

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WALTHAMSTOW SCHOOL FOR GIRLS GOVERNING BODY MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2025  
AT 6:30PM AT THE SCHOOL**

Present:	Pete Saunders, (Chair)	Co-opted Governor
	Gillian Barker, GBA Mari-Paz Balibrea, MPB Lucy Kallen, LKA	Co-opted Governors
	Helen Marriott, HMA	Headteacher
	Aktar Beg, ABE	Local Authority Governor
	Hannah Hall, HHA Clare Landon, CLA Sophie Khadr, SKH Edyta Ballantyne, EBA	Parent Governors
	Christina Oshodi, COS	Staff Governor

Clerk to the Governors: Kathryn Protsiv

Also Present:	Rachael Futo, RAF Nick O'Brien, NBR Romi Jalil, RJA Dave Shackson, DSH, left 6.50pm	Deputy Headteacher Deputy Headteacher School Business Manager Assistant Headteacher
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**Summary of agreements and actions:**

<b>Minute reference</b>	<b>Formal agreements and/or actions identified</b>	<b>Named person(s) for action(s) identified</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
4.1	Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	ACO agreed to sign	Immediate
4.2.13.1	To update Committee membership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christiana Oshodi: Curriculum Committee</li> </ul>	Governor Services	Immediate
4.2.13.1	Link governor roles to be emailed to governors for discussion, and to consider the roles of newly joined governors.	Nicola Janes/ HMA/ All	Immediate
4.2	To finalise the governors' impact statement and upload to the school website.	ACO/ HMA	Summer 1
4.2	To update the school website: upload the Autumn Term minutes and update the Committee lists to record no longer vacant posts	HMA	Immediate
5.1	To report recorded needs on EHCPs by SEND category	HMA	Next FGB

5.2	To upload the most recent copy of the exams analysis document, which includes Spanish and French outcomes.	HMA	Immediate
7.3	To appoint an Attendance link governor	All	Next FGB
7.3	To submit link visit report	CLA/ PSA	Next FGB
10	To write to LBWF to inform them of the planned changes to the timing of the school day.	HMA	Immediate
13.5	To update the Staff Wellbeing Policy to include the new Flexible Working Policy within 'linked policies' and add the link governor's name.	HMA	Immediate
13.6	To report a whole staff pay profile by protected characteristics.	HMA	Next FGB
14	To email requests for agenda items for the Governor Day to ACO	All	May
	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025, FGB</li> <li>• 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025, Resources Committee</li> </ul> <p>Agenda items (Governor Day):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget Planning</li> <li>• Income</li> </ul> <p>Agenda items (FGB):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills Audit</li> </ul>	All /GS	Immediate
	<p>Polices, Agreements and Ratified documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy</li> <li>• School Term dates</li> <li>• School Day Proposal: Timings</li> <li>• Financial Risk Register</li> <li>• SFVS</li> <li>• Provider Access Policy Statement</li> <li>• Complaints Policy</li> <li>• Staff Wellbeing Policy</li> </ul>		

## 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 In the absence of both The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body Pete Saunders was thanked for agreeing to Chair this meeting. The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Andrea Corbett, Sami Urrehman, Rukaiya Moola and Kelly Broderick.
- 1.3 The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 11 governors present.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 Pecuniary Interests – Governors confirmed receipt of the register of interests.
- 2.2 There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting.

## 3. GOVERNING BODY

- 3.1 MPB was welcomed back to the governing body.
- 3.2 The Clerk confirmed there are no vacancies.

**4. MINUTES**

4.1 Governors received the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting. ACO agreed to sign a copy of the minutes on GovernorHub.

4.2 Matters arising:

<b>Minute reference</b>	<b>Formal agreements and/or actions identified</b>	<b>Status Update</b>
3.1	Mari Paz Balibrea appointed as a co-opted governor.	Complete
5.2.7.5	All governors to complete Safeguarding training pre next board meeting (Online training 8 <sup>th</sup> February or 18 <sup>th</sup> March)	Noted as to be completed annually by all governors.
5.2.13.1	To email new governors a synopsis of link roles	Sent, by ACO
7.1	Resources Committee to review and discuss the Wellbeing section of the SIP	Complete
7.1	April FGB to review and discuss the Leadership section of the SIP	This agenda
12	Agreed: All committees recommended the re-adoption of their Terms of Reference without change.	Complete
13.1	Link Governor roles and committee memberships were updated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sophie Khadr: Performing Arts Link, Resources Committee</li> <li>• Mari-Paz Balibrea: Resources Committee</li> <li>• Christiana Oshodi: Curriculum Committee</li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing:</b> COS to be added to Curr Cttee  MPB confirmed acceptance of joining the Resources Cttee
13.1	Chair to contact Mari-Paz Balibrea regarding link governor role	<b>Action: Link governor roles to be emailed to governors for discussion, and to consider the roles of newly joined governors.</b>
13.1	To meet new governor online to discuss link governor role and processes	Complete
17.2	Chair to sign Risk Assessment for Rome Residential	Complete
19.1	To change the approval date on the PP strategy to December and record the percentage of PP children.	Complete

