

# PRIMROSE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Meeting of the Full Governing Board at the School on Wednesday 26 September 2018 at 6pm

### MINUTES

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<b>GOVERNORS</b>	Co-opted	David Adams ( <i>Chair</i> )	ف
		Hilary Aylesworth	X
		Joseph Collins	ف
		David Howe	X
		Alice Gray	X
		Syra Sowe ( <i>co-opted staff</i> ) (Arrived at 6:30pm)	ف
		CO-OPTED VACANCY	N/A
	Parent	Amal Abbamin	ف
		Ophelia Field	X
		Gavin Davies	ف
		Laura Thompson	ف
	LA	LA VACANCY	N/A
	Headteacher	Robin Warren	ف
	Staff elected	Isabel Murphy	ف
<b>ASSOCIATES</b>	Assistant Head - Laura Beeson		ف
<b>IN ATTENDANCE</b>	Victoria Mitchell, Clerk To The Governing Body		ف
	Irene Mitchell, School Business Manager		ف

## **1. Welcome and apologies**

**1.1** The Chair welcomed everyone to this FGB meeting of the Primrose Hill School Governing Board, which began at 6pm.

**1.2** Apologies were received from three governors - David Howe (childcare), Hilary Aylesworth (abroad), Ophelia Field (away from London). Apologies were also received from Liz Ghamar and Mireille Alwan (Associate Governors) The governing board accepted these apologies without comment in line with the policy of the governing body . There were four absent governors.

**1.3** The meeting was quorate.

## **2. Declarations of interest for this agenda**

**2.1** There were no declarations of pecuniary interest in respect to items on the agenda.

**2.2** Governors Gavin Davies, David Adams, Laura Thompson, Robin Warren, Joseph Collins, Amal Abbamin, Isabel Murphy, and Associate Governor Laura Beeson completed the annual Governors' Register Of Interests Form declaring any interests they had. Governors who were absent would be asked to complete the Declaration Form by the end of the next meeting of the governing board.

**ACTION 2.2: Members of the Governing Board who have not yet completed a Declaration Form for the Register of Pecuniary Interests for Academic Year 2018-19 are asked to complete the Declaration Form by the next meeting of the governing board on Tuesday 27 November 2018.**

## **3. The Governing Body**

**3.1** Drive access – all governors and associates present at the meeting except for one, Laura Smith, confirmed they have set up access to the Governing Board GoogleDrive to access documentation. The Chair requested any members of the governing board who have not yet set up a GoogleDrive account do so immediately.

**3.2** DBS - School Business Manager Irene Mitchell stated that all members of the governing body had an up-to-date Enhanced DBS certificate except for one - Governor Joseph Collins and he confirmed that the process was underway.

**3.3** Attendance Report - a draft attendance report the governing body was received by the meeting. An amendment was made to the attendance of Governor Isabel Murphy who was inaccurately recorded as absent from the meeting of 27 November 2017 - this was amended to record her presence. Missing data was supplied recording Associate Laura Beeson as absent due to maternity leave on the 21 March 2018. The Attendance Report was noted pending these two amendments.

**ACTION: Attendance Report 2017-18 to be amended by the Clerk and signed off by the Chair of Governors.**

## **4. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Board**

**4.1** Governor David Adams reminded governors that he was stepping down from the governing board in December 2018 and Governor Gavin Davies had put his name forward as a replacement Chair of the Governing Board.

**4.2** Question: What is Gavin Davies background?

Answer: Gavin Davies started work as a mathematician. He has since worked for a giant American consultancy firm called AeCom. He is an elected parent governor.

**4.3** Nominations were then taken for the new chair of the governing board. Isabel Murphy nominated Gavin Davies and Laura Thompson seconded. No further nominations were made. Governors then voted and Gavin Davies was elected unanimously as the new Chair of the Governing Board.

