

LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

Minutes of the

GOVERNING BOARD OF AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Virtual meeting held on Thursday, 3 February 2022 at 6pm

Present:	Abu Abdullah	Co-opted
	Iqbal Hussain	Parent
	Sayesta Miah	Parent
	Hafise Nazif	Headteacher
	Soyeb Patel	Parent (vice-chair)
	Nisha Ramanathan	Co-opted
	Denis Shea	Local Authority (chair)
	Iqbal Singh	Co-opted
	Geetha Unnithan	Co-opted
In attendance:	Mrs Julie Ammi	Clerk
	Mr Lee Franklin-Lewis	Deputy Headteacher
	Mrs Manpreet Chhabra	Deputy Headteacher

The meeting commenced at 6.04pm.

321. Welcome and apologies for absence

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting was quorate.

Sara Wilson, Benedicta Asare and Neha Shivhare had sent apologies.

All apologies were condoned.

322. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest on any item of the agenda.

323. Membership of governing board

a. To note the board membership – appointments/resignations/expiration of term of office

The staff governor's term of office had expired.

b. Governors to note that there was 1 vacancy for a co-opted governor

Nisha Ramanathan was co-opted into the current vacancy from the role of associate governor.

Action: The GBSO to record that Nisha Ramanathan has moved from an associate to a co-opted governor with immediate effect.

c. Governors to note that there was 1 vacancy for a staff governor

This process would be carried out internally in school. The headteacher had alerted staff and nominations would come through after half-term. It was requested that one governor (Sayesta Miah) become a returning officer when the date is set for the next stage.

Governor's question: Can the existing staff governor apply – or does she want to continue?

She can apply. It is advised for other staff to apply too. It is a democratic vote.

324. Minutes of last Governing Board meeting

a. Approval of minutes of the governing board meeting held on 9 December 2021

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

b. Matters arising

It was put forward and agreed that an action register would be produced at the end of each set of minutes.

Minute 313: The RSHE item had not been removed. This action was carried forward.

Action: The GBSO had recently left. The headteacher and chair requested that the replacement's details be emailed to them. The clerk to pass on this request.

325. Governing Board Committees

a. Minutes of committee meetings held since the last board meeting

There were no items.

326. School Budget Monitoring

This headteacher gave an overview of this item.

Budgets have been closed for this financial year with final orders being placed. At the finance and resources committee a £30,000 virement was approved to be made to address an overspend from teaching to agency supply.

Performance related pay had gone through and this would be reflected in the next outturn period. There had been 2 incidences of staff who started in September who had recently left with settlement agreements. This is rare. The fees and amounts would be reflected in the next outturn report. The committee agreed a virement from capital funding virement to pay for 50% of the cost of the bus works.

With regards to income, SEN and early years funding are the main areas that fluctuate. Pupils on roll continue to reduce. The SEN block funding received an additional £37,000 over the anticipated amount. The government were reimbursing schools for various grants including supermarket vouchers for half-term. Families entitled to free school meals would receive these vouchers.

There was an expected 1.2million carry forward but this needed to be finalised at the end of the financial year (March). This amount was larger than originally anticipated.

Governor's question: Has the budget for the next financial year in April been looked at yet?

We are awaiting funding information as census data was collected in January. It will be looked at in March and taken to the Finance and Resources Committee in April .

Governor's question: You mentioned solicitor's fees – is that an admin fee?

We did not get into a dispute. NPW represented us and the solicitor's fees for the other party are be paid by us.

Governor's question: Do we appear to be coming in budget for this financial year 2021-22, or do we think we are overspending?

We are overspending by about £200,000 from our contingency each year. It has decreased over time. We currently have a large carry forward, but need to be aware that there will be a decrease in our funding due to falling rolls. We are required to be careful with monitoring, strategy management, planning of staff, and building works. However the main unexpected large area of budget we have limited control over, when set the budget in April, is that we cannot anticipate the children that will come in. In September those needs may be complex and not yet diagnosed. They require additional adult learning support such as 1-2-1 and we have to fund this.

Decision: The budget monitoring report was approved by the governing board.

327. Headteacher's Report

The headteacher presented this item. Governors had received the Learning Improvement Plan 2021 – 2022 with focus priorities for the year, and the self-evaluation form which is where the school judges itself under the Ofsted judgment areas.

There were 5 key focus priorities:

- Raise the attainment and progress of pupils in Reading
- Building leadership capacity including governance
- Improve practices and support for children with SEND in order to raise their outcomes
- Ensure the school's curriculum offer in each subject provides effective continuity and progression of concept development and skills
- Ensure the effective introduction and implementation of the new EYFS framework 2021 – 2022

The headteacher summarised key points of the plan and what actions were currently taking place in school.

