

**Brookland Infant and Junior Schools**  
**Minutes of the meeting held at Brookland Infant and Junior Schools on Wednesday 28**  
**January 2026 at 5pm**

**LA GOVERNOR**

\*Lucy Tobin

**PARENT GOVERNORS**

\*Samantha Jayasekera-Heffer (Infant)

\*Kate Blumhof (Junior)

**HEADTEACHERS**

\*Brenda McCafferty (Infant Headteacher)

\*Jenny Aylen (Junior Headteacher)

**NON-VOTING OBSERVERS**

Amy Hurst (Infant DHT)

\*Cara Christie (Junior DHT)

**STAFF GOVERNOR**

\*Jenny Catley

**CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (12)**

\*Gabi Symons- (Junior Teacher)

\*Gillian Delany (Infant Teacher)

\*Farnoush Bikdeli (Junior Support)

\*Michael Farhi

James Clare (Vice Chair)

\*Lisa Weinbrenn

\*Laura Pincus (Chair)

Nick Astaire

\*Jeff Harris

\*Judith Bernstein

\*David Lee

\*Daniella Jackson

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER**

Karen Gubbay

**PART I**

26/1 **Welcome**

All Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

26/2 **Acceptance/ non-acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Amy Hurst, Nick Astaire, Karen Gubbay and James Clare.

26/3 **Governor appointments** (New/Re appointments)

The FGB considered the appointment of Gillian Delany to the position of Co-opted Governor (Infant Teacher).

Following a show of hands, the FGB confirmed the appointment of Gillian Delany as Co-opted Governor for the four year term ending on 27 January 2030.

26/4 **Declaration of pecuniary interests**

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

26/5 **Part I minutes of the meetings held on 25 September and 18 November 2025**

Part I of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2025, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors subject to the following amendments:

P5, Correction to JHT from IHT  
Spelling mistakes on the final page

References in staff governor reports to “insight” should have read “INSET”.

Part I of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2025, circulated prior to the meeting, were received and noted by Governors.

#### 26/6 **Matters arising**

The IHT provided Governors with an update regarding the change of the Year 2 residential venue following the closure of Moat Mount. The school had provisionally booked the Lincolnsfield Centre in Bushey. The IHT and Year 2 staff had visited the site and completed risk assessments. The intention was to take one and a half classes on 15 and 16 June and the other one and a half classes on 18 and 19 June.

The new venue was slightly more expensive due to changes in pupil numbers and coach cost distribution, with the total cost per pupil expected to be £92.50, inclusive of accommodation, catering, and activities. Pupil Premium rates were still being calculated, and instalment payments would be available. Parents of day-trip pupils would be responsible for drop-off (on following days) and collection.

Following a show of hands, Governors **APPROVED** the revised residential trip to the Lincolnsfield Centre.

Governors were reminded that several members had not yet completed cyber security training, which was required to meet insurance conditions. The link had been added to GovernorHub.

***Action: Governors***

The Chair confirmed that the skills audit and effectiveness audit were still to be completed.

***Action: Governors***

It was noted that the settlement agreement with Entrust needed to be signed. The FGB agreed that the Chair and Chair of Finance committee would sign it.

#### 26/7 **Headteachers’ reports**

##### **Infant Headteacher**

Governor attention was drawn to the IHT report and supporting documents, circulated prior to the meeting.

The IHT noted that the school had achieved the Young Carer’s Award, making it the only school in Barnet to do so and one of 650 nationally. Governors commended all those involved in this and the extensive work associated with it.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained the school’s position in relation to appointing supply teaching assistants in cases where EHCP applications had been unsuccessful; although not standard practice, additional support had been put in place on two occasions for reasons of health, safety, and inclusion.

Following a Governor question the IHT provided an update on pupil numbers, particularly the low cohort size in Year 2. She confirmed that families leaving the school had largely provided positive feedback on exit forms. Reception intake numbers for the following year were not yet finalised, one new pupil was expected to join after Easter in the current reception cohort.

A Governor asked whether there was a “domino effect” caused by pupils leaving, and the IHT confirmed that there was no indication of this.

