



Dulwich Hamlet Junior School

**Meeting of the Local Governing Body
on Monday, 6 July 2020 at 18:30
by Google Meeting**

Present:	Karen Robinson	Chair / KR
	Catriona de Jongh	CdJ
	Tom Esslemont	TE
	Tom Forster	TF
	Bridget Jackson	BJ
	Karen Larcombe-Tee	KLT
	Eleanor Parker	EP
	Claire Purcell (Head of School)	HoS / CP
	Lynsey Rowe	LR
	Tom Salomonson	TS
Clerk:	Kathleen Formosa	Clerk

MINUTES

1. Welcome, Apologies & Quorum

1.1 The Chair opened the business of the meeting at 18:33, welcoming members of the LGB and others in attendance at the meeting.

1.1.1 It was **noted** that Sara Azzopardi had stepped down from the LGB as a staff governor. Governors expressed thanks to Sara for her service to the LGB and the school. The Chair stated that elections for a new staff governor would be arranged in due course.

ACTION: Chair / HoS to arrange for the election of a new staff governor.

1.2 It was **confirmed** that all governors were present at the meeting.

1.3 A quorum was **confirmed**, and the meeting proceeded to business accordingly.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no interests declared.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 16 December 2019

3.1 The minutes of the 16 December 2019 meeting of the LGB (**Paper 1**) were **approved**.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting (**Paper 2**) were **reviewed**, and the following items were **discussed**:

- Regarding item 5.1.1, it was **noted** that read receipts for the new KCSIE guidance had been received from all governors in post at the time the guidance was issued. Newly appointed governors were asked to confirm with Sue Roberts that their read receipts had been received.

ACTION: LR and TE to confirm by email to Sue Roberts that they have

submitted their read receipts for the KCSIE guidance.

- It was **noted** that actions relating to items 6.3 (governor skills audit) and 11.1.2 (review of the link governor policy) remained outstanding and would carry over to the next meeting.

ACTION: KLT to circulate the aggregate assessment of the governor skills audit.

ACTION: Chair and HoS to discuss the next review of the link governor policy outside of the meeting and report back.

4.1.1 It was **noted** that all other actions set out on the list of matters arising were complete or on the agenda for the meeting.

4.1.2 The following matters were addressed as further matters arising:

- Regarding item 7.1.1, EP reported that a formal review of the risk register would take place in the autumn. She stated that the school's premises related risks would be discussed at the October meeting of the Audit Committee, following which EP would facilitate an LGB review of premises matters to be dealt with through the Business Committee.
- Regarding item 8.4, it was **noted** that the school was unsuccessful in its CIF bids. EP stated that essential works, including finding a means of funding these, would be dealt with by the Business Committee at its next meeting on 20 July 2020.

ACTION: EP to report at the next LGB meeting outcomes from the Business Committee's discussions relating to funding for essential premises works.

5. Chair's Report

5.1 The Chair reported that she had undertaken the following actions since the previous meeting of the LGB:

- Agreed a Covid-19 addendum to the Safeguarding Policy (which was subsequently reviewed and accepted by the Education Committee);
- Dealt with a few emails from parents during the period of lockdown;
- Participated in the off-rolling of a pupil as part of a subcommittee comprising EP, TS and herself.

5.1.1 Regarding the off-rolling case dealt with, the Chair reported that this was handled through a virtual meeting. There had been no further communication from the off-rolled pupil or the family.

6. Head of School's Report & Covid-19 Recovery

6.1 The HoS report (**Paper 3**) was **reviewed**.

6.1.1 CP reported that the current situation of managing the school during a pandemic had been very difficult for her as well as for all leadership and staff in the school, especially in having to make decisions quickly and often, frequently with very little information available. CP stated her appreciation for the core leadership team and all staff in their efforts to support the school through a difficult period.

6.1.2 CP stated that all systems and practices in the school had had to be reimagined during the period of lockdown. Not all parents and carers had been happy with the decisions the school had made or the new systems put in place. CP stated that all parent complaints and concerns had been responded to.

