

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of
Garden Suburb Infant and Junior Schools
Held on Thursday 3 February 2022 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)

Vacancy

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

**CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (12:
2Teachers; 2Parents from each Schl)**

Alexia Dobinson (Infant Support)*
Francoise Wagneur*
Paul Cohen* (Infant Parent)
Anthony Shayle*
Adrian Hodgson*
Vacancy x2
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

22/1 **Welcome**

Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

22/2 **Acceptance/non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Paola Riddle.

22/3 **Declaration of Pecuniary Interests**

No Governor present declared a pecuniary interest in the business to be discussed. The Chair reminded Governors of her role as Board of Trustees and the IHT as on the board for BELS.

22/4 **Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2021**

Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2021, were virtually **CONFIRMED** by the Chair, as a fair representation of the meeting.

22/5 **Matters Arising**

21/95 **Governor Appointments:** It was noted that the Staff Governor election had not yet been undertaken. An error was identified on the agenda; it was necessary to move Alexia Dobinson from the role of Staff Governor to Co-Opted Governor (as discussed at the previous meeting).

21/95 **Governor Appointments:** A review of the Governors' skills audit still needed to be arranged.

Action: Chair/Vice Chair

21/98 **Matters Arising**, 21/83 **GB Strategy**, *Proposed Committee structure*: The Chair explained that she, the Vice Chair and Headteachers were scheduled to meet to finalise the Terms of Reference documents on Friday 11 February at 11am.

22/6 Headteachers' reports

IHT report

The IHT provided a verbal update. She noted that a written report would be provided at the next meeting.

The IHT noted that the School had had a number of events including a Y2 trip to the RAF museum and the inflatable show for the Y1 space project. She added that there had also been a number of seasonal parties before the Christmas break as well as a carol performance in the playground.

She explained that the School had experienced a Covid outbreak a few weeks ago with 16 cases of Covid including two classes with six cases or more. As a result of this, the School had increased its Covid measures with staff wearing masks, separate assemblies, increased awareness and cleaning. The School had reported this to the NHS schools line and Public Health Barnet had emailed to ascertain if the School required any assistance.

The case numbers had reduced to a current eight amongst children and two amongst staff; this was the second week of the increased measures.

Due to these measures, the Great Fire of London workshop had been postponed to the following Friday.

The IHT noted that a child had set off the fire alarm in the dining hall today. Whilst unplanned, they were able to evacuate all pupils in approximately three minutes from different places around the School. As this was the second time that the same fire alarm had been set off, the School were looking into installing flaps over them to prevent such accidents reoccurring.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the biggest challenge at present was staff wellbeing and cover. As discussed in the Staffing Committee, it was becoming increasingly difficult to source agency staff to cover classes/absence. This seemed to be a wider shortage with agencies citing that they had no staff to offer. Many agency workers had also taken on roles as part of the National Tutoring programme so were unavailable.

A Governor referenced the fact that both the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher were having to be in class teaching more as a result of this. The IHT explained that the Deputy Headteacher taught the equivalent of two days per week which was release for the ECT and three sessions of PPA. This was on rota. She added that she also regularly taught Reception on a Wednesday morning.

This had however increased due to the lack of available cover, particularly with covering breaks etc. Governors noted the impact of this on their ability to focus on leadership.

The IHT added that TAs had also been fantastic in helping to cover classes, being very resilient and adaptive. This did however mean that they could not deliver the same amount in terms of interventions etc.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the School continued to reinforce the importance of testing for both children and parents. They also offered help in administering the tests for students, when parents who found it difficult.

A Governor noted the discussions in the Staffing Committee and how much pressure staff had been put under recently. She highlighted the importance of finding ways to support staff with their own mental

well being. Governors commended the resilience of staff and thanked them for their continued efforts and adaptability but echoed the importance of wellbeing.

Pupil Premium Update

Governor attention was drawn to the Pupil Premium update and supporting documents, uploaded onto the Governor drive. The IHT provided an overview noting that the DfE template for reporting had been used. She asked that once Governors had reviewed it in detail, to submit any questions. The document would then be added to the School website.

