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**Minutes of Beechfield Local Governing Committee Meeting held
on Tuesday 9th November 2021 at 7pm via Zoom**

Name	Governor Type	Attended
Mrs Lesly Adams (chair)	Co-opted governor	Attended
Miss Iram Ali	Staff (Teaching) Governor	Attended
Prof Ramanarayanan Balachandran	Parent governor	Attended
Ms Jennifer Batanga	Parent governor	Attended
Mr James Brown	Co-opted governor	Attended
Mrs Emma Lad	Trust clerk	Attended
Mrs Emma Hill	Co-opted governor	Attended
Gillian Jackson (HT)	Headteacher	Attended
Jade McNamara	Staff (Support) Governor	Attended
Mrs Nikita Mistry	Co-opted governor	Apologies
Mr James Roach	CEO	Attended
Jeanette White	Other	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 7.05pm

Action:

1. Welcome, apologies and consent

The meeting was quorate. Nikita Mistry sent apologies.

2. Notification of any other business – None registered

3. Conflict of interest with agenda items to be declared – None registered



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4. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes were approved by governors and will be signed electronically by the Chair as soon as possible. All matters arising were agenda items or completed.

5. Response from Trust regarding LGC comments – reported on the supporting sheet prior to the meeting.

6. Chairs update

a) *Nikita Mistry would like to stand down as a governor. She has agreed to remain on the board until someone else can take her place. The Chair will look to recruit another governor once the skills audit has been returned. Ideally a candidate from the local community will be recruited. Governors were asked to make the chair aware if they know of a suitable applicant. Governors discussed the attributes which would be helpful and the need to ensure the applicant is willing to undertake training and governor visits etc. There is a possible suitable applicant who the HT will ask for a bio and then the chair will follow up*

Chair/ All governors/HT

b) Skills audit – all responses returned.

c) Thank you to governors for posting questions ahead of the meeting.

d) *The chairs meeting is taking place next week and the chair asked for any questions to be sent to her ahead of the meeting*

All governors

7. Headteacher report

Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: Eco Council discussion September 2021, Curriculum intent – Early years 2021-22, Curriculum Intent and core skills – Early years, EYFS Core skills progression, Enrichment, Autumn visit report, BFS CPD programme 2021, BFS SEF 2021, Oct 21 attendance, Oct 21 behaviour, Pastoral report Autumn 1 2021, staff council 14.10.21 response

G: Have you completed esafety training for parents?

HT: We are going to send a questionnaire and then deliver training dependent on their need. Esafety is a priority on the school plan this year.

G: The computing lead has sent an email to all staff asking for staff to complete an esafety question and answer session at the beginning of each computing lesson with children.

G: Early Career Teachers (ECT) were overwhelmingly positive about their experience at BFS but mentioned that they find it hard to mark the morning's work at lunchtime to be able to set the interventions for the same afternoon, I am aware this is operational but wanted to let you know?

HT: The maths lead had asked teachers to have a look at lunch if they had time but we don't encourage people working through their lunch hour. The aim was to support children with that days maths issues.

8. Review and update School Plan/ discuss and agree targets for 2021/22.

Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: BFS Plan 2021-22

G: Michelle Connell is on the catch up plan, who should it be?



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HT: Tanya, I will update.

G: When will you be able to provide a RAG rating for how the plan for this year was completed?

HT: The plan runs November to November so I will provide for the next meeting.

HT to provide an update on the 2020-21 School plan outcomes next meeting

HT/ Clerk (Agenda)

G: The reports and plans are well presented and it is very helpful.

9. Finance report

Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: Finance report November 2021

a) Review of budget documentation

G: Thank you for the summary report. It is very helpful. £51,000 in red but we have a carry forward of £62,000?

SBO: The GAG, funding based on pupil numbers, is paid the following year from the October census. This means we have to estimate the children who will be on roll. Children left the school who we had not expected to leave in year and who had been projected to be in school when the budget was set. This was 13 pupils gross and resulted in a £51,000 short fall. However, we still have a carry forward of £262,396 which is £62,674 higher than expected. The reasons for the increase were explained in the finance report to governors. We will have the confirmed figures from the auditor in the next few days.

G: Covid recovery premium, is that in addition?

SBO: That is a new payment for 2021-22. The Covid Catch up grant was paid in 2020-21.

b) Update from School Business Officer on energy usage (from matters arising)

G: The energy usage – the renewable energy usage is 0%?

SBO: We have 26 solar panels in the new build. We have a CIF bid being completed for the fire safety works and we are going to submit another bid for lighting etc.

G: If we can win a bid for a renewable energy source I will try and find match funding.

