



**MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING OF
FRIERN BARNET SCHOOL, HELD AT THE SCHOOL AND ON TEAMS
ON MONDAY 16th MARCH 2026 AT 6.30PM**

Name	Governor Type	Other Information	Term of Office	Present/Apologies/Absent
Ann Woodhall	Co-opted	Chair	12.10.2025-11.10.2029	Present
Cllr Barry Rawlings	Co-opted		12.03.2024-11.03.2028	Absent
Niki Savva	Co-opted		29.03.2022-28.03.2026	Present
Kunal Gautami	Co-opted		29.03.2022-28.03.2026	Absent
Nishad Gudhka	Co-opted		07.10.2024-06.10.2028	Present
Mavis Osei-Agyapong	Co-opted		17.10.2023.16.10.2027	Absent
Andrew Redpath	Co-opted		31.03.2025-30.03.2029	Present
Simon Horne	Staff	Headteacher	Ex-officio	Present
Galia Admoni	Staff		15.05.2024-14.05.2028	Present
Helen Bull	Parent	Vice Chair	17.10.2023.16.10.2027	Present
	Parent			
Zeenat Syed	Parent		17.10.2023-16.10.2027	Apologies
Sarah Iglesias	Parent		22.11.2025-21.11.2029	Present
Cllr Anne Hutton	LA		12.10.20212-11.10.2029	Apologies
Paula Donaldson	School Business Mgr			In attendance
Kathryn Poynting	SLT			In attendance
James Robinson	SLT			In attendance
Caroline Winston	Clerk			In attendance

A presentation from the Head of Technology preceded the FGB meeting.

1. WELCOME

1.1 Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

2. ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Consent was recorded to apologies for absence submitted on behalf of Cllr Anne Hutton and Zeenat Syed.

2.2 Cllr Barry Rawlings, Kunal Gautami and Mavis Osei-Agyapong were recorded as absent.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

3.1 No business or other interests were declared for this meeting.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2025 AND MATTERS ARISING.

4.1 The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2025 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

4.2 Arising from the minutes:

4.3 Item 17.3 Contact the Chair to confirm the link roles assigned This was in progress.

5. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- 5.1 A full report had been circulated to governors, and this was received and noted. Arising from the report:
- 5.2 Introduction The Headteacher recorded thanks to all governors who had attended the recent governors' day. They had had the opportunity to speak to pupils and staff and had a full walk through of the school, and lunch in the canteen.
- 5.3 Curriculum Since the last meeting, the government had published their White Paper, which included information about proposed changes to SEND provision and funding, a curriculum review and inclusion.
- 5.4 The Headteacher highlighted that the White Paper builds on the curriculum and assessment review, the move to focus on inclusion in inspections, the work of the Best Start family hubs and the recent initiatives to improve attendance and behaviour in schools. There were no quick fixes in what was being proposed. The Headteacher explained that this was a long-term view to reform the education system. The school had looked at the key points from the curriculum review at the December meeting. An overview was provided of what was being proposed for SEND reform. In summary, the White Paper proposes:
- Introducing a new set of 'National Inclusion Standards' which would define the provision schools should ordinarily offer.
 - Ensure all schools publish an inclusion strategy. This would replace the SEN information report that schools currently had to put on their websites.
 - Reduce the reliance on EHCPs (Education and Health Care Plans) by introducing 'Individual Support Plans' which ensured that the right provision was made to meet need at an early stage and which were reviewed regularly. The school had already been using ISPs for a long time.
 - Continue to use EHCPs for students that required more complex support, like those attending the school's ARP. Governors were reminded that there had been a dramatic increase in the number of EHCPs in the last ten years. SEND tribunals often resulted in some pupils being in independent schools which was expensive for LAs.
 - Have different levels of support: targeted such as small group work; targeted plus using external professionals; specialist support for complex needs outlined in an EHCP.
 - Establish inclusion bases in each mainstream school to combine access to the mainstream curriculum with specialist teaching. These could be a support base such as the Hub at Friern Barnet or a specialist base such as the ARP already at the school.
 - Create local multidisciplinary specialist teams ('Experts at Hand') to get professional help and advice into schools at an earlier stage.
 - Use an 'Inclusive Mainstream Fund' to provide more money for schools to promote inclusion.
 - More collaboration between schools. There was an expectation that all schools would join or form a multi-academy trust. Local authorities would be allowed to establish trusts.
- 5.5 The Headteacher said that there was a lot in the White Paper that the school already did. This included the recent collaboration to host the initiative to devolve money for SEND to a cluster of local schools. This was being evaluated in the summer term and if found to have worked, would be rolled out across Barnet.
- 5.6 **ASKED** whether the cluster of schools had a list of external professionals they could call upon, this was confirmed.
- 5.7 **ASKED** who compiled this list, it was explained that this was the Whittington Trust, the LA and the cluster team.

