

LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

Minutes of the

GOVERNING BOARD OF AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Virtual meeting held on Thursday, 19 May 2022 at 6pm

Present:	Shahanara Ali	Staff
	Sayesta Miah	Parent
	Hafise Nazif	Headteacher
	Soyeb Patel	Parent (vice-chair)
	Nisha Ramanathan	Co-opted
	Denis Shea	Local Authority (chair)
	Iqbal Singh	Co-opted
In attendance:	Julie Ammi	Clerk
	Sarah Beaumont	Head of Governance (The Education Space) (minute 358)
	Manpreet Chhabra	Deputy Headteacher
	Lee Franklin-Lewis	Deputy Headteacher
	Sara Shamas	School Business Manager

The meeting commenced at 6pm.

358. Headteacher's report

a. Governance review (draft)

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was advised that the headteacher's report item would be taken first with Sarah Beaumont, head of governance at The Education Space reporting back on the recent review of governance.

Ms Beaumont thanked everyone for their engagement with the governance review process. The away day on Saturday, and the subsequent discussions with a number of governors and the headteacher had concluded the review. The draft report had been completed.

The draft governance review was screen shared. It was important to note that due to the review being completed that day, the headteacher had not had the opportunity to give feedback. Governors would also have the opportunity to read and reflect on the review and decide and agree on next steps.

The review included: documentation, observation of a governing board meeting, a one-hour self-review session at the away day, conversations with the chair, vice-chair and headteacher. The report is intended to offer constructive critique and is a process done in partnership with governors and commissioned by governors.

The context of the school is an Ofsted inspection in 2019, which was good. The school is preparing for another Ofsted at some future point and evaluates itself as continuing to be good.

The report overview sets out the expectations of governors and what an effective board looks like with continual reference to: vision, strategic direction, holding the

headteacher to account and financial resources. The website compliance is taken from the DfE requirements and this would be finalised with the headteacher before the final report.

The review provides recommendations at the end of each section.

The instrument of government which sets out the legal constitution of the board was compliant and there were no vacancies. The board and school had worked very hard to recruit governors and has some new governors, recruited in the autumn.

Governors minutes over the last year had been reviewed and were all checked off. The school has a professional clerk. **Some conversations around staffing needed to be marked as confidential.**

There are 3 committees in place. The governing board meeting of 24 March 2022 was observed with regards to procedures, etiquette and team dynamics. It was noted the school improvement plan was a separate item, which is commended.

The interview framework with the headteacher, chair and vice-chair consisted of 4 questions.

The governors away day included, understanding governor roles and responsibilities, knowing the school, stakeholders and data. It was noted that governors are committed to asking challenging questions and it was raised that even more challenge could be documented in the minutes.

It was suggested that perhaps minutes could be circulated to all governors earlier to have more opportunity to agree on the accuracy. It is up to governors to note their own actions at the time, as minutes are a formal record of the meeting.

The report concludes with an action plan. The draft report would be circulated in the next few days for discussion.

Action: The final agreed governance review report to be shared on Google Drive.

Action: Based on the governance review, governors come up with their own action plan ready for the next governing board meeting.

The chair thanked the head of governance for her review, hard work, attending the meeting on a Saturday, followed by interviews and having the draft report ready for today's meeting.

Governor's question: You have put forward recommendations, do you then come back at a later stage to see if we have complied?

The piece of work of the review is completed, but I can come back by invitation if you would like me to. The passion and commitment that has come across from you all is amazing and thank you as governors for your commitment to your roles. The headteacher's energy runs through everyone.

Sarah Beaumont left the meeting at 6.29pm.

359. Welcome and apologies for absence

Abu Abdullah, Geetha Unnithan and Iqbal Hussain (PG) had sent apologies, which were condoned.

Benedicta Asare and Sara Wilson were absent.

Governors discussed meeting attendance. It was noted that 6 months' non-attendance at full governing board meetings allowed for consideration by the board for removal.

Action: The Education Space to write to Sara Wilson and ask whether she wishes to continue as a governor.

The meeting was quorate.

360. Declaration of interest

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

361. Membership of governing board

a. Staff governor election

Governors noted that Shahanara Ali had been duly elected as a staff governor. Ms Ali was welcomed to her first meeting.

Ms Ali advised had been booked on governor induction training. It was recommended that in addition to this, specific staff governor training be attended, if this was available.

Action: Ms Ali to ask the headteacher/senior leadership team (SLT) any questions that she has around the staff governor role.

362. Minutes of the last governing board meeting

a. Governors approved the minutes of the last board meeting held on 24 March 2022

b. Matters arising

In response to a question the headteacher advised that the original meeting where Anita Stewart, Director of Education was invited had been rearranged for the following Monday.

The action register was reviewed.

The headteacher confirmed that action 344b had been implemented and was ongoing.

Action 345b had been concluded.

Action 354b would be completed once the final governance review had been received.

Action 355 was not discussed on the away day. It was agreed that online meetings at 6pm would continue and be reviewed as and when required.

363. Governing Board committees

a. Finance and Resources 21 April 2022

The minutes were approved.

The main item at the meeting was the budget setting for 2022 – 2023. This would be discussed under a separate agenda item at this meeting.

b. Quality of Education 28 April 2022

The minutes were approved.

c. Human Resources 5 May 2022

The minutes were approved.

Action: The action register of committees would be dealt with in their respective meetings.

364. School budget monitoring

a. Budget setting report

This item was led by Sara Shamas, School Business Manager (SBM). The proposed budget of 2022 – 2023 was presented at the Finance and Resources committee.

