

**Minutes of Beechfield Local Governing Committee Meeting held on  
Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 7pm via Zoom**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Governor Type</b>	<b>Attended</b>
Mrs Lesly Adams	Co-opted governor	Apologies Accepted
Miss Iram Ali	Staff (Teaching) Governor	Apologies Accepted
Prof Ramanarayanan Balachandran	Parent governor	Attended
Ms Jennifer Batanga	Parent governor	Attended
Mr James Brown	Co-opted governor	Attended
Lizzie Butler	SENCo	Attended
Mrs Sharon Carlyon (COO)	COO	Attended
Mrs Emma Lad	Clerk	Attended
Mrs Michelle Connell (AHT)	Associate Member	Attended
Emma Hill	Co-opted governor	Attended
Gillian Jackson (HT)	Headteacher	Attended
Jade McNamara	Staff (Support) Governor	Attended
Mrs Nikita Mistry (Chair)	Co-opted governor	Attended
Tanya Mortlock	Associate Member	Attended
Mr James Roach (CEO)	CEO	Attended
Jeanette White (SBM)	School Business Officer	Attended
Miss Sarah Wynne	Co-opted governor	Attended

**Governor challenge is highlighted in yellow**

*Governor actions are highlighted in italics*

**Questions, answers and comments from Governor Hub in appendix A**

BFS – Beechfield School

CTS – Cherry Tree School

LHS – Laurance Haines School

**Meeting started at 7.01pm**

**Action:**

**1. Welcome new governors, apologies and consent**

The meeting was quorate. Iram Ali and Lesly Adams sent apologies. Nikita Mistry chaired the meeting. New governors were welcomed to the meeting and introduced.

**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 – Nothing further to be recorded**

**5. Minutes of the last meeting 02.02.20 and matters arising**

Governors approved the minutes and they will be signed by the Chair via Governor Hub. All matters arising were completed except:

Item 18: Governors were asked to read the changes to KCSIE and then update their confirmation of understanding on Governor Hub. UPDATE: Emma Hill and Jade McNamara to complete

**All governors**

**6. Response from Trust regarding LGC comments – see supporting document**

## Health and Safety

**LHS** – From HT report - Nursery Playground Flooring – Site Manager and Headteacher to seek quotes and potential funding streams. £2600 to repair the edge of the safety flooring. £6150 to replace the whole area. Budgets being reviewed and amended to release funds.

The COO explained this has been moved to their premises plan as the work is not as urgent as first suggested.

## Questions

### **BFS**

- G: Why do the Trust board feel there is a Governor 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.  
COO: This was identified following a skills analysis. The Local Governing Boards are now full, but this could be a consideration for future recruitment.
- 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.  
CEO: I will pass onto the Marketing Manager

### **CTS**

- G: How will the Trust support the school if there is an in-year deficit as a result of the census date change from the DfE?  
COO: I assume this question is reference to the way Pupil premium is funded? We are expecting minimal impact of this change
- 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.  
CEO: I will discuss with HT's

Trustees discussed the responses from surveys.

### Parents:

Parents have made it clear that they are happy with the Trust as there have been no complaints from families during this time. IT devices have been provided where needed – an average of 34 per school were funded by the DfE, with other provided by local businesses – whilst welcome this will in itself present a future challenge in terms of maintenance, internet capacity and replacement.

### Staff:

COO: Between the two staff surveys it was expected that there would be a drop in the results as the nation was not feeling as positive during the second lock down.

T: Do you have a survey from before lock down to use for context? The survey may have been well timed as staff were aware, they were coming to the end of the lock down. It may be interesting to see what the results are in June 2021. Where I work, we purchased BUPA counselling sessions which staff could access for support. Does the Trust have something similar?

COO: We buy into a staff absence insurance with a wellbeing portal included. At present we are reviewing the renewal of the insurance policy. In discussions regarding moving away from absence insurance we have looked at the continued provision of wellbeing support for staff.

CEO: There are members of staff who really appreciate the service.

T: You could also train 'Mental Health first aiders' who can support children and staff which has worked well in our school?

CEO: We have mental health first aiders and we are the Hub for the area reflecting the strength and more embedded culture behind our provision.

T: Do you have a wellbeing committee?

CEO: Each of the pastoral leads support staff in their school and it is working well. We are looking at how to thank staff at present for their commitment during the covid-19 pandemic.

T: Have we had any staff who have complained or felt overwhelmed?

