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**Minutes of Beechfield Local Governing Committee Meeting held  
on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7pm via Zoom**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Governor Type</b>	<b>Attended</b>
Lesly Adams (chair)	Co-opted governor	Attended
Iram Ali	Staff (Teaching) Governor	Attended
Prof Ramanarayanan Balachandran	Parent governor	Attended
Jennifer Batanga	Parent governor	Attended
James Brown	Co-opted governor	Attended
Emma Lad (Clerk)	Clerk	Attended
Emma Hill	Co-opted governor	Attended
Gillian Jackson (HT)	Headteacher	Attended
Jade McNamara	Staff (Support) Governor	Attended
Nikita Mistry	Co-opted governor	Attended
Jeanette White (SBO)	School Business Officer	Attended
Sarah Wynne	Co-opted governor	Attended

**Governor challenge is highlighted in yellow**  
*italics*

*Governor actions are highlighted in*

**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 clerk welcomed governors to the meeting. The meeting was quorate. The clerk chaired until item 5

**2. Notification of any other business – None declared**

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



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**4. Documentation to be read and approved via Governor Hub:**

- Register of business interest
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Online safety
- Code of conduct
- Whistleblowing
- Privacy notice
- Child protection agreement

*Clerk to email governors once the documents are available on Governor Hub with instructions for update*  
**All governors/clerk**

**5. Election of Chair and vice chair for one year**

Chair – Lesly Adams was elected chair by the governors for a term of a year.

Vice Chair – Ramanarayanan Balachandran and Nikita Mistry were elected co-vice chair by governors for a term of a year.

*Trustees will be asked to approve the appointment at their meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021.*

**Clerk**

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for their continued work as governors.

**6. Minutes of the last meeting 8.6.21 and matters arising**

The clerk explained Trustees have approved the electronic signing of minutes and asked Chairs to sign via Governor Hub. The minutes were approved and will be signed electronically via Governor Hub. All matters arising were completed or agenda items.

**7. Review documentation approved by the Trust (for information)**

**Documents distributed via Governor Hub prior to the meeting and taken as read:** Terms of reference – agreed by the Trust board, Trustee minutes 8/7/21, Governance Framework

*The COO has organised Governance framework training for the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 remotely. The meeting details will be distributed via Governor Hub ahead of the meeting and all governors were invited to attend.*

**All governors**

**8. Link governor roles to be allocated**

Governors agreed to the following allocated roles and completing three visits per year on their allocated area:

Children Looked After	Sarah Wynne
Curriculum	Emma Hill
Environmental governor	Jennifer Batanga



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EYFS	Lesly Adams
Governor Development Coordinator	Nikita Mistry
Health and Safety	Sarah Wynne
Health and wellbeing	Nikita Mistry
Inclusion	James Brown
Marketing	Ramanarayanan Balachandran
Pupil premium	Lesly Adams/ Ramanarayanan Balachandran
Safeguarding governor	Sarah Wynne
Sports premium	Ramanarayanan Balachandran
Website	James Brown

#### 9. Propose any changes to admissions for the Trust Board

The HT explained that the admissions arrangements are in line with HCC. There is a criterion for the admission of Trust staff's children which HCC admissions criteria does not include. Nursery admissions also allow for children to join the term after they turn three in line with government funding, this ensures the school does not have to charge parents for sessions at the nursery up to the allocated funding amount.

#### 10. Chairs update

**Documents distributed via Governor Hub prior to the meeting and taken as read:** Letter to staff end of term

- The Chair explained that she is meeting with the other chairs next week and asked for any questions to be sent so that she can follow up at the meeting.
- The Pupil premium plan is being completed at present.

#### 11. Headteacher report including

**Documents distributed via Governor Hub prior to the meeting and taken as read:** Analysis of behaviour, Attendance analysis, BFS finance report, EYFS analysis, GIAS, HT report, Pastoral report

##### Afghan Refugees

G: Will we be taking any Afghan Evacuees into the school community?

HT: There are families staying locally and HCC have contacted the school to make us aware that children could be coming to the school. There is a meeting this week and the school may know more afterwards.

G: CTS, is also working with the families as they work with the Salvation Army and have offered the space for families to use at the weekend.



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#### Covid

G: Are there any active Covid cases?

HT: There are two active cases in year 5 and another child is getting a PCR test. We are continuing with our bubbles and assemblies online to keep the school community safe.

G: What is the protocol for the school now?

HT: Unless a child has symptoms and then tests positive, they continue to come to school. Other children are not sent home if there is a positive case in their class. There are infection limits in place for when the school has to contact Public Health England. The school will receive approximately £14000 from the Covid catch-up. The SLT are considering how best to spend the grant. Additional provision has been timetabled before and after school with TA's.

G: How much are the Trust involved in the allocation of resources?

HT: We are supported by the CEO but the decision lies with the school.