A governor also noted an action to be picked up from agenda item 15 of the previous meeting:

**Action: To finalise the governors' impact statement and upload to the school website.**

A governor also noted the need to update the governance section of the school website:

**Action: To update the school website: upload the Autumn Term minutes and update the Committee lists to record no longer vacant posts**

4.3 Curriculum Committee 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025: Minutes noted.

4.4 Resources Committee 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025: Minutes noted, RJA noted that most agenda items would be brought to the FGB in this meeting for ratification or discussion.

## **5. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

5.1 The report began with a data summary from DSH:

DSH highlighted that the most recent data collection was now out of date, an update was in the process of being finalised at the time of this meeting.

DSH noted that there would be no P8 figures for two years, due to missing KS2 data for these cohorts due to COVID restrictions. Progress is still measured internally using CATs tests to create a baseline, completed for all pupils on arrival, and FFT50 target grades.

DSH noted for governors individual subject predictions, stating governors may wish to wait for updated data for more detailed analysis.

DSH highlighted that in Years 7 to 9 students entitled to Pupil Premium have higher value added scores. Year 10 data collection is not complete yet in all subjects.

**Q:** When can governors see updated data?

**A:** This will be ready for the next Curriculum Committee meeting.

**Q:** Is the additional work and extra interventions taking place in some subjects reflected in the data?

**A:** This is why the latest data will be good to analyse side-by-side with last year.

HMA noted the improvements in Maths, Business Studies and PE already evident.

RAF noted the tiering changes made in Maths for students scoring lower on the higher tier paper, to boost progress for targeted students. Progress is improved for this group when compared to the previous cohort. Students have been tracked in crossover meetings for English and Maths, the focus is now on students currently at Grade 3 who may achieve Grade 4 with support.

Governors thanked DSH.

*DSH left the meeting*

HMA continued with the headteacher's report and highlighted the following:

**Admissions:** Year 7 and 9 are under numbers at 178. The LA has been contacted as there is a waiting list. There is no waiting list for Year 10 vacancies.

**Attendance:** At 94.64% there have been clear improvements, all Year groups are aiming for 95%. Six students have been missing education and this impacts data. One student has never attended the school as the parents feel the child requires a

specialist setting, this is at Tribunal with the LA. Some students are being supported with part-time timetables.

SEND: EHCPs have increased to 4.2%, the national average is 2.7%. This is of particular statistical significance in a girl's school. A governor requested for EHCP needs to be broken down by category for governors at the next FGB.

**Action: To report recorded needs on EHCPs by SEND category**

Suspensions and Exclusions: There have been no permanent exclusions for many years and HMA was pleased to report the reduction in suspensions compared to Spring 2024. HMA outlined the preventative work that has taken place.

**Q:** How do suspensions compare to pre-COVID data?

**A:** HMA noted she was appointed in 2021. There was a discussion between governors who were on the governing body pre-COVID.

HMA invited further questions:

**Q:** Are national and LA attendance figures also improving after the impact of COVID?

**A:** WSFG is above both LA and national attendance data. Some other schools have also made significant improvements.

**Q:** What has worked well in improving both attendance and suspension levels?

**A:** Inventions meetings, attendance always being on the agenda, a dedicated attendance officer who works with parents. BACME have not been consistent issuing FPNs or letters,. HMA outlined the external support and interventions available for pupils who are Persistent Absentees.

Teaching and Learning (RAF):

RAF reported that the second round of observations had just completed. Consistent strengths noted in observations were reported, and noted how they were reflected in the HPA report, by NBR. Development steps were reported as well as quality assurance in place this term.

NBR provided further detail on the use of quality assurance, noting the success of using AI to support processes. NBR reported the development of schemes of work, areas SIPs and development pathways and staff involvement in processes.

**Q:** Is the school still over-subscribed?

**A:** Yes, significantly at Year7 entry. It is just very unusual for pupils to move school in Year 10 or 11, unless they change location.

- 5.2 The attached document 'Exams Analysis Meetings Common Themes' was shared. The cycle of and reporting for mock examinations was shared for new governors.

**Q:** A governor asked about data for Languages.

**A: Action: To upload the most recent copy of the exams analysis document which includes Spanish and French outcomes.**

There was an explanation of how APS is used.