**4.4** Governor David Adams reminded governors that following the expiry of the term of office of the previous Vice-Chair of the Governing Board Tania Wilkinson, a new vice-chair was now sought. Governor Ophelia Field had put her name forward. Nominations were then taken for the new vice-chair of the governing board. David Adams nominated Ophelia Field and Isabel Murphy seconded. No further nominations were made. Governors then voted and Ophelia Field was elected unanimously as the new Vice-Chair of the Governing Board.

**4.5** Gavin Davies was welcomed to his new role and then took over as the chair of this meeting.

## **5. Report from the outgoing Chair of the Governing Board**

**5.1** Governor David Adams delivered his final Chair's Report to the governing body.

**5.2** Governor Adams reported that since the last meeting of the governing board he had been dealing with identifying a replacement chair and vice chair of the governing board.

**5.3** Governor Adams stated that he would continue to meet with the Headteacher and new Chair of the governing board until December 2018 when he will step down from the governing board completely. He will also attend a meeting with the London Borough of Camden to discuss the school results – the new Chair of Governors Gavin Davies would not be available to attend this meeting and so the new Vice-Chair of Governors Ophelia Field will attend instead.

**5.4** This concluded a report from outgoing Chair David Adams. Members of the governing body then thanked him for his time as chair of the governing board, and agreed that the school had improved under his chairship.

## **6. Amendment to the Terms Of Reference**

**6.1** An amendment to the Terms Of Reference of the governing board and its committees was then presented to the meeting - that the governing board permit different forms of remote attendance at meetings in exceptional circumstances.

**6.2** A discussion took place on the principle of remote attendance at governing board and committee meetings. One governor stated that allowing remote attendance at meetings through conference call or video call was a way of ensuring good attendance. It allowed flexibility for governors who were unable to get to the Primrose Hill in time for a meeting.

**6.3** One governor stated that conference calls were a useful tool but can be difficult and frustrating. They can also be logistically difficult so there would be a need to ensure technical facilities are working properly.

**6.4 Question:** Are there GDPR issues related to remote attendance?

Answer: There can be concerns with regard to confidential matters being discussed using telephone calls or video calls, particularly if the person who is attending the meeting remotely is in a room with other people. This could be dealt with by ensuring confidential matters are not discussed using video calls on conference calls.

**6.5** One governor suggested that Chair's discretion and good practice should be used when items of a confidential or sensitive nature are discussed at meetings where one governor is attending remotely. This was agreed by the governing board.

**6.6 Question:** What options are available for remote attendance at meetings?

Answer: The two options are a voice call such as a telephone call or conference call, or a video call.

**6.7** The governing board then took a vote on whether to allow remote attendance at governing board and committee meetings. Governors voted to except the principle of remote attendance, however it was made clear that this should usually be in exceptional circumstances with chair's discretion.

**6.8** The governing board then took a vote on which methods of remote attendance to allow at governing board and committee meetings. Governors voted to accept telephone conference call or video call/Skype call as methods of remote attendance at meetings.

**6.9** The governing board then had a discussion on whether governors should be allowed to vote on decisions via remote attendance. Governors voted to accept telephone conference call or video call/Skype call as methods of voting on decisions when attending remotely at governing board and committee meetings.

**6.10** Governors then began a discussion on proxy voting being allowed for governors who were absent from meetings. A number of concerns were raised. The Chair requested the Clerk establish what was good practice with regard to proxy voting at governing board meetings before any decision to allow proxy voting takes place.

**ACTION 6.10: The Clerk to find out good practice on voting by proxy being used in decision-making at governing board and committee meetings and report back to the Chair of the Governing Board. A discussion on whether to allow proxy voting would be deferred until after that time. Item deferred.**

## **7. Chairs and membership of the committees**

**7.1 Finance and Premises Committee** – There were no proposed changes to the membership of this committee. It was agreed that Governor Gavin Davies continue as the chair of this committee until a new chair had been identified.