Governors agreed that it would be beneficial to have renewable energy sources in the school and that it would be beneficial for the Eco-council to support with the process.

10. Governor visit reports

Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: EYFS visit Lesly Adams, Curriculum visit Emma Hill

a) Marketing plan review – Rama Balachandran (from matters arising) – carry forward

Rama Balachandran

b) Forest school/ rewilding playing areas – Emma Hill (from matters arising) – carry forward

Emma Hill

G: Could we work with local organisations to start rewilding?

HT: Yes, we can speak to the staff involved and work with the Eco-council to move forward.

Jennifer Batanga

G: It would be good if there were zone areas which the teachers can utilise more effectively. CTS is developing an outdoor area garden to support with the D&T, science curriculum etc.



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HT: Now that the curriculum is organised enhancements are the next stage. Building outdoor learning areas would be helpful for teachers. We do have an outdoor log circle but staff need to understand how to utilise the area effectively.

G: The approach for the school needs to have a goal and so were we to aim for an Royal Horticultural school award system [Link to RHS award for schools](#), for example, we could maintain the approach and improvement for the school long term.

G: The Eco-council have entered competitions previously so I can speak to the lead tomorrow and see if there is anything further we can be applying for. Particularly with the Climate Change Conference (COP26) which has taken place recently.

c) Governor allocated areas visited and not covered under other agenda items

Area for review	Governor allocated	Visit completed
Curriculum	Emma Hill	2.11.21 – report distributed
Environmental governor	Jennifer Batanga	<i>Visit booked 10.11.21</i>
EYFS	Lesly Adams	<i>22.10.21 – report distributed</i>
Health and wellbeing	Nikita Mistry	
Inclusion	James Brown	<i>TBC</i>
Pupil premium	Lesly Adams/ Rama Balachandran	<i>PPG meeting held and DFE proforma to be sent and reviewed</i>
Sports premium	Rama Balachandran	<i>Reviewed statement and posted to the school website</i>
ECT	Lesly Adams	8.11.21 – report distributed

All governors

Standing items:

11. Items from Trust board meeting – None to report

12. Risk review

Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: Risk register October 2021

- G3: Governor skill set
The skills audit responses are being reviewed by the Trust and Chair at present
- E1: Pupil attainment - Schools do not meet national attainment standards in 2021/22 - Highlight to LGCs (Info only) HTs and CEO to monitor and review practice. Strong programme to develop quality



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first teaching and leadership consistently across the Trust. LGC and Standards committee to monitor data and report.

HT: It is a concern as the children are joining the school with low attainment in Reception. The children in year two have not had a full school year and year 6 have not had a full school year since year three. Writing is a difficulty and the staff are all working to support all children to thrive and achieve. Results for 2022 wont be published nationally.

- F1: review pupil numbers form October census - October 21. Highlight to LGCs. Review pupil nos as at October census . Any local issues which may impact pupil numbers to be reported to the board. Ensure strong local marketing plans are in place to promote school in local community. Exec Leadership will continue to monitor pupil data alongside monthly management accounts. To continue to liaise with HCC planning re numbers in Watford. **Marketing Manager** will continue to develop a Trust marketing strategy.
- O2: Attract and retain staff. - **Oct 21. Highlight to LGCs- Continue to encourage all leavers to complete survey. Exec team-** Development of a strong people strategy (which includes enhanced CPD/career pathways) is transparent and well delivered. Continue recruitment events. Continue a programme of staff wellbeing surveys.

Mid-year exit surveys will be reviewed at the next meeting and the HT will feedback to the governors any themes.

HT/ Clerk (Agenda)

G: Can we complete wellbeing surveys with staff which may be helpful?

HT: At present staff aren't leaving because of issues with the school. The staff council allows for feedback on an ongoing basis. The staff wellbeing survey will be completed in the Spring term.

G: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion surveys, the Trust needs to ensure that there are appropriate questions which allow for the staff to feedback how they are feeling.

- Any other local risk which Trustees need to consider

13. Safeguarding/ Children Looked After – Sarah Wynne

Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: October 2021 annual-safeguarding practice-audit 2021-22, Safeguarding Y4,5,and 6 pupil survey, SCR and safeguarding audit 2021 Template BFS 21.09.21

SW reported that the audit has been completed, there were no concerns raised and actions have been started.

14. Health and Safety – Sarah Wynne

Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: Final BFS autumn 21 termly inspection checklist

The swimming risk assessments is being reviewed.

Any further issues will be reported to the governors after the next meeting.

