



GILLESPIE PRIMARY SCHOOL
MINUTES OF
FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING HELD ON
Wednesday 12 June 2024 at 5.50pm

PRESENT

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ROLE</u>
Dan Hamilton (DH)	(Chair) Co-opted Governor
Mark Owen (MO)	Headteacher
Hafsa Abokar (HA)	Parent Governor
Fin Craig (FC)	LA Governor
Bhavini Doyle (BD)	Parent Governor
Mandy Leatham (ML)	Parent Governor
Jodie Reed (JR)	Parent Governor
Ashley Smith (AS)	(Vice-Chair) Co-opted Governor

APOLOGIES

Shelley Wragg	Staff Governor
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OTHER ATTENDEES

Katrina Moses (KM)	Deputy Headteacher
Jenny Bernard (JB)	Clerk

The meeting started at 17:56 and was quorate.

1.	<u>WELCOME & APOLOGIES</u> The Chair welcomed all Governors.
1.1	He reported that Carly Davis & Joseph Gibber had resigned from the governing board. The agency through which they had been recruited now charges, but he is exploring other options and will report back on outcomes.

1.2	Apologies were received from Shelley Wragg and consent for absence given.
2.	<u>COMPLIANCE</u> MO declared an interest in a matter to be discussed in the Confidential section of the meeting.
3.	<u>Minutes of the previous meeting (28 February 2024) and Matters Arising</u>
3.1	The minutes were accepted as correct and ratified. ACTION: Clerk to remove “draft” watermark and rename as “approved”. Chair to sign minutes electronically on Governor hub HERE using the “marked as signed” button.
3.2	Item 2a. JB apologised to board as had not emailed governors. Will do so after this meeting. ACTION: Clerk to email governors about updating Governor Hub entries. (See also item 2e).
3.3	Item 2c: Done.
3.4	Item 2d: Done
3.5	Item 2e: Not yet done – JB will include link in email to governors (see item 2a above). MO reminded governors that the school’s safeguarding policy is very comprehensive and is updated almost every year
3.6	Item 3b: Done.
3.7	Item 4b: Done.
3.8	Item 4e: Done.
3.9	Item 5c: Ongoing.
3.10	Item 6b: Done.
3.11	Item 7h: JB confirmed Pay Committee minutes are restricted.
3.12	Item 7k/7l: MO commented that as the aim was to help parents to understand the EHCP process the information is already in the SEN policy (which is also reviewed every year) it is just a matter of taking that information and signposting it to parents. ACTION: MO to pull out EHCP information for parents and highlight on website by September.
3.13	Item 7p: Redundant.
3.14	Item 8b: DH reported that letter had been sent but not received well by Islington. He is happy to share the letter with governors. ACTION: DH to circulate letter to governing board.
3.15	Item 14: Not yet done. ACTION: FC to complete.
4.	<u>Report from Finance Committee and Budget Issues ()</u>
4.1	AS reported on documents previously circulated regarding the school budget. The financial year 2023 had not ended in surplus as previously forecast, but with a £50k deficit – meaning an accumulated deficit of £74k. This was due to various issues: - unfunded teacher pay rises; pupils with SEN needs but no EHCP or lag in support payments; high staff absence/sickness needing agency cover; continued increases in energy costs.
4.2	The school has filed a deficit budget with the local authority and must undertake to clear the deficit - ideally over 3 years. To prove how it aims to achieve this the school had to submit deficit recovery plan. The school will be put in monitoring group with Islington’s finance team who will meet with school once or twice per term to review progress of the recovery plan.
4.3	MO added that the school has basically cut everything possible in previous years and kept tight rein on expenditure. However, like many other schools it has been hit by costs not within its control. DH reiterated that the school was not in any way profligate. JR expressed the governing board’s thanks to AS for all his work on this and noted that these budgetary pressures on schools are national.

<p>4.4</p> <p>4.5</p> <p>4.6</p> <p>4.7</p>	<p>The recovery plan focusses on maximising the nursery roll and looking at ways to get income from the use of the school building/facilities. Other schools use their playgrounds as carparks for Arsenal but Islington had opposed a previous application from the school. The have been asked to look at it again as this could generate £10k per year. School also looking again at hosting a farmers' market.</p> <p>AS and MO had analysed a number of cost-saving options. One option will be proposed in the confidential section of the meeting. However, none of the options will eliminate the whole deficit in 3 years but will be moving in right direction. Still awaiting a response from Islington to the recovery plan letter sent on 30 May.</p> <p>Governors suggested other ways to earn money from school such as being used for filming, hosting a Sunday Boot Sale. MO assured governors they were looking at every possibility and revisiting ideas (like the boot sale and car parking) that Islington had previously rejected.</p> <p>AS formally proposed that the Governing Board approve the deficit budget. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.</p> <p>DH thanked AS for all his hard work.</p>
<p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p><u>5. Report from Learning Committee (ML) and Governor Visits</u></p> <p>ML reported that governors had made observation visits of art and Design lessons. The Learning Committee had also conducted a review of national school comparative data sets including 'Analyse School Performance'. Details will be shared in the minutes. <i>ACTION: ML to share data set analysis in minutes of Learning Committee.</i></p> <p>Individual reports of observation visits to art lessons will be shared separately but the key point was that governors were impressed by the breadth of abilities and the levels of enthusiasm (or lack thereof) that teachers deal with in each class. Governors also observed the use of art in other lessons such as English. In general, governors had given positive feedback about their visits and were happy to see the creativity and engagement of the children with both governors and with each other.</p> <p>The next meeting of the Learning Committee is on 10 July and it will go through the data review in more detail.</p>
<p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p><u>6. Head Teacher's Report (questions to MO)</u></p> <p>The report had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>FC noted the much better attendance figures and asked how these had been achieved. MO commented that the school had the lowest absence rate in the borough even though Islington is one of the worst authorities in the country for absence. School does what it always has to work with and support parents and pupil – sending consistent messages around the importance of attendance and not punishing/fining parents but working with them.</p> <p>HA had first-hand experience of how the school supports absent/sick pupils and praised Katrina & Rebecca for their excellent work. JR expressed thanks to all the teachers who ensured they maintained relationships with parents all through lockdown. KM noted that for the majority of persistently absent pupils it was due to illness or other related issues but do have a "school refuser". However parents are generally supportive. ML noted that children want to come to school due to the range of activities happening every day and expressed concern that the budget issues might affect this. MO commented that children love the playground – and are even excited by the water fountains being switched on.</p>

