

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of
Garden Suburb Infant and Junior Schools
Held on Wednesday 3 February 2021 via Zoom**

MEMBERS

LA GOVERNOR (1)

Evathia Elsiwidy*

PARENT GOVERNORS (2)

Ruth Henrywood (Junior) (Co Chair)*
Sanaz Saifolahi (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 Schl)

Francoise Wagneur*
2 X Vacancy
Adrian Hodgson*
Omar Shah (Junior Parent) (Co Chair)*
Biljana Elia (Infant Teacher)*
Janina Quinn (Junior Teacher)
Aneka Grover (Infant Parent)*
Tara Ward Ammoun (Infant Parent)*
Paola Riddle*
Pam Omeye Howell*

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS

Lisa Berger (Junior DHT)*
Sarah Jowsey (Infant DHT)*
Andrea Bailey- School Business Manager

AGENDA

Part I

21/1 **Welcome**

Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

21/2 **Acceptance/non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Janina Quinn and Andrea Bailey.

21/3 **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

No Governor present declared a pecuniary interest in the business to be discussed.

21/4 **Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2020**

The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2020, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were virtually **CONFIRMED** by the Chair, as a fair representation of the meeting subject to the following typo:

P4, practicing

21/5 **Matters Arising**

A Governor asked for clarity on the reference to school animals. The IHT explained that these were stuffed animals used to help children recognise independent learning behaviours. She agreed to send the link to the School website where these were explained in more detail.

Action: IHT

20/83 **Matters Arising**, 20/75 *Report from the Director of Education and Skills, 9, Handling Complaints during the Coronavirus outbreak*: It was noted that the Complaints Policy would be brought to the next meeting for review and ratification.

Action: IHT/JHT

20/84 **Infant Headteacher's Report/Updates**: The IHT explained that the group currently consisted of herself, Bilijana Elias, the JHT and Francoise Wagneur. This would be the Working Party focused on promoting the School, starting with an explanation of the presentation she and Alexia Dobinson had received. She noted that she had not yet opened this up to the wider parent group yet.

Aneka Grover, Tara Ward- Ammoun and Adrian Hodgson (as link to the Resident's Association) agreed to be part of this also.

21/6 Infant Headteacher's Report/Updates

The IHT provided a verbal update.

School Improvement Plan updates

Copies of the School improvement Plan (SIP) circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors. The IHT provided an overview of the objectives noting the emphasis on a broad and balanced curriculum. The home learning offer was visible on the School website with information on blended learning and the School's approach.

Focus also continued on ensuring high quality teaching with parents being supported appropriately to ensure that they could help their child learn. The IHT explained that she had carried out Zoom sessions with parents from each class and obtained feedback from them. This had helped with communication as well as the teaching videos prepared, helping parents to support their children. It had been suggested that this resource be made available moving forward.

The IHT noted that social and behavioural needs were also being prioritised with a number of wellbeing activities planned. Wellbeing Wednesdays had just been introduced in Y2 for example with a focus on additional, lighter touch activities. Y1 were also experimenting with feel good Fridays. There was a page on the School website with specific PSHE links and resources available and these had been sent to parents directly.

Staffing

The IHT noted that the School had recently received funding to support a child with an EHCP, for which the School had been funding. This had allowed for the recruitment of J Herman as a one to one TA. She was already having a positive impact on the children as well as helping to support some of the less experienced TAs.

In terms of staff communications, there was a weekly all staff meeting on Zoom to ensure all messages were cascaded and shared. These meetings also provided a forum to obtain feedback from the in school provision and home learning. The staff WhatsApp groups were also being well utilised.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the majority of staff were working from home. Each day there was one Senior Leader out of class, one member of the administrative/pastoral team, three Teachers, three TAs, two one-to-one staff, two MTSs and the lunchtime sports coach on site. Staff were rotated on a one week in, two weeks off system.

Finance- January forecast

The IHT provided an overview of the financial forecast noting that the December forecast had been balanced. She explained that this was primarily due to the increase in SEND funding as a result of the EHCP confirmation, generous donations from a parent and the reduction in costs, as much fewer children were in School. The School had also been allocated £8,500 as part of the council's Covid fund. The forecast would be reviewed and scrutinised at the next Finance committee meeting.

A Governor enquired into whether the Covid allocation had specific criteria on how it could be spent. The IHT explained that it did but as it was part of the Outbreak Management Fund, it could be interpreted in multiple ways to counteract the effects and challenges of Covid.

