

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of
Garden Suburb Infant and Junior Schools
Held on Thursday 21 October 2021 via Zoom**

MEMBERS

LA GOVERNOR (1)

Evathia Elsiwidy*

PARENT GOVERNORS (2)

Ruth Henrywood (Junior) (Chair)*
Sanaz Saifolahi (Infant)*

HEADTEACHERS (2)

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

STAFF GOVERNORS (1)

Alexia Dobinson (Infant Support)*

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (12:

2Teachers; 2Parents from each Schl)

Francoise Wagneur*
Paul Cohen* (Infant Parent)
Anthony Shayle
Adrian Hodgson
Omar Shah
Biljana Elia (Infant Teacher)*
Isabel Clarke (Junior Teacher)*
Aneka Grover *
Tara Ward Ammoun*
Paola Riddle
Pam Omeye Howell* (Infant Parent)

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS

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

AGENDA

Part I

Reference	Action	By Who
21/78 Appointment of Governors	The IHT explained that this updated Governor information needed to be added to the Governor Hub.	JHT
21/80 Appointment of Vice Chair	It was noted that Sanaz Saifolahi had expressed an interest in taking on the role of Vice Chair. The Chair agreed to discuss this with her further before it was confirmed.	Chair
21/81 Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021: 21/69 EDI - discussion of how to involve and update governors on EDI data, policies and practise	The IHT asked that her action to check if the LA were able to create an audit or template for this to then review at the next FGB, be deferred to the next meeting.	IHT
21/83 GB Strategy, Proposed Committee structure	The JHT added that it was necessary to have six meetings of the Finance committee a year and so this would need to be managed correctly. With the FGB meeting six times a year, the JHT agreed to confirm this stipulation.	JHT
21/83 GB Strategy, Proposed Committee structure	The Chair explained that further work on the Terms of Reference for the committees would need to be undertaken with the aim to review these again at the next FGB.	Chair
21/83 GB Strategy, Proposed Committee structure	Governors were asked to review the structure and allocation and send any comments to the Chair within a week.	All Governors

21/86 Policies, ICT disposals	The JHT noted that the School had had to dispose of the old IT equipment. It had been stored in the hall but with the new lettings and need for space, this was no longer feasible. The School had therefore disposed of it in the appropriate way. Governors confirmed their APPROVAL . The JHT asked that they state this via email.	All Governors
21/88 Committee Minutes	Committees were asked to agree meeting dates for the whole academic year.	Committee chairs
21/90 Any Other Business, Skills Matrix	Governors were reminded that they would be expected to complete their skills matrices shortly. The Chair agreed to review whether there was functionality to complete this on Governor Hub.	Chair

21/74 **Welcome**

Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

21/75 **Acceptance/non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Paola Riddle. No apologies were received from Omar, Shah, Adrian Hodgson or Anthony Shayle.

21/76 **Annual Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

Governors were reminded to either complete the form and return it to Andrea Bailey for collation or to fill in the correct fields on Governor Hub.

Governors confirmed that they had completed this. The two outstanding Governors would complete this as soon as possible.

The JHT clarified how to complete this via Governor Hub.

21/77 **Declaration of Pecuniary Interests**

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

21/78 **Attendance data**

It was noted that the attendance data for Governor meetings needed to be submitted to be added to the School website.

A Governor noted that it had been agreed previously that this would be done on an anonymised basis but the JHT explained that she would need to confirm this.

It was suggested that there be a running template for attendance that was added to the start of each meeting/set of minutes.

21/78 **Appointment of Governors**

Isabel Clarke joined the meeting

The JHT reminded Governors that with J Quinn being on maternity leave, the Junior School had completed a Staff Governor election. Miss Clarke had been the successful candidate and was therefore appointed for the four-year term ending on 20 October 2025.

She was congratulated on her role and formally welcomed to the Governing Body.

The Chair noted that both Adrian Hodgson's and Omar Shah's terms of office had already expired.

Following a show of hands Governors voted to retrospectively **RE-APPOINT** both Governors for another four-year term ending on 22 June 2024.

The Chair noted that both Alexia Dobinson's and Bilijana Elia's terms of office had also expired.

Following a show of hands Governors voted to retrospectively **RE-APPOINT** both Governors for another four-year term ending on 23 June 2025.

It was noted that both Aneka Grover's and Tara Ward Ammoun's terms of office were ending in December. Governors would consider their re appointments at the next FGB meeting.

