

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of
Garden Suburb Infant and Junior Schools
Held on Wednesday 14 October 2020 2020 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*
Gerard Wiseman (Junior Parent)*
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)*
Andrea Bailey- School Business Manager*

AGENDA

Part I

20/56 **Welcome**

Governors were welcomed to the meeting. Andrea Bailey, new Business Manager was introduced and welcomed.

The Headteachers noted that the staff and children had returned to school very positively.

20/57 **Acceptance/non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Paola Riddle and Tara Ward Ammoun. Biljana Elia had informed that she would be slightly delayed.

20/58 **Appointment of Chair**

Nominations for the position of Co-Chair were welcomed at the meeting. Governors considered the nominations received on behalf of Omar Shah and Ruth Henrywood.

Upon a show of hands, the Governing Body unanimously **RESOLVED** that Ruth Henrywood and Omar Shah be re-appointed as Co-Chairs for the Academic Year 2020/2021, or until their successors were appointed.

20/59 **Appointment of Vice Chair**

The Chair invited nominations for the position of Vice Chair. Governors considered the nomination received on behalf of Gerard Wiseman.

Upon a show of hands, the Governing Body unanimously **RESOLVED** that Gerard Wiseman be re-appointed as Vice Chair for the Academic Year 2020/2021, or until his successor were appointed.

Gerard Wiseman noted that he was content to continue in the role but only until December 2020. Governors were asked to approach the Chairs if they were interested in taking up the role.

20/60 **Governor Appointments**

Governor attention was drawn to the CV and supporting documentation circulated previously in regard to Pam Omeye Howell.

The Chair proposed that the Governors appoint Pam Omeye Howell to the role of Co-opted Governor for a four year term ending on 13 October 2024.

Following a show of hands, Governors **APPROVED** the nomination.

Pam Omeye Howell would be invited to subsequent meetings.

It was noted that there were still vacancies within the Governing Body with a particular need for Governors with specific Finance and Marketing expertise. The Chair agreed to complete an audit of Governors' collective skills to identify these gaps.

A pro forma would be circulated to Governors to complete.

Action: Ruth Henrywood/All Governors

20/61 **Annual Declaration of Business Interests**

Governors were requested to complete the pro forma provided in their agenda packs for the meeting and return these to the clerk/school office for inclusion in the Register of Business Interests.

20/62 **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

The IHT declared her role as part of the Board of Directors for BELS.

20/63 **Committee Structure and Membership**

Governor attention was drawn to the Committee structure and membership, circulated prior to the meeting. Governors **AGREED** that the structure should remain, with Governors invited to share their views on membership.

It was noted that shortages and skills gaps would be identified following the skills audit.

20/64 **GB Priorities 2020-21 and strategic planning**

Governor attention was drawn to the Governing Body Priorities 2020-21 and Strategic Planning documents circulated prior to the meeting.

A Governor enquired into whether it would be more plausible to have SIP areas for Governor Links. The IHT explained that some of these sat within specific committees and so this may be difficult to organise. Sanaz Saifolahi noted the utility of having a Wellbeing Governor that could be aligned with her current role as Pupil Voice Link Governor.

A Governor questioned what the process for Governor visits was in the current climate. The IHT noted that whilst there was a Visitor Protocol in place, in was probably best, in the short term at least, that visits are undertaken with the relevant staff member via zoom.

The IHT noted that she was still conducting parental tours for prospective parents but these were socially distanced and with smaller numbers.

It was suggested that wording from the Visitor Protocol be incorporated into the Governor Terms of Reference as well as any other relevant documentation.

Action: Sanaz Saifolahi

20/65 **GB Terms of Reference 2020-21**

Governor attention was drawn to the Governor Terms of Reference, circulated prior to the meeting. Subject to the addition mentioned above, Governors **RATIFIED** the document.

20/66 **Governor code of conduct**

Copies of the Governor code of conduct, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

Following a show of hands, Governors **RATIFIED** the Code of Conduct. The Chair agreed to sign the document on behalf of the Governing Body.

