



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

**Date:** Wednesday, 11 December 2018  
**Time:** 18:30  
**Location:** Benthal Primary School, Benthal Road, N16 7AU

**MINUTES**

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

**1. Welcome & Apologies**

- 1.1. The Chair opened the meeting at 18:30, welcoming the governors and others in attendance.
- 1.2. It was **noted** that TH was in attendance to observe the meeting as a Prospective Governor.
- 1.3. The Governing Board introduced themselves and TH provided a brief overview of his working background, as an Accountant from KPMG. TH advised of the link between KPMG and school governing bodies.
- 1.4. Apologies were **received** and **accepted** from Nathan Waddington (NW) who was unwell, Stella Sandford (SS), Mandy Ayres and Nick Harvey Jones (NHJ).
- 1.5. It was **noted** that Matilda Clode was stuck on train and was unable to make the meeting. The governing board accepted this as an apology for absence.

- 1.6. The Chair highlighted the importance to consider whether the FGB will continue to accept repeated apologies. It was **agreed** that governors will be required to attend a certain number of meetings, in order to fulfil their role on the governing body.
- 1.7. It was **noted** that Sem Moema was not present and did not send apologies in advance. It was **agreed** that the Chair would follow up on the matter and advise of the requirements for attendance.
- 1.8. It was **noted** that NHJ intended to step down from the governing body, however was not present; it is planned for this vacant position to be filled by TH; pending agreement to join the governing body.
- 1.9. The meeting was **confirmed** as quorate and accordingly proceeded to business.
- 1.10. It was later **noted** that Sem Moema arrived at the meeting 18.59 and was no longer marked as absent.

## **2. Update from HLT School Improvement Partner (SIP), Jason Marantz**

- 2.1 The Headteacher advised of last minute apologies from Jason Marantz, due to a family matter.
- 2.2 It was **noted** that the 2018 Annual Summary was completed by the old SIP Calvin Henry. This reports on Benthall's overall effectiveness and school performance for 2017-18.
- 2.3 The Headteacher provided a brief overview of the annual summary and the FGB were given an opportunity to raise questions and request clarity on acronyms.
- 2.4 It was **noted** that boxes contained in the report, are based on attainment outcomes for nursery, KS1 and KS2.
- 2.5 The data is organised into the following columns: Expected, National Figure, LA Figure and Greater Depth (identifying more able children).
- 2.6 The Headteacher advised that due to the annual summary being completed in August 2018, it does not include the data recently presented at the Curriculum and Standards meeting. There was also no Early Years data available in August, however, this has also been discussed at the Curriculum & Standards meeting.
- 2.7 The Chair summarised the report as a positive reflection of the school from Calvin's perspective; it is also clearly reflected that SLT understand the school and are making good progress.
- 2.8 It was **noted** that the SIP 1 visit report for 2018 was circulated in error by the clerk and would not be reviewed. Governors were advised to disregard the report.

## **3. Thank you presentation and election of new governor to be ratified.**

- 3.1. It was **noted** that the thank you presentation was for the purpose of saying good bye and thank you to NHJ for contribution to the governing board, however, due to absence, this will be done at another meeting.
- 3.2. It was **noted** that TH would observe the meeting and will feedback to the Chair and Headteacher on intent to formally join the governing body.

## **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising**

- 4.1. The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board of Governors, held on 11 July 2018, were **reviewed** and **approved**, subject to the following corrections:
  - Correct the spelling of the Deputy Headteacher's first name: letter 'e' to be removed.
- 4.1.1. The corrections to the minutes were made in manuscript, and **signed** by the Chair. It was **noted** that all matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting were complete or would be addressed as part of the agenda for the meeting.
- 4.2 The minutes from the meeting held 18 September 2018, were **reviewed** and **approved**, subject to the following corrections:

- Correct the spelling of Stella's surname.

