

The London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames



Sheen Mount School

Minutes and Action List of the Full Governing Board Meeting
Held Virtually on 30th November 2022 at 6.30pm

Constitution, Membership and Attendance

Local Authority Governors - 1	Maria Widdowson (MW) (<u>Vice-Chair</u>)
Parent Governors – 2	Susan Boughton (SB) Telmo Valido (TV)
Staff Governors – 1	Robert Kennedy (RK) – Class Teacher and Upper KS2 Phase Leader
Co-opted Governors – 10	Gemma Cass (GC) Helen Edward (HE) Anna Hare (AH) Justine Hebert (JH) (<u>Chair</u>) Kathryn Higgins (KH) (Curriculum and Learning Chair) David Morley (DM) (Resources Committee Chair) Julia Sandell (JS) (Pastoral Committee Chair) Jennifer Wright (JW) <i>Vacancy</i> <i>Vacancy</i>
Headteacher - 1	Tom Holmes (TH)
Associate Governors – 3	Louise Dear (LD) – School Business Manager Dan Jameson (DJ) Laura Jeffery (LJ) – Assistant Headteacher, Inclusion Leader and DSL Maria O’Brien (MOB) – Deputy Headteacher and DDSL
Clerk to the board	Sarah Bellingham (Clerk)
Also in attendance	Andrew Gardiner (AG) Edward Nicholson (EN)

* **Absence(s) in Bold**

The London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames



Sheen Mount School

Action List of the Full Governing Body Meeting of 30.11.2022

No:	Minute item	SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS	Date by when	Person responsible	For Next FGB Agenda
1	2.1	JH to sign approved summer term FGB minutes and Clerk to upload these to the website, together with the approved Code of Conduct	December 2022	JH & Clerk	
2	3.1, 3.3, 3.5	Clerk to update the records for new/reappointed governors (AG, EN, and HE)	January 2022	Clerk	
2a	4.2	TH to find out vacancy rates at comparable schools and feed back to Board	March 2023	TH	
3	4.6	JH and HE to talk about exit interview process for this academic year	January 2023	HE/JH/Clerk	
4	4.7	Hold first survey working party meeting in January in advance of sending out a staff and a parent survey in spring or early summer term 2023	January 2023	TH/JS/HE/MW	
5	4.9	Add in an Ofsted section to the termly HT Report	March 2023	TH	YES
6	5.2	Confirm attendance to SIP de-brief to governors in March 2023	February 2023	All Governors	
7	5.7	Future PPG link visits to monitor impact of school's focus on personalized support programmes for PPG children	Spring term 2023	HE	
8	5.8	Ask TG to attend May 2023 (strategic session) FGB and confirm to JH	Spring term 2023	TH	YES
9	6.5	Organise first meeting of the strategic plan (3-5 year) working group for January 2023	January 2023	TV	YES
10	6.7	JH to gather the views of pupils on the school's vision, before March '23 governors' day at the school	March 2023	JH	YES
11	6.8	Include a session on developing the school's vision on the agenda for the March '23 governors' day at the school	March 2023	JH/TH	YES
12	6.9	Send JH information from conversations with pupils and parents linked with developing the school's vision	March 2023	MOB	
13	8.6	Review SEND policy with school partner and bring to next Board meeting	March 2023	AH	YES
14	9.5, 9.7	Record that both Pay and Complaints policies were approved by the Board	January 2023	Clerk	
15	10.2	Confirm March 2023 FGB and governor day plans	March 2023	JH/TH	YES
16	11.1	Write a piece for the next newsletter and meet with PSA, before Christmas	End of Autumn term	JH	

Minutes

1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

1.1 JH welcomed prospective governors AG and EN to the meeting.

1.2 No apologies had been received. Governors had no interests to declare connected with the agenda items.

1.3 It was noted that a quorum was present (*50% of the total number of voting governors, excluding vacancies*). Documents referred to in the meeting had been circulated to all via Governor Hub prior to the meeting, except where noted in the minutes.



2. Minutes and Action List from 12th October 2022 FGB Meeting

Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes from the meeting of 12th October 2022 were approved. JH would be asked to sign these. The Clerk would post them onto the school website. **ACTION – JH/Clerk**

Actions from 12th October 2022 (and matters relating to them)

- 2.2 Actions from the previous meeting were either completed or in progress.

