

Brookland Infant and Junior Schools

Minutes of the meeting held at Brookland Infant and Junior Schools on Wednesday 29 January 2025 at 5pm

LA GOVERNOR

*Lucy Tobin

STAFF GOVERNOR

*Jenny Catley

PARENT GOVERNORS

*Samantha Jayasekera-Heffer (Infant)
*Kate Blumhof (Junior)

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (12)

Gabi Symons- (Junior Teacher)
*Aimee Lipton(Infant Teacher)
*Farnoush Bikdeli (Junior Support)
Michael Farhi
James Clare (Vice Chair)
*Lisa Weinbrenn
*Laura Pincus (Chair)
*Nick Astaire
*Jeff Harris (Infant parent)
*Judith Bernstein
*David Lee
*Daniella Jackson

HEADTEACHERS

*Brenda McCafferty (Infant Headteacher)
*Jenny Aylen (Junior Headteacher)

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Sapna Shah
*Clare Rosen

AGENDA

PART I

25/1 Welcome

All Governors were welcomed to the meeting which had been preceded by the Curriculum Tea.

25/2 Apologies of Absence

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Amy Hurst, Gabi Symons, Michael Farhi, James Clare and Sapna Shah.

25/3 Declaration of pecuniary interests

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

25/4 Governor Appointments

It was noted that Jenny Catley's term of office came to an end on 14 March. As she held the Staff Governor position, the IHT agreed to share the vacancy with all staff and ask for nominations.

Action: IHT

25/5 Part I minutes of the meetings held on 9 October 2024 and 12 November 2024

Part I of the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2024, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

It was noted that Gabi Symons had been asked to complete the incorrect skills audit and so had been sent the correct one.

It was confirmed that Samantha Jayasekera-Heffer was the link governor for SEN, PSHE and RSE and Sapna Shah was link governor for Food and Equalities.

Part I of the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2024, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

Governors were reminded of the offer of Safer Recruitment training available on the National College and encouraged to complete this.

25/6 Matters arising

There were no further matters arising.

25/7 Headteachers' reports

Infant Headteacher

Governor attention was drawn to the IHT report and supporting documents, circulated prior to the meeting. The IHT highlighted the significant level of movement amongst the children.

A Governor asked for further clarity around the codes used for Persistent Absence. The IHT explained that there were no particular codes specifically for illness or religious observance. Most children who took time off work for religious observance did not go below the 90% threshold, this tended to be due to longer term absence. She added that 34% was not high and was slightly below national. There was a lot of illness going around at the moment. The EWO at the School was very proactive and would contact families where necessary. There were also a number of different reasons and circumstances.

The IHT added that there was also a new Attendance support team officer in place which was a statutory role which every School now had. This involved a termly virtual visit from the officer who also had access to the School's registers and they discussed the codes etc and the actions that the School were taking. The ASTO has also been very helpful since the School has moved to Arbor and there were new fields showing on this platform.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that other absences included M-Medical, C-special absence that is confirmed, G- holiday, Z- not on roll yet, O- no reason given. There were multiple codes. A Governor asked if truancy was an issue at the School. The IHT stated that this was not an issue especially as the children were dropped to School.

A Governor asked what the upper limit was for Y2. The IHT noted that it was 90 for all year groups but it could go over this for a variety of reasons including in year fair access for example.

Governors extended their love and support to Amy Hurst and the IHT confirmed that there was no impact on safeguarding and cover would be put in place where necessary.

A Governor asked for further clarity on the exclusion of 2.5days. The IHT noted that an integration meeting had been held with parents and an integration plan was in place which was currently working well.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that Little Wandle was a phonics programme, that was DfE validated.

A Governor asked for more information on what the Letter formation challenges were. The IHT explained that it was a focus in Y1 which originated from the previous year when there was a low percentage of children reaching GLD. This had had an impact on the current Y1 students. The School had therefore introduced the OTTO programme which was focused on movement and handwriting delivered from an Occupational Therapist. They were now looking at how the handwriting policy could be updated to take all of this into consideration.

A Governor questioned why there were a high proportion of supply staff supporting children with SEN. The IHT explained that there were quite a few children who did not have a EHCP after September and it was sometimes a challenge to find the best person to support them. There were also a number of permanent staff who could be redeployed when the children moved up to the Junior School.