**ACTION 7.1: Governors to consider volunteering to Chair the Finance and Premises Committee. Interested governors to contact Chair Gavin Davies before the next meeting.**

**7.2 Curriculum and Pupil Welfare Committee** – There were no proposed changes to the membership of this committee. However it was noted that the results of the governors skills audit had shown there was still an overall lack of finance skills on the governing board. New governors to fill vacancies on the governing board were currently being sought. Governors were informed that Governor Ophelia Field had offered to chair this committee.

**7.3 Staff, Leadership and Performance Committee** – There were no proposed changes to the membership of this committee. Governors were informed that Governor Hilary Aylesworth had offered to chair this committee.

**7.4 Headteacher's Performance Management Committee** – it was agreed that Governor David Adams would continue as chair of this committee alongside newly elected committee members Gavin Davies and and Ophelia Field. The Head Teacher expressed that the remaining vacancy should be filled by a non-parent governor.

**7.5** The governing board voted to accept all of the above proposed changes to each committee.

## **8. Appoint link governor responsibilities**

**8.1** The governing board considered who to appoint as link governors with responsibility for various parts of the schools work. After some discussion the following link governors were agreed:

- responsibility for English - Laura Thomson;
- responsibility from Maths and Computing - Alice Gray;

- responsibility for Inclusion - Ophelia Field;
- responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding - Hilary Aylesworth;
- responsibility for Governing Training and Development - Alice Gray;
- responsibility for Mental Health - Isabel Murphy;

**8.2** Governors agreed that there was little need for a separate link governor for computing and that the responsibility for computing could be included in the responsibilities of the link governor for maths.

**8.3** The Chair suggested to governors that a new link governor role should be established to be responsible for ensuring the school is meeting all its requirements prior to a future Ofsted inspection and that the school is meeting all of its statutory responsibilities. It was also important for all governors to be aware of the best way to answer questions posed by the Ofsted Inspectors. Chair Gavin Davies offered to take on this role.

**8.4 Question:** What actually happens when Ofsted show up at the school?

Answer:

Ofsted inspectors come the day before an inspection and inform us they will be coming back to the school the following day for two days. The schools self-evaluation is an important document for the Headteacher to focus on throughout the inspection. Ofsted may ask for meetings with the governors - this won't be every governor, only some. The questions are not designed to be memory tests. The inspectors are more concerned to find out how governors are aware of what is going on in the school - are governors just told what is going on or have they observed the school activities reported on during their school governor visits?

**8.5** The Headteacher stated that a meeting to prepare governors for an Ofsted Inspection will take place before the end of this calendar year.

**8.6** The governing board voted to accept all of the above proposed changes to the link governor roles.

## **9. Verbal report from the Headteacher on the new school term and performance**

**9.1** The Headteacher stated that the new school term had started well at the school. The focus has been on settling the new reception children. This has been aided by the new reception classrooms in the basement of the building. The new reception classrooms have an opening onto an outside area which has been a benefit for the reception classes. The Headteacher reported an improvement in the nursery transition due to the children already being in the 2 Year Old Provision.

**9.2** The Headteacher had also been making plans to prepare for a number of staff who will be on maternity leave. The senior leadership team would be working on ensuring there was cover. There was also a few other staffing issues to address this term which would be followed up in the Staffing, Leadership & Performance Committee..

**9.3** The consultation on planning permission for the new school barge has been published. A number of hostile remarks by members of the local community had been made. A few of the most outrageous remarks were withdrawn from the consultation document by the local authority following its premature publication.

**9.4** The Headteacher circulated a data report for the school cohort 2017-18. Governors were informed that a number of meetings had taken place to discuss data and results. A meeting is also being held in preparation for a future Ofsted visit to the school. The governing board agreed that there should be a continued focus on school attendance and key groups who were underperforming both at the school and in London. The Headteacher stated that the gender gap in early years data was reducing. It was also noted there was less of a gap between EAL children compared to non-EAL children. The Headteacher stated that although there was a gap

between disadvantaged children and non-disadvantaged children at the school, data showed that by year seven they had caught up and were doing really well.

**9.5** The Headteacher informed governors that data showed that progress in maths had been very good. This was a SIP priority last year.