- 4.2.1 It was **noted** that corrections to these minutes will be made by Anna Jassim.
- 4.3 It was **noted** that all actions have been followed up, including SS completing the DBS online application.
- 4.4 The Chair advised of a letter received from NW, highlighting a number of overseas trips and sickness, which has resulted in a lack of attendance to governor meetings, particularly in the capacity of Vice Chair. A conversation was held and Nathan has agreed to step down from the position of Vice Chair; therefore, the governing board is required to appoint a Vice Chair to replace NW.
  - 4.4.1 It was **noted** that NW will remain as a governor.
  - 4.4.2 The Chair advised that SS volunteered at the meeting in September, to take up the role of Vice Chair; however, the Chair has not heard from SS since the meeting.
  - 4.4.3 The Chair provided an overview of the role and responsibility of Vice Chair and highlighted key responsibilities in relation to chairing meetings in the absence of the Chair and attending the Personnel Committee meetings. It was **noted** that there is no specific skill set for the role, however it is a greater responsibility.
  - 4.4.4 Governors were given an opportunity to volunteer for the role of Vice Chair, however there were no further nominations.
  - 4.4.5 Governors **agreed** for SS to be appointed to the role, pending a conversation with the Chair to confirm her appointment. It was **noted** that if SS decided not uptake the position, an email will be circulated to the governors requesting expression of interests for the role.
- 4.5 The Chair **confirmed** there were no urgent actions taken since the last meeting.

## 5. Headteacher's Report

- 5.1. The Headteacher's report was circulated in advance of the meeting and hard copies were provided. The Headteacher provided an overview of the report.
- 5.2. Governors were provided with an overview of the whole school context.
  - 5.2.1. It was **noted** that performance management of all teaching staff and support staff has been completed.
  - 5.2.2. There is one student working in year 4 with a good to outstanding teacher; this student teacher has been observed as working to a very good standard by the tutor and the school.
  - 5.2.3. There is one additional teacher in year 6.
  - 5.2.4. There are 86 unfilled places across the school. An increase in mobility was noted for the last academic year September 2017 to July 2018; 49 children left and 15 joined the school. The Headteacher emphasised that a total of 86 children is a significant loss for the school, as many children qualify for funding.
  - 5.2.5. There is a total of 24 children in the nursery, despite the expectation to have 25 in the morning and 25 in the afternoon.
  - 5.2.6. The Headteacher highlighted the borough wide issues of falling rolls in Hackney, which was also raised at the SIP 1 visit.
  - 5.2.7. From September 2017-July 2018 there was a total of 49 in year transfer leavers; of the 49, 15 moved within the LA and 25 have moved outside the borough. 1 child was not in the correct year group and 1 is unknown.
    - 5.2.7.1. It was **noted** that most children starting mid-term are new to the country, with English as a second language.
    - 5.2.7.2. Both the Headteacher and Chair highlighted that the increase in mobility and falling rolls, will ultimately have a financial impact on the budget for next year.

- 5.2.8. **Governor question:** Are there concerns at Benthall, in regards to the opening of Nightingale Primary School?
- 5.2.8.1. **Response:** Benthall Primary is not concerned about the opening of Nightingale further affecting the falling roll issue, as the difficulty to fill school places is currently a borough wide issue across Hackney.
- 5.2.8.2. The Chair highlighted the importance to forward think and plan for a continued reduction in numbers; it is equally important to consider a long term projection on a falling roll.
- 5.2.8.3. **Action 1: AJ to complete a long term falling roll projection based on 40 pupils.**
- 5.3. Governors were provided with an overview of effectiveness of leadership and management.
- 5.3.1. The inset day in September held at Kench Hill was a success, with all staff in attendance; this day was used to promote working as a team, to drive the school vision, creativity and Benthall values as the core approach for the school.
- 5.3.2. The Single Action Plan (SAP) has been drafted and approved by the SIP who commended the school; this is the driver for school improvement for this academic year and is a working document to be continually monitored by SLT. It was noted that an end of term evaluation will be completed.
- 5.3.2.1. Subject leaders have extracted their sections to draft individual Subject Action Plans.
- 5.3.2.2. It was **noted** that the SAP is for Governor information only, for reflective purposes, to ensure there is continued improvement; the SAP does not require FGB approval / ratification.
- 5.4. Governors were provided with an update on Ofsted changes and the School Evaluation Form (SEF).
- 5.4.1. The Headteacher advised of changes to the Ofsted inspection criteria and categories, scheduled for implementation in September 2019; therefore, it was suggested to schedule a training session for governors in the spring term, to focus on the new criteria. This will be a 30 minute agenda item.
- 5.4.1.1. **Action 2: FGB have a 30 minute training session on the Ofsted criteria, at the spring term FGB; this will focus on changes to be implemented in September 2019.**
- 5.4.2. The Headteacher advised that the SEF reflects on the positive aspects of the school. Senior leaders are able to highlight everything that is good about the school and address what needs to be done to move the school from being judged as 'Good' to 'Outstanding'.
- 5.5. Governors were provided with an update on recruitment.
- 5.5.1. The Headteacher advised that the School Site Manager, Tony Jones retired in September 2018, therefore agency staff have been used to cover this period until a School Keeper is appointed on fixed term contract.
- 5.5.1.1. A School Caretaker has been appointed to start in January 2019; this will be reviewed after 3 months.
- 5.5.2. 2 additional LSA's have been appointed for children requiring 1:1 support; it was **noted** that 2 children with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) joined the school in September 2018.
- 5.5.3. A Gardener has been appointed to work 1 day per week.
- 5.5.4. A Nursery Teacher has been appointed for 2 fixed terms; this will be reviewed in line with nursery numbers. It was **noted** that agency staff have been used since October 2018; as a result the budget will be significantly higher.
- 5.6. Governors were provided with an update on sickness.
- 5.6.1. There is 1 member of Early Years staff on long term sickness absence. The school has undertaken the stage 1 procedures, in line with the Sickness Absence Policy. It was