A Governor also asked about the likelihood of mixing classes when the cohort transitioned to the Junior School. The IHT explained that this was reviewed annually and would be considered closer to transition.

A query was raised about a parental question regarding voluntary contributions. The IHT explained that the school had discussed contributions transparently for several years, and the query related to how funds were allocated. It was confirmed that the information had been provided to the parent accordingly.

Governors commended the significant growth of clubs and enrichment opportunities, noting that the offer was strong and well regarded, with positive links to PSHE and OFSTED.

Following a Governor question, the IHT explained that the school conducted one fire drill each term: one planned fire drill, one unannounced drill, and a third where there is some kind of obstacle. The report would be corrected to reflect this.

A Governor enquired whether parents used the SALT phonenumber. The IHT advised that there was no way of confirming this unless parents informed the school but it was thought that it was well used.

Governors noted the positive outcome of the recent SEV visit. The IHT also explained the role of the School Resource Management Advisor, a DfE resource provided to schools unlikely to be out of deficit within three years- which the school did not qualify for at present .

The IHT described the updated SEF format and the school’s cautious approach to self-assessment under the new OFSTED framework, which required evidence of national impact for an “exceptional” judgement in one of the areas for example. There would also need to be a shift in mindset as there were no overall OFSTED judgements anymore.

Governors discussed the value of the Infant Partnership for external validation even if not contributing to national impact. The IHT noted that it would be beneficial to review OFSTED reports from schools who have been inspected under the new framework to gain better clarity.

The Parent Questionnaire, which had closed earlier that day, would be shared in due course.

***Action: IHT***

The IHT was thanked for her report and supporting information.

### ***Junior Headteacher’s Report***

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

The DHT provided an update on the SATs data noting that it largely remained unchanged except for one declined disapplication, Updated information had been published on the school website.

A Governor asked about priorities identified from HT lesson observations and the reference to EBIs (Even Better If). The JHT confirmed that adaptive strategies were the key development focus, reinforced through training, appraisal targets, and in line with the Brookland offer. Oracy and talk structures were also being developed in line with the new curriculum, and coaching remained central to improving practice.

She added that the scheduled Self-Evaluation Visit for the Junior School had been postponed and rescheduled for 12 February, after which the report would be shared. The school had instead, used that time to do their own learning walk focused on additional support for some students.

Following a Governor question, staff Governors explained that staff confidence in the new RE syllabus had increased following recent INSET, with the curriculum currently rolling out to Years 3 and 4 before being extended to Years 5 and 6 in September 2026. It was noted that there was a different focus question each term. Daniela Jackson confirmed that she had discussed this during her link visit and staff felt more confident with the delivery.

A Governor enquired about how pupil understanding was assessed. The JHT confirmed that assessment was ongoing through formal and informal activities as well as being embedded within the marking and assessment policy. Homework and day to day lessons also allowed students the opportunity to assess themselves.

A Governor asked for further information about the impact of declining FSM numbers in Years 3 and 4. The DHT explained that the school's Pupil Premium approach was rooted in high-quality, inclusive teaching, targeted interventions, and a whole-cohort approach. The criteria to qualify for FSMs had been made stricter but the school ensured that all completed the applications where appropriate. It was also noted that just because a child didn't qualify, this didn't mean that they were not disadvantaged in some way.

A Governor asked about the SEN report, specifically Speech & Language staffing. The JHT explained that SL provision was now in place, supplemented by Barnet's specialist resources and additional staff training.

The JHT introduced the ISDR, which showed positive three-year trends, with cohort-specific reasons explaining areas below national benchmarks. There hadn't however been data in some categories since 2022/23 due to Covid.

Governors expressed thanks for the gardening initiative, organised by Lucy Tobin, which had been supported by a Thames Water grant and included staff training and curriculum-linked activity for Year 5.

## **26/8 Staff Governor Reports**

The Infant staff governor update had been incorporated within the IHT report. The IHT notified Governors that Alison, the Inclusion Lead, would retire at the end of the academic year, and an advertisement for the position would be released on 25 February. Governors were invited to participate in the interview process.

Junior staff updates had already been covered in the JHT report.