- 5.8 **ASKED** how these services would be funded, the Headteacher explained that this funding would be held centrally in the high needs budget and this would be where the funding came from.
- 5.9 **ASKED** whether clusters would be separated into primary and secondary groups and whether a child would consistently see the same external provider for their relevant needs, the Headteacher reminded governors that the school was in a mixed cluster.
- 5.10 **ASKED** how this would work for MATs, it was explained that schools within a MAT already benefitted from collaboration and the sharing of services.
- 5.11 The clusters would also be benefitting from establishing and sharing best practice. SENDCOs within the school's clusters already had regular communication with each other.
- 5.12 If a child had needs but no EHCP, in the cluster group the school would identify these children, and this could be moderated with the cluster.
- 5.13 Attendance The Headteacher reported that the Government had set a target to raise attendance to over 94% which would be a national increase of over 1% on last year's data. The school's recent attendance data had been shared with governors.
- 5.14 It was explained that the school was now part of the DfE's RISE initiative (Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence) which linked them to Cumberland Community School in Newham. This school currently had attendance of 96%. The Executive Director of the Community Schools Trust which runs that school, was Friern Barnet's RISE regional adviser on attendance and behaviour. She had been in to visit the school and the SLT had been out to visit Cumberland School. This school in Newham was one of six schools in a MAT. They had three members of staff dedicated to attendance monitoring so there was an obvious difference in resources between Cumberland and Friern Barnet.
- 5.15 The RISE programme encouraged all schools to share and learn from best practice and, where needed, receive appropriate support. The Headteacher highlighted in the data that the school was around about average for secondary schools in terms of their attendance. However, the SLT wanted to learn from schools that had made significant progress on attendance. It was hoped that the school could make small changes to what they did to get their attendance back to levels before the pandemic. The school's attendance had been at 95% back in 2019.
- 5.16 Governors noted that attendance for the year to date was 92.3%. This was up on last year and persistent absence m(PA) was down. The school was not authorising some requests for absence when a student had low attendance. This was reflected in the unauthorised absence rate. One of the reasons for being in the RISE programme was to not be complacent, but to continue to strive to get back to pre-Covid attendance levels.
- 5.17 Attainment/Progress The Year 11 mocks data had been shared with the governing body.
- 5.18 The Headteacher highlighted that this data was very similar to the cohort two years ago who had done particularly well.
- 5.19 It was noted that the pupils did consistently well in English. There was a target for improvement in Maths, which was behind English for pupils achieving 5+.
- 5.20 Governors were informed that the government were changing the way they reported progress and Progress 8 was being rethought out. They would be looking more at 4+ attainment in English and Maths, plus 5+ attainment in English and Maths.
- 5.21 **ASKED** why he thought outcomes in Maths were lower than in English, the Headteacher explained that staffing of English had been consistent, with an enthusiastic team. Maths teachers had been more difficult to recruit, probably impacted by the fact there was no A Level Maths at the school. There was now a more stable team in the Maths department, with the Maths leaders completing training in Maths Mastery.