<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p>	<p><u>Parental Financial Contributions</u></p> <p>DH raised the issue in the context that the school is already cutting back every way it can, and the new government won't have any money. He suggested that the school could ask parents to contribute to the everyday running costs of school. AS outlined how the secondary school his child attends asks parents to contribute. FC commented that her children's school does it as well. MO has been approached by parents asking to contribute.</p> <p>Governors had a full and frank discussion. All agreed that the school needs regular/reliable income. However concern was expressed that asking parents could make the PTA (FOG) redundant as well as shift parents' expectations. Governors considered ways of working more with strategically with FOG – such as charity matching funds. But there may be a conflict with the FOG constitution. Also parents have a finite pot of money, so funds for core expenses will mean less for the enrichment activities funded through FOG. It is difficult to budgeting on donations – not a sustainable option. This general fundraising could mask the lack of funding – it is not the role of the community to bail out state funded schools. It may also affect the school's diversity if parents think only families with money can attend the school.</p> <p>Governors discussed the threat of closure/merger especially for one-form entry schools due to Islington school reorganisation/falling primary rolls. Governors asked whether there was any support from Islington to help schools. FC noted that FOG could apply for Islington local initiative funding – some organisations apply several times. MO reported that post-Ofsted he & Sarah will dedicate more time to fundraising. He also needs to communicate with parents about the deficit. If this is something governors want to pursue the school would need to develop a more detailed proposal and consult on it with the whole school community.</p> <p>DH thanked governors for the helpful discussion noted that clearly, there was not a unanimous view on the matter. He proposed that the subject be shelved for now and be revisited next term. He hoped to have the agreed deficit recovery plan and some evidence of how it was working by mid-October, along with a draft survey of parent views on the contribution issue, for consideration by governors.</p>
<p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p>	<p><u>Committee Constitution</u></p> <p>DH and AS had reviewed the list of committees and their membership. They may need to be rejigged slightly as governing board now has 2 vacancies.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the lists and formally APPROVED the committees and membership. ACTION: <i>DH to email list to Clerk. JB to update records on Governor Hub. School to update website.</i></p>
<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p>	<p><u>Governor Training / Governors' Briefings</u></p> <p>Governors were informed about two upcoming events:</p> <p>Governors' Briefing will be held on Wednesday 26 June, 6-7.30pm, on MS Teams. DH will be going, and all governors are welcome to attend.</p> <p>Islington has Financial Management for Governors training coming up soon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part One: Monday 24 June • Part Two: Monday 8 July Both parts from 6pm to 8pm on Teams. AS will attend.

10.	<u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u>
10.1	Governors were invited to an event with former chair Claire Bolderson (now a volunteer reader at school) on 11 July. ACTION: <i>DH/MO to make arrangements.</i>
10.2	BD suggested approaching ex-parents/grandparents to become governors. ACTION: <i>School to look at contacting ex-parents/grandparents. Call for new governors to be put in school newsletter. Governors to approach family and friends.</i>

PART TWO – CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Katrina & Mark left meeting at 19:35

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 19:50pm.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____

ACTION LIST – FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING 12 JUNE 2024

ITEM	ACTION	BY
3.1	Clerk to remove “draft” watermark and rename as “approved”. Chair to sign minutes electronically on Governorhub HERE using the “marked as signed” button.	CLERK (JB) CHAIR (DH)
3.2.	Clerk to email governors about updating GovernorHub entries and include a link to KCSIE status (item 2e).	CLERK/ALL GOVERNORS
3.12	MO to pull out EHCP information for parents and highlight on website by September.	MO
3.14	DH to circulate school closures letter to governing board	DH
3.15	FC to draft addition to absence policy re. safeguarding absent pupils.	FC
5.1	ML to share data set analysis in minutes of Learning Committee.	ML
8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DH to email list of Committee Membership to Clerk. JB to update records on GovernorHub. School to update website. 	DH CLERK MO
10.1	DH/MO to make arrangements for Governors event.	DH/MO

10.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School to look at contacting ex-parents/ grandparents about joining governing board.• Call for new governors in school newsletter.• Governors to approach family and friends.	MO MO ALL GOVERNORS
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