The IHT explained that this updated information needed to be added to the Governor Hub.

Action: JHT

21/79 **Appointment of Chair**

Nominations for the position of Chair were welcomed. Governors considered the one nomination received on behalf of Ruth Henrywood.

Ruth Henrywood was placed into the Zoom waiting area to allow for a Governor vote.

Following a show of hands, Ruth Henrywood was **RE-APPOINTED** as Chair for the academic year 2021-22 or until her successor was appointed.

21/80 **Appointment of Vice Chair**

It was noted that Sanaz Saifolahi had expressed an interest in taking on the role of Vice Chair. The Chair agreed to discuss this with her further before it was confirmed.

Action: Chair

21/81 **Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021**

The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were virtually **CONFIRMED** by the Chair, as a fair representation of the meeting.

21/82 **Matters Arising**

21/57 **Matters Arising:** The Headteachers had not yet arranged a date for an in person Governor gathering.

21/69 **EDI** - discussion of how to involve and update governors on EDI data, policies and practise: The IHT asked that her action to check if the LA were able to create an audit or template for this to then review at the next FGB, be deferred to the next meeting.

Action: IHT

21/70 **Succession planning:** Committee structure would be discussed later in the meeting.

21/83 **GB Strategy**

Governor attention was drawn to the GB strategy document uploaded onto the Governor drive.

Strategic Priorities

The Chair provided an overview of the priorities noting that it had been suggested that another priority be added regarding the readiness for Ofsted. This had been added.

Governors **AGREED** to the priorities.

Terms of Reference and Governor Code of Conduct

Governor attention was drawn to the relevant documents on the drive. Following a Governor question, the Chair explained that the Code of Conduct had been amended although it was noted that there was some repetition that needed to be removed.

The Chair reiterated the expectations of Governors in terms of active participation and commitment.

Following a show of hands, Governors all **CONFIRMED** their commitment to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Governors **AGREED** the Terms of Reference.

Andrea Bailey joined the meeting.

Proposed committee structure

Governor attention was drawn to the proposed committee structure, uploaded onto the Governor drive. The Chair provided an overview noting that the intention of the restructure was to ensure that the FGB was as strategic as possible and the work undertaken was reflective of the strategic priorities.

It was suggested therefore that the strategic finance elements be removed from the original Finance committee and act as a standing item on the first FGB meeting of each term. This would help to ensure a focused discussion on sustainability, long terms actions and pupil numbers for example.

The more operational elements of the original Finance committee as well as the approvals etc. would then be merged with the previous Premises committee to form an Environment, Resources and Audit committee.

This would remain mindful of the fact that there were certain statutory documents that needed to be approved as well as plans etc. that Governors needed to scrutinise and sign off for the School to then deliver.

A Governor questioned whether the financial controls would lie with the new Resources committee noting that at specific points in the year there would be a number of key financial documents that would need to be reviewed.

It was noted that these would form the remit of the new Resources committee but that there were certain documents that required FGB sign off including forecasts and budgets for example.

The JHT added that it was necessary to have six meetings of the Finance committee a year and so this would need to be managed correctly. With the FGB meeting six times a year, the JHT agreed to confirm this stipulation.

Action: JHT

The Chair explained that further work on the Terms of Reference for the committees would need to be undertaken with the aim to review these again at the next FGB.

Action: Chair

Governors agreed to the structure in principle but highlighted the need for further clarity on roles and remits.

The Chair also noted the new proposed Pupils' Committee, which entailed taking the current Inclusion and Pupil Wellbeing committee and expanding its remit. It was noted that whilst in theory a lot was covered, it was important to make sure that the focus was more shared around the different areas. The new committee would focus on all aspects of pupils that did not include the curriculum. It would therefore review such areas as Mental Health, Wellbeing, Safeguarding, Pupil Voice, Behaviour and SEN. There would also be a SEN lead governor who would play a close and key role with the School's SENCo and Inclusion Managers.

A Governor raised concern noting that inclusion encapsulated more than SEN and so discussion also needed to include inclusion and diversity. She further questioned why the Inclusion Manager would form part of the EDI sub committee instead.

Governors discussed how they could ensure that the work from the EDI sub committee linked into the other committees. The IHT suggested that the EDI sub committee review this and work with the other committees to help identify the areas of focus for the longer term.