There was a 1.2million contingency which meant the school started the year in a very favourable position. However, due to falling rolls and a decrease in income the school is in a very different position moving forward. The mainly permanent current staffing structure would not be sustainable in the long run. This has been brought to the attention of the governing board for the past 3 to 4 years.

The school was now at a point where at the end of 2023 it will have used over £700,000 of its contingency. The headteacher and SBM had met many times to try and reduce spending. However, it is mainly staffing that has a significant impact on the budget. 94% of income is due to staffing costs. Compared to last year the school roll has decreased by 75 children meaning a loss of funding. Schools block funding such as pupil premium and SEND funding have yet to be confirmed so these are estimates.

The current situation predicts that next April the school would commence with £445,000 contingency. If the current staffing structure is kept at the end of the following year, the school budget would be in a deficit.

Action: The working party to meet after the meeting with the Director of Education has taken place as it would then be in a position to give an action plan and implication of what needs to be done.

Decision: The governing board ratified the recommendations of the finance and resources committee, that the 2023 – 2023 budget is approved as was presented.

365. Headteacher's report

This item was completed earlier. The headteacher explained that the decision was made yesterday to present the draft review of the governance report because it had been completed.

The headteacher would share the document out together from the away day with governors, as this was originally planned to be discussed under the headteacher's report.

Action: The headteacher to circulate to governors the document originally planned for the headteacher's report, based on the away day outcomes.

The headteacher reminded governors that 31 May was the last day teachers could resign this term, for September. She highlighted that over the last two years there was no movement and this year there had been a number of teachers moving. Placing teachers for next year was in process and this would be reported within the human resources committee in the summer term.

Governor's question: In relation to those teachers moving on will that impact this term and if so what will we do to bridge the impact?

At this point we need to see whether we should replace them in the current situation. It will have no impact this term as the last day of service will be 31 August 2022.

366. Safeguarding

Mr Franklin-Lewis reported there were no significant updates. The usual amount of referrals had taken place with no apparent themes. There was always a high caseload particularly around Early Help and support for families.

Soyeb Patel left the meeting at 7.02pm.

367. Compliance calendar items (RAG rated)

The headteacher reported that the compliance calendar is up-to-date and rag rated. Some items are always going on so would always be amber. A new calendar cycle would commence in September.

368. Risk register

It is not a requirement for maintained schools to keep a risk register. Risk assessments kept in school are mostly health and safety related.

Decision: It was agreed that as the school does not require a risk register, this item be removed from future agendas.

Action: The GBSO to remove the 'risk register' item from future agendas.

369. School policies for review

The equalities information objectives were in progress. This was the only policy outstanding at the moment.

370. Mental health and well-being

The headteacher reported that a lot of work around mental health and well-being has been happening. This would be reported on in the summer term report.

371. Governor education and training

a. Governors to report on any training attended

HTs perf management training had been completed by Benedicta Asare, Denis Shea and Nisha Ramanathan.

b. Governors to report on any training required

Training is a key area of governance development. Training would be driven by the response to the governance review once finalised. Some areas of training were highlighted during the away day.

It was agreed that governors had to be really clear about what training is needed as it needs to be planned ahead.

It was agreed that further training on the new Ofsted framework and on the governor's role in monitoring and evaluating effectiveness was required.

Governor's question: What other training do I need as a governor that I am not aware of?

In terms of where the school is at the moment one area to benefit from is understanding the whole aspect of monitoring, training on setting a vision and how it is monitored. The Ofsted framework has 4 sections so we could do an overview of Ofsted and what they are looking for. There is lots of governing board training available e.g. financial benchmarking, personal development. Many governors commented regarding understanding assessment and how it is used.

Governor's question: Are these things bespoke training or are they online already that we can join?

Some are generic. Some we can deliver. The headteacher is experienced in running the governor effectiveness training for the authority and can also run Ofsted training. It can be planned if it is known what governors want.

The governance review will highlight training needs and it can then be identified or we can have bespoke training provided by the headteacher or third parties, but this is not officially recorded by the education space.

It was noted that some specific training might not be needed for the whole board. This would also need to be taken into consideration when planning training needs.

Action: The chair and vice-chair to use the governance review to identify which training is required and share this document on Google Drive, in order that planning can commence.

c. Governors to feedback regarding any link governor's reports

There were no items.

372. Future meeting arrangements

Summer term

14 July 2022

All meetings commence at 18:00 unless otherwise stated.

It was suggested and then agreed via a vote that the next meeting would be virtual and the October 2022 meeting (headteacher's vision presentation) would be face-to-face.

373. Any other business

There were no items.

374. Agenda items for the next meeting

There were no further items.

The chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.27pm.

Action register:

Minute	Action	Action allocated to	Update	Action completed/date
358 a	The final agreed governance review report to be shared on Google Drive.	HT		
358 a	Based on the governance review, governors to come up with their own action plan ready for the next governing board meeting.	GB		
359	The Education Space to write to Sara Wilson and ask whether she wishes to continue as a governor.	GBSO		
361	Ms Ali to ask the headteacher/senior leadership team (SLT) any questions that she has around the staff governor role.			
363	The action register of committees would be dealt with in their respective meetings.	Chair of each committee		
364	The working party to meet after the meeting with the Director of Education has taken place as it	Working party		

	would then be in a position to give an action plan and implication of what needs to be done.			
365	The headteacher to circulate to governors the Governance review originally planned for the headteacher's report, based on the away day outcomes.	HT		
368	The GBSO to remove the 'risk register' item from future agendas.	GBSO		
371 b	The chair and vice-chair to use the governance review to identify which training is required and share this document on Google Drive, in order that planning can commence.	CoG, V-CoG		