

**THE GOVERNING BODY FOR FRIERN BARNET SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ONLINE (VIA TEAMS)
MONDAY, 22 MARCH 2021**

MEMBERS:

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

* Ms Ann Woodhall (Chair) (WLA)
Mr Martin Christie (CEM)
* Councillor Barry Rawlings (RSB)
* Ms Niki Savva (SAN)
* Ms Charlotte Fergusson (FNC)
* Mr Chris Kendrick (KKC)

PARENT GOVERNORS

* Ms Olga Glazer (for part) (GRO)
* Mrs Joanna Goga (GAJ)
* Mr Nishad Gudhka (GAN)
* Mrs Tracy Ward (WDT)

LA GOVERNOR

* Councillor Anne Hutton (Vice-Chair) (HNA)

STAFF GOVERNORS

* Mr Simon Horne (Head Teacher) (HES)
* Mr Jerry Arnall (ALJ)

* Denotes members present

NON-VOTING OBSERVERS PRESENT

Ms Kathryn Poynting (Deputy Head Teacher) (PGK)
Ms Jane Mullan (Deputy Head Teacher) (MNJ)
Mr Jim Robinson (Assistant Head Teacher) (RNJ)
Mrs Deborah Myer (Careers Co-ordinator) (MRD)
Mr Carl Robinson (SENDCo) (RNC)
Ms Sharon Thomas (HoY7/Resilient School Prog. Leader)(TSS)

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs Jane Canavan (Clerk) (CNJ)

A Woodhall

21/24 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

WLA welcomed everyone to the meeting. All present at the meeting introduced themselves to Chris Kendrick, Co-opted Governor.

WLA explained that budget information supplied from the LA was incomplete and while the Finance Committee was presented with a balanced budget, some details were based on estimated figures. The local authority has put back the budget submission date to the end of May which will give Paula Donaldson time to get more detail. The Finance Committee will meet again on 20 April and a final budget will be submitted to governors on 26 April.

21/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr Martin Christie – accepted.

21/26 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None.

21/27 PRESENTATION: DEBORAH MYER [MRD] (CAREERS CO-ORDINATOR)

MRD wanted to update governors on how the Careers programme had been managed during lockdown. She said the technical skills developed by staff and students during lockdown was of real benefit and was invaluable to students in developing these skills further for the world of work.

Developments in the Careers plan will support evidence towards Investors in Careers re-accreditation, which is being submitted in June.

During lockdown many opportunities came in and the school was able to send them out to students, parents and staff and they were also put in the new fortnightly Careers Bulletin. As Firefly continues to evolve, MRD can send out information for the whole family.

Rungway: a new communications platform where students can post questions. For instance, students in Y9 can ask about possible GCSE options and they receive answers from alumni and staff. MRD said it would be good to have some governor input on Rungway, where they can share advice and feedback with students. Interested governors can email d.myer@friern.barnet.sch.uk if they would like to sign up and answer a question for a student.

Upskills Me: an online platform to help students build their CV. As students input their skills the program will connect them with prospective employers. This could enable some students to find future employment based on their skills and talents.

Work-Related Learning

Students in all year groups took part in activities including: games design, computing, film English and maths. Speakers for Schools involved students taking part in a wide range of activities such as Next Generation Nurse, Visit Britain Tourism Day, Tesco Food marketing, Santander, rail infrastructure, the built environment, coding, media and construction. One student did online work experience with Edukit, a mental health app.

MRD said she requested pre-recorded sessions so that they could be sent to students and families to watch when appropriate.

Aspirations and Opportunities

A Zoom session took place for Y11 students with Caius College, Cambridge, and subsequent events were sent for students to take part in. They were also able to give some Y12 alumni the opportunity also to take part. MRD said alumni keep in touch with the school and they often ask for advice and also they give advice to current FBS students.

Y9 group Careers interviews took place on MS Teams. Y11 students had successful, individual interviews by phone.

