

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
WALTHAMSTOW SCHOOL FOR GIRLS FULL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON TUESDAY 5 JULY 2022 AT 6.30 PM (Virtual)**

Present: Gillian Barker (Chair) Co-opted Governor

Headteacher
Helen Marriott

Staff governor
Ronnie Simpson

Parent governors
Mari Paz Balibrea
Peter Saunders
Rukaiya Moola
Raja Khan
Edyta Ballantyne

Co-opted governors
Alexandra Wills
Lucy Hutchinson
Andrea Corbett
Hannah Cheston

Also present: Romi Jalil, School Business Manager
Nick O'Brien, Deputy Headteacher
Kristine Pratt, Assistant Headteacher
Dave Shackson, Deputy Headteacher
Marianna Philippou, Deputy Headteacher
Romi Jalil, SBM

Clerk to the Governors: Jacky Potts

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Date
Minute 14.1 14.5.22	To look at historical option choices and present this to the Curriculum Committee in September 2022.	NBR	Autumn Term
Minute 14.2 14.5.22	To report back to Curriculum Committee on the outcomes from Yr9 option choices relating to triple science.	NBR	Autumn Term
3.	To note the resignation of Alexandra Wills from September.	Governor Services	1 Sept 2022
4.4	Minutes of Resources Committee 21 June deferred to next meeting.	Governor Services	11 October 22
6.	To review the draft for the Governance section for inclusion in the SEF with the Headteacher and re-present to governors.	GBA	Autumn Term

11.2	PSA to circulate his notes from Student Leadership visit	PSA	Immediate
13.1	Governors agreed the guidance on attendance on the website should be amended to reflect the attendance policy. ACTION: HMA AGREED: Governors APPROVED the policy subject to the inclusion of a section on punctuality.	HMA	Immediate
13.3	Panel of governors to be convened to meet with the Director of the TSH	PSA/HCH/MPB/GBA	Autumn Term
13.6; 13.7; 13.8; 13.10; 13.11; 13.12	Governors RATIFIED the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Policy • Staff Wellbeing Policy • Accessibility Plan • Assessment and Feedback Policy • Exams Policy • Early Careers Teachers Policy School website to be updated as appropriate	HMA	Autumn Term
13.13	Educational Visits Policy to be amended and presented to Curriculum Committee	HMA	Autumn Term
14.1	Schedule of Governing Body meeting dates for academic year 2022-23 to be amended and recirculated to governors for confirmation.	GBA	Immediate
	DATE OF NEXT MEETING FGB Tuesday 11th October 2022, 6.30pm	Governor Services	To note

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting,
- 1.2 Apologies were received and accepted from Aktar Beg and Sami Urrehman. Apologies for Rizwaan Malik were accepted following the meeting, as his apology had been received in advance by the Chair and forgotten by mistake.
- 1.3 The Clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate with eleven governors and the Headteacher present.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 The Clerk confirmed that all pecuniary interests had been completed.
- 2.2 Helen Marriott, Alexandra Wills and Ronnie Simpson declared interests as members of staff.

3. GOVERNING BODY

- 3.1 The Clerk confirmed there were currently no vacancies.
- 3.2 The Clerk confirmed that Gillian Barker's term was due to expire on the 21 October 2022 and Aktar Beg's on the 3 September 2022.
- 3.3 Governors noted that AWS was stepping down as a Co-opted Governor from 1 September 2022, due to her recent appointment to Head of ADT Faculty. Governors thanked her for giving up her free time and for her commitment to the governing body, particularly as part of the panel to recruit a new headteacher and other senior appointments.
ACTION: Governor Services to note the resignation of Alexandra Wills.

4. MINUTES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

4.1 Governors received the minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 17 May 2022 and agreed these as an accurate record. These will be signed by the Chair on GovernorHub.

4.2 Matters arising

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Date
3.3	Governor Services to note the election of Andrea Corbett as a Co-opted Governor.	Governor Services	Completed
5.	To provide the amended Financial Risk Register to Governor Services for uploading on GovernorHub	PS	Actioned. Clerk to confirm where the document has been uploaded on GovernorHub.
10.2	<u>Searching Students Policy</u> – Amendments to be made in light of governor comments. Points 10.2.4, 10.2.5 and 10.2.6	HMA	Completed
14.1	To look at historical option choices and present this to the Curriculum Committee in autumn term 2022.	NBR	Ongoing. Autumn term 2022
14.2	To report back to Curriculum Committee on the outcomes from Yr9 option choices relating to triple science.	NBR	Ongoing. Autumn term 2022

4.3 Minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting held on 7 June 2022

Governors noted the Minutes of the meeting.