Governors reviewed the SEN report. It was noted that the SENCo had put in a bid to join ELSEC, which if successful, the School would get SALT input in the class directly through a programme. They would also obtain input with the children and staff training etc.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that in terms of attainment, only baseline was available and they would be adding to it in February. She added that a few groups had already been identified as requiring further attention and interventions were being put in place inside and outside of the classroom. There seemed to be a need amongst boys and the disadvantaged. There were however quite a small group of disadvantaged children and a number of them were also on the SEND register.

The IHT noted that they had received a visit from their LNI which had involved discussion on Ofsted and what the School were implementing moving forward. The feedback was positive. There were currently 15 children at the School with EHCPs.

Nick Astaire arrived at the meeting at 5.40pm.

Governor attention was drawn to the Pupil Premium strategy, circulated prior to the meeting. A Governor questioned why there were two dates on the document. The IHT explained that the strategy had to be on the School website by December.

The IHT was thanked for her updates.

Junior Headteacher

Governor attention was drawn to the JHT report and supporting documents, circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the SEV, networking visit had been included from last term as well as the assessment/data from the last year. The PP report had also been uploaded onto the School website.

The Juniper report was part of the school's tracking package which data was inputted in to. This was done three times a year and it was used to drill down to what more support was needed and areas where they were working well.

It was noted that the SEF had also been updated.

The JHT noted that the Autumn term had been quite challenging due to the premises issues including the roof repairs. James, the Site Manager was thanked for all his work on this as well as Yazid and Nick Astaire.

She noted that there were still ongoing issues with the heat pump. It was suggested that at the end of the project, the School look at clawing back some of the money due to the payment needed for the generator for the swimming pool, overtime for the site manager as well as some electricity bills.

A Governor noted that the total budget for the PP strategy was £85,867 but the cost was £98k. It was asked where this shortfall was coming from.

The JHT explained that they typically spent more than the allocated PP income on interventions and support to benefit this pupil group. This also benefitted many other pupils and so was good value for money. However, this year the School had applied for additional asylum seeker funding of £11,469 which had enabled them to provide further support for disadvantaged and new to English pupils. The vast majority of PP funding was to support staffing giving flexibility within year group teams to support the different needs of the pupils.

A Governor asked for more information on how the coaching model worked and whether it was for every teacher or those who needed more support.

The JHT explained that they endeavoured to make sure all staff took part in coaching either within school or beyond. This was built into CPD planning for the SDP, into action plans, appraisal targets and INSETs. For some staff eg SLT, office and premises team, they used external coaching through BPSI and also found Fierce Conversations a useful model. Teachers and teaching assistants had taken part in peer coaching projects each year. Lesson visits, appraisal conversations and other professional development projects were expected to have a coaching structure. The School worked with the GROW model structure.

Staff were expected to identify their own thread that was then owned by them – and where their areas of challenge were. They also tried to make the appraisal conversations a coaching style too.

A Governor drew attention to the 'Impact' section where it stated that: Any inconsistencies or less strong areas of practice were highlighted and addressed. They questioned how many inconsistencies there were and if there was a pattern.

The JHT explained that there were some inconsistencies in following the marking and feedback policy which were identified in the book monitoring where there was an HLTA cover teacher delivering lessons, especially where staff were new to this role. The DHT led a training session for all cover HLTA on the January INSET Day as a result of this and they will review this at the next book monitoring this term. Since September, HLTA also attended many staff meetings on teaching and learning.

A Governor noted the persistent absence of 15% and asked what steps the School were taking to combat this.

The JHT explained that PA was currently at 13.31%. There were 47 children where attendance so far this year was below 90% i.e. PA. 24 of these were Y6 children. The vast majority of this Y6 absence was due to secondary school application, attending exams and interviews. Children had missed between 1 and 21 school sessions for this reason. This was no longer counted as a school attendance as it used to be. For the other PA pupils, absence was mainly religious observance and the School would expect the percentage to rise above 90% very soon as the year went forward. There was one pupil whose attendance was below 50% due to extended periods abroad for family circumstances. The School had met with the ASTO, parent and continued to challenge on this case.

A Governor noted that the GD results were above Barnet and national in all subjects except writing at the higher level and questioned if there were any improvement plans for this area.

The JHT noted that the lower GD in writing was always the case nationally compared to GD in other areas. Barnet was a very high attaining LA. Historically it had comparatively lower writing results than other LAs but a higher Maths, Reading and SPAG. Quality writing curriculum and teaching of writing was embedded across the School and recognised by the School's LNI. The School identified that there had been children who had not been able to meet Y6 GD writing solely because of their handwriting and the School had made this a whole school priority this year. Targets for the year ahead for current Y6 were percentages and intervention work would include at the GD border line for pupils in Y6 with extension opportunities including Brookland magazine for the most able writers.

