



MINUTES
GILLESPIE PRIMARY SCHOOL
FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Wednesday 25 February 2026, 5.50pm
at the school

Members

Mark Owen (MO)

Headteacher, Ex-Officio

By Invitation

*Shelley Wragg (SW)

ECT Mentor and
Senior Curriculum
Leader, Associate
member

Dan Hamilton (DH)

Chair, Co-opted
governor

Jenny Connolly (Clerk)

Clerk to Governors

Deborah Lee (DL),
Shruti Dholakia (SD)
Tiffanie Lee (TL)
Michael Padfield
(MP)

Parent governor
Parent governor
Parent governor
Parent governor
(arrived 6.52pm)

*Fin Craig (FC)

LA governor

*Alicia Jumman (AJ)

Co-opted governor

Hassan Khan (HK)

Staff governor

Vacancies, 2 x Co-opted

*Non-attendance

The meeting was quorate

1 Apologies/consent for absence

There were no apologies for absence, but FC and AJ absence noted and accepted by governors.

2 Governance

2.1 Compliance

Governors were reminded to ensure Register of Business Interest Forms, Self Declaration Forms, enhanced DBS checks and Section 128 checks are completed.

Governors were reminded to read the Code of Conduct (CoC) on GovernorHub.

Governors were reminded to confirm they have read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 via Governor Hub.

Governors were reminded to declare any personal or pecuniary interest in any item that might arise during the course of the meeting.

Completed Register of Business Forms were received from MO and HK.

2.2 Membership of governing board

2.2.1 Upcoming term ends

Governors noted the upcoming term end of the Local Authority (LA) governor (Fin Craig, FC), 01 March 2026.

FC has confirmed she would like to be renominated as LA governor and governors confirmed agreement for FC to be renominated.

Action: Clerk to contact School Governance, Islington regarding the renomination of FC as LA governor

2.2.2 Appointments

Hassan Khan (HK) was elected as staff governor for four years, effective from 16 January 2026, until 15 January 2030.

2.2.3 Vacancies

Governors noted the Co-opted vacancies.

DH has spoken to a potential candidate, a lecturer.

Action: MO to arrange an interview with the potential co-opted candidate and a governor

A second candidate has applied for the Co-opted vacancy through Governors for Schools and has a senior government position.

Governors were reminded to contact DH if they know anyone who has the ability and commitment (not a parent in the school) to be a Co-opted governor.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting (22 October 2025)

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2025 were agreed as an accurate reflection of discussions and signed by the Chair.

The Learning Committee minutes from the autumn term will be uploaded to GovernorHub.

4 Matters arising from the minutes

See Action Log

5 Chair's Action

There have been no decisions or actions made by the Chair.

6 Safeguarding

6.1 Report from Safeguarding Lead

No report, but update included in Item 6.2

6.2 Annual Safeguarding Report from Head Teacher

The key task for the Safeguarding Lead this term was to receive and approve the Annual Safeguarding Report.

The report will be sent before the end of the spring term to enable the Safeguarding Lead to assess the report. When the report is complete, it will be circulated to governors and approved by the Safeguarding Committee.

In conjunction with advice from LA, the school is looking to review the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PHSE) Policy. The policy will need to be reviewed through Safeguarding Committee and the FGB and consultation will need to take place with parents/carers at the school. There is work to be done to meet policy guidelines.

The PHSE Curriculum is developed by Islington and Camden Councils and an update is currently taking place. It is important that teachers know what they are able to teach and the use of appropriate language is also important.

Q: In terms of consultation with parents about the PHSE Policy, what would the consultation be about? A: It would be about the policy, presenting the policy, informing parents and seeking their views. The PHSE Lead is undertaking formal training for the policy.

7 Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher's report was included in the pack. Governors were invited to question and comment on the report.

Q: Attendance has reduced, can you explain why? A: There are a small number of pupils who have significantly poor attendance in school (pupils who are relatively new to the school); this is a challenge and impacts on overall attendance. The school has taken the position to create a positive culture and try to support the small number of pupils with poor attendance.

Persistent Absence (PA) continues to increase, but parents/carers are not fined. The LA may want the school to include fining as part of its strategy. However, the school will continue with its' procedures and seek advice.

Q: Why do you not fine, do you believe it does not work? A: Fining may be a possibility, but other options will be considered first. If that does not work, that is an approach that can be taken, but this approach can appear confrontational.

Q: Are these families who have joined the school in different years? A: Yes and these families have established their own way of managing the attendance. This causes issues as the school is trying to manage pupil wellbeing and it does not help pupils not being in school. The long term is to create a solid, inclusive and supportive community.

A: The harassment incident – is the problem becoming an issue or is it isolated? A: These issues happen and relate to the same set of families in relation to poor attendance. It was a simple incident, not a general school issue, but it is concerning.

Q: In terms of the Capital Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Fund Project, the funding has been secured but note that match funding is being sought. The project has been introduced to the Gillespie Foundation (Foundation). Does that mean you are asking the Foundation to match-fund the money that you are getting from elsewhere? A: We are still awaiting a decision from key people in the Foundation regarding the funding secured. Work was done at the beginning of summer 2025 and a meeting took place in the autumn term 2025. Committed parents are now being sought who have capital fundraising expertise.

The money for the SEND project is about the current government approach. The idea is that the government provides money across the country for mainstream schools to make adaptations to the school property. A corner of the playground has been identified to create a building space to meet the needs of pupils with complex needs. This funding is a separate initiative; the school will also be looking at outside funding.

There are 35 schools in Islington currently working on SEN projects.

Action: MO to find out the current position in terms of the match funding (Capital SEND Fund Project).

8 Financial management / budget

8.1 Report from Finance Committee

SD provided a finance update.

In May 2025, the budget agreed generated a deficit of £135,000 on top of an existing deficit of circa £160,000. During May to September 2025, we went through a process of trying to reduce the in-year deficit through various means. The in-year deficit is now just below £30,000.

There is some funding from the Foundation; this is paying for two additional teaching assistants (TAs) which enables flexibility when staff are off sick.

Overall, the aim for end of year is -£29,000, with overall deficit to -£190,000. There has been positive feedback from the LA but LA have asked that next year to be paying the debt.

Q: What happens with the accrued deficit? A: It does not get written off. The school is in a Deficit Recovery Group and DH meets with the School Business Manager (SBM), MO and LA. The idea is to go slowly into surplus which will slowly reduce the deficit.

We are meeting the needs of pupils, but staff numbers have been reduced. Through the Foundation class TAs have been increased, which is helping on a day-to-day basis.

Nursery - wrap around care has been authorised and hope to launch this by September 2026. Wrap around provision will also be provided to reception children. The money from the Nursery can be used to pay off the deficit.

There are two streams of funding: the LA and Foundation (for recurrent funds, bids, grants). The Foundation has the drive to generate funds to allow teachers and TAs to be back in the classroom.

8.2 Schools Financial Value Standard

The Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) has been prepared, approved by Finance Committee, signed by DH and will be sent to the LA by 03 March 2026.

9 Budget 2026-29

The budget has to be submitted to the LA by 31 May 2026.

Governors agreed the budget would be delegated to the Finance Committee for approval. SD offered to arrange a Teams call with governors for a briefing on the budget.

10 Equalities Report from Equalities Link Governors

Governors noted that the Global Majority Governors' Network took place on 26 February 2026.

11 Governors' Central Meetings

Governors noted Governors' Briefing took place on 04 February 2026 on Teams. DH reported that:

- The government is expecting a 6% pay settlement over three years and there will be no additional funding.
- A health-related behaviour survey was undertaken.

Action: DH to find out if there are any slides available for governors to view the health-related behaviour survey.

Chairs' Advisory Group – governors noted the next meeting is due to be held on 11 March 2026, 5.30-7.30pm, venue to be confirmed.

12 Governor Training and Development

DH will undertake safer recruitment training.

DL discussed the LA finance training; there was discussion on school deficits.

Governors noted that training in the London Borough of Islington (LBI) Governor Training Programme can be booked on My Learning.

13 Future meeting dates

FGB, 10 June 2026, 5.45pm

Learning Committee, 18 March 2026, 6pm

Agenda Items

White Paper update (MO)

Equalities Report

14 Any Other Business

14.1 Payroll Provider

MO explained that the LA has decided that schools will need to find their own payroll providers and described the process.

- The provider will be Juniper and transfer to the new provider will take place in June 2026.
- The SBM will check payroll for all members of staff in school.
- Juniper will upload to BACS platform in June 2026.
- The SBM will recheck to ensure this is correct.
- The SBM will approve the upload and if there are any errors there will be two primary security supporters.

It should be a straightforward process. Staff will be advised to check pension histories at the same time.

MO explained he also looked at linking with other schools with a shared provider, but some of the services are not appropriate for Gillespie Primary School.

Staff will be encouraged to download all documents before the transfer.

Action: MO to find out the length of the payroll provider contract is with Juniper.

15 Confidential Items (Part Two of the meeting)

Item minuted confidentially.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 7.45pm.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____

Action Log

	FGB 25 February 2026	Who
2 2.2.1	Membership of governing board Upcoming term ends Clerk to contact School Governance, Islington regarding the renomination of FC as LA governor.	Clerk Complete
2 2.2.3	Vacancies MO to arrange an interview with the potential co-opted candidate and a governor.	MO
7	Headteachers Report MO to find out the current position in terms of the match funding (Capital SEND Fund Project).	MO
11	Governors' Central Meetings DH to find out if there are any slides available for governors to view the health-related behaviour survey.	DH
14 14.1	AOB Payroll Provider MO to find out the length of the payroll provider contract is with Juniper.	MO
	Agenda items next meeting: White Paper update (MO) Equalities Report	

	FGB 22 October 2025	Who
2 2.1	Governance Compliance All governors to update business interests and confirm they have read the Code of Conduct 2025 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 P1 on Governor Hub.	ALL Ongoing
2 2.1	Governance Compliance New governors to check with School Business Manager to ensure that DBS and 128 checks have been completed	DL, SD, TL Ongoing
2 2.3 2.3.1	Governance Membership of Governing Board Vacancies Governors who know anyone who has the ability and commitment (not a parent in the school) to be a Co-opted governor to contact DH	ALL Ongoing
12	Induction and Safeguarding Governors to ensure they complete safeguarding training. 25/02/2026 – governors reminded to ensure induction safeguarding training has been completed and to send the certificates to the Senior Admin Officer at the school.	ALL Ongoing
ITEM	FGB 26 February 2025	BY
11	Governor Training and Development DH to look at Safer Recruitment training for governors. 21/05/2025 – DH to look at further date for Safer Recruitment training. 22/10/2025 - DH will continue to look for a date when governors can attend Safer Recruitment training. 25/02/2026 - There is safer recruitment training in May 2026. Chair or Vice Chair should do safeguarding training to enable MO to under senior interviews with a governor. DH agreed to do safer recruitment training.	DH