

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FOREST ALLIANCE OF NURSERY SCHOOLS
FINANCE, PAY AND PERSONNEL WORKING PARTY HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13
NOVEMBER 2024 AT 5.30 P.M. VIRTUALLY**

Present: Pauline France (Chair)-Local Authority Governor
Jana Mills-Co-opted Governor
Helen Currie-Head Teacher

Also in Attendance: Hasina Rashid, Federation Business Manager

Clerk to the Committee: 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	Minutes: Defer sign off until reviewed by the committee.	All	Next meeting
4.1.6	Review of Use of Ferguson Centre Car Park: HC to follow up with AFS.	HC/AFS	Ongoing
4.1.7	Pollution Levels on Markhouse Road: HC to ask AFS to progress.	HC/AFS	Ongoing
6.15	Insurance Premiums: Liability outstanding.	HR	As soon as possible
6.20	Balance at Bank: HR email per minute	HR	As soon as possible
6.22	Supervision and Well-Being Training: Discuss on WhatsApp including group supervision.	COG/chairs of committees	Ongoing
8	Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 12 February 2024-6pm-Virtual.	All to note. School/GS to action.	12/02/2024.

- 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** All were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Paula Vaz Cudna and Katie Stowe, parent governor. It was agreed to proceed as a working party to receive information with decisions on grounds of urgency or ratified by the next quorate meeting.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were no declarations of interest in any of the current agenda items.
- 3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE:** It was agreed to defer this to next term with Pauline France and Jana Mills to continue for the present.
- 4. MINUTES OF THE SUMMER TERM COMMITTEE MEETING:** It was noted that these had been received from AFS.
ACTION: Defer sign off until reviewed by the committee.

4.1. Matters Arising:

4.1.1. Appointment of New Payroll Provider: This has been done.

4.1.2. Purchase of Safer Site Software: This has been done.

4.1.3. Early Years Business Plan: HR has applied for funding for a breakfast club for 2 year olds (approved).

4.1.4. Sustainability of Staffing: Yes, if places filled as expected in January.

4.1.5. 2 Year Old Modelling and Plan for Place Creation: This has been discussed and will be presented in the spring term.

4.1.6. Review of Use of Ferguson Centre Car Park: AFS to be asked to follow up by HC.

4.1.7. Environmental Health Remeasure of Pollution Levels on Markhouse Road: HC to ask AFS to progress.

5. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND PREMISES FIT FOR PURPOSE: AGREED to defer.

6. FINANCE AND BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS-HR:

6.1. CHNS-Month 6: Numbers are lower than last September with a predicted in year deficit of £64,000. However, the 2 year old shortfall has now been filled. At both schools finances are being supported by notional SENIF and Centre of Excellence funding.

6.2. LHNS: There is a level 5 Education and Health Care plan and the place vacated is being refilled.
ACTION: HR to recalculate Centre of Excellence funding.

6.3. Pupil Premium Funding: Income has been overachieved reflecting the change of community.

Q. Re low take up of pm places is that 15 hours? **A.** Yes. There have been more requests for 30 hour places. Will consider the sustainability of this and possible purchase of wrap around care. There has been more interest at CHNS with places offered generally taken. Cannot fill all 30 hour place requests due to lack of space for lunches.

Q. So insufficient interest in 15 hours? **A.** Yes. People want longer hours. There is some part time at LHNS, longer days at CHNS.

6.4. Devolved Capital Funding: £4,924 has been allocated.
Anticipated income at year end £1,000,000.

6.5. Teachers' Pay Award: This was noted as agreed at 5.5%, 2.5% being unfunded. A grant is coming but the method of distribution is to be reviewed. Also, a teacher has progressed to Upper Pay Scale 1.
The teachers' pension scheme employers' contribution rate has increased from 23.68 to 28.68%

6.6. Support Staff Pay Award: There has been a flat rate pay award on all bands of £1490. Employers National Insurance has increased with bandings reduced for lower paid staff.