G: Is there a specific program to support the EAL children in the school?

HT: We are considering the purchase of a program to support this group specifically alongside ensuring there is high quality teaching.

#### Exit interviews

No staff requested an exit interview this year.

Governors discussed recruitment across the Trust and the difficulties of recruiting in Watford.

G: The marketing of the schools is important to attract not just pupils but also quality staff.

HT: The recruitment takes a large amount of time and Fiona Lawrence and Janette White work really hard behind the scenes to get everything ready for September.

#### Overview of the budget and the CIF project

The school was successful with the CIF fire bid. The fire panels, emergency lighting and fire doors have all been replaced. The project will be completed in the October half term. The HT explained that the capital funding which has been released will be used for electric gates and updates around the school.

G: Governors are responsible for checking the energy use in the school, do we check that we are using the right light bulbs etc?

JW: We display our energy certificates and we have our sustainability policy.

JW will review further

JW

HT: We have the policy and the Trust is working hard with the children to move the schools forward.

## 12. Review and update School Plan/ discuss targets

**Documents distributed via Governor Hub prior to the meeting and taken as read:** BFS school plan review 20-21, BFS school plan 21-22

G: Have the curriculum priorities changed as a result of Covid?

HT: No, some children have always come to the school at a lower attainment level than the rest of the cohort and so we have always supported all children to thrive and progress at all entry levels into the school.

G: Are you reducing the number of ways children are being taught for example maths?

HT: We have considered and concise curriculum for the school and we have simplified it to ensure that all children are being taught an appropriate number of systems. This has allowed for a coherent approach across the school in terms of curriculum and abilities. The Trust have completed their plan which has been helpful and allowed for a more coherent Trust approach.



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**Standing items:**

**13. Items from Trust board meeting**

Trust strategic priorities plan –

- Strengthen governance at each level
- Facilitate growth across the Trust
- Develop a culture where the value of Trust collaboration is clearly recognised
- Support pupils to thrive

*The plan will be distributed via Governor Hub once available for information.*

**Clerk**

**14. Risk review**

**Documents distributed via Governor Hub prior to the meeting and taken as read:** Risk Register September 2021

- G2: Provide update on current membership to trustees.  
The clerk explained that two new Trustees are completing safeguarding checks at present and a third is being advertised for.
- G2: Succession planning to be considered?  
Governors discussed succession planning but no one felt at present that they would be willing to stand as Chair in the future.
- G3: CPD Governor to be appointed  
Nikita Mistry was appointed as CPD governor.
- G3: Skills audit to be completed by all. The clerk will distribute the NGA skills audit via Governor Hub for completion and asked that all governors complete before half term.

**Clerk/ All governors**

- F1: Review current pupil numbers – discussed under HT report
- F1: Raise any local issues which may impact pupil numbers to the Trustees?

The planning at HCC have made it clear that there will be more pupil places than pupils in the Watford area within the next two or three years. This is a concern for the school as the school may not have been first choice in previous years for some families, however, the school was able to maintain pupil numbers so ensuring we are first choice is a priority.

G: What are the reasons we aren't first choice?

HT: Historic reputation and although we have a very good progress rate parents look at attainment levels. The nursery at present has a large number of children who are EAL.

G: Could we be making more contact with nurseries to try and advertise to parents?

HT: Yes, we are looking at it but there is a lot of competition.

- F1: School Marketing plans to be reviewed?  
G: Staff enticement and reducing attrition rates and establish a long-standing relationship with other schools and universities could support marketing and maintaining quality staffing. Governors asked



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that Rama discuss further with the CEO and HT. We could also review if there are cleaner energy sources the school could be adopting.

*Rama, and HT to meet to review the plan*

**HT/ Rama Balachandran**

G: Could we try and look at Forest School and rewilding the school playing area?

HT: Yes, it would be helpful for the school.

*Emma Hill will meet with the HT to discuss further*

**Emma Hill**

- 02: Staff exit survey to be reviewed – there were no completed exit surveys to review.

- Any other local risk which Trustees need to consider

HT: There have been some complaints from local residents about parent parking and the school signs. The gate in Sussex Road has also been complained about. The local residents being unhappy could be an issue for local reputation. Is there anything that the Trust can do to support with this?

*The clerk will make Trustees aware*

**Clerk**

### 15. Safeguarding

**Documents distributed via Governor Hub prior to the meeting and taken as read:** Termly report to governors

G: Are the actions in progress?

HT: Yes, at present.