4.4 Minutes of Resources Committee meeting held on 21 June 2022

Governors noted that the draft minutes had not yet been finalised, these would be considered at the next FGB meeting in October.

ACTION: Deferred to next FGB meeting

5. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

5.1 Governors had received the report in advance which was available on GovernorHub. HMA highlighted the following points:

- Attendance – Whole school 92.3% which is higher than the previous year and above national, but falls below target of 95%.
- Yr11 outcomes from exams – difficult to predict this year due to uncertainty around grade boundaries.
- Exclusions – Increase in exclusions from 2021. HMA highlighted the reasons for exclusions in each year group. The school are working to support students and their families, some of whom have experienced trauma.
- Bullying – which is now referred to as harmful and abusive behaviour. One incident in the Spring Term. Since the report was written, two further students were involved in a physical assault incident.

Q. Difficult year groups/serious incidents, has that got worse due to lockdown?

A. It was considered that the lack of socialisation during lockdown, and then coming back to school and finding social situations difficult to handle, could be considered a factor. HMA highlighted plans that will be put in place next year for individual students through intervention meetings, including Pastoral Support Plans, use of the Wellbeing Hub and learning mentors

The number of students being monitored on Safeguard also appeared higher than previously and shows the extent of issues that the school are dealing with.

Governors were informed about Operation Encompass which alerts schools if a domestic abuse incident is reported to the LA or the police are involved. This acts as an early warning system, enabling schools to monitor children who have witnessed such events at home.

6. UPDATE ON SELF EVALUATION FORM (SEF)

Governors were in receipt of the draft SEF for leadership and management which is a working document. HMA explained the evidence the school currently has which relates to the Ofsted Outstanding criteria, as well as areas for improvement. Governors were appraised of the grade descriptors for Leadership and Management.

The Chair agreed to review the draft governance section, and work with the Headteacher on the content. This will be presented to governors in due course.

ACTION: GBA

7. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

7.1 HMA presented the SIP Progress Review – June 2022. She took governors through the objectives for Year 1 of the 3-year Strategic Improvement Plan and what actions still need to be focused on, such as the S11 survey which still needs to be analysed. Governors noted the actions that had been completed or partially completed, and were already aware or were informed about the reasons for some actions having been delayed.

7.2 HMA clarified what the Pupil Passport is and the purpose of the ASDAN course.

7.3 SIP Introduction and 3 Year Plan 2021 to 2024

Following the recent review and consultations with stakeholder groups this term, the 2022-23 SIP is being updated with the agreed changes. Work is still ongoing regarding the school vision which it is anticipated will have been refined by Christmas 2022.

HMA explained that the SLT have identified ‘golden threads’ which run throughout the SIP: wellbeing; safeguarding; developing expertise to “bring out the gift” in every member of the school community; consistency (and in-school variation); SEND.

Priorities:

- Staff and student wellbeing
- Leadership Development
- Pedagogy for Achievement and Progress
- Curriculum
- Community Engagement

Governors noted that the work carried out on Governors Day had been fed into the SIP.

8. SAFEGUARDING

MPB (Safeguarding Governor) attended the LBWF Safeguarding Forum, which concentrated in the main on Child Q. She briefed governors on the main points found from the review and investigation. Recommendations highlighted were:

- Reviewing and revising searching and screening policies
- Stronger reference to record keeping and engaging parents and carers as part of safeguarding practice
- Raising awareness amongst staff
- Staff wellbeing and recognition of the extra burden and stress that teachers had been under in the context of Covid
- External support services available from LADO
- Impact on governors when sitting on complaints and review panels and support required for individuals

It was recognised that the school had already actioned the main recommendations.

9. REVIEW OF ASSET REGISTER AND ASSET DISPOSALS (SFVS)

The Link Governor (PSA) attended school on 4 May 2022 to undertake a review. He appraised governors of what items were covered during his visit with the SBM and Finance Manager. Going forward PS will arrange termly visits.

10. CHAIR'S ACTION

10.1 No items to report

11. LINK GOVERNOR VISITS

11.1 GBA appraised governors on her recent visit to the Performing Arts Faculty and key areas of discussion covered. Report available on GovernorHub.

11.2 PSA to share his notes from Student Leadership visit with HCA and EBA on Governors Day so they can agree a final version. SUR to collate visit notes from Equalities visit with RSL.