3. Autumn Term FGB 2 Items

Approve appointment of Andrew Gardiner as a co-opted governor to sit on the C&L Committee

- 3.1 JH introduced AG. She had e-mailed governors before the meeting with details of the recruitment process for AG, his CV and the skills AG would bring to the Board. AG left the meeting, and governors were asked to vote on his appointment to the Board. Governors voted unanimously for his appointment. The Clerk would update records and liaise with AG and the school as needed. **ACTION – Clerk**

- 3.2 AG returned at 18.42

Approve appointment of Edward Nicholson as a co-opted governor to sit on the Resources Committee

- 3.3 JH introduced EN. She had e-mailed governors before the meeting with details of the recruitment process for AG, his CV and the skills EN would bring to the Board. EN left the room, and governors were asked to vote on his appointment to the Board. Governors voted unanimously for his appointment. The Clerk would update records and liaise with AG and the school as needed. **ACTION – Clerk**

- 3.4 EN returned at 18.43

Approve re-appointment of Helen Edwards as a co-opted governor, to remain on the Pastoral Committee

- 3.5 JH explained that current co-opted governor, HE, had kindly expressed an interest in remaining on the Board for a further term of office. HE left the room, and governors were asked to vote on her re-appointment to the Board. Governors voted unanimously for her appointment. The Clerk would update the records as needed. **ACTION - Clerk**

- 3.6 HE returned at 18.45

- 3.7 Separately JH informed the Board that SB had expressed an interest in being JH's successor after JH had stood down as Chair and governor in July 2023. SB had attended a networking event for chairs and vice chairs and had spoken at length with JH and MW. She would be putting herself forward to be Chair in September 2023. SB explained why she would like to take the role on and what skills and experience she could offer. JH would be happy to support the transition.

- 3.8 JH was keen to ensure the Board was happy with this proposal. An indicative vote at this stage would be helpful, pending a vote at the end of the academic year.

- 3.9 **Q:** What help and support would SB need from the governors?

A: SB explained that she would be grateful for each governor meeting her in person this academic year to help her get to know everyone, and for governors to be prepared to answer questions from time to time.

- 3.10 **Q:** Would SB have the bandwidth to attend one of each of the committee meetings to gain a feel for things?



A: SB said that she would and that she had already been to a Resources committee meeting.

3.11 SB left the meeting at 18.47.

3.12 The governors discussed SB's potential appointment. There were many expressions of support and the Board was unanimously in favour of SB taking on the role for September 2023.

3.13 SB returned to the meeting at 18.50.

3.14 JH and SB would work closely together to ensure ready as possible for the role in September 2023.

4. Headteacher Report and Presentation

Headteacher Report

4.1 TH clarified that everyone had read his report. Governors were invited to ask questions.

4.2 **Q:** How were vacancy rates at Sheen Mount compared to other schools in the area?

A: TH would find out exactly. **ACTION – TH** The position was relatively similar to East Sheen Primary, which was also three form entry.

4.3 **Q:** Were exit interviews still taking place with families of pupils leaving before the end of Year 6?

A: TH's report had made reference to surveys and the percentage of people filling them in, however there had not been much data on this from those. Parents going to the independent sector or leaving the area tended not to fill in the exit survey. There were at least three or four families over the summer who had not completed this part of the exit process.

4.4 **Q:** How did TH feel about the targets set for 2023?

A: TH was comfortable with these and discussed the characteristics and progress of various pupil cohorts in the school.

4.5 **Q:** Was there any value in governor interviews continuing with leavers?

A: TH thought that if parents were taking a pupil out of the school because they were unhappy with it, that information would more likely come from a face-to-face conversation, rather than a form. Therefore governor interviews were valuable and the information which had come from these previously had been insightful.

4.6 It was agreed that HE would lead on this, making a phone call to parents when notified by TH. The Clerk would pull out any existing template for the conversation and JH would finalise this with HE. **ACTION – HE/JH/Clerk**

4.7 **Q:** Was another survey planned for this academic year?

A: This was discussed. It was agreed that a parent and a staff survey would be done, with a working group leading on this with TH, made up of JS, HE and MW. The timeframe was to send the survey out in the spring, or early summer term. **ACTION – JS/HE/MW/TH**

4.8 **Q:** Please explain more about the bullying statement in the report.

A: TH said that the statement in the report was based on the formal meaning of the term bullying as intentional repetitive behaviour. The statement was not a comment on any occasional instances of poor behaviour occurring more generally from time to time and dealt with by the school.

4.9 MW asked TH to retain the 'Covid' element in the report for the time being. Governors also agreed that an Ofsted section in the report was valuable each term to provide data on items such as trends, the content and impact of inspection reports coming out across the borough, and changes to the framework. **ACTION – TH**



4.10 **Q:** Had the school isolated modern foreign languages ('MFL') into sequenced steps of progression? This might have been in the School Improvement Partner ('SIP') report?

A: TH said that the SIP had not yet looked at MFL, but had referenced it because MFL was in the Ofsted report. He was checking on that as an area for development. MOB offered to speak to any governor after the meeting if more detail was required.

