

# LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

Minutes of the

## GOVERNING BOARD OF AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Online meeting held on Thursday, 30 March 2023 at 6.30pm

<b>Present:</b>	Shahanara Ali	Staff
	Benedicta Asare	Co-opted
	Hafise Nazif	Headteacher
	Nisha Ramanathan	Co-opted
	Denis Shea	LA (vice-chair
	Neha Shivhare	Associate
	Geetha Unnithan	Co-opted (chair)

<b>In attendance:</b>	Julie Ammi	Clerk, The Education Space
	Manpreet Chahbra	Deputy Headteacher
	Lee Franklin-Lewis	Deputy Headteacher

*The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.*

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

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies received from Iqbal Singh, Soyeb Patel, Iqbal Hussain, Abu Abdullah and Sayesta Miah. The apologies were condoned. It was appreciated that, with being the month of Ramadan, some Governors would find attendance difficult.

The meeting was quorate.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

The code of conduct needed review. The headteacher highlighted that a new model policy code of conduct was available on Governor Hub. It was agreed that Denis Shea would review this and share for governor comments before agreeing the final version.

## **Constitution items**

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

Governors noted the board membership

- a. Note the board membership -
- b. Election of parent governor update

There are 2 parent governor vacancies.

There is a new parent governor called Ms Shahnaz Begum. No election was needed as Ms Begum was the only applicant. Ms Begum would attend the next meeting. The new governor has had a brief induction with the headteacher and has visited the school. Ms Begum works as a data analyst and would bring important skills to the governing board.

The second parent governor vacancy is on the newsletter. The preference was to have a parent governor with a child currently at the school, but if there were no nominations, individual parents may be approached and/or an alternative parent without a child at the school could be considered.

- c. Governors were advised that the term of office of Iqbal Hussain, parent governor expires on 22 April 2023**

**Action: The headteacher to ask Iqbal Hussain if he wishes to stand again as a governor.**

**444. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

**a. Approval of the minutes of the last board meeting held on 2 February 2023 (enclosure A)**

Governors approved the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2023 as a true reflection of the meeting.

**b. Matters arising**

A previous action from the register was for all governors to complete safeguarding training and links had been sent. Governors updated the board on their training.

**Action: Governors were requested to send in their safeguarding training certificates to Lee Franklin-Lewis (DSL) once they have completed the training.**

**Headteacher and governing board items**

**445. Reports from committees**

Minutes from committee meetings held since the last meeting.

**a. Finance and resources 12 January 2023 (enclosure B)**

**b. Quality of education 19 January 2023 (enclosure C)**

**c. Human Resources 23 February 2023 (enclosure D)**

Governors noted the minutes of all three committee meetings.

**446. Headteacher's report**

The headteacher's report had been shared with governors in advance of the meeting. Questions were invited.

**Governor's question: As noted in the human resources committee minutes Denis Shea and the headteacher had attended the local authority (LA) pupil falling roles meeting for the Manor Park area. Is there an update from the meeting and a plan?**

*The meeting was also attended by the other schools in Manor Park. Peter Gibbs (LA) is implementing these meetings across Newham. It was not felt that the meeting provided any new information. Pupil roles are still falling and a strategic plan was not offered by the LA. Projected numbers have recently come through and Avenue has been allocated 41/120 admissions for September.*

In terms of risk, it is important to acknowledge that falling roles may impact on attainment. This year there were 55 children in Reception, so next year there will be two classes in Year 1. There would still be capacity for up to 90 children.

The phonics check will be affected by receiving children from mid-phase admissions during the year. Mid-phase admissions will impact all year groups.

The EYFS teacher pupil ratio also means that going over 60 pupils will require an additional teacher.

Avenue will formally become a 3-form-entry in September 2024. Keeping options open would be the choice. Because the numbers are capped this will impact going through the school. The school is not recruiting to positions where natural wastage is taking place. Looking ahead to September there may be staff on maternity leave whilst 3 teachers have indicated they will be leaving for personal circumstances.

Ms. Ramanathan has produced an Ofsted preparation document which the chair and headteacher have looked at. The board would benefit from using it and would suggest later that in May's meeting that session is used to review the Ofsted document and to start thinking about some of the questions that Ofsted are going to be asking. All governors, especially those with key roles could have their input and add to this draft so that it becomes a working document.