**9.6** One governor congratulated the Headteacher and the school for the Data Report for the School Cohort 2017-18. He stated that the school had done really well for the children in this cohort.

**9.7** The Headteacher stated that the Data Report for the School Cohort 2017-18 would form the basis of the standards meeting he, the Vice-Chair of Governors and Governor David Adams would have with the London Borough of Camden. The purpose of this meeting was for the school to show the funds it had received from the London Borough of Camden had resulted in good standards of education.

**9.10** The Headteacher also informed governors that the School Self Evaluation Form and the School Improvement Plan had been uploaded onto the GoogleDrive for governors to read.

**9.11** The Chair asked if there were any questions about the Headteacher's Report. No questions were asked.

## **10. Receive updates from committees**

**10.1** It was noted that no committee meetings had taken place since the last full governors meeting, and therefore there were no updates.

## **11. ASD Provision**

**11.1** The Headteacher updated the governing board on the ASD provision proposal. The plan was for the governing board to take a decision at this meeting on proceeding with this proposal and then if the governing board has voted yes to proceed an email will be sent out informing parents of the ASD provision proposal. Unfortunately an admin error had occurred while preparing a draft of this email and the email had been sent out prematurely informing parents prior to the governing board making a decision tonight. The Headteacher apologised to the governing board for this admin error.

**11.2** Governors were then given the opportunity to ask questions on the ASD provision proposal prior to a decision being taken.

**11.3 Question:** In the Camden consultation it states that the ASD provision will cater for 14 children with an option for a further 14 children until there were eventually 28. Is the expansion to 28 children a certainty?

Answer:

That part of the consultation may need rewording by the school. There is the possibility of eventually extending to 28 in a building to be built in the current school playground, but the school currently feels this is too many. However we think it is best to be open about the possible extension to 28 children rather than keeping this possibility a secret from the local community.

**11.4** One governor stated that they felt there was a compelling case for the ASD provision to be established, but extending it to 28 children may be controversial.

**11.5 Question:** Is the plan for there to be 14 children in the first year or will be number of children gradually increase over several years?

Answer:

There will be 2 children in the first year of the ASD provision, then 2 more until finally there are 14 children over seven years. There will not be a sudden influx of 14 children, nor a sudden expansion to 28.

**11.6** Governors stated there should be clarity on the timescale in the document - it should be made clear that only two ASD children would be admitted in the first year, a further two a year later and so on until eventually reaching a full provision of 14 children. Making that timescale clear would prevent confusion about the proposal and possible hostility.

**11.7 Question:** Should the consultation document be rewritten without reference to a possible expansion to 28 children?

Answer:

The possible extension to 28 children does need to be mentioned in this document as we would prefer to be open and for there to be no secrets about the possibilities. It would also mean we do not have to carry out a further consultation if there are eventually plans to extend the provision to 28 at a later date.

**11.8 Question:** Would this document benefit from a frequently asked questions section?

Answer:

There is a section in the document that serves this purpose. However it could be made more apparent.

**11.9 Question:** Are the school staff familiar with the requirements of ASD pupil admissions?

Answer:

This school already admits pupils with ASD - the school is already familiar with the process of considering ASD pupils for admission and which pupils would benefit from coming to the school and which would not.

**11.10 Question:** Do other schools cater for ASD pupils in the same way that Primrose Hill does?

Answer:

Primrose Hill School follows its statutory responsibilities and rules regarding ASD pupil admissions.

**11.11 Question:** Will the existing ASD children in the school be moved into the ASD resource base?

Answer:

No they will remain in their current class. The new ASD provision is for new ASD pupils to the school who will be admitted to the dedicated ASD resource base.

**11.12 Question:** Will the local authority coordinate admissions to the ASD provision?

Answer:

Yes. Syra Sowe on behalf of the school attends meetings with the Camden School Admissions Department each year.

