



## BENTHAL PRIMARY SCHOOL MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD (FGB)

**Date:** Tuesday, 10 December 2019  
**Time:** 18:30  
**Location:** Benthal Primary School, Benthal Road, N16 7AU

### MINUTES

|                       |                   |                         |             |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Present:</b>       | Jo Carter         | Chair of Governor       | Chair       |
|                       | Henry Greenwood   | Co-Opted Governor       | HG          |
|                       | Louise Drew       | Head Teacher            | Headteacher |
|                       | Shabnum Hassan    | Parent Governor         | SH          |
|                       | Susannah Barker   | Parent Governor         | SB          |
|                       | Thomas Hindson    | Co-Opted Governor       | TH          |
|                       | Fatima Haffeji    | Staff Governor          | FH          |
|                       | Michael Simpson   | Co-Opted Governor       | MS          |
| <b>Apologies:</b>     | Mandy Ayres       | Co-Opted Governor       | AS          |
|                       | Stella Sanford    | Co-Opted Governor       | SS          |
|                       | Nathan Waddington | Co-Opted Governor       | NW          |
| <b>In attendance:</b> | Anna Jassim       | School Business Manager | AJ          |
|                       | Tracy Williams    | Deputy Headteacher      | TW          |
| <b>Absent:</b>        |                   |                         |             |
| <b>Clerk:</b>         | Chenelle Blake    |                         | Clerk       |

- 1. Welcome & Apologies**
  - 1.1. The Chair opened the meeting at 18:35, welcoming the governors and others in attendance.
  - 1.2. It was **noted** that Anna Jassim, School Business Manager and Tracy Williams, Deputy Headteacher were in attendance to contribute to the meeting.
  - 1.3. Apologies were **received** and **accepted** from Mandy Ayres, Nathan Waddington and Stella Sanford.
  - 1.4. The meeting was **confirmed** as quorate and accordingly proceeded to business.
- 2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising**
  - 2.1. The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors, held on 9 July 2019, was **reviewed** and **approved** as an accurate reflection of the meeting.
    - 2.1.1. It was requested to amend para 9.1.3 – amend Gill to *Jill*.

- 2.1.2. It was noted that Action 1 is being followed up through the Finance and Premises Committee.
- 2.1.3. It was noted that Action 2 has been completed.
- 2.2. The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors, held on 17 September 2019, was **reviewed**.
- 2.2.1. It was requested that Anna amend the attendance to reflect Fatima Haffeji in attendance and Tracey Williams not in attendance.
- 2.2.2. Para 2.3 – Anna to amend spelling of *responsibilities*.
- 2.2.3. Para 3.2 – Anna to amend spelling of *meeting*.
- 2.2.4. It was noted that Action 1 has been completed. The Declaration of Interest forms were completed by those present at the meeting, however MS was not in attendance and was reminded to complete and return to Anna.
- 2.2.5. It was noted that Action 2 was completed; advice has been received from the Head of Governance Services via the Clerk. It was been agreed to appoint a Local Authority Governor with close ties to Hackney.
- 2.2.5.1. JC advised the FGB that she will step down from role of Governor/Chair of Governor at Benthall Primary School. As a result, this will create 2 vacancies and the need for a new Chair of Governor to be appointed. It was noted that there has been no nomination / expression of interest appointment to Chair of Governor. As a result, the school will recruit for LA and Co-Opted governors who are willing to take up the role.
- 2.2.5.2. **Action1: Louise to contact Governors for Schools to recruit for a LA /Co-Opted governor who is willing to be appointed as Chair or Vice Chair.**
- 2.2.5.2.1. It was noted that the FGB would prefer that the LA governor not be appointed as the Chair of Governors; it was agreed that this should be 2 separate roles.
- 2.2.6. Action 3 completed.
- 2.2.7. Action 4 completed.
- 2.2.8. Action 5 completed.
- 2.2.9. Action 6 completed
- 2.2.10. Action 7 completed.
- 2.2.11. Action 8 completed - safeguarding training. The clerk advised governors to undertake the HLT annual Safeguarding training available. It was **agreed** to have a 1 hour annual safeguarding internal governor's refresh training at the first FGB meetings of each academic year; this will be led by MS.
- 2.2.11.1. **Action 2: Governors to ensure they are registered for the HLT Safeguarding training.**
- 2.2.12. Action 9 completed.
- 2.2.13. Action 10 completed.
- 2.3. Matters arising:
- 2.3.1. It was **noted** that there was no urgent action taken since the last meeting.