15. Premises



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Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: Energy saving information

- Update of Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) projects
The fire alarm CIF is continuing. The ceilings have now been completed and the doors will be updated in February. There could be electronic releases fitted to the kitchen doors from the contingency. The general maintenance works can then be completed.

16. Policy tracker review and policies due

- Trust policies approved and available via Governor Hub policies folder – available on Governor Hub
- School policies – the Health and safety policy was approved by governors
- Volunteer policy – The Trustees have moved to LGC responsibility
The HT's have decided this will be a procedure. It has been written and is being checked with the office staff at present to ensure it reflects practice.
G: Will it include the induction?
HT: Yes, we are ensuring there is a Volunteer induction in place.

17. Training – See supporting document

- Ideas/requests for future sessions (from Matters arising) – nothing identified at present
- Nikita Mistry training record is up to date
- Governor training booked (from Matters arising)
 - Lesly Adams/ James Brown – Chairs strategic information briefing – 19th October 2021
 - Emma Hill/ Rama Balachandran – Handling academy complaints – 19th October 2021
- Governor training to be completed (from Matters arising)
 - *Rama Balachandran – Safeguarding training – completing on modern Governor*
Rama Balachandran
- Governor training completed (from Matters arising)
 - Emma Hill – Designated Safeguarding Lead

18. Clerks update – Distributed via Governor Hub

The clerk and Chair attended a webinar Experiences of Ofsted. The slides are here: [21.11.10 Experiences of Ofsted: Autumn 2021](#)

The webinar is an hour long and governors were encouraged to take the time to listen: [Click here to listen to webinar](#)

All governors

19. Any other business – No items were requested

20. Items to be sent to Trust/ LGCs



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- Skills audit responses completed
- No further risks to be reported
- No Health and safety concerns to be reported
- The Health and safety policy was approved by governors

The clerk was asked to report the above to Trustees

Clerk

21. Future Dates

Date	Start	Meeting
Thu 9 Dec 2021	19:00	AGM
Tue 1 Feb 2022	19:00	Local Governing Committee
Tue 14 Jun 2022	19:00	Local Governing Committee
Fri 15 Jul 2022	TBC	Governor Day

8.08pm Jeanette White and the clerk left the meeting

22. Training session – Ofsted preparedness – James Roach CEO led the training

Distributed prior to the meeting and taken as read: EIF refresher October, Inclusive MAT Ofsted refresher November 2021, Ofsted preparation questions for governors

The CEO delivered training to governors on the subject of Ofsted Preparedness.

Meeting ended: 9pm

Appendix A: Governor Hub discussion:

Early Careers Teachers (used to be called NQTs)

Hi all,

I met with our 3 ECTs today to see "what it feels like to be an ECT at Beechfield"

The answers were overwhelmingly positive, Apart from feeling EXHAUSTED most of the time (par for the course?) and sometimes doubting themselves they feel-

- well supported by mentors and SLT
- comfortable asking for help (open door policy)
- enjoy having a planning partner as it cuts down on preparation time
- specifically mentioned the wonderful support both practical and emotional that they get from the Pastoral team.
- like how specific the targeted observations from their phase leader/mentors is
- would welcome the opportunity to meet with other ECTs across the Trust (I will bring this up at the next Chairs' meeting)



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FYI - Gillian/Tanya.. they mentioned they find it hard to mark the morning's work at lunchtime to be able to set the interventions for the same afternoon ??

Questions

1) Well Done for the Green RAYG rating on the HIP visit report.

2) Plead Confirm that the planned 1/2 term briefing in the Safeguarding in Practice doc did take place.

HT: Yes the 1/2 term briefing took place.

3) When will the CPD programme be fully planned?

HT: CPD programme is planned half termly in accordance with the yearly overview

4) Are we fully Staffed now ?

HT: Almost fully staffed - currently looking to employ 3 1:1 for pupils with SEND.

5) What does the "48" mean next to Languages in the Head's Report ?

HT: We have 48 languages spoken at Beechfield. This does change regularly due to the mobility.

G: Thanks that's enormous, I didn't add up those listed to identify that there were many children not accounted for in the list on the right.

G: At some governor training I listened to yesterday about schools' recent experiences of Ofsted inspections, the following areas were highlighted. Gillian, could you please talk us through some of these at the meeting?

Thank you

NUANCING THE OFSTED FRAMEWORK -

- Recovery from Covid gaps
- peer on peer sexual abuse and violence
- Relationship Sex and Health Education
- Curriculum flexibility
- Online safety

Inspectors will look at the following areas:

QUALITY OF EDUCATION accounts for 40%of the judgement (Intent/Implementation/Impact)

BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

CURRICULUM IS THE BACKBONE OF THE INSPECTIONS

How has assessment been used to identify gaps?

