



Westbrook Primary School

Full Governing Board Meeting, Monday 4th March 2024

6pm – 8pm

At the School

MINUTES

Present: Julie Lamirel (JL)
Helen Keane (HK)
Earl Collins (EC)
Hardeep Dhillon (HD)
Mariam Asghar (MA)
Angela Khungar (AK)
Dr Melvyn Tatters, Head Teacher (HT)
Carly Benton, Deputy Headteacher, Staff Governor (CB)

In Attendance: Gurmeet Virdee, School Business Manager (SBM)
Amarin Hans, DT subject lead (for Item 9) (AH)
Helen Keane, Assistant Headteacher (HK)

Clerk: Samantha Rennie

The meeting started at 18.03

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Paul Bepey (PB) and Priti Singh (PS).

Manpreet Babbra (MB) was absent.

With the PB unavailable, HT took the chair.

2. Declarations of interests

HT declared that his partner was employed at the school; he was also Chair of Governors at Oaklands School.

MA declared that she was employed at Oaklands School.

Item 9 was taken at this point in the meeting at 18.12h.

3. Membership

There were no changes to Governor membership

4. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the FGB held on 27th November 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from the minutes of 27th November:

Agenda Item	ACTION	Lead	Deadline
2	Governors to update Trust Governor with declarations and confirmations <i>HT reminded Governors how to do this</i>	ALL GOVS	asap
2	Collate Governor details and update School website <i>Completed</i>	School	Asap after action 1
3	MA to consider volunteering for the Executive Committee <i>ACTION: MA to discuss further with HT. Item to be carried forward to the Summer FGB.</i>	MA	Asap
3	Delete Mr Bari from Trust Governor as he is no longer a Governor <i>ACTION: HT to confirm this has been actioned (Post-Minute: completed)</i>	School	asap
5	Complete skills audit on Trust Governor <i>Completed</i>	MA	By end of Term
5	Update details on Trust Governor <i>Completed</i>	ALL GOVS	By end of Term
5	Assist with Deep Dive in French <i>Completed</i>	JL	March 2024

5	Assist with Deep Dive in Art Completed	PB	When required
5	Check number of absence days for support staff and update Governors HT reports that high figures due to a member of staff with long term sickness, eventually took early requirement, and another with long-term eye problems. Former was a young staff member	Jasmine via HT	asap
5	Visit School for Deep Dive into Music Completed	PB	When convenient
10	Share Wellbeing plan with Governors when finalised. Completed	HT	When finalised
13	Adopted policies to be published on school website. Completed	School	Asap
14	Governors to refer any media enquiries regarding the house-fire to HT. Completed	ALL GOVS HT	As required
14	Governors to attend the school when funerals are taking place to welcome community members. See Item 8 on this agenda (HT report)	ALL GOVS	When notified
15	Lead Governors for Cyber and Safeguarding to produce a report on cyber safety for the school Meeting with JosKos arranged but PB unable to attend. ACTION: HT to follow up with PB and revert to other trustees if Paul is unavailable. And Gurmeet and Mel to press Joskos further for a standard report template.	PB and AK	??
16	Circulate a link for Governors to sign up to relevant training Completed	School ALL GOVS	Ongoing
21	Include audited accounts on the next FGB Agenda Completed	Clerk	By 11 th March 2024

6. Executive Committee Report

JL presented minutes of the EC meeting held on 5th February 2024 and highlighted key points from the meeting:

- Pupil absence was discussed, including options for addressing it such as changing term dates which, as an academy, School has the power to do. HT noted that school dates for 2024/25 have now been published and circulated to members, so changing them might be more of a challenge, although not impossible.

- Diversity monitoring of Governors was discussed. HT noted that all Governors had now agreed to participate and were now being surveyed. Diversity data will be published on the school website.

[Next to Exec names – ‘list of names missing - Remove Helen, add Julie’ (??)]

There were no further questions

7. Feedback from Governor meetings with Teachers

HD reported on her observation of School’s efforts to encourage reading, including reading for pleasure. She had focussed on Y1 and special needs children and was very impressed with the genuine passion expressed by teachers for reading and their great ideas for further encouraging it – such as reading clubs and audio books.

EC reported that in his meetings, teacher enthusiasm really came through. Buy-in has been secured from staff and their passion is demonstrable. Staff also positively welcomed constructive feedback offered by Governors, and took on board all comments and suggestions – which demonstrated a keen interest in improvement.

MA supported previous comments, adding that staff were reflective and keen to improve, open and honest about the journey they’d come on in their subjects. They were very responsive and open to suggestions.

