



**Governing Board Meeting
Wednesday 9th June 2021 at 6.30 pm
online via Zoom**

DRAFT MINUTES

Name	Role	Present	Name	Role	Present
Chris Ampofo	Foundation	x	Will Leaf (Co-Chair)	Foundation	√
Dan Brandt*	Foundation	√	Zoë Miller	Parent	√
Ralph Cator	Foundation	x	Anthony Richards	Ex officio	√
Kwamena Duker*	Staff	√	Cristiana Silvares de Melo	Parent	x
Victoria Heald-Barraclough	LA	√	David Sin	Foundation	√
Lucas Janssen	Co-opted	√	Leandos Taliotis	Foundation	√
Marianne Jenkins* (Co-Chair)	Foundation	√	Joel Wolchover	Parent	√

* Present for part of the meeting

Also present:

Katie Kilgallon Associate Member, T&L Committee (observing)
Janet Gordon Clerk

1. Opening Prayer and welcome

Will Leaf (chairing this meeting) welcomed governors and began the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received in advance from Chris Ampofo and Nicola Christopher. Dan Brandt had sent apologies for late arrival. No other apologies were received.

Documents:

- Charging and Remissions Policy.docx
- Medical Needs Policy Summer 2021.docx
- PF FGB Draft Minutes 2021-05-12.doc
- Proposals for structure for 2021-22 governor meetings.docx
- School Uniform Policy.docx

3. Declaration of interest for items on this agenda

There were no declarations of interest for items on this agenda.

4. School Improvement Plan update

The Chair invited the Headteacher to give a verbal update on the School Improvement Plan.

Safeguarding

The link governor was due to visit the following in and would report to the Board at the next meeting.

Action: Lucas

The LDBS are not carrying out visits to schools because of Covid restrictions, so the annual Safeguarding audit will not be conducted until early in the next academic year. Instead, an audit of the school website will be completed and the report will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

A growing number of schools use an electronic safeguarding system called CPOMS. The school had a relatively low number of Safeguarding referrals historically, so this was not seen as an appropriate investment when considered previously. However, the staff are now spending more time on Safeguarding administration, as there has been an increase in the number of vulnerable pupils and in the scope of referrals, including issues relating to mental health. This system will be evaluated for possible roll out for the new academic year. CPOMS has a number of advantages, including reducing the risks associated with paper based records.

Writing update

A subject audit review was carried out and highlighted the importance of a new model of working, whereby the Writing lead member of staff will be released from classroom responsibilities to allow him to work directly with individual teachers to support them. This individual attention, using the expertise within the school, will provide further refinement of the work carried out to date on Writing. Over the next five weeks and potentially in September, this will involve planning, team teaching, over the shoulder marking and on the spot feedback. The Headteacher reassured governors that Writing is still a priority and focus.

[6.45 pm Kwamena Duker joined the meeting during this item]

Development of Subject Leaders

Each subject leader will be given time this term to complete any outstanding development work that is needed. There will be training with small groups of subject leaders to build their confidence in talking about their subject area. Subject overviews will identify key strengths and areas for development in each subject. Towards the end of the term, a curriculum review training session will look at the finalised curriculum overview documents and consider any adjustments needed for cross-curricular links.

Governors asked whether other subject leaders may be released to work with colleagues if the work of the Writing lead is found to have impact. This would be ideal, as subject leaders have had training and are the most skilled within their subject. This model is expected to be particularly effective for Writing, as the subject lead is a Year 6 teacher with several years' training in Brent and with other organisations, with the skills and knowledge gained from being a Brent moderator. This model could be used in other subject areas, although it is a big commitment, because for effective implementation time must be allowed out of class during the school day. All teachers apart from the PE and Music teachers have classroom responsibilities. There is a balance to be had to ensure that it is a supportive training model. Overall, with the changes in the Ofsted Inspection Framework, there is a need to ensure that all children have a broad and balanced curriculum, with less emphasis on only Year 6 results. This model will give longer-term impact across the whole school.

Governors asked how the impact will be measured. As well as data, the expectation would be more evidence in children's books and in the environment of shared and modelled writing and of improvement in writing.

Governors asked whether work with the LDBS on subject areas will be regular. It is one off training to support subject leaders.

