



**MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING OF
FRIERN BARNET SCHOOL, HELD AT THE SCHOOL AND ON TEAMS
ON MONDAY 19th MAY 2025 AT 6.30PM**

Name	Governor Type	Other Information	Term of Office	Present/Apologies/ Absent
Ann Woodhall	Co-opted	Chair	12.10.2021-11.10.2025	Present
Cllr Barry Rawlings	Co-opted			Apologies
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			Apologies
Mavis Osei-Agyapong	Co-opted		17.10.2023-16.10.2027	Apologies
Andrew Redpath	Co-opted		31.03.2025-30.03.2029	Present
Simon Horne	Staff	Headteacher	Ex-officio	Present
Galia Admoni	Staff		17.05.2022-16.05.2026	Present
Helen Bull	Parent	Vice Chair	17.10.2023-16.10.2027	Apologies
Olga Glazer	Parent		26.01.2022-25.01.2026	Apologies
Zeenat Syed	Parent		17.10.2023-16.10.2027	Present
vacancy	Parent			
Cllr Anne Hutton	LA		12.10.2021-11.10.2025	Present
Paula Donaldson	School Business Mgr			In attendance
Caroline Winston	Clerk			In attendance

1. WELCOME

- 1.1 Governors were welcomed to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair reported that, since the last meeting, Sharon Morgan had decided not to continue in the role of Clerk.
- 1.3 Caroline Winston, an independent professional clerk, had since been appointed and had been into school to meet with the Chair. She would be in attendance at the next meeting and had been unable to attend today due to a previous commitment.
- 1.4 The Chair said that a further update to report was that the governing body would now be using GovernorHub for the sharing of papers and management of governor business. The Clerk would be sharing login details for the system with individual governors in the coming week.

2. ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 Consent was recorded to apologies for absence submitted on behalf of Barry Rawlings, Nishad Gudhka, Mavis Osei-Agyapong and Olga Glazer.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

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

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4. PART I MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31st MARCH 2025 AND MATTERS ARISING.

- 4.1 The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 31st March 2025 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.
- 4.2 There were no matters arising.

5. APPROVAL OF INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT

- 5.1 The Chair explained that when the new Clerk had recently contacted the LA for the school's Instrument of Government, the legal department could not source it.
- 5.2 A revised Instrument had therefore been drafted and shared with governors for consideration.
- 5.3 It was proposed that the new constitution consist of 1 LA governor, 1 staff governor, 1 HT governor, 4 parent governors and 7 Co-opted governors. This was a total of 14 governors, with a reduction in the number of parent governors which were often difficult to recruit and retain.
- 5.4 After full consideration, the governing body **APPROVED** the Instrument. The Clerk undertook to send this to the legal department to be signed and sealed.
- 5.5 It was highlighted that there were currently two parent governor vacancies for which an election would be held in due course.

Item	Action	Who?	Deadline
5.4	Send updated Instrument of Government to the LA to be signed and sealed	Clerk	May 2025

6. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- 6.1 A full report had been circulated to governors, and this was received and noted. Arising from the report:
- 6.2 Dance Show The Headteacher praised the efforts of the pupils in the recent dance show. He said that there had been a real sense of joy amongst the 40 youngsters who had taken part.
- 6.3 Memorial The Headteacher and Chair had recently attended the memorial of Jane Canavan.
- 6.4 An event would be organised in school so that staff, both past and present, could be invited to attend.
- 6.5 A memorial bench and plaque would be being installed in school in Jane's memory.
- 6.6 ARP The Headteacher reported that the first group of pupils who had attended the ARP were soon to be entering Year 10. This meant that in two years' time, there would be pupils from every cohort attending the ARP. The school had now consolidated a curriculum throughout KS3 and would be adapting the offer for pupils going into KS4.
- 6.7 Support Staff Pay It was highlighted that the national negotiations between the LA employers and the unions had not yet agreed a cost of living pay rise for support staff. Once this was agreed, the school would be backdating this to April 2025.
- 6.8 Governors were informed that Barnet LA had made changes to most of the grades in their Unified Reward structure. These changes had been made to ensure the maximum and minimum salaries at each grade did not overlap.
- 6.9 This had resulted in a wide variation in pay increases before any cost of living award, ranging from 0.25% to 5.88%. The school business manager and the Headteacher had worked on both the grade changes and the appraisal scheme to ensure everyone was paid in line with the recent changes. This was an additional cost to the school and one that had not been expected.
- 6.10 The Chair had reviewed the changes proposed to support staff salaries and confirmed that these had been fair. A letter had gone out to support staff that day notifying them of the changes.
- 6.11 Attendance The recent school attendance data had been shared with governors for review.
- 6.12 It was explained that the DfE had started to produce more detailed data on attendance as there was recognition that attendance nationally was a concern.
- 6.13 The school's pupil attendance data was now ranked by the DfE with national secondary school data. They had also produced a comparison with similar schools with some analysis of where the problems were for each school.

