

**THE GOVERNING BODY FOR FRIERN BARNET SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN SCHOOL & ON MS TEAMS
MONDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2022**

MEMBERS:

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

* Ms Ann Woodhall (Chair) (WLA)
Councillor Barry Rawlings (RSB)
* Ms Niki Savva (Vice-Chair) (SAN)
* Mr Chris Kendrick (KKC)
* Mr Kunal Gautami (GIK)
Mr Alexander Gayle (GEA)

PARENT GOVERNORS

§ Ms Olga Glazer (GRO)
* Mrs Joanna Goga (GAJ)
* Mr Nishad Gudhka (GAN)
* Mrs Tracy Ward (WDT)

LA GOVERNOR

* Councillor Anne Hutton (HNA)

STAFF GOVERNORS

* Mr Simon Horne (HT) (HES)
* Ms Varuni Morrison (MNV)

* Denotes members present

§ Present on MS TEAMS

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS PRESENT

* Ms Kathryn Poynting (PGK)
§ Ms Jane Mullan (MNJ)
* Ms Paula Donaldson (DNP)

IN ATTENDANCE

* Mrs Jane Canavan (Clerk) (CNJ)

A Woodhall

22/96 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

WLA welcomed everyone to the meeting.

22/97 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Barry Rawlings – accepted
Alexander Gayle

22/98 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None.

22/99 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Subject to one amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2022 were **APPROVED**.
WLA apologised if governors received their pack late – delays were due to a postal strike.

22/100 MATTERS ARISING

22/68 Able & Ambitious

WLA asked if information about able and ambitious students was on the website. **HES** said information on the school's intranet, Firefly, but it was not currently on the website. Some information would be put on the website for prospective parents.

22/85 Head Teacher's Report

WLA asked if there was any indication of a teachers' strike. **HES** said they won't know the results of the ballot for teachers until January at the earliest. Support staff had settled with their employers and would not be striking.

HES said they have recruited a new Head of Drama, to start in January 2023.

22/87 Pupil Premium

HES confirmed Pupil Premium information is up on the website.

22/90 Safeguarding

Clerk to remind some governors to confirm they have read KCSIE 2022, Part 2.

Policies/School Website

HNA said she had difficulty in finding a policy and the governors' area on the school's website.

HES agreed some areas were difficult to navigate and that was why they were updating the website. **WLA** suggested **HNA** test out the new site for user acceptance prior to it going live.

22/101 FINANCIAL AUDIT REPORT 2022

WLA explained the report was scrutinised at a Finance Committee Meeting.

DNP said the school is audited every five years by the local authority. The audit took place over 3 days and the auditor was looking to ensure that the school was managing its finances satisfactorily, which they were. The auditor's main concern was that the school does its own payroll. Finance Officer, Juliana Crawford, does the school's payroll and is training up a Finance Assistant as back up. FBS is the only Barnet school that does its own payroll and the auditor felt this was a risk to the school and that they should be looking for an external payroll provider.

WLA said they had suggested the Finance Assistant should go on an appropriate course. **DNP** said he had agreed to do this and they were looking for a payroll course that would give him the relevant understanding of HMRC, Pensions and so on.

SAN asked why the school chose to do their own payroll. **DNP** said they feel that doing payroll in-house gives them more cost control and makes them more efficient. She said payroll bureaux, generally, don't have a good reputation. However, the auditor was concerned that the school might miss a payroll update. **HES** said they have the utmost confidence in Juliana, who claims she regularly updates the software (SAGE).

DNP said that at the end of the audit, the auditor met with her and **HES** and then it would be up to **DNP** to put actions into place. **HES** said the auditor had reduced the level of risk (from high to medium) because there is someone being put in place to cover Juliana.

GIK said it seems they are asking what the business continuity plan is around payroll and once that is sorted there should be no issue.

Another issue raised by the auditor was the school's asset register. This is currently held on a spreadsheet. The IT staff had ordered some projectors and at the time of the audit which had not been allocated to classrooms and not entered onto the register. **DNP** has asked the finance staff to find an electronic asset register system and **GIK** offered advice/assistance if required.

