

**Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of
Walthamstow School for Girls held on
Tuesday 3 December 2019
at 6.25 pm at the school**

Present: Ms Gillian Barker - **(Chair)** – Co-opted Governor

Co-opted Governors

Mr Jeroen van Dinteren
Ms Debbie Lewzey
Ms Alex Wills

Headteacher (voting)

Ms Meryl Davies

Local Authority Governor

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Parent Governors

Mrs Nina Mikolajczyk
Dr Aneela Shah
Mr Graham Clifford
Mr Sami Urrehman

Staff Governor

Mr Ash Ramlagan

Clerk to the Governors: Mrs Ros Tatam

Also present:

Ms Sally Kennedy (Deputy Headteacher) SKE
Ms Jane Snowsill (Deputy Headteacher) JSN
Mr Romi Jalil (School Business Manager) RJA
Ms Kristine Pratt (Assistant Headteacher & Designated Safeguarding Lead) KPR

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
2.1.2	Governor Services (GS) to write to Mr Muhammad Khodabocus.	Governor Services (GS)	asap
2.2.3	Mr Ramlagan to contact Mr Beg to offer assistance with accessing emails and documents sent electronically.	ARA	asap
4.2.1	School planned to send on 3.12.19, electronically, to governors the table of the latest outcomes data – Chair to confirm	School	Chair Confirmed receipt on

	receipt.		6.12.19
	Signed 'WSfG Code of Practice for School Governors' – scanned copies to be sent to GS - GS to confirm receipt	Headteacher's PA and GS to notify School and Clerk	20.12.19
4.2.3	Ref. 14.2 (ii) Draft governing body development plan 2019/2020 to be considered at the March Full Governing Body (FGB), after the analysis of the Skills information is received from GS.	School / GS	For 24.3.2020
4.2.4	Ref. 15.2 Draft of the Annual governance impact statement to be considered by the March FGB	Chair / School / GS	For 24.3.2020
4.5	The Pay Committee's Terms of Reference to be ratified at the next FGB.	School / GS	For 24.3.2020
5.1.2	The Chair to seek applicants for the co-opted vacancy, and the School to seek applicants for the parent governor vacancy.	Chair and School	14.2.2020
5.4.2	School to convene a planning meeting to take forward the recommendation to amalgamate Finance and Premises and Staffing Committees, and rename both committees.	School	Before 31.1.2020
11 (i)	Chair and Mr van Dinteren to liaise on the Safeguarding link role and on the Single Central Record monitoring visit.	Chair, Mr van Dinteren and School	Before 31.1.2020
11 (ii)	GS to note new Safeguarding link governor.	GS	asap
12.2	Further enquiries regarding the new 'Delegation Decision Planner'	Chair and School Business Manager	asap
15	School to issue to governors (and the Clerk) the dates for Committees in the Summer term.	School	Asap and no later than 14.2.2020
16.2	School to formulate proposal for setting up laptops (for governors who required them) in the meeting rooms, and the safe storage after the meetings.	School	asap

1. Governor Safeguarding Training

Ms Kristine Pratt, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, presented a tailored Level 1 Safeguarding training for governors, highlighting the additions to, and where greater emphases have been made in, the September 2019 "Keeping Children Safe in Education". She advised that her caseload has doubled over the last year (includes Children in Need, Child Protection, and requests for Early Help). She expects that recording of all concerns and incidents will be into the SAFEGUARD programme from spring 2020.

2. Welcome and apologies for absence

2.1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2.1.2 The Chair had made a further attempt to contact Mr Muhammad Khodabocus (known as Mo), by writing to his Line Manager at IBM (who had responded), but still no contact at all had been received from Mo. Donna Miller of Governor Services (GS) advised that newly-appointed governors must commence their application to the Disclosure and Barring Service within 21 days, and, by not doing so, Mo has disqualified himself.

Action: Governor Services to write to Mr Muhammad Khodabocus.

2.2.1 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Ms Janeen Hayat, Ms Lydia Sanderson, Mr Aktar Beg, and Dr Rhys Morgan.

2.2.2 Ms Sanderson had also regretfully tendered her resignation (for personal reasons).

2.2.3 The Chair noted that Mr Beg said he had not received the agenda and reports for this meeting in the post. Mr Ramlagan volunteered to contact Mr Beg to offer assistance with accessing emails and documents sent electronically. The Chair reminded all governors to consult their school email address regularly.