- Has the curriculum been flexed to address the gaps (where/how)
- Any areas being repeated because they've been missed/forgotten
- What differences have been made to accelerate progress (" sticky learning?")
- Any tutoring? If so..what?

STAFF WORKLOAD QUESTIONS VERY POPULAR (and they will ask the staff for their perception of it)

- What has been done to reduce it? how well has it worked

PEER ON PEER SEXUAL ABUSE/VIOLENCE TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY

- have staff been trained?
- do we have a policy?
- how do we prepare/protect our pupils



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ONLINE SAFETY VERY IMPORTANT AS EVERYONE HAS SPENT SO MUCH TIME ONLINE DURING COVID-

- how do we prepare and protect our pupils. Can our pupils explain this to inspectors?

PUPIL VOICE -INSPECTORS TALK TO PUPILS A LOT (what is it like to be a pupil in this school?)

(My questionHOW GREEN IS OUR SCHOOL ? -are we incorporating COP26 issues in our curriculum ?)

HT response: Most of this is covered in the SEF.

Peer on peer abuse: all staff have had training on KCSIE 2021 during the INSET day in September. In addition to this there was an additional Staff Meeting updating all staff about safeguarding. Peer on peer abuse was part of this. There have been regular reminders in the staff briefing. We had a whole school assembly last Monday about keeping safe. SLT have all completed additional online training about peer on peer abuse. All schools in the Trust have been asked to prepare an appendix on this to reflect their practise. Once it is agreed I will share it with governors.

We have Eco Council, our geography curriculum includes climate change. Over the coming term and moving forwards this focus will increase as it looks like it is high on the agenda for the new Education Secretary!

Thank you to Gillian and Tanya for all the information prior to our meeting. A couple of questions from the reports: What is our capacity for nursery? How many families attend the coffee mornings? Thank you

Thank you Gillian for posting these reports well in advance to give us all plenty of time to read and comment.

To save time in the meeting, my comments/questions are as follows

- Behaviour report - could we have numbers of pupils involved please as well as incidences? I am mindful that several incidences may refer to just one pupil?
- Attendance- I feel our figures are very acceptable in view of the past 20 months - especially for our SEND (94%) and PPG (93.4%)- would you agree?
- Re SEND - how is the new system of LButler and MConnell P/T working across the Trust working out for BF ? particularly with reference to the Staff Council comment about feeling there could be better information/communication regarding their SEND pupils ?
- Staff Council - you have our total support when you say expectations MUST BE HIGH .Are staff absences still impacting so hard on PPA time? and good to see all the positivity re SLT/Headship/fellow staff members. Have you been able to talk to the office staff re comments that they are not as supportive as they might be ?Do you think this might be justified?
- CPD plan - thanks for sharing .It is great to have such a very clear and detailed plan to drive quality teaching
- Pupil views re: safeguarding - overall very positive, I know that you have since banned pupils from going behind the shed in the playground !
- SAFEGUARDING - I note we now have one CLA and 3 previously CLA now adopted. Do they still receive additional funding/support ? And is Sarah W aware of them ?
- PASTORAL REPORT - Many thanks to Alison for such a detailed and far reaching report on the vast number of initiatives they are carrying out . Particular mention to the COLLABORATION with other PST leads across the Trust and the Watford [S.Army](#) and Asda. Also working towards the MENTAL HEALTH KITEMARK award. Please ask Alison to keep us informed as to the progress.



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- We now have A Mental Health Practitioner coming into school one day per week...how is this funded ?out of the PPG money?
- Congratulations on the outcome of the Safeguarding Audit. Very few requirements still to be met and you have plans in pace to remedy this (they mostly seem to be reminding staff at regular intervals of various safeguarding requirements?)
- What is the progress on developing the Trust collaboration NURSERY PROGRAMME FOR MATHS?
- Good to know that the SEF is showing us RAG rated 2 in ALL areas ! With regards to the SEF though, there seems to be conflicting Progress percentages ? Top 20% of schools for 2019 on page 1.. and top 3% on page 4 ?(I actually thought it was 2%?)
- FINALLY .. at a training session I attended there was mention of schools needing to have a CYBER ATTACK DEFENCE strategy (or words to that effect)....is this something the Trust might be undertaking ?

Tanya Mortlock

Hi Lesly,

To answer a few of your queries:

Behaviour - I will add this and upload it; however, there aren't any 'repeat offenders' - most incidents have been by different children (and there may have been more than 1 child involved - as you will see on the report). There are 1 or 2 children with a few more behaviour incidents but these are recorded on CPOMS because they have SEND or child protection needs that require support, rather than sanctions due to 'poor behaviour', as such.