Governors asked how this might connect with link governors for subjects. The Headteacher explained that he was bringing a proposal for next year (item 7). There are some things which are similar and consistent between subject areas that it will be important for all governors to know.

5. Risk Assessment

The previously approved Risk Assessment is still in place, with face coverings being worn in all communal areas and no unnecessary visitors on site.

There has been one positive case, but as symptoms began late in half-term, there was no requirement for contact tracing. Governors discussed the arrangements for testing of close contacts and were satisfied with the Headteacher's response.

Events will continue to be approached with caution. Year 6 graduation is expected to happen outside, class by class, but this is likely to be the only event with parents invited. Some events will take place in September, unless guidance changes.

Home visits for Reception are unlikely, but groups of children will be invited in with parents, a similar approach to the previous year.

[7.02 pm Dan Brandt joined the meeting during this item]

6. Headteacher's Update

Staffing update

One class teacher and two non-teaching staff members will be leaving at the end of the school year. There have been no other resignations. Exit interviews will be offered to these members of staff.

Action: Dan

Governors asked whether there were any operational concerns for the autumn term. The Headteacher was looking at agency and/or internal cover for a three week period in the kitchen. Contingency plans were being made if recruitment for the office is difficult, including an effective handover. All teachers were in place for September.

SEND

The Headteacher informed governors that there had been a consultation with Brent regarding admission of a child with profound high needs. Although there would be additional funding with the child's EHCP, schools have to demonstrate that they are providing the first £6,000 of support. Applications for EHCPs for two other children have been rejected and the school is appealing. Consequently, there will be additional costs, not included in the budget.

Governors asked whether there is anything they can do to support the process. The Headteacher wanted governors to understand that the transition will be slow for the first child mentioned above, as further information is needed from professionals. The school will work with Brent and Social Services.

Governors asked whether there was a need for wider or more specific staff training. The staff are supported with external training from Brent. Before half-term there was training on Communication Keys, which are used in Speech & Language therapy in Brent, and on mutism. The Assistant Headteacher/SENCO is aware of the importance of having professionals leading staff training. Last year there were also two sessions led by Brent on autism. The SENCO works with individual teachers on writing Learning Support Plans.

7. Proposal for Governing Board overview for 2021/22

After discussion with Dan, Zoë and the Clerk about governor monitoring (an action from a previous meeting), the Headteacher had shared a proposal for the approach to meetings and monitoring responsibilities. The next school year will still be affected by the pandemic, so he felt that the most effective model to serve the school and school community would be to continue with the circle model of governance, ie no committees for the next school year, continuing the way the Board had operated in the later part of 2020-21. This focuses the Board's attention on matters that all governors need to know about and broadens governors' knowledge and understanding of the school while ensuring that statutory duties are met. It would support the Board in preparation for inspection by Ofsted. The proposal brings an overall reduction in the total number of meetings with more regular full Board meetings and fewer, more targeted visits to the school with the reorganisation of link roles.

Governors asked whether the Admissions committee would be suspended. This proposal affects only the Teaching & Learning and Resources committees. The Pay and Admissions committee and financial monitoring with the external consultant would continue.

Governors discussed the proposed model and how it could help governors to plan monitoring visits in advance, makes expectations clearer and means that all governors hear reports from link governors. The committees helped distribute workload and a potential pitfall is that a few individuals might volunteer for the majority of tasks, so it will be important to ensure that responsibilities are shared appropriately between Board members.

The Headteacher felt that, on reflection, the expectation of two visits a year for each subject had not been achieved and was not necessarily the best use of time, so a reorganisation of roles around the priorities of the school was more realistic and strategic.

Governors considered the need not to overburden governors and to use their strengths and skills. The aim is to maximise time together in leaner meetings and to work efficiently to make the greatest impact on the direction of the school.

Governors asked whether the Circle model is broadly in line with what other schools are doing. Some schools have moved or are moving to more frequent full Board meetings, others have continued with or returned to having committees. At this school, the change has been as a result of the current context and needs and will be reviewed for the following school year.

The proposal structures link roles around statutory duties and school improvement priorities to enable focused visits. A governor commented on the value of a learning walk led by Graham Marriner. The Headteacher explained that if termly tours of the school are scheduled, there will be opportunities for various governors to visit without pressure to attend each time.