CEO: The group who are not critically vulnerable but have a health condition or live with someone who has a health condition we have had to put in place personalised support. As those staff are asked to return, they are becoming anxious. We have two members of staff who are vulnerable and so we have made alternative arrangements for them which are under constant review.

T: Can we explain to the community that we are now Nurture Hubs?

CEO: Yes, once it has been officially communicated.

## 7. Chair's update

- Update on Governor induction – HFL governor services have created an Induction checklist which all three schools are adopting moving forward to ensure all governors are supported when they take on the role. Nikita Mistry will send via Governor Hub

Nikita Mistry

## 8. Headteacher report – Distributed via Governor Hub ahead of the meeting - Staff council minutes, Catch up premium strategy review for March 21/ May 21, Headteachers report, Pastoral report, Peer review feedback

- The reception class is likely to have 50 children for the next academic year. The nursery admission number is low at the moment for next year but the current year is full at present although it started below number.
- Staffing is being reviewed at present as there are some short-term issues with cover staffing. In the long term the school will employ cover staffing as is already in place across the Trust for the other schools.
- Through monitoring and observations the HT reported there was evidence of consistent teaching across the school. This has been a positive step forward for the school as an area of development previously. The subject leaders now have their end points for each child and Tanya Mortlock explained that training has taken place with TA's so that they are also aware of the requirements. There has also been peer to peer review for science which has been very positive and will be replicated for other subject areas.

7.15pm James Roach and Sharon Carlyon joined the meeting

Budget update – distributed prior to the meeting via Governor Hub – Spring term reforecast, April Management accounts, financial report June 2021, 3Y Budget – 1<sup>st</sup> draft

- The documents distributed prior to the meeting were explained to governors.
- The school has budgeted for projects which include school refurbishment projects and IT updates over the next two years. The projects are dependent on pupil numbers increasing and could be amended if numbers increase or reduce.
- The COO congratulated the team on the increase in school numbers as this has had a positive impact on the budget for the school. The Trust board discusses reserves as part of the schools reserves policy. The Trustees have asked that there be spending in line with the Estates plan as the funds in reserves at present are above the required level.  
The CEO also explained that the funds which are available need to be spent in line with the school plan and governors were asked to ensure spending is in line with the objectives.
- The trend across Watford is for there to be a further decrease in the number of children entering schools in three years. As such the budget has been set conservatively for year 3. Governors were asked to ensure they have a good local knowledge of the challenges facing the school.
- G: The spending for IT, is it part of joint infrastructure?  
COO: We have one provider across the three schools. They meet with the school leadership termly for an update. All three schools have a large number of portable devices as a result of Covid-19. We would usually allow for them being replaced in five years. The school has an asset management plan which includes work such as wireless access points etc. We continually assess what we need next and at present we are reviewing cyber security.  
CEO: We also have the computing curriculum which is funded differently.  
COO: We have a significant number of computers given to the school during covid but I am not sure we can maintain that level without further funding.  
CEO: If this is a priority for the board you can ensure that the HT is supported to seek funding in the future. Children have become better at using computers but not necessarily been taught computing so that is a different area for the school moving forward.
- G: You wanted to upgrade the front of the school with improved signs etc, when will this happen?  
TM: The signs are on order and will be in place as soon as delivered.

7.32pm James Roach and Sharon Carlyon left the meeting

- G: The documents which have been presented are fantastic and we need to thank Tanya, Jeanette, Lizzie and the HT for all their hard work.
- The Sex and relationships lessons have started and parents have attended a parent session so that they understand the delivery.  
G: The session was very well run and the emails which have been sent by the teachers ahead of the lesson have made the whole process easier for families to manage.

- There has been an Early Years session for parents to support their readiness for school and two parents emailed to thank the HT for the session. There was also a secondary transfer meeting which was well received by parents.
- Get Information About Schools is up to date.
- Governor open day – the school is hoping that governors can come into the school for the day and work in teams reviewing different areas and have lunch. The school will have to wait for further guidance from the DFE before it can be confirmed. Governors will then go to CTS to have a Trust meeting and review the new buildings. If governors are not comfortable to attend in person, then remote access will be arranged.