A Governor commended the single incident of bullying across a term with 360 students which seemed an excellent indication of effectiveness of golden rules and overall behaviour.

The JHT noted that this was a constant focus with the School's very positive overall behaviour and attitudes always commented on by visitors, parent survey and pupil survey. There were reasons for repeated poor behaviour especially within a very successful wider school culture and these were always explored leading to longer term improvements. The School also worked with families and the children of those on the receiving end or those whose behaviour was for any serious issues. The wellbeing offer of the School was exceptional and was a significant factor in the School being a happy and successful day to day environment.

It was noted that there was one EHCP waiting to go to panel.

The JHT was thanked for her updates.

25/8 Committee reports (including risk and safeguarding updates)

Finance committee

A meeting had been held on 19 January which focused on figures since the Q3 submissions. Neither schools were currently in a deficit position although it was extremely tight and challenging. Similar risks were at play in terms of pupil numbers and exceptional items. Teaching and learning continued to remain the priority.

Lucy Tobin was thanked for securing the 20 laptops for the School.

Lucy Tobin left the meeting at 6.20pm.

Safeguarding committee

A committee meeting and safeguarding walk had taken place in November. This had involved meeting with the children who had spoken positively about being safe and happy at School and knowing who to talk to. They had also reviewed a number of policies. In terms of risks, these focused on challenges around the pupil group and staff absences.

It was noted that there had also been a number of attempted burglaries in the area which the HTs agreed to add a note about in the newsletters. The lime bikes had also seemed to have reappeared.

Curriculum committee

A meeting had been held on 14 October which had focused on the curriculum intent statement, Teaching and Learning Policy, Curriculum Policy, Music development plans and curriculum priorities for the year. The next meetings were scheduled for 10 February and 19 May.

Personnel committee

A meeting had been held in November. The committee discussed a number of policies as well as the unified reward pay scales. The IHT added that she had received a letter saying that this was still being reviewed with the performance related pay decision being postponed.

The committee would also be reviewing the sexual harassment protocol and policy.

Strategy committee

The committee had discussed topics for focus at the July FGB meeting for example Ofsted and/or SEN training. It was suggested that one of the sessions could be on performance data, analysing and identifying the different patterns and what this meant. The JHT added that in the next few weeks, a consultation on new processes/grading was scheduled.

Premises committee

A meeting had been held in November which had focused mainly on the challenges with the heat pump and roof repairs. The next meeting was scheduled for 11 February.

HT mid year review

The dates for this were set as 13 and 20 June.

25/9 Wellbeing

The HTs noted that there was still a lot of activity going on with 35 children and families in receipt of some sort of counselling. There were also a number of intervention groups in place.

25/10 Governor visits

Lucy Tobin had completed a link visit in her role as Maths Link Governor. Laura Pincus had also undertaken a link visit in Computing. Lisa Wienbrenn, Laura Pincus and Judith Bernstein had completed a safeguarding walk and confirmed that all was compliant.

Lisa Weinbrenn had completed a link visit in Music, David Lee for English and Samantha Jayasekera-Heffer met with Michelle and Cara

All Governors were asked to complete a short write from their discussion with their link teachers from the Curriculum Tea and share this on Governor hub.

Action: All Governors

25/11 Governor Training

The Chair noted that the training links had been circulated. Governors were encouraged to take up the training offer.

25/12 Chair's correspondence

The Chair provided an overview of the correspondence she had received. Last term this was concerning parking. The School had also put in a request for a traffic warden.

25/13 Report of the Director of Education and Skills (if available):

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/wwc-home/information-for-schools/school-governors/meetings-and-reports.html>

Governors noted the report.

25/14 **Any Other Business**

The Chair asked what the School's procurement approach to Breakfast Club was. The IHT noted that most of the produce was bought from Costco or Asda. The School had looked at the catering company to explore alternative options but they were more expensive.

25/15 **Dates of committee meetings**

- a. Finance: 7 March and 9 May
- b. Safeguarding: 25 February
- c. Curriculum: 10 February and 19 May
- d. Personnel: TBC
- e. Strategy: 9 June 3-4
- f. Premises: 11 February 10.30
- g. HT mid - year review date: 13 and 20 June

25/16 **Dates of governing body meetings**

- Tuesday 11 March 2025 at 6pm
- Tuesday 13 May 2025 at 6pm
- Wednesday 9 July 2025 at 6pm (unlocked)

The meeting ended at 6.50pm.