Collaborations

Nationwide's AccessHE and LEAN, the Mayor's Enterprise adviser network, are keen to work with FBS to promote progression paths and the school has been successful in being awarded small grants from those organisations, to strengthen the careers offer to students.

Upcoming Events

Y10 university speed dating event in May. It is hoped that Y10 will go out on work experience in July this year. Students are looking for placements now and they have to download an app in order to upload the details of the placement they are successful in securing. MRD this will help students gain experience with what is now a common way of applying for a job.

Governor Support

FBS is always keen for governor input and if governors have any business links that might support a Y10 student in the workplace for a week from 5 – 9 July, please contact MRD (d.myer@friern.barnet.sch.uk).

Community Languages

The school is recruiting for community language assessors for people who know a language. Interested governors who speak another language and who would be interested in becoming an assessor, please email the clerk. (j.canavan@friern.barnet.sch.uk)

HNA thanked MRD for her excellent presentation and she wished her success with the re-accreditation. She said she had read in the press that there were not enough young people who were interested in technology and that was where the shortage of jobs would be. MRD said there were opportunities that go out to staff and Peter Silk, IT teacher, picked up on some things, in coding, which he has done successfully with students

MNJ said concerning Investors in Careers re-accreditation: they have to set objectives against a key set of criteria. Governors should be able to demonstrate from this meeting, and in the work that they do, a commitment to the school's Careers Plan, that they are aware of the school's priorities and the way it is able to strengthen those priorities in terms of the students beyond 16 as well. **WLA** confirmed the governors were supportive of the plan and was amazed that in lockdown MRD was able to achieve so much. She agreed that the technological skills learnt during lockdown would be of benefit to students.

FNC said that MRD's list was very impressive and it was really useful to see at least three practical ways that governors can support the school. MRD said she would be happy to hear from, or speak to, any governor about the careers programme.

WLA thanked MRD for her presentation and asked her to liaise with the clerk to governors of the support they can give to the careers programme.

21/28 PRESENTATION: MS SHARON THOMAS [TSS] (HOY7, RESILIENT SCHOOL PROG. LEADER)

FBS is in the third year of the Resilient School Programme. This year TSS has developed a Firefly page where students can find support. There is also information for parents on how they can support their children. In November, the school carried out an audit with Y10 students through the Resilient Schools Programme and this will be compared with all the other schools involved. The audit asked students how they understand mental health and how they can find support. Details of where students and parents can find support will be promoted in the newsletter.

TSS delivered inset on Anxiety Disorder and Conduct Disorder and faculties were asked to share strategies on what they had learnt and how they would deal with students with these disorders. This information has been collated and put on the teaching and learning area and displayed in the staff room.

The school had a celebration of children's awareness of mental health during Mental Health Week, which started on 1 February. This was done remotely and students did some work through dance

and music. The work is displayed on Firefly and it will also be in the end of term newsletter. There was a very good response to HES's request that students write a poem or give a spoken word performance. TSS has created a Resilience Schools Display Board, which contains motivational quotes and places where students can get support if they are struggling.

TSS and Ms Pearman (Anti-bullying Co-ordinator) have created an area where children can report bullying online, which can be done anonymously. TSS said she has also co-ordinated the work of the Terapia therapists who come into FBS. (This was organised through a successful bid made by HES.) Three trainee and a qualified therapist, who oversees the programme, come into FBS for half a day each week and between them they are seeing nine students. The therapist works with the school's Counsellor to develop group counselling on topics such as exam stress and friendship issues.

TSS recently attended phase 1 training for the DfE Supporting Wellbeing in School. She will report back to SLT and she said it was encouraging because FBS seem to be a bit ahead of everyone else. She added RNC had also arranged for someone to talk to staff about mental health issues.

WLA asked TSS how she felt staff and student anxiety levels were at the moment.