6.2 CP reported that most staff had continued to come to work on a rota timetable throughout the period of lockdown, unless they were shielding. She stated that this had helped substantially as the school went into wider opening.

6.2.1 CP reported that there had been cases of Covid-19 among the staff team.

6.2.2 CP reported that staff who had been shielding had been invited to come into school to experience what the school had been working toward the last several months, and to

- reassure these staff of the environment they would be coming back to upon their return to work. CP stated that it was possible that one or two staff may not return to work in September, and that this should be confirmed by end of week.
- 6.2.3 CP stated her view that all staff should have a break over the summer. It was **acknowledged** that staff had achieved a lot in a short space of time, including the launch of Google Suite to facilitate online learning.
- 6.2.4 **A governor asked whether CP would also have a break over the summer, and how she would ensure that staff were having a break given how much work needed to be done to prepare for the September reopening of the whole school.**
- 6.2.5 CP stated that there would be a period after the end of term when all school activity would shut down. She stated that she was aware that everyone in the school needed a period of rest and recuperation, including herself. CP assured governors that a lot of planning for the new school year had been done already, and that whatever planning had been done would need to be adapted to government advice current at the start of the new year. She stated that planning activity would resume two weeks before the start of the autumn term.
- 6.3 CP reported that 93% of Year 6 pupils had returned to school, which was considerably higher than the local and national average. She stated her view that the large number of students electing to return to school demonstrated that parents and carers had confidence in the arrangements the school had put in place.
- 6.3.1 CP reported that the school had remained open to vulnerable children and the children of key workers throughout the period of lockdown. She stated that the school had been proactive in identifying its vulnerable and borderline vulnerable pupils and inviting them to attend the key worker school. CP reported that a total of 60 pupils attended throughout the lockdown as part of the key worker school.
- 6.3.2 CP reported that there were 38 pupils in the school in receipt of PPG, and that these pupils as well as the school's vulnerable pupils were being supported with weekly phone calls from the school. She stated that many of the pupils in the PPG group had also been offered places in the key worker school during the lockdown.
- 6.3.3 CP reported that grocery vouchers had been ordered and distributed to families in receipt of free school meals in advance of the announcement of the national programme. She stated that the school had continued to handle voucher distribution directly so there were no issues with distribution. CP stated that vouchers had been secured for the duration of the summer and the school was in the process of distributing these now. Details of summer programmes in the local area have also been advertised to the families of free school meals, PPG and vulnerable pupils.
- 6.3.4 CP reported that there were 11 pupils in the school who had EHCPs. The provision arranged to support the needs of these pupils through the period of lockdown was briefly **reviewed**.
- 6.3.5 CP stated that there was no expectation that schools would keep attendance in the usual way during the period of lockdown, or even in the return to school this term during which attendance was not enforced.
- 6.3.6 CP reported that government had announced that there would be no SATs this year. She stated that this was disappointing for the school as so many of the Year 6 pupils were on track to achieve high marks on their SATs. She stated that predicted results had been used for Year 6 pupils, and these showed remarkable performance.
- 6.3.7 **A governor asked how SATs results had been determined in the absence of external moderation and if the methodology used for predicting results could be explained.**
- 6.3.8 TS explained that the same methodology used in predicting A-level and GCSE results for older pupils had been applied to SATs. He stated that the methodology was useful for predicting general results, but did present some difficulty in predicting greater depth

scores. TS stated that there was no indication that other schools had predicted their SATs results. No national moderation of scores was available.

