

Brougham Street Nursery School Governing Body

Minutes of Meeting of the Full Governing Body

Date and Time: Tuesday 21st February 2023 at 6.00pm
Location: BSNS

Present:

Michael Pettavel, Alison Stewart, Katherine Sandercock, Daisy Cairns, Charlotte Robson and Ann-Marie Merifield

Clerk: Sallie Wareham

1. Opening:

In the absence of the Chair and Vice chair, Katherine Sandercock opened the meeting of the Brougham Street Nursery School Governing Body at 6.00pm on 21st February 2023

2. Apologies for Absence:

Ian Turvey and Jenny Dean

3. Declarations of interest:

Alison Stewart declared an interest in item 14 and it was agreed that she would leave the meeting when headteacher recruitment was discussed.

4. Identification of confidential items:

Item 10a and item 14 have been recorded in the confidential minutes file.

5. Identification of urgent items to be included:

Michael informed the governing body members that he had received the resignation of Jenny Dean. This will be included for discussion during item 13, together with an update on governor recruitment.

Anne-Marie had an update to share with the governing body following the performance management of both Headteachers. The chair agreed to include this for discussion during item 7.

6. Approval of Minutes from 29th November 2022:

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th November 2022 were unanimously approved as a correct record of that meeting. Chair has signed a copy for the record. These minutes can be published onto the school website.

ACTION SCHOOL OFFICE

7. Matters arising not covered elsewhere:

The HT performance management was completed by Ian Turvey, Anne-Marie Merifield and supported by Ruth Mason. Documentation and targets have been issued to the members of the panel and staff members and approved.

The next review will take place in May 2023, date tbc.

8. Budget Monitoring and Sustainability:

Governors received the December and January monitoring statements from Karen Taylor, the new bursar from the FMS team.

There is a variance on expenditure since the last monitoring was scrutinised. Governors noted that the year end is likely to show a significant deficit of approx £73,000. Lower than expected income from funded places, staff costs, and inadequate SEN funding have all impacted negatively on the in-year position.

As a result, the governors have approved a request to NYCC for a licenced deficit. This is an extremely disappointing position for the governing body to be in, however the significant failings within SEN departments at County level are the main contributing factor together with the NJC unfunded pay award to non-teaching staff of 10%.

The governors have invited Howard Emmett, Assistant Director of Finance and Sally Dunn, Head of Finance for schools, early years, and high needs to a meeting to explore solutions to the current funding issues.

Karen Taylor (school bursar) is gathering as much information as is available to accurately provide year end information and to prepare the start budget for governors. She will update again during the next meeting.

Governors agreed that with so much information still unknown it was not possible to discuss fees. This will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Q. What is happening with SEN funding at county level that is having such a negative impact?

The SEN department within NYCC is making efficiencies which are seriously impacting on children and families.

When a pupil joins the nursery with additional needs, these needs must be met. This usually involves additional hands-on staffing time, sometimes on a 1:1 basis. It can involve extra resources but ALWAYS involves unseen staff time to co-ordinate visits from other professionals involved with the child and family. Evidence that is required for reports need to be collected and collated and then a formal request sent to NYCC for the funding necessary to support the child. During the period spent getting to know the child, working out what support is necessary to fully include the child, there is no additional money paid to the nursery. Once the request for funding is submitted, the LA has a statutory obligation to consider the request within 20 weeks. During this period there is no additional payment to cover support for the child. Even if the LA approves funding after 20 weeks, it is not backdated.

The current problem is that the LA is not meeting its 20-week statutory obligation to approve funding requests, in some cases there are delays of 10-20 weeks. This means that children have received the care and support they need for almost a full academic year with nothing additional in the budget to pay for it. Approved requests are not backdated even if the LA has not met the statutory obligation of 20 weeks.

Q. What can we do?

Michael explained that when the governors meet with Howard Emmett and Sally Dunn, they must convey the impact of the delays and insist that in instances where decisions are delayed, there must be an interim financial measure to support nursery budgets.

Governors will need to demonstrate that when decisions and payments are delayed, salaries are met from the ever-shrinking budget and the offer for all children is at risk. Governors cannot “rob Peter to pay Paul” forever.

Governors will also propose that the supplementary funding calculation is reconsidered.

Currently, supplementary funding is shared between the three maintained nurseries using a simple headcount method. Governors will argue that it must change to factor in the number of those pupils who have SEN, qualify for FSM, DAF and EYPP.

