

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of  
Garden Suburb Infant and Junior Schools  
Held on Thursday 2 December 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\*  
Vacancy x3  
Biljana Elia (Infant Teacher)\*  
Isabel Clarke (Junior Teacher)\*  
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

**Part I**

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>
<b>21/95 Governor Appointments</b>	It was also suggested that a Staff Governor election be held to allow for other nominees to come forward for the position. Alexia Dobinson noted that she was happy to continue in the role if no other applicants came forward.	<b>IHT</b>
<b>21/95 Governor Appointments</b>	The Chair noted that she and the Vice Chair would review the Governors' skills audit to identify the skills gap and initiate a recruitment drive based on that.	<b>Chair/Vice Chair</b>
<b>21/98 Matters Arising</b>	<b>21/78 Appointment of Governors:</b> The JHT confirmed that the updated Governor information had been added to the Governor Hub. She noted that there were still a few Governors who had not submitted their skills matrices. Governors who had not yet done so, agreed to provide these as soon as possible.	<b>Governors</b>
<b>21/98 Matters Arising</b>	<b>21/83 GB Strategy, Proposed Committee structure:</b> The Chair explained that she, the Vice Chair and Headteachers needed to meet to finalise the Terms of Reference documents.	<b>Chair/Vice Chair</b>
<b>21/99 GB Strategy</b>	The Chair agreed to update the committee list accordingly.	<b>Chair</b>

21/93 **Welcome**

Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

21/94 **Acceptance/non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Pam Omeye-Howell, Francoise Wagneur, Sanaz Saifolahi, Lisa Berger and Andrea Bailey.

## 21/95 Governor Appointments

The Chair provided an update. She noted that Aneka Grover had chosen to resign from her role as Governor; her term of office had just ended. The JHT wished to thank her for all her contributions to the School with her time spent on recruitment, attendance on panels and scrutiny of policies etc. The rest of the Governors joined the JHT thanking her.

Omar Shah had also resigned from his role as Governor. The JHT and Governors thanked him for his continued contributions to the School and the Finance committee in particular.

It was noted that Tara Ward-Ammoun's term of office had come to an end. Governors considered the nomination to re appoint her for a further four-year term.

Following a show of hands, Governors voted to **RE APPOINT** Tara Ward-Ammoun to the position of Co-Opted Governor for a four-year period ending on 1 December 2025.

The Chair provided an overview of the outstanding vacancies, with one for Co-Opted Junior parent and another two/three Co-Opted Governors. It was necessary to clarify the number of Co-Opted Governors with reference to the Instrument of Governance.

It was also suggested that a Staff Governor election be held to allow for other nominees to come forward for the position. Alexia Dobinson noted that she was happy to continue in the role if no other applicants came forward.

**Action: IHT**

The Chair noted that she and the Vice Chair would review the Governors' skills audit to identify the skills gap and initiate a recruitment drive based on that.

**Action: Chair/Vice Chair**

## 21/96 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

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

## 21/97 Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2021

The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2021, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were virtually **CONFIRMED** by the Chair, as a fair representation of the meeting.

## 21/98 Matters Arising

21/78 **Appointment of Governors:** The JHT confirmed that the updated Governor information had been added to the Governor Hub. She noted that there were still a few Governors who had not submitted their skills matrices. Governors who had not yet done so, agreed to provide these as soon as possible.

**Action: Governors**

21/80 **Appointment of Vice Chair:** It was confirmed that Sanaz Saifolahi had agreed to take up the position of Vice 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 noted that she had been unable to locate a template.

21/83 **GB Strategy**, *Proposed Committee structure*: The JHT explained that the six Finance committee meetings could also include the FGB meetings.

21/83 **GB Strategy**, *Proposed Committee structure*: The Chair explained that she, the Vice Chair and Headteachers needed to meet to finalise the Terms of Reference documents.

**Action: Chair/Vice Chair**

21/83 **GB Strategy**, *Proposed Committee structure*: Governors were reminded to inform the Chair if they wished to move committees.

21/88 **Committee Minutes**: Committee Chairs were in the process of arranging meeting dates.

#### 21/99 **GB Strategy**

The Chair noted that she had received a few emails from Governors who wished to step down/change committees. Sanaz Saifolahi had stepped down from the Staffing committee and Paul Cohen had stepped down from the Pupils committee. The Chair agreed to update the committee list accordingly.

**Action: Chair**

#### 21/100 **Headteachers' reports**

##### **IHT report**

Governor attention was drawn to the Infant School report, uploaded onto the Governor Drive before the meeting. She also drew Governors' attention to the assessment summary report, which had also been uploaded.

