

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
GOVERNING BODY OF HARBINGER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Date of Meeting	25 th November 2021
Venue	Virtually Via Zoom
Chair	Martin Young
Clerk & Minutes	Suzette Nicol
Time	5:00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP:

Governor	Category
Martin Young (Chair)*	Co-opted
Rebecca Abrahams (Executive Headteacher)*	Staff (Head)
Charlie McKnight	Co-opted
Caroline Hurley*	Co-opted
Father Tom Pyke	Co-opted
Benedict Brickley (Ben)*	Co-opted
Susannah Abdelouahed	Parent Governor
Kiran Rahman	Parent Governor
Jasmine Islam*	Parent Governor
Srividya Srivathsan (Vidya)*	Local Authority
Eddie Miller*	Staff

Also In Attendance	Role/Title
Nimesha Nagahawatte (Head of School)	Observer
Mai-Anh Dien (School Business Manager)	Observer
Alison Gawthrop (THEP)	Observer
Lawrence Houldsworth	Associate Member

* Denotes attendance

PART 1 – OPEN SECTION

	ITEM
1.	Welcome, Apologies For Absence And Declaration Of Pecuniary Interest
	<p>The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Kiran Rahman, Susannah Abdelouahed and Father Tom Pyke. Governors RESOLVED to accept the given apology.</p> <p>There were no pecuniary interests declared on items on the agenda.</p>

2.	<p>Feedback On The Recent Teaching And Learning Review And The Subsequent TIG Meeting (Alison Gawthrope)</p>
	<p>Alison Gawthrope introduced herself as the Leadership Consultant to the school from the Tower Hamlets Education Partnership (THEP). She explained that since the school received a Requires Improvement (RI) judgement at the last Ofsted inspection, she had been holding Targeted Intervention Group (TIG) meetings at the school. The TIG Meetings were geared towards focusing on the key areas for development from the Ofsted inspection. During these meetings, leaders would be held to account, to ensure that at the next inspection, the school was able to demonstrate the progress that had been made. As part of that, Alison and a colleague, Dan, (a previous HMI Inspector), visited the school the previous week on an evidence gathering day. They focused on reading across the school and on curriculum development.</p> <p>With regard to reading, in the morning Alison and Dan looked at daily supported reading, Destination Reader and phonics. They met with the reading leaders, some teachers and a group of children from years 5 and 6. In the afternoon of that same day, they met with Nimesha Nagahawatte, Head of School and Rebecca Abrahams, Executive Headteacher to discuss the curriculum.</p> <p>In terms of daily supported reading Alison mentioned that they were very impressed with what had been achieved within the short period of time in which it had been implemented. Each small group of children across the key stage was being read to by an adult. The adults felt well supported and they had received training from Eddi Miller. Destination Reader was doing well in getting the children into reading. The children were enjoying it and the texts were suited to them. Alison and Dan then looked at phonics across early years and KS1 where the school was using the Letters and Sounds Programme. There, the adults were doing the right thing but rigour and vigour appeared to be lacking. Some of the lessons were lackluster and could have been improved. In addition, some of the adults were missing assessment points. The children were slightly off task at times and the adults were picking that up. Recommendations for this included that the leaders should go back to checking that all of the adults were doing what they should be doing with a bit more flare, rigour and vigour about it. She noted that in early years it was quite challenging because the children had only been in school for a short while but said that the recommendations would improve phonics as there was room for improvement within phonics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Destination Reader</u> <p>Alison reported that they had gone into KS2. The training that the teachers had had was quite evident. They could see what had been happening, the changes in staff and in the leadership. She said that the school was making good progress in getting Destination Reader up and running however the teaching needed to be explicit at times and that teachers needed to be very clear about what reading skills the children had got, the skills that had been taught during that lesson and what was being applied across when they were reading different texts. There were some good examples of teachers reading out loud to the children. She said that when she talked to teachers about</p>

Destination Reader they were of the opinion that it was making a difference. The children and the teachers were reporting that the work with Destination Readers was helping to increase the children's understanding and their vocabulary. There were one or two things that needed improving but on the whole things were moving forward.