Governor's question: At the moment the school's moving and changing to readapt the curriculum. We have the effects of covid and the ongoing effects of individual staff and children getting covid. This will obviously affect our outcomes at the end of the year. Do you think you will be in any position to state that this problem was caused by covid, or by our curriculum – or do you think our curriculum will be embedded enough to make an impact on our outcomes anecdotally?

We cannot say covid has not affected it. However we have worked consistently to put measures in place that will mitigate the risks of being affected too adversely. The online learning went well and was led well. On our return we had small targets that teachers had to work to and before this some of the leadership spent a great amount of the summer holiday together planning what we wanted. In September we

immediately set out high expectations with the different year groups. Ms Chhabra took on teaching and learning and assessment. Mr Franklin-Lewis took on well-being and personal development aspects. T

Although we do not use covid as an excuse we cannot ignore the fact that it has had and will continue to have a negative impact on individual children and year group learning. It is difficult because expectations have to be high whilst at the same time recognising everyone is working within restrictions. We would hope our results are not affected by that.

Governor's question: How are you tracking the progress? Is it based on a milestone or other things in addition?

We have had strategic days for reading, SEND and curriculum. IDuring these days we go through the actions and have our own additional plans that we work to. As we go through the year it will be RAG rated and upon review you will see many actions having been implemented.

Governor's question: With curriculum – should we be inspected by Ofsted will the new assistant headteacher's work bring us to a point where we should be able to pass?

Yes, absolutely. We are not expecting Ofsted until the earliest in February 2023. We aim to launch our new curriculum in the summer term of this year. It would still suffice at this moment in time, but we want Ofsted to see how much we have worked on our curriculum.

As part of the leadership, governors were part of the learning improvement plan and the actions that sit behind it. Governors agreed they needed to improve at talking about structures, accountability measures and setting themselves goals. There needed to be a cycle of monitoring and review, aspirations, what was done and next steps. It was agreed that all governors would work together on a strategic day and start creating an action plan together. The school was in a fortunate position to have governors that know the school so well, plus new governors. It was important to have commitment from all governors to attend for this to work well.

Action: Potential dates and location for the strategic away day to be shared by the headteacher with a location. Once governors have confirmed the headteacher would arrange the day.

Governor's question: Will this need to be done prior to the audit on 28 March?

No, we want the audit to tell us things we do well and what we need to improve upon. The away day will be an opportunity to review where we are currently at with regards governance .

There were also some additional priority areas:

- Enhance the mental health and well-being of all staff at work
- Reduce the levels of persistent absenteeism

The chair thanked the headteacher for her report.

328. School Improvement Plan (SIP)

This item was covered in the headteacher's report.

329. School Self-Evaluation Update

The school's self-evaluation captured the entire life of the school in a few pages. The headteacher explained that it asks the school to judge itself under each Ofsted category.

For example; leadership and management with regards to governance is an area for development, but also an area of strength. At the moment there were new governors that needed to be developed further, and there was some work to be done.

Points to note were:

- Governors needed to be familiar with significant groups and what was being done to support those children e.g. pupil premium, SEND and the lowest attaining 20%
- Stakeholder feedback probably in the form of a parents' questionnaire would be carried out
- Prior to lockdown the school had 2 years of good results. A third good year would really make the school feel very confident in the curriculum and provision being provided .

Governor's question: How often do you review the SEF?

The SEF is required regularly in line with the learning improvement plan . Sections of the SEF are taken to individual committee meetings . The SEF links to the learning improvement plan, which is a working document. The SEF continues to be a live working document for discussion.

The chair thanked the headteacher for the self-evaluation summary.

330. Safeguarding

The DSL attended a seminar linked to Ofsted conversations. It looked at what lessons should be learnt from Ofsted where schools were judged to be ineffective in safeguarding.

32 of 59 ineffective reports mentioned leadership and governance. It was really important to know that lots mentioned governors were too reliant on being told information on safeguarding rather than questioning safeguarding themselves. For example, when visiting the school for any area, it is important to integrate lots of questions around safeguarding. Mrs Unnithan recently did this during her health and safety visit. Governors discussed what examples of applying the safeguarding awareness from meetings during a visit to school might look like.

Governor's question: Have there been any issues since our last meeting that need to be reported on?