## 6. GOVERNORS' TRAINING

The Clerk confirmed training booked through GovernorHub is automatically recorded. Governors noted a need to update the Skills audit.

## 7. LINK GOVERNORS' TRAINING

EBA reported link visits for Humanities and Safeguarding.

- 7.1 Safeguarding: EBA reported the expansion of the safeguarding team was felt to be positive by staff, due to the shared workload. The visit was conducted shortly before the Ofsted inspection. The positive relationship with the Early Help coordinator was noted as well as work around encouraging students to still report concerns even when they are worried about friendships. Supervision for the DSL was also discussed. Case studies were noted as a future development to highlight school strengths.

**Q:** How were self-harm and disordered eating selected for staff training?

**A:** This were noted as issues that are more frequently recorded on the school's Safeguard system

The Safeguarding link role was handed over to KBR in December.

- 7.2 Humanities: This visit was soon after Ofsted. Strengths in adaptive teaching in Geography and questioning in History were noted as a result of the Ofsted inspection. Following the school's curriculum review, two years ago, RE has an extra hour per fortnight. The new curriculum at KS3 was a focus for discussion. There was a detailed discussion, in response to a governor's questions, about the teaching of RE. Staff noted that to obtain a higher mark at GCSE students need to be able answer questions through a broader analysis of different religions. The changes to the curriculum are to introduce students to sophisticated thinking that considers multiple perspectives from an earlier age. The curriculum is still based on two world religions: Christianity and Islam.
- 7.3 SUR also conducted a link visit, which will be reported at the next FGB.

**Action: To appoint an Attendance link governor.**

**Action: To submit link visit report**

CLA thanked LKA for her offer of support to complete the link visit report for MFL.

## 8. SIP AND SEF

- 8.1 SIP mid-cycle: HMA summarised the use and evaluation of the SIP for governors. HMA highlighted updated evaluations, ongoing actions and noted the Ofsted evidence has been recorded in this term's evaluations. An action was highlighted to governors, ACO and HMA will be working to develop the quality of link visit reports in the summer term.

**Q:** What training for staff on AI took place?

**A:** NBR, with HEP and another staff member, delivered sessions on using AI to support adaptive teaching, effective questioning and marking. As a tool it can be used to help staff to reduce their workload.

A governor congratulated staff on the Ofsted report. .

**Q:** The focus on Oracy is a positive emphasis that has been introduced, what is the impact you see?

**A:** The impact on writing was discussed. Also discussed was staff training and strategies in place. RAF highlighted a 2024 report by the Oracy Commissioner as further reading for interest, which evidences best practice.

- 8.2 HMA noted how the SEF overlaps the SIP. HMA noted changes, contextual data, RAG ratings and highlighted the hyperlinks for further information.

## 9. CHAIR'S ACTION

Some minor changes were made to the Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy. An appendix was clarified in response to a parental complaint about detentions. Sanctions and timelines around phone confiscation were clarified. 'Fun snaps' were added to the list of banned items.

**Q:** Are parents always called regarding detentions?

**A:** A child can be kept in school for up to 15 minutes at the end of the day, any longer than this and a parent must always be called.

Governors agreed to formally ratify the changes to the policy.

## 10. SCHOOL TERM DATES

The school term dates were agreed. It was noted the 20<sup>th</sup> July will be a disaggregated inset day; the final day of term will be the 17<sup>th</sup>.

## 11. SCHOOL DAY PROPOSAL

HMA presented the attached PowerPoint presentation to governors. The conclusion of the consultations with staff, children and families was that the school is recommending a compromise approach. The school arrival time will remain the same, but the lunch break will be changed from 60 to 50 minutes in length.

**Q:** Why were parents not keen on a shorter lunch?

**A:** Likely in support of their child's feedback. HMA noted the staffing challenge of managing to supervise students over an hour lunch break on a large site.

**Q:** Is there a union response regarding a shorter lunch break?

**A:** Not yet, but there will be after the staff are briefed. This isn't counted as a trapped time, like morning break, and the majority of teachers supported the changes so it is unlikely to be an issue.

Arrival procedures were clarified for a governor.

**Q:** Is this a trial period, or could this be changed back if this didn't work?

**A:** HMA detailed the length of the consultations and evaluations involved in the decision. A governor also noted the positive impact on flexible working for staff. Governors agreed the timetable could not be changed mid-year, and there was a clear rationale for the changes.

