

The London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames



Sheen Mount School

**Minutes and Action List of the Full Governing Board Meeting
Held At Sheen Mount Primary School on 29th November 2023 at 6.30pm**

Constitution, Membership and Attendance

Local Authority Governors - 1	Maria Widdowson (MW) (<u>Vice-Chair</u>)
Parent Governors – 2	Susan Boughton (SB) (<u>Chair</u>) Telmo Valido (TV)
Staff Governors – 1	Robert Kennedy (RK) – Class Teacher and Upper KS2 Phase Leader
Co-opted Governors – 10	Gemma Cass (GC) (Curriculum & Learning Chair) Giota Kovani (GK) Anna Hare (AH) – arrived 6.50pm Caroline Bones (CB) David Morley (DM) (Resources Committee Chair) Julia Sandell (JS) (Pastoral Committee Chair) Jennifer Wright (JW) David Carter (DC) Tej Patel (TP) <i>Vacancy</i>
Headteacher - 1	Tom Holmes (TH)
Associate (non-voting) Governors – 5	Laura Jeffery (LJ) Maria O'Brien (MOB) Dan Jameson (DJ) Jodi Hunt (JH) Louise Dear (ad-hoc) (LD)
Clerk to the board	Sarah Chipperfield (Clerk)

* **Absence(s) in Bold**

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Action List of the Full Governing Body Meeting of 29.11.2023

Actions in white below are outstanding, those in grey completed or in progress

No:	Minute item	SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS	Date by when	Person responsible	For Next FGB Agenda
1	1.3	Committee meetings to be amended on Governor Hub	December 2023	SB/Clerk	
2	1.4	Committee Terms of Reference – clerk to upload to Governor Hub & website	December 2023	Clerk	
3	1.5	Signature sheet to be filed	December 2023	TH	
4	2.1	SB to sign approved FGB minutes from 11 th Oct and clerk would upload these onto the website, along with any other outstanding minutes.	December 2023	SB/Clerk	
5	2.4	Clerk and SB to liaise with AfC to establish e-vote procedure and will feedback to Board.	December 2023	SB/Clerk	
6	4.2	Create a glossary of acronyms to be uploaded on Governor Hub	December 2023	TH	
7	5.4	Research baseline toolkit for Oracy.	Spring term	TH	
8	7.1	Redraft of Purpose statement. To be launched in Spring term.	January 2024	TH, SB and GK	Y
9	8.3	Forward A.I. research participant information to TH	Spring term	GC	
10	9.12	Create a child friendly version of the Behaviour document.	Spring term	LJ	Y
11	9.14, 9.15	Add separated parents page to communications guidance and rewrite existing document – For March Pastoral committee	Spring term	LJ	
13	9.17	Check links are working in the Safeguarding policy document.	December 2023	Clerk	
14	9.18, 9.19, 9.21, 9.23, 10.3, 10.4	Update website with approved policies. Policy Review Schedule on Governor Hub to be updated.	December 2023	Clerk	
15	9.20	Governors and staff to sign the IT usage appendices.	Spring FGB	ALL	
16	12.1	The Board will write an end of term message to PSA, parents and staff	December 2023	SB	
17	12.2	Collection to be organised for staff drinks	December 2023	Clerk	

Minutes

1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

1.1 SB welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from DC,DM and JW. The governors had no interests to declare connected with the agenda or for the Register of Interests.

1.2 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.

Approval of Committee Terms of Reference

1.3 SB proposed that the number of termly committee meetings stated in the Terms of Reference be reduced from two to one (with additional meetings as necessary). This was approved unanimously by the Board – **ACTION – SB/Clerk**



1.4 The Committee Terms of Reference. This was approved unanimously by the Board subject to the agreed amendment (1.3).
ACTION – Clerk

1.5 Annual Signature sheet for 2023/2024 - Final outstanding signatures received. **ACTION- TH**

2. Minutes and Action List from 11th October 2023 FGB Meeting

Minutes

2.1 The minutes from the meeting of 11th October 2023 were approved. SB would be asked to sign these. The Clerk would post them on to the school website. **ACTION – SB/Clerk**

Actions from October 2023 (and matters relating to them)

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

2.3 SB wished to convey her thanks to everyone who worked on the school policy updates.

2.4 H&S Policy e-vote. Clerk and SB to consult AfC to establish correct procedure. It was confirmed that any notices on Governor Hub will create an automatic email to Governors. – **ACTION SB/Clerk**

3. Autumn Term FGB 1 Items

Governing Body membership

Vacancy update

3.1 The Board discussed challenges in finding a Governor with HR skill set to fill the current vacancy. Various approaches to finding a suitable candidate were discussed and MW outlined steps already taken, with no success. It was noted that it is a common challenge faced by Boards. It was suggested that the Board now looks to alternative skill sets to fill the post.