Governors visits this term have been really strong and this momentum needs to continue. The school is confident that most things are working well. Good progress is being made against the Learning Improvement Plan.

**Governor's question: On the curriculum report that was included, the impact statement said more use of the library. Do we have any measures or views as to how the pupils are using that library? Is there any data to look at to say they are using these books?**

*In the last committee meeting the librarian's role was discussed. The librarian is having a huge impact on children's enjoyment of reading. She produces reports and the quality of education committee requested that in the summer term that she comes along and talks to them. She gave us data on boys and girls going into the library and books. The impact can be seen in children's enjoyment of books.*

*All our books are levelled, e.g. 4.3, the child will go to that section of the bookshelf. Before they put the book back they do an accelerated reader online quiz. It tests skills. They have to score 85% or 90% and if they do, they move their name up a pyramid. If they get that score or higher 3 times they move up a stage until they get to the top. At this point we send a message home and we sign and date and give them a book. In addition this year we have a teacher, who as part of performance management is doing a reading millionaire quiz. She is challenging children to read a million words by the end of the year. Shelves outside classrooms display a book the children are reading and shows how many words the class has read collectively. The children are being tested through quizzing.*

*This year there is a buzz around reading at break and lunch. Children are walking into class in the morning with a book in their hands. That energy around reading is much more evident. There are a lot more reviews of books in the library. The book borrowing is a lot higher. Children are choosing more than one book at a time. Some visitors today asked Manpreet if we had been working on reading because they noticed it.*

#### **447. School budget monitoring**

Period 10 is reported on within the headteacher's report. The in-year deficit was revised to £436,431, from £814,164,

The headteacher reported verbally on Period 11. The school is making some savings but is using significant contingency to ensure staying solvent. At the current time it was confirmed that the in-year deficit had decreased by £33k due to a SEN income final adjustment, a decrease in catering forecast and some savings in admin supplies.

The school is still very much relying on its large contingency and predicts this year it will have to utilise over £400k of this. The school is using 90% of the budget on staffing this year; a decrease from 94%. Agency costs are expensive so the school is mindful of these costs. This year less than £30k has been put into agency which is the lowest ever. At the beginning of the financial year there was an in-year deficit of £814k predicted. This now sits at about £400k.

Governors observed that benchmarking showed staffing costs are high and with the falling roles and income, this was a concern. The government's proposal for teachers pay had been turned down because the rise was unfunded. If this did eventually go ahead it would challenge all schools financially, in what are already challenging times.

#### **448. Schools financial value standard (SFVS)**

The SFVS is an annual checklist. It is a self audit to say whether financial regulations are in place. The headteacher had been through this with the bursar and a copy had already been shared with governors. Governors approval was required in order for SFVS to be submitted to the LA.

Governors had no concerns with this document and were happy the SFVS is a true and accurate record of where the school is and what it has done over the last year.

**Decision: The governing board approved the SFVS for submission to the LA.**

**449. Compliance calendar items and policies**

**a. Mental health and well-being policy**

The draft policy has been shared with link governors and is currently out for consultation with staff to gain their views over the next couple of weeks.

**Action: Governors to share any comments on the mental health and well-being policy with Lee Franklin-Lewis (DHT) and Abu Abdullah (link governor) before the next meeting.**

**450. Safeguarding**

Safeguarding was covered in a section of the headteacher's report.

Governors discussed safeguarding and reaffirmed that they must challenge one another and the senior team because this is something that can break a school and a reputation. At the next governing board meeting alongside some Ofsted training there would be some further safeguarding training with governors to ensure everyone is as up to date as can be.

**Governor's question: IS there anything further that Governors can do to ensure that Safeguarding is as strong as can be ?**

*Read the summary of KCSiE 2022 again as it is a very useful starting point and then to access the safeguarding training highlighted earlier this evening.*

*When the chair visits she does a very thorough review in safeguarding. The chair visits regularly and talks to children and staff regularly. It is really important to ask questions about safeguarding and a few questions each time on testing our safeguarding knowledge. Everyone needs to know it is their responsibility. It is about keeping the dialogue fresh and current. The Ofsted document will support this too.*

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

Year 5 would do this in summer 2. Letters go out and information to parents in summer 1.