A Governor suggested that there be a formal Governor walk around the School, even if at Headteacher level, to be able to confirm all the Covid precautions and protocols that had been put in place.

The Chair agreed to organise this with the Headteachers

Action: Ruth Henrywood

It was noted that similar visits would have to be undertaken for other statutory roles for example Safeguarding and Health and Safety.

20/67 **Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020**

The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were virtually **CONFIRMED** by the Chair, as a fair representation of the meeting.

20/68 **Matters Arising**

There were none.

20/69 **Infant Headteacher's Report/Updates**

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

The IHT noted that the return to School had been generally calm and positive with the new procedures and protocols well received. The main concern continued with maintaining necessary distance between staff.

New procedures were in place for the start and end of the day which allowed the IHT to communicate with parents at the front of the School as well as having a temporary outdoor classroom to allow parents to settle those children joining in Reception.

It was noted that the staggered playtimes with tight lunches and rotas were actually having a positive impact in that there were fewer incidents and behavior issues. The playground was divided into area for each class with them having something specific to play with in each; this made the time more

purposeful. A Meal Time Supervisor (MTS) had also been assigned to each class which was helping to build better relationships.

The IHT noted that the new children joining Reception had settled in well with it being their first time in an institution however their self-help skills were limited. One child had an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) but this had only been completed for half of their needs and therefore the hours assigned were not sufficient. The IHT had assigned the child another support staff member at the cost of the School. The IHT explained that this was mainly due to the fact that due to Nursery closures, the learning and behavior difficulties had not been picked up and the relevant paperwork submitted; there had been less communication with some nurseries over the lockdown period. The IHT confirmed that this had been raised with the relevant bodies as the funding could not be sustained.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the objectives within the SIP had been broken down in the report. The suggestion that Objective 2 include reference to 'lost learning and learning with disadvantaged children' was welcomed although this was the wording that had been provided by the LNI.

The IHT further explained that these targets (from the SIP) filtered into all staff's appraisal targets, inclusive of TAs and 1-1 staff. Main focuses included wellbeing, a broad and balanced curriculum and filling the gaps in learning.

A Governor enquired into whether the SENCo's working from home arrangements were temporary and whether the limited physical presence was anticipated to have an effect on the children. The IHT confirmed that this has been put in place during the pandemic noting that wherever possible, working from a desk was encouraged to be done outside of the School site due to the limited space and need for separation.

The IHT added that the SENCo had been onsite on a number of occasions to conduct observations with the children for example. Tracey xxx also played an important role in this working closely with the children in the classrooms. It was noted that a lot of paperwork had been completed as well as meetings with parents via zoom. Meetings had also been set aside with staff and support staff to ensure consistency and sharing of evidence etc.

A Governor noted the altered communication modes and questioned whether the School planned to undertake a staff survey to better understand their views on how it was working. The IHT welcomed this. She noted that there were a number of processes in place to facilitate communication with staff meetings on Monday mornings in the hall as well as additional ones via zoom. Staff meetings were also working well within year groups as both the IHT and Tracey could visit each group in their respective rooms and have more focused discussions and updates.

The IHT added that there was a meeting with TAs scheduled for the following week. Monday morning briefings continued as well as a staff newsletter which was circulated each Friday.

A Governor noted that pupil numbers for the census were lower than expected and asked for further clarity on the implications of this. The IHT explained that there had been a lot of change over the Covid period. Over the last few years School numbers had also reduced by 11 children per year, to 233 this year. The IHT explained that the School were 37 under full complement, with each child accounting for £5,000 worth of funding.

The IHT noted that this was not a specific Garden Suburb issue. She had commissioned a survey with other local schools about this and of the ones that had responded so far, approximately half of them stated that their numbers had dropped. Action at a borough level was necessary.

Alexia Dobinson noted that for a number of families, more local schools had been sought in order to avoid the need for travelling on public transport.

The IHT added that a number of schools had seen a reduction in income in terms of lettings etc. over this period. The School were re starting some of their clubs and lettings for example gymnastics.

