

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF
WESTMINSTER NURSERY SCHOOL
HELD REMOTELY ON 17th NOVEMBER 2021
(Commenced 4.30pm)**

Governors Present:

D Reed	(DR)	Chair
E Hulse	(EH)	Headteacher
E Austin	(EA)	
L Buchanan	(LB)	
D Clark	(DC)	
E Connor	(EC)	
C Naismith	(CN)	
S Khatun	(SK)	
N Tice	(NT)	
L Woolley	(LW)	

Also in attendance:

H Cummings	(HC)	Clerk
S Lomas	(SL)	Observer

PART ONE

Training on the new Early Years curriculum had been planned, but information packs prepared for governors could not be shared as the meeting had been moved online. Instead, DC made a short presentation on the role of governors, and EH talked through the governor visit form that governors should complete after their visits to the nursery.

ACTION: Clerk to upload presentation to GovernorHub.

1. APOLOGIES AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) ITEMS

The Chair welcomed Sarah Lomas to the meeting as an observer, prior to her taking over as Clerk to the board.

Apologies were received and accepted from Neil Smith.

There was one item of other business:

- The plaque for the bench in memory of Dorothy Flude.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Governors were asked to declare any potential pecuniary interest or conflict of interests with the business to be discussed during the meeting. The following potential conflicts were declared:

- D Reed is also a governor at Beechwood Primary School, Crewe.
- D Clark a governor at Pebble Brook Primary School, Crewe, and also a member of Crewe Town Council.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Governors agreed the appointment of Connor Naismith as a Local Authority Governor, following approval by the LA panel, and welcomed him to the board. CN's term of office would be 4 years from 17/11/21.

Governors also agreed to co-opt EA for a further term of 4 years, and thanked her for her continued support of the nursery. EA's term of office to run from 1/11/21 when her previous term expired.

- b) There were no governor vacancies to note.
- c) No terms of office were due to expire before the next meeting in March 2022.
- d) NS would complete the necessary checks for CN.
- e) Governors confirmed that NS was responsible for updating GIAS (Get Information About Schools) as necessary.

4. PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- a) Governors **approved** the minutes of the previous Board of Governors meeting on 14th July 2021. Due to the virtual nature of the meeting, the Chair would enter a typed signature on the minutes, and these would be signed once the school was re-opened.
- b) All part 1 actions had been completed with the exception of Safeguarding training. Governors were reminded to inform LB and DR of the date they completed the Safeguarding training, so records could be updated accordingly. **Action c/f**

5. CHAIR'S ACTION

No decisions had been taken under Chair's action,

6. COMMITTEES AND NOMINATED GOVERNORS

- a) Governors approved the committee membership for 2021/22 as follows:

Curriculum Committee	Elizabeth Hulse Liz Austin Donna Reed (chair) Dawn Clark Emma Connor Shakie Khatun	Premises Committee	Elizabeth Hulse Liz Austin (chair) Nathan Tice Linda Buchanan Neil Smith Tricia Woolley
Finance Committee	Elizabeth Hulse Donna Reed (chair) Neil Smith Nathan Tice Connor Naismith Emma Connor	Chairs Committee	Elizabeth Hulse Donna Reed Dawn Clark Liz Austin
HTPMP	Donna Reed Dawn Clark External Advisor: Katie Tyrie		

Governors had been allocated according to their skills and all confirmed that they were happy with the allocations.

- b) Committee Chairs were elected by the respective committees.

c) Individual governor responsibilities were agreed as follows:

SEND	Shakie Khatun
Safeguarding/ Cared for children	Donna Reed
Training	Linda Buchanan
Pupil Premium	Dawn Clark
Health and Safety	Liz Austin

d) The Terms of Reference for each of the committees above had been reviewed in committee and on GovernorHub and were approved by the board.

e) The Terms of Reference for the following ad hoc committees were included in the ToR document on Governor Hub and were approved by the board:

- Pay Committee
- Complaints Committee
- Pupil Exclusions Committee
- Staff Grievance Committee
- Appeals Committee

7. CONSTITUTION AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE HEADTEACHER'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING APPOINTMENT OF THE EXTERNAL ADVISER

The membership and terms of reference of the HTPM panel were approved by governors, see item 6 above.

