

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY OF THE FOREST ALLIANCE OF NURSERY SCHOOLS (FANS) FOR CHURCH HILL AND LOW HALL NURSERY SCHOOLS HELD ON THURSDAY 22 MAY 2025 AT 6PM VIRTUALLY

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

Co-opted Governors

Mark Brown

Sally Davey

Jana Mills (from 18:17)

Head Teacher

Helen Currie

Local Authority Governor

Pauline France

Staff Governor

Lindsay Read

Associate Member

Hasina Rashid (Federation Business Manager)

Clerk: Caroline Russell

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
4.1	Membership: Governor Services to note re re-coptions and vacancy for a co-opted governor following resignation of PVC.	Governor Services	Ongoing
5.2.1	Revised Committee Structure: Governors and Governor Services to note.	Governors/ Governor Services	Ongoing
5.2.2.	CLD Committee Agenda Item: Statement of Federation values, ethics and ethos.	Governor Services	Ongoing
8.	Basis of Funding: COG/HT/business manager to liaise post meeting with date for meeting with LA to be shared with PF	COG/HT/ Business Manager/PF	Ongoing
11.	Date and Time of Next Meeting: Thursday 9 October 2025-6pm-Virtual.	School/ GS to note	09/10/2025
12	INSET Days 2025-6: Advised per minute.	All to note	Ongoing

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: All were welcomed to the meeting with apologies for absence received and accepted from Katie Stone and Austin Ventour.

2. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS: None was advised.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest in any of the following agenda items.

4. GOVERNING BODY:

4.1. Membership: Abrar Malik and Mark Brown agreed to be co-opted for a further 4 year term of office. A co-opted governor vacancy was noted which is being considered by the School with HT to make contact to explain the role and arrange visits to the School.
ACTION: Governor Services to note re co-options and current vacancy.

4.2. Disqualification due to Non-Attendance: This was noted without action.

4.3. Disclosure and Barring Service Checks: These are held for all currently serving governors.

4.4. Alternative Meeting Options: Continuing use of online/virtual meetings was **AGREED** by the Governing Body.

5. MINUTES:

5.1. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 27 February 2025: These were received and accepted considered signed.

5.2. Matter Arising:

5.2.1. Committee Structure: It was **AGREED** to amalgamate Finance, Pay and Personnel Committee into a business committee. MB and PF will co-chair with terms of reference to be amended. It was noted that meetings will need to coincide with the Annual Cycle of Business for the School including the budget with HR to attend these and all FGB meetings including report on audit issues.

5.2.2. Reports from Committees:

Children's Learning and Development Committee: This had discussed a number of policies including teaching and learning, curriculum goals and attainment descriptors for non-verbal children. The policies have been amended to ensure that they are clear and intelligible to the Schools wider community including parents.

ACTION: Next CLD committee to consider regarding statement of values, ethics and ethos.

6. FINANCE-HR SCREENSHARED AND PRESENTED: HR apologised for late circulation of reports following extensive late amends in consultation with the LA.

6.1. <u>Church Hill Nursery School:</u>	£
Outturn 2024/5 carry forward	148,930
Predicted Carry Forward	208,984

It was noted that the School relies heavily on a broader financial base beyond the delegated funding of £718,470 to support the Schools budgets noting that central income does not cover core staff costs.

However, there has been a reduction in school generated income from day care fees following the introduction of the 30 hours Free Early Educational Entitlement for 2 and 3 year olds. Further budgetary challenges relate to overspends/ unfunded elements of the teachers' pay and pension increases, NJC (National Joint Council) pay and pension increases for support staff and £7,000 compensation payments relating to NOPAL (non-payment of additional annual leave) and TTO (Term-Time Only working).

Other budget lines were noted which are on budget with the School commended re £60,000 in year reductions in revenue expenditure.

Capital expenditure totalling £13,562 was noted including re i pads and

renovation of the 2 year old room.

