

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
GOVERNING BODY OF HARBINGER PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Date of Meeting	18 th March 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
Father Tom Pyke*	Co-opted
Ranjani Shrutisagar	Co-opted
Caroline Hurley*	Co-opted
Srividya Srivathsan*	Local Authority
Susannah Abdelouahed*	Parent Governor
Kiran Rahman*	Parent Governor
Jasmine Islam*	Parent Governor
Eddie Miller*	Staff

Also In Attendance	Role/Title
Nimesha Nagahawatte (Head of School)	Observer
Lawrence Houldsworth	Associate Member
Mai-Anh Dien (School Business Manager)	Observer
Jackie Garner (EY Lead) (Item 1 only)	Observer
Robert Bullett (Confidential Item only)	Observer

* Denotes attendance

PART 1 – OPEN SECTION

	ITEM
1.	Presentation on ‘On Entry’ Data – Jackie Garner
	Jackie Garner, Early Years Lead, delivered a presentation on ‘On Entry’ data in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). <u>Reception</u> Jackie shared Reception data with Governors. The reception data had come from the baseline assessment. It showed that 18% of pupils were at the

expected level. This was very low. 83% of pupils were working below the expected level. The school was faced with a huge challenge in the autumn term.

The autumn 2 data showed the scores were very low in terms of the children working at the expected level. Teachers looked at the groups to see where the biggest challenge was. The data showed that the boys were outperformed by the girls. Non pupil premium children were outperforming pupil premium children. Overall a lot of work needed to be done. Soon after that the children went into lockdown. The teachers did a good job during the lockdown in terms of online learning.

The data showed that 62% of children were set to achieve a good level of development. The children were said to have achieved a good level of development if they achieved at least the expected level in the Early Learning Goals (ELG) in the prime areas of learning which were communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development as well as achieving the expected in literacy and maths.

From that data, it was identified that 38% of the children were not on track. The children were not at the point where the school would like them to be. The areas for development were: boys, pupil premium pupils and the children classified as other who were not Bangladeshi or White British (35% of cohort). There would be some more assessment data at the beginning of summer. The school had taken on the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) to improve the spoken language of the children in Reception. The school had all of the resources for this in school. The staff would be receiving training in this. Everything was currently on hold due to the lockdown. Assessment in phonics had taken place and regrouping into attainment groups would take place the following week with new groups starting next term.

Nursery

Looking at the nursery data, it was noted that there was a very low level on entry in the nursery. Looking at the baseline 21% of the children were working at the expected level. The children who were working well below and those at the cusp were identified. They were targeted. The school was aiming for at least 64% of children to be working at expected at the end of nursery.

In terms of next steps, a good nursery teacher had been recruited. A second lot of assessment would be done in the spring term to track progress to see the children's level of attainment and identify the children who needed additional support. Interventions had been planned. There was a high level of need in the nursery as children would not have been assessed for special needs at that point. As a result, there was an additional member of staff in the nursery in the morning. Phonics and maths group interventions would be started for the children. Jackie listed the key focus areas for the EYFS as a whole.

Governors put the following questions to Jackie Garner.

	<p>Q&A: You have a challenging task in the EYU. Have you got everything you need or is there anything we can do to help? The difficulty we have had is the staffing, having the right number of staff and allowing opportunities for the Reception teachers to take the children out for reading session. Due to Covid 19 and absenteeism, this was a real challenge. I am now able to work with the team to ensure that we can do what we want to. It is mainly about having the opportunity to provide support where it is needed.</p> <p>Q&A: Approximately 36-38 children in Reception are working well below. How does that compare to normal years? Our baseline is usually very low. We always have a low starting point in the nursery data. The nursery figures are comparable but the reception data is really low. Looking at the autumn 2 data, you can see that although the children have returned, the level of progress is very low. I believe it is lower because the children did not have a whole year of nursery experience last year.</p> <p>Governors thanked Jackie Garner for her presentation and she left the meeting at this point.</p>
2.	<p>Welcome, Apologies For Absence And Declaration Of Pecuniary Interest</p>
	<p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Ranjani Shrutisagar.</p> <p>There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.</p>
3.	<p>Minutes Of The Governing Body Meeting Held On 12th November 2020 & Matters Arising (circulated)</p>
	<p>The minutes of the governing body meeting of 12th November 2020 had been circulated prior to the meeting. These were reviewed and approved by the governing body.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the governing body meeting of 12th November 2020.</p> <p>Matters Arising: None</p>
4.	<p>Governing Body Matters</p>
	<p>i. <u>Approval of Srividya Srivathsan (Vidya) as Local Authority Governor</u> The Chair introduced Srividya Srivathsan (Vidya) who had been approved as the new Local Authority Governor by the General Purposes Committee at the Local Authority (LA).</p> <p>Governors RESOLVED to approve Vidya as the new Local Authority Governor.</p> <p>The Chair formally welcomed her to the governing body.</p> <p>ii. <u>Skills Audit (Questionnaire circulated)</u></p>