#### Annual SEND report to Governors June 2021 – Lizzie Butler reported

- There are 22 girls and 38 boys who have SEND in the school.
- **G: The number of speech, language and communication needs is high at 29?  
LB: This is usually alongside another area need which is why it is higher.**
- There is a higher number of children who require speech and language at present as a result of Covid-19. The school is waiting for 18 months plus for referrals to be met with. This is due to a backlog in the system from Covid-19.
- A number of children have been referred to educational psychologists and are awaiting services.
- SEN children when reviewed have made expected progress which the school should be very proud of.
- The HT thanked Lizzie for her work which has been amazing across the three schools. There have been 10 EHCP applications already this year and there are more being prepared. Last year there were only 7 made so the number of children with needs is increasing. The school had been told that the children who have received EHCP's would be banded for funding under the new system by November 2020 but this has not been completed. This has caused issues for the school budgeting as it is difficult to know whether to appoint a one to one as the school is unsure of the funding allocated.
- Michelle Connell will be moving to a Trust role working with SENCo for the SEND team on a year's contract. The role will be based in the classroom and allow for SENCo to continue with her work on EHCP's. This should allow for greater support of children and staff when there is low to medium need. The school will then be in line with other schools in the Trust with one Assistant HT.
- James Brown completed his governor visit via Zoom and the report is available on Governor Hub.

#### 9. **Review and update School Plan** –distributed prior to the meeting via Governor Hub - BFS Plan 2020-21, BFS SEF

- Year 5 and 6 have been staying for extra maths sessions in school and it has had a positive effect for the children in terms of their fluency and staff can see the gaps closing. The impact has been clear. The other year groups have worked in small groups which have allowed for focused booster lessons.
- **G: Have we got sustainability targets within the plan alongside targets to improve? Also, governors need to have further direction on how to oversee the sustainability?  
HT: This will be part of the Open day**

HT

#### 10. Governor monitoring visits

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	PPG meeting on the 7th May EYFS meeting on 24th May
Prof Ramanarayanan Balachandran	Marketing Sports premium	Meeting booked virtually for Pupil Premium. Sports premium to be booked	PPG 1.12.20 Sports Premium review for the website to be audited	Sports Premium review for the website to be audited Marketing meeting to take place
Mr James Brown	Inclusion Website	SEND policy has been reviewed and a meeting is being booked	Website review completed	Visit completed for SEND
Mrs Nikita Mistry	Governor Development Coordinator Health and wellbeing	Virtual conversations have taken place regarding Health and wellbeing	Training organised	22 <sup>nd</sup> May visit on health and wellbeing Governor Induction to be put in place across schools

Mrs Sarah Wynne	<i>Children Looked After Safeguarding governor Health and safety</i>	<i>Virtual conversation to be booked</i>	<i>Safeguarding Nov 2020 Health and safety visit to be booked for the annual review</i>	<i>Health and safety and Safeguarding visits completed</i>
Mrs Jennifer Batanga	<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>	<i>Attended the Eco Council meeting and gave badges to the children.</i>
Emma Hill				<i>Meeting to visit the school arranged.</i>

**All governors**

Governors thanked the Chair for all her work.

**Standing items:**

**11. Items from Trust board meeting**

Minutes from the Trust meeting to be sent via Governor Hub

**12. Risk review** (From Trust Risk Register High Risks)

- Pupil Numbers – The numbers have been discussed previously at the meeting. This will continue to be monitored.
- Covid Risk assessment
- *Any other local risk which Trustees need to consider – None to report*

**Clerk (Trust)**

**13. Safeguarding** – termly report to governors

Sarah Wynne has visited and it was raised that there are members of staff who have not used CPOMs in a while and ensuring that they are aware of how to use it.

**14. Health and Safety**

- *Annual H&S report – completed Spring term and report to be uploaded to GH*
  - Any areas identified have been actioned.
- Set date for Summer termly review – completed after half term
- Independent audit from HCC - Beechfield 19th October 2021
- *Any H&S issues to discuss - Nothing to report*

**HT**

**Clerk (Trust)**

**15. Policy tracker review and policies due**

- Trust policies approved and available via Governor Hub policies folder
  - Administration of Medicines
  - Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers
  - Code of Conduct for Employees
  - Code of Conduct for Trustees and LGC Governors
  - Pay Policy
  - Executive Pay Policy
  - Managing Aggressive Parents
  - Trustee and Governors Visit Policy
  - Pupil Premium
  - Shared Parental leave
- No local policies due to review

**16. Training** – See supporting document

- Feedback from recent Trust training
- Ideas/requests for future sessions – governors were asked how they found the training. The governors liked the quiz. It was better than the Hertfordshire training. Governors were asked to add to their governor hub record.
- Diversity training –

G: The budget for CPD is decreasing in the future, how will you cover the training?

SBO: The budget is inflated by the Covid budget as there are two TA's salaries there are present. If the pupil numbers increase then we can increase the training moving forward. There is an additional £5000 in the budget this year for a TA who wants to train to become a teacher.

