

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FOREST ALLIANCE OF NURSERY SCHOOLS (FOR
CHURCH HILL AND LOW HALL NURSERY SCHOOLS) HELD ON THURSDAY 16
NOVEMBER 2023 AT 6.00 P.M. VIRTUALLY**

Present: Abrar Malik (Chair)-Co-opted Governor (AM)

Co-opted Governors

Mark Brown (MB)
Sally Davey (SD)
Jana Mills (JM)
Paula Vaz Cudna (PVC)

Head Teacher

Helen Currie (HC)

Local Authority Governor

Pauline France (PF)

Parent Governors

Aalia Chauhary (AC)
Katy Thompson (KT)

Also in Attendance: Lindsay Read(Term of office as staff governor now expired).

Clerk to the Governors: Caroline Russell

Summary of agreements and actions:

| Minute reference | Formal agreements and/or actions identified | Named person(s) for action(s) identified | Completion date |
|-------------------------|---|---|------------------------|
| 4 | Governing Body: (i)Staff Governor: School to action and advise Governor Services (VK). | HC | As soon as possible |
| 5 | FGB and Committee Mins and Business: (i)Minutes of Summer Term FGB Meeting: AM to sign off on GovernorHub. (ii)FPP Committee: Transfers and recovery plans-HC/HR to devise and advise. | AM HC/HR | Ongoing Ongoing |
| 8 | Date and Time of Next Meeting: Thursday 7 March 2024-6pm-Virtual | School/ Governor Services | 07-03-2024 |
| 9.2. | Any Other Business: -Funding of LHNS: Action per minute | School/Chair/ LA | 11-12-2023 |

1. WELCOME, OPENING PRAYER AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Welcome

All were welcomed to the meeting, opened by the chair.

1.2. Quorum

The meeting was quorate throughout with 9 governors present.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Annual Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

It was noted that these have recently been updated on GovernorHub before the recent OFSTED inspection. All governors are reminded to respond if necessary if they have not already done so.

2.2. Declarations of Interest in Relation to the Current Agenda Items

There were none.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BODY FOR THE CURRENT ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/4 (ELECTIONS CONDUCTED BY CLERK)

3.1. Election of Chair: Abrar Malik was elected unanimously. Proposed by Helen Currie and seconded by Pauline France.

3.2. Election of Vice Chair: Mark Brown was elected unanimously. Proposed by Sally Davey and seconded by Abrar Malik.

4. GOVERNING BODY

4.1. Membership: It was noted that the term of office of Lindsay Read, staff governor, has now expired so this is being considered by the School. It was agreed that the replacement be a member of the Children's Learning and Development Committee.
ACTION: School.

4.2. Chairs and Vice- Chairs of Committees:

Children's Learning and Development Committee: Sally Davey and Aalia Chaudhary respectively.

Finance Pay and Personnel Committee: Pauline France and Jana Mills respectively.

Premises Committee: Mark Brown and Katy Thompson respectively.

4.3. Committee Terms of Reference: These have been updated.

4.4. Link Governor Responsibilities:

Special Educational Needs and Disability: Sally Davey.

Safeguarding: Mark Brown.

Disciplinary and Grievance Panels: It was **AGREED** that these be constituted from a pool of the entire governing body from available and eligible governors on an ad hoc basis as necessary.

4.5. What's App Groups

These were confirmed as the individual committee groups.

4.6. Governor Hub Arrangements

Use of this was confirmed for access to Governing Body information and resources.

4.7. Timetable for and Focus of Learning Walks

This was proposed by HC and agreed by the meeting noting the recent 'outstanding' OFSTED inspection outcome.

Spring Term 1 and 2: LR and HC re ECKERS, peer observation spring term 2.

Summer Term: Governors learning walk.