It was agreed that Katie Tyrie should continue as the adviser for 2021/22. Governors felt it was important to have somebody in a similar role, who understood the specific requirements of a nursery headteacher. However, governors heard that Katie Tyrie may be changing her role at some point, and would no longer be available. Governors noted the need to look for a new adviser for 2022/23.

8. GOVERNORS CODE OF PRACTICE 2021/22

Governors had reviewed the Code of Practice on GH and approved its adoption for the board.

ACTION: Clerk to add to GH and ask all governors to confirm their acceptance.

9. PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors had reviewed the minutes of each of the autumn term committee meetings on GH, and noted the following updates from the Committee Chairs:

Premises:

- NS would obtain 3 quotes for painting the outside of the building.
- Compliance testing was complete apart from the PAT testing and testing of outdoor equipment, which was in-hand.
- Local Authority Food Hygiene Inspections were running behind schedule, but an inspection was expected in the near future. In the meantime, the nursery would retain its 5-star rating.
- EA thanked EH and NS for conducting the H&S walk-arounds while she had been unable to visit the school.

Curriculum

- The committee had examined the implications of the new Early Years curriculum.
- The adult and child versions of the curriculum intent document had been uploaded to the school website.

Chairs

The Chairs' committee had looked in detail at the following areas:

- Staffing
- Admission Numbers
- Covid update
- Governor Development Plan and School Development Plan

Finance – See item 10 below

There were no further reports from committees and no matters requiring full board approval.

As the Safeguarding governor, DR reported that she met with EH every half term to review safeguarding matters in the nursery and sign off the report produced by EH. While visiting, DR would pose a safeguarding question to a random member of staff to check their awareness of the correct procedures. DR noted that on her last visit, she received a perfect answer.

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- a) Governors received the School Fund Audit certificate which had been uploaded to GH.
- b) Governors appointed Pat Grice as the auditor of the school fund for 2021/22.
- c) The current budget situation had been reviewed in detail at the Finance committee meeting, and there were no areas of concern.
- d) Governors heard that the 3yr budget forecast showed an in-year deficit of approximately £33K forecast for 2021/22, but with a carry-forward of £95K from last year, this would still give a carry-forward figure of approximately £62K for this year.

Governors thanked EH and NS for their excellent budget management which had enabled the nursery to emerge from a deficit budget situation and achieve a healthy carry-forward.
- e) Governors agreed that the SFVS would be completed by the Finance committee in the spring term ready for submission by the deadline of 31st March.
- f) The Manual of Internal Financial procedures (MoIFP) had been reviewed and approved by the Finance committee and would be uploaded to GH for all governors to review.
- g) The asset register was in progress and would be completed in the spring term for approval at the spring term FGB

ACTION: Clerk to add Asset Register to spring term FGB agenda.

- h) The scheme of delegation had been included in the MoIFP.

11. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Governors had reviewed the Headteacher's report on GH and no questions had been submitted. Governors heard that since the report was written, the nursery had had its first positive Covid case, but the person concerned had not mixed with others and it was hoped that there would be no further spread.

The Headteacher noted that pupil and staff wellbeing remained a high priority.

Some areas of the School Development Plan had been started and work would continue through the spring term. EH noted that the implementation of the new Early Years curriculum was going well, as much of it was what Westminster already did.

12. GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The governance statement for 2020/21 had been approved at the summer term FGB and would be updated on the website.

ACTION: EH to update the school website with the latest governance statement.

13. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – AUTUMN 2021

The Director's Report had been shared on GovernorHub earlier in the term, to inform committee discussions. The clerk noted item 1.3 on the OfSTED Sexual Abuse Review and EH reported that staff had been made aware of the implications for the nursery.

DC reported that she had attended the Cheshire East training on the findings of the review.

14. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

Training

LB reminded governors to record all training undertaken, including learning walks at the nursery.

Governors agreed that the EYFS training that should have taken place prior to the meeting would now take place before the spring term meeting. It was noted that in the spring term governors would be able to look at the impact as well as the implementation of the new curriculum.

The training session prior to the summer term meeting would now be 15 minutes on Finance and 15 minutes on Early Years curriculum assessment.

Governors agreed that it would also be useful to hear from DC a summary of the training on the OfSTED Sexual Abuse Review, and in particular how it relates to the nursery.

ACTION: DC to summarise training at next Governor drop-in.

Governors had undertaken a number of training courses, so were asked if there were any they would particularly recommend. LW noted that she had found the Induction modules very informative, and also the Safeguarding training. SK commented that it had been difficult to absorb the information when it was not possible to visit the nursery to see it in action. However, she had found the SEND module to be very useful.

LB reported on her learning walk focusing on internal resources. She noted that the rooms were bright and welcoming, providing visual and sensory stimulation. The children had not been in the nursery during the visit, so LB was interested to learn how gender stereotypes were challenged through the use of play equipment and would follow-up with EH.

LW had focused on outdoor resources and noted that the equipment was changed daily to give greater variety and maintain the interest of the children.

Governance Development

The Governance Development Plan for 2021/22 had been drawn up based on the results of the skills audit conducted in the summer term. Governors approved the plan and reviewed progress to date.

Priority 1 - To improve in engaging effective support for the nursery POST PANDEMIC.

Progress was rated as red overall, but it was noted that action 1 had been completed and action 3 had started. It was also noted that we were not yet 'post-pandemic'.

Priority 2 - For all governors to understand the intent, implementation and impact of the new Early Years Curriculum

Progress was rated as red overall, due to the delayed FGB training, but individual training had been identified and plans were in place for the drop-ins and learning walks. EH had received a number of requests to schedule learning walks and asked if they could be spread across each term to minimise disruption. It was agreed that once learning walks were agreed with EH they would be entered onto the GH calendar, so governors could see if one was already booked in for a given week.

Website Review

It had been noted that the governor section of the website was out of date, so DC and EC were asked to review in detail and let EH know what needed to be updated. Governors understood that the nursery had been without an internet connection for the whole of September, creating a backlog, but EH asked governors to report areas to be updated so they could be addressed when time allowed.

ACTION: All governors to check allocated areas of school website and report areas needing updating.

Monitoring

A monitoring schedule for the year had been agreed at the Chairs' meeting and circulated to governors.

15. POLICIES

The following policies had been reviewed in committee and were approved by the FGB:

- Child protection policy and Procedures (revised to reflect updated statutory safeguarding guidance)
- Pay policy for teachers
- Instrument of Government

16. CONFIRM TERM DATES FOR 2022/23

Term dates for 2022/23 had been approved at the summer term meeting.

Governors noted that the additional days holiday for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee would be taken on Monday 6th June 2022.

17. MEETINGS

Governors confirmed the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 16th March 2022 at 4pm.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Governors heard that the memorial area for Dorothy Flude was progressing well and should be finished in the next few weeks. The 'Men in Sheds' organisation in Crewe had been approached to make a bench and had responded that they would be honoured to do so, given the support they had received from Dorothy.

EH confirmed that NS would place a definite order for the bench, and DC agreed to draft the wording for the plaque. Once the wording was agreed by governors, she would seek the approval of the family before having the plaque made. It was hoped to arrange an official 'unveiling' ceremony in the spring term, to which former pupils could be invited.

19. IMPACT STATEMENT

- Governors had agreed committees, responsibilities and schedules to enable effective monitoring, through which they would be able to hold the Headteacher to account.
- The process and support for effective performance management of the Headteacher had been agreed.
- Governors training and development needs had been identified and a plan agreed to address the needs and enhance the effectiveness of the board.
- The School Development Plan had been approved, against which progress could be measured.

Part 2 minutes were recorded at this meeting.

The meeting finished at 6.10pm

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

Date: _____