- 6.14 The three main points reported were:
- Attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals was 87.1%, which was lower than at least a quarter of many similar schools. If the school increased attendance for pupils eligible for free school meals to 90.9%, then their overall attendance would increase by 1.42 percentage points and their overall persistent absence percentage would drop by 3.76 percentage points.
 - Attendance of pupils with special educational needs was 83.2%, which was lower than at least a quarter of many similar schools. If the school increased attendance for pupils with special educational needs to 89.5%, then their overall attendance would increase by 1.19 percentage points and their overall persistent absence percentage would drop by 3.32 percentage points.
 - Year 9 attendance was 89.1%, which was lower than at least a quarter of similar schools. If the school increased it to 92.6%, then their overall attendance would go up by 0.76 percentage points and the overall persistent absence percentage would drop by 2.17 percentage points.
- 6.15 The school's overall attendance data ranked them in the 7th decile in the DfE data.
- 6.16 **ASKED** about the decrease in pupil attendance, the Headteacher said that before Covid this had been 95%, but there had been a national picture of reduced school attendance since the pandemic. The school was currently broadly in line with other state secondary schools. The Headteacher did not have the context of the similar schools used by the DfE to rank them in their data.
- 6.17 Governors were reminded that the school bought into the LA EWO service and also used an extra attendance officer to work particularly with the pupils who had emotionally based school avoidance issues. The Chair said that she hoped that this would result in a positive improvement to the overall pupil attendance percentage.
- 6.18 **ASKED** whether it would be possible to find out the percentage of schools in the 7th decile and the other deciles, the Headteacher undertook to look further at the data the DfE provided.
- 6.19 **ASKED** whether there was a correlation between the SEND pupils on roll and the low attendance, the Headteacher highlighted that this data had been separated in his report, but was not specified in the DfE data.
- 6.20 It was noted that overall attendance to date in the summer term had been 90.92%.
- 6.21 School Improvement Plan (SIP) The SLT had reviewed and RAG rated the actions in the SIP. The Headteacher explained that green items had been completed, and amber were still being worked on. There were no red items reported. The document had been shared with governors for information.
- 6.22 It was reported that the SLT would be re-writing the SIP to update the objectives and this would be brought to the next meeting. The Headteacher said that there would be three broad areas which would be Oracy, Educational Technology and Adaptive Teaching (differentiation).
- 6.23 **ASKED** about the school's work on resilience, the Headteacher reminded governors that the school was part of the Barnet Resilient Schools project and this work was going well.
- 6.24 Enrichment The broad range of trips offered to the children was noted.
- 6.25 The Chair highlighted the pleasing number of pupils who had attended the ski trip this year.
- 6.26 The Headteacher said that three PP pupils had been supported with the cost of this trip with the school making a £200 contribution. Parents had been offered extended payment plans for this trip.
- 6.27 The Headteacher recorded his thanks to the staff members who had given up their own time to take the pupils skiing.
- 6.28 **ASKED** whether there had been any injuries, it was reported that there had not been.
- 6.29 Safeguarding The information was noted.
- 6.30 **ASKED** whether there were any new safeguarding issues specifically within the borough, it was reported that there were not.

Item	Action	Who?	Deadline
6.18	Find out the percentage of schools in the 7 th decile and the other deciles	HT	July 2025

7. RATIFICATION OF THE BUDGET 2025-2026

- 7.1 The Headteacher said that the budget had been presented to the finance committee on 29th April 2025.
- 7.2 It was reported that the outturn for 2024-2025 meant that there had been an in-year surplus of £31,553 which had resulted in a revenue carry forward to the new budget of £421,858. There was also a capital carry forward of £18,000.
- 7.3 The school business manager explained that savings had been made in recent premises works and staffing costs.
- 7.4 The Headteacher said that the school business manager and Varuni Morrison had done an excellent job in managing the finances and budget despite the falling roll numbers.
- 7.5 Governors were reminded that the falling roll numbers would have an impact on income for the new financial year.
- 7.6 It was explained that the school would be receiving a grant of £78, 225 to cover increases in employer National Insurance rates. This amount did not cover the costs involved.
- 7.7 There was a small increase to pupil funding and PP funding but this was not sufficient for the needs of the school.
- 7.8 Salary increases of 2.8% for teachers had been factored into the forecast, which had been the recommendation by the LA whilst this figure was currently unconfirmed. This year the increase would be the responsibility of the school and would not be funded.
- 7.9 **ASKED** what the shortfall was of the NI grant, this was reported to be 30% at £30,000. The teachers pensions employer contributions would be costing 28.68%.
- 7.10 Cost of living salary increases of 4% had been factored in for support staff. The local government pension scheme contribution had last year been reduced to 20.4%, but this was anticipated to have gone back up to 28.4% this financial year.
- 7.11 A four-year forecast had been shared with governors and it was highlighted that this had been based on there being 90 students in Year 7 moving forward.
- 7.12 Within this forecast, ARP funding had been increased for all five year groups.
- 7.13 **ASKED** whether the funding received for the ARP covered need, the Headteacher said that it did not cover the staffing required. The biggest issue was that, when set up, the ARP was predicted to be supporting 10 pupils per year group. In Year 7 there were currently 7 pupils and these were funded dependent on needs.
- 7.14 **ASKED** whether the LA would want the school to take pupils with more complex needs in the ARP, this was confirmed. There were already pupils using it with higher needs and who were non-verbal. But if there were ten children in the ARP and two TAs, this same level of staffing would be needed even if there were only six children.
- 7.15 Governors acknowledged that there was a national crisis in the funding of SEND and that schools inevitably spent more on SEND than the funding that they received.
- 7.16 The Headteacher explained that the primary need in the UK was no longer cognition and learning and there had been a rapid growth in the number of pupils diagnosed with autism. The ARP had originally been set up to support cognition and learning for the higher than average number of pupils with Down Syndrome attending the school. There was now an expectation that these children be taught in in mainstream classes and that the focus of ARPs be children with autism.
- 7.17 **ASKED** whether this impacted on the funding of the ARP, the Headteacher said that these children still had an EHCP and some had more than one level of need so funding was not necessarily impacted. There was no funding for one-to-one support in the ARP.
- 7.18 The Headteacher said that there was a national drive for schools to teach a diverse range of pupils and that more children should therefore be able to cope in a mainstream class setting.

