



GILLESPIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES FROM

FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING HELD ON

Wednesday 2 March 2022 online at 6.00PM

Attendees:

Claire Bolderson (CB) Chair of the Governors & Co-opted Governor	Dan Hamilton (DH) – Co-opted Governor
Mark Owen (MO) – Head teacher	Bhavini Doyle (BD) - Parent Governor
Sarah Bergin (SB) - Staff Governor	* Katrina Moses (KM) – Deputy Head (Observer)
Mandy Leatham (MK) - Parent Governor	Hafsa Akbar (HA) - Parent Governor
Ashley Smith (AS) Vice-Chair & Co-opted Governor	Finella (Fin) Craig - Local Authority
*Jodie Reed (JR) - Parent Governor	Tess Lundy – (Former Clerk)
Sajni Patani (SP) - Co-opted Governor	Pauline Mayne – (New Clerk)

An asterisk (*) denotes absent

Item no.	Item
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. A special warm welcome was given to Hafsa Akbar following her election by the parents as a parent governor. After being confirmed by the Governing Board, Finella Craig was welcomed upon her appointment as an LA governor.</p> <p>The Chair explained that two clerks were present at the meeting because Tess Lundy, the existing Clerk, will be handing over to Pauline Mayne, the new Clerk.</p> <p>Apologies were given and accepted for Jodie Reed and Katrina Moses.</p>
2.	<p>Membership of governing board</p> <p>Election of parent governor</p> <p>The FGB noted the appointment of Hafsa Akbar as a parent governor for four years ending 01.03.2026 following parent governor elections held in February 2022.</p>

	<p>Appointment of Local Authority (LA) Governor</p> <p>The Governing Board approved the appointment of Finella (Fin) Craig as LA governor for a period of four years ending 01.03.2026, following nomination by the LA.</p> <p>ACTION 2.1: Clerk to update GovernorHub and to send Register of Interest forms to FC.</p>
3.	<p>Reconstitution of Governing Board</p> <p>To return co-opted member numbers to four from six</p> <p>The Governing Board had six co-opted governors, and it had been established that six co-opted governors were not required. Therefore, the Chair suggested that the Governing Board revert to the 2019 Instrument of Government model, which consisted of four parent governors, four community or co-opted governors, a staff governor and a LA governor.</p> <p>The Governing Board agreed to return to the former Instrument of Government as outlined above.</p> <p>ACTION 3.1: Clerk to liaise with Jane Wright regarding the Governing Board reconstitution requirements and the legal administrative procedure.</p>
4.	<p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New governors to submit their relevant DBS documents to Rebecca in the school office. • The Chair to check if data about governors are up to date on the DfE's national database of governors. • Register of Interests forms: Clerk to check that Register of Interests forms have been received from AS and JR. • Self (Disqualification) Declaration Form. The Clerk explained that the form is signed once a new governor is appointed, and HA has already sent a form.
5.	<p>Approval of the Code of Conduct</p> <p>The Code of Conduct was approved, with one amendment noted 'to visit the school when possible'.</p>
6.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - Wednesday 20 October 2021</p> <p>Minutes accepted as correct and ratified. Chair to return minutes to clerk for upload to GovernorHub.</p> <p>ACTION 6.1: Signed copy of minutes to be sent to clerk for uploading to GovernorHub.</p>
7.	<p>Matters arising from previous minutes</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
8.	<p>Head Teacher's Report</p> <p>Nursery Class and Admissions</p> <p>The Board had no questions around nursery class or admissions.</p>

Attendance

Although attendance during Covid was relatively good and, bearing in mind that before the Covid pandemic attendance was impressive, the Chair raised the following **questions** on persistent absenteeism of particular pupils:

- What efforts were being made to address persistent absenteeism?
- What were the reasons for persistent absenteeism?
- What contact had been made with families to improve it?

ANSWER MO: The school has very rigorous and robust processes in place. However, a number of the persistent absentees have attached social workers, and the issues were quite varying and complex, which means that the problems will not be easy to resolve. The school is using all the procedures that they can and putting as many measures in place as they can to support those families. Everyone plays a role, but the key people are KM, the attendance officer and himself.

Quality of teaching and learning

QUESTION: A governor inquired why the school decided to move away from the National Literacy Strategy, furthermore what evidence was there of better outcomes using an alternative reading model.

ANSWER: MO: Reminded governors that the National Literacy Strategy approach of using guided reading was introduced 20 years ago (replaced by the Revised National Curriculum for English in 2014) Most schools including ours have moved away from using the guided reading approach in the last 5 years or so to a more effective whole class teaching approach. The primary decision was based on how effectively human resources can be used in teaching a class of thirty children. The previous approach was about the organisation of reading and how many children you could reach across a week; it also meant that only certain children would get expert intervention, whereas other children would not be getting direct teaching.

The methods now being used are recommended by the Education Endowment Foundation, and are based on extensive research. Using this research, plus experience, and evidence, the school has refined the approach to teaching reading. SB has taken the lead on this.

MO is pleased with what he has observed so far as it relates well to other areas of motivating children to be readers and not limiting them. The teachers from nursery up to Y6 can deliver effective teaching of whole class reading. The idea is to make sure that children who have difficulty reading or who are not yet fluent readers have the right interventions from staff within the school. In the past, reading volunteers, have supported this work and the school has appealed for new volunteers to come back in once it is safe to do so.

QUESTION: A governor asked if there was anything parent governors could do to help with the process of recruiting reading volunteers.

ANSWER: MO: The role has been advertised in the newsletters, but there have been very few responses. The support of parent governors to encourage people to become volunteer readers would be welcomed. An approach to organisations such as Beanstalk is also being considered.

ACTION 8.1: Parent governors to encourage parents, grandparents, and people in the community to become reading volunteers.

SB gave governors an insight into the different methods of teaching reading. She had not taught guided reading for a number of years. She found it to be problematic to teach in terms of behaviour management and chaotic as there were groups of children working on different things

at the same time. Also it would take a very experienced teacher to manage the situation without feeling deflated.

From SB's experience, whole class reading is more effective as the focus is on:

- How you read as a reader
- Going back and looking at the context
- Zooming in on language and
- Undertaking extended reading

Additionally, the children are building their stamina and pace, which is more beneficial.

There is a need to be extra aware of children already behind, and to guarantee they are supported to ensure that any gaps do not become wider. Whole class reading is carried out in history, geography, and science; therefore, the children are reading throughout the day. Across the school, reading is taught across the curriculum, and not just in the reading lessons.

ACTION 8.2: The Chair recommended that visits be made to a whole class reading session in the first half of next term, so that the governors can see this in action. After that, a Learning Committee should be held with Sarah (Literacy lead teacher) and Steff (KS1 expert teacher), where reading will be discussed.

MO: We have been working on systematic phonics using government recommended schemes

Mo confirmed that he would submit a report on phonics to Governors in the summer, either at the Learning Committee or as part of the Head Teacher's Report at the summer FGB.

Science for Life (SFL) Update (Lab 13)

QUESTION: The Chair inquired about the clarity of the recruitment of a new scientist, employed on a freelance basis and wanted to know if the school had recruited them directly?

ANSWER: MO confirmed that the science teacher was employed on a freelance basis and was not employed by Gillespie. The role is funded by The Dame Alice Owen Foundation (DAOF), and there is no ongoing obligation in terms of employment. The project is a tremendous success story within Islington and beyond and has continued to raise the school's profile and reputation. Gillespie is immensely proud and committed to the project.

The Chair recommended that the matter be discussed at the Finance Committee with a focus on the terms of employment to ensure the school does not encounter any problems with HMRC should they consider the school responsible as an employer rather than it being a freelance role.

ACTION 8.3: DH to consult with MO and SW (the school's Business Manager) to look further at the job description and the terms on which the science teacher has been taken on and to then report back to the Finance Committee.

Staff training update

There were no questions on staff training.

After school club status report

DISCUSSION: Following the switch to a new company, Ready Set Stage, as provider of after school clubs, governors had asked for details of club participation with a view to understanding the impact of a rise in fees. Governors noted that the report on participation highlighted that there had not been any take-up of clubs from pupil premium children. The Chair commented that while there may be other reasons for PP children not attending, if price were the main factor this would need

to be addressed. Friends of Gillespie (FOG) may be able to offer support with some funding for pupil premium children to attend clubs.

MO: He had not received any feedback from the clubs or parents saying that they could not afford the clubs, however this would now be explored with relevant families in a sensitive way. MO explained that cost is not always an issue. Some PP families are engaged in many other activities outside of school. The club prices are in line with other schools' clubs. Historically, when free clubs, were provided, still only a small percentage of pupil premium families accepted the offer. Nevertheless, a way needed to be found to encourage more PP children to attend clubs including by making certain clubs free to pupil premium families.

BD: Had received feedback from some families that the clubs are too expensive. An additional barrier could also be that parents must pay for half a term's fees in advance or make one full payment for a whole term. BD suggested that staggered payments, perhaps weekly, could make a difference.

A governor suggested putting a survey in the school newsletter to find out what after school activities families are participating in. This would also give a broader understanding of any possible barriers. MO agreed to do this.

The school keeps 10% of the fees paid to the private company running clubs. A governor proposed that this be renegotiated to increase the amount - which MO agreed to do.

ACTION 8.4: MO to establish whether price is the determining factor for PP families not attending clubs. He will also look in to how many clubs might be provided at no cost to pupil premium families and where alternative funding might come from.

ACTION 8.5: MO to add a survey in the next school newsletter and report findings in Head's report for the next FGB.

ACTION 8.6: MO to ask for a bigger percentage from Ready Set Stage.

9. Covid Protocols

Any update to Risk Assessment

QUESTION: The Chair noted that Government guidance suggests there is no longer any risk and wanted to know the following:

- Is the risk assessment still required; if so, will it be updated?

ANSWER: MO: There is a slight change to the risk assessment taken from the LA in interpreting the Government's advice that there are no longer any regular restrictions in place.

ACTION 9.1: MO to update the risk assessment to reflect the slight change and to then send it to the Chair and Vice-chair for review by the end of the week, 11 March 2022.

MO: I have put some information in the school's newsletter, but we cannot insist that families comply. We are recommending that parents do the Covid test if they can afford them. They are free until 1 April 2022 and chargeable after that.

- Children who have Covid should have five days off, and if they are well enough, they can return to school on the sixth day.
- There is an expectation for face-to-face education.

- The LA's guidance has requested that families and staff continue to test twice weekly until 31 March 2022.
- This is advice, not a requirement. We will add the information to this week's newsletter.
- The main change is that we are now advising parents rather than insisting.

ACTION 9.2: MO to add new Covid information to this week's school newsletter.

QUESTION: A governor wanted clarification around the current guidelines and asked what would happen if a child got Covid. Rather than staying at home for five days, the parent decides to let them go to school on the third day, would there be any adverse reactions from other parents?

ANSWER: MO: The situation may manifest in due time but the information was clear as to what the current guidelines are.

ANSWER: SB confirmed that there were two cases in Y6 this week, and they were both testing and self-isolating, the parents contacted her to let her know what was happening, which is a sign the parents are acting accordingly.

QUESTION: A governor raised a concern that there may be a barrier for certain families not being able to afford to do the tests after the 1 April 2022, and whether some children would be able to return to school after six days because of the cost of the test.

ANSWER: The Chair suggested that MO enquire with Public Health Service or the LA to determine the plans for pupil premium families.

ACTION 9.3: MO to contact Public Health Service and the LA to find out what will happen to families who are not able to afford the lateral flow test for the children.

MO: Suggested that the school should retain some tests for Pupil Premium families and to also thank parents who are isolating their children in the newsletter.

A governor proposed that money should also be ring-fenced for teachers to have free access to tests.

Full Head Teacher's Report can be viewed [HERE](#)

10. Minutes / Reports from Committee

Finance committee – 2 February 2022 initial overview headlines by SB.

- There is likely to be an end of year deficit for 2021/2022 and a year-end carried forward deficit. The carried forward deficit is likely to be £34,000.
- Should they close with a carried forward deficit, they will need to join a project with the LA, which means that SW and MO will have to work more closely with Islington Finance, who will help with the deficit for this year and to come up with a plan to clear it. They will also look at future budgets more closely with regular budget monitoring.
- An estimated budget has been put together for 2022/2023, which has been shared with the LA. The budget includes proposed expenses and inflationary increases but does not include the income side and what will be received from the LA.
- The finance committee were not in a position to discuss next year's budget. After their finance meeting on 23 March 2022, budgets will be discussed in more detail, by then, the committee will know whether there will be a growing deficit or not.
- Since the school was audited, SW has updated a number of policies for SP and AS to review; they will continue to review as many as possible in time for the Finance Committee Meeting on 23 March 2022. The policies do not need approval from the school governing board.

	<p>ACTION 10.1: The chair delegated the School’s Financial Value Statement form (SFVS) to the Finance Committee to be completed by the 23 March 2022 so that SW can submit the form by 31 March 2022.</p> <p>Both the Chair and MO noted that since they have been at the school, this was the first time it has ever ended with an end of year deficit, which was partly due to the Covid pandemic in which not all additional costs had been reimbursed.</p> <p>ACTION 10.2: The Chair recommended that after the February books have closed, MO should have a discussion with the LA to find out if any additional funds are available to help close the financial gap.</p> <p>The full minutes from Finance Committee can be viewed HERE</p> <p>Learning Committee - Headlines – An initial overview of minutes of meetings held on 30/11/2021 and 08/02/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was an excellent briefing on pupil wellbeing from Lyn Brett, Assistant Head and SENDCO, and from Stephanie Welburne, PHSE lead. Lyn’s summary of the processes for identifying and supporting children who have emotional and general wellbeing needs is attached to the minutes and can be viewed HERE; the chair recommended that governors had a look at the report attached to the minutes of 08/02/2022. <p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BD as Safeguarding Governor, had attended the school on 21/10/2021 and was shown around by MO and the Premises Manger and was very impressed. BD wanted it to be noted that Gillespie was fortunate to have the level of attention to health and safety, and to safeguarding from the Premises Manager. • The annual safeguarding report was approved and can be viewed HERE <p>The Chair added that a food standards article had been shared by the LA on Natasha's Law which came into effect on 21 October 2021. It draws attention to the need for clear labelling on packaged food. The school might need to have more explicit policies on food labelling.</p> <p>MO: The school keeps a very tight record on children who have allergies and works extremely closely with catering at lunchtime.</p> <p>ACTION 10.3: BD and MO to liaise on this to find out more on what is required under Natasha's Law.</p> <p>Full minutes and report can be found HERE</p>
11.	<p><u>Approval of updated policies</u></p> <p>Virtual Meetings Policy – an updated policy was approved.</p> <p>The Virtual Meetings Policy can be found HERE</p>
12.	<p>Governor Training and Development and Governors’ Briefings</p> <p>Report on any training completed and resulting actions to be taken and to consider any other training needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FC and HA to arrange to attend the Governor Induction training, the next session is in May 2022.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone can attend the Islington Governors' briefing; the meetings are mostly held on Zoom. • No one has undertaken any training since the Board last met. <p>New Governor Induction training can be booked HERE</p>
13.	<p><u>Future meeting dates</u></p> <p>The next Full Governing Board will be held on Wednesday 15 June 2022, 6.00pm to 7.30pm. Dates for the following year will be set at this meeting.</p>
14.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no further business.

PART TWO – CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

If there are items to be discussed under Part 2, please put the items below on a new sheet.

15.	CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS	
	None	

	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING: FGB – Wednesday 15 June 2022 at 6pm to 7.30.</p> <p>There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 19.35 pm.</p> <p>Pauline Mayne - Clerk to Governors</p> <p>Islington Governor Services Islington Council</p> <p>CHAIR: _____</p> <p>DATE: _____</p>	
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**GILLESPIE PRIMARY SCHOOL
ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF
2 MARCH 2022**

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION REQUIRED	BY
ACTION 2.1	Clerk to update GovernorHub and to send Register of Interest forms to FC.	Clerk
ACTION 3.1	Clerk to liaise with Jane Wright regarding the Governing Board reconstitution requirements and the legal administrative procedure.	Clerk
ACTION 4.1	New governors to submit their relevant DBS documents to Rebecca in the school office.	HA, FC
ACTION 4.2	The Chair to check if data about governors are up to date on the DfE's national database of governors.	Chair
ACTION 4.3	HA and FC to return Register of Interests form and Self (Disqualification) Declaration Form to Clerk for her to upload on GovernorHub.	HA, FC, Clerk
ACTION 4.4	Chair to send approved and signed Code of Conduct to Clerk to upload to GovernorHub.	Chair/Clerk
ACTION 6.1	Signed copy of minutes to be sent to clerk for uploading to GovernorHub.	Clerk
ACTION 8.1	Parent governors to encourage parents, grandparents, and people in the community to become reading volunteers.	Parent Governors
ACTION 8.2	The Chair recommended that visits be made to a whole class reading session in the first half of next term, so that the governors can see this in action. After that, a Learning Committee should be held with Sarah (Literacy lead teacher) and Steff (KS1 expert teacher), where reading will be discussed.	SB
ACTION 8.3	DH to consult with MO and SW (the school's Business Manager) to look further at the job description and the terms on which the science teacher has been taken on and to then report back to the Finance Committee.	DH, SB, MO
ACTION 8.4	MO to establish whether price is the determining factor for PP families not attending clubs. He will also look in to how	MO

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	many clubs might be provided at no cost to pupil premium families and where alternative funding might come from.	
ACTION 8.5	MO to add a survey in the next school newsletter and report findings in Head's report for the next FGB.	MO
ACTION 8.6	MO to ask for a bigger percentage from Ready Set Stage.	MO
ACTION 9.1	MO to update the risk assessment to reflect the slight change and to then send it to the Chair and Vice-chair for review by the end of the week, 11 March 2022.	MO
ACTION 9.2	MO to add new Covid information to this week's school newsletter.	MO
ACTION 9.3	MO to contact Public Health Service and the LA to find out what will happen to families who are not able to afford the lateral flow test for the children.	MO
ACTION 10.1	The chair delegated the School's Financial Value Statement form (SFVS) to the Finance Committee to be completed by the 23 March 2022 so that SW can submit the form by 31 March 2022.	Finance Committee, SB
ACTION 10.2:	The Chair recommended that after the February books have closed, MO should have a discussion with the LA to find out if any additional funds are available to help close the financial gap.	MO
ACTION 10.3	BD and MO to liaise on this to find out more on what is required under Natasha's Law.	BD, MO