TSS said this would be difficult to say because everybody reacts in different ways. She said that a lot of students have come back to school and they have lacked routine in their lives and are feeling unsettled. She added that as Head of Year 7 it is difficult for her to have an oversight of what is going on in every year group. Y7 have returned and have settled well. She said it would be difficult to have an overview of all year groups and a lot of the things she does is to signpost to support rather than giving direct support.

WLA asked if TSS felt the staff had enough tools to help students. TSS said she thought at the current time she had given enough training and she could carry out a survey to see if there were areas that staff felt they needed support with.

GAJ she had read an article about the language used during the pandemic and some of it is quite damaging to children. For instance terms like 'lost generation' and 'catching up' can put pressure on children. There is so much pressure on them and they are 'the doomed ones'. **GAJ** felt they should be aware of how some of these terms may affect children.

TSS said this was discussed at a middle leaders' meeting and they discussed reassuring the children and not testing them too much on their return. Obviously for Y11 there are some subjects that have to be assessed for teachers to give grades but everybody around the table agreed they needed to be gentle upon the students' return.

WLA thanked TSS for her presentation.

21/29 PRESENTATION BY MR CARL ROBINSON [RNC](SENDCo)

Current SENDCo team:

SENDCo, RNC, Deputy SENDCo, Holly Levitan (almost fully qualified as a SENDCo), 2 Level 4 TAs, 1 Level 3 TA (soon to be appointing another Level 3), 7 Level 2 TAs and 2 Level 1 TAs. Level 4 TAs teach the alternative provision groups in KS3 and KS4, the Level 3 leads on some intervention programmes. The Level 2 TAs offer in-class support and those at level 1 have had no prior experience of working with students.

EHCP students:

Y7: 5, Y8: 7, Y9: 7, Y10: 3 and Y11: 9. In September, 3 students who have an EHCP will be joining FBS. Two of the Y8 students are waiting to join a specialist school and RNC is in the process of applying for three new EHCPs (1 in Y7, 1 in Y9 and 1 in Y10). The national average for EHCP students is 3.3% and FBS is above the national average with 4.2%. The most common form of SEND need, nationally, is Autism (30%) and the next need is speech, language and communication (15%). At FBS this current year 26.6% of SEND pupils have a diagnosis of Autism and 46.6% have a diagnosis of speech, language and communication (S&L).

Challenges:

10 students will be leaving at the end of this academic year and they come with high funding and only 3 students are coming in to Y7. This will lead to a reduction in the number of TAs and some of them may find other roles within the school, such as the Inclusion Hub and EAL. For S&L challenges a link therapist should come out and work with the level 4 TA and model what intervention needs

to be used. They should come in at regular intervals to work with the department and the student. Currently, because of a shortage of therapists, FBS has not been assigned one for this year.

Alternative Curriculum:

There is one big alternative curriculum class and children are being taught vertically.

Mental Health:

RNC said he thought the SEND students have coped remarkably well since they have returned from lockdown, but there are some students who have found things difficult. In that connection RNC arranged for the Educational Psychologist to talk to all staff about managing dysregulated students.

Success Stories:

AP4 group goes to Aldenham Country Park each Monday. There has been good feedback from both parents and students.

RNC has secured 1 EHCP and he has applied for 2 changes of provision.

The school has identified a number of students whose reading age was three or more years below the normal reading age and Holly Levitan set up an intervention called Readingwise, which started and engaged students during lockdown.

Individual support plans and ragging and monitoring the support plans over the year continues to be successful.

During lockdown there were 12-15 students – 7 who were EHCP students - in school who were supported by TAs.

Reading-wise: Y7 – 12 students are below the reading age of three or more years, Y8 – 16, Y9 – 30 and Y10 – 27. In addition some students' parents have declined to join the programme.

Interventions

Zones of intervention – 1-2-1 interventions run by a level 2 TA focussing on students with Autism. The programme is being developed by the Autism advisory teacher.

Social, emotional and mental health interventions are run by a level 2 TA. There is also occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, touch-typing and handwriting.