Action: Mr Ramlagan to contact Mr Beg regarding his email access.

2.3 The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate (and, with eight or more governors present, it remained quorate for the entire meeting).

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Register of Interests – All governors' Annual Declarations of Pecuniary and Personal Interests had been completed.

3.2 Declarations of Interest for this meeting, as being members of staff at the School, were made by Ms Davies, Ms Wills and Mr Ramlagan.

4. Minutes

4.1 Governors received the minutes of the governing body meeting held on 15 October 2019, and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting. [NB Ref. item 12.1.3, the Clerk was advised after the December meeting that Mr van Dinteren was not a member of Pay Committee, because he was already serving on the Panel for the Headteacher's Performance Review.] The Chair signed a copy of the minutes and these were retained by the school, together with the record of the decision on Alternative Methods for governors' participation.

4.2 Matters arising:

4.2.1 School to send electronically to governors, the table of the latest outcomes data – Chair to confirm receipt.

Action: School to send electronically to governors, the table of the latest outcomes data – Chair confirmed receipt on 6.12.19

4.2.2 Signed 'WSfG Code of Practice for School Governors' – scanned copies to be sent to Governor Services (GS) - GS to confirm receipt.

Action: Signed 'WSfG Code of Practice for School Governors' – scanned copies to be sent to Governor Services (GS) by School - GS to confirm receipt.

4.2.3 Ref. 14.2 (ii) Draft governing body development plan 2019/2020 to be considered at the March Full Governing Body, after the analysis of the skills audit information is received from GS.

Action: Draft governing body development plan 2019/2020 to be considered at the March FGB, after analysis of the skills audit information is received from GS.

4.2.4 Ref. 15.2 Draft of the Annual governance impact statement to be considered by the March FGB.

Action: Draft of the Annual governance impact statement to be considered by the March FGB.

4.2.5 All other action points had been completed, or were to be covered on this or future agendas.

4.3 Minutes / Notes from Committees for information (as circulated)

4.3.1 The draft Notes of the Curriculum Committee of 29 October, The draft Minutes of the Staffing Committee of 12 November, and The draft Minutes of the Finance and Premises Committee meeting of 5 November 2019, were noted respectively.

4.3.2 Matters arising from Committees

4.3.2.1 The Chair of Staffing Committee for next term is Mr van Dinteren with Mr Urrehman as Vice-Chair. The Chair of Finance and Premises Committee for next term is Ms Lewzey with Ms Hayat as Vice-Chair. The Chair and Vice-Chair for Curriculum Committee will be elected next term as the meeting was not quorate. [NB See item 5.4 below]

4.3.2.2 The schedule of residential, overseas and 'adventurous' educational visits for the year 2019/20 was endorsed by governors.

4.4 The Committees' Terms of Reference (ToR)

The Terms of Reference for Curriculum, Finance and Premises and Staffing Committees were considered and ratified by the FGB. [NB See item 5.4 below]

4.5.1 Pay Committee Terms of Reference

The Pay Committee will review its Terms of Reference at its meeting on 17 December, and these to be ratified at the next FGB.

Action: The Pay Committee's Terms of Reference to be ratified at the next FGB.

4.5.2 The Headteacher Performance Management Review Panel's Terms of Reference were ratified, subject to updating references to other documents showing the most recent version (such as that for the Governance Handbook being March 2019).

Action: Chair to update document references where appropriate.

5. Governing Body

5.1.1 The Clerk confirmed that (in accordance with the 'Instrument of Government', effective from 22 October 2014), and resulting from earlier matters (see items 2.1.2 and 2.2.2), there are currently two vacancies, one co-opted and one parent governor. No governor reaches the end of their term of office during the spring term.

5.1.2 The Chair will seek applicants for the co-opted vacancy, and the School for the parent governor, after the Christmas holiday.

Actions: The Chair to seek applicants for the co-opted vacancy, and the School to hold an election for the parent governor vacancy.

5.2 Annual Work Programme for the Governing Body 2019/2020 (circulated in advance)

The Headteacher and Chair had updated the work programme for the current year, in respect of the policy review schedule, and this was endorsed by the GB.