The IHT noted the sad loss of L Hyde, a Teaching Assistant from the School. Her funeral had been held today which a number had attended. Governors wished to extend their condolences to her family and friends. They noted the asset she had been to the School.

The IHT provided an update on COVID noting the increasing number of cases amongst both the students and staff. There were currently five staff members isolating. The number of cases did not yet qualify as an outbreak.

The IHT noted the current financial situation at the School. She explained that they had formulated a new Five Year Plan based on the most current forecast. She had met with representatives from the LA who reviewed the plans and agreed the position in terms of the forecast and asked the School to re do the Five Year Plan to make it most up to date. The reduced deficit had been utilised for this.

The IHT reminded Governors of the previous deficit which was at £58,000. This had been reduced to £37,000 as a result of staff changes as well as a number of grants that had been received. In September, the School completed a further forecast, which reduced the deficit to £27,000. The School therefore completed the new Five Year Plan using this, based on a worst-case scenario in terms of pupil numbers and detailed how the School intended to get back to a positive surplus position.

Governors commended the School and all those involved for reducing the deficit so significantly. They extended their thanks.

A Governor questioned whether any flexibility could be built into the Plan for further contingency purposes. The IHT explained that it was very difficult to do that although they had not included some of the grants that they expected to receive. She also had not included any money that the School might make from lettings for example.

A Governor noted that there had been a number of changes this year, noting the most important being A Saunders leaving after having been the SENCO for so long. She questioned how confident the School were in the current arrangements in fulfilling the needs of all categories of children who needed extra support and if the biggest impact was on T Alam and the TAs.

The IHT confirmed that children were being well supported with a number of targeted teaching interventions taking place within the classroom. Frequent assessment was also undertaken to ensure these targeted interventions were the sufficient. She agreed that the main impact was on those members of staff and they had been put on very tight timetables to ensure those children did not miss out.

She added that the School made sure that they included coverage of a broad and rich curriculum especially with the increased expectations that the Government and Ofsted were imposing. Emily Davis was undertaking tuition work and she had been registered with the programme for training. The School were also focusing on the Phonics programme and reading.

In terms of Maths, Maths Mastery sessions were being put in place every day in addition to the daily Maths lessons. The focus was on wider skills sets.

A Governor noted the Phonics and e-books and questioned whether the School had assessed how accessible these were to families.

The IHT explained that all reading books were now phonetically decodable with a tight reading scheme. There were however not enough books to send them home and so at present, parents only had access to eBooks. This had only in place for one week so far and so they had not accessed the accessibility.

Following a Governor question, the Deputy IHT explained that a complete set of Phonics books for one phase cost £650. At present, the School were using PTA funds. In the new year, they would also do a sponsored read to try and raise more money to purchase further reading sets.

A Governor noted the book purchases, birthday books to be donated in each class and the Books Wish list. She questioned whether more work could be done with local bookstores for example. The IHT noted that there were no longer any bookshops that local to the School. She noted that it was still a good ambition but was aware that this would not reap the same benefits as the Amazon wish list.

A Governor noted the Amazon smile account that had been set up previously and questioned what the success of this was. The IHT noted that whilst this was promoted through the School newsletter, it would be discussed more at the Marketing Committee.

A Governor noted that the Residents Association also offered grants that could be utilised for the purchase of books.

The IHT was thanked for her report.

## **JHT report**

Governor attention was drawn to the JHT report, circulated prior to the meeting and added to the Governor Drive.

It was noted that both Evathia Elsiwidy and Paola Riddle had both undertaken their skills audit etc. at the School. Evathia Elsiwidy had then had an informal tour of the School. She noted how impressed she was with the children, their behaviour and their enthusiasm. She added that they were very respectful and inspired, celebrating black and British history.

In terms of COVID, the JHT noted that there were both cases amongst students and staff, with approximately six in a class across the School. She confirmed that she had communicated this with the DfE. She highlighted the difficulties and challenges with the staff absences and the increasing pressure this was placing on the School. This was being further exacerbated by the Omicron variant and the uncertainties with it.

The JHT noted the time and money spent on COVID, approximating £25,000 in total and definitely attributing to the increasingly difficult financial position.

A Governor noted the number on roll with that Y3 and Y4 seemed quite low. She questioned how this affected the budget.

The JHT explained that the numbers had been lower on census day than expected with this having an anticipated financial impact on the School budget of approximately £48,000. Whilst more children were joining, children were still leaving the School.