### 16. Health and Safety

- *Independent audit from HCC to be completed on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and the results will be reported to the H&S governor*
- Any H&S issues to discuss – Fire Risk assessment completed at BFS over summer

**HT**

### 17. Policy tracker review and policies due

**Documents distributed via Governor Hub prior to the meeting and taken as read:** Home learning, Marking and Feedback

- Trust policies approved and available via Governor Hub policies folder

The following policies were approved for use:

- Home Learning
- Marking and Feedback

### 18. Training

- *Governance Framework training – 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 remote*

**All governors**



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- *Ideas/requests for future sessions – list to be sent to governors on Governor Hub by Nikita to prompt response*

**Nikita Mistry**

- Governor induction – Nikita Mistry  
The new plan is available in Resources for new governors.
- Courses to be completed:  
*Rama/ Emma – Safeguarding and Handling academy complaints*  
*Nikita to check her training record as training is not being shown.*

**Rama Balachandran / Emma Hill / Nikita Mistry**

### 19. Clerks update

The Ofsted inspection framework changes were sent prior to the meeting via Governor Hub and governors discussed the impact on the school in particular the changes to the Early Years Framework expectations in relation to curriculum.

### 20. Any other business – None

### 21. Items to be sent to Trust/ LABs

#### Chair and vice chair nominations:

*Lesly Adams was elected chair by the governors for a term of a year.*

*Ramanarayanan Balachandran and Nikita Mistry were elected co-vice chair by governors for a term of a year.*

#### Risk register comments/ recommendations:

HT: There have been some complaints from local residents about parent parking and the school signs. The gate in Sussex Road has also been complained about. The local residents being unhappy could be an issue for local reputation. Is there anything that the Trust can do to support with this?

#### Health and safety concerns:

*None*

#### Policies approved:

*Marking and Feedback – approved*

*Home learning – approved*

#### Training recommendations:

*None*

**Clerk (Trustees)**

### 22. Future Dates:



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G: How much are you having to cover when there are absences? This must put you under a great deal of pressure alongside your role? There is a training plan in place at the moment which means that, for example, all phase leaders are out of the school tomorrow, could there be a plan in place to support further?

HT: We have had an additional HLTA allocated this year but unfortunately one other HLTA is on long term sick. Once they return and covid stops meaning staff have to isolate we would be in a better position moving forward.

Date	Start	Meeting
Tue 9 Nov 2021	19:00	Local Governing Committee via Zoom
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	00:00	Governor Day

Meeting ended at 8.41pm

### **Questions from Governor Hub**

1. Could we have an update of the TOTAL number of pupils on role as of now?

Today there are 406 on roll. Lower than we had at the end of last term. Children have been moving out of the area as it is too expensive to live here, some have returned to their home countries, a few have gone to local schools which are closer to their homes. I am still talking with all families who move on.

2. Has a Deep Clean taken place?

Yes, in the new building but not in the existing building due to the building works. I have requested that nursery is deep cleaned as they sit on the carpet a lot. I am waiting for the cleaning company to give a decision. The existing building will be deep cleaned in spring term once the work has been completed. The builders are coming back at October half term to complete the works.

3. Can we ensure additional ventilation around the school?

We are making sure all rooms were well ventilated - doors and windows open.

4. Is there any external support available for Wellbeing (staff and pupils)

Yes, we pay into Education Mutual that staff can access. Some staff are being trained in mindfulness which is also benefitting them personally. The pastoral team are very supportive for staff, parents and children. We have a mental health worker in school on Wednesdays who is supporting specific families.

5. What is the level of anxiety for staff/parents/pupils around the lifting of restrictions?





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I haven't heard anything. One pupil in Year 3 is wearing a mask. We have kept a lot of the Covid things in place at BFS e.g., staggered start, keeping phases together at lunchtime and on the playground

6. Can you explain to Gobs how you plan to ensure planning time/leadership time is available going forward?

We have appointed an additional HLTA (we still have one HLTA on long term sick) this has relieved some of the pressure. Both Tanya and myself had to cover last week as well. We will do our best, however, medical appointments, positive Covid, self-isolating and long term sickness all makes it tricky.

7. Have we received any additional 'catch up' funding?

We are going to receive some additional money from the government this year.

8. Behaviour/exclusions - the way this is reported seems to have changed which makes it difficult to compare with previous data?

Behaviour is improving - going forwards hopefully you will find it easier to compare. We will have the same headings for the next governors report.

9. National data shows that KS1 and disadvantaged children have suffered the most during the past 18 months. What are we doing specifically for these groups?

There are a range of interventions taking place in all year groups. Our main priority in KS1 is getting the children reading. There are two phonics sessions per day for KS1 plus reading at the end of the day, daily reading, singing. We have 2 volunteers supporting us with reading in Year 1 and 2. Alongside this the children are being supported in class by teaching assistants who are gap filling in the afternoons. There is a focus on maths fluency. Tanya and myself have been hearing the lowest 20 per cent of readers in all classes to check that they are heard regularly.

Regarding the school plan - we are continuing with our EAL training to support teachers with their curriculum delivery. We haven't budgeted for 'Racing to English' but we can consider this for next year. We are looking again at our enrichment entitlements at BFS and are working with the Central Trust about this. Yes, we can change the wording about retention of staff.