

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FOREST ALLIANCE OF NURSERY SCHOOLS (FOR CHURCH HILL AND LOW HALL NURSERY SCHOOLS) HELD ON THURSDAY 7 MARCH 2024 AT 6PM VIRTUALLY

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

Co-opted Governors:

Mark Brown
Jana Mills
Paula Vaz Cudna

Head Teacher

Helen Currie

Local Authority Governor

Pauline France

Parent Governor

Aalia Chaudhary

Clerk to the Board: Caroline Russell

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
3.1.	Governing Body Membership: (i) GS to note that Lindsay Read has filled the staff governor vacancy. (ii) School to send DBS check number for Paula Vaz Cudna to GS.	Gov Services Gov Services	Ongoing Ongoing
4.1.5.	Sale of Curriculum and Assessment Package to Other Schools: HC to meet with Roland Hill Nursery re establishment of Community Interest Company to administer and financial risk mitigation.	HC	Ongoing
4.2.5.	SFVS Return: HC/HR/PF to report re mitigations, premises development, staffing ratios.	HC/HR/PF	31-03-2024
7	Dates and Times of Future Meetings: FANS FPP Committee: 07/05/2024-5.30 p.m.-Virtual; FANS FGB 09/05/2024-6pm-Virtual. Premises Committee 14/06/2024: 9.30 a.m.-Virtual.	All to note. School/GS to action.	Ongoing

- 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** All were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Sally Davey and Katy Thompson.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting. All were asked to update annual declarations of pecuniary and personal interest on GovernorHub.

3. **GOVERNING BODY**

3.1. Governing Body Membership: It was noted that Lindsay Read has filled the staff governor vacancy and will attend the next meeting.

ACTION: Governor Services to note.

3. **MINUTES:**

3.1. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 16/11/2023: These were received and agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting, considered signed.

3.2. Matters Arising:

Minute	Action	Status update
4	Staff Governor Vacancy: This has been actioned.	Completed. GS to note.
5	Sign off of minutes on GovernorHub: Chair to sign off.	Ongoing
Other Items	Current agenda items	Ongoing

4. **INFORMATION SHARING REPORTS AND DOCUMENTATION:**

4.1. Head Teacher's Report:

4.1.1. HC noted that there will be additional income in April 2024 re early years' pupil premium funded pupils.(11and 8 at CHNS and LHNS respectively).

4.1.2. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND): PE continues with the Inclusion Quality mark framework with Part 1 to be assessed in April.Gold level accreditation takes 3 years.

4.1.3. High Needs Provision Funding: The federation has been invited by LBWF to express an interest in this for 3 or 4 places in a number of settings. HC has suggested to AAT that a joint approach be made with Acacia Nursery.

4.1.4. Current Numbers re Education and Health Care Plans and SEN Interim Funding: Current data was noted with rejected applications to be resubmitted.

4.1.5. Sale of Early Years' Curriculum and Assessment Package to Other Schools: This has been given to Barncroft with sale also expected to Stoneydown Park for £3,000 including INSET and learning walk.

Q. How was the sale price estimated? **A.** Time of head and assistant head and cost of support. 2 more goals per subject area are being devised for selection by schools. It was **AGREED** that an annual subscription fee be charged and a service level agreement devised. It is assumed that the impact on Head Teacher time is manageable.

ACTION: HC to meet with Roland Hill Nursery re establishment of a community interest company and risk mitigation.