5.3 Publication of governor information on the school website

The Chair confirmed that, following liaison with Governor Services, the required information (being: attendance 2018/19, Declarations of Interest 2018/19; committee membership and link responsibilities) was published on the school website. The revised list of committee membership and link responsibilities, as circulated in advance, was noted – with one amendment, namely that Ms Hayat is not a member of Curriculum Committee currently. [NB see also items 2.2.2 above and 5 and 11 below.]

5.4 Review of Committees and proposal for change

5.4.1 The Chair's review report had been circulated on 29 November, and governors confirmed they had been able to study the options set out, to address the matter of committee meetings being inquorate over the past 18 months. During a discussion on the length of meetings, it was noted that governors have the responsibility to study all documents prior to the meeting, and prepare questions in advance; it is thus only necessary for the members of staff to highlight exceptional matters or those for decision. It was agreed:

- to amalgamate the Finance and Premises and the Staffing Committees, from after the Easter holiday
- to have seven governors on each Committee (when there is a full complement of governors)
- to consider re-naming both committees, to reflect their respective foci on student progress and development and on management
- to review the committee structure (and the length of meetings) each October, to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

5.4.2 It was further agreed to hold a planning meeting in the Spring term, to take forward this recommendation. Invitees to include the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher, the School Business Manager, the Chairs of Committees, and – as appropriate – other members of the Leadership Team.

Action: School to convene a planning meeting as early as possible in the Spring term to take forward the recommendations regarding amalgamation of Finance and Premises and Staffing Committees.

6. **Chair's Action**

The Chair explained that she had been liaising with the Leadership Team regarding responses to a number of Local Authority consultations that each had relatively short deadlines:

- A further proposal for the High Needs Block (HNB) funding for April 2020 onwards, relating to Special Education Needs & Disability provision, children with Education and Health Care plans, and funding for special schools
- The next step towards Fairer Funding/National Funding Formula
- Plans to support pupils who are in need of Alternative Provision within smaller units after the planned closure of the Hawkswood Group facility, and
- Allocation of growth funding, as the 'bulge' cohort moves into secondary education.

The Chair confirmed she will be attending the Schools' Forum on 11 December, which will receive a further report on the High Needs Block funding (prior to the recommendation being considered by the Cabinet meeting on 16 January 2020). The Chair and Leadership Team (LT) ventured that information on the options in these consultations was rather insufficient and contradictory; it was felt unlikely WSfG

would offer to host an Alternative Provision for girls (given the uncertainty about funding for the staffing, and the lack of space within the premises).

The Chair thanked the Headteacher, School Business Manager and other leadership team members for their work on all the consultation responses.

7. Headteacher's Report (circulated in advance)

7.1 The Headteacher highlighted a number of aspects of her comprehensive report for the autumn term 2019, noting that some of the categories of information had been amended in the light of the new (national) Ofsted priorities on the Quality of Education (and that the use of 'Teams' in Office 365 enables smoother Leadership Team contributions from their specific responsibilities). The ongoing popularity of the school is illustrated by the number of first preference applicants and that there are still 112 children on the waiting list for the current Year 7. The Teaching School support continues to be offered to local schools, part of WSfG's commitment to support teachers across Waltham Forest. The Headteacher was gratified to report that the school she had been supporting in South London had been awarded Good in all areas in its recent Ofsted report and had moved away from Requires Improvement. She was pleased to say (for the first time) that to date there have been no Fixed Term Exclusions this term.

7.2 In response to governor questions, the school clarified:

- The three students who had joined Year 10 since the start of term came from: the family's move from north of England, from a local school (by parental choice), and from a decision of the Fair Access Panel
- The (single) Ofsted action on the use of questioning is being taken forward through the whole staff Continuous Professional Development (CPD) session planned for February, as part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- The Progress 8 measure predictions for the current Year 11 may be adjusted at the end of term, after the mock GCSE exam results are in
- The sub-group of High Prior Attainment Pupil Premium students may have made less progress than others, due to a tendency to some finding the adjustment from the Primary School context difficult, being more likely to be disengaged from education under the stresses of adolescence, and more likely to have low parental support, despite interventions made by the School
- Some subjects find it harder than others to support students with Special Educational Needs due to the new curriculum content
- Reassurance had been received from the Information Commissioner's Office regarding the possible Breach under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), namely that the copyright of the school's photos remains with the school even if uploaded onto a hosting platform.