The IHT drew Governors' attention to the positive news section of her report which included a number of celebrations and initiatives undertaken by the children including Black History Month.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that staff had been partaking in a number of the training resources available through the Covid learning recovery programme run by BPSI. She confirmed that whilst not all staff were partaking in these sessions, the aim was for the learnings to be cascaded to all staff. The sessions were also recorded and could therefore be shared.

In terms of the budget, the IHT explained that she aimed to finish the forecast by 16 October. The main additional cost at present was the TA in Reception working with children with additional needs. The supply budget was currently being used to facilitate this.

A Governor noted the reference to replacing the server and questioned why the School could not capitalize on other platforms for example the cloud. Alexia Dobinson explained that this had been enquired into and deemed not possible due to the current set up. Capital funds would be used to pay for this.

It was suggested that a wider discussion on technology and the IT infrastructure be had at the next Premises Committee meeting.

Action: Premises Committee

The IHT was thanked for her report

20/70 Junior Headteacher's Report/Updates

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

The JHT noted the initial start to School, with an outbreak of Covid that had to be dealt with. Whilst this was challenging, it was a good learning and training exercise.

It was noted that signs of tiredness, lack of resilience and the impact of lockdown were starting to be seen amongst some of the children. The School was prepared for this however.

Face to face parent teacher consultations had been completed which had received very positive feedback.

There were a number of changes to schedules with sharper timings for lunch and playtimes; half the children were in the dining hall and half in the hall. This had helped to minimise incidents and made for a much calmer experience.

SLT were working on the premise that every interaction was an intervention and so they were aiming to be as visible as possible, having more informal contact with the children. It was noted that attendance today was 98% and parents had been very communicative and responsive being vigilant about their child displaying any possible symptoms.

The JHT noted that one of the biggest challenges was for staff to remain vigilant and maintain distance. The JHT thanked all the staff for their continued commitment and adaptive nature.

It was noted that new guidance had been received from the LA which seemed to set out the new process that schools should follow if there was an outbreak. This effected the communication between the school and Public Health England with the school asked to complete their own risk assessments.

A Governor challenged this interpretation noting the resources available through the DfE helpline etc. The Governor urged that, with entering the flu season, clear communications and actions were necessary.

The JHT agreed to circulate the correspondence from the LA on this for clarity.

Action: JHT

The JHT drew Governor attention to the new 'parking people' positioned around the School to assist with traffic and parents stopping where they should not be. Special cameras had also been installed on Child's Way and the School were hoping to extend these to other areas.

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that a survey with parents had been completed to better understand access to devices and the internet. It was noted that, of the returns, there was only a small group of parents who said that they did not have access. *Showbie* was the online platform used. Further work was being undertaken with parents to ensure that they utilised this resource and encouraged their children to do so.

A Governor noted the social and emotional activities being undertaken with the children referred to in the report and asked for further clarity on what these entailed. Janina Quinn explained that when the children returned to school for a few weeks in June/July there was a big focus on PSHE type activities where children were encouraged to share their concerns and experiences during lockdown. At present, PSHE lessons were run every day for an hour or spread across the day. These sessions provided opportunities for the children to share activities undertaken during the lockdown or summer holiday, both positive and negative. They also discussed how things had changed and how they felt about that as well as the importance of good routines and structures.

It was noted that much of the guidance placed an importance on facing trauma rather than ignoring it. Calm corners had also been developed in each classroom with a lot of mindfulness activities available for the children to access as and when they felt the need to.

In addition to this, a lot of work has been undertaken on the scaling of emotions, explaining to the children that they could be angry at something specific but this did not need to impact on everything. Word wheels had also been ordered which helped children to identify and discuss different feelings and emotions felt internally compared to those appearing externally. National Mental Health day had also been celebrated with face to face assemblies for each year group.

A Governor asked for clarity on the role of the Year Group Coordinators in Y3 as depicted in the structure chart. The JHT explained that this was due to the part time and job share division of the role.