A Governor made reference to the behaviour report and the incidents of "physical Assault" and "inappropriate touching" listed. She questioned whether it was the same children associated with these and if parents were informed.

The JHT confirmed that correct procedures were followed in all circumstances. She added that the behaviour had been outstanding recently and each incident had its own context.

A Governor noted that Y6 were significantly behind their Greater Depth (GD) targets in writing and reading and questioned what specific actions were being taken to get this year group closer to their target. The JHT explained that reading and writing had suffered the most during COVID and so the focus of the SDP was very much on these two areas (as it had been on numerous occasions).

She added that the School had changed the way writing was taught; in four phases with additional Insets, monitoring sessions and lesson observations focused on it. She explained that the children seemed to be enjoying it more, the more they were being immersed in it.

It was noted that whilst none of them could be graded as at GD at present although it was still early in the year and they were building up their resilience. She added that Teachers were also using reading to aid this, to help the children obtain the ability to gain inferential meanings from texts and then use the language gained from the reading in their independent writing.

A Governor questioned how much children were expected to write and whether judgements were based on work produced in class or at home. The JHT explained that this was more dependent on the genre of writing and whether the child included the features of that genre in their writing; it was more about quantity than quality. She added that writing was Teacher assessed.

A Governor noted that out of 12 targets (3 for each year group), only three Pupil Premium GD targets were higher than the general GD targets. She questioned if the GD targets for PP children were sufficiently ambitious. The JHT explained that staff were always rigorous when undertaking target setting. She also added that PP children often had other factors that needed to be considered for example EAL and SEN. She noted that some did not have KS1 data either. High expectations were important and staff ensured that these were always maintained.

In terms of Finance, the JHT explained that further detail was available in the Finance committee minutes. She added that a forecast would be completed in January and at that point the School would be able to decide whether they would need to complete a recovery plan like that of the Infant School. She noted that this was highly likely especially with the drop in pupil number.

A Governor questioned whether there was a pattern amongst those students who had left the School. The JHT explained that the biggest movement had been in Y3 and Y4 and this tended to be a result of families moving out of the area. Alexia Dobinson added that the Y3 cohort was also when the birth rate started to drop.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the number of EAL children in the Infant School was high at 80%; this referred to children who spoke another language at home in addition to English.

A Governor noted the previous issues with the availability of Speech and Language therapists through the LA and asked whether there had been any improvements. In particular, she questioned how those with S&L requirements in their EHCPs were being supported.

The IHT explained that the situation had not really improved and hence this was one of the reasons why the School had submitted a bid for the language enrichment programmes and Occupational Therapy. She added that next term, the School were starting a club where they had an Occupational Therapist come into School to work with Teachers, TAs and students.

The JHT was thanked for her report.

### 21/101 **Policies**

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

**Infant Attendance Policy,  
Infant Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy,  
Junior Anti-Bullying Policy**

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

### 21/102 **Committee Minutes**

#### **Resources Committee**

Copies of the Resources committee minutes had been added to the Governor Drive. The Chair of the Committee provided an overview of the meeting noting the detailed discussion on the budgets. The committee commended the HTs for all their hard work in managing a very difficult position.

#### **Staffing Committee**

Copies of the Staffing committee minutes had been added to the Governor Drive. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, Ruth Henrywood provided an overview noting the focus on priorities for staffing in the coming year as well as staff wellbeing. The Committee had also discussed the administrative support team and how best to use this resource to help with workload. They also reviewed the lettings and how to make that process easier and generate more income.

#### **Pupils Committee**

Copies of the Pupils committee minutes had been added to the Governor Drive. The Chair of the Committee provided an overview of the meeting noting the work the Schools were doing to target the children and the number of interventions in place.

### 21/103 **Any Other Business**

It was noted that Ian Harris was retiring as the Director of Skills and Education at the LA and the IHT would be involved in the recruitment process for appointing his successor.

It was noted that the School would be organising a collection for A Saunders, singing Christmas carols on 15 December.

21/104 **Dates of Committee meetings**

- Finance: 25<sup>th</sup> January 22, 15<sup>th</sup> March 22, 14<sup>th</sup> June 22
- Pupil Well-being: Tuesday 1st March 22, Tuesday 7th June 22
- Staffing: Friday 21<sup>st</sup> Jan 2022 at 9.15am

21/105 **Dates of Governing Body Meetings** (all at 6pm)

Dates of future meetings were confirmed as:

- 3rd February 2022
- 24th March 2022
- 12th May 2022
- 23rd June 2022

*The meeting ended at 8.05pm*