6.2. <u>Low Hall Nursery School:</u>	£
Outturn 2024/5 carry forward	66,764
Budgetted Revenue Income 2025	1,196,312
Budgetted Revenue Expenditure 2025	1,201,368
Projected in year deficit	(5,056)

It was noted that LHNS is supported by non-core funding relating to special Educational Needs, Centre of Excellence, SEN Interim Notional funding and pupil premium funding. These income sources are greater than for CHNS reflecting increased deprivation. Cash flow has been managed by use of a £100,000 transfer from CHNS to the main account to support lower pupil numbers. Costs are managed carefully re vacancies with staffing to ratio. Budgetted numbers are optimistic supported by working families income. There has been some reduction in 2 year old income but LHNS is full am. Pupil premium funding is based on summer term numbers and there is a salary recharge re HT/Federation Business Manager. Play scheme income has increased to reflect increased charges.

Universal Early Educational Entitlement has increased to 30 hours provision but not all families may use in full. A 2.8% teachers' pay increase is to be funded but 4% may be agreed creating a cost pressure for the unfunded element. HT noted that National Education Union strike action is likely if the increase is not fully funded by central Government. Employers' National Insurance contributions has increased from 13.8 to 15%.

There have been extensive discussions with the LA regarding a fair formula. LA inflation assumptions assume 2% with the LA energy framework subsidised by the schools' bloc.

The estimated in year deficit of £5,000 may increase if the teachers' pay award is not fully funded and it is predicted that the deficit will increase over the next 5 years.

It was noted that core income does not cover staffing costs and that daycare income may not cover the deficit.

6.3. Questions:

6.3.1. **Q.** Is there an issue re SENIF and Centre of Excellence funding? **A.** Delegated funding to maintained nursery schools has reduced based on lower pupil numbers. Centre of Excellence funding will no longer be paid from September with an adverse impact on cash flow.

Re LHNS there have been conversations with the LA about the predicted deficit with a minimum funding guarantee made for 2 year old places and after school club provision funded to 20 places. Funding has been amended to include working families provision, increased pupil premium funding, salary recharges and the rates rebate.

These factors have supported a cumulative break even position of (£302).

The LA has requested that CHNS make an informed decision re federation funding.

Discussion followed reiterating the need for LA undertakings to be given in writing. Reserves are needed for potential under take up of places at CHNS, in the year deficit and reflecting that there a past subsidy to LHNS has been necessary.

Regarding CHNS funding a formal complaint has been made with the chair of Governors and Head Teacher to discuss this with the LA. It was unanimously **AGREED** to delay the budget submission until a face to face meeting has been held. HT noted that LHNS is a School Facing Financial Challenge but CHNS is not. It is concerning that offers are made but not followed up. It was, therefore, **AGREED** to note the budgets as presented.

ACTION: Chair of Governors/Business Manager to liaise post meeting.
A vote of thanks was agreed to HR for her work in a very difficult and challenging situation which was exacerbated by last minute changes by the LA.

7. **RISK REGISTER-MINUTED AS CONFIDENTIAL UNDER SEPARATE COVER.**
8. **HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT-PRIOR E-CIRCULATED.** This was noted and commended re retention of curriculum provision, values, ethics and goals.
 - 8.1. Basis of Funding: Information was received regarding the allocation of top up funding between the LA's 3 maintained nursery schools with a potential conflict of interest in this regard and withdrawal of Centre of Excellence funding. A formal complaint is to be made to the LA.
ACTION: COG/HT to liaise with written agreements needed with the LA and funding guarantees given in excess of 1 year. Date for meeting to be agreed and shared by the Chair of Governors.
 - 8.2. Special Educational Needs and Disability: The IQM next stage was passed with gold standard and Centre of Excellence provision commended. There is, however, a need to review provision based places as staffing has reduced.
 - 8.3. Training Offer: This was noted with income funded for 3 years.
 - 8.4. Ferguson Centre: This is being assessed by the LA with a view to sale. It was noted that provision needs to continue to be made for emergency site evacuation.
9. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT:** This will be dealt with offline.
10. **GOVERNORS' SAFEGUARDING TRAINING:** This will be done in June by AM.
11. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT FGB MEETING:** Thursday 9 October 2025-6pm-Virtual (to be confirmed).
12. **TERM DATES 2025/6:** HT stated that INSET days are planned for September (2), 2nd January 2026 and a well being day in July at the end of term.
13. **POLICY RATIFICATION:** These have been ratified and signed off by the Committee chairs concerned.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.