The IHT explained that it was formulated according to academic year, which was slightly challenging with the funding being received by financial year. She noted that some of the information was based on figures that were not yet known. The document also helped to identify the challenges the School were facing and these were focused on the Curriculum intent and content. She added that it detailed why the School did what it did, it's focus on the children and their learning behaviours. It also explained the School's diverse cultural capital offer ensuring that its approach was all inclusive.

The IHT noted that some of the activities/interventions had been possible due to funding received from other grants (separate to Pupil Premium funding). As it was not sure whether these grants would be offered again, the funding would have to come from Pupil Premium monies to continue them.

The IHT noted that the School had also registered with the National tutoring Programme and they had a TA who worked with a number of pupils on a rolling basis each receiving 15 hours of Phonics tutoring.

A Governor raised concern about the lack of funds limiting after school activities and clubs and suggested that actions be taken to engineer some elsewhere. The IHT explained that an analysis of which pupils were attending would be necessary in the first instance to ascertain what offer was available.

Following a Governor question, the IHT reiterated the importance of cultural capital at the School, which the documents helped to evidence. Governors highlighted the importance of this noting that many children had not been able to experience this during lockdown; particularly the disadvantaged pupils.

She noted that the children were also taking part in some tree planting in the following weeks as part of the Tiny Forest project.

The IHT was thanked for her updates and reports.

JHT report

The JHT provided a verbal update.

She noted that the last Covid outbreak was in December. The School managed to have their seasonal fair but had to reduce mixing subsequently with a number of challenges at the end of term. She explained that the School had been able to source agency cover as well as having part time staff who were often able to cover.

The School were currently in the midst of another Covid outbreak; the peak had been 43. She added that whilst some Schools had been sending classes home with more than six cases, they had decided not to do that.

The Ancient Egyptian day would continue the following day.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the School had been able to continue a number of the cultural capital activities. In the first week of half term for example M Freer had visited to talk to

the children about the role of an MP. They had also had a number of class assemblies for Y3 where parents had been invited.

A number of sports activities were ongoing with the boys recently winning the Dyck Bailey Cup for example. The School would also be running the project with the Minnie Masters again this week, which were a company that turned the children's work into print, and then this was displayed in a gallery for parents to come and view and purchase.

The number of children signed up to the School journey was currently at 79 (out of 90) which was very positive. It was confirmed that the School would assist those families that were unable to pay.

This week was Mental Health week and so there were a number of activities underway focused on that. The following week was Maths week which would culminate in a Maths cake competition.

RR Grant

Governor attention was drawn to the Renaissance Recovery grant update that had been uploaded onto the Governor Drive.

Governors were reminded of the £10,000 grant that the School received as part of the Renaissance Recovery Grant. Details of the spend were outlined in the report and the JHT provided further information. She noted that they had re organised the Music Coordinator's timetable so that he was able to undertake some mentoring/self-esteem focused musical theatre workshops with the children. Pupils who struggled with self-confidence or needed support to express themselves had been chosen to take part. The children also knew the Music Coordinator well which helped with continuity.

Pupil Premium report

Governor attention was drawn to the Pupil Premium report, added to the Governor Drive. The Headteacher provided an overview.

She noted the focus on Reading and Reading interventions, with funds being allocated and spent on similar initiatives as previous years. She reminded Governors that attainment of Pupil Premium pupils was not always as high as non-Pupil Premium children especially at Greater Depth and so there was a focus on them.

The social and emotional challenges were also highlighted and so some of the funds had been used for a counsellor that came in every two weeks. The counsellor worked with both the children and families and also offered an early morning session for staff to access.

She reminded that a lot of SENCo time was also spent on this, supporting vulnerable families, completing referrals and providing emotional and health support. Hence, some of the funding was coded to this role. Similarly, some was allocated to LSA interventions as well as the development of cultural capital.

The JHT noted that they had also been supporting children take part in extracurricular activities. This was sometimes funded from the Sports Premium too.

A Governor questioned whether there was a plan and schedule in mind on how and when to develop pupils' voice/survey/etc. in order to capture data on Wellbeing. The JHT explained that they had already started to gather pupil voice, preparing for the visit the following term. She added that all Coordinators had been actioned with meeting with the children to talk about the curriculum and what they were learning. This also helped to develop the leadership skills of the Coordinators.

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that the figures in "Challenge numbers addressed" referred to the four challenges identified that were then used as a cross reference to the interventions in place to support those challenges.

A Governor noted that many of the interventions and initiatives also benefitted SEND and EAL children and others and questioned if the School portioned total cost accordingly between PP funding, Catch up funding and others. The JHT confirmed that this was in place, detailed in the spreadsheet.

A Governor questioned whether all pupils had access to clubs or if numbers were limited. It was explained that the School already had waiting lists and if demand was higher then the clubs would send another coach to accommodate.

Governors wished to echo their thanks to all staff for their continued work and the environment they continued to create for the children.

The JHT was thanked for her updates and report.

22/7 Policies

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

Allegation of Abuse against Staff
Reporting Low Level Safeguarding Concerns
Safer Recruitment Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Support Staff Appraisal and Pay Policy

The following policies had been discussed at approved at the Finance Committee meeting:

Financial Management Policy
Lettings Policy and Scale of Charges
Anti-Fraud Policy
Whistle Blowing Policy
Charging Policy
Security Policy
Business Continuity Policy

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

22/8 Finance

The IHT provided an update noting that the forecast for December had been completed and the deficit that had been reduced significantly to £27,000 had now risen to just over £30,000. This was primarily a result of staff absence and cover as well as a few long term staff absences. She noted that the Finance committee had reviewed the budget in detail and there had been no fundamental alterations with most of the changes in income being offset by those in expenditure.

The JHT provided an overview noting that the previous £10,000 deficit had increased to £25,000. This again was due primarily to staff absence and cover. There had been a lot of absence in the summer term as well as since September. She explained that this position had been shared with the LA and she was now expecting them to respond and request a recovery plan to be formulated. She highlighted the challenges overall particularly with the funding reduction.

A Governor questioned to what extent the fall in pupil number in the Infant School impacted upon the Junior School and what the School was putting in place to circumvent this.

The JHT agreed that this was having an impact, exacerbated by the fact that there had been a lot of movement overall.

The IHT noted a similar problem in the Infant School and explained that she would be talking to Alison Dawes at the LA about whether the School should be limiting the intake i.e. having two classes as opposed to three.

Governors discussed the feasibility and likelihood of this. They highlighted the importance of fundraising and income generation overall. The Chair added that a plan on income generation/lettings was being formulated to be reviewed by the Finance committee and subsequently the FGB.

It was suggested that after discussing with the Headteachers, the Chair contact the LA to raise the challenges with funding etc.

Action: Chair

The Chair reiterated that whilst maximizing income was important, it was more important to protect the education and pastoral experience of the children. Governors therefore re affirmed their support for any decisions taken to protect the educational experiences as well as the wellbeing of staff even if this impacted further on the budget deficits.

22/9 Committee Minutes

Finance Committee

Copies of the Finance committee minutes from 1 February had been added to the Governor Drive.

Staffing Committee

Copies of the Staffing committee minutes from 21 January had been added to the Governor Drive.

22/10 Report from the Director of Education and Skills

The Report had been added to the Governor Drive for information.

22/11 Governor Training

Governors were reminded to inform Alexia Dobinson of any training completed.

Sanaz Saifolahi noted that she had attended the Wellbeing Forum on 9 December.

Tara Ward- Ammoun noted that she was also signing up to a training session.

22/12 Any Other Business

Governors were welcomed to visit the School to undertake a tour.

It was noted that both a Premises and Health and Safety visit needed to be scheduled with the relevant Link Governors.

22/12 Dates of Committee meetings

- Finance: 15th March 22, 14th June 22
- Pupil Well-being: Tuesday 1st March 22, Tuesday 7th June 22
- Staffing: TBC

22/13 **Dates of Governing Body Meetings** (all at 6pm)

Dates of future meetings were confirmed as:

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

The meeting ended at 8pm