If parents want to withdraw their children from some non-statutory aspects they can. The school accepts and appreciates this. The curriculum is quite established now. At the last governors meeting the website was discussed and the school confirmed that the website content had now been refreshed and was back online as per requirements.

**452. Risk register**

Governors had previously discussed a risk register and know that it is only for academies and that maintained schools do not have to have one. However, it was purposely left as an item discussion about risks in school continued.

Some risks had been discussed already and the school is at risk of going into a deficit budget in the next couple of years should the pupil numbers not improve. Attainment is at risk of falling in various year groups due to increased mobility due to having a lot of spaces available.

It was put forward that the chair has found it is highly recommended to keep the risks being discussed in a central place where it is easily identifiable, What is being done and what the rag rating is. It may be at some point in the future all schools will be told to do this.

**Action: The chair to share a template of a risk register with the headteacher that is easy to complete and maintain.**

**453. Mental health and wellbeing**

This item had been covered earlier as part of the policy.

The DfE has written new guidance in attendance for pupils, in relation to attendance and support in relation to where mental health and wellbeing is a concern. The attendance team and the pastoral manager are looking at this.

**Governor's question: The LA has a priority of attendance. Are they doing anything with regards to this?**

*The attendance management service (AMS) has not said anything and the link person to the LA was not yet aware that the DfE had released this.*

*There are a couple of pupils who have some spectrum of emotional based school avoidance. It is about making those appropriate reasonable adjustments and the guidance sets out what is and is not allowed etc. This will continue to be taken forward.*

The LA should be starting a new offer from April 2023. There is a free base offer and other levels which are paid for. They should be expanding their department to follow up on children missing in education so that it relieves some of the burden from schools and having to keep these children on role. The figures they gave were that the Newham primary and secondary average attendance was the same but the secondary % was above national, whereas primary is below national.

**454. Term dates 2023 - 2024 - Newham changes**

The October autumn term 2023 and Easter 2024 was moved after publication to bring more in line with neighbouring boroughs.

Governors approved this change.

**455. Governor education and training**

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

4 governors completed the LGFL safeguarding training. It was a good course. It would have been overwhelming for people that have not previously attended any safeguarding training.

**b. Governors training required**

Safeguarding training is ongoing and a section on safeguarding would also be delivered at the next governing board meeting.

**c. Link governors report**

Ms Asare carried out an inclusion link visit at the end of February. Ms Asare gave a brief summary. The visit report is on GoverHub and governors were requested to read this.

There are 103 pupils on the register and around 75% of these needs are communication related. The school has recently lost its SaLT and is awaiting a new one to start. Overall things are going quite well. Some actions being worked on include working with teachers ensuring they are equipped and able to manage. Newham are recruiting a new SaLT and hope to have one in place after Easter. Once in post there would be a coffee morning for parents.

The next inclusion link visit is scheduled for the end of May.

**d. Governors visit reports**

Visit reports can be found on the shared drive.

**Future meeting arrangements and any other business**

**456. Governing board meeting dates 2022 - 2023**

**Summer:**

Thursday, 18 May 2023

Thursday, 13 July 2023

All meetings to commence at 6.30pm unless otherwise agreed.

**457. Any other business**

**Governor's question: In the health and safety internal audit the first aid/medication section has not been completed. Is there a reason for this?**

*This was an oversight. This section will be completed.*

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

- Safeguarding training
- Review of Ofsted document

The chair closed the meeting at 8pm.

**Action register:**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action allocated to</b>	<b>Update</b>	<b>Action completed/date</b>
443 c	The headteacher to ask Iqbal Hussain if he wishes to stand again as a governor.			
444 b	Governors were requested to send in their safeguarding training certificates to Lee Franklin-Lewis (DSL) once they have completed the training.			
449 a	Governors to share any comments on the mental health and well-being policy with Lee Franklin-Lewis (DHT) and Abu Abdullah (link governor) before the next meeting.			
452	The chair to share a template of a risk register with the headteacher that is easy to complete and maintain.			