6.7. Term Time Only Compensation Payments: Review is almost complete. £19,000

has been paid. £19,000 has been paid with 50% reimbursement by LBWF.

- 6.8. Staff Changes: These were noted with changes from year round working to term time only by level 3 with level 2 back up. Long term absence and maternity pay were noted.
- 6.9. Pension Errors: These have been reported by the payroll provider (LB Wandsworth). Fines issued will be reclaimed by Strictly Education.
Q. Grant for National Insurance Contribution increases? **A.** Is expected to be received.
- 6.10. Forest School Provision: This has been developed re garden, fencing, turf and canopy using reserves. There has been an increasing emphasis on teaching and learning. HC advised of an email from EMcL re Centre of Excellence income projected for the next 12 months.
- 6.11. School Facing Financial Challenge: This will discuss the NIC increase. PF noted that low uptake needs wider governor involvement re numbers and funding (national issue). The staff structure at CHNS needs review (ratio of 1:9) and want to avoid SFFC for LHNS next year whilst maintaining staff and child well-being. HR noted depletion of reserves and transfer of £100,000 from CHNS to LHNS. Can't rely on income generation as in the past from day care and holiday schemes but there has been positive financial support from LBWF. (Concern expressed re number of interim decision makers).
- 6.12. Capital Funding: There has been £4,000 spent at CHNS to reconfigure the 2 year old room and staff room providing sleep space for 2 year olds.
- 6.13. Low Hall Nursery School: There has been an opening deficit with low numbers (20 children less than last year). So have capped the number of 3-4 year olds. There are an increasing number of 2 year olds. The grant is supporting the current shortfall re Breakfast Club and ratios and is expected next year also. There is additional income for wrap around provision with significant agency spend at LHNS. A full time apprentice is to be requested with inner London living wage to be paid.
- 6.14. New Photocopier Lease at LHNS: This was noted.
- 6.15. Insurance Premiums: Liability outstanding.
ACTION: HR.
- 6.17. RHS Grant: This was noted.
- 6.18. In Year Deficit: This was noted at £67,000. A capital commitment has been made for architects' fees and a grant application made. There is a predicted closing deficit of £128,000.
Q. Effect of increasing 2 year olds? **A.** Depends on uptake but will consider the impact of staff departures and implications for lunchtime staffing and Forest School.
- 6.19. LHNS New Doors and Windows: Installation of these was noted and approved. Will put warning stickers on them.
- 6.20. Bank Balance: This was noted at £69,000, £300 in school fund. The monthly payroll is £47,000 with an impact on cash flow. There is the possibility of a loan so need to manage pay and agency spend carefully. HR will share this with SFFC on 14/11/2024. The financial risk relates to the take up

of places so need to plan for that. There is no finance for contingency.
A 15 hour FEEE provision is needed, there are frequent calls re 2 year old provision
parents need continuity. A practical formula is needed including Acacia Nursery.
ACTION: HR to email chair of governors and FPP committee re possible need for a
loan and bi weekly updates.

- 6.21. Personnel and Staffing Matters: Minuted as confidential under separate cover.
- 6.22. Supervision and Well-Being Training: This is being provided by the chair of governors and chairs of committees.
ACTION: Discuss on WhatsApp including group supervision.
7. **ANNUAL POLICY REVIEW:** These were readopted unchanged on grounds of urgency.(next quorate meeting to ratify) in respect of :
 - Financial Regulations.
 - Order of delegation.
 - Debit card policy.
 - Pay policy (to be agreed with WF NEU).
 - Performance management and appraisal.
 - Pay policy.
 - Volunteering.
 - Staff Handbook and Code of Practice: New draft, approve at next meeting.
 - Safety of children sleeping on site.
8. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday 12 February 2024 6.00 p.m.-
Virtual.
9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** There was none.
THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.15 P.M.