

**THE GOVERNING BODY FOR FRIERN BARNET SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN SCHOOL AND ON MS TEAMS
MONDAY 20 JANUARY 2025**

MEMBERS:

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

* Ms Ann Woodhall (Chair) (WLA)
Councillor Barry Rawlings (RSB)
* Ms Niki Savva (SAN)
Mr Kunal Gautami (GIK)
Mr Nishad Gudhka (GAN)
* Ms Mavis Osei-Agyapong (OGM)

PARENT GOVERNORS

* Ms Helen Bull (Vice Chair) (BLH)
* Ms Olga Glazer (GRO)
§ Ms Zeenat Syed (SDZ)

LA GOVERNOR

* Councillor Anne Hutton (HNA)

STAFF GOVERNORS

* Mr Simon Horne (HT) (HES)
* Ms Galia Admoni (AIG)

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS PRESENT

§ Ms Kathryn Poynting (PGK)
* Ms Paula Donaldson (DNP)
* Mr Jim Robinson (RNJ)
* Mrs Jane Canavan (CNJ)
* Mr Oribi Davies (DSO)

* Denotes those present

§ accessed via MS Teams

A. Woodhall

Prior to the meeting there was a presentation from Student Parliament pupils representing the environment.

25/01 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

WLA welcomed everyone to the January meeting.

25/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Barry Rawlings

Mr Nishad Gudhka

Mr Kunal Gautami

25/03 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None.

25/04 REVIEW OF THE HUB

Mr Oribi Davies (DSO), Director of the Inclusion Hub, joined the meeting.

WLA said that as it is no longer financed by the John Lyons Trust, it would be useful for governors to know how the Hub is being used.

DSO said the Hub is now a fully taught provision for KS3 pupils only. All lessons are taught in the Hub, with the exception of lessons such as PE and IT. Early intervention and working just with students from Years 7, 8 and 9, the degree of success is much greater. **DSO** showed governors some 'before and after' logs of three students that were in the Hub and the improvements they had made. This is a term model but there are some students who would not graduate to mainstream after just one term. **DSO** said that after each term the needs are more and more complex. There is a greater number of SEND students in the Hub, currently there are two EHCP students in the group. The school is trying to educate them until their needs can be met in a specialist provision.

All but one student is on the SEN register and there are students with EAL needs and **DSO** said this is not even taking into account the other adverse childhood experiences and multiple traumas that exist in the profiles of the students in the Hub. He said the melting pot is quite complex and there are a lot of moving parts they work on daily to try and maintain a calm high quality learning environment. **DSO** said in spite of all this it can and does work and they have more successes than failures in keeping children in education. However, they are quite strict in how they assess the children and only three students have graduated into mainstream. These students had demonstrated above and beyond that they had met all the expectations and they need to do more work with the other students to ensure that they can sustain the improvement. He said he thought that this would taper out over time and the success rate would increase, but it is also determined by the level of need for the child.

DSO said there are some children with EHCP and have named FBS and even though the SENDCo has said they can't meet the child's needs, they try to do so by putting them in the Hub. For instance, **DSO** said a special school had rejected a child because they said they couldn't meet their needs and they have been sent to FBS. Referrals to the Hub are made by the heads of year and part of the process is challenging staff and asking them to check if they have gone through all they can before making a request to the head of year. **WLA** asked if staff now have an understanding of what the Hub is for and the referral system. **DSO** said there are very many brilliant teachers in the school who do have an understanding of what the Hub is for and there are a few who don't necessarily understand. He said the best way to understand how it works is to go and see what goes on there.

HES said that since they have gone to the new model, it is noticeably different. The last term has appreciated the work of the Hub more because those children who would be walking around or being difficult in lessons have been contained by **DSO**. He said that **DSO** has done amazing work and he believed that it has been appreciated more this spring term. **AIG** said that they should look at the success on the other side, too, where mainstream classes have been able to function without the disruption from some of these students. She added that going down to the Hub is special – the work there is amazing.