- noted** that the Headteacher is receiving support from Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) HR services.
- 5.6.2. There is 1 teacher on long term sickness; it is hoped that they will return very soon; sickness absence procedures are being followed. It was **noted** that this teacher does not have an allocated class.
- 5.7. Governors were provided with an update on disciplinary procedures.
- 5.7.1. It was **noted** that there are no disciplinary procedures to report.
- 5.8. Governors were provided with an update on staff pay and conditions.
- 5.8.1. Performance management has been completed for all staff and teachers have been informed of their pay scale.
- 5.8.2. All targets have been set for the academic year; these are linked to teaching and learning and are closely linked to the Single Action Plan (SAP) and Subject Leader action plans.
- 5.8.3. There are no formal capabilities, however one member of teaching staff continues to require support; it was **noted** that the second informal support plan will begin in January 2019.
- 5.8.4. Support staff performance management was undertaken in October 2018; all targets are in line with the cycle of teacher's performance management.
- 5.8.4.1. It was **noted** that targets were linked to supporting specific groups of pupils.
- 5.9. Governors were provided with an update on outcomes for pupils.
- 5.9.1. There is a 3 year trend for pupil outcomes; this is evidenced in the SEF. It was **noted** that 2016 was first year of assessments under the new SATs framework.
- 5.9.2. The Deputy Headteacher, Tracy Williams, provided an update on the whole school data for November 2018.
- 5.9.2.1. The assessment week for year 1, 3, 4 and 5 have taken place. Year 2 and 6 are currently being assessed.
- 5.9.2.2. Data shows good progress across all years groups and there is continued progress of girls non EAL and non PPG pupils.
- 5.9.2.3. There is a larger proportion of EAL, PPG and SEN pupils in line to achieve the expected level of attainment. It was **noted** that this is a good position to be in, at in this point of the year; therefore, the school can build on these outcomes.
- 5.10. Governors were provided with an update on target setting.
- 5.10.1. KS1 and KS2 targets were set and approved by the SIP and HLT.
- 5.10.2. Year 2 and year 6 summit meetings have taken place, with both year groups to establish targets and provision. A second year 6 summit will take place during December 2018 and year 2 in January 2019.
- 5.11. Governors were provided with an update on the profile of teachers.
- 5.11.1. All teachers have been observed and it was noted that the quality of teaching is strong across the school, with a continuation of teachers demonstrating good with outstanding features. This has been quality assured by the SIP during the SIP 1 visit.
- 5.11.1.1. It was **noted** that the next SIP visit will focus on teaching and learning, with more time spent in classes.
- 5.12. Governors were provided with an update on whole school assessment.
- 5.12.1. Year 6 completed the KS2 SATs paper from 2016; this enabled teachers to complete a gap analysis, to tailor their teaching.
- 5.12.2. The CAT tests were completed October 2018.
- 5.12.3. The Early Years stage baseline assessments was carried out in October 2018. The cohort is lower than last year.
- 5.12.3.1. Communication, language and physical development are the areas of focus this year.