**11.13 Question:** Two aspects of the consultation document concerned me. The secondary provision was a concern. Also the playground at Primrose Hill School is outstanding and resources in the playground are very good and attracts parents to send their children to the school. The new building in this playground would take up a huge part of this playground.

Answer:

Parts of the school grounds are a luxury, for example the staff car park. At many schools staff either park on the road or make alternative travel arrangements. The Aeroball game in the playground also takes up a huge amount of space. These parts of the school grounds could be put to more effective use. The idea of a playground on the school roof is also a good idea. It was also suggested that an ASD provision of 28 children could be located on the top floor of the school in four classrooms - however this would mean those current classes would need to be relocated elsewhere in the grounds.

**11.14** One governor stated that losing part of the current school playground to build a new building for the ASD provision could be controversial and the school would need to win over

those who were against such proposals. There are also concerns about a provision as large as 28 ASD children.

**11.15 Question:** Once the ASD provision is up and running the school may start attracting many more high needs children who may not be diagnosed with ASD. Will this change the school's usual population?

**Answer:**

Yes the school will no doubt attract more pupils with high needs but it is doubtful whether this will change the school's cohort. The schools could still consider those high needs applications and won't necessarily accept all of them. It will only accept those where we have the resources to meet their needs.

**11.15 Question:** Once the ASD provision is up and running would this affect the school's geographical catchment?

**Answer:**

No this will not affect the schools existing cohort. However the ASD provision will be a hub for the Borough of Camden. The plan is for there to be various specialist hubs based around the borough. The small number of pupils who were admitted into the ASD provision will however attend most of their classes in the main school with the other pupils.

**11.16** One governor requested that parents be made clear that the ASD provision will not affect the school's existing cohort or geographical catchment.

**11.17 Question:** Will the larger number of ASD pupils affect the schools overall results and data?

**Answer:**

No. Even if these pupils haven't met their age related expectations they will still make huge progress at this school. The good level of development statistic may change a little however as this will be 2 ASD children out of 30, but the schools results are unlikely to be significantly affected as a whole as the results are already very good given the similar existing cohort.

**11.18 Question:** Will the school staffing structure change as a result?

**Answer:**

The responsibilities of the Inclusion Manager will increase so this may need to become an assistant head role and the appointment of a SENDCO could be considered. The school will need a staff-pupil ratio of one staff for four children.

**11.19** The governing board then considered the matter of whether to accept the proposal plans for an ASD provision. A vote was taken. Governors voted unanimously in favour of accepting this proposal.

## **12. Minutes of the governing board meeting held on 11 July 2018 and matters arising**

**12.1** The governing board received and read the minutes of the governing board meeting held on 11 July 2018. Governors accepted them as an accurate record.

**12.2** There was one matter arising – *Item 3.1: Chair to write to the local authority requesting they propose a new local authority governor for the school.*

The former Chair of the Governing Board David Adams confirmed that this had now taken place and the local authority was in the process of identifying a replacement local authority governor.

**12.3** The minutes of the governing board meeting held on the 11 July 2018 were then signed off by the former-Chair and placed on file at the school.

## **13. Dates of future FGB meetings**

**13.1** Governing body meetings in academic year 2018-19 are scheduled to take place as follows:



- Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018;
- Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019;
- Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

#### **14. Any other business**

**14.1 Question:** Please can the school provide high visibility bibs for pupils to wear on school visits?

Answer:

Yes the Headteacher is planning to do this, however bibs are not always ideal as they don't always fit over children's coats. Instead we may consider sashes.

**14.2 Question:** Please can the school consider having some beehives in the grounds?

Answer:

Yes the school can look into this.

**14.3** Some governors expressed their positive thoughts on beehives. It was suggested that one governor could report on their experience of installing beehives in their back garden.

**14.4** There being no further business and no confidential items, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and brought the meeting to a close at 8pm.

Signed..... Date.....

**Gavin Davies, Chair, Primrose Hill School Governing Board**

#### **ACTIONS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF FGB OF 11 July 2018**

**To be completed at the next stage of circulation**