JL reported that Maths Mastery was well structured across year groups. CPD had evidently increased confidence in teaching Maths.

HK added that AI training was well received by teachers, and there had been a healthy debate on the issue between staff.

HT finished by pointing out the number of inset days was limited, which also limited the ability to deliver staff training across every subject taught at School.

8. Headteacher Report

HT referred to his written report provided with the Agenda and highlighted key points:

Kishen family Tragedy: The School’s Memorial Day was well attended and the family had offered gifts to the school in appreciation. A commemorative bench was unveiled in the school playground. Chair PB was present and spoke with family members. Staff had attended the funerals.

Governors asked about mental health support provided to staff and pupils. HT confirmed a high level of support was offered in the aftermath of the tragedy. The bench was a fitting legacy and now being well used and he was conscious that the School needed to move forward. An anniversary event may be considered in future years.

Staffing:

- Two teachers were on long term sick leave with posts covered by supply teachers.
- School is still recruiting for cleaners and lunch-time support.
- An experienced candidate had been recruited to support nursery children.

Attendance:

- There were still some issues with attendance – mainly due to specific families removing children for holidays, often without prior notification.
- Governors queried what could be done to address this, and HT pointed out that LA fines did not deter them, nor 121 meetings with the HT before or after the child's return from school. Children in these cases could not easily be removed from school. One option might be to change the school term dates and he invited other suggestions from Governors. There were none.

In-Year Admissions:

- HT went on to describe the changing profile of pupils entering the school. Some new arrivals were still wearing nappies, many had no English.
- Many more were arriving and leaving mid-term, with undiagnosed behavioural issues and challenging family circumstances. A large number were from refugee and asylum seeker families and trauma affected. They were being moved in and out of the borough without prior notice to families or school. This was impacting pupil attainment and School results because pupils were not at School long enough for them to achieve improvements.
- It was not unusual for family moves to be cancelled or postponed at the last minute, after children had said their farewells, and this was deeply unsettling to all concerned.
- HT noted that a number of new pupils were also known to social services. The behavioural challenges presented by some, and their parents, could lead to increased pressures on School staff which he was keen to mitigate or manage.
- HT emphasised that the intake of pupils facing challenges to their learning was increasing over time, and this trend was only likely to grow. This presented School with a dilemma as it was now not possible to be both an inclusive school and a high-results-achieving school.
- Whilst children coming into the school clearly achieved well over time, overall School results were skewed downwards by unpredictable arrivals and departures of pupils with high levels of need. This was happening randomly across school Years and term times
- A discussion followed with Governors raising points and queries regarding the school's powers and options in the face of the changing pupil profile and movements. A key point of discussion was whether School should reduce form-entry level:
 - o School's auditor had advised against reducing form entry level as it would reduce income.
 - o If income reduced, consequent staffing could potentially be managed by not replacing posts as they became vacant.
 - o Any change would need wide community consultation and could only therefore be implemented the year after next at the earliest.
 - o Westbrook is probably the only school in the local (central Hounslow) area that has decided not to reduce the form of entry. There is a large capacity of school places within Hounslow.

- It was **agreed** that further Governor discussion was needed on whether reducing form entry level was a viable option for School

ACTION: HS, JL and HT to form a Working Group to explore reducing form entry level in response to the changing pupil profile and erratic on- and off-rolling. Group to meet in May and report back to the next Summer FGB.

9. Deep Dive

This item was taken at 18.06h

Art

AH stated Art is taught within DT and presented key points from the report circulated with the agenda:

- Based on feedback from teachers, this year School changed to using the Kapow Primary scheme of work to teach art. This includes wider cross-school learning. Skill progression and assessment have now also been made clearer
- Staff feedback indicated that teachers are now more confident teaching art – a result of the many CPD mini-videos on Kapow for teachers to dip into.
- It was clear that children take pride in their sketchbooks and their art works.
- Art is clearly visible around the classroom.

Areas for improvement include:

- Assessment paperwork still needs to be kept on track and this is an area for continuous improvement as children are keen to keep only their artworks in sketchbooks rather than include assessments. End of year assessments will be kept in the back of DT folder so children are able to constantly engage with their art.
- Early Years art works often go home with the children. School is trying to keep some in the school so pupils can continue to engage with it.

Coming up:

- Sky Arts week is coming up 17-21st June and children are looking forward to this

Following a question from Governors regarding what Art Ambassadors thought of early years art teaching, AH said they very much enjoyed it. Ambassadors participate in deep dives to observe lessons.

There were no further questions and AH left the meeting at 18.12h.

French

HK presented the report circulated with the Agenda. Key points included

- The change this year to using Language Angels scheme of work, which is used for all language teaching across School. This was proving very popular among both children and teachers.

