

**THE GOVERNING BODY FOR FRIERN BARNET SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 25 AUGUST 2020**

MEMBERS:

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

- * Ms Ann Woodhall (Chair) (WLA)
- * Mr Martin Christie (for part) (CEM)
Councillor Barry Rawlings (RSB)
- * Ms Niki Savva (SAN)
- * Ms Charlotte Fergusson (FNC)

PARENT GOVERNORS

- * Ms Olga Glazer (for part) (GRO)
- * Mrs Joanna Goga (GAJ)
- * Mrs Sangeeta Kerai (KIS)
- * 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 Arnull (ALJ)

* Denotes members present

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs Jane Canavan – Clerk (CNJ)

A Woodhall

20/48 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

20/49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

20/50 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None.

20/51 REVIEW OF NEW STRUCTURE OF GB MEETINGS

Governors were asked to comment on the structure instigated in 2019/20.

CEM said he felt there little time for challenge because of the amount of information they had to get through. Committee meetings had offered the opportunity for challenge, which meant the full GB meeting didn't need so much detail.

GRO said she liked the new structure because she was getting more information and could see the bigger picture. **FNC** agreed that this structure allowed governors to see things in the round. She enjoyed the staff presentations.

GAJ said she found the presentations very interesting. She suggested they could be virtual and the governors could then focus on the meeting agenda. **GAN** agreed this was a good idea and **WLA** said that this meant teachers could present from home. **SAN** said this doesn't give the opportunity to ask questions and thought the presentations should be live.

WLA asked if governors thought they should have, say, three meetings a term but with shorter agendas.

GAN thought this might work - meetings could have a particular focus with more opportunity to challenge. He added that the information provided to governors on finance is concise and sufficient. **GRO** confirmed that the Governors' Finance Committee still has to meet independently of the main GB meetings.

HES said that in SLT's view was there had been a lot of duplication of information at committee level. They suggested a traffic light approach – to focus on one or two items in the meeting: if there was no issue, don't include the item on the agenda.

CEM agreed if there was more focus and time to challenge, he felt this might work better.

WLA said it was important that everyone should feel they have an opportunity to challenge/input in meetings and she asked governors how they would like to meet: virtually or in person. The consensus was that there should be a mix. **HES** said that the LRC was a reasonable space to meet (better acoustics) but the main hall would also be available to use probably for the first term. **WLA** proposed one virtual staff presentation per term.

Faculty links

WLA suggested that governors could link to a member of SLT (9 staff). She said governors could have a conversation with that link and then bring information back to the main meeting. **GAN** said he thought this was a good idea because faculty links were not always successful. **ALJ** said there might be an issue because his focus was as a head of faculty and his view might differ from the SLT member. He added that the current structure might be the only opportunity for the HoF to put their view forward. **WLA** said that governor day could offer the opportunity for governors and HoFs to meet and to have their say. **FNC** asked if the purpose of a link was to find out what a HoF thinks or what an SLT member thinks. **WLA** said it is to find out what the faculty is doing. She said a termly conversation with an SLT link could be about an aspect of their particular remit, enabling a closer relationship between governors and SLT.

CEM said that on Governor Day, governors get a feel for the faculty. If they were to deal exclusively with SLT, they might not get this insight.

HES said governors have a specific oversight and they could visit different faculties on Governor Day. He added they might get a better oversight from SLT about a particular faculty.

HES said he would circulate the SLT list detailing their roles and responsibilities to governors.

ACTION: HEAD TEACHER

GRO said they do have presentations from SLT at the GB meetings, but HoFs wouldn't have their say and talking to a HoF might give a different view. **HNA** said it is about how governors can get a strategic view to challenge whatever they have to. **WLA** agreed that it is important to make strategic judgements and how best governors can get that view. She added that that governor faculty links had not always been successful and an SLT link might be a more effective way of working. **GAN** thought this might provide governors with a better opportunity to find out more about what goes on.

FNC suggested that, as there are 9 members of SLT, some governors could link with a faculty such as English, maths or science. **WLA** said that governors might wish to link to an area where they would feel more comfortable.

Governors agreed to pilot a revised structure of 3 meetings per term for the academic year 2020/21. **WLA** said she would work with CNJ to produce a schedule.

Noted the first meeting of the year will be Monday, 5 October 2020 at 6.30 pm. Venue to be confirmed.

Sangeeta Kerai (KIS) has resigned as a parent governor. On behalf of all governors, **WLA** thanked KIS for her work and support for the school and wished her and her daughter well. **KIS** said she would still be involved through coordinating the work between Sarah Geiger (local authority) and Carl Robinson (SENDCo).