### **3. Core Business, Headteacher's report – the Headteacher's report was circulated with time allocated for governors to review and digest.**

Head Teacher LD highlighted the following from the report:

- Benthall Primary School is receiving additional support (through Schools Requiring Additional Support - SRAS) from Hackney; this is focused on supporting the school with KS2 reading attainment and progress. As a result of this additional support, the School Improvement Partner will schedule 2 additional support visits each term, in addition to the core SIP visits.
- There are 111 empty places across the school, with 2 reception classes. Louise has contacted the Head of Admissions at HLT and it has been agreed to introduce

an informal temporary cap on year 1 admissions (currently at 32 children).  
Governors were advised that if 2 children leave the school between now and end of academic year, the classes will be combined as one class of 30 for year 2.

#### **Governor Questions:**

- *Early Years Base Line Assessment in October GLD is 5%. Is this exceptionally low?*  
Yes – lower in comparison to last year which was 18%; as a result the school has purchased a vocabulary programme 'NELI' to improve children's vocabulary and facilitate in house training of all staff. This programme was recommended by the Education Endowment Fund.
- *There are a number of staff on long term sickness; Is this likely to continue in to next term and how is this being addresses?*  
Yes, this will continue into next term. 1 class teacher covered by our additional Year 6 teacher, 1 PPA cover teacher however is currently being covered internally and the Learning Mentor. There is no member of support staff (TA or LSA) with the level of expertise and training to cover the role of the Learning Mentor.

#### 3.1. New OFSTED framework- questions & queries

3.1.1. LD last spoke to Governors in March 2019 during the consultation process, followed by publication in June 2019. It was noted that the presentation circulated to governors was recently shared with all staff, to update them on the new framework.

3.1.2. LD shared the 'Questions Ofsted might ask Governors' document, which was obtained from The Key for School Governors.

#### 3.2. School Priorities & Single Action Plan 2019-20 (for information only)

3.2.1. It was noted that the SEF was shared at the Curriculum and Standards Committee; this was mainly focused on teaching and learning. It was noted that the SEF and Single Action Plan have been updated to reflect the new Ofsted Framework. Governors were advised that contextual data on the front of the Single Action Plan is taken from ASP, which is compared with national not local figures.

#### 3.3. Sports Premium Grant update

3.3.1. It was noted that following agreement at the Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting, this was shared for information only.

#### 3.4. Whole School data overview

3.4.1. Deput Head Teacher Tracy Williams advised that the data shows the percentage of children working at expected and below.

3.4.2. TW advised of an additional row inserted for Boys Pupil Premium.

3.4.3. It was noted that there is still some data verification outstanding, following recent assessments from year 4-6.

3.4.3.1. **Action 3: TWto circulate updated whole school data summary, with a narrative on the areas for concern.**

3.4.3.2. It was **agreed** to flag this with Stella to follow up during link visit.

#### 3.5. Revised Benthall's Curriculum Offer statement and vision statement- for further comments

3.5.1. SB suggested the paragraph about outdoor areas be expanded, as it is not just for EYFS and Forest School. It was suggested and agreed to split the paragraph.