Governors asked whether a working group to prepare for Ofsted inspection would be a useful addition for next school year. Other areas for governors' attention could include continuation of monitoring of Black Caribbean achievement, the distinctly Christian character of the school, vision and values, RE and Collective Worship. An Ethos committee was suggested at SIAMS training.

The Headteacher emphasised the importance of governors having the opportunity to feed back on visits to the school by sharing a brief written report, then the rest of the Board can raise any questions.

Governors discussed the need to ensure that issues that are usually covered by the main committees are included on agendas across the year.

Governors **agreed** to the proposal for 2021-22, continuing with the Circle model and Admissions and Pay committees.

8. GB matters:

- **Membership**

The Clerk advised that one parent governor's term of office was due to end at the beginning of October. The vacancy would be advertised and an election run if required in the autumn term, whether or not they wish to stand again. The Headteacher will make use of tips on recruitment gained from recent training.

- **ABC Fund**

Lucas had contacted Ralph regarding transfer of administration of the ABC Fund.

Governors discussed the process for reporting on the ABC Fund to parents. Communication encouraging donations to the fund were paused because of Covid, as this felt inappropriate when parents may be suffering from work hardship. There is a need to be transparent about what donations are used for after payment is made to the LDBS. The fund has continued to be allocated, as previously agreed by governors, predominantly to music provision which falls outside the curriculum allocation, such as African drumming and steel pans.

Governors agreed that a short letter to parents summarising what the ABC Fund has provided for the children could be a positive message. Year 6 parents could be encouraged to continue to support the community after their child has left the school. The Headteacher will support Lucas in drafting a message to parents.

Action: Lucas

- **Training**

Zoë had attended SIAMS training and Lucas had completed the first of two Safer Recruitment sessions.

Governors were encouraged to look at training opportunities from Brent and the LDBS.

[8.16 pm Marianne Jenkins left the meeting]

9. Policy review

- **School Uniform policy**

The Headteacher advised governors that no significant change was being recommended to this policy. Distinctions between uniform for boys or girls has been removed. The policy takes affordability into consideration in line with current guidance.

Governors asked whether any action is taken on non-regulation hairstyles, as outlined in the policy (page 3). They asked whether it was necessary to include this and whether there was a danger of cultural discrimination. The Headteacher agreed that this text was outdated and agreed to remove the bullet points and the section on hair so that it addressed health and safety issues only.

Governors suggested that a paragraph could be added to explain what the school does to ensure the uniform policy is poverty-proofed and what is done to address hardship, including more proactive, strategic arrangements for distribution of pre-used uniform.

Zoë will email information about poverty proofing to the Headteacher.

Action: Zoë

- **Medical Needs policy**

The Headteacher proposed readopting this policy, which covers current provision.

Governors noted that the section on vision and values (page 2) was misnamed and should read Aims of Policy or similar.

The Clerk offered to send information to the Headteacher about the statutory policy covering children with health needs who cannot attend school.

Action: Clerk

- **Charging and Remissions**

The Headteacher drew governors' attention to the fact that the proposed updates to the policy included an increase to the reductions that the Headteacher can offer to children eligible for Free School Meals for residential trips and clubs. Charging for clubs and Kenzalia has been separated.

Governors **approved** these three policies subject to the amendments noted above.

10. Minutes of the previous meeting (12th May 2021)

- **Accuracy**
- **Matters arising**

Governors **approved** the minutes of the previous meeting as accurate.

11. Any other urgent business

The Chair of the Admissions committee advised governors that an update to the School Admissions Code had been proposed, requiring admissions authorities to give priority to internationally adopted Post-Looked After Children. He will circulate information when this is confirmed.

The previous year, the Board had been granted a variation to the admissions arrangements because churches and places of worship had been closed. This had worked for September 2021 admission, but will be more difficult in the next round of applications, as most places of worship continued to be closed or offered limited attendance. Joel will speak to the vicars and will liaise with the LDBS, as parents will want to know the position for applications for September 2022.

A query raised about the sibling criterion during an admissions appeal will be brought to governors' attention for consideration.

Admissions will be an agenda item at the next FGB meeting.

Action: Clerk

The Chair thanked governors for their attention and questions and closed the meeting at 8.41 pm.