- 5.12.4. The Headteacher brought the whole school priorities to the governors' attention and encouraged them to be acquainted with the 2018/19 priorities.
- 5.13. Governors were provided with an update on personal development, behaviour and welfare.
  - 5.13.1. Children continue to be positive and ready for learning. The SIP commended this as a strength of the school.
  - 5.13.2. Attendance for the autumn term (September to November 2018) was 96.3%; however, the school was at 95.9 % this point last year.
    - 5.13.2.1. The school is focusing on raising attendance figures, in order to focus on becoming 'outstanding' in this area.
  - 5.13.3. There have been 2 fixed term exclusions.
    - 5.13.3.1. 1 pupil joined the school in mid-September 2018 with an EHCP from a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). Teachers completed a lot of work with this child, however a situation arose which gave the Headteacher no other option than to exclude the pupil.
    - 5.13.3.2. 1 pupil (now at New Regents College) to be referred to a school in Islington which specialises in therapeutic care.
    - 5.13.3.3. The Headteacher highlighted that these instances do not generally reflect the behaviour at Benthall.
  - 5.13.4. There are 2 children on the Child Protection Register, 8 on the Child in Need Register and 6 known to Social Services but not on the Child Protection Register. There are 4 Looked After (LAC) Children across the school.
  - 5.13.5. The fire drill was carried out this term and the evacuation was completed in 2mins and 20 seconds; this has been recorded in the fire book. It was **noted** that KS2 pupils were in their different maths groups.
  - 5.13.6. English conversation clubs are available for parents to attend; this is for parents who do not have English as their first language. There are currently 10-12 attending.
  - 5.13.7. Governors thanked LD for her report. There were no further questions from those present.
    - 5.13.7.1. It was **noted** that SS sent across questions in relation to items on the agenda, some of which were addressed in the Headteacher's report.
    - 5.13.7.2. In response to a query from SS, it was **noted** that the most current Pupil Premium Strategy is on the school website; this is based on the financial rather than academic year.
    - 5.13.7.3. It was **noted** that other points raised by SS can be addressed by the Curriculum Committee.

## 6. Finance & Premises Feedback Matters

- 6.1. It was **noted** that governors would not be provided with a formal report on finance and premises matters, due to NHJ being absent. However, the Chair advised that she had met with the SBM prior to the FGB and there are no significant matters raised, which require governor's attention.
- 6.2. The Chair advised that the budget spend target is 67% spend and the school is currently on 66.2% spend.
  - 6.2.1. It was **noted** that the pay budget is slightly over budget, due to increase in need to utilise agency staff; however, the Department for Education (DfE) will award Benthall an £8,000 grant to subsidise the cost of the salary increase.
  - 6.2.2. It was **noted** that a surplus is expected at the end of the year.
- 6.3. The Finance and Premises Committee discussed marketing of the school and a need to refresh the school website, especially to address the issue of falling rolls.
  - 6.3.1. Governors were informed of the school website review, to go ahead in January 2019; this will also to enable website viewing on various platforms.
- 6.4. The Finance and Premises Committee agreed to develop a Governors newsletter, which has been drafted and will be circulated at the end of term.

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

- 7.1. SB provided a brief update following the Curriculum and Standards meeting, which was held 2 weeks ago; a presentation on RWI Spelling Zone for KS2 was given by the literacy leader and the HT shared all the school data in more detail.
- 7.2. The committee discussed the new E- Safety Policy for comments and feedback. This has since been expanded and updated.

## **8. Personnel Committee Feedback Matters**

- 8.1. It was noted that personnel matters were discussed in previous agenda items.
- 8.2. JC advised that the Headteacher's Performance Management Review is scheduled to be completed before the end of term.

## **9. Link Governor Feedback**

- 9.1. SH provided governors with an up update on the SEND link area.
- 9.1.1. SH met with Jill Joseph AHT for Inclusion & Safeguarding after the half term break and discussed secondary school placements for the current year 5 children. It was **noted** that applications for SEND students requiring extra support (EHCP pupils) are completed a year earlier.
- 9.1.2. Jill advised that the application process has been explained to parents; however, questions were raised about choosing a mainstream rather than a special school for that individual. Parents were encouraged to consider special schools, as children can receive the support they need.
- 9.1.3. SH advised that Jill expressed concerns about workload for SEND staff and raised the need to have more support from Education Psychologists (EPs). It was **noted** that support from the EP service has not been provided at the required level and has been a poor buy in from HLT.
- 9.1.4. **Governor Question:** Do we provide any clinical supervision for SEND staff?  
**Response:** The school does not currently provide clinical support, however this has been considered in the past. It was noted that there is a need to consider how this would be funded.
- 9.1.4.1. In response to feedback on poor support from the HLT Educational Psychologist team, the Headteacher advised that Benthall will not continue to pay into HLT EP services.
- 9.1.5. SH encouraged the Headteacher to raise the poor level of service with HLT.
- 9.1.6. Coffee mornings and SEN support group meetings have been held. Jill is currently reviewing agencies for parents to access.
- 9.1.7. Governors were advised that the Art Therapy room is proving to be too costly and will no longer be a resource within the school. It was noted that this is something the Headteacher strongly believes in, however it is proving too expensive.
- 9.1.8. SH and Jill have discussed having a sensory garden, similar to Tyssen Primary School.
- 9.1.9. The Headteacher advised that there is now a Gardner in place, therefore this is something to be considered.
- 9.2. **HG provided governors with an update on the Teaching & Learning link.**
- 9.2.1. HG advised of meeting all teaching and learning leads for maths, science and literacy and carried out a literacy learning walk across the school. This was a positive experience and good to meet the key teachers.
- 9.2.2. It was noted that SS will meet with the Deputy Headteacher early in the spring term.
- 9.3. **SB provided governors with an update on the stake holder voice link area.**
- 9.3.1. SB met with the Headteacher early in the term and is scheduled to meet again next term.