Alison Gawthrop reported that when she met with the leaders: who were leading reading across the school (Eddi, Jackie and Emily), they were able to clearly articulate the plans for the school. They knew the children's levels very well. She added that the teachers' assessments were good, they knew the children who were on track, those who were not on track and those who needed intervention. They were able to articulate the plans for the children. There were a lot of good things happening around reading and the progress that the school was making in reading, in raising aspiration for the children and in driving forward the use of vocabulary and language was evident. She added that there were some things that needed to be improved but the leaders were already aware of those.

With regard to the curriculum, Alison reported that she did not have enough time to look at this. However she commended the work that Nimesha Nagahawatte had done with the leaders on this. They had set the new curriculum, put new curriculum maps in place for each subject and looked at the progression and skills for each subject across each year group. This had been challenging for the school because of mixed year groups. She said that Nimesha and Subject Leaders had done a lot of work on the curriculum and the subject Leaders had risen to the challenge although they were new in post. She mentioned that the school had the leadership that knew the school well and was making significant progress. Things were not yet perfect but they were moving in the right direction. She said that it was obvious that the leadership of the school knew where they were going and what they needed to do to improve. The school now had the capacity within the leadership team and the right leaders in the right place to do that. In summary, it was a positive picture.

The Chair thanked Alison for her feedback.

One Governor asked about what was being done to help with the assessment for learning area of development. Rebecca Abrahams, Executive Headteacher, said that this was part of the discussions that were taking place in SLT meetings as well as in staff meetings. Assessment was different with different subjects. Alison Gawthrop said that when she mentioned assessment in Phonics, it was not so much the overall assessment, but more what happened when some children had not got what was being taught. It was more of the forensic assessment at specific points within the lesson.

The Governor asked what the plan was in that area to boost that. Rebecca Abrahams said that the school was receiving consultant support from the Tower Hamlets Education Partnership (THEP). The school was working with a Consultant from THEP and they were about to start another piece of work with another Consultant around English and literacy. There were plans to re-

	<p>focus the Consultant’s next few visits to look at phonics. Rebecca mentioned that it had been a long time since the school had phonics as a focus for peer reviews and lesson observations and that there was currently a big focus on Destination Reader, daily supported reading and teaching and learning in general. Eddi said that he had met with the Consultant about three or four years ago and a phonics audit had taken place. Alison said that the issue with phonics was the high stakes that Ofsted had placed on it. Rebecca said that phonics would be given a focus early next year in a bid to reinvigorate it. She said that the school was currently following the Tower Hamlets phonics scheme. This scheme had not yet been validated. Rebecca said that having a focus on phonics learning in the spring would be timely as the school may have to make some changes.</p> <p>Governors thanked Alison Gawthrop for her update and she left the meeting at this point.</p>
3.	<p>Election Of Chair And Vice-Chair</p>
	<p><i>The Clerk took this item.</i></p> <p><u>Election of Chair</u> Nominations were invited for the position of Chair of Governors. Martin Young was put forward and the nomination was seconded. As there were no other nominations, Martin Young was duly elected Chair.</p> <p><i>The Clerk handed over to the Chair at this point.</i></p> <p><u>Election of Vice-Chair</u> Nominations were also invited for the position of Vice-Chair of Governors. Kiran Rahman was nominated for the position. The nomination was also seconded. There being no other nominee for the position, Kiran Rahman was elected as Vice-Chair.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To appoint Martin Young and Kiran Rahman as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively for the 2021/22 academic year.</p>
4.	<p>Governing Body Matters</p>
	<p>4.1 <u>Membership Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>To appoint Benedict Brickley as Co-opted Governor</u> The Chair introduced Benedict Brickley who was hoping to be appointed as Co-opted Governor by the governing body. Benedict Brickley had visited the school and had met with the Head and Chair who were satisfied with the skills that he had to offer and were impressed with his enthusiasm. <p>Governors RESOLVED to appoint Benedict Brickley as Co-opted Governor of the governing body for a four year term with effect from this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>To decide on Charlie McKnight’s membership of the governing body</u> The governing body discussed the fact that Charlie McKnight had not attended a governing body meeting in over a year and had also not been in contact with

the school to explain the reason for his absence. As a result, a decision was taken to end his membership of the governing body due to non-attendance at meetings. Governors noted that Charlie had been an active member of the governing body in the past and had made a positive contribution to the governing body. They thanked him for his contribution and wished him well.

