions section of the policy could/should be amended in cases for which the School did not believe they could adequately accommodate the needs of a SEND – arising from a diagnosed disability - child. This would obviously need to be in compliance with the School's statutory duties/responsibilities and in line with other policies.

The IHT explained that the Admissions policy set out a very clear criterion. If the child had an EHCP for example, there was a clear process in place for consulting the school as to whether they were able to meet the child's needs.

- **Junior SEND**

A Governor asked if parents ever refused consent where the teaching team and inclusion manager identified a child with specialist needs and wished to enter them onto the SEND register.

The JHT noted that this did occur. 19 children had been offered extra help for SATs for example and these had all been refused by the parents for being either too early or too late in the day. She confirmed that interventions were also run during the school day. Parental feedback was important here as the timing of these could always be changed if it was not suitable for the particular child.

A Governor noted that there was no mention of adaptation of the Behaviour Policy for children with SEN and suggested that this be added.

The JHT welcomed this suggestion.

- **Infant EAL**
- **Equality Plan**

A Governor suggested that the policy incorporate a note on Neuro diversity.

Tara Ward Ammoun agreed to draft a sentence to be added to the policy.

Action: Tara Ward Ammoun

- **Staff Leave of Absence**

A Governor noted that the policy did not mention days taken off for religious reasons/holidays.



The Headteachers explained that this had been discussed in the Staffing committee. Staff were allowed two days off for whatever reason.

- **Educational Visits Policy**

A Governor enquired into whether either of the Schools had a significant problem with parents expressing their opinions on which adults they would like their children to be monitored by and, if so, was this something which the Headteachers would like dealt with through the Policy.

The Headteachers explained that there were occasions where there had been difficulties but this was not a significant problem. Sometimes, in the Infant School for example, the number of parent helpers had to be limited. As outlined in the policy 'the School decided how parents are allocated'.

Each parent had to attend a session prior to the trip which outlined the expectations and behaviour. The IHT added that this could be something that could be incorporated further into the Parent Code of Conduct.

Governors noted the importance of creating a strong and cohesive cohort of parents in year groups. The IHT had scheduled meetings with class representatives for the first Friday of every month to gain useful feedback. She noted that she would take a copy of the Parent Code of Conduct to the next meeting.

Action: IHT

Following a show of hands, Governors **RATIFIED** the policies.

19/28 **Update on School Funding**

Budget notes for 2019/20 plus a breakdown of the budget lines, had been circulated to Governors.

The IHT provided an overview of the financial position of the Infant School.

She noted that the Headteachers' Forum was still active and were linking together with the Governors' Forum to continue their case.

A number of challenges facing the School were noted. These included:

Pension contributions increasing from 16.4% to 23.6%. This would approximately cost the School an extra £20,000 per year. Although the Government had stated that these costs would be covered, the amount and length of this was still not clear.

The increase in the Teachers pay grant had been funded for the summer term (£8,300). The School had to facilitate a 1% increase and anything above that, would be funded by the Government.

There had been a clawback on SEN funding, as EHCP funding was calculated according to financial year.

Due to the reduction in number of students, School funding had decreased by approximately £30,000; 15 children.

Funding for English Additional language (EAL) had increased, reflective of the cohort of children).

A reduction in funding for Infant Free School Meals (FSMs) due to the lower numbers of children.

The PE grant that the School had received for the last six years (£9,000 each year) was due to end in the summer.

The School had however received money for the "added extras" announced by the Chancellor. This was £11,000 for the Infant School and £14,000 for the Juniors. This was ring fenced to capital projects for example building and ICT.

Taking all these things into account, the Infant School had reached a balanced budget with a £0 contingency.

The IHT informed Governors that the Local Authority were also in the process of introducing a Unified Reward scheme for Educational Support Staff. This was to ensure that they were in line with national salaries. This increase could range from 3.91% to 8.27% or higher; an approximate £30,000 extra cost for the School. The School had budgeted for this amount at present until precise numbers had been confirmed.

The Teaching Assistants that were leaving were not being replaced.

The School had bought into the same Traded Services as the previous year. BPSI for example was a positive resource for staff development and retention.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the School would have to review having one TA per class but the School remained aware of the benefits of interventions and maintaining these. The School may also look to reviewing the office staff.

The JHT provided an overview of the budgetary position in the Junior School.

She noted that they faced similar budgetary pressures as mentioned by the IHT. They had managed to set a balanced budget with a contingency of £0; this was very tight and vulnerable however.

A staff member leaving at the end of May to go on maternity was not being replaced and would be covered internally. There had been a reduction in the number of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs). These however were mainly agency staff who had indicated already that they were leaving.

The School also faced the same issue with the increase in the Support Staff Pay Award.

Governors discussed the importance of remaining mindful of the stress this was having on staff, particularly if there were no support staff in a class and a child with special needs joined the School. There was an evident impact on morale.

Governors commended the Headteachers for reaching balanced budgets considering the challenges faced. They noted however that there was a limit to cost cutting that could be done and it was increasingly becoming more urgent to think of money raising initiatives.

It was suggested that a group be formulated to work alongside the PA to focus on fundraising. The Chair agreed to organise this with Ziya Kocabiyik, Tara Ward Ammoun, Anneka Grover, Gerard Wiseman and Françoise Wagneur. A plan would be formed to be feedback at the next FGB meeting on 16 May.

19/29 **Ratification of budgets for each school including traded services**

Following discussion these were **RATIFIED** for both schools.

19/30 Minutes of Committees

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

Premises Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

Inclusion and Pupil Wellbeing Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

Staffing Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 March, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

19/31 Named Governors Update

Francoise Wagneur and Tara Ward Ammoun met with the Science Leader.

Tara Ward Ammoun also met with Mr Glazelle to discuss Literacy and Writing in particular.

19/32 Governor Training, Visits & Development update for Autumn term

Governors were reminded of the Governor training available.

All training was to be submitted to Alexia Dobinson.

19/33 Parent, Pupil and Staff Surveys

It was agreed at the Inclusion Committee that the Parent survey would be conducted using the Ofsted Parent View. Parents would be notified of this the following day through the School newsletter.

Action: Headteachers

Although the questionnaire was continually open, the School would issue a cut-off date to allow them to analyse the results.

If any trends were identified, the School could administer a follow up survey.

For the Pupil Survey, it was agreed at the Inclusion committee that Francoise Wagneur and Ruth Henrywood would discuss it further. Francoise Wagneur had sent a set of 10 questions that could be used. These were based on the survey previously used by Ofsted.

This would be held in the second half of the summer term as a reflection on the year.

19/34 **Any Other Business**

Sanaz Saifohali enquired into what impact Brexit was having on families at the School. She offered to hold a seminar to present some information about immigration laws for parents.

The Headteachers agreed to discuss this with Sanaz Saifohali and arrange accordingly.

Action: Headteachers

A Governor challenged as to why the School did not allow children to wear sunglasses during the summer as another protective precaution.

The Headteachers noted this challenge and explained that the School did allow children to wear sunglasses if they had specific eye sensitivities.

19/35 **Dates of Committee meetings**

- a. Curriculum – Thursday 4th April 2019
- b. Finance – TBC
- c. Premises – TBC
- d. Inclusion & Pupil Wellbeing – TBC
- e. Staffing – TBC

19/36 **Dates of Governing Body Meetings**

- a. Summer I: 16th May 2019
- b. Summer II: 4th July 2019

Ram Heyns
16/5/19.