

**Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting of Brookland School, held on 3 October 2023
at 6pm at the School**

LA GOVERNOR

Sapna Shah

PARENT GOVERNORS

*Samantha Jayasekera-Heffer (Infant)

*Kate Blumhof (Junior)

HEADTEACHERS

*Brenda McCafferty (Infant Headteacher)

*Jenny Aylen (Junior Headteacher)

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS

*Amy Simpson (Infant DHT)

*Cara Christie (Junior DHT)

STAFF GOVERNOR

*Jenny Catley

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (12)

Marcelle Jennings (Junior Teacher)-
maternity leave

Gabi Symons- staff Governor cover

*Aimee Epstein (Infant Teacher)

*Farnoush Bikdeli (Junior Support)

*Michael Farhi

*James Clare

*Lisa Weinbrenn

*Laura Pincus (Chair)

*Nick Astaire

*Jeff Harris (Infant parent)

*Judith Bernstein

*David Lee

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

*Carol Frankl

*Daniella Jackson

*Clare Rosen

PART I

23/53 **Welcome**

All Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

23/54 **Acceptance/ non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Sapna Shah. No apologies were received on behalf of Gabi Symons.

23/55 **Appointment of Chair (nominations to be invited at the meeting)**

Nominations for the position of Chair were welcomed at the meeting. Governors considered the one nomination received on behalf of Laura Pincus.

Following a show of hands, Governor **RE-APPOINTED** Laura Pincus for the 2023-24 academic year or until her successor was appointed.

23/56 **Appointment of Vice Chair** (nominations to be invited at the meeting)

Nominations for the position of Vice Chair were welcomed at the meeting. Governors considered the one nomination received on behalf of James Clare.

Following a show of hands, Governor **APPOINTED** James Clare for the 2023-24 academic year or until his successor was appointed.

23/57 **Governor appointments** (New/Re appointments)

Governors welcomed David Lee to the Governing Board. He had been appointed via Governor Hub. David Lee was **APPOINTED** as Co Opted Governor for a four year period ending on 2 October 2027.

It was noted that Tony Brand's term of office had ended. The Chair had tried to make contact but had not received a reply. The FGB agreed to send him a gift to say thank you and wish him well.

23/58 **Annual Register of Business Interests 2023-24**

Governors were reminded to complete their annual declaration forms via Governor Hub.

Action: All Governors

23/59 **Declaration of pecuniary interests**

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

23/60 **Part I minutes of the meetings held on 16 May and 5 July 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2023 were agreed as an accurate recording of the meeting. The Chair signed the minutes.

The Chair noted that Governors had received a presentation on the equality objectives on 5 July. They had also reviewed some books and would like to incorporate that more into learning.

The Chair had agreed to redo the Governor survey.

Action: Chair

23/61 **Matters arising**

The JHT agreed to circulate the diversity plan.

Action: JHT

Governors noted the previous discussion regarding Sen need and the panel in place. This was also presented at the SENCO conference and there were a number of concerns raised.

23/62 **Annual Review of Committee Structure, Membership & Terms of Reference**

Governor attention was drawn to the committee structure, membership and TOR, circulated prior to the meeting.

The following changes would be made:

Clare Rosen to come of the Premises committee

In terms of Link Governors:

Laura Pincus- Computing

Kate Blumhoff- Art
Daniella- Art
James Clare- Gifted & Talented
David Lee- English
Judith- Science
Amy Epstein- History
Jeff- D&T
Lisa Weinbrenn- Music

The Chair reminded Governors of the importance of the Link Governor role and the expectation of visits. She agreed to update and recirculate the list along with the protocol and pro forma.

Action: Chair

It was noted that a meeting was scheduled for 5 October to discuss the role of the Strategy Committee.

23/63 Governor Code of Conduct

Governor attention was drawn to the Governor Code of Conduct, circulated prior to the meeting.

Following a show of hands, Governors confirmed that they had agreed to it on Governor Hub.