ACTION: PSA and SUR

12. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

12.1 Report from Governors' Briefing had been uploaded to GovernorHub for governors' attention.

12.2 Summary and feedback from Governors Day 14 June 2022

Report available on GovernorHub for those governors who were unable to attend. Twelve governors were able to attend. This was the first since 2019 and a valued opportunity for governors to spend a day in school together looking in depth at various aspects of school performance and development. See report for further details.

13. SCHOOL POLICIES AND ITEMS

13.1 Attendance Policy and actions completed from complaint recommendations

HMA presented the policy and briefed governors of the key points highlighted in yellow, along with actions completed regarding the recommendations from the recent parental complaint investigated by the Chair, including making it clearer to parents in all communications what the processes are and the status of letters sent to parents/carers.

Governors commented as follows:

- The policy should include the impact of the loss in learning and on exam results

- Typos in 4.5 to be corrected
- Acronyms to be spelt out fully the first time they are mentioned
- References to the FGB in sections 7 and 8: 'Body' not 'Board'
- Governors requested that punctuality be included

Q.

Where will punctuality feature?

A. *Framework has been taken from The Key, punctuality is not included in this particular policy. We have a punctuality strategy but not a policy. Although it is covered briefly in section 4.*

Governors agreed the guidance on attendance on the website should be amended to reflect the attendance policy.

ACTION: HMA

AGREED: Governors **APPROVED** the policy subject to the inclusion of a section on punctuality.

13.2 ATTENDANCE

Governors received a presentation from Kristine Pratt, who highlighted the following:

- 360° Attendance View
- Consistently above national average
- Students starting to take holidays, as of now ie. before the end of term
- Bar chart shows rates of persistent absentees across each year group. Apart from Yr11, remaining year groups are considerably better than national average.
- Yr11 went on study leave earlier than normal, which is authorised absence, but this is still an absence and figures are therefore skewed
- Breakdown of children by groups
- SEND Yr10, SEND Yr11 and Yr11 non-FSM are below national average
- Attendance YTD – 92% for whole school
- Yr9 Covid testing was undertaken at the start of term
- Dip in April/May relates to Eid. Large number of families take extended leave over that period which has impacted all year groups. Only one day is officially recognised by the LBWF
- Yrs10 and 11 – number of children who have not been able to return who have been awaiting placements at Alternative Provisions or Eating Disorder Clinic and school refusers with complex issues (9 students). This is a higher number than in previous years.
- Aspire Attendance Tracker Report which outlined authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Unauthorised absence holiday – the increases before and after main school holidays was noted and is concerning. There were 50 students taking unauthorised holiday of more than 3 days across 2021/22, which accounts for the large number of absences.
- Concerns around medical appointments being taken in school time
- Governors were concerned that the school is not being informed when students were being taken on holiday, which is a safeguarding issue. The school spends time tracking and locating those students who have not returned. Fines are not high enough to deter parents however.
- Annual comparisons – Covid recovery and beyond. The school is working to ensure that attendance figures are higher in the next academic year than in 2021 – 22 and will report back on this to governors in the autumn term.

- Issues to consider:
 - Parents are being cautious about sending students into school with minor ailments
 - Address the attitude that work can be carried out on Teams as a matter of course when this is not the case
 - Uncertainty around Covid as figures are rising again
 - Managing a lot of students with anxiety issues, including Covid anxiety
 - LA fine is £60 per child per parent which is not a deterrent and is often factored into the cost of the holiday taken in term time.
- Strategies for 2022/23 attendance improvement

Q. *Why are our figures worse than other schools in comparison for absences due to holidays?*

A. *It is accepted that we have more fluctuation than the national average, due to families who have extended families abroad they wish to visit. We make it clear that holidays in term time are not acceptable, but when a child disappears there is little we can do. Our message has to be stronger than it is normally, with the threat of prosecution. It is important that we make this a priority. To discourage longer absences, the LA is proposing that if a student is absent for four weeks or more they will be automatically off-rolled and will have to reapply for their school place on their return. If this is widely publicised, it is hoped this will have a positive impact.*

Governors noted the impact of Persistent Absence on a child's education where a student does not return to school until 2-3 weeks after the start of term.

Q. *Do we get access to attendance information from feeder primaries?*

A. *We get information where they have been referred to the EWO. Absenteeism would be looked at straightaway. Primaries are often reluctant to fine parents.*

Q. *Are we benchmarking with other schools to share best practice and see what their strategies are?*

A. *We benchmark against other schools, both using data, such as FFT, as well as by sharing strategies across the borough and through Reconnect London.*

Governors thanked KPR for her presentation.