- 5.22 **ASKED** how Maths was in the current Year 7 cohort, the Headteacher said that there were positive relationships with the pupils and the curriculum had been updated to ensure that Maths lessons were being correctly sequenced. One issue identified for Maths in school was that in some cases the teaching had not been consistent, but this was being addressed.
- 5.23 **ASKED** how Maths teaching could be improved further, it was explained that two members of staff had been trained on the Maths Mastery programme, and the plan was to build capacity in this across the school. The school was also part of the Maths Hub, sharing practice with Marylebone High School.
- 5.24 Staff Wellbeing The staff absence data for the academic year was noted.
- 5.25 **ASKED** why the support staff absence rate had increased since the last academic year, it was explained that this mainly related to one particular member of staff on long-term sick leave.
- 5.26 It was highlighted teaching staff absence rates were lower than last year and the Headteacher said that this was testament to staff dedication and commitment.
- 5.27 Trips The exceptionally broad and varied list of trips was highlighted by the Chair.
- 5.28 **ASKED** about the fact that the White Paper would be a longer-term implementation timeframe and when schools were likely to see the first signs of change, the Headteacher said that this would be over ten years. He added that some things would be quicker, for example at the School the SLT wanted to see a 1% increase for attendance over the next few months. The SEND reforms would take time. However, there was a financial imperative for LAs to reduce their spending of the High Needs Budget.
- 5.29 **SEND Link Governor Visit – Andrew Redpath** It was reported that Andrew had been in to school and had met with the SENCO. He had discussed the Hub and the ARP and the wide range of pupil needs the school was supporting. He said that many of these pupils would have been in a specialist provision in the past.
- 5.30 The school ARP was successfully using Zones of Regulation, pupils in the ARP were accessing entry level courses, staff were well trained and the ARP was a valuable resource. Governors heard that the ARP would be well placed to take advantage of the government initiatives coming into place.
- 5.31 Governors were informed that the school was ahead of the proposed government changes as they already had a broad range of SEND expertise developed. Andrew suggested that the school find out from the LA what SEND services they were having to access out of borough and whether the school could meet these needs in the ARP instead which, although might require additional investment and modification to the curriculum on offer, would be a cost saving to the LA longer term and income generating for the school.
- 5.32 The Headteacher said that he had contacted Kim Miller, new Director of SEND, who had recognised the work that the school was doing.
- 5.33 **ASKED** who the Barnet councillor was for Education, this was reported to be Cllr Pauline Coakley Webb.
- 5.34 The Headteacher undertook to have a further discussion with the LA as suggested.

Item	Action	Who?	Deadline
5.34	Contact the LA to find out what out of borough SEND provision they were using	HT	May 2026

6. PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT DATA

6.1 This had already been discussed.

7. CURRICULUM AND TEACHING PRIORITIES

7.1 Governors were reminded that the two main priorities for the year were Oracy and Reading.

7.2 Reading Reading tests now took place at the end of every term so that intervention groups could be allocated more quickly at the start of term.

7.3 Teachers were teaching reading skills in all subject areas, not just in English. The DfE had launched a scheme 'Unlocking Reading' which offered free training for all secondary schools for two members of staff. This would then be rolled out to all staff in September 2026.

7.4 The school continued to work on promoting reading for pleasure. Activities were held in the library for pupils in Year 7 and Year 8, these were particularly targeting reluctant boy readers and had been successful.

7.5 The LRC manager was running events regularly, including the recent World Book Day and Book Swap.

7.6 **ASKED** whether staff ensured pupils who could not afford books get to take a book in book swap events, this was confirmed.

7.7 Oracy This was a buzz word in school now.

7.8 One of the three T&L groups had responsibility for focussing on oracy and two members of staff were leading on this using the Oracy Framework (Voice 21 Charity).

7.9 Teaching staff were using intentional language and were aware of the effect this had on pupils.

7.10 Oracy was being audited in school.

7.11 Staff recognised and promoted the fact that listening was important too and were embedding this in lessons.

7.12 **ASKED** whether there were wider school opportunities for presenting and oracy, it was explained that the school was part of the Jack Petchey Foundation Speak Out Project in Year 10 and a transition project in Year 7. Pupils also had the opportunity to attend Debate Club and Student Parliament. Every October there was a speech competition in English, and pupils were encouraged to participate with the offer of a cash prize, which was popular.

7.13 The Chair suggested that an update of the reading data at the end of the academic year would be useful.

8. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

8.1 It was confirmed that the Headteacher's annual performance management review had been completed. Tracey Parrott, SIP, had been in attendance.

9. REVIEW OF SFVS

9.1 The updated SFVS report had been shared with governors for review.

9.2 It was highlighted that the majority of questions had been answered 'yes'.

9.3 The SBM highlighted the four questions which had been answered 'in part':

- A2 *Does the governing body have a finance committee, or equivalent, with clear terms of reference and a knowledgeable and experienced chair?* This had been answered 'in part' due to the recent departure of the finance committee chair. Governors were hoping to recruit a new Co-opted governor with finance skills.

- B2 *Does the school have a realistic, sustainable and flexible financial strategy in place for at least 3 years, based on realistic assumptions about future funding, pupil numbers and pressures?* This had been answered 'in part' due to the forecast deficit budget and falling rolls.

- C9 *Does the school set a well-informed and balanced 3-year budget and has this been submitted to the local authority?* This had been answered 'in part' due to the forecast deficit budget.

- **C13** Are balances at a reasonable level and does the school have a clear plan for using the money it plans to hold in balance at the end of each year? This had been answered 'in part' due to the forecast deficit budget and falling rolls.

