

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of
Garden Suburb Infant and Junior Schools
Held on Tuesday 4 February 2020**

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

Gerard Wiseman*

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*

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS

Lisa Berger (Junior DHT)

Sarah Jowsey (Infant DHT)*

*Denotes attendance

Part I

20/1 **Welcome**

All Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

Julia Chalfen was thanked for all her hard work in setting up the Governor email addresses and drive.

20/2 **Acceptance/non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Adrian Hodgson, Omar Shah and Lisa Berger.

20/3 **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

Gerard Wiseman noted that he may be a future hirer of the School.

20/4 **Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2019**

The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 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.

20/5 **Matters Arising**

19/114 **Matters Arising**, *19/94 Infant Headteacher's Reports/Updates, email to parents*: Ruth Henrywood agreed to send the final version of the email regarding Governor vacancies to the office staff to add to parent mail.

19/116 **Junior Headteacher's Update**, *School Improvement Plan*: Sanaz Saifolahi noted that she attended a training session with T Barney and the JHT and will now make the next steps.

19/117 **Website Audit**: The IHT noted that this was ongoing.

Governors were reminded to log on to the School Bus and change their password.

It was noted that the collective Governor Skills audit had been completed.

The School were still awaiting the specific Finance Audit from Omar Shah necessary for the SFVS submission.

20/6 **Infant Headteacher's updates**

Headteacher's Report

Governor attention was drawn to the IHT report, circulated prior to the meeting.

The IHT provided Governors with an update on staffing. She noted that H Jones was due to take maternity leave from March and her role would be covered by B Chitha three days a week until the end of the year.

The current number on school roll was 252; numbers had increased by eight with new children in each year group. All new children were EAL.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that at the time of the census, the School had 26 vacancies compared to the current 13 (one in Reception, 10 in Y1 and two in Y2). Whilst any PP funding would be received as an adjustment in year, the School did miss out on the per pupil funding for tall these children. This would have an evident impact on their finances.

Attendance for the Autumn term was 94.93%; this was broken down into different groups including PP and non PP as well as EAL and non EAL. It was noted that PP children had lower attendance than their peers as well as more late arrivals.

A Governor asked for further detail on Persistent Absentees and whether this was more apparent amongst one group in particular. The IHT explained that the figures tended to be higher for this time of year as any single absence counted for a high percentage as it had not yet been a full year.

The current percentage was 13% compared to 11.3% the previous year. A breakdown had not yet been undertaken but the IHT provided some further detail: of the 16 PP children in Y1, four of them were PA; of the 9 in Y2, one was PA and of the 10 in Reception, three were PA. She added that parents were being approached more to try and encourage better attendance; this was being linked to volunteering opportunities in the School too.

A Governor enquired into whether there had been any anxiety in the School regarding the coronavirus. The IHT explained that the School had sent a letter to parents and were exploring options for hand sanitizers etc. This would be discussed further at the Parent rep meeting on 7 February as well as the Premises Committee.

Action: Premises Committee

The IHT reminded Governors of the scheduled Y2 boat trip as well as the Y1 trip to Kew Gardens.

Workshops had been organised for Reception parents focused on physical education as part of the Healthy Schools work. A session for each class was scheduled for parents and their children (including younger pre-school siblings), followed by a session with staff looking at the school environment. Governors were welcomed to attend the final session on 26th February.

Governors highlighted the importance of physical activity and its link to a readiness to learn and wellbeing.

The IHT noted that this were also supported by the PSHE curriculum and the Relationships and Health curriculum. The policies for these would be uploaded onto the School website for parental discussion; parents had been involved in the formulation so far.

Following a Governor question, the IHT confirmed that the School Council had also been involved with this, designing posters to encourage healthy eating for example.

A Governor enquired how physical activity would be measured throughout the year. The IHT explained that this was still in progress and would be planning accordingly. The JHT added that this could not be as accurately measured in the Junior School but children received at least two hours each week (lessons). She added that staff had learnt a number of games from coaches that they had then taught themselves. In addition to the new pitch, these games had improved the behaviour at playtime significantly.

Governors extended their thanks to Mr McGwinn and Mrs Alam. A presentation to Governors from Mr McGwinn, Junior PE Co-ordinator, was welcomed for the next meeting. Mrs Alam, the Infant PE Co-Ordinator, could give the infant presentation at a later meeting.