A Governor noted the challenges with committees often working in silos and suggested that there be a mechanism to bring them together better. It was suggested that for the second FGB of each term, each committee be given five minutes to provide any updates, summaries and priorities to the rest of the FGB. This would help to make the committees more accountable and engender a more collective approach.

The Chair added that the Governor allocations were suggestions and Governors were welcome to contact her to ask that they move to different committees for example.

The Chair also proposed that the Curriculum Committee be separated into a Junior and Infant group although meetings could be held consecutively on the same day to allow for some continuity.

Governors were asked to review the structure and allocation and send any comments to the Chair within a week.

Action: All Governors

21/84 **SIPs**

Infant SIP

Governor attention was drawn to the Infant School SIP, added to the Google drive. The IHT provided an overview as well as a number of updates.

She noted that A Saunders was retiring from her role as Teacher and SENCo after a significant period of time with the School. How the post would be covered in the interim had been discussed with the Staffing committee with T Alam acting into the role for the rest of the year.

The IHT noted that pupil numbers had decreased by 11 which would have an impact on the census. The budget deficit had however decreased by approximately £10,000 due to some increases in income.

Governors were reminded of the tight financial position with the forecast set to be reviewed at the next Resources committee and then at FGB.

The IHT reminded Governors that the SIP had been presented previously but had been reviewed for this term. She noted that there had been some changes made to the priorities due to some new requirements. She explained that curriculum development was the same in terms of the development of Middle Leaders, the spiral curriculum and enrichment activities for example. However, there had been a shift in focus this term due to the changes in Phonics teaching.

The IHT confirmed that the School had a rich reading environment but wanted to ensure that it invested in literature that was reflective of the community. It was also important to ensure that the literature was well plotted and matched to the School's curriculum development. Sitting within this was a very structured phonics programme, which needed to be given real focus at present. As directed by Ofsted, all books had to be decodable to match what was being taught. The School had bought into Little Wandle from Letters and Sounds, which was approved by the DfE.

This half term, the School have been undertaking intensive training with staff as well as investing PTA money into resourcing. The IHT explained that it was composed of very tight six-week programmes, which were succinctly targeted. She added that a session would be run for Governors as part of the Curriculum committee in order to provide more detail.

The IHT added that the last INSET day had been spent reviewing books and regrading them. It was important to ensure that the School invested in readers and made it as streamlined as possible for staff to match the books to groups of children to accommodate their levels etc.

She noted the emphasis on reducing the cognitive load within phonics teaching. This new approach moved away from the distractions and focused on sounds and repetition as well as blending and segmenting.

The IHT also drew attention to the changes to the Early Career Teaching programme and the associated challenges.

Governors were reminded of the changes to the EYFS curriculum noting that the team had undertaken a lot of work, revising the units for example so that there was free flow between them. It was noted that they were also finishing off the new statutory Government baselines as well as the Teacher lead broader baseline.

The EYFS team was thanked for all their hard work.

In terms of interventions, the IHT noted that Governors would be scrutinising any funding received for these including the tutoring programme. The IHT explained that the School had not yet used this for external tutors as they were hoping to train some of their current TAs to take on the role. This required 10-11 hours of training that was not available until November.

Following a Governor question, the IHT confirmed that the School did collaborate and share good practice with other schools in terms of the new EYFS curriculum. B Elia was also part of a number of partnerships as well as the Headteachers who met regularly.

A Governor questioned how the School increased children's cultural capital, particularly those from a disadvantaged background. The IHT explained that with limited funding, the School worked to ensure that the offer in School was rich in cultural capital. An example of this was the project on Kenwood where the School ensured that all children were able to attend. The next half term's project on space

would involve the School bringing in the planetarium so that all the children were able to see and experience it.

The Infant DHT had also been working on curriculum overviews, which plotted those experiences and identified where the diversity was in the teaching of those areas for example. She highlighted the importance of ensuring diversity within the curriculum and being very clear on that.

A Governor asked how frequently the School obtained student feedback. The IHT noted that this was still an area for development. She explained that the School continued to use such things as worry boxes, circle time and school council but they were finding that the children still needed more practice.

The DHT noted that the pandemic had impacted on the ability of children to talk about their learning and so the School were currently investing more in this.

Governors thanked the IHT for her updates and extended their gratitude to all the staff for their continued hard work.