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that the Covid recovery project entailed ten sessions of approximately two and a half hours each run by BPSI. It was noted that the JHT and DHT had attended the initial sessions with other staff scheduled to attend the relevant ones. These would then be cascaded to the rest of the staff. Of the sessions attended thus far, the importance of effective teaching and ensuring the effective differentiation with planning had been highlighted.

The JHT added that the School also had INSETs planned as well as baseline assessments to further support this. Governors were invited to attend the Twilight sessions on Tuesday 3 or 17 November if they wished.

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that the catch up funding expected of £16,000 had been included within the report. The School had also registered for the technological scheme although this was only available if a school had a significant number of children who were self-isolating or if the area went into a local lockdown. Additionally, the School had registered interest in the National Tutoring Programme.

A Governor questioned whether the School had enquired into the resources offered via the Endowment Trust in terms of mentoring offered to schools. This was led by Teach First. The JHT agreed to review this further.

Action: JHT

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that the secondary school transfer list would be made available for the next meeting. Approximately 30 children had gone to Christ College and seven had gone to Henrietta Barnet (the latter had changed their admissions criteria). It was noted that pupil numbers had increased to 351.

A Governor enquired into whether the JHT would be organising school tours for prospective parents. The JHT noted that she would follow a similar approach to that in the Infant School and it was envisaged that these would begin in November.

Governors extended their thanks and gratitude to staff over this period.

The JHT was thanked for her report.

20/71 **Policy Ratification**

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

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

A Governor enquired into whether it was useful to make more explicit reference to the processes followed by staff in terms of safeguarding. The IHT agreed to add this accordingly.

Appraisal and Pay

It was agreed that a general Covid statement be added to the policy (and any other relevant policy) to explain the impact of Covid on classroom observations

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

20/72 **Minutes of Committees**

The IHT agreed to review the committee minutes and confirm that these were all held centrally on file.

Action: IHT

Each committee was tasked with reviewing their Terms of Reference at their first meeting, to be confirmed at the next FGB meeting.

20/73 **Named Governors Update**

It was noted that Sanaz Saifolahi had attended a session on wellbeing which provided an overview of what should be looked out for in terms of wellbeing for staff, Headteachers and children. She noted that there were a lot of useful ideas for Governors on how they could effectively support after Covid as well as the challenges and questions to put to leadership without overburdening them.

20/74 **Governor Training, Visits & Development update for Autumn term**

Ruth Henrywood noted that she had also completed a training course via the NGA. She agreed to send details of this to Alexia Dobinson to log.

20/75 **Report from the Director of Education and Skills** <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/working-children-barnet/information-schools/school-governors/meetings-and-reports>

Governor attention was drawn to the Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning - Report to Governors, circulated prior to the meeting.

1. Transfer of the Education and Skills service to BELS

As well as supporting schools and families through the covid19 pandemic since the closure of schools in March, the Education and Skills service has had to respond to an organisational challenge, also the result of covid19, when Mott MacDonald, trading as Cambridge Education, notified the council of a 'Force Majeure' event in April as a result of the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the consultation, the council decided the service should transfer to a company that would be wholly owned by the council and so established a new company called Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS).

All services would continue as usual, or at least as usual as possible in covid19 conditions.

Governors noted this information.

2. COVID recovery curriculum and support to schools

Schools were still in the process of settling their children back into a version of 'normality', with all the challenges that this presented. Senior Leaders have, with governor support, created comprehensive risk assessments, ensured that both staff and pupils feel safe to come back to school and are working hard to reassure parents and families in a world of uncertainty.

It was noted that the LNI team would be visiting schools, either virtually or in person, and the visits would reflect the approach that would be taken by Ofsted during the autumn term.

3. Safeguarding Update

During this extraordinary time of the pandemic, schools have worked in close partnership with the local authority to safeguard our most vulnerable children; this category includes children with EHCPs and those with a social worker.

During 2020/21 BELS will continue to provide support to schools through sharing information and good practice through breakfast briefings and weekly MS Teams drop-in sessions, as well as being a regular agenda item at meetings for heads and deputies.