There was also a minor issue of some money from the summer festival being held in the school safe over the summer holidays, but that will not happen again.

WLA said there were no major issues of concern but the governors needed to be aware of the report.

22/102 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The report covered the period to end of October 2022 (Period 7, 58.32% of the financial year). Income is on track. There is an increase in school lettings. **DNP** said they would need to review lettings, as costs (staff and energy) were increasing. **HNA** said she had been looking for the Lettings Policy to see if it mentions having a safeguarding person on the premises. **HES** said that for a school event, they would always have a safeguarding person on site.

Expenditure is on track – staffing costs look lower because the backdated pay awards have yet to be applied - support staff in November and teachers in December.

DNP said there may be a shortfall in the budget for support staff because they were advised to put in 3% for an across the board increase but the amount agreed was a flat rate of for £2,229.00 (and an increase of between 10% and 3% depending on the income bands). January will show a clearer picture of this.

Energy costs will need to be monitored – the fixed cost plan for electricity came to an end at the end of September. The school signed up for a six-month plan with Eon and it looks like the costs will be an additional £10,000 per month. She said they hoped to have more of an idea of the costs in January. Gas is still on a fixed rate. **DNP** said that staff staying after 5.30 pm are asked to come over to the main building in order to save some energy.

22/103 SITE UPDATE

The main work is the installation of a continuous dosing unit to try to resolve the issues with the water. The pipework has started to be replaced. The contractors are carrying out the work before and after school and any quiet work can be carried out during the day. Estimated switch-over time is February 2023. **HES** said this work has to be undertaken to avoid the risk of Legionnaire's Disease and will cost the local authority around £250,000. The local authority were considering putting in a lift to make the school fully accessible (cost £200,000).

DNP said they had put some coloured strips on the edge of the stairs for visually impaired students. Flooring repairs have been carried out in Food Technology and the boiler in the caretaker's house has been replaced.

Work under consideration: IT replacement (servers, computers and smartboards and the telephone system will need to be replaced by 2025. Cost for the servers and phone system will cost around £100,000.

A tree has been planted with a bench around it, in the grassed area, in memory of Sonu Tiwari.

22/104 GREEN AGENDA

DNP said the school has been included in the **PSDS3B (Phase 3B Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme)** application made by Asset Plus on behalf of the local authority. £635 million will be allocated to public sector organisations. This is designed to provide, heat, decarbonisation and energy efficiency schemes. The local authority/Asset Plus should know in January if they have been successful. **WLA** asked if the school was liable for any of this cost. **DNP** said she assumes it would be dependent upon what they receive: possibly a boiler, LED lighting or solar panels.

Student Parliament (SP): have planted a couple of new trees following a visit from **ECOSIA**. This is a search engine based in Berlin. They use the ad revenue from searches to plant trees. SP are still hoping to start a little vegetable garden and **DNP** said she was hoping to get some funding from **ECOSIA** for that. Students would like some help from anyone with 'green fingers'.

SP have been selling Christmas decorations at break and lunch time to discourage people from sending Christmas cards. SP is planning to celebrate Earth Day next April.

GAJ asked if there was any more information about food recycling. Since COVID there appears to be a lot more waste. **HES** said they have been talking to the canteen service about what they can do. At present food is served in compostable packaging and most of that is put in refuse/recycling bins. He said the alternative would be to get students to sit down in the canteen and have their food on plates, which is not viable. **DNP** said there are recycling bins but they may be used as ordinary bins.

DNP said she was going to talk to SP at a meeting the following day. She is trying to get them not to use the single use water bottles, which can be purchased from the canteen on a daily basis. She is looking to source some bottles that could be sold from student services. **GJK** suggested it might work if they tried to educate students (and adults) by putting in more recycling bins specifically detailing what can be put into each.

HNA said that Barnet were looking again at food recycling in the future.

GAN said that concerning growing vegetables, perhaps the school could see what kind of community engagement they could facilitate for the school. **CNJ** to enquire to see if there could be any link with Friern Barnet Allotments.

WLA said she would like the governors to sign up to the NGA's Green Pledge. They would need an action plan by the end of the year. The plan could state what the school would be doing over a number of years. **WDT** said she was meeting with SP on 6 December and she asked for suggestions to move this forward.