Junior School

Governor attention was drawn to the Junior SIP, added to the Governor drive. The JHT provided an overview noting the areas of focus. These consisted of: first quality teaching; non academic barriers to learning and; leadership and management. She noted that of the 12 Teachers, six of them were relatively new which meant that there was a lot of learning and support that had to be undertaken.

The JHT highlighted the importance of planning with this years' focus on English and Writing, which had suffered a lot during the pandemic. She explained that the teaching of Writing had been redesigned and now consisted of a four-phase approach. Feedback from Teachers has been positive as it had allowed them a longer time to prepare the children so the independent work had been much better.

The JHT noted that the School continued with its interventions although this was becoming increasingly challenging with the limited number of staff. She added that she and Brookland Junior School had applied for a recovery grant and each received £10,000. The funds would be used to target the non-academic barriers to learning.

In terms of quality teaching, the JHT explained that the School continued to focus on the curriculum as they had started before the pandemic.

A Governor questioned how the School developed cultural capital with the children. The JHT explained that this was undertaken by ensuring that the children had as many practical experiences as possible. She added that the theme of diversity also ran through the curriculum.

A Governor questioned how the School were developing its communications with the parents. The JHT explained that they had recently had a parent Teacher consultation for Y3 and were planning to do a similar one for Y4 after half term. She added that she also wanted to restart tours again.

Governors thanked the JHT for her updates and extended their gratitude to all the staff for their continued hard work.

21/85 Safeguarding

Governor attention was drawn to the KCSIE documents circulated as part of the agenda papers.

Governors confirmed that they had read and understood the document.

Governors were reminded to complete Safeguarding Level 1 training if they had not already done so.

Safeguarding Policy

Governor attention was drawn to the policy, circulated prior to the meeting. A Governor raised concern that the policy was not personal enough. The IHT noted that the policy had been taken from the School Bus and was longer in nature as included a number of key details.

The IHT agreed to review the policy with the intention of streamlining.

Subject to these changes, Governors **RATIFIED** the policy.

21/86 **Policies**

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

Teaching Appraisal and Pay policy

The Headteachers confirmed that the policy had been circulated to staff with no comments received.

Complaints Procedure

A Governor noted that she had some observations and comments on some of the wording and agreed to discuss this further with the Headteachers. It was confirmed that these were not substantial changes.

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

ICT Plan

The JHT reminded Governors that she had sent them information about the School's ICT plan in June 2021. Due to the timing of the project, Governors had **AGREED** to approve the capital expenditure of £10,759.60 via email.

As the project progressed however, two additional pieces of equipment needed to be purchased- one monitor and one screen. This increased the project total to £11,460.60.

The JHT confirmed that the project had all been completed and had already impacted on the quality of teaching.

ICT disposals

The JHT noted that the School had had to dispose of the old IT equipment. It had been stored in the hall but with the new lettings and need for space, this was no longer feasible. The School had therefore disposed of it in the appropriate way. Governors confirmed their **APPROVAL**. The JHT asked that they state this via email.

Actions: All Governors

The JHT confirmed that any future disposals would obtain Governor approval prior.

21/87 **Governor Training**

It was noted that Sanaz Saifolahi and Ruth Henrywood had both completed their Safeguarding training on 14 October 2021.

21/88 **Committee Minutes**

Staffing Committee

It was agreed that the committee minutes would be added to the Governor drive.

Committees were asked to agree meeting dates for the whole academic year.

Action: Committee chairs

21/89 **Report from the Director of Education and Skills** <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/working-children-barnet/information-schools/school-governors/meetings-and-reports> (if available)

Governors noted the report and its contents.

21/90 **Any Other Business**

Skills Matrix

Governors were reminded that they would be expected to complete their skills matrices shortly.

The Chair agreed to review whether there was functionality to complete this on Governor Hub.

Action: Chair

21/91 **Dates of Committee meetings**

- I. Curriculum – TBC
- II. Finance – TBC
- III. Premises – TBC
- IV. Inclusion & Pupil Wellbeing – TBC
- V. Staffing – TBC
- VI. Heads and Chairs of Committees – TBC

21/92 **Dates of Governing Body Meetings** (all at 6pm)

Dates of future meetings were confirmed as:

- 2nd December 2021
- 3rd February 2022
- 24th March 2022
- 12th May 2022
- 23rd June 2022

The meeting ended at 8.27pm