DSO said currently there are 9 students in the Hub (capacity is 10). All these students have complex needs and the first couple of weeks of the term is establishing some kind of law and order and then they start to make some educational progress. He added there are always going to be situations where it doesn't work for everybody but where it doesn't work for a child, they know why. It could be that the school cannot

provide support for a particular element of autism, there could be a friendship dynamic and they might need a new environment with a managed move or offsite respite. Occasionally, there may be no other choice than a permanent exclusion. **WLA** asked if the students in the Hub learn and possibly reflect from each other's behaviour. **DSO** said they are dealing with children who sometimes have very complex needs, so sometimes 'no'. If they are autistic that isn't necessarily how their mind works and dealing with behaviour can be quite challenging. He said they use praise and reward a lot and that is what students tend to respond to better. If all their peers are having rewards that tends to be a driving force. There is also a bit of competition around one-up-man-ship and that's how the three students managed to graduate.

DSO said they work with the King's Trust and this term and the students have been accessing tennis coaching and the Trust has donated racquets and tennis balls for the students to take home. He added they have managed to secure a 90% bursary and on Fridays, students will be accessing equine therapy where they use horses to teach human behaviour. This is an 8 week programme called 'strength and learning through horses' held at Greengate Stables in Barnet.

25/05 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

One small amendment and the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2024 were **APPROVED**.

25/06 MATTERS ARISING

24/102 Annual Register of Business Interests

The clerk said there were now 3 people outstanding and they had been sent the form to complete electronically.

24/113 Numbers on Roll

WLA said the committee of governors to meet with HES and DNP were BNH and GAN. They would report back at the next meeting.

25/07 GREEN AGENDA

DNP said there was nothing further to add. She said the recycling of food waste was in hand. There was no further detail about solar panels. The company asked the school for energy readings and the school is waiting to hear back from them. She said she hoped they would have more news at the next meeting.

25/08 SCHOOL FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD (SFVS)

DNP said the form has to be completed annually to ensure schools maintain a good level of financial health and resource management.

DNP said the local authority would be hoping for a 'yes' to all the questions in the form. However the response to question C9 says that the school would be submitting a deficit budget for 2025-26 because of the falling school roll. She added that the committee of governors meeting with the school would be discussing this. **DNP** would be reporting further to the Finance Committee and the full GB in April.

GRO said there are a lot of unknowns for 2025-26 and it will be very difficult to even try to set a budget.

DNP agreed and said the main problem is the falling roll, since the allocation is based on the number of students on roll the previous October.

The governors approved the SFVS document.

25/09 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

There have been only four school weeks since the last meeting and as there had been little change, no attendance and suspension data had been provided.

UCL Project

HES said the school was part of a project with University College, London, looking at teenagers and how their brains work and their emotional state. They get their brain imaged and they follow a project over a number of weeks. There are two groups – one a control group and the other group which has some counselling. UCL are trying to see the effect of therapies on teenage brains.

Pisa Project

The school was chosen by the DfE to take part in this international assessment. It is done in every country and when the results come out all governments rush to find out where they are on the charts for maths and English.

HES said for attainment and progress the school has prepared a separate report on the mock exams. He has also provided data on English and maths at KS3. He said the school has its own assessment system where students are judged to be working above, working at, working below and working significantly below. **WLA** asked why the students who were working significantly below in English was much higher in English than in maths. **AIG** said that English tend to be much harsher in their marking and the step levels don't compare subject for subject at KS3 and the way English and maths are taught. There are ten skills in English that the pupils need to learn and they become increasingly more challenging as the children grow up. In maths, the pupils are taught a unit in a particular topic, such as long division, and then they move on to another. **RNJ** added that there are EAL students new to the country who would find English more challenging than, perhaps, maths.

HES said there is a change in maths in Year 9 because students are starting their GCSEs and they used GCSE grades for where the children should be. He added this is a good way for all subjects to assess where the children are in their learning.

Numbers on Roll

HES reminded governors of the falling school rolls in this part of Barnet. He said that the new committee will be considering probably moving down to four forms of entry. There are other alternatives that might increase the school's income and to keep the teachers the school already has. He said he had met the person who is reviewing alternative provision and he said he thought FBS could have a role to play in this. **HES** said the local authority is also looking at special educational needs and about how mainstream schools are going to have to take students with a higher level of need. He added they already have seen this at FBS and it is something that will increase as there are no places in special schools.