Attendance - really we would like higher attendance this year (aiming for 97%) Gillian and I will be speaking to the Herts attendance officer so can check if our figures are in line with others in Herts. I am aware that LHS and CTS have higher overall attendance; however they have not had as many covid cases this term. Our attendance is around 96% with covid cases not included, which is definitely worth noting.

School council - staff absences have only impacted on PPA in terms of the PPA time being changed, which is disruptive for children and teachers because they will have set things ready for cover and then it can often change. It hasn't impacted teachers actually receiving their time, thankfully.

Progress - I think it's because it's officially reported as being in top 20%; however, technically, we were in the top 3%.

Tanya

Hello - just to let you know that we spoke with the Herts attendance officer today - she said Herts attendance has been around 96%. There has been no national data to compare to since the pandemic. She did agree with you, Lesly, and say she was pleased with it and happy with how we are tackling attendance and all of the circumstances over the last 2 years.

Lesly Adams

that's good to know Thank you Tanya



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I wonder, do we still have a copy of Rachel MacFarlane's letter congratulating BF on being in the top ??% of schools for progress ?

Tanya Mortlock

A very similar letter from the House of Commons (Dean Russell) is laminated pinned to the wall in Gillian's office 😊
It says 3%.

Sarah Wynne

Hi Lesly, re CLA, I was aware of the one currently looked after and spoke to Jess (designated CLA teacher) earlier this year. Haven't checked in since the new previously CLA pupils started so probably worth a revisit.
5 days ago

HT:Hi Lesly,

Here are some answers!

- Re SEND - how is the new system of LButler and McConnell P/T working across the Trust working out for BF ? particularly with reference to the Staff Council comment about feeling there could be better information/communication regarding their SEND pupils ? I have emailed Lizzie and Michelle about arranging a regular feedback meeting as it is easy to get out of the loop about what is going on.
- Staff Council - you have our total support when you say expectations MUST BE HIGH .Are staff absences still impacting so hard on PPA time? and good to see all the positivity re SLT/Headship/fellow staff members. Have you been able to talk to the office staff re comments that they are not as supportive as they might be ?Do you think this might be justified?
Yes I have talked with the office, they were upset actually. They feel they are so busy and often working on tasks when staff just walk in and expect them to drop everything! We will ask the next staff council to provide examples rather than generic statements and a member of office staff will attend. It is day 3 and everyone has been at work so far! It was because it was so extreme with 8 staff off.
- SAFEGUARDING - I note we now have one CLA and 3 previously CLA now adopted..do they still receive additional funding/support ? And is Sarah W aware of them ? CLA 1978.55 on top of their normal funding. Not for post CLA.
- We now have A Mental Health Practitioner coming into school one day per week...how is this funded ?out of the PPG money? This is free because we are a mental health hub.
- Congratulations on the outcome of the Safeguarding Audit. Very few requirements still to be met and you have plans in pace to remedy this (they mostly seem to be reminding staff at regular intervals of various safeguarding requirements?) Yes just regular reminders.
- What is the progress on developing the Trust collaboration NURSERY PROGRAMME FOR MATHS? That is the EYFS curriculum work we have already written and started to put in place.



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- **FINALLY** .. at a training session I attended there was mention of schools needing to have a CYBER ATTACK DEFENCE strategy (or words to that effect)....is this something the Trust might be undertaking ?
Yes this is all in process. The Trust are giving an overview with then the individual schools taking responsibility for this.

Lizzie Butler

Thank you Lesly and Gillian. I am going to pick up on that comment regarding communication with the SEND team and see how we can improve this with all staff. We do offer surgeries that staff can ask for at any time in the year to discuss any particular pupils they have concerns about; these pupils do not need to be on the SEND register, they are for all pupils. Many thanks.

Eco council

There has been an Eco Council today. This is what was discussed today in the meeting with the Eco Lead Tina Scott.

This afternoon I spoke to the Eco Council children about a class pledge to protect the environment.

The children will be coming back to class with a piece of paper with instructions about how to make a class pledge.

Please spend ten mins next week discussing as a class what your pledge is going to be- anything like switching off lights, saving fruit skins for compost or picking up litter.

Please complete the sheet and then return it to me before Friday next week.

I will laminate them and then we can display them on our doors.

G: Thank you Gillian, i hope to be invited in some of the meetings.

I have been looking at some activities/ resources that schools can get involved or say children can get involved specially with the COP26 summit.