RESOLVED: To terminate the membership of Charlie McKnight.

The Clerk was asked to draft a letter to Charlie informing him of the governing body's decision for approval by the Chair.

Action: Clerk/Chair

- Vacancies

It was noted that there were 2 vacancies for Co-opted Governors on the governing body. The Chair mentioned that an expression of interest had come through and that he and the Executive Headteacher would be meeting with the person to ascertain their suitability.

4.2 Annual Register of Business Interests

- To Complete Annual Register of Business Interests

Governors were reminded of the requirement to complete the Business Interests Form every year. They were asked to complete their declarations of interest on GovernorHub.

Action: All

4.3 To review

- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

Governors were informed that Mai-Anh Dien, School Business Manager, was the contact point for DBS checks. Governors would be informed by the SBM when their DBS certificates came up for renewal.

- Governing Body Code of Conduct 2021 - for Approval

Governors reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the NGA Governors' Code of Conduct 2021 which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

- National Governor Database – School to confirm details are up to date

Governors were reminded that their details would be uploaded on the National Governor Database (GIAS). The School Business Manager (SBM) would be liaising with the Clerk for an up to date list of Governors which would then be added to the school's entry on the website.

Action: Clerk/SBM

4.4 To agree

- Committees' structure – Membership of the various committees was agreed as follows:
- Curriculum & Standards Committee

Caroline Hurley (Chair)
Rebecca Abrahams
Lawrence Houldsworth
Susannah Abdelouahed

	<p>Jasmine Islam Kiran Rahman Eddi Miller (Observer) - Nimesha Nagahawatte</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Finance & General Purposes Committee</u> Kiran Rahman (Chair) Martin Young Rebecca Abrahams Srividya Srivathsan Benedict Brickley (Observers) – Nimesha Nagahawatte & Mai-Anh Dien • <u>Headteacher’s Appraisal Panel</u> Martin Young (representing Harbinger) & Governors from St Luke’s • <u>Review of Link Governor Roles</u> The Link Governor roles were reviewed and Governors RESOLVED to make the appointments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Safeguarding Link Governor – Father Tom Pyke ii. KS1 Link Governor – Susannah Abdelouahed iii. KS2 Link Governor – Kiran Rahman iv. Looked After Children Link Governor – Martin Young v. EYU Link Governor – Jasmine Islam vi. SEND Link Governor – Susannah Abdelouahed vii. Healthy School Governor - Caroline Hurley viii. RSE Link Governor - Kiran Rahman ix. Mental Health Link Governor – Caroline Hurley x. Health & Safety Link Governor – Benedict Brickley xi. Anti-bullying Link Governor – To be agreed after the next Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting <p>RESOLVED: To approve the above appointments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Terms of Reference for all committees</u> Governors reviewed and RESOLVED to agree the terms of reference of the above committees. They were the same terms of reference that had been agreed the previous year.
5.	<p>Minutes Of The Meetings Held On 8th July 2021 & 9th September 2021 And Matters Arising</p>
	<p>The minutes of the governing body meeting held on 8th July 2021 had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 8th July 2021 be signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>Minutes of the governing body meeting held on 9th September 2021 had also been circulated prior to the meeting. It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 9th September 2021 be signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.</p>