We have made one referral since the last meeting. We are also currently involved where a decision to close an open case has been made, and we disagree. There have been consultations around this and to escalate the case by following the LA escalation policy.

Governors now had Avenue email addresses and they could complete the Safeguard training on the school's software.

Action 1: The DSL to add governors to the Safeguard training system and email them the link for governors training.

Action 2: All governors to regularly check their school email account.

331. Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

This item was requested to be removed as a standing item at the previous meeting. There was nothing further to report at this meeting.

Action carried forward: The GBSO to remove RSHE as a standing item with immediate effect.

332. Compliance calendar items

The compliance calendar was RAG rated and any relevant items would be looked at again in the March meeting.

Governor's question: With regards to the review of a policy for children with health needs who cannot attend school, or if they are in hospital - does the LA provide work or is that our responsibility?

The provision has recently changed. We have had one pupil off for a significant amount of time with health needs. There is a referral process to get support for that pupil, but they remain our responsibility. It was also mentioned in the safeguarding session, in safeguarding reports about ineffective schools. We need to go back to the policy to make sure it is correct.

a. Skills audit of the governing board membership

The skills audit needed to be submitted to the LA by 28th February. The governing board had not been able to meet to go through this but they had reviewed it individually. The headteacher led a session during the governing board meeting to agree on the grades collaboratively.

Action: Once the headteacher has finalised the skills audit form, it would be placed on google drive for governors to see what has been submitted to the LA.

The skills audit would also be used as a working document with tracked changes.

b. Review of governor code of conduct

Action: The headteacher to send the chair the code of conduct to be reviewed and reported back at the next full governing board meeting to adopt.

333. Risk Register

This item was in red on the agenda, as requested by the headteacher. It appeared as an agenda item from the local authority (LA). Some guidance from the LA was required and/or a template before attempting to create one.

334. School Policies for Review

Governors to agree any new policies or any that are up for review:

- Equality information and objectives
- Arrangements for teaching R.E. and for a daily act of worship
- Food policy

- **Home – school agreement**

The above policies were brought to the governing board's attention that they are still for review. They would be taken to the appropriate committee for discussion prior to that meeting. The equality information and objectives were talked about at the curriculum committee.

335. Mental health and well-being

a. mental health and well-being policy

This item was touched upon in the headteacher's report and was a standing agenda item that Newham added.

This policy would be a new one. Practice needed to be delivered before a policy, therefore the policy would be drafted in due course. The school was carrying out an audit of the current provision and would share the results on GoogleDrive once it had been completed.

336. Governor education and training

a. Governors to report any training attended

There were no items to report.

b. Governors' training required

Governors had received an introduction to their role initially by meeting with the headteacher in school. New governors were also to attend the governor induction training delivered by The Education Space.

There were link governor sessions also being delivered by The Education Space and governors were encouraged to book themselves onto these sessions. The headteacher would arrange for this information to be circulated to governors. This originally comes directly from The Education Space.

As agreed earlier in the meeting the governing board would be having an away day.

8pm Iqbal Hussain left the meeting.

c. Link governors' reports and visits.

There were no items to report.

337. Future meeting arrangements 2021-2022

Spring Term

24 March 2022

Summer Term

19 May 2022

14 July 2022

Sarah Beaumont, head of governors services (The Education Space) Is coming to observe the 24th March governing board meeting. It was agreed that this would be a virtual meeting. Governors would be notified of the start time nearer the meeting date. It would be either 6pm or 6.30pm.

338. Any other business
a. School website

Governor's question: The website appears to need updating?

A deputy headteacher along with another member of staff are looking at compliance on the website. They will then look at each page and set some priorities.

Action: To support with the website Mr Patel to email Mr Franklin-Lewis with the areas that had been noticed as in need of updating.

339. Agenda items for the next meeting

There were no additional items for the next meeting.

The chair thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions.

The meeting closed at 8.06pm.

Minute	Action	Action completed
323 b	The GBSO to record that Nisha Ramanathan has moved from an associate to a co-opted governor with immediate effect.	
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327	Potential dates and location for the strategic away day to be shared by the headteacher with a location. Once governors have confirmed the headteacher would arrange the day.	
330 1	The DSL to add governors to the Safeguard training system and email them the link for governors training.	
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332 a	Once the headteacher has finalised the skills audit form, it would be placed on google drive for governors to see what has been submitted to the LA.	
332 b	The headteacher to send the chair a paper for the code of conduct to be reviewed and reported back at the next full governing board meeting to adopt.	
338	To support with the website Mr Patel to email Mr Franklin-Lewis with the areas that had been noticed as in need of updating.	