- 100% of children now enjoyed learning French – they especially liked the repetition of words to perfect pronunciation. And the scheme was increasing teachers’ confidence to teach French.
- Cross-school learning and progression was now much clearer, as was evidence of assessment.
- Children are now able to link their learning across subjects and with prior learning in French. A whole-school approach included French assemblies and display boards in French displayed around School.
- A Staff training day in January had led to teachers who were previously nervous about teaching French being now much more confident. Planning works well with Kapow and saves teacher time, along with the ease of producing re-usable ‘click and print’ teaching resources.

Areas for improvement include

- Tracking paperwork
- Knowledge Organisers need to be tweaked, and end of year assessments need to be made more consistent across years.

Coming up:

- Assessment Training will be the next step to roll out.
- School will also try and set up a French club.

Following questions from Governors, HK clarified that Mrs Mohammed is not a French speaker, but that Mrs Killeel, who is, was pleasantly surprised that School is on track and able to demonstrate how well the language is being taught. HK added that it was worth noting French is sometimes a Westbrook child’s 3rd or 4th language.

There were no further questions

Maths

CB presented the paper circulated with the agenda on behalf of Mrs Simpson and outlined results from parent and staff surveys undertaken by the Maths Team.

- 30 responses were received from staff (50:50 teachers and support staff).
- Most staff were confident with the Mastery approach to teaching maths across abilities, believed it provided a good balance between fluency and reasoning in maths, and that a growth mindset and resilience questions were improving Maths learning outcomes.
- The Parent survey received 43 responses: 95% felt maths was important. 70% had themselves enjoyed maths in school, which was surprisingly high, and 30% reported difficulties in supporting their children’s learning. 88% felt their child was motivated and challenged in maths in school.

Areas for improvement:

- 50% of parents did not indicate they were happy or very happy with the level of information received about how their child was learning or their child's progress in maths (although the survey did not demonstrate they were *unhappy*)

A discussion among Governors on this issue raised the following points:

- This poor rating may be related to homework – where parents felt less confident in supporting their child. She also commented that 43 responses was a low proportion of school parents.
- HT noted parents had been sent a lot of surveys recently and in any case, School may be able to address this parental concern at the end of the year with a demonstration of maths teaching to parents.
- HD suggested translating surveys into parents' primary language and HT proposed using Research RockStar, an online research tool which was easy to use and provided immediate feedback

This item was completed at 18.28h.

10. Attendance

HT presented the Attendance report circulated with the agenda. He reported that attendance data is tracked weekly using FFT Aspire and absence mainly affects children in Reception and those with SEN support below EHCP level. School does not fall significantly below national averages, although could still do better. HT invited comments and suggestions.

There were none.

11. Finance Report

SBM took Governors through the detailed written finance report

Cost Centre Summary: This showed the forecast for year end 2023/24 to be £345,309 deficit, as at the end of January. This was £10k better than previously forecast and shows finances are largely to budget at this point, with the difference due to updated staffing forecast, the Support staff pay award having been processed and reforecasting of school meals income which is much lower than the previous year due to the Mayors UFSM programme. The latter has been extended for another year.

Governors raised questions about staffing, the main cost centre within the budget. SBM explained that the long term sickness of 2 staff members was unusual, but one will be going onto a lower rate in April. A high contingency for HR legal advice may be partly recoverable from insurance.

Guarding Against Fraud: SBM reported that a recent Fraud and Operational Service Review with NatWest was completed on 24th January as part of School's commitment to safeguarding school assets and guarding against fraud. School was advised it had good systems in place that challenged unusual activity and odd queries. NatWest recommended that School require approval of payments by 2 members of SLT and introduce a maximum payment amount to minimize risk further.

Governors therefore unanimously **approved** a limit of £40k as a maximum payment amount for one payment to any single supplier, above which HT validation is to be required.

Reserves: SBM went on to describe the significant reserves held by School and HT clarified LA policy for maintained schools is to clawback reserves amounting to more than 8.3% of a school's annual budget. Westbrook's reserves amounted to 44% of its budget, but as an academy, there was currently no automatic right for the LA to clawback funds. This could change.

SBM explained that although School was maintaining a managed deficit, it would be prudent to invest some of the reserves and her paper proposed the following:

- Refurbishment work Max £50k
- Playground equipment Max £5k
- Reception post £36k annual costs 23/24 (£108k min over 3 years)

A discussion followed. HT provided further details on the Admin post proposed – currently filled by a Temp who was popular and provided valuable admin support to staff. Governors further added that School could benefit from two minibuses, that further decoration was needed around the school building and that further investment in playground equipment would be beneficial.

