

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WALTHAMSTOW SCHOOL FOR GIRLS SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON TUESDAY 11TH JULY
AT 6:30 PM
AT THE SCHOOL AND VIA TEAMS**

Present:

Gillian Barker, GBA (Chair)	Co-opted Governor
Andrea Corbett, ACO	Co-opted Governors
Lucy Hutchinson, LHU	
Hannah Cheston, HCH (Via Teams)	
Michael Lerpiniere, MLE (joined at 6:40pm)	
 Helen Marriott, HMA	 Headteacher
 Aktar Beg, ABE	 Local Authority Governor
 Edyta Ballantyne, EBA	 Parent Governors
Rukaiya Moola, RMO	

Clerk to the Governors: Kathryn Protsiv

Also present:

Nick O'Brien, NBR	Deputy Headteacher
David Shackson, DSH	Assistant Headteacher
Romi Jalil, RJA	Business Manager

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
3.2	To record MLE as a co-opted governor	Governor Services	Immediate
13	Review of Asset Register and asset disposals, Autumn FGB agenda	Governor Services	Next FGB
15.1	To number policies and other school items on the agenda for future meetings	WSfG/ Governor Services	Next meeting
15.5	NBR to upload Assessment Policy, final copy	NBR	Immediate
15.8	GBA to raise a concern with the LA regarding the language of the Maternity Policy	GBA	Two weeks
15	Policies ratified this meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Policy • Home Learning Policy • Parent and Carer Code of Conduct • LA Capability Policy • LA Recruitment Policy • LA Maternity Policy and Procedures 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA Reorganisation Policy • LA Redeployment Policy • Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff • Asset Management Policy 		
	<p>Agreed by the Governing Body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND Information Report • Data Sharing Agreement between LBWF and WF Schools • School Term Dates Consultation 2024/5 and 2025/26 		
16.3	Governor Diversity Data, to be reconsidered as an agenda item when further guidance is published	All/ GS	
	Date of next meeting: Tuesday 10 th October FGB	All /GS	Immediate

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Sami Urrehman, Pete Saunders and Mari Paz Balibrea. It was noted that Tatiana Cassango may not have received notification of the date as a newly appointed governor. If this is the case, then apologies will be accepted.
- 1.3 The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 8 governors present (9 governors following the appointment of MLE at 6:40pm. See 3.2.).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 Receipt of Pecuniary Interests was confirmed on GovernorHub.
- 2.2 There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting.

3. GOVERNING BODY

- 3.1 The Governing Body currently has two vacancies: a parent and a co-opted governor. A co-opted governor application is to be considered at this meeting.
- 3.2 GBA shared a statement from MLE's application to join the Governing Body as a co-opted governor. It was unanimously agreed to accept this application.
Action: To appoint MLE as a co-opted governor

6:40pm, MLE joined the meeting

4. MINUTES

- 4.1 The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 16 May 2023 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 4.2 There were no matters arising
- 4.3 The minutes of the Curriculum Committee meeting held on 13 June 2023 were noted by the GB, with a correction to be addressed at the next committee meeting.
- 4.4 The draft minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 27 June 2023 were noted. Some minor corrections/additions had been made and RJA agreed to resolve one query GBA had, after which the final draft would be returned to Governor Services.
- 4.5 There were no matters arising, apart from policies to be ratified at this meeting.

5. SAFEGUARDING LINK GOVERNOR REPORT

- 5.1 Governors received the visit report from the Safeguarding Link Governor.
- 5.2 EBA went through the key discussion points and highlights within the report, noting the report followed the school's independent safeguarding review which was very favourable and noted many areas of strength.
- 5.3 Recommendations from the external review, conducted in May:
 - Peer-on-peer reporting - some students fear losing friendships if reporting concerns.
 - Supervision for core safeguarding staff - this is a new expectation.
 - Statement regarding searches - this relates to a statement for police searching of students. It is a recommendation arising from the Child Q report.
 - Parental Responsibility statement to be uploaded on the school website.

Q: What is the thinking behind the PR statement recommendation?

A: It makes the school's position clear regarding parental responsibility. For example, a parent with PR may collect their child from school. The school cannot be involved in a domestic disagreement regarding collection arrangements.