- 9.3.2. The staff wellbeing survey will be completed annually.
- 9.3.3. It was noted that the Staff Away Day is important for staff wellbeing, however a budget consideration attached to this.
- 9.3.4. SB advised of meeting with the Magic Breakfast Charity and attending the launch, which was a good experience.

## **10. Governance Matters**

- 10.1. It was **noted** that governance matters were reviewed at the FGB meeting held in September 2018.
- 10.2. **SS advised of completing 2 CPD webinars (with Governors for Schools) and 1 online module:**
  - o 27 September 2018 Webinar: The Governors' Role in Headteacher's Appraisal
  - o 28 October 2018: Webinar: New Governors Induction (Governors for Schools)
  - o 26 November 2018 Online module: 'Performance Data for New Governors.
- 10.2.1. SS stated that the webinars were very good, however the online modules were less so.
- 10.3. JC advised of attending the Governors and Heads forum.
- 10.4. HG advised of completing online webinars.
- 10.5. SH advised of attending the safeguarding session; however raised concern about there being only 1 Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at Benthall. The Head Teacher clarified that all members of SLT were now fully trained as DSLs for the school in order to share the work load.

## **11. Any Other Business**

- 11.1. The Headteacher provided governors with an update, following a meeting with HLT (Annie Gammon and Mike Coleman) regarding concerns about the possible school move for Benthall and the effect it was having on the schools falling roll.
  - 11.1.1. It was confirmed that Benthall is not due to move for the next 5-8 years. Mike agreed to have a press release to address this.
  - 11.1.2. The Headteacher advised the board that she had strongly requested HLT issue for Benthall a specific press release to inform parents and the community before the end of term.
- 11.2. SB provided governors with an update on the draft Benthall Governors newsletter. The draft text has been circulated and governors were invited to give comments and feedback.
  - 11.2.1. It was **agreed** that following insertion of governor introductions, the newsletter will be circulated in hard copy before the end of term – Wednesday 19 December 2018.
  - 11.2.2. Governors to provide introductions to SB by the end of this week.
  - 11.2.3. The Chair advised of agreement to have a FGB group photograph; it was **agreed** to take a photograph of those present at the end of the meeting, despite some governors being absent.
  - 11.2.4. Governors agreed that the emphasis of the newsletter is to celebrate the school and not the FGB.
- 11.3. The Headteacher advised of being invited to speak at a 'Governors for Schools' London Conference in October 2018, for the purpose of recruiting new professionals to be governors. The Headteacher accepted the invitation and attended as a panel member of 3, to share the schools governing board story. The Headteacher talked about how Benthall went through the process of changing the Instrument of Government and establishing clear roles and responsibilities across the governing board. This was well received.

- 11.3.1. Since the conference, the CEO of Governors for Schools has been in contact and has requested to visit Benthall to video the Headteacher's story. A film crew visited last week and the Headteacher's presentation was filmed to be used for recruitment of governors and governor's training.
- 11.3.2. Governors commented on this being good marketing opportunities for the school.
- 11.4. The Headteacher has met with Maggie Kalnins, Head of Governor's Services, to implement Headteacher workshops, to address the process of strengthening governing boards in Hackney. A workshop for Headteachers will be rolled out in the spring term.
- 11.5. **Governor question:** Would it be possible to have a link to the school website, included in text messages to parents?  
**Response:** AJ advised of difficulty to include the website link due to limited characters in each text message, however this will be looked into.
- 11.6. The Single Central Record was signed by the Chair.
- 11.7. TH confirmed interest in being co-opted as a governor.
- 11.7.1. The FGB voted and **unanimously agreed** to appoint Thomas a Co-opted Governor with a link role for Finance & Premises.

## **Part 2: Confidential Business**

- 12. There was no confidential business discussed.
- 12.1. The business of the meeting concluded at 20:30.