	<p>The Chair said that the questionnaire had been sent out. He encouraged Governors to complete the questionnaire.</p> <p>Action: All</p> <p>iii. <u>Vacancies for 2 Co-opted Governors</u> The Chair asked Governors to think of what sort of people they would want on the governing body. It was agreed that a decision would be made after the skills audit had been completed.</p> <p>iv. <u>Confirmation of Link Governors</u> The following Link Governor positions were confirmed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Link Governor – Father Tom Pyke • KS1 Link Governor – Susannah Abdelouahed • KS2 Link Governor – Kiran Rahman • Looked After Children Link Governor - Jasmine Islam • EYU Link Governor – Jasmine Islam • SEND Link Governor – Susannah Abdelouahed • Healthy School Governor - Caroline Hurley • RSE Link Governor - Kiran Rahman • Health & Safety Link Governor – TBA <p>Governors asked for some guidance on Link Governor roles. The Executive Head gave a brief summary of the role and added that the National Governance Association (NGA) provided one of the best information on Link Governor roles. The Clerk undertook to re-send the information that she had sent out to Governors on the Link Governor role.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p> <p>Kiran Rahman formally accepted her role as Vice Chair as she had been absent from the previous meeting.</p> <p><i>Nimesha Nagahawatte joined the meeting at this point.</i></p>
5.	<p>Headteacher’s Report</p>
	<p>The Headteacher’s report had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>I. <u>SDP</u> The Executive Headteacher said that the school now had a School Development Plan (SDP). The SDP had been presented at the Curriculum Committee meeting of 25 February. The committee had gone through the structure of the SDP, the various objectives and the staged approach to success included in the plan. As the school was in partnership with St Luke’s for two years, it was prudent for the SDP to span the two year period especially given the level of disruption that the school had experienced this year. The context of the report was that since the last meeting, the school had been in a third lockdown since January until the previous week. As a result, the school had been quite constrained in terms of making progress against the plan with</p>

the children not being on site.

She added that she would have preferred a more collaborative approach in developing the SDP and would have liked to include the governing body in the process. This could not happen due to the lockdown. She mentioned that the plan could however be changed and it would be evaluated at the end of the academic year to see how much had been achieved and adjustments made for next year. The plan was also designed against the priorities that the school would be measured against during the next Ofsted visit. The first objective was to develop the school's curriculum, the second objective was developing the use of data and assessment to improve pupil outcomes, the third objective was to improve pupils personal development, behaviour and attitudes, the fourth objective was to ensure leaders took decisive action to improve the quality of provision while the fifth objective was to maximize the school's use of resources.

Governors put some questions to the Executive Head about her report.

Q&A: How did the re-opening of the school go on 8th March? With 95.6% attendance is this not a good result?

We were very pleased about it as it reflects schools in the Borough. The difficulty is that it is trailing off a little now. We were very pleased with the return of children to school. The children returned very enthusiastic and pleased to be here. Once the novelty of being back in school fades some of the more deeply rooted anxieties might re-surface. One of our more challenging aspects of the school re-opening is the availability of staff. Our biggest strain is the availability of staff and the effect this has on the budget. The spirit of the staff shines through and they support each other.

Q&A: Will the email address that was set up for home learning continue as a way of engaging parents in the children's learning?

The email is still live. When a class bubble closes the children are expected to switch over to teams so the email is still there. We are also looking at other digital platforms that we can use to communicate with parents.

Q&A: You mentioned one racist incident in your report. How was that dealt with?

We formally recorded it and addressed the perpetrator and the victim. We keep a log to see if there are any patterns.

Q&A: Will Governors be able to see the logs?

We need to be careful as it has children's names and dates of birth. Inspecting the log could be under the brief of a Link Governor.

Q&A: In the SEND register, a lot of children are identified with speech and language difficulties. Is it a key focus in your future CPD as a school?

It is. It is also part of an SLA that we buy into to ensure we have the necessary