5. Autumn Term SIP

5.1 SB gave the Board a verbal update about the de-brief she had attended this term with SIP, Tom Gibson ('TG'). DM, MW, and JH had also attended from the Board. In summary, SB was impressed with TG's positivity, aspiration, and commitment.

5.2 Governors were asked to let TH know if they could attend the next SIP governors' de-brief on 1st March 2023, at 12.30pm.

ACTION – ALL

5.3 **Q:** Who had assigned the SIP to the school?

A: The SIP was assigned via the support package purchased by the school from the local authority. The SIP attended the school termly and produced a report each time for the Board, containing areas for the school to focus on and develop.

5.4 **Q:** Had TG put a timeframe on achieving his aspiration for the school?

A: A clear point to aim for was naturally the next Ofsted visit, but ideally key goals would be achieved sooner than that for pupils' benefit, part of which was giving staff the opportunity to achieve their potential. TH thought it would be very structured and practical approach.

5.5 **Q:** What continuity would there be from (former SIP) Karen Feeney's report in April 2022, where she identified the need for a learning walk focus and signposted developments for the outdoor provision?

A: TH explained that TG would pick up on areas for focus as time went on. TH advised trying to connect the areas brought up by Karen as forming part of the current SDP focus. EYFS had now been added to that and the latest SDP version was now on the Hub. The SDP was intended to be fully reflective of the school's priorities.

5.6 **Q:** How would the school be measuring the extent to which financially deprived pupils were making full use of the extra-curricular or enrichment activities on offer?

A: RK had taken over the PPG lead from LJ. TH had spoken with RK already about a more personalised programme of support for PPG pupils to reflect need. This could be discussed more at Pastoral Committee level. So many of the school's PPG pupils were performing well academically, so now the focus could be wider and more tailored. A key aim was for class teachers to take more responsibility for this by the year end, with TH and RK overseeing the budget.

5.7 HE agreed to monitor the school's tracking and measuring of impact in this area in her next (and future) visits as PPG link governor. **ACTION - HE**

5.8 TH agreed to find out if TG would be available to attend the governors' annual strategic FGB meeting in May 2023. **ACTION - TH.**

5.9 AH joined at 7.35.

6. Strategic Development Plan

One Year School Development Plan

6.1 TH had circulated a 'final' version SDP for this academic year, which had been updated with the feedback received from governors at the previous FGB meeting.

6.2 The committee minutes from the latest cycle of meetings showed how each committee had been reviewing progress against the SDP priorities relevant to that committee.



6.3 TH asked governors for questions, to the extent that these may not have been addressed at committee level. None were raised.

6.4 Governors were happy with the committee-based focus so far.

Three to Five Year Strategic Plan

6.5 JH explained that the Board had wanted to set a 3-5 year plan this academic year to enhance the 2022-2023 SDP. The updated suggestion, taking into account how much had been done already since TH had joined, was to set up a small working group, led by TV, which would look at key topics for the strategic session in May. The aims would be to construct the session in May and do the groundwork needed in advance to prepare governors for inputting meaningfully. It was agreed that the working group would be made up of: TH, DM, SB, JH, GC, EN, and TV. The group would meet first in January 2023. **ACTION - TV**

School Vision

6.6 JH spoke to her vision presentation. In summary, JH was proposing a refresh to the current vision statement, to help unify and motivate the school community, and to help streamline the school's values and strategic focus.

6.7 The governors discussed this in detail and were happy to take this forward. It was agreed that JH would lead on this project and her first step would be to seek the views of the pupils at the school. **ACTION - JH**

6.8 It was also agreed that this should be included on the agenda at the March 2023 governor curriculum day at school. **ACTION - JH/TH**

6.9 MOB would send JH relevant information which had been obtained by the school from conversations with parents and pupils this academic year. **ACTION - MOB**

7. Financial Management

7.1 DM spoke to his financial presentation.

7.2 Matters identified included a projected overspend over £50k, the current year surplus of £56k, support staff costs linked with an unexpectedly high pay award by the government and the need to backdate to April 2022, a new TA hire, SEN/EHCP pupil support costs, agency staff fees resulting from staff absence, and income expected from the pool and other areas.

7.3 In summary the projection for the year end was a deficit of £60k, with a surplus still of around £200k.

7.4 The governors discussed the school's position in detail.

7.5 **Q:** Would the government's pledge of £2 billion for schools help ease the situation going forward?

A: The actual impact, for example any additional money to be received per pupil, had not yet been made clear. TH was also not yet clear if other forms of school grant, such as the recent grant linked with rising costs of living, would be withdrawn. The school would need to wait and see.