The IHT reminded Governors of the continued importance of reduced pupil numbers; an issue apparent in many schools. Some of the funds from the PTA had been used to pay for the sports coach at lunch time to compensate for this.

In terms of Premises, the project to replace the windows was expected to start over February half term. It was being funded by the LA. The wall at the back of the School was also being rebuilt, again funded by the LA. The School server would be replaced over the half term.

Following the census in January, the number of Pupil Premium children had increased to 22%; 53 out of 220 children. This was compared to 13% in 2019.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that there were multiple reasons for school leavers, mainly moving out of the area or abroad or attending schools that did not require them to use public transport.

Remote learning and onsite provision

There were 42-43 children attending the onsite provision for key worker and vulnerable children; this was almost double the amount during the first lockdown. A group was open in each year group although Y1 had to be closed for a period of time due to a positive case.

For this half term, the shared school project was based on a wordless picture book with children encouraged to create their own through the home learning activities. The home learning was put on to Tapestry as well as sent through parent mail and on the website. Any resources or videos created by the School were also uploaded onto Tapestry.

As noted, the IHT had conducted zoom meet ups with approximately 140 parents over the week (approximately 50% of families). Each week, Teachers arranged a meet up with children and parents. It was noted that the School were not administering live lessons or additional zoom meetings to help relieve some of the pressure on parents, particularly those working from home etc. Instead, teaching videos were being uploaded which parents could utilise at their own pace. The School also continued to phone families to keep in contact, with meetings arranged if no work was being completed/uploaded onto Tapestry.

Parents were being encouraged to use their WhatsApp groups as a tool to support one another. The IHT also intended to introduce monthly catch ups with class representatives.

SD cards had been reconfigured on some laptops, so they could be loaned where families were having difficulties. Assistance was being provided where possible, noting that the DfE scheme was only available for children in Y3 and upwards. A survey of parents had also been undertaken to understand what technology they had so that assistance could be provided.

Alexia Dobinson was thanked for all her work on the Free School Meal vouchers, which provided families with £15 per week.

The IHT confirmed that staff development continued with the School taking part in the Action Research Group with other schools. This had been formulated as part of the BPSI Covid Recovery training programme. The group looked at and shared examples of good practice focused around different areas.

A Governor questioned whether the School was getting support from their School Improvement Partner and the LNI during this academic year. The IHT confirmed this noting that feedback received had been very consistent and they were being very supportive. She noted that there were weekly updates from LNIs who remained very contactable and available to run training for schools when requested.

A Governor commended the balance of home learning with videos and independent tasks and questioned how many families were uploading work on to Tapestry. The IHT explained that the majority were. Every Friday, the TA for each class went through posts on Tapestry and logged the work uploaded. This was then sent to the Inclusion Leads to be aligned with the information received from phone calls home. This helped to identify and highlight any families not being able to upload onto Tapestry and subsequently target support.

Different options had been given to families to help them upload work, including taking photos, emailing them and the school uploading these onto Tapestry for them. It was important to be tenacious and assist families in the best way.

The upcoming INSET would be used for Teachers to reflect on each individual child, looking at the quality of work rather than quantity and making any changes necessary.

Risk Assessment

The Infant School risk assessment had been uploaded onto the Governor drive. It was noted that small changes had been made to reflect the key worker and hybrid approach.

The IHT was thanked for her updates.

Pam Omeye Howell joined at 6.55pm

21/7 Junior Headteacher's Report/Updates

The JHT provided a verbal update.

Staffing

The JHT provided an overview. She noted that there were two staff members who were pregnant and so recruitment to that year group was crucial. The rules on pregnancy and maternity leave in terms of timings was not yet clear. The members of staff had been seeking advice from their relevant medical sources and risk assessments were underway.

The job share role in Y3 was also being reviewed as one of the members had resigned with immediate effect. Some lesson observations had been undertaken the previous week with the JHT and DHT looking into the NQT programme. This however, was still in the exploratory stage and Governors would be updated accordingly.

Remote learning and onsite provision

The JHT noted the continual challenges in dealing with Covid with a number of staff self-isolating due to sickness. Teacher workload was being reviewed to ensure the best and most effective model was in place. LSAs were taking on a bigger role in the Key worker provision with them delivering some of the recorded lessons.

The JHT wished to thank and congratulate staff for what had been achieved in such a short space of time.

It was noted that complete blended learning was being administered. There were approximately 57 children registered for the provision although 35-40 attended on average per day. There was one key worker class per year group with a rotation of staff in place, including a Teacher from each year group.