23/64 Approval of residential trips

Governors were asked to formally approve the following residential trips:

Infant School: Moat Mount on 9-12 July 2024

Junior School: PGL in Osmington Bay on 9-12 June 2024

It was confirmed that there were tight safeguarding protocols in place and the risk assessments were reviewed as part of the Safeguarding committee.

Governors **APPROVED** the trips.

23/65 Headteachers' reports and supporting documents

Infant Headteacher

Governor attention was drawn to the IHT report, circulated prior to the meeting. The IHT provided an overview noting that it had been a very successful summer term with positive assessment results. She added that the assessments would be reviewed in more detail at the Curriculum committee but a top line analysis of results had been uploaded onto Governor Hub for Governor view.

The IHT noted that a deep dive had also been conducted where it was identified that most of the children that scored lower had more than one barrier to their learning. She added that Paul Whitcombe BPSI advisor, had also been in the School the previous term for a two day mock inspection where he did some mock interviews with subject leaders etc. Feedback was very positive with good reassurance given. He also came in and completed a deep dive in Science this term. Feedback from this was also positive. This was particularly good noting the high level of long term staff absence at the start of the year.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the maximum number of children in the nursery varied due to the way spaces were offered. The Nursery had both 15hour and 30 hours spaces. For each session there could not be more than 39 children due to staff ratios. Last year there were 44 on roll and this year the figure was 43- this was a full complement.

A Governor raised concern about the downward trend in pupil numbers and whether, if this continued, a restructure would need to be considered. The IHT noted that this would be discussed further as part of the Finance committee. She added that for Reception, figures were lower than they had been before; a trend being seen amongst a number of schools due to the drop in birth rate. She reminded that the School had always been full with a waiting list and this was the first year where there was not. She noted that the catchment area has always stayed the same and they had taken on children from outside of the catchment area too.

She added that there was still a waiting list for Nursery with a number of children also paying for additional hours.

A Governor questioned whether the School could not afford to give a whole year's worth of extra-curricular activity to a PP child especially as a term did not really seem long enough. The IHT explained that this had been reviewed a number of times but it was difficult with a lack of funding. The funding was also more beneficial to use on other areas. The School did also have a lot of non fee funded lunch time sessions.

A Governor asked what the most common reasons for persistent absences were and what strategies were in place to reduce the numbers.

The IHT explained that figures were previously higher and they were slightly skewed due to three children (one was for medical needs and the other, the EWO was heavily involved). She added that parents were written to and had discussions with the EWO. She noted that the EWO did not review the absences for under 5 years old as this was not statutory. The School did however monitor this.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that Authorised and Unauthorised absences were used and if under 90% then this was counted as persistence absence.

The IHT noted that the School had a brand new PA committee with a number of sub committees for different events.

SDP

Copies of the SDP, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors. The IHT noted that the document outlined the School's priorities and were very much based on the analysis the School had done from last year.

A Governor questioned whether it could be communicated to all subject leaders to explicitly discuss vocabulary and curriculum progression in subject link governor meetings (in addition to any other discussion points).

The IHT agreed to add this to the newsletter. She also added that they always had progression skills in place and vocabulary progression in place. They would however be making some of these links more explicit and had vocabulary for every day words and very topic specific ones too.

She noted that there were also half termly overview that went home and showed what was being taught (and were also on the School website). The School also had learning organisers- where the skills and knowledge needed. These were very explicit and showed the previous

knowledge, what vocabulary had already been introduced and what would be and that was all cross referenced.

A Governor questioned how the School were assuring that the curriculum progression linked from Y2 to Y3. The DHT explained that they had shared the progression of skills with the Juniors for them to build upon. It was also built into the national curriculum.

A Governor questioned where there was enough staff to support an increase in lunchtime club provision. The IHT confirmed this but noted that with a lot of staff absence, sometimes these needed to close.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the Mini Duke Award Scheme was a scheme inspired by the Duke of Edinburgh award and was based on helping primary school children to learn a practice to become more independent. The School were trialling this in Y1. 79 out of 90 children were taking part, including PP children. As part of the programme they received a booklet of tasks to complete which linking in with resilience and independence. Parents paid £10 for it.