- 6.4 CP reported that the usual business of the school had continued throughout the lockdown.
- 6.4.1 CP reported that the school's Admissions Policy had been clarified by the Education Committee, especially regarding the deferment of admission for summer-born children.
- 6.4.2 CP reported that there was one teacher who would be leaving the school due to family relocation. A Schools Direct trainee would be used to fill the vacant post. Several teachers would be moving into different year groups, and there would also be some movement in subject leadership. Details of these movements were briefly **discussed**.
- 6.4.3 CP reported that both NQTs teaching this year had successfully completed the year. The school's Schools Direct trainee would be appointed as a NQT next year.
- 6.4.4 CPD emphasis for teachers this term had been on learning G-Suite and Google Classroom.
- 6.4.5 **A governor asked if the school had planned for the use of Google Classroom going forward, or how teachers' skills would be maintained in case the school needed to lock down again.**
- 6.4.6 CP stated that the selection of G-Suite was made in the interest of adopting a future-proof online platform. Current plans were that homework would be set on Google Classroom going forward, and that teachers would use technology and connectivity as a classroom tool and part of ongoing learning across the school.

- 6.5 CP reported that the school's admissions process, including Year 3 admissions, were complete and had gone smoothly.
- 6.5.1 CP reported that the incoming Year 3 pupils would not have their usual induction, but would have the opportunity to come in for an early visit to the school. There would also be provision for some Year 2 pupils to undertake an enhanced transition into Year 3.
- 6.5.2 CP reported that there would be some SEND children coming into the school next year and that their special needs were being anticipated with plans put in place now to ease their transition.
- 6.5.3 TS reported that the school had done everything possible in the circumstances to support Year 6 pupils in their transition into Year 7. He stated that he had observed a higher level of anxiety among pupils this year than in previous years and in response had arranged for previous school leavers to share their experiences of secondary school and to answer pupils' questions.
- 6.5.4 CP reported that the school's end of year performances and showcases had been organised to be done online. The end of year assembly would also be facilitated online.
- 6.5.5 CP reported that a virtual parent and carer café had been arranged to ensure that communication with families was ongoing though the end of year.

- 6.6 CP reported that there had been overall more communication with social workers supporting vulnerable children during the period of lockdown. This had been important in terms of supporting safeguarding and to the school's success in getting many vulnerable pupils into school.
- 6.6.1 CP stated that safeguarding activity had also emphasised educating children and parents about online safety through the Hamlet Herald and in communications through Google Classroom.
- 6.6.2 CP reported that there had been one referral to MASH during the period of lockdown.

- 6.7 The school development plan ("SDP") circulated to governors ahead of the meeting was **noted**.
- 6.7.1 It was **noted** that the SDP would be rolled over to the next academic year. Some new sections would also be integrated, including a Covid-19 recovery plan, the Black Lives

- Matter (“BLM”) agenda, and inclusion.
- 6.7.2 Regarding BLM, CP stated that the whole school community would be engaged in evaluating the school’s provision, and specifically whether and how it could be adapted to encourage explicit attention to and greater mindfulness of diversity and social justice. It was **accepted** that there was a need for an education process that emphasised the value of anti-racism rather than just sensitivity to inclusion and diversity.
- 6.7.3 CP reported that an assembly had been put together following the death of George Floyd on the topic of racism.
- 6.7.4 It was **discussed** that risk assessments undertaken before reopening the school had considered the higher risks around Covid-19 for BAME pupils and staff. It was **noted** that the school community was quite diverse but that the LGB was not.
- 6.7.5 A governor asked whether the LGB needed to consider whether, as a governing body, its membership was sufficiently diverse and suggested that diversity should be built into the school’s governance agenda.
- 6.7.6 It was **discussed** and **agreed** that diversity training for the LGB should be prioritised, with attention to unconscious bias that may influence the recruitment of new members. It was **noted** that there were vacancies on the governing body, and that the LGB should ensure its recruitment of new governors was deliberate and encouraging of BAME candidates.
- 6.7.7 Various approaches to encouraging a greater number of BAME candidates for elected and co-opted roles were **discussed**. It was **agreed** that multiple strands of recruitment for new governors would be pursued. It was **acknowledged** that the recruitment of a more diverse pool of parent governor candidates may present the greatest challenge. It was **discussed** that education was needed among the parent body and broader school community about governors’ duties and responsibilities what a parent governor would be expected to do.
- ACTION: Chair to revise the governor recruitment strategy in line with the aim to increase diversity on the LGB and circulate it to governors for input.**
- 6.8 CP reported that all children and staff were expected to return to school in September. Staggered starting and leaving times, and break times would continue, as would the school’s enhanced cleaning and hygiene regimens.
- 6.8.1 CP stated that in line with currently available guidance, year-group bubbles were being considered. Before the start of autumn term, decisions would need to be made about lessons that would normally include a mix of year groups (e.g., music).
- 6.8.2 A governor asked how year-group “bubbling” was expected to work with staff.
- 6.8.3 CP stated that staff bubbling, according to available guidance, was open to some interpretation. DHJS’s approach would be that so long as staff maintain social distancing from children while teaching, staff would be able to cross various bubbles. It was **noted** that the guidance also advised that children would not need to socially distance within their bubbles, but that children in different bubbles should maintain appropriate distancing.
- 6.8.4 It was **noted** that social distancing and bubbling guidelines may affect the amount and type of wrap-around care that the school was able to offer from September.
- 6.8.5 CP stated that plans were also being made for the possibility of a second lockdown after the return to school in September. She stated that the school would need to manage its key worker provision very carefully were there to be a second lockdown. To this end, consideration was being given to asking that key worker parents and carers to identify themselves upon the return to school in September so that checks could be done on their key worker status.
- 6.8.6 CP stated that there may be a need to undertake a kind of admissions process for key worker places in the event of a second lockdown, based on previous demand for key worker places.