7.6 **Q:** Was there a need to prepare a financial model to assess financial viability over the longer-term?

A: DM said that whilst a model was relatively simple to prepare, the assumptions underpinning that model would be far more complex to determine. There was a good chance that modelling done now would not be meaningful down the track. More useful was for the school and for governors to understand in detail the key levers having the greatest impact on finances. DM expressed his confidence in the school and the Resources committee's understanding of this area. Looking at ways to bring in additional stable income streams would be important.



7.7 MW echoed DM's comments. She reminded governors of the school's supportive PSA and the steady income stream from the swimming pool use. The school remained in a relatively strong position. Caution was warranted but the position was not too concerning. The school also had to renew and refresh in terms of maintenance and improvement. An investment plan needed to be part of the estate strategy.

Approval of Swimway Sunday Proposal

7.8 The governors' discussion is contained in the confidential section of the minutes.

7.9 Following the discussion, the governors unanimously approved DM's proposal of the variation of the school's contract with Swimway, at the rate agreed, until September 2023.

8. FGB Standing Items

Safeguarding – report of autumn term visit 2022

8.1 JH expressed her thanks to JW and LJ for their comprehensive safeguarding report.

8.2 The governors had no questions on this.

Equality and Diversity – verbal update

8.3 SB confirmed that her report was almost complete. She had planned a school visit to follow up on various actions being taken by the school. Good progress had been made so far and the picture was very positive.

SEND – report of autumn term visit 2022

8.4 JH expressed her thanks for the comprehensive report after the school visit.

8.5 The governors had no questions.

8.6 AH would be looking at the current position regarding the SEND policy review and would update the Board. **ACTION - AH**

9. Link visit reports/updates and policy approvals

PPG Report May 2022

9.1 JH expressed her thanks to HE for the comprehensive report. HE would be carrying out a deeper dive early in 2023 at the time to the handover from LJ to RK on this topic.

Health & Safety Report – Autumn 2022

9.2 Thanks were offered to MW for her detailed report. MW explained that the actions were listed in the report and were all in progress. This was very positive.

Data Protection Call Report – July 2022

9.3 DM reported that the external DP officer had visited in October 2022, had produced another report and that staff training had been scheduled for the February 2023 inset day. DM added that the officer's report had already been reviewed and discussed by the Resources Committee.

Approval of Pay Policy – reviewed by Resources



9.4 DM clarified that the changes made were just to reflect the fact the school now had a pay committee. This committee had met already which was positive. The policy still set out that the school was implementing national pay scales, as required.

9.5 This was approved unanimously by the Board. **ACTION - Clerk**

Approval of Complaints Policy – reviewed by Pastoral

9.6 JS confirmed that she, SB and JH had reviewed this thoroughly and were happy with it.

9.7 This was approved unanimously by the Board. **ACTION - Clerk**

10. Receipt of Committee Minutes and Updates

10.1 The Board acknowledged receipt of each committee's set of minutes (C&L, Pastoral, and Resources).

10.2 The Board discussed holding an all-governor day at the school on 15th March 2023. It might be possible to hold the Spring term FGB meeting in person on this day, as well as a range of other sessions. Plans would be finalised and communicated as soon as possible. **ACTION – JH/TH**

11. Communication to PSA, Staff and Parents

11.1 JH would prepare an update for a newsletter before the Christmas holidays, and had planned to meet with the PSA Chair the following day. **ACTION – JH**

11.2 Governors were welcome to attend the final Friday morning staff briefing of the term, on 9th December 2022. JH and SB confirmed that they would be attending.

12. Confidential – from Minute 7 above

12.1 DM explained that in 2020 the school had signed a 10-year lease with Swimway for it to operate the school's pool from Monday to Saturday 9am-6pm, for receipt of an annual rental income of £50k and the additional benefit of free lessons for pupils several mornings a week.

12.2 Swimway had approached the school to request an extension of the lease to provide lessons on Sundays. Planning permission had been sought for that and for staff using the pool between 7am-9am on school mornings. That had now been granted to September 2023, with the requirement to reapply for further permission.

12.3 It had been proposed that SM accept £11k income per year in respect of the Sunday swim service to be provided by Swimway, and that DM would meet with Swimway later in the academic year to discuss and negotiate the general annual payment. There would be natural break clause in respect of the agreement for the £11k payment for Sunday pool usage when the school had to reapply for planning permission in September 2023.

12.4 **Q:** What insurances were available in terms of Swimway remaining as a going concern (or not)?

A: If Swimway were no longer a going concern, the asset i.e. use of the pool, would revert to the school. The only risk would be the loss of the annual £50k income, but the school would have a buffer form the balance of the money which had already been pre-paid.

Meeting ended at 20:40