SEND Governors Report

Copies of the SEND report, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

A Governor noted that the EHCP numbers were lower, but there were a lot of children combined on Monitoring and SEN Support. She questioned whether the School anticipated any of these children getting an EHCP this year. The IHT confirmed this noting that since the report two applications had been submitted and one was going to panel this week and the other they had agreed to assess.

She added that they would also be applying for 2-3 in Y1 and 3-4 in Reception. The process was very long and the School needed to have evidence of support plans for two cycles as well as any professionals involved and the impact of those strategies put in place as part of the application.

A Governor questioned whether there been any training available for staff working with children with EAL and SEN combined. The IHT noted that she had not seen training with them both combined but staff had gone on separate ones and there was a lot of expertise within school that they utilised.

A Governor questioned what the biggest risk was this year. The IHT explained that this was having little to no space for when children were extremely dysregulated. Another risk was waiting times for referrals. The waiting list for CAMHS for example was 70 weeks and for speech and language it was at least 39 weeks.

Governor attention was drawn to the SEND questionnaire. Governors noted the impressive and positive feedback. This was reflective of the hard work undertaken by the SENCO. More appropriate timing would be considered if conducted again.

The IHT was thanked for her report and updates.

Junior Headteacher

Governor attention was drawn to the JHT report and supporting documents, circulated prior to the meeting. The JHT provided an overview.

The JHT highlighted the positive SATs results with the School well above national and for Greater Depth too with positive outcomes for PP children too. Governors joined her for commending all the hard work of the staff too.

The School had also been awarded the Platinum award in PE in recognition of all the extra curricular activities and competitive sport. They had also been awarded the Gold Healthy Schools award again.

Staff were also finding opportunities for grant funding. The School had received an autism grant for £10,000 to improve the sensory environment and some for staffing too.

Following a Governor question the JHT explained that Clicker was a brilliant digital resource which supported reading and writing for pupils with a range of literacy difficulties eg. by generating bespoke word lists, sentence structures and scaffolding for reading and writing. TAs had completed several training sessions on this and were training the teachers.

A Governor questioned whether, the percentage under Combined was for children that satisfied all three simultaneously. The JHT confirmed this.

A Governor questioned why the names of the sports teams were the “school teams” and the “girls teams” rather than boys or girls, or some other name. The JHT explained that this was because under BPSS rules, the school team could include girls and boys and did in some cohorts and in addition there were girls only teams.

A Governor noticed the huge increase in wellbeing needs and questioned what strategies had been thought of to look after the wellbeing of the adults in charge of these areas and/or if the workload could be spread more widely if possible. The JHT explained that this was actually a positive picture of the number of pupils the School were aware of with challenges over time as well as currently and also the amount of support through counselling and mentoring the School had been able to put together.

She added that the School’s wellbeing lead was supported by the safeguarding SLT team and TAs with experience as mentors including one with an ELSA qualification. In addition, the School had a new learning mentor this year. The wellbeing lead also had support from the person who gave supervision to the counselling placements.

Following a Governor question the JHT explained that the new learning mentor would be focusing her 1 to 1 support on young carers, more ad hoc support for individual pupils who wanted advice and also providing staff training and a dance club.

Following a Governor question, the JHT noted that numbers were 355 with 2 spaces in Y6, 1 in year 5 and 2 in year 3. Maria had worked incredibly hard to fill as many spaces as possible and the School had had 17 new pupils join the school in the last four weeks.

SDP

Copies of the SDP, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

The JHT confirmed that she would communicate to all subject leaders to explicitly discuss vocabulary and curriculum progression in subject link governor meetings (in addition to any other discussion points).

A Governor requested that the coaching logs and how coaching worked/was being developed be discussed in Personnel committee. The JHT welcomed this suggestion and said that she had a one-page summary that could be shared.

A Governor questioned how well the SEND coffee mornings had been attended in the past. The JHT explained that they had not held these for a while. Whilst they had hoped to do this last year but in the end managing the very high level of EHCPs did not give time for this. The SENCO was working additional hours this year and the School had 16 EHCPs rather than 22 at the moment.