Also, the local authority spends a lot of money (£1 million) on private tuition and there is a need to have a Barnet provision. **HES** said this is something that FBS could be involved with.

Ex-Caretaker's House

HES and **DNP** invited a surveyor to look at the house to see what they could do with the building and how it could become part of the provision. There are a few alternatives – a base for the ARP, or a base for students with special educational needs or it could be a base for children who don't like or can't go to school could be housed. These suggestions have been sent to the local authority to consider. It is expensive – around £300,000 – but the local authority is part of a DfE change/challenge programme which has access to that kind of money.

WLA said that prior to the meeting **GAN** had sent in some questions. **HES** confirmed he had answered those and had circulated his email to all members of the governing body.

SENDCo

WLA asked what arrangements were in place when the SENDCo goes on maternity leave.

HES confirmed that Holly Levitan would shortly be going on maternity leave and would be replaced by a cover SENDCo. Richard Young is already the SENDCo for the ARP and there is also a very good Assistant SENDCo, Katrina Keaveney.

25/10 PROGRESS & ATTAINMENT

Y11 mock results had been circulated to governors. **HES** said they should bear two things in mind. This cohort were the COVID cohort and there will be no Progress8 score this year, nor for 2026 as there were no KS2 results for either year group. The school has set its own targets but they are moveable because if a child meets that target the teacher will raise it higher.

SDZ said that given the fact that the school doesn't have a starting measure for the students, how well does the school feel the current cohort are going to do in their GCSEs. For those students who would be attaining the higher grades, would they be higher or lower? **HES** said he thought they would be higher.

25/11 LESSON OBSERVATIONS/WORK SCRUTINY

PGK said that most teachers were observed twice last term – there was some staff sickness last term and there are still a few to catch up on. There were 53 observations in total and this time it was the teacher who had been observed who gave their rag ratings. Feedback would be given in the same way and following on from that the teacher would decide their own judgements. They have done this once before and they want to roll this out permanently so the teacher can make their own judgements and reflect on their own professional development. **PGK** said there isn't much difference between what teachers say about themselves and what observers said about them. Marking & Feedback and Differentiation &

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Challenge both came out as the areas that teachers most needed to work on. On that basis, the school has delivered some training on differentiation and challenge and there is further training. Those who identified themselves as amber are invited to go to that session specifically on differentiation for the less able, led by our lead practitioner and our EAL coordinator. The grey areas are where the teacher wasn't able to upload information. Hopefully this will be improved next time.

Work Sampling was carried out for Years 9 and 11. These are done by the heads of faculty/department who have the overview of the quality of the curriculum. Marking and Feedback is the main focus area.

HNA noted there was quite a lot of no rating in the student responses. **PGK** said that when they observe a lesson the observer is supposed to ask a few students the questions on the sheet but sometimes it can be difficult as it would not be good for the observer to be chatting away to the children when the teacher is trying to get them to do something else.

WLA asked **PGK** what her overall response was to the observation summaries. **PGK** said she was confident of the processes and there is always room for development. Teachers don't know when they are going to be observed, they will know the week, but not the specific lesson.

HNA said there was only one that requires improvement which was good. **PGK** said that was one individual teacher who is aware that their marking was not as it should be for their Year 9 class.

25/12 REVIEW OF HT PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

WLA said that she and **BLH** reviewed the Head Teacher's performance management with an external adviser, Patrick Moriarty. There were no issues and **WLA** said they are still waiting for Patrick's report.

25/13 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

RNJ confirmed there was no change to the data provided at the last meeting. All new staff were given safeguarding training within their first week of starting at the school. The school records that staff have read the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education and they are shown how to use My Concern. **RNJ** said he attended the online DSL briefing about what is happening in the local area. He said the Met is re-launching Crimestoppers across London. The police say they are struggling with getting people to come forward to give witness statements. They are happy to say what is happening but don't want to go to the police station to make a statement. There are many reasons: fear of repercussions, not sure if what they've seen is a crime. Young people are worried about joint enterprise and being drawn into what is going on and there is a mistrust of the police. They are also launching a child-friendly site called 'Fearless' trying to get children to come forward if they've witnessed a crime. Also, police are concerned that people are de-sensitised about crimes.