WLA said there were now 12 governors. She suggested this was a good size, small enough for governors to have their say. However, there would be issues when trying to arrange hearings where a panel of 3 governors would be required. Ideally, she would like a Y7 parent. (**WDT** will be a Y7/Y11 parent.) **HNA** said they didn't recruit a Y7 governor last year and it might be good to have one this year. **HES** said this might help to increase diversity and they could put out a message to Y7 parents. **FNC** agreed the GB should reflect the diversity of the school. She suggested they could try to co-opt governors, selling it as a career development learning opportunity.

HNA said there is a community information area on the Barnet website. **WLA** suggested they put something up on that. She said governors used to be given time off for governor duties, **FNC** confirmed five days a year were granted for public duty roles. **KIS** suggested they approach Barnet and Southgate College. **HES** said this could be a challenge – no-one from Barnet and Southgate College has attended the local authority secondary heads' meetings.

WLA asked if the weekly briefings should continue - another way of keeping governors informed. **HES** said he is happy to produce the briefing notes and he can coordinate news and information from other members of SLT.

20/52 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

HES said Angela Moore has been appointed Head of the Hospital School and officially leaves FBS on 31st August. He said they wanted a full-time deputy head in post. Currently, Kathryn Poynting is acting full-time deputy and Jane Mullan is part-time, three days a week. They placed an internal ad for the full-time post and Jane decided not to go for the full-time position. Kathryn applied, was interviewed and has been appointed full-time Deputy Head from 1st September.

HES said that, sadly, Nigel Green (a former Head of Year and teacher of science) died last week. The funeral was to be on 1st September and the school would be represented.

Open Evening, on 23rd September, would be run virtually. This is the way that most schools are planning open evenings. The video will be on the school's website. **CEM** said and **WDT** agreed this was a shame because it would be difficult to capture the school's uniqueness and warmth. **HES** said they would try and arrange to have small groups to look round the school. **GAN** suggested that local parents from, say, Holly Park, be invited in to meet some of the students. **HES** said they would still

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need to prepare something online. **CEM** said there is plenty of material from the performing arts that could be used.

HES said FBS is part of the Evening Standard Exclusion Initiative. They need somewhere to house this project (cost about £100,000). He said they are working with an architect and will need to put in a planning application which has to be approved by the governing body. The proposal is that the Y7 area will be extended and a small building be erected in the current Y7 area. The project will have a soft start and they hope to have something ready before Christmas. HES said he would give governors more information in due course.

Application for Planning proposed by WLA, seconded by WDT. Approved by all governors **except 1 abstention: HNA (a conflict of interest as she is on the LA Building Committee)**

GCSE RESULTS

HES said overall the results were good. They had asked teachers to be optimistic, but realistic in their assessments. For instance, if a child was predicted a 4/5 in a subject, they should be given a 5. Teachers prepared the assessments, which were modified by the HoF and then SLT. Grades were up 8% - mainly in arts, languages and literature. The results for this year were similar to those from two years ago. This year Attainment8 was 45 and two years ago it was 44.

HES said that an area they haven't got quite right is they didn't predict the higher grades as high as they should have been. HES said there were 10 children who were not happy. For those families, the focus is on the teacher and it has become quite personal. Parents have been in to complain and 10 children have put in an appeal. HES said appeals are quite limited. The school has to send information out to the parents who, in turn, then ask the school to review. He said that not all parents will go through the procedure –probably 5-10 people will ask for a review. The review panel cannot include the head teacher. HES said they have spreadsheets of detail and they have tried to be consistent. Exam boards may be reluctant to review grades because the school set them. HES said even though they wanted to maximise opportunities for children, some would not have received a 5. English scores for 4+ in English were 84% and 69% in maths. HES said overall results were good.

WLA said they had agreed that the school would pay for any examination re-sits. HES said they would also pay for any appeal.

GRO said she had heard that Y9 children had experienced anxiety through the lockdown. HES said that during lockdown Theo Josif received many calls from vulnerable children who were having a difficult time. They carried out a survey for parents and children and the responses didn't come across that they were stressed. Families did say that they wanted online lessons. The students missed meeting their friends and this was particularly true of the younger children. **WDT** said that some children had found lockdown very difficult She said her daughter in Y10 found it challenging to get through 12 hours of homework and to meet the deadlines.

GAJ said that communication with parents, especially new parents, was important and they would appreciate any information to keep them informed. HES said all parents have been sent a link to the website about what the school is doing at the start of term.

WDT asked if there were many children who were travelling miles to the school from a distance. From October half term those who live within 2 miles of school will lose their bus passes. HES said the frequency of buses was also a problem for children. WDT said that at the beginning of the school day, every other bus will be a school bus exclusively for children.

WLA thanked everyone for their thoughts and comments.

20/53 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING :** **Monday, 5 October 2020, 6.30 pm.**
LATER; Meeting postponed to: Monday, 12 October 2020, 6.30 pm.

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