6. LINK GOVERNOR VISITS FROM GOVERNORS' DAY

- 6.1 Governors received the visit report from the H&S Link Governor.
 - 6.1.1 GBA outlined the key discussion points
 - Asbestos
 - Fire Safety risk assessments
 - Water quality/safety.
 - 6.1.2 RJA noted the need to upgrade the fire alarm system, which will be funded by the LA. Every room now requires a detector to meet the Level 4 standard.
 - 6.1.3 The school had 33 portable heaters, which the LA now deems a potential fire risk, so schools have been told to remove them. RJA and DSH will be exploring if the LA can provide funding for oil-filled alternatives where needed.
 - 6.1.4 The GB requires a new H&S governor from Autumn 2023, which is a statutory requirement. GBA is covering the role until then.
- 6.2 Governors received the visit report from the Disadvantaged Pupils Link Governor.
 - 6.2.1 LHU noted the key points from the report, notably the new PP strategy plan. The new plan is more strategic and has clear metrics to measure impact.
 - 6.2.2 GBA thanked LHU for her questions on Governors' Day, stating they were very helpful.
- 6.3 Governors received the visit report from the Student Leadership Link Governor.
 - 6.3.1 RMO shared the key highlights with the GB, stating it was a good visit.
 - 6.3.2 RMO raised a question during her visit regarding the diversity of student ambassadors at the presentation. Ms Warren reported some girls had been too shy to attend the presentation, or reluctant to do so without friends. The girls not attending represented a greater diversity among student ambassadors. This will be addressed in the future.
- 6.4 Governors received the visit report from the Careers Link Governor.
 - 6.4.1 HCH explained Ms Philippou's use of the Gatsby Compass Tool to score the 8 Gatsby benchmarks. Currently the school is doing well when compared to other schools.
 - 6.4.2 It was confirmed by HMA that 100% of students attended their allocated work experience placement, as stated in the report.
 - 6.4.3 The careers adviser is moving out of area; a new provider is being sought.
 - 6.4.4 Options are being explored for partnerships with local universities for students wishing to stay at home or study part-time.

- 6.4.5 Unifrog logins have been given to students, parents and teachers. This is to raise awareness and understanding of choices for college, university and apprenticeships.

7. GOVERNORS' DAY REPORT

GBA noted most of those present at the meeting attended the Governors' Day held on 20 June 2023 and confirmed that others had read the report. GBA invited questions and requested the school to upload all the papers/presentations from the day to GovernorHub, so that all governors could access them. Governors who attended agreed that it had been a really useful day which had enabled them to increase the breadth and depth of their knowledge of WSfG. GBA asked all to note the date of the 2024 Governors' Day in their diaries.

8. TEACHING SCHOOL HUB (TSH) REVIEW PANEL

- 8.1 GBA reported on the governor panel's TSH review meeting with NBR, which focused on finances. GBA noted that while the TSH has a statutory responsibility to report to the DfE, there is no guidance on how TSHs should structure, plan or monitor their activities and therefore NBR had needed to set these up from scratch. A copy of NBR's detailed report to the governors' TSH panel was included for information.
- 8.2 GBA and HMA noted NBR's hard work and the significant time needed to run the TSH alongside his DHT role, noting that an additional DHT is starting September.
- 8.3 HCH noted the quality of the tracking system and the work on finances by NBR. HMA echoed this and thanked NBR for his diligence.
- 8.4 HCH noted the extensive monitoring systems required to follow study breaks or those leaving the course. GBA confirmed that this was a significant admin task and more admin support for NBR is planned or next year.
- 8.5 GBA thanked NBR on behalf of governors for his significant contribution to making the TSH a success.

9. CHAIR'S ACTION

None.

10. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- 10.1 The GB received the HT's report.
- 10.2 Admissions: HMA shared the reasons for the PAN not being full in Years 9 and 11 with the GB.
- 10.3 Attendance: HMA noted that recent attendance figures were impacted by Eid falling in term time - a number of students took two days off. The school is planning to recruit a full-time Attendance Officer to support attendance, as JKI's role has expanded well beyond this and there is a need for a full-time AO. There has been some increase in students taking holidays in term time. There appears to be more confidence in travel again post COVID. ACO echoed that her other school also was seeing this trend and speculated the cost of living also impacted parental decisions. GBA noted that a fine may be less than travel cost increases in the summer holidays.

Q: Are many pupils taking both Eids off? Would it be useful to see attendance figures also without Eid?

A: Yes, this could be useful as a narrative to explain the drop in attendance. Eid next year falls in the Easter holidays.

- 10.4 Quality of Education: Faculty reviews have continued; work is being done to ensure feedback is incorporated into Area SIPs.
- 10.5 Suspensions and permanent exclusions: There were no permanent exclusions. HMA went through suspensions with the GB.

Q: Are suspensions linked to re-integration difficulties following COVID?

A: Many suspensions are triggered by external events, with some pupils coming from complex backgrounds.