Action: JHT

School Improvement Plan

Copies of the School Improvement Plan, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

The IHT noted that topics were progressing well.

The IHT was thanked for her updates and documents.

20/7 Junior Headteacher's updates

Copies of the JHT report, circulated prior to the meeting, was received and noted by Governors.

There was currently 355 pupils on roll.

Attendance for the Autumn terms was 95.96%. The JHT noted that was a slight concern with attendance, in particular in Y6 where there had been a virus amongst the children. It was also the term where children often took time off to visit potential secondary schools for interviews and assessments.

She added that the School had sent out approximately 25 letters to parents about attendance. There were 46 pupils who had 90% or less attendance. Whilst there were reasons/narratives for each of these children, the School needed to ensure that they were closely monitoring this.

A Governor raised concern about the 25 PA who had EAL and asked why this was the case. The JHT explained that this was primarily due to extended holidays abroad. A lot of these families had strong ties abroad. Whilst the majority of parents were very compliant, a hard line newsletter had been sent out to parents the previous week detailing this further.

Governors requested for the number of fixed penalty charges to be added to the next report with comparative numbers from the previous year.

Action: JHT

A Governor challenged as to why there was a whole Maths team but only one individual managing English (as outlined in the staffing structure).

The JHT explained that the previous year there had been a real focus on Maths and it was a key area of the SDP. CPD opportunity has been offered to staff who were passionate about Maths and the embedding of Maths Mastery. She added that the School really had a team approach to things and this allowed opportunities for professional development, support and succession planning. A TLR had been offered in the School with a focus on Maths for this academic year, with a particular focus on development in the lower school and preparation for the statutory times table test.

English was normally planned by the SLT as it was a key skill that ran across all subjects; Mrs Berger played a central role in this. It was suggested that the staffing table be updated to reflect that more clearly.

The behaviour of pupils was discussed. There had been four incidents of physical assault, one incident of persistent disruptive behaviour and two incidents of racist/homophobic abuse. The number and reasons for exclusions were tabulated in the report.

The JHT noted that both the girls' and boys' football team had reached the final of the football tournament which was scheduled for the following week.

Following a Governor question, the JHT confirmed that there were a lot of girls interested in joining the team and there were also a number of boys doing netball.

Governors commended the level of physical activity and highlighted the focus and importance of the conduct of the children during the lessons.

School Improvement Plan

Governor attention was drawn to the School Improvement Plan, circulated prior to the meeting. The JHT updated Governors on the various actions.

The JHT was thanked for her updates.

20/8 Policy Ratification

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

- **Financial Management Policy and Procedures**
- **Lettings Policy**
- **Scale of Charges for Lettings**

Following a Governor question, it was noted that the School were looking into how other outside spaces were managed. This would be added to the document.

Additionally a benchmarking exercise had been carried out with other Schools and it was noted that the School needed to be more competitive with its pricings.

- **Charging Policy**

A Governor questioned why there had been no reference made to the PTA funds specifically for School improvements in the policy. The JHT explained that this was because the PTA was a separate entity/charity. The statement "voluntary donations requested at the start of the year" would be added to the document.

It was noted that the Junior School no longer accepted cash or cheque; payments had to be processed through Parent mail. Julia Chalfen explained that this helped to better prepare parents for Secondary School; she confirmed that she offered assistance to parents through the process.

The necessary changes would be made to the document.

- **Anti-Fraud Policy**

Governors were reminded that the Governing Body had a collective responsibility for this.

- **Whistleblowing Policy**
- **Near Miss Policy**

Following a Governor question, it was confirmed that relevant forms were available throughout the School and parent volunteers were aware of them. Governors discussed whether all parents should be made aware of the forms but noted the importance of being clear that they were specifically based on the Health and Safety of the *premises*.

It was agreed that a similar poster to the safeguarding one would be created and displayed around the School to raise awareness.

Action: IHT

- **School Security Policy**

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that practicing the Emergency Response plan with the children may cause unnecessary anxiety. The process would be re-highlighted at the next staff meeting.

A Governor questioned whether every visitor was escorted to and from the School office as outlined in the document. Following discussion, the phrase "with some form of discretion" would be added for clarity.