Possible Opportunities

To develop the alternative provision further and to create a more personalised pathway at KS4. There is a possibility they could run some of the Duke of Edinburgh Award across the school with some identified students. A TA is doing an exam access arrangement course, this could save some money in the long run. RNC is in the process of writing the SEND Information Report and SEND Policy and making sure they are accessible to parents on the website. They are creating a more accessible SEND page on Firefly.

WLA asked if it helped the 12 children who came into school during lockdown, and how did the SEND students cope with remote learning? RNC said remote learning was more challenging than for those students who came into school. Those who came into school had the support of a TA. During this last lockdown they linked TAs remotely with students.

FNC wondered why there was such a big difference between the reading age in Y7 and the higher age groups. RNC said he wasn't sure. All students are tested regularly throughout the academic year and some parents have decided not to take the school up on the Readingwise offer, but as they promote the program more, he anticipated numbers would rise.

GAN referred to the development of EHCPs in Y10, Y9 and Y7. What was the reason for identifying a child's needs so late in their academic life at FBS? RNC said he has only been at FBS for two years and there were a couple of students who hadn't been identified prior to that. The student in Y10 was coping and making progress in Y7/Y8. He has Autism and he is finding things more difficult to cope with as he understands the differences between him and his peers. This is becoming a barrier to his social and learning needs. RNC said the Y9 student has only come up on the radar and she is experiencing severe mental health issues. The Y7 child's primary school did apply for an EHCP but the SENDCo was on maternity leave and the application was rejected. He said he was confident that the child will be given an EHCP because she is working at KS1 levels.

WLA thanked RNC for his presentation and for his ongoing work with SEND students.

RNJ said the options process is very different from usual because of COVID. He said much of the credit for this year must go to Sam Read, who maintains the school's website. She managed to convert RNJ's notes to put something meaningful and useful on the website.

From this year the school's website has its own Y9 Options section (Menu/Curriculum/Year 9 Options). Each head of faculty has recorded a video, giving detail of what goes on in their GCSE course, how students will be assessed and the non-exam content. The link to the options area on the website was sent to parents through Parentpay and this year the form that students complete to select their options goes straight into the school's management information system, SIMS. English, maths and science feature personalised pathways this year and students get support for the core subjects in their extra hours. These subjects will be on the students' timetables but if the teachers want to do some additional things, or there are other opportunities, students will be taken out of these lessons without affecting their learning. RNJ said there will always be something worthwhile within the personalised pathway. He said he is hoping for two option blocks containing personalised pathways.

There has been a Y9 online Options Evening, where students could choose four options subjects they could 'visit'. Students could also go and talk directly to teachers about options when they were in school. The two-week options window closes on 29 March, giving a little time for RNJ to chase up any students.

WLA said she had seen the Options area on the website and she thought it was very clear and comprehensive. It told students what they needed to do for the exam how much was practical and how much was theory. They also suggest which careers to use with the subject. She asked what would happen if a student couldn't have the options they chose.

RNJ said students select what they want. Staff might need to negotiate with a few students about their option choices, but generally they get what they want.

GAJ said she has just been through the options process with her son and it is a massive improvement from when she did this with her daughter a few years ago. She felt the process worked very well. However, they used to be able to chat to students about the options they had chosen and she wondered if the school might consider incorporating a few videos of students talking about what they enjoyed about the GCSE option. RNJ said in the testimonials box they did get a couple of students talking about their options issues. However, he would take GAJ's suggestion through to next year.

GAN said that he agreed with WLA and GAJ's comments that it was a really good process from a parental point of view. The videos really helped to demonstrate the passion the heads of faculty have for their subjects. He said that five minutes was too short with a teacher in the Options evening and he requested more time to talk to each teacher. He asked if there were issues that meant that some students might not get the options they had chosen.

