



Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting

Held on Wednesday 1 March 2023 at 6.00pm, in person

Membership

Name	Initial	Term Expiry Date	Governor Category
Mark Owen	MO	Ex-officio	Headteacher
Claire Bolderson (Chair)	CB	18/10/2026	Co-opted Governors (4)
Ashley Smith (Vice Chair)	AS	19/10/2025	
Dan Hamilton	DH	03/03/2024	
Sajni Patani	SP	03/03/2024	
Jodie Reed	JR	22/02/2025	Parent Governors (4)
Hafsa Abokar	HA	01/03/2026	
Mandy Leatham	ML	22/02/2025	
Bhavini Doyle	BD	22/02/2025	
Shelly Wragg	SW	TBC	Staff Governor (1)
Finella (Fin) Craig*	FC	01/03/2026	Local Authority Governor (1)
Katrina Moses (Deputy Headteacher)	KM	N/A	Observer
Mel Sealy-Pearson		N/A	HEP Cover Clerk

An asterisk (*) denotes absent

PART 1

1. **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all Governors to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from FC.

2. **Compliance**

2.1 *Business and Personal Interests*

All governors completed the Business and personal interests form.

The annual 2022-23 Register of Business Interest form has been posted on GovernorHub noticeboard for all governors to complete. Please click [HERE](#) to access the Business and Personal Interests form on GovernorHub.

2.2 *Self-declaration (Disqualification) Form*

All declarations are up to date.

Please click [HERE](#) to access the Self-declaration (Disqualification) form on GovernorHub.

2.3 *Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks/Section 128 checks*

All checks are up to date.

2.4 *National Database*

The national database is up to date.

2.5 *Code of Conduct*

Governors are up to date.

3. Membership

3.1 End of Term Expiry Dates

There were no end of term expiry dates approaching.

3.2 Succession Planning

The Chair contacted Governor for Schools who suggested three candidates. She will arrange to meet people if the board agrees they're a suitable fit.

The Chair also asked Governors to gauge interest from their contacts within the community who may be interested in a role on the board.

4. Appointment of Link Governors

HA was **confirmed** as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Link Governor.

ML was **confirmed** as the Equalities Governor Link Governor.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising – 19 October 2022

5.1 Minutes of the Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were **agreed** as an accurate record of the meeting held. A signed copy of the minutes will be sent to the Clerk for uploading to GovernorHub.

5.2 Matters Arising

Item	Action	By Whom
2.1	All Governors are asked to review, complete, and upload the signed annual Business and Personal Interests form 2022-23 in the folder provided on GovernorHub or return the completed form to the Clerk. Completed	All Governors
2.2	Chair and Vice Chair to complete the Self-declaration (Disqualification) form and to upload the signed form in the folder provided on GovernorHub or return the completed form to the Clerk. Completed	CB, AS
2.3	FC to give the school office her DBS number. Completed	FC
3.1	CB is to commence handover to DH. Completed	CB, DH
4.1	SP to handover her Chair of the Finance Committee duties to AS until February 2023. Completed	SP, AS
4.2	The Chair to find out if other governors are interested in the Equalities Governor role before confirming with ML. Completed	CB, AS
5.1	Signed copy of the minutes is to be sent to the Clerk for uploading to GovernorHub. Completed	Clerk
6.1	At the beginning of Spring (March/April), the GB and FoG will communicate with parents to make clear that enrichment activities and support for families will have to come from donations. Completed	GB, FOG
6.2	MO to look into the Islington Local Initiatives Fund. Completed	MO
8.1	The Finance Committee to look into more detail at the nursery's finances and when doing so to consider the three points below: 1. The future impact of the closure of many private nurseries in Islington, which could, in time, increase take-ups in schools. 2. A wraparound model in which teaching assistants are given the option to work as child-minders in the nursery.	Finance Committee

Item	Action	By Whom
	3. Discussion with Islington about helping to support places for local children whose parents do not qualify for the 30 hours-free provisions. Completed	
8.2	MO to survey parents and pupil's views of after school clubs. Ongoing	MO
8.3	KM to look at absence in relation to progress for pupil premium children. Completed	KM
10.1	JR and MO to liaise on the subjects for governor visits. Completed	JR, MO
10.2	All governors are to let BD know their safeguarding training date. Completed	All Governors
11.1	MO to ensure that the Child Protection and Online Safety policies are uploaded to the website. Completed	MO
12.1	MO to start putting together a proposal/vision of where he would like the school to go in the context of all the changes and to bring a draft at the next FGB. Ongoing – Governors agreed to postpone in light of recognised financial challenges and Islington's plans	MO

ACTION 5.1 – Change HA's surname on future agendas and in the last meeting minutes.

6. **Headteacher's Report**

6.1 The Headteacher gave a verbal overview of each section of the report and Governors were given the opportunity to share comments.

Quality of teaching and learning - The Chair commented on the positive observation of the teaching of Maths where effective teaching and active learning is taking place in nearly all classes.

The Chair asked what is missing and what is being done to remedy the classes where there isn't effective teaching and learning. The Headteacher confirmed there isn't anything missing from those classes and the issue has not arisen from day to day teaching - one lesson observation was not executed as planned. Additionally, some new teachers are currently being inducted. KM looked at books on 28 February 2023 and all looked good.

The Chair commended the school on the process of the new teachers settling in well and asked the Headteacher about meetings with teachers in their first term and whether pre-appraisals will be conducted. The Headteacher confirmed meetings will take place however, in a more substantive way to ensure that new teachers are mentored and supported. New teachers will also have regular meetings with senior teachers.

The Headteacher confirmed there is stable teaching in both year groups in which new teachers have joined this term, and positive feedback has been received from parents and pupils.

Library - The Chair thanked all parents who supported the organising and running of weekly sessions at the library. The Headteacher informed Governors that funding options to raise money for the library would need to be explored as there is no budget.

After School Clubs - The Chair stated that after school clubs looks positive in terms of increasing the number of Pupil Premium children using the service.

Wellbeing of Staff and Pupils - The Chair shared a positive comment and interaction that she had with a pupil during a visit who demonstrated that he understood that he could speak to any adult about concerns.

Attendance - A high percentage of absence and term time leave was reported. The Chair asked if there was anything, in addition to past efforts, that can be done to address the issue. KM informed Governors that the last newsletter informed parents that term time leave will not be authorised.

A consistent message to parents has been sent. The Senior Admin Officer, Rebecca and KM are meeting some low attendance families in the weeks commencing 27 February and 6 March 2023 to find out what the barriers to attendance are. The Chair asked if these families are ones who have previously attended meetings. KM confirmed that some have not previously had issues with absence and stated also that there have been instances of children who have had increased illness. Although Gillespie Primary School has had more illness than some other schools, its authorised absence rate remains lower than the local and national average.

The Chair asked whether the absence rate is linked to the high number of children with EHCPs. KM confirmed some of the children with complex needs have had more time off school than others but suggests this is only part of the reason

Governors discussed fining procedures for parents and possible solutions to help improve attendance. The Headteacher suggested analysing some of the term time holiday requests. BD asked whether the school could offer attendance rewards. The Headteacher confirmed children have always been awarded for punctuality and attendance. Classes that get over 96% attendance will now also be awarded.

School Trips – The Headteacher was pleased that teachers are engaging in organising trips and visits. These are on the increase since the end of the pandemic.

7. **Preparing for Ofsted**

The Chair uploaded an Ofsted information sheet to GovernorHub, which Governors can contribute to. The Headteacher explained the purpose of the document is to provide Governors with an accurate picture of the school, both strategic and non-strategic. The Headteacher shared the school's key headlines in the inspection data summary report.

The Headteacher expects the school to have a Section 5 Ofsted inspection soon and informed Governors of the process. The current focus is a deep dive into the curriculum and improving the delivery of all subjects including the foundation subjects. All other areas within the framework will also be inspected. The Headteacher is confident that he has strong curriculum plans in place across the school, particularly Maths, Music, Science and Geography. Further developmental work is needed in Art and Design and Technology but are strong regardless.

The Headteacher shared the Education Inspection Framework document with Governors and asked them to familiarise themselves. He also explained the leadership and management section of the inspection data summary report, which can be found online. Inspectors will look at this data but will not discuss it with governors.

The Chair informed the Board that inspectors will want to know how Governors can evidence curriculum development and what the processes are, for example, minutes of meetings, visits to school and meetings with the Headteacher. The Chair sent a link to Governors, which explains the government's overview of the school.

DH asked what the process of notifying Governors would be in the case of a phone call on a strike day. The Headteacher clarified that a call can be received between 10:30am and 2:00pm Monday to Wednesday, which will require scheduling a 90-minute telephone call with inspectors before the visit. He will telephone the Chair who will then ring AS and initiate a phone tree to inform Governors. The Chair confirmed she will also send an email.

The Headteacher asked the Parent Governors to encourage other parents to feed back any positive comments about the school that they have to share to the inspectors.

ACTION: Governors visit reports to be sent to HT to be uploaded.

ACTION: HT to send the updated information sheet to Chair.

8. Pupil Progress (Autumn data)

The Pupil Progress data report is available on GovernorHub. This covers progress and attainment up until Autumn 2022. Spring assessment is taking place in the week commencing 6 March 2023. The Chair commended the Headteacher on great progress in Upper KS2 Writing, particularly in Year 5.

Governors queried the decrease in attainment in Year 2 and 3.. SW explained that early in the Autumn term, the evidence to support judgements is not yet complete and teachers are often cautious with assessment given the developmental jump from Year1 to Year 2.

The Chair queried whether the data reflects the impact of the lockdowns due to these children in particular having very little time in school and asked whether there is additional support in the classroom. SW confirmed a weekly targeted catch up support session is in place for those children on the cusp of expected attainment to focus on areas such as English, writing or reading. This happens in groups and one-to-one sessions across the school.

During a visit to the school, HA observed children being taken out of SW's class to do targeted work and were transitioning back in to the class well.

9. Minutes/Reports from Committees

9.1 *Learning Committee (JR)*

JR thanked all who sent observation notes following governor visits to classes. Any questions will be picked up at the next meeting, which will focus on writing. JR also thanked Lynn who delivered a full presentation and write-up of the school's work on SEN. The Chair informed JR that FC had been impressed by the information provided.

Minutes of the last meeting held on 7 February 2023, at which the School Improvement plan was discussed, can accessed [HERE](#). **The next meeting takes place on Wednesday 29 March 2023.**

9.2 *Finance Committee - update on budget and plans for monitoring (SP)*

The last committee meeting on 23 February 2023 did not take place and will be re-scheduled. SP summarised that budgets are still very tight. The in-year deficit is likely to be greater than originally forecasted, which was estimated to be circa £37,000 by the end of the year. Figures are now forecasted to be circa £60,000 in deficit by the end of the year.

The key action now is to look at numbers for 2023-24 once they're available and review the impact. AS, SP, DH and the Chair will meet with the Headteacher and School Business Manager in the week commencing 20 March 2023. If figures show a continuing deficit, SP advised the Board they will need to look at ways to address it. **The next meeting takes place on 23rd March 2023.**

ACTION 9.1: JR to check SW is on the Learning Committee distribution list.

10. Financial Management/Budget

10.1 *Approval of the Schools Financial Value Standard*

SP updated Governors on the SFVS. There have been some updates to the SFVS from last year. There is one action remaining from audit, which is to approve school leaver checklist. The main focus for this year will be reducing the deficit for the coming year, everything else remains the same. Governors **approved** the report to send to Islington.

10.2 *Update on Previous Discussions About the Nursery*

AS confirmed the nursery makes a small profit and, following discussions with the Local Authority, they are supportive of continuing the provision. It has been decided to continue with the provision with a focus on getting as many children as possible and to regularly monitor it.

10.3 *Update on the Budget for 2023/24 and Future Years*

Governors discussed the school's budget situation. The Chair reminded the board that all schools across the country are in dire financial circumstances and last reports from Islington showed a collective £700,000 deficit. The funding due in December 2022 as well as future funding has been factored in to the budget. The final figures will be received in the week commencing 6 March 2023.

The Chair informed Governors that a conversation will need be held to explore the way forward. Islington is devising a plan for special provision within certain schools with some allocated funding. However, this is coming together slowly with no guarantee that schools will be able to immediately access this opportunity.

ML asked whether there is an expectation that schools will be able to innovate and manage this unprecedented situation. The Chair confirmed Islington are formulating a plan and reviewing how they do things. Debbie Stevenson, Head of Finance at Islington, has advised to look at everything from the bottom up.

The budget will be revisited at the Finance Committee meeting. The Chair invited Governors who do not sit on the Finance Committee to attend. The budget will be ratified at the next Full Governing Body meeting.

ACTION 10.1: Approve the school leaver checklist on the SFVS.

ACTION 10.3: Delegate the budget to Finance Committee and ratify at the next Full Governing Body meeting

11. Safeguarding

11.1 Update from the Safeguarding Governor (BD)

Update to the Online Policy – see Item 12.

Governors collectively **agreed** they had no objection to the Headteacher being the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). It was the opinion of the person delivering the safeguarding course who suggested that the Headteacher should not be the DSL however, this is not a statutory requirement

11.2 Approval of the Annual Safeguarding Report to Governors for Submission to the Local Authority by 31 March 2023.

The annual safeguarding report was signed on 7 February 2023.

Written comments were received from FC, who queried whether the Early Help referrals were being actioned early enough by the Local Authority. She was concerned that some CP and CIN cases were being closed too quickly or returned to Early Help by Social Services.

Governors **approved** the annual safeguarding report.

ACTION 11.2: The Headteacher to liaise with FC regarding the safeguarding report.

12. Policies for Approval

12.1 Online Safety Policy

Governors **approved** this policy.

13. Governor Training and Development and Governors' Briefings

13.1 Governors' Briefing

The Chair and DH went to a governors meeting, which takes place once per term. Following feedback about communications and governor knowledge, twice-termly updates will now be sent to governors.

The next Governor Briefing takes place on Thursday 16 March, 6-7.30pm.

13.2 Training

ML undertook Safer Recruitment training and is due to do equality training.

Two governors have yet to complete Safeguarding training and will contact the school office for details of the online courses. Certificates will be kept in the office.

ACTION 13.2: JR and SP to complete safeguarding training.

14. Future Meeting Dates

Full Governing Body meeting - Wednesday 14 June 2023
Finance Committee meeting – March 23rd 2023
Learning Committee meeting – March 29th 2023 and June tbc

15. Any Further Business

There was no other business.

PART 2 - CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

16. Confidential Business

There was no other business.

17. Headteacher's Report on Complaints, Exclusions and Incidents

There was nothing to report.

18. Any Other Confidential Business

There was no other confidential business to report.

The Chair thanked all Governors for attending and closed the meeting at 19:42.

Signed.....Date:
Chair

Action Table

Item No.	Action	By Whom
5.1	Change HA's surname on future agendas and in the last meeting minutes.	Clerk
7	Visit reports to be sent to the Headteacher to be uploaded.	Governors
	Send the updated information sheet to Chair.	Headteacher
9.1	Check SW is on the Learning Committee distribution list.	JR
10.1	Approve the school leaver checklist on the SFVS.	Finance Committee
10.3	Delegate the budget to the Finance Committee and ratify at the next Full Governing Body meeting	Governors/Clerk
11.2	Liaise with FC regarding the safeguarding report.	Headteacher
13.2	Complete safeguarding training	JR/SP