13.3 Update on Teaching School Hub

NBR presented to governors and highlighted the following key areas:

- All KPIs have been met or exceeded this year and feedback has been good
- ITT providers: from September 2024 they need to apply to be designated. Much more robust framework. NELTSH not applying to become an ITT provider
- Self-evaluation has been completed
- Year 2 Strategic Plan: focus on Quality First Provision
- Governors will be appraised of budget planning and will receive a narrative of budget figures and a summary of Year 1 – by end September 2022
- Appropriate Body update – TSH to offer AB services for their entire region by September 2023. This is currently out to consultation and the school has provided a response
- Think piece: SLEs – Developing School Improvement across the TSH. Under consideration as TSH as well-placed to deliver such a service.

Q. *Will we get extra money to become an Appropriate Body? Governors were concerned about the staffing implications to carry out this function.*

A. *Every school that has an ECT currently has to pay their LA so schools will need to pay the Teaching School Hub for our Appropriate Body services*

Q. *What is the nature of the extra work?*

A. *Appropriate Bodies are responsible for confirming a teacher has consistently met the Teachers' Standards. They may need to observe, consider reports of mentors and induction tutors and apply consistency across schools. We have the expertise to do this.*

NBR updated governors on how mentors and ECTs are being surveyed and asked for feedback to allow the programme to be evaluated across the three Hub areas

The Chair reminded governors that in the NELTSH Handbook of Governance it mentions that a small panel of governors would meet annually with the Director in the Autumn Term to review the previous year's performance as part of the Governing Body's responsibility for oversight. PSA/HCH/MPB agreed to form the panel, along with GBA.

AGREED: PSA/HCH/MPB/GBA. Panel to meet in autumn term with TSH Director

13.4 Staffing and Recruitment Report

This had previously been presented to Resources Committee and was noted by the FGB.

Q. *Are we fully staffed for September?*

A. *Yes for September. There are some support staff vacancies to be filled, but these will not impact teaching and learning.*

13.5 School Budget KPI Summary

Governors noted that the LA want governors to be fully aware of schools' budgets and, in particular, the following key areas:

- Staffing costs
- Total staff costs to Section 251
- Total Staff Costs to Total Income
- Pupil numbers
- Pupil Teacher Ratio
- Average Teacher Cost
- Proportion of budget spent on the Leadership Team
- Spend per pupil for non-pay expenditure

13.6 H&S Policy

AGREED: Governors RATIFIED the H&S Policy

13.7 Staff Wellbeing Policy

AGREED: Governors RATIFIED the Staff Wellbeing Policy

13.8 Accessibility Plan

AGREED: Governors RATIFIED the Accessibility Plan

13.9 Term Dates

Governors noted the dates given by the LA. HMA led a discussion around the allocation of INSET dates for 2022/23 and possibilities for 2023/24.

13.10 Assessment and Feedback Policy

Q. Inclusion, learning disabilities and difficulties, have these been discussed in school?

A. We need to be consistent in the language we use. Disabilities may reflect an EHCP, but difficulties may not be linked to any assessment or diagnosis. One phrase might be too broad and we need to differentiate.

AGREED: Governors **RATIFIED** the Assessment and Feedback Policy

13.11 Exams Policy

Governors noted that the policy remains unchanged, but just reflects the updates.

AGREED: Governors **RATIFIED** the Exams Policy

13.12 ECT Policy

The policy had been amended and the amendments were highlighted and noted at the Curriculum Committee.

AGREED: Governors **RATIFIED** the ECT Policy

13.13 Educational Visits Policy

Governors queried whether the EHIC can still be used. This needs to be looked at and the policy amended to reflect the new arrangements following Brexit.

AGREED: To be amended and presented to Curriculum Committee in the Autumn Term.

14. **DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR**

14.1 Schedule of Proposed Governing Body Meeting dates for academic year 2022/23.

Governors agreed 6 December 2022 for FGB and 13 December 2022 for Pay Committee. The Schedule of Dates to be amended and recirculated to governors for confirmation.

ACTION: GBA

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

15.1 Governors noted that a meeting will be arranged in the autumn term with Vivienne Porritt (Chair of TSH Strategic Board), HMA and GBA to explore options regarding the Government's latest plans for academisation of all schools. Governors will be kept informed. No further dates have been published by the government, despite further guidance being circulated.

15.2 MPB has been awarded a fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Study in Nantes, France. Having consulted Governor Services, governors agreed that she will be allowed to attend meetings remotely for the coming academic year.

15.3 Confidential item

Staff governors left the meeting at 9.30pm – AWI; MPH, NBR

Meeting finished at 9.50pm