	Matters Arising: There were no matters arising from the above minutes.
6.	Headteacher's Report
	<p>The Headteacher presented her report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. As the report had been circulated in advance, it was taken as read. The Chair asked all present whether they had any questions for the Executive Headteacher.</p> <p><u>School's Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) Update</u> The Chair asked the Executive Headteacher to confirm whether the Self-Evaluation would be ready in January. The Headteacher confirmed that this was the case. She mentioned that there was already one in place and that when Alison Gawthrope and her colleague, Dan, came to the school to do a teaching and learning review, one of the first things that Dan said was how impressed he was with the School's Self-Evaluation Form (SEF). As a result, if Ofsted were to come in the school had a very detailed SEF. However, as the school was progressing all the time, that was the reason why it would be updated in January.</p> <p>Q&A: With regard to the school roll, is there a trend of pupils not joining the school or is there something else as the number on roll affects funding? It is due to the impact of the RI judgement. As we know parents tend not to choose a school with an RI judgement and they also tend to leave a school that has an RI judgement. This is coupled with the fact that at St Luke's and in other schools in Tower Hamlets as well, Covid and Brexit have seen a lot of families re-evaluating and a lot of mobility has been happening generally. This is why we are working so hard to get us ready for that next inspection as we want the outcome of that next inspection to be at least good.</p> <p>Q&A: Do we have any information from the LA in terms of school places? Is there a need in that area or is it purely because of what you have just explained? Every time we have feedback from the pupil places team, we are told that this area of London, the Isle of Dogs and Poplar is where the growth is happening. That is why they are giving approval for the opening of new schools in this area because their projections say that we will need more schools in this area. We are disadvantaged at the moment with the judgement hanging over us. We do not know when we will be inspected. With the impact of Covid we are told it could be up to 6 terms after the date that one expected to be visited.</p> <p>A Governor said that it would be useful to find out from parents wanting to take their children out of the school what the triggers were. Nimesha Nagahawatte, Head of School, said that each time a parent applied to take their children out of the school, they had to give a reason for this. Arrangements were usually made to try and talk to the parents to find out why they were doing this. In most cases they said that it was because their destination school had a good or outstanding Ofsted judgement.</p> <p>It was agreed that the governing body would keep an eye on this issue as it</p>

	<p>was a very serious risk because it had an impact not only on funding but on school improvement as well.</p> <p><u>Attendance and Welfare</u> The Headteacher said that although attendance and welfare were not as would have been expected in normal times, they were significantly better than the national average. She added that attendance was improving nationally but the school at 94% remained significantly above the national average (91%). The school reviewed attendance regularly and the admin team was very good in following up on attendance. Governors commended the school for its attendance figure and said that it was a real strength.</p> <p><u>SEND Update</u> The Executive Headteacher said that an area of concern for the school which was a direct effect of Covid was the fact that children had not been in a school setting and were coming into Reception having not been in a setting until they arrived in the school. They were therefore arriving with a high level of need that had not been diagnosed or supported previously and this was putting a strain on resources in the school. A lot of children were arriving at Reception not been toilet trained. Some were arriving not having been diagnosed. There was a high level of concern around this. The Chair suggested that this issue should be made a special item at both the Curriculum & Standards and the Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings to see what could be done in terms of securing additional support in the immediate term. Action: Clerk/Executive Headteacher</p> <p>A staffing update was presented. The school would be recruiting a Strategic School Business Manager to co-ordinate a team of two.</p> <p>Nimesha Nagahawatte informed Governors with regard to the Canal and River Trust Project, the Year 6s had created flags which would be displayed in the Docklands Museum for this weekend only. She invited Governors to visit the museum to see the flags on display. The flags would be brought into school after the exhibition.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Executive Headteacher for her report.</p>
7.	School Development Plan (SDP)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>To review and approve the school's SDP</u> This item was not discussed at the meeting.
8.	Safeguarding (Standing Item)
	<p>This item had been discussed under agenda the Headteacher's report (Agenda item 6).</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher reminded Governors of the safeguarding report the school had received from the LA last year. In the past, safeguarding had been a serious concern and a significant area for development. However, the staff</p>