HT: The budget is also only for external training and so the internal training is not captured in this area.

SBO: We have training packages which allow staff to complete courses online.

G: The staff seem to be asking for more training and more time. More time is difficult to achieve but we can increase the training for staff, we could also engage more private institutions for training?

HT: We can discuss this as part of the Governor Day.

G: We have a large skill set within the trust and there will be further opportunities in the future for opportunities for the sharing of information across the Trust.

LB: In relation to the NQT's there has been recording of training which has worked well. We have also accessed the DSP9 training, Autism training and training from the Educational Psychologist. Covid has limited the training which can take place in the last year but this will hopefully increase.

HT: The AHT has recorded sessions for the TA's so they can watch when needed which has worked very well.

17. **Clerk's update** – distributed via governor hub

18. **Any other business** - None

19. **Items to be sent to Trust/ LABs**

20. **Future Dates**

The governors were thanked by the Chair for all their work.

Governor Open day – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021

#### **Beechfield at 7pm**

Tue 14 Sep 2021

Tue 9 Nov 2021

AGM - Thu 9 Dec 2021

Tue 1 Feb 2022

Tue 14 Jun 2022

Governor Day - Fri 15 Jul 2022

Meeting ended 8.30pm

#### **Questions, answers and comments from Governor Hub**

Some Questions from The Meeting Documentation:

Catch-up Premium:

- As Lesly – When are the second and third instalments expected?

Send Report:

- Some children are marked as requiring banding on the SEND register– who does this and what are the timescales?

- Do external referrals bring costs to the school?

- Have all the EHCPs been able to be reviewed on time?

Safeguarding Report:

- Have the planned actions been progressed?

Heads Report:

- Note: External link goes to Absence Data not Pupil numbers! - Questions: Does the unauthorised absence in Y2 relate to only one child?

- Do we expect to be fully staffed in the autumn?

HT response:

We currently have 427 children on roll.

Yes, we are currently fully staffed for September.

Tanya will have a look at the absence and get back to you

SENCO response - Send Report:

- Some children are marked as requiring banding on the SEND register– who does this and what are the timescales? This is done by HCC. However, I will explain in full at the meeting.

- Do external referrals bring costs to the school? No. They are either part of DSPL 9 or HCC provisions. We do use externals from time to time who incur a cost but we have previously put a bid in for the money for this through personalised commissioning. The families have to be logged on the EHM system. I can explain this at the meeting too.

- Have all the EHCPs been able to be reviewed on time? Yes. All Annual EHC reviews have been completed. The next one is due in September.

AHT response: Sorry - I can't find where the comment about an unauthorised absence in Y2 is on the Head's report. Is it somewhere else?

G: I clicked on the link at the top of the first page of the report. It leads to absence data. This data is what sparked my question.

AHT response: Ah thank you. In September, 1 child in Year 2 did not return from Brazil following a family holiday. They had trouble getting back to the UK (due to needing to renew passports in Brazil) until 16th October. We were advised by the attendance officer to unauthorise the absence. His total unauthorised absence is 22%, which has brought the Year 2 total up significantly in comparison to other year groups.

[Annual SEND Report to Governors BF June 2021.docx](#)

I've updated the branding.

G: SEND school profile:

Total % of boys/ girls with SEND. Are we saying the total is 20% with the rest of the 80% being non-SEND pupils at school?

1. When do we get the 2nd and 3rd instalments of the catch-up premium?

2. Why did the remote workshops for parents not take place?

3. I've heard that the phonics videos for parents received great feedback - did they also show impact?

4. Cornerstones is not being renewed - I thought this was a Trust recommendation

[5. Finance](#) update from J.White is mentioned in your report but not in the file ?

6. Congratulations on all the children being Boxall profiled

7. Thanks to Alison Hayward for another inspiring Pastoral report - could we please see the outcome from the Parent Voice due on the 23rd June?

8. The staff wellbeing WhatsApp group seems popular - what a nice idea.

HT response: We haven't had a chance to run remote workshops in the 8 weeks we've been back. The staff have been so busy helping the children catch up, plus having the Year 3 staff off on long term sick has meant that there has been no cover to plan or deliver anything. I am going to make this a big focus for the next school plan.

The phonics videos were very good in for Reception. Their phonics has benefitted.

Both Cherry Tree and Beechfield are not renewing Cornerstones as we have both developed our own progression, skills and end points for our curriculum. Laurence Haines is continuing with it. It has been discussed with James.

All the finance reports are now uploaded.

I think we have had all of our Covid money now, but I will check with Jeanette.

[Beechfield Plan 2020-2021 Review May 21.docx](#)

G: In regards to parent voice/ coffee mornings. How is the school encouraging parents to attend? I've seen it in the school newsletter but is this working? Could we try another method ie: Arbor? Could the teachers mention this in class so the pupils can relate back to parents/ carers?

HT response: Yes, we can definitely give this a try.

[24th May 2021 - Staff Council.docx](#)  
[Catch Up Premium Strategy Plan Review May 21.docx](#)  
[Pastoral Report June 2021.docx](#)  
[Peer Review feedback BF 20 05 21.docx](#)  
[termlyreport\\_governing\\_body\\_spring\\_term\\_2021a.doc](#)

G: Hi there, I wanted to say a huge thank you and well done to Gillian, Tanya, Michelle and the whole Beechfield team for all you have done this half term to provide such a fantastic education for the children. This includes the wonderful pastoral support given to the families from Alison and her team. Your reports for the governors are so informative and thorough and provide us with a wonderful insight into the impact of all your hard work.

I see from the School Review that the children would like more science experiments and outdoor science' so perhaps I could offer some help here, if you feel it would be useful, with some ideas to meet their demands and share my love of outdoor learning.

I am looking forward to visiting next half term and continuing to work closely with Tanya and Michelle in our roles as Assistant Heads. Happy half term everyone.

G: Gillian/Tanya

Following on from a point raised in our training the other evening are all pupils in KS2 included in the Spanish lessons? How much time is given to learning Spanish? How popular is it with pupils and staff? How confident are staff teaching it?

HT response: Spanish is taught weekly from Year 3-6. The lessons are roughly 45 minutes long. We use a scheme called 'Language Angels' which supports teachers with the language as we

don't have many Spanish speaking teachers! It also ensures progression and development within the language. The lessons are generally well received. Laura Carman is our Spanish subject leader.

G: I have attended the ECO Council Meeting today where Mr Puertas. The ECO councillors / ECO Warriors received their official badge. They were really proud!

We have also planted Sunflowers for a competition next year.

It was great to see how engaged children were during the meeting and how they understand the implications of the small acts they do to save and protect the environment.

G: That's great Jennifer, thank you. Are you able to explain to us what particular areas they are focussing on?

G: They are focusing on:

1. Energy Saving
2. Waste Management
3. Recycling and Use of Recycling Bins
4. Project of to make Pillows using Plastic Bags ( Re-Using instead of sending to landfill).

They have also planted trees in the playground for each year group.

I will complete the governor visit form and add more details.

G: I just wanted to update you on a couple of visits into school I've made recently - in person! The first was the annual Health and Safety audit which went very well. We talked through all the required paperwork and went for a walk around school. Jeanette and team had done a great job pulling everything together and all the required evidence was clear. We discussed using risk assessments more in the future for ongoing areas of concern e.g., gates, Sussex Road entrance, so changes can be tracked over time.

The second visit was a safeguarding audit led by James R looking at the areas Ofsted would be likely to look at if/when they visit. He was really impressed with the culture of safeguarding at the school - we talked to new teachers and children to make sure it was embedded throughout the school and both responses were really positive. Fiona's work on the single central record was also really impressive and it was clear a lot of hard work goes into maintaining it to such a high standard. The next step is to look at how e-safety can be embedded and talked about in a similar way to safeguarding.

Overall, two very successful visits

[Beechfield SEF -April 2021.docx](#)

[Catch Up Premium Strategy Plan Review March 21.docx](#)

The SEF and the Catch-up Plan have been updated and reviewed.

On the Catch up Plan the green is already done, yellow in progress, left blank still to do.

It is Reception allocation day today. We have had 53 allocations. 40 of these are first choice which is good news. 5 are second choice, 3 are third choice, 1 is 4th choice, late preference 4.

Things change a lot before September as we know from experience so hopefully, we won't be too far off of 60 by then.

G: Under the Attendance section in the SEF:

Would it be possible to distinguish Covid related attendance rates against the usual? ie: It would be interesting to see how much Covid is affecting our attendance figures at the school.

G: Thanks Gillian. Great news about our reception numbers...and especially the first choices!

HT response: Covid actually made our attendance better because people weren't having odd days off here and there. Also, when parents were ringing up saying their children were ill, we were advising a Covid test if they displayed any symptoms. I think this put many parents off calling in and they just sent their children to school every day like they should!