6.9 The Chair thanked CP and school staff on behalf of LGB for their diligent work to deliver admirable end of year results and support for pupils throughout a difficult period.

7. School Finances

7.1 The budget monitoring report (“BMR”) (**Paper 4**) was **noted**.

7.2 CP reported that the 2020/21 budget and three-year projection (**Papers 5 and 6**) had not circulated. It was **noted** that most governors were present at the recent meeting of the Business Committee at which the budget was discussed in detail.

7.2.1 CP reported that the school had not anticipated such a significant dent in its finances going into next year. She stated that the Business Committee would be scrutinising the budget and the approach to minimising and managing next year’s significant deficit.

7.2.2 The Chair stated that an extra meeting of the Business Committee would be arranged in two weeks’ time for further discussion on the budget. She stated that the Business Committee needed to understand the school’s current position, including why the GAG increase for next year would be so small. It was **noted** that the school’s staff costs had now outpaced its GAG increases.

7.2.3 CP reported that the SEND notional budget had also declined by £6K whilst the school had been arguing that funding for SEND had been insufficient.

7.2.4 Other significant costs to the school which had a substantial impact on the budget were **discussed**, including an ill-health retirement claim from a member of staff, and proportionate funding with BPS of a full-time EHT salary.

7.2.5 CP stated that extra expenses relating to Covid-19 and other exceptional matters had impacted this year’s budget and its carry-forward. It was **noted** that the school was eligible to submit its Covid-10 related cost claims to DfE as it was showing a deficit for the year, and so the impact on the carry-forward may be smaller than currently anticipated.

7.2.6 EP reported in her capacity as Chair of the Business Committee that the school’s in-year deficit of £30K this year had been unusual for the school. She reminded governors that the in-year deficit had been agreed mainly to fund premises expenditure. EP stated that the loss of the CIF bid recently submitted was disappointing, as there were several premises matters still to be addressed.

7.2.7 EP stated that finding other streams of income would become increasingly important as a lifeline for the school. She recommended that the parent body and other external bodies are approached to support the school in shoring up its finances with voluntary income.

7.2.8 CP stated that without increased voluntary income to fill funding gaps, the school was at risk of slashing areas of the curriculum that were felt to be core to its mission. It was also at risk of not being able to fund quality CPD to keep staff motivated and their skills current.