4.1.6. Pupil Roll and Staff Well-Being: Information was noted.

4.1.7. Application for Sculpture Project: This was not successful but could use some pupil premium funding.

- 4.1.8. Interviews for Site Services and SEND Staff: These will be held shortly.
- 4.2. Budget, Schools' Financial Value Standard Return (SFVS) and Risk Register Update:
- 4.2.1. Budget 2023/4:
LHNS: The in year deficit is lower than predicted at £94,000 and hope to devise a 4 year recovery plan to reduce and repay this. Accounting for repayment of the loan from CHNS will be considered next term. LHNS is expected to no longer be considered as a School Facing Financial Challenge by the LA with the relationship developed with the Head of Early Years and Education finance.. The number on roll has increased possibly following the recent outstanding OFSTED Inspection, staff publicity and premises refurbishment. The remaining risks are to be included in the SFVS return re under 3 provision and number on roll (latter could be mitigated by increased fees). A proposal to increase fees by £1 per hour except for LHNS after school club and play scheme to increase by £2 per hour reflecting increased costs was **AGREED** unanimously. The revised charges are reasonable locally and for nearby boroughs.
- 4.2.2. Future of Federation: Governors **AGREED** that they wish to sustain CHNS and LHNS as federated independent nursery schools. However, there are budget risks for CHNS reserves which, to date, have supported underfunding from the delegated budget. Both schools are underfunded for what is delivered and work is ongoing to encourage the LA to recognise this by lobbying officers and councillors.
- 4.2.3. Risk Register:
-The main risk is that staff expenditure exceeds income and the recommended ratio significantly. However, high staff ratios are needed to provide an outstanding provision and for safe supervision of premises.
-Ways to increase income and reduce expenditure were discussed e.g. reduction of staff hours and report staffing costs through day care.
-The garden is being developed for curriculum usage e.g. creation of a Forest School area. £35,000 has been spent this year on staff sickness absence which could be reduced in future by employment of an apprentice to reduce the need for supply cover. The roll is increasing including for 2 year old provision with a part contribution from parents to be considered as the amount delegated does not cover costs.
- 4.2.4. Budget 2024/5: This will include increased top up and SENIF funding and 2 year old pupil premium funding. There is income from day care and play schemes at CHNS with potential for further income but noting that a number of private nurseries are open or proposed locally.
- 4.2.5. SFVS Return:
ACTION: HC/HR/PF to report re mitigations, premises development and staffing ratios in SFVs return.
- 4.3. Chair's Action: There was none reported.
- 4.4. Link Governors, SEND and Safeguarding Matters:
- 4.4.1. Link Governor Reports: These are on GovernorHub. Very high quality pm interactions were seen with curriculum goals taught well at both schools with good support for both child and adult initiated play. Sally Davey will visit shortly (objectives agreed). It was noted that the current intake was born during lockdown and so may have socialisation problems but it is hoped that this will reduce over time.

- 4.4.2. Safeguarding-MB: A safeguarding walk at LHNS is planned. The most recent was held at CHNS on 01/12/2023. Re partitioning of the garden at CHNS it was noted that there is an outdoor classroom at Walthamstow Wetlands. The Single Central Record was inspected including for social media checks. Office improvements were seen at LHNS. There are currently no children at LHNS with social workers due to child protection or child in need status but some referrals have been made to Early Help. A possible child exclusion was considered at LHNS but avoided by reduced hours and a SENIF application to meet increased supervision costs.

5. FANS REVIEW AND STRATEGIC PLANNING:

- 5.1. Review and Strategic Planning: 3 committee chairs met with HC on 23/02 to discuss strategic issues and a 5 year plan for action.
- 5.2. Strategic Plan: PF has formulated a plan (screen shared and **AGREED**) including timescales. A follow up meeting is needed with the chair of governors and senior leaders to refine it re federation, curriculum, income generation and premises development.
- 5.3. Policies: These were noted as signed off by chairs.
- 5.4. Equality Objectives: These continue per SDP objectives.

6. GOVERNING BODY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PLAN:

Safeguarding: This is an annual requirement with all governors asked to book onto training.

Supervision Training: HC will organise this with chairs to supervise senior leaders who will supervise staff.

Finance Training: Governors will look for email alerts on GovernorHub.

7. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

FANS FPP Committee: 07-05-2024-5.30 p.m.-Virtual.

FANS FGB: 09-05-2024-6pm-Virtual.

Premises Committee: 14/06/2024-9.30 a.m.-Virtual.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS:

- 8.1. Confidential Minutes of 16/11/2023: These were approved. Matters arising have been considered with the current agenda. A feasibility study for the CHNS garden will be posted on GovernorHub.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.45 P.M.