9.4 It was reported that the auditor had reviewed this document during their recent audit.

9.5 The document was **APPROVED** for submission to the LA.

9.6 **ASKED** whether there were any 'in part' answers last year, this was confirmed.

10. BUDGET MONITORING

10.1 The SBM had shared the budget forecast monitoring report which included figures up to the end of February 2026.

10.2 It was highlighted that income was expected to be at 92% at this point in the year and was actually at 94.9%k, mainly due to the fact that the LA payment schedule was adjusted throughout the year.

10.3 Expenditure looked lower than forecast, but this was due to lots of invoices being sent in March. However, this was still lower than forecast as when staff had left posts these had been deleted rather than being recruited to in order to reduce costs. 14 posts had not been filled this financial year, which had mainly been support staff and one fixed-term contract teacher.

10.4 The finance committee would be setting the budget for 2026-2027 at their next meeting.

10.5 The Chair highlighted that lettings income appeared positive. The SBM said that this was not yet where the management company wanted it to be, but lettings income was forecast at approximately £15,000-£20,000 in the new financial year.

11. SITE UPDATE AND THE GREEN AGENDA

11.1 The SBM had circulated a site update report for information.

11.2 The main works to highlight had been the need for roof repairs on the green gym, conservatory and DHTs office. On closer inspection of the gym roof, the school had been advised that it was in very poor condition and was well past its life expectancy. The caretaker was getting two quotations for this roof replacement work, which would then be sent to the LA. Governors were assured that this was not a safety issue but was the cause of several internal leaks.

11.3 Governors were informed that other expensive work required was the cost of upgrading the unsupported wi-fi access points across the school. A quote of approximately £40,000 had been received and capital funds and some carry forward funding would be required to cover this cost.

11.4 **ASKED** whether this project could be completed in two halves, it was explained that this would not be possible.

12. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

12.1 Jim Robinson, DSL, had shared a safeguarding update report which was received and noted by governors.

12.2 It was highlighted that there were currently 18 pupils on roll under Early Help (EH). This was due to some higher profile cases being lowered to EH.

12.3 There were no pupils under the targeted youth service.

12.4 Three pupils were CIN (child in need) and 2 pupils were CP (child protection).

12.5 Four pupils were currently under assessment, and two of these were likely to be CIN.

12.6 Looked after Child (LAC) pupils on roll included two in Year 8, one in Year 9 and two in Year 11.

12.7 The number of young carers spread across the cohorts were highlighted. This included two in Year 7, one in Year 8, three in Year 9, five in Year 10 and three in Year 11. Governors were reminded that the school was particularly strong at identifying young carers.

12.8 Pupils currently attending alternative provision included one pupil in Year 8, two pupils in Year 9, three pupils in Year 10 and three pupils in Year 11. Governors were informed that several of these were attending Meadway.

12.9 It was highlighted that the counselling data looked like less students were requiring counselling, but this was actually due to there being less counsellors to access. One counsellor had left the school

and had not been replaced due to budgetary constraints. Two more cases were currently in the process of being taken on for counselling.

- 12.10 It was noted that there had been no CAMHS referrals made by the school, however, some would have been made by GPs or A&E services.
- 12.11 Two referrals had been made to Grief Encounter.
- 12.12 Three students had been referred to BICS (Barnet Integrated Care Services).
- 12.13 BICS would be undertaking some drop-in services with Heads of Years termly.
- 12.14 **ASKED** whether any pupils were waiting for school counselling as the data showed zero, it was explained that this was not indicative of what was happening, but was due to the loss of one counsellor, so some pupils had not been referred yet. With exams coming up, this would change. Terapia would also have a waiting list as they were taking over the counselling when there were no school counsellors here.
- 12.15 **ASKED** whether, as in Enfield, Barnet had a Young Carers Centre, this was confirmed. Governors heard that the service had been into school to meet the young carers. That day there had been a Fun Day for young carers in Barnet, and pupils had been authorised to attend this if they chose to do so.
- 12.16 The Chair added that she was the Chair of the Barnet Young Carers committee, which was why the school had had a big push in identifying these pupils in recent years. Jim Robinson added that some young carers don't realise that they played this role and so did not come forward. There had been a need to reduce the stigma and embarrassment that some young carers experienced.
- 12.17 Local Context It was reported that local risks included gangs, violence and online issues.
- 12.18 **ASKED** whether the school had had any issues with the recent 'school wars red and blue' craze, it was reported that SLT had been outside school and nothing had happened.