All children with an EHCP were attending the provision except one who was overseas. The majority of those children categorized as vulnerable were also in attendance. The sports coach was still in place meaning that the children had a lot of physical activity opportunities.

The JHT noted that she had received some positive anecdotal feedback from parents about the School's approach.

Showbie was being used for the home learning, which had been embedded well. Registration and catch up sessions were being undertaken live which allowed children to see their Teacher twice a day. This also helped with monitoring safeguarding, following up with families not in attendance. Children had also been compliant with wearing their school uniform during the online sessions.

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that they had moved away from Showbie onto zoom due the chat function and being able to see all the children at once. There had been one to two inappropriate occurrences but these were being reviewed.

The JHT explained that some zoom group sessions had been arranged for children with EAL two to three times a week with LSAs also conducting one to one or other groups with some children with SEND. The offer continued to be reviewed and improved to tailor to the children's needs.

The School had received 26 laptops from the DfE which had been offered out resulting in more children engaging. Some paper copies of work were still needing to be sent home.

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that technology did not seem to be the main barrier to access. There were many families having to share devices for example, for which laptops were being provided where possible too.

With Online Safety week the following week, recorded workshops from an external provider were being provided for each year group. These would be added to Showbie. There were also recordings for parents and staff, for which the links would be circulated.

The JHT noted that both she and the DHT had completed their Designated Safeguarding Lead training the previous week. *Sharenting* seemed to be a new concern, with information added to the school newsletter etc. on this.

The JHT confirmed that health and emotional wellbeing remained high on the agenda. A number of families with mental health issues were being supported.

School Improvement Plan (SIP)

The Junior SIP, circulated prior to the meeting and available on the Governor drive, was noted. The JHT explained that many of the targets remained the same. Online provision was in the process of being reviewed with the DfE having published an audit tool to review the blended learning offer. It was important to ensure that the learning offer was sufficiently reflected on the website.

Finance- January Forecast

The JHT noted that the budget had been balanced with no contingency. This had been aided by the £9,400 Covid grant from the LA as well as some of the savings caused by lockdown.

Risk Assessment

The Junior School risk assessment had been uploaded onto the Governor drive. It was noted that small changes had been made to reflect the key worker and hybrid approach.

A Governor questioned what was in place to support staff wellbeing and resilience. The JHT explained that there was an open door policy in place with staff encouraged to discuss any concerns. This had been reiterated in the letter sent to all staff with wellbeing high on the agenda. Staff were also reminded in the biweekly staff meetings.

The IHT added that staff also had access to support through Qwell which was an online resource through the LA with counselling and other resources available.

The JHT noted that a mental health session for children had been run in October with one for staff run by an Educational Psychologist in January. These had both been very useful.

Following a Governor question, the JHT confirmed that school vouchers were also being issued in the Junior School. Andrea Bailey was thanked for all her work on this.

The JHT was thanked for her report.

21/8 Schools' Financial Value Standards (SFVS)

The IHT explained that SFVS would be submitted for approval at the next meeting. The document required the Governors' Skills Audit to be completed.

The IHT noted that this had been circulated to Governors for completion.

Action: All Governors

21/9 Policy Ratification

Copies of the following policies, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors:

- **Lettings**
- **Anti-Fraud**
- **Charging**
- **Financial Management**
- **Whistle Blowing**

The IHT explained that these were all part of the School Financial Value Standards (SFVS).

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

21/10 Safeguarding Audits

Francoise Wagner, Safeguarding Link Governor, confirmed that she had completed the Safeguarding Audits for both Schools. It was confirmed that both Schools were compliant with rigorous processes and protocols in place. These could be accessed on the Governor drive.

21/11 Parents, Pupils and Staff Survey

A discussion ensued amongst Governors about the best way to approach a parent, pupil and staff survey.

It was suggested that the parent view or Ofsted questionnaires be used although the questions would need to be adapted to make it more appropriate.

Governors noted the importance of what would be done with the feedback from the survey and whether this was the best time to issue it.

A Governor raised concern about the need for a pupil survey noting that it had been deferred for a while. The JHT noted that there had been a number of focus groups with pupil voice etc. just before the lockdown but agreed that there would need to be longer term plans put in place.

The Headteachers agreed to review the surveys and the best way to approach these.

Action: IHT/JHT

21/12 **Minutes of Committees**

The IHT agreed to review the Curriculum committee minutes to ensure that they had all been uploaded onto the Governor drive.

Action: IHT

21/13 **Named Governors Update**

There were no updates at present.

21/14 **Governors' Skills Audit**

This had been covered earlier in the meeting.