22/105 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

GCSE results

HES said the DFEE published the GCSE results without giving schools being able to check and challenge them. The Progress 8 score is +.16 (compared with 2019 -.5). **GAJ** asked how the school performed against Barnet overall. **HES** said FBS is below the Barnet average of +0.49 but it puts the school above the national average and shows that the school is doing better.

School Roll

Concerning numbers on roll, **HES** said if the school wants to change its pupil admission number it has to go through a six week consultation period which has to end by 31st January 2023. The local authority has published a consultation document on behalf of the school because projections for the local area show a reduction in nursery and primary school numbers. Following the consultation period, the proposal will come to the governors for a decision. The benefit would be to manage the number of staff and reduce staffing costs. Also, currently the school has vacancies in each year group and has to accept any student that the LA wants to place. **GAN** asked if the consultation was a good thing, from the school's perspective. **HES** said he felt that 150 in the cohort was probably about right for the school. The consultation provides options: as a five-form entry school, they can have six forms to reduce class sizes.

WLA said the governors would have the opportunity to debate this but by having the consultation now and, subject to governor agreement, it would allow the school to make the change for September 2023. **HES** said with the ARP (10 children per year group) they are looking to have 140 students per year group.

HES said he would send the link to the consultation.

Attendance

HES said whole school attendance to end of November is low (92.24%) but is in line with secondary schools nationally. Before COVID the school's attendance was averaging over 95%. He said there could be many reasons for this and hoped that it would improve over time. **WLA** asked why Yr 11 was so low (90.75%). **HES** said there would be different reasons for different year groups. In Yr 11 there is a non-attender, which would have an impact. There is another in Yr7 who is not attending, but the school has to keep the child on roll. **HES** added that there is more illness than he could remember - possibly parents were more likely now to keep their children off school.

WLA asked if it might be helpful to have the information with those children taken out. **PGK** said that no-one would look at that – they are only interested in the actual figures.

Suspension Data

Overall, the figures are lower than the previous year.

Charles Rice's (CR) Report

CR visited the school in October. CR said there were no issues with behaviour but he said he felt that a lot of lessons were teacher-led, limiting time for student comment. HES said this could be as a result of COVID, but he felt that this was not so much the case now and there was more group work. PGK agreed but said that some teachers may have got out of the habit of group work. She added this is quite a skill to work effectively.

Student Wellbeing

HES said a school counsellor said the nature of the cases were more complex which is possibly a reflection of what is happening across the country. HNA said there are a lot of families struggling, for instance those accessing food banks. HES there is quite a high turnover of social workers in the borough and it is difficult to get help for some families and children. With this in mind, Jim Robinson will provide a regular safeguarding report for governors.

WLA asked how long students were on the waiting list to see a counsellor. HES said they normally see a counsellor for six or twelve weeks. GAJ said she noted there are fewer boys accessing counselling – was this typical and if girls were more likely to access this kind of support?

HES said he thought some boys might be more reluctant to access counselling. PGK said, anecdotally, some wouldn't want to have counselling. GIK asked when students access support, did it remain anonymous? HES said the pastoral team would know who is accessing counselling but this is quite discreet and would not be announced in a lesson.

WDT said support is acknowledged by students through surveys where they can answer questions anonymously. WDT attended a coffee morning held by SEN staff and it was good to see parents who felt they were getting good support.

HES said that the SENDCo, Holly Levitan, was now on maternity leave.

22/106 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

PGK said that in addition to the school's professional development sessions, there were several teachers signed up on courses for new national professional qualifications. Called The Golden Thread, the DfE consider this is a way of retaining staff and raising standards.