RNJ said there might be some scheduling constraints but they can't guess that until they have all the options choices in. SIMS puts the subjects into option blocks and staff can then see how many students have opted for each subject. He said 85% of students get their four option choices and the remaining students get three and their first reserve choice. He added there might need to be a discussion with two or three students to choose one other option.

WLA thanked RNJ for his presentation.

21/31 NOTES OF THE EGM HELD ON 01-02-21

WLA reminded governors that these notes (on blue paper) are private and confidential. If they didn't wish to keep the notes, she asked governors to shred them. She confirmed these notes are not a public document and would not be uploaded onto the school website.

She asked if the school had heard back from the Teacher Regulation Agency. HES said Teacher Regulation Agency has acknowledged receipt of the information and they were engaging a team of solicitors to work on the case and to date he has heard nothing else.

21/32 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2021 were **ACCEPTED**.

21/33 MATTERS ARISING

21/15 – NPQH Presentation

HNA reminded PGK had said she would share the detail of the staff survey based on a DfE framework document.

ACTION: CLERK

HNA asked if the governors' congratulations to all staff had been passed on. **HES** confirmed that it had.

21/16 – Wellbeing of staff and students

HNA asked if there had been any improvement in Y11 engagement. **HES** said he did a series of assemblies with groups of Y11 students (two tutor groups at a time). He explained to the students how grades were going to be awarded and the evidence the school would need to have to do this. He stressed the importance of engagement for the assessments that were going to take place. The message has also gone out to parents. He said he felt students knew what the school was doing and they are aware of the assessments that are taking place. Some children, who have not done so much work during lockdown, might find this more difficult to deal with than others. The school is working through this to try to get some evidence and some assessments out of those students.

WLA said that at the February meeting they had been unsure of how assessments would be carried out.

WDT said that some Y11s who had worked during lockdown were disappointed and disheartened to find out that some of the work they had done couldn't be used for their assessment. **HES** said that this was the opposite of what he told the students. He said the students were given a list of what they could use and students were told they could use the work they did during lockdown. There is a proviso from the exam boards about when the evidence is produced, and that the students produced the work themselves and the relevance to the type of assessment that the exam boards would set. He told students that teachers will have that evidence going back to Y10 and they can use it. **WDT** said there was some work in English that students were told could not now be used, which was disappointing. **HES** said when they give the grades to the children, they have to use whatever evidence they have to justify them. If an English teacher has something going back to Y10 and they think that the work would support the grade, they will use it. They will use anything so long as it is suitable evidence to support the awarding of a grade. **HES** said the exam boards have said the more recent evidence is going to show how the students are working at the moment, but schools must also keep in mind what the student levels have been during the course. For instance, they couldn't expect students who were getting levels 4/5 to jump to a 9. Teachers would have to have some regard to the work students have done previously and that past evidence is going to be useful as well.

21/21- Governor Hub

HNA asked if the Governor Hub was up and working. Clerk to follow-up.

ACTION: CLERK

21/22 Head Teacher's Appraisal

HNA said that she had not asked the Head to arrange his appraisal, but that it was a reminder to governors to fix a date. **HES** said he would be sending a document to the Chair and Vice-Chair in readiness for his interim appraisal.

21/34 HEAD TEACHER'S BRIEFING

HT notes were circulated prior to the meeting.

Staff/new life

Sophie Poulleau (MFL teacher/EAL Co-ordinator) gave birth to a boy on 21 March. In a similar vein, some SEND children visited the farm today (22 March) and they saw two lambs being born.

Tottenham Hotspur Foundation

Aew

This week the school starts a project with the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation. All premier league clubs were given money to run programmes in schools and Tottenham has decided to launch out into Barnet. A trainer came into school and they are setting up a group with Y8 children.

COVID testing

At the time of the meeting there had been no positive tests. 11 children are isolating for a variety of reasons (but not because they have COVID). HES said he thought the school's system for testing was very efficient and it meant they could open earlier than some other schools. He said they can't control the delivery of the lateral flow tests and they have a very large supply. They have given the tests to Y7 students and asked parents to test their children twice a week.