The document provided Governors with further detail on the processes and procedures.

Governors noted this information.

4. Safeguarding Audit

To assist schools in evaluating their procedures for safeguarding and Child Protection including considerations during Covid-19 Pandemic, Heads should have received the annual Safeguarding Audit, which has been revised to take into account recent events.

This audit has been designed to assist schools in ensuring that they have the evidence to show that their procedures are good and to identify any actions needed to make improvements.

It was advised that Governors have regard to the following documents whilst undertaking the audit:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- London Child Protection Procedures 5th edition
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

The Headteachers noted that a safeguarding audit would need to be conducted with the Safeguarding Governor using the new format.

The IHT agreed to circulate the KCSIE document for all Governors to return to say they had read and understood it.

Action: All Governors

5. Education Endowment Fund (EEF)

School governors and trustees played a crucial role in improving school performance by providing support and challenge to the headteacher and their leadership team. It was essential, therefore, that Governors were able to access and use the best available evidence-based resources.

Set up in 2011, the EEF was an independent charity which had since been designated by the government as the What Works Centre for Education. Its mission was to break the link between family income and educational achievement.

The EEF supported schools (as well as early years and post-16 settings) with two critical aspects of their work:

- improving outcomes for 3-18 year-olds by increasing the quality of teaching and learning, and
- closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged young people and their peers.

6. Governor Training

There was a pause in the Governor Training Programme last term and guidance was instead provided related to Covid-19 (including the Governors' Covid-19 Handbook). Schools were not charged for this period. This term, the Governor Training Programme returned and was available for registration at: www.barnetce.org.uk/ (click on 'All Traded and Other Training' and then 'Governor Services' to see this term's courses).

Given the current circumstances, courses would be delivered online this term. Governors would simply need to click on the link sent to them in their confirmation email and enter the meeting password when prompted (no prior applications would need to be downloaded).

7. Prevent Online training via The Home Office

The Home Office was offering an introduction to the Prevent Duty and explained how it aimed to safeguard vulnerable people from being radicalised to support terrorism or becoming terrorist themselves. This provided an important foundation on which to develop further knowledge around the risks of radicalisation and the role that schools play in supporting those at risk. This training addressed all forms of terrorism and non-violent extremism, including far right wing and Islamist extremism threatening the UK. This e-learning had been developed by HM Government following consultation with a range of individuals and organisations. It had benefitted from the feedback of teachers, local authority officials, community-based groups, youth workers and many other links to further information can be found at the end of the training.

The training can be found at: <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk>.

Governors were reminded to complete this training.

8. Schools Libraries Resources Service

The SLRS was a traded service that supported reading and learning in schools by loaning books/artefacts/role play resources/guided reading sets and more, to subscribing schools. Termly and half termly topic and fiction loans were curated to support the delivery of the national curriculum in the classroom. The Guided Reading sets were one of the most popular resources. Each collection comprised 15 books and many had been bought to satisfy teacher requests.

9. Handling Complaints during the Coronavirus outbreak

In accordance with Section 29(1) of the Education Act 2002, all maintained schools and maintained nursery schools must have and publish procedures to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provided, for which there were no separate (statutory) procedures.

A Governor enquired into whether the appropriate changes had been made to the policy. The Headteachers agreed to review this.

Action: Headteachers

20/76 Any Other Business

There was none.

20/77 Dates of Committee meetings

- I. Curriculum – TBC- Finance – Tuesday 10th November at 8.15am
- II. Premises – TBC
- III. Inclusion & Pupil Wellbeing – Tuesday 3rd November at 8.15am
- IV. Staffing – Friday 6th November at 8.30am
- V. Heads and Chairs of Committees – Friday 13th November at 9.30am

20/78 Dates of Governing Body Meetings (all at 6pm)

- Thursday 3rd December 2020
- Wednesday 3rd February 2021
- Wednesday 24th March 2021
- Thursday 13th May 2021
- Wednesday 23rd June 2021

The meeting ended at 8.30pm