	<p>had done a lot to improve the situation which led to the positive report that the school received last year. She commended the SENCO for the personalised approach that she had taken with the children. She said that she was pro-active in identifying issues and this was what set safeguarding in Harbinger at a different level. She added that the school would not remain complacent and would always review and make changes where necessary.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Head for her report.</p> <p><i>The Chair handed over the chair at this point to Caroline Hurley as he had to leave the meeting for another engagement. Caroline took the chair from this point on.</i></p>
9.	<p>Committee Reports</p>
	<p>a. <u>Curriculum & Standards Committee - Minutes of 21st October 2021</u> Caroline Hurley, Committee Chair, reported that much of what happened at this meeting had been covered in the Headteacher's report. Areas that had not been discussed under the Head's report included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A suggestion about 2 Link Governor roles i.e. an Anti-bullying Link Governor and a Link Governor for Literacy and Numeracy. It was agreed that this should be discussed at a meeting where more Governors were present so that the roles could be distributed. It was agreed this should be placed on a future agenda. Action: Clerk ii. Focus on SEND following the SEND review and the possibility of less resources. Caroline said that it had been agreed that this would be discussed at a future F&GP Committee meeting. A Governor suggested that given the level of need in the school, the school could apply to the LA for a bridge funding. The Executive Headteacher said that she would investigate this. Action: Executive Headteacher iii. The committee saw a lot of examples of children and parents engaging positively with the PSHE and RSE curriculum. The plans presented to Governors the previous year had been implemented with great success. iv. A list of enrichment activities was presented to committee members. v. The SENCO had made a request for funding for a wellbeing breakfast for staff to encourage them. No decision had been taken on this item at the meeting. The Chair asked whether it had been resolved. The Head said that if Governors were to give their approval, she would then work with the School Business Manager to identify the best budget to support this. It was noted that this did not involve a large amount of money. Governors RESOLVED to approve the proposal. <p>b. <u>Finance and Resources Committee – Minutes of 4th November 2021</u> In the absence of the Committee Chair, Vidya Srivathsan reported that following the above meeting, further information needed to be circulated to the committee as there were some issues with the data which the committee was working on at the time. Since then, she had been in contact with the school and the technical errors identified at the meeting of 4th November had been</p>

	rectified. The school was now on track for the budget it had set. This was confirmed by the Executive Headteacher.
10.	Policies For Review and Approval
	<p>The following policies which had already been reviewed at committee level and recommended to the governing body for ratification were presented for approval:</p> <p><u>From Finance & General Purposes Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding – Safer Recruitment Policy • Health & Safety Policy • Special Leave Policy & Procedure • Appraisal Supporting Document • HR Induction Policy • HR Whistleblowing Policy – Staff • HR – Support Staff Appraisal Policy & Procedure • HR - Teacher Appraisal Policy & Procedure • Pay Policy <p><u>From Curriculum & Standards Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Safety Policy • Acceptable User Agreement For Staff/Governors/Volunteers • Education Trips Policy • Photograph & Images Policy <p>RESOLVED: To ratify the above policies.</p>
11.	Reports From Governors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Including Training and Visits to the school</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Martin Young had visited the school to interview Ben Brickley for the position of Governor. He mentioned that the school was clean and tidy and that it was good to see people in their natural environment. ii. Caroline Hurley and Vidya Srivathsan undertook to visit the school. • <u>Chair’s Action</u> <u>Any urgent action taken by the Chair since the last meeting</u> None taken.
12.	Items For Next Agenda
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on phonics • Update on SEN to include work on Speech and Language
13.	Any Urgent Business
	The Executive Headteacher asked Governors whether they would like to have some updates from the school following the feedback from Alison Gawthrop

	<p>and whether that should happen at a Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting or at a governing body meeting. It was agreed that Jackie and Eddi should deliver a presentation on Phonics. Caroline Hurley reported that a decision had been taken at the Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting that a presentation would be delivered on Reading in the February meeting and that there would be a focus on Oracy in the final committee meeting of the year. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that phonics would be discussed as a specific area at the full governing body meeting as well as an update on SEN to include the work of the Speech and Language therapist and that a presentation on reading would be delivered at the next meeting of the curriculum & Standards Committee.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p>
14.	Dates Of Future Meetings
	<p>Governors noted the dates of future meeting as follows:</p> <p><u>Governing Board Meetings</u> Thursday 24th March 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Thursday 26th May 2022 at 5:00 p.m. - Meeting to ratify budget for 2022/23 Thursday 7th July 2022 at 5:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Finance & General Purposes Committee</u> Thursday 13th January 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Thursday 28th April 2022 at 5:00 p.m. – To approve draft budget for 2022/23</p> <p><u>Curriculum & Standards Committee</u> Thursday 3rd February 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Thursday 12th May 2022 at 5:00 p.m.</p>
15.	PART 2 – CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS
	There were no confidential items.

The Chair closed the meeting at 18:20 p.m. and thanked all for attending.

Chair's Signature: _____

Date: _____