7.3 Governors noted variously:

- the support Mr Jalil had provided to another school in the appointment of a School Business Manager
- the enthusiasm and commitment of some of the school leader visitors from Saudi Arabia; at least one of whom has been accepted on a Masters course in the UK
- the appointment of a maternity-cover KS4 Learning Mentor who has experience in counselling and supporting students living with mental health issues, and
- the interesting exhibitions of work of talented members of the Art Department (including the co-opted governor, Ms Wills).

- 7.4 The Headteacher explained that Mr van Dinteren has agreed to address the Presentation Evening on 5 December; she invited other governors to join them in advance of that evening, and / or to attend the Christmas Concert on 12 December.
- 7.5 The GB thanked Ms Davies and her team for their presentations.

8. Health and Safety Annual Report 2018/19 (circulated in advance)

- 8.1 The Business Manager introduced the H&S Annual Report, advising that the template used is the same as previous years, and highlighted that the high number of accidents / incidents of two years ago has mercifully not been repeated subsequently. In response to a governor question, he confirmed that the review of chemicals stored within the Science area is in progress. As with the Annual Report 2017/18, governors agreed to add to section 24 that there is a link governor for Health and Safety, who attends termly walk-rounds. With this revision, the Annual Health and Safety Report was endorsed by the Governing Body and signed by the Chair and the Headteacher.

9. Draft Annual Impact of Governance Statement for the Governing Body 2018/19

See 4.2.4 above.

10. Skills Audit Update

See 4.2.3 above.

11. Link Governor report

- 11.1 The Chair asked for a volunteer to be Safeguarding link governor (following Ms Sanderson's resignation), and Mr van Dinteren agreed. (He did not feel the need to relinquish other responsibilities in order to carry out these termly visits.) The Chair suggested that she conducts a Single Central Record monitoring visit early next term jointly with Mr van Dinteren. Mr van Dinteren also to arrange his first link governor visit with Ms Snowsill and Ms Pratt.
- 11.2 The signed acknowledgement slips, confirming that a governor has read the relevant parts of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019)' guidance, had all been received.

Action: Chair and Mr van Dinteren to liaise on the Safeguarding link role and on the Single Central Record monitoring and link governor visits.

12. Financial documentation (all items circulated in advance)

Finance items remitted by Finance Committee:

12.1 Model Financial Regulations and Standing Orders

The Business Manager reported that the bank has proposed an arbitrary limit (of one pound sterling) on cheques signed by himself and the Finance Manager, in response to governors' request to maintain the strict division of responsibilities. The GB approved and adopted the Model Financial Regulations, which were signed by the Chair and the Headteacher.

12.2 Scheme of Delegation (in accordance with 2.3 of Financial Regulations)

The Scheme of Delegation (as signed by the Chair of Finance and the Headteacher) was noted. The Chair and the Business Manager are making further enquiries regarding the new 'Delegation Decision Planner', referred to by Governor Services on the agenda; it may be that this requirement is already met within WSfG by the Committee's Terms of Reference, but if not, it will need to be considered by each committee next term.

Action: CoG to make further enquiries regarding the new 'Delegation Decision Planner and liaise with SBM.

12.3 Asset Register Assurance Certificate

The Asset Register Assurance Certificate was endorsed by the GB and signed by the Chair and the Headteacher.

12.4 Three-year Budget Plan Update 2019 to 2022

The Three-year Budget Plan Update, employing mid-point assumptions as necessary for decisions yet to be taken by Schools' Forum, was endorsed by the GB, and signed by the Chair and the Headteacher.

13 School policies / items (all items circulated in advance)

Governors appreciated receiving the summary of changes to policies compiled by the School Business Manager.

Safeguarding Policy (LA version 2.0)

The Safeguarding Policy was adopted by the GB.

The following policies were remitted by the Finance Committee for ratification:

13.1 Health and Safety Policy (LA version 2.1)

The Health and Safety Policy was adopted by the GB

13.2 School's Lettings Policy (version 3.1)

The Lettings Policy was approved by the GB.