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- 7.19 A governor highlighted the need for a quiet space for autistic children to go should they become dysregulated.
- 7.20 **ASKED** whether teachers could cope with the wide range of needs in their classes, the Headteacher said that even in the ARP there were a wide range of needs, so teachers adapted their teaching to meet those needs. ARP attendees did also go to some mainstream classes too.
- 7.21 **ASKED** whether there had been an increase in SEND children attending the school in the last two years, the Headteacher said that the number of pupils with an EHCP had certainly increased, but it was difficult to ascertain whether there were more children with SEND or whether certain conditions were more recognised and assessed. He believed that it was probably a combination of both of these factors.
- 7.22 It was highlighted that different boroughs had different thresholds for the funding of SEND pupils.
- 7.23 The Headteacher informed governors that he was on an LA SEND funding panel who were looking into whether putting funding in schools earlier for SEND would prevent the longer term number of EHCPs within the system. Barnet would be piloting this national scheme next year.
- 7.24 **ASKED** whether this would solely be in primary school settings, it was explained that this would be in geographical clusters.
- 7.25 Governors noted the information tabled concerning KPIs and projected student numbers.
- 7.26 They were reminded that the projected falling roll numbers were used to generate the four-year forecast. It was projected that there would be 447 students on roll in 2028.
- 7.27 **ASKED** what the numbers for the new academic year were, it was explained that in Year 7 this was projected to be 95. The Headteacher reminded governors that pupil mobility was high so this number would change regularly.
- 7.28 **ASKED** what this figure was likely to be taking account of mobility, the Headteacher said that at present it was 90. He added that this trend was common in other Barnet secondaries, although Friern Barnet did not have a Sixth form to bring in additional revenue in the way that some other schools did.
- 7.29 The Chair informed governors that 50% of Barnet schools were now reporting deficit budgets.
- 7.30 It was explained that the main grounds on which the LA could reject the school's proposed financial recovery plan for their deficit budget was if recovery would not be within three years, if there was no timeframe on budget recovery or if the plan was unrealistic.
- 7.31 The budget and proposed recovery plan would be presented to the LA and a response would be awaited.
- 7.32 The budget for the new financial year had to be confirmed by 31st May 2025.
- 7.33 There would be further discussion on the budget and recovery plan under Part II of this meeting.

8. REPORT FROM LINK GOVERNORS

- 8.1 There were no reports.

9. RATIFICATION OF POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

- 9.1 There were none.

10. REPORT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS DIRECTOR

- 10.1 The Director's report was received and noted.
- 10.2 The Chair highlighted that BELS had secured another five year contract with the LA.
- 10.3 A new Executive Director for Children and Families had recently been appointed.
- 10.4 Barnet were leading a Children with SEND programme and SENCOs had been encouraged to register for the free resources available.
- 10.5 Schools would have the option to sign up to the Smart Phone Free scheme which could be something to consider in future.

11. GOVERNOR TRAINING

- 11.1 The governor training programme had been shared with governors.
11.2 The Chair said that this would go on GovernorHub in future.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 12.1 Governing Body Membership The Chair reported that the Clerk had queried the reappointment dates of Barry Rawlings and Nishad Gudhka but this had since been resolved.
12.2 Summer festival The date of this event would be shared with governors as soon as possible.

13. DATES OF NEXT GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS

- 13.1 The date and time of the next meeting was confirmed as:
- Monday 14th July 2025 at 6.30pm

14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

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

ACTION LOG – 19TH MAY 2025

Item		Action	Who?	Deadline
5.4		Send updated Instrument of Government to the LA to be signed and sealed	Clerk	May 2025
6.18		Find out the percentage of schools in the 7 th decile and the other deciles	HT	July 2025

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