13. AI

- 13.1 This continued to be monitored in school and staff were receiving training on ways of using AI to support their roles.

14. CYBER SECURITY

- 14.1 The SBM had shared a cyber security update on GovernorHub and it was highlighted that:
- 14.2 An email was sent to all staff termly to remind them about email security and safety. Stay safe online posters were also displayed around the school.
- 14.3 An Acceptable Use Policy was in place for both staff and pupils.
- 14.4 Staff were aware that they must not reply to, forward or click on links in attachments sent in a suspicious email or an email they did not expect. Any such emails must be reported to IT support immediately.
- 14.5 RPA cover, the school's brokered insurance, included cyber cover. The school must meet four conditions to be eligible:
 - Data must be backed up daily
 - National Cyber Security Centre cyber security training must be completed by all staff
 - The school must register with the Policy Cyber Alarm Tool
 - The school must implement a Cyber Response Plan (Masoud updated this in November 2025).
- 14.6 There was currently a plan to upgrade/rebuild seven virtual servers to maintain ongoing support and reduce cyber security risks such as viruses and ransomware.
- 14.7 To mitigate risks, staff used Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) to verify login attempts to protect accounts from unauthorised access.
- 14.8 Sophos antivirus was installed on all computers and laptops, which reduced the risk of ransomware infecting computers and files.
- 14.9 The Chair reported that she had met with the new IT support person.
- 14.10 **ASKED** how he had settled in, the SBM explained that he was highly experienced in cyber security but was not as experienced as a technician, so he was developing his skills in this area. The SBM was

currently meeting with him weekly and said that he was successfully prioritising his workload and he was doing well.

15. REVIEW OF POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

15.1 There were none.

16. REPORTS FROM LINK GOVERNORS

16.1 A link governor report had been shared earlier in the meeting.

16.2 There were no further reports.

17. EDUCATION AND SKILLS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

17.1 The Education and Skills Director's report had been shared on GovernorHub for information.

18. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP AND TRAINING

18.1 Reappointment of Co-opted Governor The term of office of Niki Savva would be coming to an end on 28th March 2026 and she had confirmed that she would like to be considered for reappointment.

18.2 After full consideration it was **AGREED** that Niki be reappointed for a new four-year term ending on 28th March 2030.

18.3 The term of office of Kunal Gautami would also be coming to an end on 28th March 2026. The clerk had not received a response to recent communication to him and therefore he could not be reappointed.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19.1 Governors' Day A report on the recent Governors' Day had been shared on GovernorHub for information.

19.2 **ASKED** how the actions/suggestions from the day would be taken forward, the Chair undertook to summarise and circulate these to governors.

19.3 **ASKED** whether there were any famous alumni the school could contact, the Headteacher said that he would consider this.

19.4 A brief discussion ensued about how positively the pupils had talked about the school during the recent governor' day. It was suggested that some of these comments be shared anonymously on the school website.

19.5 **ASKED** who holds the list of alumni, the Headteacher undertook to find out.

19.6 Dance Show The school dance show would be taking place on Wednesday 25th March at 6.00pm. The Chair asked that governors receive invitations to school events with plenty of notice as they had not received an invitation to this.

19.7 Parent Guide To School Complaints The Chair tabled the recently published DfE document for parents and suggested that it be published on the school website.

19.8 The Headteacher undertook to check the school complaints policy against this document.

Item	Action	Who?	Deadline
19.2	Summarise and share with governors the actions/suggestions arising from Governors' Day	Chair	May 2026
19.3	Find out who holds the school's list of alumni	HT	May 2026
19.8	Compare Parent Guide to School Complaints with the school's Complaints Policy	HT	May 2026

20. DATES OF NEXT GOVERNING BODY MEETING

20.1 The date and time of the next meeting was confirmed as:

- Monday 18th May 2026 at 6.30pm - FGB

- Monday 13th July 2026 at 6.30pm - FGB

21. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

21.1 A discussion was held on confidential items, which were subject to separate confidential minutes.

ACTION LOG – 16TH MARCH 2026

Item	Action	Who?	Deadline
5.34	Contact the LA to find out what out of borough SEND provision they were using	HT	May 2026
19.2	Summarise and share with governors the actions/suggestions arising from Governors' Day	Chair	May 2026
19.3	Find out who holds the school's list of alumni	HT	May 2026
19.8	Compare Parent Guide to School Complaints with the school's Complaints Policy	HT	May 2026