- 10.6 Bullying: HMA informed the GB of events recorded since September and steps taken to address these with students and their parents/carers.
- 10.7 Data: DSH shared the Go 4 Schools overview with the GB, noting the school was currently in the middle of collating the latest data. DSH outlined the use of colour codes on the overview for governors.
- 10.8 DSH outlined the need for greater consistency between subjects as to what 'being on track' means in each year group. Work is being done with faculties to develop a Flight Path for each subject, detailing what skills would need to be demonstrated as part of a trajectory.
- 10.9 DSH stated that currently, comparative data is more useful when looked at within a subject. He highlighted RS as an example. Whilst in each group the numbers on track look low, it is actually a high-performing subject for the school at GCSE.
- 10.11 For Year 10, DSH noted the grey bar for English. This is because they are still completing assessments and uploading data.
- 10.12 DSH noted that end of Year 11 target grades could be dispiriting for Y10s starting their GCSE courses. End of Year 10 target grades are being considered. EBA noted that anecdotally she heard this was already happening verbally in feedback following the mock exams. DSH agreed, but noted it would be good to be more explicit.
- 10.13 NBR noted the scale of the work needed to create Flight Paths and the value of them for all stakeholders.
- 10.14 DSH noted the A8 of 60.4 would in previous years have resulted in the school's best P8 ever. However, post COVID assessment the P8 is not directly comparable this year. GBA has shared a document on GovernorHub from OFQUAL regarding GCSE grading this summer for governors to read in advance of the autumn term results analysis.

DSH left the meeting at 7:35pm.

11. UPDATE ON SELF-EVALUATION FORM (SEF)

HMA noted governors had looked at the SEF in detail on Governors' Day, which governors' agreed had been a very useful exercise. GBA enquired if governor involvement in safeguarding should be added in on page one. HMA noted this was the SEF summary and that this detail was included in the main SEF.

12. SAFEGUARDING

- 12.1 The governors received the Safeguarding report from the 3rd May review conducted by a very experienced DSL from another London school. This was a robust and useful process. The SCR and Safer Recruitment procedures were found to be strengths and students reported feeling very safe at school. The recommendations are in agenda item 5.3 of this meeting's minutes.

Q: Is it surprising to have a recommendation regarding mental health trained staff?

A: This recommendation is about having staff trained in Mental Health first aid, for example ensuring there are staff well-equipped to make pupils feel safe in the event of a mental health crisis. It will be part of the training for the wider safeguarding and pastoral teams next year.

13. REVIEW OF ASSET REGISTER AND ASSET DISPOSALS

This is to be moved to the Autumn Term FGB Agenda.

Action: Review of Asset Register and asset disposals - Autumn FGB agenda.

14. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

- 14.1 The governors received the Draft Development Plan.
- 14.2 GBA went through the six areas of the plan. GBA noted where individual governors could find training on GovernorHub or via the NGA Learning Link. New Governors were expected to attend the Governor Accreditation Programme at level one, modules 1,2 and 3. Level 2, modules 4,5 and 6 were also recommended and are available for all governors via Governor Services.
- 14.3 Succession planning: The GB requires a new chair next year. GBA has discussed possible solutions with Donna Miller if a new chair does not come forward. One possibility is the election of co-chairs splitting the workload, or for designated governors to be given responsibility for specific tasks. GBA offered to focus on Ofsted preparation if a co-chair comes forward to share the workload in other areas.

15 SCHOOL POLICIES AND ITEMS

- 15.1 GBA requested that in future policies and other school items are numbered within the agenda to enable them to be easily trackable in the document list.
Action: To number policies and other school items on agenda in future meetings.
- 15.2 School SIP: Governors received the SIP progress review, June 2023. This is a review of leadership and management progress against the Three Year Plan and the wider SIP excel document. HMA went through notes in purple with governors.

Q: Does a Red Rag rating indicate that something has not yet begun?

A: Yes, or that it has not yet had the intended impact.

- 15.3 TSH update: Governors received the NELTSH Strategic and Partnership Board report June 2023. NBR noted the TSH has its own governance and a Hub Improvement plan (HIP).
The DfE has agreed that TSHs will continue until 2028, but the Hubs will be required to apply for re-accreditation. The initial tenure was until August 2024. It is not yet known what the application process will require in October 2023, but results of any bid will be given in February 2024. HMA and NBR have already held conversations about this. If this journey is to continue, then the application process window is expected to be around 6-8 weeks.

Q: Regarding cohort drop-outs, will deferrals be used to manage the number of drop-outs?