	<p>support. When staff are working alongside Speech and Language therapists that is the best CPD. We have a very positive experience with the SLA for speech and language. Part of the conversation we will have later around staffing is that we hope to highlight and celebrate some of the specialisms that our very capable Teaching Assistants (TAs) have. When we can do that, this would also be a strong CPD focus for staff going forward.</p> <p>A Governor mentioned that what struck him on looking at the 2022 targets and contrasting them with the 2021 targets was that the 2021 targets were very much about re-establishment. There was a real hike between the 2021 and 2022 targets. He added that while he imagined that the staff would be able to achieve them, he wondered whether there should be some interim targets along the way as it was such a huge jump. The Headteacher said that one of the main factors was having the data available. When the plan was written, the staff were aware that there would be no national assessments this year. As a result, it would be difficult to measure those steps without the national data. This year with the significantly reduced amount of time on site, they needed to ensure they had the infrastructure for development before focusing on the standards agenda. The outcomes at the end of Early Years and KS1 had not been a cause for worry as the outcomes at KS2. The real improvement would be largely focused around KS2. To do this, they needed to focus on standards and the curriculum and all of that work was already happening. In September, the school would be able to provide teachers with a revised curriculum and will then support them to deliver the curriculum. The Head said that the staff were enthusiastic about improving standards and she was confident that they would deliver the targets.</p> <p>Q&A: Given that from the data presented earlier, it has been identified that boys and Pupil Premium children had more visible learning gaps and bearing in mind the changes in personnel due to maternity and the tight budget under which you are operating, should you be looking into whether the school has enough catch up funding and whether the funding could be used to support these groups in order to reduce the gaps in their learning and attainment? The Covid funding that we received was used to create an additional class in KS1. The detailed breakdown is on the school's website. From the research we have done, it has been identified that it is the youngest children who have experienced the greatest learning loss so we have created smaller classes and classes that were specifically year group targeted. The mixed aged classes were a serious challenge in the school. Next year, we hope the catch up funding will be increased and we will be able to do something similar. Specialists will be delivering the interventions that the children need.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Executive Headteacher for her report and the excellent work done on the SDP.</p>
6.	Safeguarding Update (Standing Item)
	The Headteacher mentioned that she had circulated a letter earlier in the day that the LA wrote to the school about safeguarding. Safeguarding had been a

	<p>real concern previously. However, the Headteacher said that she hoped that that her report and the letter showed that the concerns were being addressed. There were safeguarding related policies among the list of policies to be approved later at this meeting. In terms of the level of vulnerability in the school, the staff had had a very useful training on safeguarding the previous evening. It was a reminder that 15% of the school's population was vulnerable according to safeguarding pastoral concerns. This was against the background of the effects of the pandemic such as mental health issues, unemployment and domestic violence at home. The school's emphasis was to ensure that the staff were properly trained to offer support. She commended Jubeda and Jackie for the excellent work they were doing in terms of supporting vulnerable families.</p>
7.	<p>Committee Reports</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Finance & General Purposes Committee – Minutes of 11 February 2021 & Finance Update</u> Governors received the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of 11 February 2021. • <u>Approval of School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)</u> Governors RESOLVED to ratify the Schools Financial Value Standard that had been agreed at the Finance & General Purposes committee meeting of 11 February and recommended to the governing body for ratification. • <u>Approval of Virements</u> A list of virements were presented for approval. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the virements should not be approved as the Executive Head said that the correct procedures had not been followed. The Financial Consultant appeared to have acted beyond his remit by carrying out the virements without waiting for approval. In addition, virements were not always advisable as they could skew the school's benchmarking data. It was agreed that the School Business Manager would liaise with the Executive Head to discuss what needed to be done and then report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Action: Executive Head & School Business Manager • <u>Curriculum and Standards Committee – Minutes of meeting of 25 February 2021</u> Governors duly received the draft minutes of the Curriculum and Standards committee.
8.	<p>Report From Governors</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Training and Visits to the school</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Kiran reported that she had undertaken some training delivered by the NGA and that she was currently undertaking Safer Recruitment training. II. Kiran reported that she had spoken to Mai-Anh Dien. The PTA funding will now be banked with the School Fund but it would have a separate heading 'PTA Fund'. There were plans to create a forum for parents to

	<p>discuss the PTA raising funds for the school. The umbrella body for the PTA had put forward some ideas which she wanted to discuss. She said that she needed a named staff member to liaise with in terms of the plans the PTA had. This was noted for action. The Chair also undertook to give consideration as to how the Governors would keep in touch with the PTA.</p> <p>Action: Chair</p> <p>III. Jasmine Islam mentioned that she had attended an online Induction Training for New Governors, Financial Oversight training and a National Governance Association training entitled ‘Governance: your role, your responsibilities, your organisation’.</p> <p>IV. Caroline Hurley had attended an Ofsted training which she said was very informative. She undertook to circulate the slides from the training.</p> <p>Action: Caroline Hurley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Chair’s Action</u> None
9.	Policies for Approval
	<p>The following policies were presented for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Code of Conduct & Safe Working Practices – Additional updates to the originally agreed policy • Attendance Management Procedure • Attendance Management – Template Letters • Organisational Change Procedure • Organisational Change – Statutory Redundancy Pay Table • Organisational Change – Template, Forms & Letters • Disciplinary Policy & Procedure – Model Policy For Schools • Disciplinary Policy & Procedure – Template, Forms & Letters • Dignity At Work (Grievance) Policy & Procedure • First Aid Policy • Complaints Policy • Positive Handling Policy – A Governor pointed out the policy needed to be anonymised • Acceptable Use Policy For Parents <p>RESOLVED: To approve the above-mentioned policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND Policy & Offer This policy was not reviewed at the meeting.
10.	Items For The Next Agenda
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the PTA • Progress on the new School Development Plan (SDP)
11.	Any Urgent Business
	None

12.	Date Of Next Meeting
	Thursday 27 th May 2021 at 5:00pm

The open section of the meeting closed at this point and Eddie Miller and Lawrence Houldsworth left the meeting at this point.

Chair's signature: Date: