

**Minutes of Beechfield Local Governing Committee Meeting held on
Tuesday 3RD February 2021 at 7pm via Zoom**

Name	Governor Type	Attended
Mrs Lesly Adams (Chair)	Co-opted governor	Attended
Miss Iram Ali	Staff governor	Attended
Prof Ramanarayanan Balachandran	Parent governor	Attended
Mr James Brown	Co-opted governor	Attended
Mrs Emma Lad (Clerk)	Clerk	Attended
Mrs Michelle Connell	Associate Member	Attended
Mrs Gillian Jackson (HT)	Headteacher	Attended
Mrs Nikita Mistry	Co-opted governor	Attended
Mrs Tanya Mortlock	Associate Member	Attended
Mrs Sarah Wynne	Co-opted governor	Attended
Mrs Jennifer Batanga	Parent governor	Attended
Katie Nevard	EYFS lead - presenter	Attended

Governors challenge is highlighted in yellow
Governor actions are highlighted in italics

BFS – Beechfield School

CTS – Cherry Tree School

LHS – Laurance Haines School

Meeting started at 7.01pm

Action:

- 1. Welcome, apologies and consent** – The meeting was quorate.
- 2. Notification of any other business** - None
- 3. Conflict of interest with agenda items to be declared** - None
- 4. New pecuniary business interests to be recorded** - None
- 5. EYFS presentation – Katie Nevard EYFS lead presented to governors**
 - There has been an external review process undertaken. After the initial visit there were observations and actions which the team completed.
 - The follow up visit has taken place and the presentation ‘Evidence for the audit’ was shown to the governors via screen share
 - Safeguarding – all classes now have pictures with children’s medical needs and a picture for staff to make themselves aware of.
 - The learning environment has been developed including real life resources.
 - Improvements to the outside area resources were explained.
 - The Team have worked on ensuring the activities were meeting the children’s abilities as children came in below the expected level.
 - Teaching phonics using Read write Inc in an Early year’s session has been improved.
 - Children have made good progress during the half termly assessments for phonics and reading.
 - Reading within EYFS has been a focus throughout the nursery rather than just in one area and embedded in children’s learning

G: Whilst there are children with a low baseline what do you do to support children who are aware of all the books?

KN: We haven’t had any children who have come in aware of all the stories so it has not been a concern this year.

G: What are you doing to support children who are above?

KN: There is a small group of children who are at age related and so we give them focused time to support each day.

G: How are the children assessed?

KN: We use Tapestry to track the children and this is an ongoing process.

G: Do you speak to parents before they arrive?

KN: We usually complete home visits but this year we couldn't so we completed Zoom chats. We also sent out a booklet for children to complete so we are aware of their interests.

G: What is the percentage of parents who can't speak English?

KN: We have a third of children who are EAL.

G: Do the children receive copies of the books?

KN: I have recorded the books and they can watch them electronically via Tapestry.

- Parental engagement – Tapestry is supporting this area and 100% of parents are using the app to upload work and comment. We also had Stay and Plays, prior to lock down which showed parents activities they could carry out at home.
- The HT explained that KN has worked very hard to improve the area and the Team is working closely together with the same vision.
- Tapestry was shown to governors at the meeting via Screen share. Governors were very impressed with the work and also the communication between the school and home during lock down.

G: How are you planning on increasing the numbers?

KN: We now have 33 places out of 36 filled. I have been working hard with the marketing manager to create videos for the nursery/reception to use as advertising. I am also working with the most successful local nurseries to try and ensure that children are coming to BFS from them.

G: Would there be more visits if Covid-19 wasn't happening?

KN: Once possible we will be inviting nursery staff and families into the school.

HT: The Trust is also spending funds on targeting ads on Facebook and Twitter and the marketing manager is taking the lead on this area.

G: How will we be able to take younger children?

KN: There will be different ratios so we will have to employ more staff to ensure we are meeting legal ratios.

HT: We are looking at whether we can take children once they have turned three.

Governors discussed the logistics and the challenges of changing the minimum age of children in the nursery.

7.36pm Katie Nevard left the meeting

6. Minutes of the last meeting 10.11.20 and matters arising

Minutes were approved and will be signed by the Chair electronically via Governor Hub.

All matters arising were completed except:

Item 5:8: There are three co-opted governor vacancies on the board. UPDATE: The chair explained that there are vacancies for a co-opted and a support staff governor. The Trust had recommended someone with an Education background.

G: Why do the Trust board feel there is a gap for primary education? It would be interesting to have someone with a psychology or social sciences background as an understanding of community would be helpful.

The clerk was asked to pass onto the Trust and marketing manager

Chair/ Clerk (Trust)

Item 9: Governors discussed the best way to contribute to and review documents via Governor Hub. Governors agreed to comment on the notice board thread so that any discussion is available to all. UPDATE: The chair reminded governors to comment on the noticeboard

All governors

7. Response from Trust regarding LGC comments

- HT performance management has taken place
- Environmental sustainability – The CEO has taken on board comments and explained that the policy is written with children taking the lead and ensuring a sensible balance regarding the involvement of governors.
- BFS LGC meeting will move to the 15th June 2020
- Exclusion policy – being added to the websites
- The concern regarding the nursery playground at LHS has been reviewed and in future any issues will be reported through the premises plan.

8. Headteacher report including

Documents distributed via Governor Hub prior to the meeting:

- Headteachers report
- COVID risk assessments, remote learning plans, Parent update 3/1/21
- Finance Update for information
 - a. Autumn Reforecast
 - b. December management accounts
 - c. Catch-up premium report
- Marketing
- Staff council notes – 27.01.21
- PE evidence 2020-21
- Pastoral report

- Governors thanked the HT for her weekly updates
- The HT explained that the staff have been amazing and have gone above and beyond. She has observed online classes and they have been really good. The provision is fantastic.
- The parent governors explained that the work and engagement has been fantastic for remote learning. The children are looking forward to attending sessions and receiving their work each day. The teachers need to be commended for their fantastic work.
- Interventions are continuing for children at the end of sessions or separately.
- IA reported that the school day is being replicated on line which is helping children in school have the same routine as those working at home. The interventions with TA's can then take place via Google classrooms which is working very well. Parents have been called to explain why they are working with the children and to explain what they can do to help at home. Children are really taking pride in their learning. There are three Google meets each day which means there is a very well-rounded day. Staff continue to speak to parents or email as well.

G: Are you still calling parents every other week?

IA: We aren't calling fortnightly but if they aren't handing in work or attending then we call them. I have also visited two children's houses to check up on them. There is not the same regularity as we are seeing the children three times a day remotely.

G: SEN children, how are they catered for?

IA: We are meeting with them after classes and there is a team of TA's who meet with them during the day. TA's are also dropping off differentiated learning packs.

- TM explained that the subject leaders are also still being met with and assessment is continuing in a simplified form. The SLT have tried to ensure phase leaders are aware of what is happening ahead of time so that there isn't work building for the end of the term.
- The HT thanked TM for her work as she has ensured 56 laptops have been provided to families. She is also dealing with technical issues which is very helpful. TM is now trying to make sure that where families are sharing laptops they are provided with additional laptops as sharing can hinder a child's ability to access learning.
- MC has managed to source £400 for the school. The charity which is run by an author was contacted and has contributed to purchase books for the school.
- MC explained that the food parcels have been replaced with vouchers which parents are preferring. There are 84 children receiving vouchers for free school meals and 96 for pupil premium which is an increase. Quite a lot of parents are accessing the £100 fund which we are processing to help with resources at home.

G: What are refund forms?

MC: Once the parents have spent the money, we then ask them to complete the form to claim the money back.

- The catch-up plan has continued in terms of CPD. We have programmed the staff meetings and the two Talk for Writing sessions after school have had fantastic engagement from staff and the SLT thanked staff for their work and interest.
- Pupil numbers continue to be a risk; however, nine new children joined the school in the last week.

G: Pastoral provision, who is taking over the member of staffs work whilst they are ill?

HT: We are covering between the TA and myself. The pastoral line is not being used by parents to the same degree at the moment.

G: Who would parents contact if they have concerns?

HT: It would be the class teacher or a TA.

G: Parents were given a number to call for SEN concerns, would it be worthwhile reissuing?

HT: Yes, I will reissue.

HT

Finance:

- The reforecast has been completed by the School business officer
- There are some variances. The nursery figures will improve in March as the nursery now has more children. The school has saved a large amount over the year so far which has been positive. There are still 65 unfilled spaces which the school is working with the Trust and marketing manager to fill.
- The school business officer was congratulated on her work for the school ensuring the finances are in order.

Marketing

- Once the school place allocations have been published in April, the Marketing manager has asked SLT to contact all the families to ensure they take up their place at BFS. The Chair explained that the CEO has complemented the HT on her tenacity in following up any interest or children who are leaving the school.

G: Are the numbers down?

HT: There are a lot of schools in a small area and we are building our reputation.

G: We need to make sure that we say why we are special. We need to make sure the marketing manager is ensuring that what is available at BFS is communicated to parents as being special. School is improving so much and the data/team are improving. There are less children locally but we can still increase the numbers by improving the reputation and becoming first choice.

HT: I will pass that onto the Marketing manager.

HT

Catch-up plan

- The catch-up plan is on the school website

9. Review and update School Plan/ discuss targets

The school plan will be updated shortly and sent to governors via Governor Hub for review

10. Governor monitoring

Documents distributed prior to the meeting via Governor Hub

- Chair of governor's letter November 2020
- Educational implications of COvov-19 governors' session
- PP governors report Autumn 2020 Michelle Connell
- PPG governor link visit report 1.12.20

Name	Roles	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Mrs Lesly Adams	EYFS Pupil premium	Meetings booked for both areas before the end of term	EYFS 17.11 PP 1.12.20 HIP Review	
Prof Ramanarayanan Balachandran	Marketing Sports premium	Meeting booked virtually for Pupil Premium. Sports premium to be booked	PPG 1.12.20 <i>Sports Premium review for the website to be audited</i>	
Mr James Brown	Inclusion Website	SEND policy has been reviewed and a meeting is being booked	<i>Website review being completed</i>	
Mrs Nikita Mistry	Governor Development Coordinator Health and wellbeing	Virtual conversations have taken place regarding Health and wellbeing	Training organised	
Mrs Sarah Wynne	Children Looked After Safeguarding	Virtual conversation to be booked	Safeguarding Nov 2020 <i>Health and safety visit to be booked for the annual review</i>	

	<i>governor Health and safety</i>			
<i>Mrs Jennifer Batanga</i>	<i>Environmental governor</i>	<i>Virtual conversation to be arranged by the HT</i>	<i>Viola grant being applied for and then will attend an Eco council meeting.</i>	

All governors

11. Governor to complete a school website audit

Documents distributed prior to the meeting via Governor Hub

- Website audit form

James Brown will complete and report back to governors.

James Brown

Standing items:

12. Items from Trust board meeting

Documents distributed prior to the meeting via Governor Hub

- 07.09.20 IMAT Trustees minutes
- 14.10.20 IMAT Trustees minutes
- 15.12.20 IMAT AGM meeting
- AGM PowerPoint
- Trust and LGC chairs meeting 13.1.21

The chair updated on the Chairs meeting and the agreement that it is key to ensure that communication is working well between the two boards.

The chair asked governors how often they would like the CEO or COO to join the meetings and governors fed back that they would like them to attend as regularly as possible but maybe at the beginning of the meeting to deal with specific issues. *The COO was asked to come to the beginning of the next meeting to discuss the budget.*

Clerk (Trust)

13. Risk review (From Trust Risk Register High Risks)

- Pupil Numbers
 - Governors were pleased with the ideas highlighted by the EYFS leader to increase numbers.
- Covid Risk assessment
 - Governors were confident in the risk assessment presented by the school.

○ G: Staff attrition rate – now that we are not taking agency staff on if a member of staff is ill or leaves how can we cover this to ensure the other staffs wellbeing? Also, how are we ensuring that staff are not overworked and that their wellbeing is being managed as a priority?

HT: The feedback from the last staff council was that they do not feel overloaded, we have booked some really good CPD, we have shaped the curriculum to ensure it is efficient, and we have spoken to staff regularly to check in on their wellbeing and recently to ensure they are happy to stay on in September 2021.

G: We have a staff WhatsApp group which allows us to keep an eye on each other.

G: *Can we add staff wellbeing to the HT report as this is fantastic but we need to ensure that it is recorded and reported?*

HT: Yes.

HT/ Clerk (Trust)

G: *Can we also add staff member feedback videos to the web page as this would be helpful?*

HT: *I will recommend. I think the SLT are excellent role models and they live the values of the school. The school is very positive at the moment.*

HT/ Clerk (Trust)

G: A member of staff had said that they are struggling to get out of the class at the moment, have we resolved?

HT: We have managed any issues raised at the staff council meeting and we are making sure they get a break.

8.39pm James Brown left the meeting

- Wellbeing events have been arranged by a member of staff and they are well attended every couple of weeks.

- Any other local risk which Trustees need to consider – None

Clerk (Trust)

14. Safeguarding

Termly report to governors – reviewed by Sarah Wynne. Clerk to send to Safeguarding Trustee

Clerk

15. Health and Safety issues to report to the Trust

- Confirmation from HT that Autumn Term H&S review completed - confirmed
- *Date to be set this term for Annual H&S review to be completed with H&S Governor – Sarah Wynne and the HT will arrange with the COO*

SW/ HT

- *Any H&S issues to discuss – None. Clerk to report to Trustees*

Clerk (Trust)

16. Policy tracker review and policies due

The following policies were approved by governors for use:

- Local Equality statement
- Collective Act of Worship

Governors were pleased with the content for the Collective Act of Worship policy

G: We have a substantial BAME community and the curriculum is set nationally. It would be good to have a statement to make it clear that the school has considered the BAME community when creating the curriculum. For example, in the EYFS presentation it would have been interesting to hear the practice which is taking place to support the diverse community of the school.

HT: I will add a statement to the policy and pass onto teachers to include when reporting to Governors/ external agencies

HT

17. Training

Governors were reminded of the training available from HFL.

18. Clerks update

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) changes – update GH

KCSiE has been updated to take account of changes to recruitment after the UK left the EU. The latest version can be downloaded. As these changes involve safer recruitment - senior leaders, governors, and office staff who deal with recruitment or the single central register should be informed.

The changes to the guidance are as follows:

This update replaces Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020. Changes are strictly limited to those related to the UK leaving the EU on 31 December 2020. European Economic Area (EEA) regulating authority teacher sanctions or restrictions 149.

From 01 January 2021 the TRA Teacher Services system will no longer maintain a list of those teachers who have been sanctioned in EEA member states. Now Schools and colleges must make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These checks could include, where available:

- criminal records check for overseas applicants – Home Office guidance can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk); and for teaching positions
- obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked. Advice about which regulatory or professional body applicants should contact is available from the National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom, UK NARIC.

Governors were asked to read the changes to KCSIE and then update their confirmation of understanding on Governor Hub

All governors

- *Diversity in the Governing body webinars – Governors were encouraged to listen to the six-part series on **Diverse governance**. You can view the webinars via You Tube*

<https://www.youtube.com/hashtag/diversegovernance> or click here: [#Diversegovernance](https://twitter.com/diversegovernance)

19. Any other business

G: The Sussex road entrance was being used for families to come into school and it is very slippery, can we look at it?

HT: If we open it again, we will have to ensure that it is safer but we have no budget at present for a permanent solution.

G: A child was followed in the park; has it been resolved?

HT: The child came back to school which was the right thing to do but the child was very frightened. However, there has been no more issues as the school closed. The police have been made aware.

The Chair thanked the governors, HT, SLT and staff team for all their work.

20. Items to be sent to Trust/ LABs

- G: Why do the Trust board feel there is a gap for primary education? It would be interesting to have someone with a psychology or social sciences background as an understanding of community would be helpful. The clerk was asked to pass onto the Trust and marketing manager
- The COO was asked to come to the beginning of the next meeting to discuss the budget.
- G: Can we add staff wellbeing to the HT report as this is fantastic but we need to ensure that it is recorded and reported? HT: Yes.
- G: Can we also add staff member feedback videos to the web page as this would be helpful?
HT: I will recommend. I think the SLT are excellent role models and they live the values of the school. The school is very positive at the moment.

21. Future Dates – see supporting document

LGC: (7pm)

Summer term:

8th June BFS

9th June LHS

10th June CTS

Governor open day 9th July 2021

15th December 2020 AGM at 6pm

Meeting ended 9pm

Questions and answers from Governor Hub ahead of the meeting:

• Head's Report Some Questions/Comments:

Governor questions:

Safeguarding:

Safeguarding Report: Comment. Please can the Yes/No column be completed fully, and Action required filled in (say None if None) this will enable us to be sure of the situation.

Question: Can we have a couple of examples of the type of CPOMS indents and an outline of what happens.

Finance: Questions: CIF Bids when will we know? Could they be partly funded? Is There a timetable for the work?

Health & Safety Questions: Fire Risk Assessment: Who is leading up on actions? Is there a timetable for completion? Do we have the resources or is the work directly related to the CIF bid?

HT: I have put yes and no in the safeguarding columns now. They are all yes except for the governor training which is no.

The sorts of concerns from CPOMS are: non-attendance at school for families we are concerned about, not giving treatment for physical ailments such as burns, children being hungry, children saying they have been shouted at/physically chastised, bruising, children reporting chaotic home lives, domestic violence notifications from Police, stealing, changes in behaviour. There are particular families that we are very concerned about so we collect a lot of CPOMS records for them which builds a bigger picture. We also put on CPOMS what was discussed at any strategy meetings, Core Group meetings or Child in Need meetings. Some of the outcomes from these CPOMS records may be: further monitoring, using the pastoral team to support where appropriate, talking with the parents, talking with the consultation hub for further advice, liaising with social workers and family workers, new child protection referrals, referrals to outside agencies e.g., CAHMS, Intensive Families.

Fire risk assessment: We should know whether the CIF bids have been successful by the end of March beginning of April 21. Last year the outcomes of the CIF bids were delayed due to Covid. This year the applications for the bids were delayed so we may have to wait longer than March/April. If the CIF bid is successful, we are hoping it will be fully funded by trust capital contribution rather than school revenue reserves. This will of course depend on the trust capital balance. We will know more in March/April and will be able to tell you more then.

Sharon, Jeanette, I looked at the fire risk assessment. There were some things on there that we have already started to take action on, for example, thorough recording of fire drills. The main the infra structure work, we are hoping, will be actioned if we are successful in our CIF bid. If we are not successful

G: a few questions on the financial reports, apologies that they are last minute, please answer verbally in the meeting if necessary.

Appendix 1

1.line 34 - supply agency costs are very low- well done

2.line 47 - staff training forecast was only £15,000, this is less than 1% of budget, are we investing enough in training? if you take out the Covid Catch up money being used?

3.line 54 - Premises maintenance costs seem low - are we making a problem for future if they are not maintained adequately? Are we relying on the CIF bids?

4.line 92 - HO recharge is £163,000- could you explain this please?

As I understand it, simply put, we have a reserve of £165,000 but an overspend of £113,000, leaving £52,000 contingency, how worrying is this? What are our perceived financial risks going forward?

HT: Staff training - staff training is not just external courses, CPD is continuous (staff meetings, working with phase leaders, subject leaders working with AHT, peer support). Is in line with the other schools.

Premises maintenance: £23,000 - the other schools do have more money to spend as they have more pupils. We are meeting statutory obligations but you can't spend what you haven't got. We haven't got any disposable income to improve and enhance unfortunately only money to spend on what is essential.

HO recharge is the same for all schools and pays for the central team and centrally agreed contracts. The in-year balance needs to be as close to 0 as possible, we don't want to be spending more than we have. All comes down to pupils' numbers.