Succession Planning

3.2 SB requested that timely notice is given, should a Governor wish to step down. This would allow for new candidates to shadow existing Governors. Alternatively, if current Governors are interested in taking on additional roles/responsibilities, please let SB know.

4. Headteacher Presentation

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

4.2. **Q: MW commented that the report contains a lot of acronyms and needs to be read alongside the SDP. Is it possible to make this simpler to read?**

A: TH confirmed he would add a glossary of acronyms to Governor Hub – ACTION TH

4.3. **Q: The behaviour section of the report states that low level behaviour incidents are now no longer logged on ARBOR. Is cumulative low-level disruption logged anywhere else and would this prove helpful to staff.**

A: TH confirmed that this is not recorded. Although TH would be happy to consider this, it was felt that it wouldn't be the best use of staff time. MO'B and LJ agreed and were confident that the measures already in place were effective and avoided further escalation. Behaviour was discussed further and TH highlighted a recent Q&A with phase leaders around the negative effect of exclusions and the reason the school was keen to avoid these measures. It was felt this had been a constructive meeting.

4.4. **Q: The Governors noted that the school will be losing funding for the SEN support teacher at the end of this academic year. What impact will this have on the SENCO workload?**

A: The additional support had been very welcome, but funding and support is an issue. TH has been discussing these issues with Local Authority and other Headteachers.



4.5. **Q: MW was very pleased to read about Sheen Mount participating in the Peer to Peer Review exercise organised between local Primary Schools. Could TH explain a little more how this works?**

A: TH stated that he had volunteered to go first and this had been a positive experience for Sheen Mount staff. Visiting staff had commented on the warmth and openness of the school. Feedback included elements that would help Sheen Mount to improve, but no new areas to work on, which was reassuring. Tom Gibson (TG) would write up report and share.

4.6. **Q: How was the school closure communicated to parents on 13th September, when the water supply had failed? What measures were in place if parents hadn't received the messages from the school?**

A: Parent email was used first, followed by class reps communicating via WhatsApp groups. The school phoned the few parents that hadn't responded to the message. It was felt that there had been a good response time for parents collecting their children and generally parents were understanding of the situation. In the event that the school hadn't been able to get in touch with a parent, staff members would have stayed at the school with the child until they were collected. A positive outcome was that the school now had established a direct means of communicating with the service provider to get better information quicker.

5. Autumn Term SIP Report

5.1. SB referred to the point made by Tom Gibson (TG) on page 3 – 'How can Governor's support staff morale?'. SB asked staff members for their view on how this could be achieved.

A: It was felt that this could be difficult to quantify as each staff member's situation would be very different. However, it was noted that the Governor day had been positively received amongst the staff. Visibility helped to humanise the Board and supported partnerships. It was felt that communicating the limit of the Board's control would help to manage expectations. TH felt a thank you to staff went a long way and could be passed on, if a Governor was unable to attend in person.

5.2. **Q: Are cross curriculum links being embedded into the curriculum plan? Is this being measured?**

A: This is in process – aspirational rather than specific goals to achieve. At present this is anecdotal, rather than systematic measuring. It was noted that staff are encouraged to recognise links between subject areas, where this is constructive.

5.3. **Q: Are potential curriculum links being recognised that relate to children's background, culture and identity?**

A: Yes, teachers are encouraged to look for genuine connections in the classroom – specific examples were explained to the Board. Staff are keen for links to be made in the right context and know how to make those connections relevant to the learners.

5.4. **Q: How is baseline data for Oracy measured?**

A: Foundation stage is measured, but this does not apply to other year groups. TH to look into baseline toolkit for Oracy.
ACTION TH

6. **SDP** – Covered within points 4 and 5.

7. Purpose

7.1. The Board were asked for their opinion of the wording drafted by TH and SB. The Board discussed specific wording and phrases and how best to convey the ethos of the school. It was decided that this needed further work and GK volunteered to support SB and TH, as this is an area of expertise. **ACTION TH, SB and GK**



8. Curriculum Committee update/minutes

- 8.1. GC provided an update to the Board. A link Governor subject visit outline calendar has been created in liaison with the school. Governors are requested to fill in their availability and finalise dates with MO'B. First visits will have a more informal approach to support building strong positive working partnerships between governors and subject leads. GC noted that teachers required timely feedback for the visits to prove worthwhile. GC noted that link governors must be aware of how to phrase feedback to staff and that TH and MO'B would edit reports first.
- 8.2. MO'B added that meetings would be arranged for core subjects as a priority. Staff seeking professional development for leadership roles could also be supported by Governors with development of relevant skill sets.
- 8.3. GC spoke about offering Sheen Mount access to A.I. research. This would look at safe ways to use A.I. to support learning. Participant information would be forwarded to TH for Year 5. Parental consent would be required. The results and professional development would be shared with staff. **ACTION GC**

9. Pastoral Committee update/minutes.

- 9.1. JS provided an update to the Board. It was confirmed that Paula Teeling now attends pastoral committee meetings as the Wellbeing Lead.
- 9.2. Mental Health week scheduled for February would be themed "My Voice Matters".
- 9.3. A visit has been scheduled by an ex-student, who is now a professional tennis player. They will deliver a positivity talk to learners.
- 9.4. The Wellbeing website page is being updated and plans for the Wellbeing room are in process.