3.5.2. Creativity paragraph to be amended.

3.5.3. Last paragraph of the School Vision Statement to replace *Blossoming Beacon* with '*Shining Vision*'.

3.5.4. Shining to be in large font.

3.5.5. Last paragraph and last sentence to read '*to which others aspire.*'

#### **4. Finance & Premises Feedback Matters**

##### **4.1. Committee Feedback from meeting held 12 November 2019:**

**4.1.1. Amounts outstanding from parents:** The F&P committee discussed the increasing levels of debt outstanding from parents (mainly for breakfast and after-school clubs or school dinners), which is now a combined total of £10,000. All parents have been contacted regularly via letter and telephone, however this approach has not been successful and some parents have not repaid their debt. The committee agreed that TH and LD meet with parents with the largest amounts outstanding, to discuss their situation and agree a repayment plan, which will be monitored closely. It was noted that there are a number of parents who have not responded to requests to discuss the matter; these parents' cases will be escalated to HLT. It was agreed at the meeting that parents can make repayments of whatever is affordable, however they are not able to use any clubs which will enable them to incur any further charges.

**4.1.2. Pupil Recruitment Strategy:** The school has commissioned a pupil recruitment strategy report from an external market research provider. This report has been reviewed by the F&P committee and has a number of useful suggestions to help Benthall succeed in pupil recruitment. The report's recommendations are being considered in detail and will be implemented and progress monitored against these by the F&P committee. It was noted that the main goal is to increase recruitment.

**4.1.3. Letter to HLT:** The pupil recruitment strategy report also included detailed demographic analysis of the local area, including forecast projections of pupil numbers in the coming years, which was sourced from Hackney Council. It was noted that several staff and governors at the school have requested this information from HLT via various channels in the last 12-18 months, however the information has never been provided. The F&P committee expressed disappointment that this information was made available to a private consultancy, causing significant expense to be incurred by the school in obtaining it. F&P agreed to write to HLT to complain about this, given the critical importance that forecast pupil numbers have in the budgeting and forecasting process.

**4.1.4. Financial performance vs Budget:** Benthall continues to track very closely against the budget for the year, with 59% of the annual budget spent at October 2019. It was noted that the target spend was budgeted at 58.33%. Governors were advised that the very minor overspend is incidental and the school remains on track to meet its previously agreed budget for the year. The school remains on track to meet the approved budget for this year.

**4.1.5. Financial Forecast:** The fiscal position of the school for the next financial year is expected to be challenging and, depending on a number of uncertain factors, there is the possibility that the school may have to set a deficit budget. The F&P committee will consider this matter in more detail at the next meeting in February 2020. The governors were made aware that the budget is expected to be challenging for the next academic year.

**4.1.6.** It was noted that the Marketing Working Party reviewed the report recommendations.

**4.1.6.1.** LD advised that there is simply no money available in the budget to afford teachers insurance to provide extra resources.

**4.1.7.**

#### **5. Curriculum & Standards Feedback Matters**

##### **5.1. Committee Feedback:**

**5.1.5.** The C&S Committee was presented with results for the end of the last academic year. It was noted that there was strong results in Year 1 Phonic Reading Check and KS1 SATs

results. Early Years made good attainment from such a low base line, this could be due to small classes in EYFS.

- 5.1.6. Following KS2 reading results, the Destination Reader programme has been completely changed by the Literacy Lead and Head Teacher, following a school based review in September. Due to the low KS2 Reading Results the school is receiving additional support from HLT through the SRAS programme as mentioned earlier.
- 5.1.7. There is new emphasis on language acquisition in early years, as it has been noted that there are a number of children entering the school with poor basic knowledge.
- 5.1.8.
- 5.1.9. The C&S committee agreed a number of policies.
- 5.1.10. There are new PSHE requirements to be implemented, which will result in existing provisions being altered.

## **6. Personnel Committee**

### **6.1. Committee Feedback:**

- 6.1.5. Governors were advised that the Headteachers Performance review was delayed to early January 2020, due to diary clashes.

## **7. Link Governor Feedback**

### **7.1. Susannah Barker – Stake holder voice**

- 7.1.2. The Benthall Parent council committee has been set up 'Benthall Parent Voice'. This is a diverse group of parents and carers. SB is currently chairing the committee, however has welcomed members to take the opportunity to Chair.