## **26/9 Committee reports (including risk and safeguarding updates)**

### **Premises Committee**

An overview of the last meeting was provided. Discussion had included the area that seemed to be used as some sort of drug den, and expressed thanks to the Site Manager, James Flanagan, and to Lucy Tobin for their work on trying to push a resolution forward. The Committee also reported ongoing work relating to the heat pump, which James Flanagan and committee chair Nick Astaire continued to pursue.

### **Strategy Committee**

The Chair of the committee provided an overview of the discussion noting that they had talked about Governors' roles as ambassadors, the importance of promoting school initiatives, and current national discussion about screen use in schools. The IHT updated Governors on two coffee mornings held on smartphone free schools and screen addiction and described work with parents on a potential playdate pledge. The IHT was drafting a new screentime policy, which would be shared with curriculum committee when finished.

The Committee had also discussed potential topics for the July Governor training session and agreed that the School Council and other student groups would attend that meeting. The Chair will do a poll on GH to determine training. ACTION: Chair

### **Finance Committee**

The Chair of the committee provided an overview of the last meeting held on 13 January which had primarily focused on a review of Q3 submissions. The Infant School remained in deficit. Key risks included fluctuating pupil numbers and unpredictable exceptional costs. Teaching and Learning remained a priority for the school.

### **Safeguarding Committee**

The Chair of the committee provided an overview of the last meeting held on 8 December, which had included a review of several policies, and identified gaps in Governor safeguarding training. We also discussed the safeguarding audits.

### **Curriculum Committee**

The Chair of the committee provided an overview of the last meeting held on 10 November which had discussed how to provide enrichment within budget constraints by utilising grants and free opportunities. Over 100 pupils had signed up for Junior Duke Award. Career guidance in the Junior School had expanded with several external speakers. The Committee also noted that pupils were entering a rapidly changing work environment and discussed how best to prepare them.

The Committee also considered upcoming changes to the RSE curriculum and the need to undertake a statutory parental consultation before September 2026. Updates were also provided on national guidance relating to gender-questioning pupils.

### **Personnel Committee**

The Chair of the committee provided an overview of the last meeting held in November which had included a review of the draft Pay Policy along with other staffing policies, such as capability and appraisal. New provisions on neo-natal care had been added. Daniella Jackson noted national changes to statutory rights, including day-one entitlements for paternity and parental leave, and reductions in some qualifying periods from two years to six months, with implications for probation. She agreed to send updated information on this to be considered by the committee.

***Action: Daniella Jackson***

### **26/10 Wellbeing**

JB reported on her visit with the Inclusion Leader and confirmed that she had also met with Simon Greenhouse. A Governor asked about support for Iranian/Persian pupils and staff in light

of international events. The school confirmed that pupils and staff had been reassured that support was available, and those previously unable to attend were now back in school.

The JHT expressed concern about Year 6 attendance, noting the increase in Persistent Absence for some pupils for a range of reasons, including the J-code for secondary school visits. There was no evidence of truancy. Parents were able to access live attendance information through Arbor, and discussions with families were ongoing.

#### 26/11 **Governor visits**

Governors were reminded to upload all visit reports, including summaries of today's curriculum tea, to the Visits tab on GovernorHub.

***Action: All Governors***

#### 26/12 **Governor Training**

Governors were reminded of the training sessions available.

#### 26/13 **Chair's correspondence**

The Chair reported receiving correspondence from a parent seeking Governor support for funding towards an EHCP. This had been responded to.

#### 26/14 **Report of the Director of Education and Skills**

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

It was noted that the report was not yet available.

#### 26/15 **Dates of committee meetings**

- a. Finance: 6 March, 15 May (12-1.30)
- b. Safeguarding: 5 March, 30 June (8.45)
- c. Curriculum: 2 February, 15 June (2.30-3.30)
- d. Personnel: 13 Mar, 19 Jun (12-1)
- e. Strategy: 12 June, (12-1)
- f. Premises: 21 Jan, 6 May (12.30-1.30)

#### 26/16 **Dates of governing body meetings**

- Tuesday 10 March 2026 at 6pm
- Wednesday 3 June 2026 at 6pm
- Wednesday 7 July 2026 at 6pm (unlcerked)

*The meeting ended at 7pm*