13.3 Pay Policy and Procedure (LA version 5.1)

The Pay Policy and Procedure was adopted by the GB.

The following policies were remitted by the Staffing Committee for ratification

13.4 Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff (to be an Appendix to the revised LA Disciplinary Policy, when received)

The Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff was endorsed by the GB.

13.5 Disclosure and Barring Policy and Guidance (LA version 1.1)

The Disclosure and Barring Policy and Guidance was adopted by the GB.

13.6 Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure (LA version 1.1)

The Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure was adopted by the GB.

13.7 Draft Initial Teacher Training & Newly Qualified Teacher Policy and Practice

The GB agreed to consider this policy after the Christmas holiday, given the substantial changes coming on stream for Newly Qualified Teachers.

13.8 Flexible Working Guidance (LA version 1.1)

The GB adopted the Flexible Working Guidance, noting the importance of flexibility in the retention of staff.

13.9 Report to Parents - Pupil Premium Grant 2018/19

The Deputy Headteacher, Ms Snowsill, presented the report on the allocation of the Pupil Premium Grant in the last academic year and the plans for its use in the current year. She set out the intention to audit at an earlier stage the disadvantages faced by students and explore how targeted help (including raising aspirations and strengthening parental engagement) may improve outcomes for that group. The Pupil Premium Grant report was endorsed by the GB (with the correction of one typo)

and will be published on the school's website. Ms Snowsill was thanked for her thoughtful analysis.

13.10 Year 7 Numeracy and Literacy Catch-Up Premium Report 2018/19 (

Ms Snowsill presented the Year 7 Numeracy and Literacy Catch-Up Report 2018/19, a government commitment in 2013 to provide additional support for children who had not achieved level 4 in reading and / or mathematics at Key Stage 2 (the £11,000 grant having been fixed since 2015/16). She considered a range of tools to assess which strategies have a greater impact on progress. The Year 7 Numeracy and Literacy Catch-Up Premium Report 2018/19 was endorsed by the GB, and will be published on the school's website.

13.11 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Full Audit Report from LBWF and the school's Action Plan 2019/20

The Business Manager presented the Local Authority GDPR Audit Report from their Audit (on 16 May 2019), noting that only one area was deemed to be high risk, namely the use of unencrypted USB sticks to transfer personally identifiable information. In the Action Plan, these USB sticks will be replaced by the use of cloud technology from January 2020, and medium risk areas will be addressed over the next two terms. (The school has yet to receive a Subject Access Request under the Data Protection Act 2018 but is prepared for any such request.) The GDPR Full Audit Report was noted and the school's Action Plan 2019/20 was endorsed.

14 Staff Performance Management Reviews

The Headteacher reported that all members of staff (except one) had completed the 2018/19 Performance Management cycle, and their documents were ready for Pay Committee the week after next.

15. Date and agenda items for the next meetings

Dates of next meetings: 14 January (Pay); 21 January (Curriculum);
25 February (Staffing);

10 March (Finance and Premises), and the Full GB on 24 March 2020.

The Pay Committee this term will be on Tuesday 17 December.

Governors' Day is on Thursday 18 June 2020, and all governors are expected to attend as far as possible.

Dates for Committees in the summer term will be confirmed as soon as available.

Action: School to issue to governors (and the Clerk) as soon as possible the dates for Committees in the summer term.

16. Any Other Business

16.1 There were no confidential items.

16.2 The Headteacher and Chair set out orally the cost of sending out hard copies of documents for this meeting (including printing at £180, £40 for postage and £10 for envelopes). They summarised options for reducing these costs as against documents being available in electronic form only. Governors were supportive of the proposal for electronic circulation of agendas and reports becoming the norm; the Headteacher, Chair (and Clerk) indicated they would wish to continue to receive paper copies regularly, and any governor could exceptionally request a paper copy (it was not the intention that governors should print out documents at home). Governors agreed the school would need to be able to set up laptops (for governors who required them) in advance of committee and full governing body meetings. Mr

Ramlagan suggested governors be asked on each occasion to confirm receipt to the school of the email with agenda documents attached.

Action: School to formulate proposal for setting up laptops (for governors who required them) in the meeting rooms, and the safe storage after the meetings.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

Chair: (print)

..... (sign)

Date:

Chair of Governors Initials:
