



HIGHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting
Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 7:00 pm via Zoom

Part 1

Governing Body Membership	
Headteacher (1): William Dean (WD) <i>ex officio</i>	LA Governor (1): Cllr. Liz Morris (LM) 14.09.24
Staff Governor (1): David Calvert (DC) 11.11.23*	Parent Governors (5): Julie Bland (JB) 01.07.23 Yousaf Bhatti (YB) 01.07.23 Leona Asamoah (LA) 29.03.23 Sue Cheung (SC) 16.11.24 James Green (JG) 16.11.24
Co-opted Governors (4): Rebecca Lewis (RL) 16.09.23 Laura Eden (LE) 02.08.23 Steven Porter Chair (SP) 14.09.24 Louisa Caswell (LC) Vice Chair 16.11.24	Associate Members: Liam Frost (LF) 14.09.24 Billie-Jean Daniels (BJD) 01.07.23 * Patricia Prichard (PP) 13.11.21* Sam Evans (SE) 19.03.23*
Also in attendance: John Twomey - Clerk	

*Asterisk denotes absence

Part 1

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 SP welcomed all to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE; DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Apologies were received from David Calvert. There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2020; MATTERS ARISING

3.1 The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and would be digitally signed by the Chair and sent to the school.

3.2 Matters arising

- 3.2- Outstanding forms: **LM** advised that Declaration of Interest and Code of Conduct forms needed to be submitted by **SE**, **SC** and **JG** and sent to her. Also, governors needed to ensure their biogs were up to date and sent to her.
- 5. 6- National Tutoring Programme: **WD** confirmed that the Programme would be in use for the summer term.
- 17.1- Governor records: **SP** reminded governors that committee records needed to be kept up to date on Governor Hub. Some folders need updating.



- Governors asked if safeguarding committee records could be safely kept on Governor Hub. The site was secure but it may be necessary to restrict access. This can be looked into.
- 17.2: Pupil Premium plan: **WD** will recheck if it was agreed by email.

4. COVID UPDATE

- **Remote Education Provision**

4.1 WD advised that the school has really had to focus on its online teaching strategy. The starting point was which digital platform to use. Google Classrooms has emerged as the preferred option. It can be used in two ways – to show a teacher teaching live to camera in a classroom or to show a teacher teaching remotely and beaming it into the classroom. The latter is being used mostly. A blended learning approach is being taken at the school with a mix of recorded content and live Zoom lessons.

A typical remote learning day might involve the following:

- Pre-recorded introduction to the day ahead
- An English lesson via Zoom. The teacher introduces the topic, gives instruction and then sets work tasks for children to do at home. The teacher stays live on camera where necessary to assist children who may need more input. Then, there is a return to plenary at the end.
- A Maths lesson via online links such as White Rose or My Maths. Teachers are present via Zoom for the plenary session.
- A mix of activities via online links.
- Breakout rooms are now being used as the school has a greater understanding of online platforms now.
- Children submit photographs of their work for the teacher to inspect.
- Children join their friends at the end of the afternoon to interact educationally and socially.

Provision is much improved from the first lockdown. The school has learned a lot of lessons from that experience.

The feedback from parents has been positive.

Some problems have been noted where there are multiple children in one family. Devices may have to be shared and this requires some coordination. Also, it can be challenging to coordinate school lunch times with family meal times.

Learning packs have been delivered to all pupils

- **On Site Education Provision**

4.2 A significantly higher number of children (of critical workers or who are vulnerable) are eligible to attend than at the previous lockdown but not all do. Attendance has run as high as 70 + last week. There is a lot of overlap with the Friday afternoon catch-up group. The education support staff are playing a very active role in the onsite provision.

All nurseries have been required to remain open. The School is hosting nursery and reception children together. A group of about 15 attends each day. It is felt that this is as much as the school can cope with. This is also the belief of the union that represents the support staff.

- **Risk management**

4.3 The risk assessment has been updated in the light of the latest lockdown.



- **Safeguarding**

4.4 The school is maintaining its vigilance in regard to pupils at home with which it has concern.

- **Staff well-being**

4.5 The atmosphere is good. The weekly staff meeting is continuing. The phase structure appears to be working well.

- **Testing**

4.6 Testing kits are awaited. There are twice-weekly tests off-site for the time being.

4.7 JB advised that she had joined WD on a Learning Walk around the school today. She visited all classes. She found the atmosphere throughout the school to be pleasant. The children seemed happy. She was impressed by the effort made by teaching staff. The blended learning mix appeared to be working well. The online/digital teaching was of good quality.

4.8 Governor Questions

Governors asked how many laptop devices have been allocated to children. WD advised that the school had received 23 laptops from the Department for Education. All children who had needed one had received one. Some had been allocated to staff as well. All pupil households have devices but there probably are some where devices are shared. RL advised that the school still has some laptops. The school has also supplied a camera to one pupil and has availed of the government Wi-Fi subsidy. The engagement levels on Zoom are much better this time around. The school can offer printing facilities if the household is near the school. Printing material for distant children is an issue because of the ban on non-essential travel. Staff are tending to use work programmes that don't require material to be printed.

Governors asked if it would be possible for the teaching material for the day to be uploaded before 9:00 AM as this would be an ease to parents. WD advised that it should. The school will try to get it done by 8:00 AM so that there can be a clean start to the school day at 9:00 AM with the welcome video.

Governors asked how the school tracks the wellbeing of children over time. WD advised that it was a challenge and there wasn't an easy answer. A key indicator is absence from Zoom sessions. When this arises, the school follows it up. It will generally try to reach out to someone who is struggling with attendance issues by offering an opportunity to attend school in person once a week. The school has certain flexibility in this regard because some of the children attending every day have a lesser degree of vulnerability and daily attendance may not be absolutely necessary for them. The school is also looking at the possibility of a PE/dance event for the whole school at some stage. The coming half term should also give a boost to wellbeing.

Governors asked if there had been any issues regarding free school meals. WD advised that meals or vouchers were being offered. Vouchers were the more popular option.



Governors asked how many EHCP children are in school. RL advised that eight children with EHCP's were in school at the moment and one other is expected to be shortly. Of the remaining children with EHCP's, a teaching assistant is supporting two, some are able to engage with online lessons and teachers are remotely supporting the remainder.

Governors asked how the school monitors children at home. WD advised that the school keeps its own informal register of children at home. If online sessions are missed over a couple of days, teachers follow it up. If it continues thereafter, a referral to the Pastoral Support Team is made.

Governors asked about the school's obligations viz. nursery provision. WD advised that it was a difficult situation. Schools were expected to offer it. However schools were also mandated to minimise the risk of the spread of infection and risk increased with attendance. Presently, 60 children were entitled to attend nursery provision but only 15 were actually attending. The school feels that higher attendance levels would be unsafe. It cannot prevent children attending but it hopes to persuade parents on safety grounds not to send their children to school. If more children attend on site, the school may have to allocate teaching staff to be present and this might jeopardise the remote learning provision. There is no easy solution. In the meantime, the school continues to offer remote learning to the nursery cohort even though it isn't obliged to. There has been good feedback on it.

5. Finance Update

LC advised that the Resources Committee had held a meeting last week.

5.1 Finance

They looked at the quarter 3 budget report and the three year budget plan. There would be a significant impact in funding terms if the school remained shut until Easter. The deficit to March is projected to be £65,000. The deficit for the full year is projected to be £76,000. Weekly Covid-related costs are estimated to be £8000.

On the positive side, the school has received its catch-up funding and some monies from the borough. It has also made some cost savings. The Committee is assuming for caution that the school will stay closed until Easter but this may not prove to be the case.

The refurbishment of the nursery costs will be recouped once the school returns to normal provision. The Committee had a discussion on whether the government will clear school debts after Covid lifts. She will post the minutes and budget on Governor Hub.

5.2 Personnel

One teacher is on maternity leave and cover is in place.

The school wants to change its payroll and HR provider. It is looking at a company called EPM for payroll services and the Borough of Haringey for HR services. It is anticipated that new contracts for these services will be in place from 1 April.

A governor advised that Haringey's HR services had previously performed poorly under a peer review, so due diligence would be important. WD said he was aware; hence the school had stopped using them at that time. However it is understood that they've turned the service around and are now well regarded.



5.3 Premises

The Wave 2 works are continuing.

The Committee's next meeting is in April.

6. Headteacher's Report

A comprehensive written report had been sent out in advance of the meeting which governors had read. Many of the items covered on the report arose elsewhere in the meeting. Accordingly it was not necessary to discuss the report at great length. Nonetheless **WD** took governors through the report, highlighting certain items as follows:

- **Curriculum:** despite the lockdown, the school is working to keep its curriculum as full as possible. The *Reading Adventure* programme is planned for the children once they return to school.
- **Assessment and standards:** all statutory assessments have been suspended this year. However the school will still do its own assessments which will be broadly in parallel with the statutory ones.
- **Racial Equality:** there had been good feedback from BME staff in regard to the staff meeting to address the area of unconscious bias.
- **SEN (per RL):** in the autumn term, the SEN provision was able to return to almost 'normal service'. On the whole children with EHCPs were still supported in accordance with their Plans. At the start of this term, they were contacted to ascertain whether they would be attending school and encouragement was given to those whom the school felt would not be well supported at home. Online attendance and engagement of children with EHCPs not attending school is being monitored closely. A number of pupils with lower-level SEND are attending school. Termly and Annual Reviews will take place remotely this term. The school has had one SEND consultation which has been declined. The school will be applying for at least one EHCP this term - a child with Down's syndrome in nursery, and possibly one for a child in Year 3 with a moderate learning difficulty.

7. Committee Reports

- Resources Committee
See Finance Update at 5 above.
- Curriculum and Standards Committee
(Per **SP**) The Committee had met on the 1st of December. They had been given a presentation on reading. They approved various policies. They had been provided with some internal assessments data. Maths was identified as an area where some catch-up will be needed. They had a discussion on unconscious bias. They plan to meet again in one week's time.
- Communications Committee
The Committee hasn't met since its November meeting but is due to meet on 1st of February.
- Community Services Committee
The Committee hasn't met. It probably won't do so until the school reopens.
- Safeguarding Committee
See Part 2 Minutes.



8. School Development Plan

SP reminded link governors that they should be having their second meeting around this time.

9. Policies for approval:

The following policies were ratified by governors:

- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff
- Anti Bullying
- Curriculum
- Homework
- Maths
- Online Safety
- PSHE RSE
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Whistleblowing Procedures

In response to a Governor's question, WD will check that the complaints policy is on the website.

10. Chair's Items

Governors were reminded that all committee meetings documents should be uploaded to Governor Hub within seven days of the meeting.

11. Miscellaneous items:

- Governor School Visits were being made virtually at this time. School Council and Green Council meetings were suspended by virtue of the lockdown.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

There being no further Part 1 business, this section of the meeting closed.

ACTIONS LIST

ITEM NO.	ACTION	ASSIGNED TO
3.2	Complete Declaration of Interest and Code of Conduct forms and send to LM	SE, SC and JG
3.2	Update biogs and send to LM	All governors
3.2	Update all Committee records on Governor Hub	Committee Chairs
3.2	Recheck if Pupil Premium plan was agreed by email	WD
4	Ensure teaching material for the school day is uploaded before 9:00 AM	WD
8	Arrange a second virtual school visit	Link governors



SIGNED

CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BODY

DATE