New teacher qualification is a two year programme and there are now specialist and leadership national professional qualifications (NPQs). The courses take a year and are free. They focus on different areas:

- Leading teacher for any head of department (5 teachers)
- Leading teacher development – to enable them to deliver internal training (2 teachers)
- Leading teacher behaviour and culture – aimed at heads of year (1 teacher)
- Leading literacy (1 teacher)
- NPQSL – a leadership course lasting 18 months (3 teachers)

PGK said there are two different starting points in the year (October and February). Some of the training is outside school and some is online. PGK is co-facilitating the leadership course (run by the North-East London teaching hub) and 28 teachers came into FBS recently for the first two-hour session. There has been a good uptake for the courses from FBS staff, and the feedback has been positive. There are a couple of days outside school but the majority of the course takes place after school hours with much of it being self-study. Feedback is given, and the teacher would have to give a presentation, but there is no final assessment/exam.

WLA asked if there would be a survey at the end of the courses and thought it would be interesting to see how the teachers felt about the courses and she asked PGK to feed back to governors at the end of the period(s).

22/107 TEACHERS' PAY REVIEW

WLA said the pay review committee met to consider SLT's recommendations and accepted all of them apart from two.

22/108 Yr11 DESTINATIONS

MNJ said currently they had destination details for the 105 of the 2022 cohort. Of those, 28 have gone on to Woodhouse College, 16 to Barnet and Southgate College and 14 to The Compton School.

WLA noted that there was still quite a high number of students for which the school had no destination detail (105 out of 161). **MNJ** said the new Careers Co-ordinator was continuing to chase those ex students and she was optimistic the numbers will increase. Some students are still coming in to collect their certificates and they will be asked where they are now.

MNJ said there is a two-year gap in the destination of leavers to further education. Latest information is taken from the national performance tables and relates to 2020 leavers. Students have to remain in the establishments for two terms to go onto the national databoard and 93% of the 2020 cohort have been accounted for. There were no students in apprenticeships (most are offered to post-18 students). It was noted that 2020 students were enrolled in some of the top universities in the UK.

22/109 ACADEMY COMMITTEE UPDATE

WLA said the government has put the education white paper on the back burner for the time being. She said they would monitor this and if or when it re-surfaces they will re-consider their options.

22/110 GOVERNOR LINKS

The Governor Links document had been emailed. **WLA** said she had listed areas to monitor and she reminded governors they were not there to manage, but to learn and offer support if needed. Possibly some things could be dealt with on Governor Day. Governors should contact **WLA** if they had any queries.

22/111 POLICIES FOR RATIFICATION

Pay Policy for Teachers

The only changes were the rates of pay.

The policy was RATIFIED unanimously.

The following policies were reviewed at the Finance Committee meeting. The amendments were minimal and were recommended for ratification:

Data Protection

Charging and Remissions

Supporting Students with Medical Conditions

Health, Safety and Welfare

These policies were RATIFIED unanimously.

22/112 SAFEGUARDING REPORT/TRAINING

HNA said she recently met with Jim Robinson (RNJ) to go through the Safeguarding Audit. They ran out of time and some parts were not completed (eg lettings policy and queries concerning anti-bullying). **HES** said he would talk through the queries with RNJ.

Because of the importance of Safeguarding **WLA** felt there should be a separate training session for governors and Jane Morris, local authority Safeguarding Officer, said they should allow at least 1.5 hours. **WLA** said the safeguarding audit could be part of the training. Clerk to get dates from Jane Morris and communicate with governors.

22/113 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Governor Day

WLA suggested they hold this in March 2023. **WLA** said she would like suggestions of how the day should run. They should see some students and time would be put in for governors to meet with their link. **SAN** suggested the safeguarding training might be held on that day.

Clerk to send out some provisional dates.

Road Safety – Crescent Road

WLA said an email had been received from a governor at St John's School concerning road safety in Crescent Road. St John's are considering safety measures, such as applying for a school street and they asked if an FBS governor could offer support. **WDT** offered to contact the St John's governor. **HNA** said they don't have blocked off school streets in Barnet but there are some traffic and parking restrictions.

Race Mark

HES said that as part of the anti-racist working party, Kathy Newey wants to apply for a 'Race Mark', an accreditation supported by SSAT and Fig Tree International. This is a framework to look at race and equal opportunities in school. It would commit people to doing a certain amount of training and governors would need to commit to 2.5 hours of training.

Governors agreed to go ahead with this.

22/114 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 23 January 2023, 6.30 pm.