8. Sub-Committee Reports

8.1 It was **noted** that the sub-committee reports (**Papers 7 – 9**) had not circulated.

8.1.1 The Chair reported that there had been several extra meetings of the sub-committees during the period of lockdown, as follows:

- The Business Committee had had three meetings since the lockdown – i.e., 16 March, 10 June, and 30 June 2020; and
- The Education Committee had had two meetings since the lockdown – i.e., 24 February, and 18 June 2020.

ACTION: Sub-committee chairs (EP / KR) to circulate their committee reports for all meetings to members of LGB as soon as possible.

8.2 EP reported in her capacity as Chair of the Business Committee that the meetings held in

March and June had focused almost exclusively on the school's budget. The June meetings had also focused on HR and premises matters and their budgetary impact.

- 8.2.1 EP reported that the Business Committee had scrutinised and supported staff furlough arrangements. She stated that furlough claims were processed monthly. She reported that the school was topping up the 80% salary received from the government while on furlough with a 20% top-up.
- 8.2.2 EP reported that the Business Committee had discussed the impact of the ill-health retirement claim from a member of staff. It was **noted** that the costs of the claim were borne by the school because of its academy status. Insurance against future claims was found to be very expensive to the point of being prohibitive, but such claims were felt to present a serious risk to the school and would therefore be entered onto the risk register.
- 8.3 The Chair reported in her capacity as Chair of the Education Committee. She stated that most areas covered by the Education Committee had been discussed under other items previously on the agenda.
- 8.3.1 The Chair reported that at the start of lockdown, the Education Committee's focus was on support for families who may not have access to technology. She stated that checking was done to determine which families may be affected, and arrangements made to ensure their access to technology.
- 8.3.2 The Chair reported that the Education Committee had formally signed-off the updated admissions policy.
- 8.3.3 The Chair reported that the Education Committee had also discussed whether communication to the parent body was needed from the LGB Chair to assure parents that the school's arrangements during lockdown were provided oversight. It was **agreed** that such communication would be useful.
- ACTION: Chair to draft a message to parents assuring them of the LGB's oversight of the schools' arrangements during lockdown, and circulate the draft for input from governors.**
- 8.3.4 It was **noted** that any message to circulate from the LGB Chair would be circulated through the Hamlet Herald, which was the usual vehicle for communicating messages from governors.

9. LGB Matters

- 9.1 The governor terms of service schedule (**Paper 10**) was **reviewed**.
- 9.1.1 It was **noted** that Sarah Azzopardi should be removed from the schedule and a vacancy for a support staff governor recorded.
- ACTION: Chair / CP to discuss arrangements for filling the support staff governor vacancy.**
- ACTION: KF to update the governor terms of service schedule.**
- 9.1.2 It was **noted** that there were two governors whose terms of office would expire within the next six months.
- ACTION: Chair to open discussion with the two governors whose terms of office would expire within the next six months.**
- 9.2 It was **noted** that LGB and sub-committee meeting dates for 2020/21 were still TBC.
- ACTION: Chair to discuss with the new clerk a suggested set of meeting dates and report back.**
- 9.2.1 New clerking arrangements for the LGB were **noted**.

10. MAT Update

- 10.1 The approved minutes of the 5 December 2019 and 5 March 2020 meetings of the DHET

Board of Trustees (**Papers 11 and 12**) were **taken as read**.

10.1.1 It was **noted** that the minutes of the 25 June 2020 meeting of the DHET Board of Trustees were not yet available.

10.2 **A governor asked about the Trustee/governor expenses policy mentioned in the minutes of the December Board of Trustees' meeting, and whether the policy could be circulated to members of the LGB.**

ACTION: Chair to circulate the Trustee/governor expenses policy to all LGB members.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 **A governor asked whether link governor visits were expected to resume from September.**

11.1.1 CP stated that link governor visits should resume from September, and that these should continue to assist the school in its efforts toward Ofsted inspection readiness. She stated that link governors should also help to ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum remains available to all pupils.

The business of the meeting concluded at 20:52.

**Upcoming meeting dates for the Local Governing Body:
21 October 2020 - TBC**

Other upcoming meeting dates: TBC

KF/kf: 31/07/2020