A: The NPQs are still evolving but our new tracker system is helping us to evaluate and monitor more effectively. We have shared this . UCL who have adopted it as a framework to use with their other Hubs. Participants showing signs of likely drop-out, will receive two points of contact and a phone call before being removed. We hope to get the drop-out rates down to single figures in the future.

Q: The drop-out rates seem variable between the NPQs. Why?

A: Some newer NPQs are still being understood, compared to the more traditional NPQs. An evaluation by the DfE would be advisable in NBR's opinion.

- 15.4 GCSE results: Presented by DSH in agenda item 10 of this meeting.
- 15.5 Assessment Policy: This was received by the GB, but noted to contain the highlighted amendments/comments. The final copy will be uploaded for governors, but it was confirmed the content of this policy was correct as shared.

The governors agreed to ratify the Assessment Policy, subject to the final document copy being uploaded for them.

Action: NBR to upload Assessment Policy, final copy

15.6 Home Learning Policy: received by governors, with a presentation from HMA.

Q: How will this be shared with staff and pupils?

A: At the beginning of the new academic year. The school will include it in its student planners.

Q: What devices will pupils use to access Go 4 Schools? Could there be access issues?

A: Go 4 Schools can be accessed from any device, for example mobile phones. No issues are expected. Students have already been using platforms such as Teams at home.

Q: Are there any students known to have difficulties accessing devices?

A: No. RJA noted that if the need arose, there are laptops in school available.

Q: Are there students without parental support with learning at home?

A: This is not usually an issue at WSfG. HMA noted though that Home Learning would be a useful theme for a Parent Information Evening. Students without support can also access the National Tutoring Programme and Bedrock for support with the school's help.

The governors agreed to ratify the Home Learning Policy.

15.6 Literacy strategy update: this went to the last Curriculum Committee and was received today by the GB.

Q: Can you explain '...students taking dual language do not get literacy lessons so this grouping must be reviewed' from section 2 of the Strategy?

A: The MFL faculty will be given the Reading Ages of students. It will be considered if it is in the best interests of the student to take dual languages, or reading interventions instead.

15.7 Parent and Carer Code of Conduct

The governors agreed to ratify the Parent and Carer Code of Conduct.

ABE left the meeting at 8:30.

15.8 GBA proposed the ratification of the following LA policies en bloc:

- LA Capability Policy
- LA Recruitment Policy
- LA Maternity Policy and Procedures
- LA Reorganisation Policy
- LA Redeployment Policy

RJA highlighted to governors that he had added the update of social media searches to the recruitment policy. RJA stated an external company undertakes this on behalf of the school. RJA has also requested for this to be added by the LA to the Recruitment policy.

EBA asked if there were any parameters in place concerning the vetting of external speakers for the school. HMA answered that there were checks in place, including

any speakers being discussed at Calendar meetings. However, the school is going to make this more robust going forward by using a proforma which is used in another WF school.

LHU noted the recruitment policy was not pro-active in wording regarding supporting diversity, using terminology such as 'avoiding'.

ACO raised the issue of interchanging terminology in the recruitment policy: 'policy' and 'procedure' are different things.

LHU raised a concern regarding the language of the maternity policy, it being outdated and gendered. E.g., defining a mother as one who 'gave birth'.

EBA checked the Burgundy Book and found the terminology in this had been updated by the government in relation maternity matters.

Action: GBA to raise a concern with the LA regarding the language of the Maternity Policy.

The governors agreed to ratify the LA policies listed, though would query if the Maternity Policy reflects current legislation and good practice.

- 15.9 SEND Information Report: This was previously approved by the Governing Body, but has now had quotations added to it, with the necessary permissions obtained by the school. It was approved by governors for the school website.
- 15.10 Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff: This policy was ratified by the Governing Body.
- 15.11 Asset Management Policy: This was recommended by the Resources Committee and was ratified by the Governing Body.

16. LA ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

- 16.1 Data Sharing Agreement between LBWF and WF Schools: agreed by the Governing Body. Chair of Governors to sign as specified.
- 16.2 School Term Dates Consultation 2024/5 and 2025/26: agreed by the Governing Body.
- 16.3 Governor Diversity Data: This DfE recommendation to publish was brought to the GB by GBA. It is currently not statutory and there is not yet guidance on the collection of data. Governor Services is looking into it and is working with GovernorHub on a possible solution. This recommendation is to be re-considered by the governors when more information and guidance is released.

17. DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

- 17.1 The schedule of proposed Governing Body meeting dates for the academic year 2023-24 was previously circulated with the meeting papers on GovernorHub. The meeting dates were agreed.

The meeting ended at 8:55pm.