**Q:** Are there any worries to share?

**A:** Consultation has been extensive, there are no specific concerns but a change like this will be monitored.

**Q:** Will the LA need to give their permission?

**A:** No, but the school will inform them.

Agreed: School Day Proposal

**Action:** To write to LBWF to inform them of the changes to the timing of the school day.

## 12. FINANCE

12.1 Financial Risk Register: RJA shared the updates and discussion from the Resources committee and invited governors to suggest risks. RJA noted he had agreed to update risks with numerical rating scales and this will be available at the next FGB. Governors agreed the recommendation from the Resources Committee to agree the Register.

12.2 Draft 2025/26 Budget Plan: budget plan, allocation:

RJA provided a verbal update as shared with the Resources Committee:

- Delegated funding is up 7%, but only 1.2% if Pay, Pension and Core Grants received last year are accounted for in addition to delegated funding received last year
- Around £34k has been lost in funding due to vacant spaces during the October Census
- SEND income is higher, but EHCP provision costs have risen which are greater than the increase in funding.
- PP funding is higher.
- Staff Pay Awards are not yet agreed for this budget
- Employers NI costs are expected to be covered.
- Any grants or Pay awards do not tend to cover costs for the school's staffing profile.
- The loss of the Teaching School Hub is around a £300k impact on the budget

RJA reported the headline to governors is that there is a significant budget gap to manage, a deficit of £60-70k or a cumulative deficit projection of £300k. LBWF will not agree a deficit budget to be set and there needs to be a clear plan to manage this over the next two financial cycles. Exclusive of staffing there could be possible savings of up to £50k, but the budget gap cannot be managed without the consideration of staffing costs.

**Q:** Essentially, is restructuring likely?

**A:** This will take time to look at. RJA noted vacancies not backfilled, but stated this was unlikely to be sufficient. There may be more opportunities to not fill posts for outgoing staff, but the gap is likely to be too big for this to be an adequate strategy.

**Q:** What is the level of staff awareness?

**A:** This has been discussed with the SLT, the Resources Committee, the FGB and Unions. It will now go to staff when they return after the Easter holiday as an item in the extended briefing. The decisions are not concrete at this point, the school will involve staff and make them aware in line with the schools vision and values. Unions have accepted the position is financially as has been described to governors and that this will need to be managed.

**Q:** When will a plan be proposed?

**A:** A strategy should be in place for the budget ratification meeting, with indicative cost savings in the staffing structure.

There was a very detailed discussion regarding potential income generation, such as a PTA's involvement, lettings, or voluntary contributions. All governors were updated on the extensive discussion held during the resources committee on this topic.

12.3 Receive and evaluate Financial Benchmarking Data: RJA shared benchmarking data for statistical neighbours. Utilities and staffing were highlighted as areas of higher spend and a narrative was given. The staffing profile was noted to have been expanded to support the Teaching School Hub.

- 12.4 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS): RJA highlighted two changes on the checklist, responses to note the budget is not yet balanced and to note the use of reserves. Agreed.
- 12.5 Statement of Internal Control: This is a legacy document, reported to governors still in order to provide a summary for the SFVS. RJA noted the removal of the Teaching School Hub. Areas for development are contracts and the staffing structure.

RJA was thanked by all present.

### **13. SCHOOL POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

- 13.1 Assessment and feedback position paper: This policy will be brought to governors for ratification in July. NBR updated governors on the current direction of travel. There is further work planned with the teaching and learning team in the Summer term, to develop assessment and feedback. CPD for children is also being planned.
- 13.2 Provider Access Policy Statement: Ratified
- 13.3 Complaints Policy: Ratified
- 13.4 Pay Policy: Verbal Update. This is still the subject of negotiations between the NEU and the LA. The school recommends adopting the model LA Pay Policy.
- 13.5 Staff Wellbeing Policy: Ratified subject to amendment

**Action: To update the Staff Wellbeing Policy to include the new Flexible Working Policy under linked policies and add the link governor's name.**

- 13.6 Performance Development: HMA shared an equalities data summary in relation to the anonymised staff pay progression data. It was noted not all staff apply for UPS progression.

**Q:** How does the school use this data?

**A:** It provided for governor monitoring and transparency. Governors can use this to hold the school to account.

A governor stated it would be useful to have protected characteristic data for the wider staff population, not just those eligible for pay progression. This would enable a discussion around staff groups and possible wider trends in pay.

**Action: To report a whole staff pay profile by protected characteristics.**

### **14. GOVERNOR DAY 17/6/2025**

**Action: To email requests for agenda items for the Governor Day to ACO**

Agenda items noted:

- Budget Planning
- Income

### **15. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

- 15.1 Date of next meeting:
- 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025, FGB
  - 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025, Resources Committee

### **16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 16.1 A governor shared information about tax rebates, Gift Aid and donations to schools and agreed to forward this to HMA.

Spring 2025

*The meeting ended at 8:50pm*