A Governor noted that discussing diagnoses with parents had been put as a development point. She questioned how often this was happening.

The JHT explained that parents being supported to discuss an SEN diagnosis with their child was a strategic next step building on from the autism focus last year and was an area which parents of children with autism found particularly challenging. Children not knowing their diagnosis had been a barrier to how the School could support them in many cases.

A Governor asked the JHT to elaborate on the referral and communication system for the established counselling offer. The JHT explained that Simon, the wellbeing lead had worked with one of the School's experienced counsellors to formalise and record the process of setting up a counselling piece of work a little more starting this term. This should help communication with so many placements and may also improve the focus of the counselling.

A Governor asked who the three middle leaders were doing an NPQ. The JHT noted that these were Gemma Lally, Maths leader had started her NPQ. Daniella Ellington, Music Leader and Kasra Adjudani, PE lead had been accepted onto their NPQs to start this term.

A Governor asked how the School were assuring that the curriculum progression linked from Y2 to Y3. The JHT explained that the project to write the current curriculum maps included reviewing the Infant School KS1 and EYFS curriculum maps and they also ensured that they kept close liaison with any changes for these.

SEN Governors Report

Copies of the SEN Governors report, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

Following a Governor question, the JHT explained that the sensory room was really popular and high impact with a number of children using it regularly at specific times with the TA supporting them. Other children benefit from ad hoc times. The School were finalising the lunchtime provision map for the year so that it included the sensory room being open for ad hoc use at lunchtimes.

A Governor questioned what the biggest risk was at the School. The JHT noted that this was sickness absences e.g. Covid- hence the updated risk assessment for infectious illness. Budget, building, pupil numbers and recruitment were ongoing risks for most schools locally and they too were mindful of these.

Michael Farhi left meeting at 7.45pm

Junior School Audit report

The Junior School audit, circulated prior to the meeting, was received and noted by Governors. Following a Governor question, the JHT noted that all items had been actioned. It would also be reviewed further at the next Finance committee meeting.

The JHT was thanked for her report and updates.

23/66 Staff governors' reports

The Infants noted that it had been very challenging in terms of staff absences and unsettled children. The staff were working well together to support one another.

In terms of the Juniors, there was a nice feel around the School. There had been improvements made to the lunches too.

Michael Farhi was thanked for his work on the tender for this.

23/67 **Committee reports**

It was noted that committee meeting dates would be confirmed via Governor Hub.

The Safeguarding committee had been renamed to Safeguarding and Pupil Wellbeing committee.

They were working out a system to ensure that an efficient process was in place for policy review.

Governors were reminded to confirm that they had read and understood KCSIE Part 1 via Governor Hub declarations.

Lockdown policy

The HTs noted that the School had had an evacuation policy for a while and it had been practiced with staff. It was suggested that it also be practiced with children. This would help the School to be better aware and understand any learnings. It would also identify any issues with the phone system.

Governors agreed to do this (and in an age appropriate way). It would be conducted across both schools together.

James Clare left meeting at 8pm

23/68 **Wellbeing**

There was nothing further to report.

23/69 **Governor visits**

An SEN learning walk had been completed, with notes added to Governor Hub. The visit included a tour of both new sensory rooms as well as the different adaptations made for the children.

23/70 **Chair's correspondence**

There was nothing to report.

23/71 **Governor support and development, and report of the link governor**

The Chair confirmed that a link to the courses had been uploaded onto Governor Hub.

23/72 **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 and its contents.

23/73 **Dates of committee meetings**

- Finance:
- Safeguarding:
- Curriculum:
- CCE: TBC
- Personnel:
- Strategy: TBC
- Premises: TBC

23/74 **Dates of governing body meetings**

- Tuesday 14 November (unclerked)
- Wednesday 24 January (curriculum tea)
- Wednesday 13 March
- Wednesday 15 May
- Tuesday 2 July (unclerked)

The meeting closed at 8.05pm