21/15 **Governor Training, Visits & Development update for the Spring term**

All Governors were asked to share any training undertaken with Alexia Dobinson to log.

Francoise Wagneur was scheduled to complete her Level 3 Safeguarding.

Adrian Hodgson had completed Level 3 Safeguarding as part of PHE.

21/16 **Governor Vacancies**

The IHT drew attention to the two Co-opted Governor Nomination forms circulated prior to the meeting.

Governors discussed the applications and the skills that both individuals could bring to the Governing Body.

Following a show of hands, Paul Cohen was **APPOINTED** as Co Opted Governor for the four year term ending on 2 February 2025.

Following a show of hands, Antony Shayle was **APPOINTED** as Co Opted Governor for the four year term ending on 2 February 2025.

The IHT agreed to email them to congratulate them on their appointments. The Co-Chairs would then organise an induction for them.

Action: Co- Chairs

1. Covid-19 Lockdown Update

It was noted that the council had been allocated funds from government to help manage the COVID outbreak locally and was allocating some of this funding to all Barnet schools as a contribution to the costs schools had incurred or may incur in this respect.

The DfE had announced that the Edenred site was now open for schools to purchase eGift cards/vouchers for eligible families to use at their choice of supermarkets. Schools could therefore begin ordering free school meal vouchers for eligible pupils. The vouchers were worth £15 a week per child and families could receive codes by email to redeem themselves, or as a gift card provided by post, collection or delivery to families without internet access.

The DfE had announced that all primary schools, including school-based nurseries, and maintained nursery schools would start to receive deliveries of home testing kits to offer to all their staff from 18 January. Staff would be supplied with lateral flow device (LFD) test kits to self-swab. Staff would be asked to take their test kits home and carry out the test twice a week.

The DfE had updated its critical worker guidance to make clear that critical workers should keep their children at home if they could. It was important that schools should speak to parents and carers to identify which children needed to go to school and which could be supported at home with remote learning. Government guidance also stated that “whilst schools were attended by vulnerable children and the children of critical workers only, where possible schools should keep group sizes small”.

2. SEND Update

The DfE published additional guidance on 14th January for special schools, specialist post-16 providers, and alternative schools (including hospital schools) during the national lockdown period. It should be read alongside the main guidance document: Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools and the Further education guidance for restricting attendance during the national lockdown, which covers the main operational issues.

Mainstream and special schools should ensure that remote education provided for children and young people with SEND (SEN Support and those with an EHCP) was differentiated and that the appropriate support is provided.

3. Education Strategies

Governors may be interested in the key education strategies that were recently considered and approved by the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee. These had been published on the council's website and you can see copies here: <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-support-information>

4. Governor Training Programme Spring 2021

This term's Governor Training Programme returned and was available for registration at: www.bels.org.uk > all traded and other training > governor services.

Courses continued to be delivered online this term and, with much positive feedback received for online course delivery, the plan was to deliver a blended programme with some courses returning to face to face delivery as circumstances normalised. For virtual courses, Governors would be sent a link prior to their course which would take them to the training platform.

5. GovernorHub

GovernorHub was a communications tool that allowed Governing Boards to securely store meeting papers, manage board membership, share calendars, and so on.

6. What Maintained Schools must publish online

The DfE had updated its information on what schools maintained by their local authorities must publish on their websites. Every local-authority-maintained school must publish specific information on its website to comply with the School Information (England) Regulations (2008), as amended by The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 and 2016 and other relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010: advice for schools and the Children and Families Act 2014.

7. Prevent Update

Further information on training for both parents and schools were outlined in the report.

Governors noted the report.

21/18 Any Other Business

Co Opted Governor nomination forms

A Governor raised concern about some of the points stipulated in the nomination form, particularly that asking whether the candidate had a mental disorder.

Francoise Wagneur agreed to raise this with George Peradigou.

Action: Francoise Wagneur

21/19 Dates of Committee meetings

- I. Curriculum – this would be convened at the end of March (TBC)
- II. Finance – 24 February 2021 @ 8am; 23 March @ 8am
- III. Premises – 16 March @ 9.30am
- IV. Inclusion & Pupil Wellbeing – Weds 3rd March 2021 @ 8.30am
- V. Staffing – Fri 19th March 2021 @ 8.30am
- VI. Heads and Chairs of Committees – TBC

21/20 Dates of Governing Body Meetings (all at 6pm)

- Wednesday 24th March 2021
- Thursday 13th May 2021
- Wednesday 23rd June 2021

The meeting ended at 8.30pm