Action: IHT

Following a show of hands, Governors **RATIFIED** the policies, subject to the amendments mentioned.

20/9 Update on Safeguarding Audits – Infants and Juniors

Francoise Wagneur noted that she had completed a rigorous Safeguarding Audit of both Schools. The SCR had been reviewed and all records were in place and compliant. The report would be submitted to the Inclusion committee and sent to J.Morris at the LA.

Francoise Wagneur was thanked.

20/10 Minutes of Committees

Premises

Minutes of the meeting would be circulated.

Finance

An overview of the discussion was provided. The committee had scrutinised the Three Year Plan, the budget forecast, best value exercises and the completed SFVS. Following a Governor question, it was clarified that the SFVS was a document that evidenced that the School were meeting the correct financial standards in their operations and Governor scrutiny.

Following a show of hands, Governors **RATIFIED** the SFVS. This would be submitted to the LA accordingly.

Governors were reminded of the tight budgets that the Schools were operating within. There was close to no contingency and major deficits were expected moving forward. The budgets had only been balanced due to the highly proactive Business Managers and PTA strategically targeting fundraising at specific activities.

Whilst the School continued to plan, the challenges were evident. The impact of reduced pupil numbers for example was becoming more apparent. The Infant School however was expected to benefit from the National Funding formula, which had been capped the previous year.

20/11 Long Term Financial Planning

Governors were reminded of the extraordinary FGB meeting scheduled for 5 March. The format would run as a workshop and brainstorming session. The Chair agreed to circulate an agenda.

Action: Chair

Minutes of the Finance Committee would be added to the Governor drive for Governors to review in advance of the session.

20/12 Named Governors Update

Sanaz Saifolahi had attended the Pupil Wellbeing meeting in the Junior School; notes from the session would be added to the Governor drive.

Action: JHT

It was noted that with the new RSE policy, parents would only have the right to withdraw their children from very few/specific parts. The JHT noted that she would be discussing this with the PTA and would share the resources with them at their next meeting.

Following a Governor question, the JHT noted that the previous year, only two parents from Y3 withdrew their children.

The policies would be reviewed in detail and the Curriculum and Inclusion committees.

Francoise Wagneur noted that she had met with S Jowsey to discuss Foundation subjects. The high workload was evident and the improvements with this were in progress.

20/13 **Governor Training, Visits & Development update for Spring term**

Governors were reminded of the training offered by the LA.

Slides from the Pupil Wellbeing training held at the School on 27 January would be added to the Training folder.

Action: JHT

Further wellbeing sessions were planned for staff on 26 February and pupils on 11 March 3.30-5pm. Governors were welcomed.

20/14 **Report of Director of Education and Skills Spring 2020**

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/working-children-barnet/information-schools/school-governors/meetings-and-reports>

Copies of the report, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

1. School Funding

The DfE announced the allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant to local authorities on 19th December 2019. Colleagues in the school funding team have been processing the numbers since then in order to generate indicative allocations to primary and secondary schools through the school funding formula.

The enclosure (Appendix 1: Indicative School Budget Allocations) provides details of allocations to individual schools, including comparative figures on budgets for 2019-20 and indicative budgets for 2020-21. It also shows the school rolls with the 20/21 figures updated from the October census.

All primary and secondary schools will receive a minimum increase of 1.84% per pupil through the pupil-led element of the schools funding formula, which is the maximum Minimum Funding Guarantee allowed by the DfE. Schools that benefit from the national funding formula may get higher increases, as there is no cap on gains this year.

Governors noted this information.

2. Early Years Funding

From 1st April, schools and academies will record all their nursery children on the Synergy system and will be paid monthly by the Early Years funding team.

Governors noted this information

3. Local Area SEND inspection

In the very near future, Barnet is due an inspection under the Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inspection Framework. This inspection is conducted jointly by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). During the inspection, Inspectors will review how we meet our responsibilities to children and young people (from birth to age 25) who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Inspection covers the three areas of Education, Health and Social Care.

Governors noted this information.