The relaunch of Crimestoppers means that people can report a crime and this is then passed on to the police. The moment your call is answered through Crimestoppers or Fearless, it immediately encrypts your phone – the number will not be known. They can't phone back or get in touch with the caller in any way. This means that someone can call the numbers and report a crime or potential crime without being known. Police are trying to bring down the 'snitching' barrier so that you can be a person in the community who stops a crime happening. Fearless could give children the opportunity to report something they feel is not right. **RNJ** said he would obtain the resources for Fearless and introduce it in tutor time and PSHE. There are posters that can be put up in key areas. **OGM** asked what the target age was for Fearless. **RNJ** said he wasn't sure but it was supposed to be child-friendly and there were some primary safeguarding officers at the meeting.

RNJ said the police also talked about the safer schools officers and they changing the way they are going to offer that out. The school will not have a specific safer schools officer but safer schools teams are going to have a ward that they work with and the idea for this is to provide more community focus. **RNJ** said he hopes that might mean more police having a presence in the area. **RNJ** said it sounded positive and they will wait to see if things improve. **SAN** asked if the police had done any assemblies recently. **RNJ** said they haven't done so for some time. There have been officers who have come in and spoken to students but they haven't been in on a regular or scheduled basis.

HNA said that if it is the same team going into schools that's a good thing but at the same time, they are saying they are short-staffed. **RNJ** said he's complained at the DSL meetings that they haven't seen an officer for some time.

HNA said the school should know who their ward officer is. **RSB** would know. **HES** said he has been asking for a safer schools officer for years and years. **WLA** said she hopes that the new initiatives will work.

25/14 REVIEW OF TRANSITION 2024/PROGRAMME FOR 2025

RNJ said they had a few weeks to wait to know the new Y7 students. There would be a number of transition days in the coming weeks. Last year there were two ARP days for those students to familiarise themselves with the school. Then there are the smaller taster day for some of the more vulnerable students, to give them a bit of a footing in the school before the main transition day. On the main transition day, they run core sessions in the morning (30-minute sessions of English, maths and science) and then they have performing arts for the afternoon. The students give a mini performance to parents, when they come in to pick them up.

RNJ said Corrie Mordecai, the Pastoral Support Manager for Year 7, goes into every feeder school. **RNJ** said he tries to get into as many as possible and the incumbent head of Year 7 will also try to visit as many primaries as possible.

WLA asked if the school surveys the current Year 7s to see what their experience was. **RNJ** said that is not something they have done, but it is a good idea. **WLA** said one of the issues they seem to have is when the transition doesn't work properly and they don't settle. **HES** said the cause of that is lack of information. For Barnet schools everything is co-ordinated. If a child is coming from another borough, the information can come in very late and that's when they find out maybe too late that there have been behavioural or other issues too late.

GRO asked if the school still had EAPs auditions for the performing arts. **RNJ** said they did and this often happens at the end of a taster day. The family are informed in advance. **RNJ** said they manage to fill the EAPs every year and **HES** added it's not all from external applications – there might be a few children in school who can apply.

25/15 LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS

SAN (Safeguarding Governor) said she met with **RNJ** and they are going through the current audit.

25/16 GOVERNOR DAY ATTENDANCE (25 March 2025)

Governors to confirm with the clerk if they plan to attend.

25/17 GOVERNOR TRAINING

The latest available governor courses have been emailed to governors.

25/18 EXTRA CURRICULAR CLUBS

The details for autumn term were included in the pack (AIG's clubs were not included).

HES said the latest version is on the website.

25/18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

WLA and **HES** met a potential governor. He has been a head teacher of a special school, an HMI and a governor. By appointing him it would increase number of Co-opted governors but he has the right skills. He will be sent an application form.

25/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 31 March 2025 at 6.30 pm.

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