5. MINUTES AND VERBAL REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

- 5.1. Summer Term 2023 FGB Minutes: These were received and accepted, considered e-signed.
ACTION: AM to sign off on GovernorHub.
- 5.2. Verbal Report re Finance, Pay and Personnel Committee Held on 06-11-2023:
-PF reported that this had been postponed due to OFSTED inspection with congratulations to all on the 'outstanding' outcome. The meeting had approved 2023/4 committee terms of reference, arrangements for the completion of the Schools Financial Value Standard Return. Update of the risk register for both schools had been discussed noting that financial issues had affected both schools with consequent implications for premises, finance and curriculum.
-The federation business manager had presented budgets for both schools noting that CHNS is predicted to have a small surplus at the year-end but with depleted reserves following transfers to support LHNS. At LHNS staff restructuring has reduced the imbalance between income and expenditure to a predicted deficit of £3,000. However, a decision is needed as to whether the transfers should be repaid over a period of time or written off. Reserves at CHNS need to be rebuilt and recovery plans devised for both schools including staff for both indoor and outdoor learning environments.
ACTION: HR/HC to advise 3 options with pros and cons.
-The committee also **AGREED** a recommendation that supervision training be provided to chairs and vice chairs of committees to support senior leaders.
-Head and Assistant Head Teacher job descriptions have been reviewed.
- 5.3. Verbal Report re Children's Learning and Development Committee Held on 09-11-2023:
-SD reported that this meeting had discussed policies and admissions. These had been updated in response to parental requests e.g. for deferral of admission. Attendance is monitored with consideration given to family circumstances e.g. recent childbirth.
-Work continues with other local schools and private and voluntary settings are supported. A collaborative project is proposed with a Suffolk based artists organisation which raises the profile of LBWF nurseries.
-The SEND policy was discussed with issues noted re funding for services such as speech and language therapy for less advantaged families.
-Nursery staff continue to meet re transitions and OFSTED outcomes.
-The next meeting is scheduled for 22 February 2024.
- 5.4. Verbal Report re Premises Committee Held on 13-10-2023
-MB reported that installation of solar panels or a ground source heat pump had been discussed noting difficulties re funding and the construction of the roof at LHNS.
-Re drainage at CHNS a survey has been forwarded to WF with no response. Tree roots are blocking the drainage (HC to contact WF further if necessary). Problems were also noted re holes in the garden with a survey to be commissioned to replant for a warmer climate.
-Emergency lighting needs to be tested by an SSO (to be appointed) and a link governor visit is to be arranged by MB with HC.
-HC reported re a heating upgrade at LHNS which had finally been completed to a satisfactory standard and works boxed in. Replacement windows are still on the long term specification for works needed at LHNS.

6. EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS' REPORT-E-CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION

6.1. School Development Priorities:

- These continue with curriculum goals being imbedded with good impact and used elsewhere for 2 and 3 year olds. OFSTED indicated that they were very impressed by the federations skills based curriculum.
- SEND practice is being consolidated with an Inclusion Quality Mark being written to support a funding bid.
- Work Together, Play Together Project: This has now been completed.
- Creative practice is being developed in collaboration with local schools and a Suffolk Nursery school. Sources of grant funding are being investigated to support this with work continuing re cultural capital and We Play bags.

6.2. Staff Well-Being: This was noted re the School Development Plan priorities including supervision training for governors.

6.3. Premises: The federation is continuing to develop areas which are good to work in including for noise insulation.

6.4. Safeguarding: All governors are asked to read and confirm recent posts on GovernorHub including re the DFE's Keeping Children Safe in Education. Changes are reflected in the safeguarding policy and Waltham Forest training is provided annually reflecting that this is a responsibility of all governors.

6.5. SEND Link Governor Report: It was noted that SENCOs submit a report with updates seen and posted on GovernorHub and the Schools' website.

6.6. Risk Register/Budget: This has been reported by PF.

6.7. Policy and Practice: HC noted work re supervision, staff INSET, a collection for an Israeli-Gaza fund, school disco, staff social, walk to school week and be active activities.

7. STRATEGIC INTENTS AND PLANNING FOR 2023/4

7.1. School Self-Evaluation Form Priorities in Current School Development Plan:

HC reported re the longer term vision to be more financially viable e.g. via soft Federation, provision funding, minimum funding guarantee for mainstream nurseries.

7.2. 15 and 30 Hour Funded Places:

Staff are planning for this from April and September 2024 respectively.

7.3. School Self Evaluation:

The School grades itself by OFSTED inspection areas and reports re numbers. The SDP includes an evolving strategic plan for the next 5 years.

Q. Is any governor training necessary? **A.** Refer to updates on Governor and WFHubs, Early Years updates and national updates re funding rates.

HC noted that 2 years old are financially speaking a 'loss leader' due to safe staffing ratios needed so discussed is needed re what can be managed with WF.

Schools' Forum have recently voted for funding for rates from schools bloc and recognise that the 3 WF maintained nursery schools are all graded by OFSTED as 'outstanding' and of value locally. A minimum funding guarantee will be needed if numbers fall.

8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Spring Term: Thursday 7 March 2024-6 to 8pm-Virtual.

Governor Briefings: These will be advised in the standard spring term agenda with the chair or a representative from the Governing Body asked to attend if possible.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1. Formal Congratulations to all re LHNS OFSTED 'Outstanding' Judgement

This was **AGREED** to all involved in the School's community including senior leaders, teachers and governors. The LA assessment process rates the School 'green' and the LA will be encouraged to publicise the recent judgement with visits by Stella Creasy MP and Cllr Grace Williams (Leader of the Council) sought in support of the federations negotiations with the LA regarding funding.

9.2. School Facing Financial Challenge Action Plan (LHNS)

This was noted as on GovernorHub. The recent outstanding OFSTED judgement at LHNS is noted with ways forward suggested re the staffing structure. OFSTED inspector comments re additional funding needed for staffing and resources were noted. The chair will support by attendance at a meeting on 11/12/2023 re LHNS finance (virtual).

ACTION: Governing Body to continue to discuss provision and place funding and a future minimum funding guarantee with the LA. Also collaborative work with local primary schools.

9.3. Other AOB Items:

Recorded as confidential under separate cover.

The meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.