In the meantime, the specific expenditure described above was unanimously **approved**.

Site Manager Rent Increase: Governors were asked to approve a 5% annual increase in the site manager's rent/rate of £39 per month. Governors queried the low rent and were advised this was a legacy issue from the LA pre-dating Westbrook's academy status.

Governors unanimously **approved** the 5% increase

12. Policy Review:

HT took Governors through the following policies which were circulated with the agenda:

Equality Policy and Objectives: This Policy was updated in line with the updated equalities legislation and language, notably to reduce the offensive language used by children in instances of racial abuse, to increase attendance and punctuality. The revised policy also now required training for Governance involved in recruitment.

Governors **approved** the revised policy

Volunteer Helpers Policy: This stated the requirements, including checks, on volunteer helpers for trips and other occasional events. The policy was unchanged from previously.

Governors **confirmed approval** of the policy

Food and Drink Policy: This covered children's access to water and hot meals, it did not incorporate the Mayor's FSM as this was a temporary scheme. .

Governors **approved** the updated policy.

13. SIP and SEF

HT introduced the papers circulated with the agenda

The Self Evaluation results were all rated Good. SIP and SEF will be shared with Challenge partners who will go through them next term.

There were no queries from Governors.

14. Safeguarding

HT presented the Safeguarding report and data circulated with the agenda and summarised key points. He noted an online WhatsApp incident brought to School's attention by a parent who's child had received a message with sexualised language. There had also been some racial incidents and some bullying reported.

In response to Governor's questions, HT mentioned anti-bullying practice carried out by School and invitations to Police to come and speak about harassment. He noted that all staff undertake online training on anti-bullying.

AK (Designated Safeguarding Governor) reported that she had also visited School in March 2024 to look at Safeguarding records, HR files and the Single Central Record and found all in order.

There were no questions

15. Wellbeing and Mental Health

HT reported initial findings from the staff survey, not yet completed. Most results indicate a moderate satisfaction, with variations depending on personal circumstances.

HT noted the MH lead, Kim, who is a trained counsellor and reminded Governors of the Wellbeing Policy in place.

The survey indicated the main cause of stress to be a sense of having to do unnecessary admin tasks, much of which are actually unavoidable, despite efforts to reduce admin over the years.

HT drew Governors' attention to the qualitative feedback (comments) at the bottom of the survey report, including comments on delayed email responses from other staff. He explained these were unavoidable as most staff were in fact teaching all day and could not be expected to respond outside of working hours.

Staff feedback indicated a desire for more teambuilding and more was now being planned.

HT noted the decline in staff availability for extra-curricular work out of hours, and the poor -life balance reported by many.

Future surveys would be annual.

There were no questions from Governors.

16. AOB

Wrap Around Care: a parent had requested half-hourly provision and been told this was not financially viable. HT stated that School was already the cheapest provider in the borough. Governors **endorsed** HT's view and declined to provide half hourly provision.

Temp Admin Post: this was covered under Item 11, Page 9 and approved.

GB Meetings next year:

Autumn 2024

Monday 14th October. Executive Committee 5:30-6:30pm

Monday 18th November. 6:00pmAGM

Monday 25th November. Full Governing Body Meeting 6:00-8:00pm

Spring 2025

Monday 3rd Feb. Executive Committee 5:30-6:30pm

Monday 3rd March. Full Governing Body Meeting 6:00-8:00pm(tbc)

Summer 2025

Monday 2nd June. Executive Committee 5:30-6:30pm

Monday 23rd June. Full Governing Body Meeting 6:00-8:00pm

17. Dates of Next Meetings

Monday 25th March. Executive Committee 5:30-6:30pm

Summer 2024

Monday 3rd June. Executive Committee 5:30-6:30pm

Monday 24th June. Full Governing Body Meeting 6:00-8:00pm

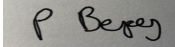
Monday 8th July. Executive Committee 5:30-6:30pm

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING

Action No	Agenda Item	ACTION	Lead	Deadline
1	5	MA to discuss EC membership further with HT. Item to be carried forward to ty he Summer FGB.	MA & HT	Summar FGB
2	5	To follow up with PB re meeting with JosKos on cyber safety and revert to other trustees if Paul is unavailable. And SBM and HT to press Joskos further for a standard report template.	HT & SBM	asap

3	8	Form a Working Group to explore reducing form entry level in response to the changing pupil profile and erratic on- and off-rolling.	HT, JL & HS	Meet May Report Summer FGB

The Meeting closed 20.16pm

Signed: 

Dated: 24.6.24