Q. It is difficult to see the accurate split of the staffing expenditure in a classroom where funded and paid pupils are both present.

Michael confirmed that although it was not an exact science, the costs are accurate in each budget column.

Governors were pleased to receive some detail from NYCC on the extra money promised to undertake energy efficiency works. BSNS has received £11,000 of capital funding to support this.

Karen reported that a premises charge had been rejected by her as it included no detail. She has asked NYCC for a detailed breakdown of costs before she can accept the cost on the budget. This will be followed up continuously until resolution. **ACTION KAREN TAYLOR**

School Financial Value Standards (SFVS)

SFVS is an annual review of the measures in place to ensure financial competence and adherence to procedures. This review and its findings must be sent the Local Authority by 31st March.

It was agreed that the full governing body should review the documents outside of the meeting. Each governor is required to send their feedback and acceptance to Michael by 31st March. This decision will be ratified during the next meeting of the governing body.

Governors considered a report from the school office to write off two small amounts in order that accounts can be closed. This was approved in accordance with existing procedures.

The Sustainability committee has not met so there was no report available.

Michael was asked to investigate other settings nationally that might be similar in size and structure to BSNS and invite them to share benchmarking data. **ACTION MP**

9. Preparation for Ofsted:

Governors are encouraged to visit each term. The following visits have been arranged:

Anne-Marie to visit with a focus on SEN 7th March

Charlotte to visit with a focus on Safeguarding 7th March

Anne-Marie and Katherine to visit with a focus on inclusion tbc

Governors were reminded that they can use the monitoring visit template to record the details of their visit. It can be found [here](#) and should be uploaded to the SharePoint folder, once completed.

10. Governor compliance:

Charlotte Robson signed the following declarations during the November meeting. No further action is required.

10a. Headteachers Report

Michael Pettavel provided a brief overview of his written report.

This item is included in the confidential minutes.

11. Safeguarding

It was acknowledged by the governing body that the named safeguarding governor role was a large area of responsibility and governors agreed that the workload should be shared. Charlotte Robson will undertake the Safeguarding Audit with Michael to become familiar with the role.

12. Premises, Health and Safety

Katherine Sandercock was appointed as governor with responsibility for monitoring Health & Safety within the setting.

Governors noted that the Autumn term HANDS visit was cancelled due to staff absence and this will be completed on 1st March instead as a double visit with the Fire Risk Assessment.

Nursery managers have completed Fire marshal training.

The decking at the rear of the nursery classroom will be replaced during July 2023.

13. Governor training and development

Governors reluctantly received the resignation of Jenny Dean from the governing body. Jenny has been a committed and enthusiastic co-opted governor for 3 years, the governors all thanked her for her service.

The governors have received an expression of interest from a potential new governor and after discussion, Anne-Marie Merifield nominated Gillian Robinson as a co-opted governor. This nomination was seconded by Daisy Cairns. All governors present approved the appointment by show of hands. Gillian Robinson is duly elected as a governor for a four year term.

The clerk was asked to send an induction pack to the school office as soon as possible.

ACTION CLERK

The vacancy for Vice Chair will be carried forward to the next meeting.

There are currently 2 vacancies on the governing body.

- LA governor.
- Parent governor.

14. Headteacher Recruitment

Having declared an interest in this item, Alison Stewart left the meeting.

This item is included in the confidential minutes.

15. Policies for review and approval:

Charging and Remission Policy with new fee structure (01/01/2023) was approved by the governing body. Updated version can now be uploaded to the website.

ACTION SCHOOL OFFICE

16. Effectiveness of meeting: What impact has this meeting had on the staff and pupils at our Nursery?

- Governors feel confident that by increasing their knowledge of the budget, they can provide inclusive learning opportunities for all children.
- Governors have begun the HT recruitment process, to provide continuity of effective leadership of this school.
- Governors have undertaken performance reviews with the co-headteachers, setting targets and encouraging professional development to ensure that high standards of leadership continue to be met.

17. Any Other Business previously identified:

None

18. Date for next meeting of Full Governing Body:

The proposed dates for forthcoming meetings are:

Tuesday 25th April 2023 - 6pm at Nursery **note change of date*

Tuesday 6th June 2023 - 6pm at Nursery

Tuesday 11th July 2023 - 6pm at Nursery

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8:50pm