

# LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

Minutes of the

## GOVERNING BOARD OF AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Online meeting held on Thursday, 2 February 2023 at 6.30pm

**Present:** Shahanara Ali Staff

Abu Abdullah Co-opted  
Benedicta Asare Co-opted  
Iqbal Singh Co-opted  
Sayesta Miah Parent  
Hafise Nazif Headteacher  
Soyeb Patel Associate  
Nisha Ramanathan Co-opted  
Denis Shea LA (vice-chair  
Neha Shivhare Associate  
Geetha Unnithan Co-opted (chair)

**In attendance:** Julie Ammi Clerk, The Education Space Lee Franklin-Lewis  
Deputy Headteacher

*The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.*

### **425. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Iqbal Hussain had sent apologies which were condoned

### **426. Declaration of interest and code of conduct**

Governors were requested to complete the annual declaration of interest form, via their GovernorHub profile, if they had not done so already.

**Action: All governors to complete the annual declaration of interest**

**form. Constitution items**

### **427. Membership of the governing board**

Governors noted the board membership

#### **a. Election of parent governor update**

There are 2 parent governor vacancies.

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The headteacher reported that there had been no nominations so far. Should there be more than one nomination, once the closing date had been reached, a member of the governing board would act as the returning officer.

#### **428. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

##### **a. Approval of the minutes of the last board meeting held on 8 December 2022 (enclosure A)**

Governors were informed that all of the documents were on GovernorHub once they sign in. All documents were also in the schools governor GoogleDrive folder.

If any governor was ever unsure whether all documents have been received, they should send a message via the governors WhatsApp group.

Governors approved the minutes of the last meeting as a true reflection of the meeting.

##### **b. Matters arising**

The items within the action register had all been completed or were in progress.

The chair reminded governors to complete the safeguarding training. There were 2 options but it is essential that 1 of these were completed. This would then be logged by Lee Franklin-Lewis, DSL.

**Action: All governors to complete a session of safeguarding training before the next meeting.**

#### **Headteacher and governing board items**

##### **429. Reports from committees**

Minutes from committee meetings held since the last meeting.

##### **a. Quality of education minutes 10 November 2022 (enclosure B)**

Governors noted the minutes.

**b. The finance and resources and the HR committee minutes** would come to the next full governing board meeting for governors to note.

##### **430. School self-evaluation form**

The headteacher presented this item and began by asking governors some questions about the SEF and LIP.

The school's priorities are:

- Raise the attainment and progress of pupils in Reading
- Developing leaders of all levels through the use of subject deep dives

- Developing Outstanding Personal Development / Enhance the mentalhealth and wellbeing of all staff at work
- Developing the pedagogical knowledge of all staff in order to deliver an outstanding curriculum effectively

The SEF together with the Learning Improvement Plan are the 2 documents that Ofsted are sent the day prior to an inspection.

The main risks for the school are currently attendance (and persistent absence) and falling roles. Persistent absence is higher than both national and local. Falling roles means reduced funding and budget.

The school is proud of its performance and quality of teaching. There is a 3 year trend in line or significantly above national.

Governors carry out visits, receive reports and monitor.

A governor has been working on typical questions and where to find evidence. This is a work in progress and can be found on the shared governor drive, Governors were encouraged to have a look at this document.

**Governor's question: Have we had any notification from Ofsted or do we anticipate the inspection?**

*We do not get prior notification. They tell us the day before. It is still slightly early. We all have to be prepared.*

The LIP has been populated with everything the school is going to do in order to achieve the targets stated. It is rag rated. SLT meet weekly and as far as possible dedicate part of the meeting to one area of the plan. It is evaluated and reviewed. SLT has also created a child friendly version to share with the children.

**Governor's question: A lot of the things in there are about re-establishing links with parents and carers but it all seems to be all coffee mornings. They can be successful but do we have any other plans if our coffee mornings do not attract the numbers we are thinking of?**

*We do like social activities, as it is a way of getting parents in. We also run a lot of workshops. We had a reception behaviour meeting and a phonics meeting recently.*

**Governor's question: If something were to hinder the school from meeting all of the targets, what would that be?**

*It would be the fact that SLT have such high aspirations, that they may be over ambitious.*

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Governors spent some time thinking about the strengths and developments in the 4 Ofsted areas. The headteacher highlighted how the Governors are part of the leadership and management judgment.

Governors hold school leadership to account through appropriate questioning. A strength of leadership and management is that they know what is required and are committed to achieving it. Part of the governors' role is to be assured that the middle leaders' subject knowledge is deep enough. This can be by having meetings with those leaders or they can report to governors either in writing or in person. Governors have those reports regularly.

The quality of education committee along with link governors also scrutinize this. Governor's complete a visit form afterwards on their findings. The chair encouraged everyone to visit the school for a portion of a day. Governors should visit classrooms to increase knowledge of the school and speak with pupils where possible.

There are a lot of strengths in the governing board and they are very supportive. They are committed to children and education which is really important. Governors have different working backgrounds and this is a strength with a wide variety of skills. Governors are open to listening to each other's views and in the needs of the school. Constructive discussions are held about matters that affect the school.

#### **431. Reports**

There were no additional reports.

#### **432. School budget monitoring**

The headteacher reported that the budget monitoring report for Period 8 had been looked at in January. The bursar and headteacher had presented a report at the finance committee which is on GovernorHub for those governors not on finance and resources.

The next budget monitoring report is scheduled for after February half-term. The chair of finance reported that the finances are looking alright with the risks as known. The surplus over the last few years is being utilised for school requirements. There are no particular concerns and the headteacher and team are doing a good job budgeting adequately. The budget is now closed to prepare for the close down of the financial year.