Safeguarding

- 9.5. CB provided a safeguarding update.
- 9.6. A visit took place in October and an update was given at the pastoral committee. There are currently no Children in Need or children with a Protection Plan. One safeguarding incident, was later found not to be a safeguarding matter.
- 9.7. The central register is now up to date.

Behaviour

- 9.8. PPG students – gaps in academic attainment have been identified and extra sessions have started as the beginning of a more tailored approach to using PPG funding.
- 9.9. **Q: Have free school meals for KS2 affected PPG numbers?**
A: No, the school regularly prompts parents to register, if relevant.
- 9.10. **Q: The Local Authority has identified an increase in parent complaints. Is this the case at Sheen Mount?**
A: No, this data reflects schools in Wandsworth borough and not Richmond. Formal complaints are avoided by resolving issues with parents early. This is followed up to make sure complainants are satisfied with the outcome.
- 9.11. The governors asked about low level bullying mentioned in the HT report. Respectful behaviour is reinforced during assemblies. A session for parents about what does/does not constitute bullying is being considered.
- 9.12. It was agreed that a child friendly version of the Behaviour document would be useful – **ACTION LJ**
- 9.13. SB highlighted the AfC suggestion that schools have a Separated Parents policy in tandem with their Communication policy. This can be especially crucial when handling complaints. The current Communication policy is under review and this addition will be reviewed by the Pastoral committee.
- 9.14. LJ confirmed this would be best as a written guidance document. Separated parents guidance would be added to the communications document. **ACTION LJ**



9.15. **Q: The communications document online is listed as 'under review'. Who is responsible for updating this?**

A: This is a school responsibility overseen by Pastoral. ACTION - SCHOOL

POLICY VOTES

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

9.16. MW noted the excellent comprehensive review of this crucial policy. She asked whether the Mental Health Lead should be listed as a key contact. It was confirmed that this was not in the Richmond LA guidelines.

9.17. Need to check that links work in the document. **ACTION Clerk**

9.18. Safeguarding and Child Protection policy approved unanimously by the Board. **ACTION – Clerk**

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND RELATIONSHIP POLICY

9.19. Approved unanimously by the Board. **ACTION- Clerk**

ONLINE SAFETY POLICY

9.20. MW suggested that this better (whole-school) policy duplicates the Acceptable IT Use policy/agreement recently reviewed through Resources and this should be withdrawn.

9.21. The online safety policy approved unanimously by the Board. **ACTION – Clerk**

9.22. Governors and staff to sign the IT usage appendices in the new Safety Policy. **ACTION - ALL**

COMPLAINTS POLICY

9.23. It was noted that this had been uploaded very late. TH confirmed that the policy had been submitted to the pastoral committee in advance of their meeting and the minutes indicated it was ready to put forward to FGB. TH explained the key changes to the policy.

9.24. Complaints policy was approved unanimously in principle. Any comments must be received by Thursday 6th December. **ACTION - Clerk**

10. Resources Committee update/minutes

10.1. MW provided an update to the Board with regard to her Health and Safety termly visits. A report had been made available in this meeting's documents. SB wished to note her thanks to MW for her work on this report.

10.2. The Board discussed areas highlighted in the report and potential financial implications.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

10.3. The Health and Safety policy approved unanimously by the Board. **ACTION – Clerk**

PAY POLICY

10.4. The Pay policy approved unanimously by the Board. **ACTION – Clerk**

11. Update on Governor Day

11.1. TP provided feedback from the recent Governor's day. TP thanked the school for hosting the event and found the experience very useful as a new Governor. This was echoed by the Board, who found the interaction with staff and learners insightful.

11.2. It was discussed whether Governor days should be more frequent. The Board and staff agreed that changing this to an annual event would be beneficial.

11.3. Governor attendance at inset days and on learning walks was also discussed.

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11.4. **Q: What would prove useful for subject leaders at the school?**

A: *The opportunity to develop working relationships with the corresponding link Governors.*

11.5. It was suggested that Spring term 1 would be the best point in the academic year for future Governor days.

12. Communication to PSA, Staff and Parents

12.1. The Board will write an end of term message to PSA, parents and staff. **Action - SB**

12.2. Collection to be organised for staff drinks. **ACTION – Clerk**

TV left at 20:40

Meeting ended at 20:43