- 7.1.3. There is no School Council visit this term, due to long term sickness; however this will be followed up next term.

### **7.2. Michael Simpson- Safeguarding**

- 7.2.2. During the link visit, a number of cases were highlighted re domestic abuse and poverty. It was noted that there are challenges with an increasing number of children from outside the borough, which means working with other councils; this can be challenging.
- 7.2.3. MS learned about the safeguarding initiatives which the school is a part of.
- 7.2.4. It is important at the next visit for MS to be familiarised with the relevant safeguarding related policies.

### **7.3. Shabnum Hassan– SEND**

- 7.3.2. During the link visit there were concerns raised about support for the SENDCO.
- 7.3.3. It was noted that the trial of the Educational Psychologist was positive. Governors were advised that ongoing support for JJ provided by LD for one particular parent is not sustainable and needs to be followed up.
- 7.3.4. Staffing shortage of the Learning Mentor due to sickness absence has had an impact on interventions for some SEND pupils. .
- 7.3.4.1. JC highlighted the lack of rolling teachers insurance to cover staff shortage and staff replacements. It is important that staff wellbeing is prioritised and teachers are not pressured as a result of a lack of resources.
- 7.3.5. Early Years Foundation stage October Base Line Assessment is well below previous years, which has resulted in Speech and Language support in place for teachers.
- 7.3.5.1.
- 7.3.6. It was suggested that an Autism Unit would be useful.
- 7.3.7. Reading Working Party has been set up for SEND pupils.
- 7.3.8. Vocabulary teaching is in place for SEND pupils.

- 7.4. Henry Greenwood – Curriculum / Stella Sanford – Pupil Outcomes (joint visit 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019)
- 7.4.2. The focus of this visit was to observe Destination Reader in action, following KS2 reading highlighted as a concern in the last KS2 SATs reading results. Both HG and SS were pleased with what was observed; children were focussed and reading well. HG and SS were also very impressed with Ms Oz, Literacy Lead. Next steps is to establish whether this work will have an impact on results.
- 7.4.3. Library opening will have a positive effect on the children's reading and will help to ensure they have books which are age and reading level appropriate.
- 7.5. JC commented overall, that Link Governor Relationships have significantly improved over the year and are purposeful.
- 8. Governance Matters**
- 8.1. **Review governance work plan and agree reports required for the next FGB meeting**
- 8.1.2. It was **agreed** that the Marketing and Communications Working Party report be circulated and reviewed at the next FGB.
- 8.2. **Feedback from Governors participating in CPD - Governor overseeing CPD**
- 8.2.2. It was noted that updates on training attending are provided to NW, who keeps a list of training.
- 8.2.2.1. SB attended Finance training which was very useful. There was good discussion about the falling roll in Hackney.
- 8.3. **DBS - sign off**
- 8.3.2. The Chair signed the DBS.
- 9. Any Other Business**
- 9.1. LD advised governors of the Carol Concert tomorrow afternoon and Early Years Christmas show on Friday morning.
- 9.2. Governors were advised that two days in July 2020 have been allocated to INSET days; as a result, two 6 hour twilight sessions will be scheduled throughout the year.
- 9.3. LD advised that Benthall Primary School was on London BBC news on Friday, to raise the profile of the Winter Toy appeal, which is a local charity with 'Stokeley Parents'. Governors were advised that Benthall has supported this local charity for the past 3 years, as children have paid £1.00 to dress up as a toy for the day. It was noted that a press release was included in the Hackney Citizen, along with being publicized on the Benthall Twitter page.
- 9.3.1. JC emphasised the importance to build connectivity on Twitter and governors emphasised the importance to re-tweet others.
- 9.4. It was noted that the school planted 50 trees around the school, in links with the Mayor of London's initiative.
- 9.5. **To note the dates of future meetings of the governing board for 2019-2020**
- 9.5.1. It was noted that the next FGB meeting is scheduled on 31 March 2020.
- Part 2: Confidential Business
10. It was noted that there is one item of confidential business, which will be recorded in confidential minutes.