Governors would look at setting the new budget in March. Another challenge is that 92% of the budget is on staffing and it should be nearer 80%, so there is some work to do to decrease without diluting the quality of teaching. The budget will be set but when resignations come in after this it impacts the budget again so it will need to be

reassessed.

**Governors' question: If we should be about 80% spend on staffing and we are 92%, where is that extra spending being made?**

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*For the last 10 years we have been a 4fe school and we are now decreasing in pupil numbers, so the funding we are receiving has decreased but we still have a larger leadership team. We also have a lot of teachers at the top of their pay scale so many are expensive. We have a lot of LSAs who have been part of a few forms of entry primary School - so we are paying a lot of money for staffing. 80% is the average but benchmarking shows we are higher. It was 95% and now we have decreased to 92%. It is important that this is decreased further in time.*

**433. Compliance calendar items and policies**

The Equality Policy had been uploaded. It was agreed the chair would review this with the headteacher and approve.

**434. Safeguarding**

All staff have recently undergone online Prevent training.

The DSL is undergoing filtering and monitoring training with LGFL to ensure the right systems in place and rationale.

Denis Shea had a meeting with Lee Franklin-Lewis as link governor for LAC and the report has been placed on Google Drive.

**435. Relationships, sex and health education (RSHE)**

RSHE is to be covered in the headteacher's report in March. The website section is being worked on.

**436. Risk register**

Falling pupil numbers is a risk factor to the School's current position. The School is planning for this decrease on a year by year basis. This will remain as an ongoing agenda item.

**437. Mental health and wellbeing**

Mr. Abdullah had visited the school and met with Mr. Lee Franklin-Lewis. He also received a tour of the school corridors and the bus. The noticeboard would be a good opportunity to link some of the things Ms. Hyland and Mr. Franklin-Lewis said with what the pupils said. Mr. Abdullah learnt about zones of regulation. It is mental health week next week and the plans were shared about school activities built into learning as opposed to adding to staff workloads. The visit report will be shared.

The LIP has a whole focus priority on mental health and wellbeing and on this. Mr

Abdullah had a discussion around staff wellbeing. It is a key agenda item on most meetings. There is a staff wellbeing charter from the DfE that has been signed up to and covers 8 different headings. This will be shared with the HR committee.

#### **438. Governor education and training**

##### **a. Governors to report any training attended**

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Mr. Shea joined a training webinar last week called 'Is your governance ready for Ofsted?' It was very good. It was amazing to hear that the things coming up, the headteacher had already told governors about. The headteacher was congratulated. It is about a state of readiness. The quality of education is weighted at about 50% of their inspection and this focuses on the curriculum, not so much of the outcomes. The other 3 areas are a 3rd each of the remaining 3 areas. Attendance is an area of concern at national level.

Mr. Shea attended the Newham governance association forum where a representative from each school attends. Their main areas of concern are the same as Avenue, falling roles, falling budget. Economies of scale were discussed.

Councillors and the new Education Director gave an address of what he had done so far. He is looking at new SEND strategies from the local authority. These should be around the long awaited green paper. Peter Gibbs came and talked about attendance. The LA are re-organising themselves. There will be 17 staff in total so they are recruiting additional staff to what was formally called pupil services to identify CME.

They believe there are 482 children missing in education in Newham and that was accurate as of January this year. They think 50% have moved out of England and 25% moved to other locations. The focus is on the remaining 25% that they think are still in Newham. The other 75 impacted on attendance figures. £2,500 penalty notices have been issued by the LAs. There is no information on how many families that is. There will be a new SLA and the information would come out to schools. At the moment it is a graded service you have to buy into. The new one will be a basic free service and then a silver and gold service that you can buy into.

**Governor's question: Where they talked about the impact where pupils are missing education. Does that money made from fines come back to the schools?**

*No, it goes to the LBN.*

##### **b. Governors training required**

There were no items.

##### **c. Link governors report**

Link visit reports would be uploaded to GoogleDrive for governors to review.

#### **d. Governors visit reports**

Mr. Miah carried out an attendance visit and met with Mr. Franklin-Lewis in December. The attendance officer was also present. The visit included Studybugs, a guided tour and an open question session. Mr. Miah was struck by the impact on other students, when students are late or persistently absent (PA). A student said she has taken upon herself to help some of the children that are PA, and she then falls behind. The class teacher then has to help the absent student and it takes away from those in class. Perhaps this is something that needs looking into more.

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There are some real positive changes for some families and there was discussion about chipping away with some families; not just attendance but also punctuality. Mr. Franklin Lewis met with 15 parents on punctuality and was able to subsequently call 13 of those to congratulate on a significant improvement. This is about understanding individual family circumstances that lead to PA.

#### **Future meeting arrangements and any other business**

##### **439. Governing board meeting dates**

###### **Spring:**

Thursday, 16 March 2023

###### **Summer:**

Thursday, 18 May 2023

Thursday, 13 July 2023

**Action: 30 March meeting to be moved to 16 March. The clerk to inform The Education Space.**

All meetings to commence at 6.30pm unless otherwise agreed.

##### **440. Any other business**

###### **a. Agenda items for the next meeting**

- Term dates 2023 - 2024 (Newham changes)

*The chair closed the meeting at 8.15pm.*

#### **Action register:**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action allocated to</b>	<b>Update</b>	<b>Action completed/date</b>
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<b>426</b>	<b>All governors to complete the annual declaration of interest form.</b>	<b>All governors</b>		
<b>428b</b>	<b>All governors to complete a session of safeguarding</b>	<b>All governors</b>		

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	<b>training before the next meeting.</b>			
<b>439</b>	<b>30 March meeting to be moved to 16 March. The clerk to inform The Education Space.</b>	<b>clerk</b>		

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