4. SEND Strategy Consultation

The LA is undertaking a review of the Barnet's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy (2017 – 2020) to make sure that it reflects the current needs in Barnet, and provides a framework for all partners supporting children and young people with SEND to work to over the next few years. The strategy is for everyone involved with SEND, including parent carers, children and young people, headteachers, governors, school and setting staff, health and social care professionals and the voluntary sector. The strategy will set out Barnet's vision, principles and strategic priorities that aim to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people aged 0-25 years with SEND. An initial consultation on what is working well and areas for improvement is taking place in January and February, which will be followed by a consultation of the Draft SEND Strategy, and sign off in April 2020.

Governors noted this information.

5. Looked After Children Transition Hub

In October 2019, the Barnet Virtual School, in collaboration with Richmond, Kingston, Windsor and Maidenhead Virtual School (delivered by Achieving for Children) and St Mary's University were awarded a £765,000 research grant, for eighteen months, by the Youth Endowment Foundation (YEF) for a feasibility study to implement a Transition Hub for children in care aged 11 to 14. The YEF was established in 2019 with a £200 million endowment from the Home Office. In October 2019 the YEF announced that 22 projects across England and Wales would share in £16.2m to help prevent youth offending by intervening early to stop children getting involved in crime. **The Transition Hub is one of the 22 projects.**

Governors noted this information.

6. Ofsted Consultation

Ofsted are seeking views on the removal of the exemption for outstanding schools, colleges and other organisations delivering publicly-funded education and training. Some schools, colleges and other organisations delivering publicly-funded education and training, that were rated outstanding by Ofsted at their last inspection, are legally exempt from further routine Ofsted inspection. This consultation seeks views on the removal of the exemption. The consultation is open until 24th February 2020. Governors are encouraged to respond to this consultation giving their views. Follow the link <https://consult.education.gov.uk/inspection-and-accountability-division/removal-of-the-outstanding-exemption/>

Governors noted this information.

7. Barnet Local Plan Consultation

The Local Plan is one of the most important documents that must be produced for the Borough. This document sets out a planning framework of 51 policies and 67 site proposals. These will help shape the future of Barnet over the next 15 years, balancing a need to respond to a changing population - with new homes (46,000) and new jobs (27,000) as well as securing the community infrastructure such as schools to help support this growth – while also maintaining the qualities that attract people to live in Barnet.

Governors noted this information.

8. Capita People Solutions Update

The LA would like to welcome **Clare Alan–Waller** to Capita People Solutions. Clare joined us at the beginning of September as our new HR & Payroll Services Director for Education.

9. Governor Services: Updated Affordable Offer

The LA have reviewed the Governor Services offer from April 2020. They will be offering a single Governor Support Programme which includes training and advice. This reviewed offer will include the re/introduction of governor training courses according to demand and forthcoming changes.

The training programme can be found at: www.barnetce.org.uk (click on 'All Traded and other Training' and then 'Governor Services').

The Chair agreed to review the Governor Services offer; this would be discussed in line with the budget discussions

10. Governance Self-Evaluation Audit Enhanced Feedback Session

Many Governing Boards have submitted their annual Governance Self-Evaluation Audits. This was included in the previous version of this report and will continue to feature in future autumn term reports. The tool is used to help drive improvement in the quality and impact of governance.

This term, Governor Services has arranged an enhanced feedback and knowledge sharing session to review audits collectively. This session takes place at **7pm, Monday 9 March at Foulds School** and will be ran by Bronwen Tumani, National Leader of Governance. More information and registration details are available, along with all Governor Training.

11. Policy Schedule

The Department for Education (DfE) recently released a new statutory policy schedule which provides guidance for policy management for both maintained schools and academy trusts.

Governors noted this information.

20/15 Any Other Business

Complaints Policy: Sanaz Saifolahi agreed to review the Complaints Policy

RSE Governor: Evatheia Elsiwidy agreed to be the RSE named Governor

20/16 Dates of Committee meetings

- a. Curriculum: 12 March 2020
- b. Finance: 23 March 2020
- c. Premises: 19 March 2020
- d. Inclusion and Wellbeing: 3 March 2020
- e. Staffing: 13 March 2020

20/17 Dates of Governing Body Meetings

- a. Extraordinary Meeting: 5 March 2020
- b. Spring II: 26th March 2020
- c. Summer I: 14th May 2020

d. Summer II: 23rd June 2020

The meeting finished at 8.15pm.