WDT praised the work of the support staff and the organisation of the lateral flow testing in school.

Attendance

Of the 20 children not in school, 10 children are still abroad.

Autumn GCSEs

There is a consultation out with Ofqual and it looks probable that children will be given the opportunity to take a GCSE in the autumn if they are unhappy with the teacher-assessed grades.

GAN asked if there was any information on September's Y7 intake. HES said he was going to send the information to governors after he had heard back from the local authority. Second offers were sent out on 22 March. At the time of the meeting the school hadn't heard from other local authorities. He added that the figures were down and possibly will be similar to the current Y7 (124 children). HES said London has been affected by a reduction in the population and in Barnet the numbers are down. He said while showing parents around, one parent thought that FBS wasn't academic enough for her child. When he asked her why, she said because FBS doesn't have a sixth form. He said fortunately she came into the school and they were able to talk about their links with Woodhouse and how FBS facilitates progression to other schools.

HES said he would let governors know the figures when they have been received.

WLA noted that many of the children who sat the GCSEs were marked down from the grades awarded by the school. HES said the numbers entered were very small but music, for instance, had no practical element in this exam and the music teacher felt that the grade awarded was higher than they should have achieved.

E-books

HES said that during lockdown MRD was trying to encourage children to read and she launched an E-book library. The take-up goes down at the weekend. PGK said most children read the E-books on their phones. HNA asked if the books were free. PGK said not every book was free – there are unlimited numbers of the classics and for some of the others there is only a limited number that students can take out at the same time. WDT said the children have a list on their phones and they can be put on the waiting list for a particular book.

21/35 RISK ASSESSMENT (RA) UPDATE

This is available to see on the school's website. HES said they have updated the RA to include lateral flow tests and masks being worn in classrooms as well as on corridors. HES said the latest RA has been sent to the local authority together with the RA for the lateral flow tests.

WLA asked if there were issues with children and mask-wearing. HES said generally there hasn't been an issue and the one-way system is established in the school. Generally, the children know there is a seating plan in classrooms. However, it is impossible for the children to keep to social distancing in the corridors and also the canteen queue. He said he felt overall behaviour was good, but there have been a few issues leading to some irritability. This could be due to the children being out of routine such as going to bed late and getting up late.

GRO asked if there was any way of identifying people who were exempt from wearing a mask. HES said all staff wear masks but if a teacher is in the classroom and they can socially distance themselves from the children, they can remove their mask. The names of children exempted from wearing a mask have been sent round to teachers – some children have exemption lanyards or cards. He added there are very few of them in school.

21/36 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SLT Links

Clerk to send round details of governor/SLT links

Action: Clerk

Y10 Parents' Evening

GRO said the online parents' evening was good – being able to speak to the subject teachers. She felt it would be of benefit to have a few minutes to speak to the tutor group teacher or the head of year. **HES** said the online parents' evening has been recognised as a step forward because of convenience and privacy. The problem with heads of year and form tutors is that they are also subject teachers and that would conflict. Heads of year and tutors did make appointments with some parents outside of the parents' evening. **HES** said parents should feel that they should always be able to contact their child's form tutor or head of year. **GRO** said this might not have been very clear at the time of booking.

WLA suggested a note on the booking saying that if a parent wanted to speak to the form tutor or head of year, this could be arranged separately for them.

Charlotte Fergusson Resignation

WLA said, sadly, due to work commitments, FNC has had to resign as a co-opted governor. The governors expressed their thanks for the work she has done as a governor and they wished her well. **WLA** said she would like to invite her to future school performances and FNC agreed to have her email address added to list of past governors. **HES** said they would be using FNC as a local champion of FBS.

WLA said, on behalf of the governors, she would write a short note to staff at the end of term to thank them for all the hard work they have been doing.

21/37 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 26 April 2021, 6.30 pm.

