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Minutes of Beechfield Local Governing Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 20th September 2022 at 7pm via Zoom and at the school

Name	Governor Type	Attended
Lesly Adams (chair)	Co-opted governor	Attended
Iram Ali	Staff (Teaching) Governor	Attended
Prof Rama Balachandran	Parent governor	Absent
Jennifer Batanga	Parent governor	Attended
James Brown	Co-opted governor	Attended – on screen
Emma Hibberd	Co-opted governor	Attended
Gillian Jackson (HT)	Headteacher	Attended
Emma Lad (Clerk)	Clerk	Attended
Kennedy Rodrigues	Co-opted governor	Attended
Sarah Wynne	Co-opted governor	Attended – on screen
In attendance		
Liz Leeman	Chair of Trustees	Attended
James Roach	CEO	Attended - remotely

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.



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- The Chair of Trustees was welcomed to the meeting.
- Emma Hibberd was welcomed to her first meeting with the board.
- The Chair congratulated the school on their Ofsted report.

2. Notification of any other business

- There was no notification of any other business.

3. Conflict of interest with agenda items to be declared

- There were no conflicts of interest declared.

4. Safeguarding Update from the CEO (James Roach)

Moved to later in the meeting

5. Documentation to be read and approved via Governor Hub

The clerk will notify governors once all declaration documentation is available via Governor Hub

Clerk

- Register of business interest
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – part one
- Online safety policy
- Code of conduct
- Whistleblowing policy
- Child protection policy
- Academies trust handbook 2022

6. Minutes of the last meeting (14.06.22) and matters arising – See appendix A

Minutes were approved and will be signed by the chair via Governor Hub. All matters arising were agenda items or completed.

7. Communication from the Trust

- a) Information and documentation from the Trust
 - i. Trustees' minutes 16.03.22 [available on Governor Hub](#)
 - ii. Trustees' minutes 07.07.22 [available on Governor Hub](#)
 - iii. Risk Register [available on Governor Hub](#)
- b) Documentation for information
 - i. Local Governing Committee Terms of reference [available on Governor Hub](#)
 - ii. Governance Framework [available on Governor Hub](#)

8. Propose any changes to admissions 2024/25 for the Trust Board

There were no changes proposed to admission arrangements.



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Governors discussed Nursery admissions. The HT explained that at present the nursery is full and there are children on the waiting list. The numbers are based on the square footage. The HT explained that there will be work to increase the square footage by adding sliding doors which can allow access to another room.

9. Chairs update

- a) Governors to review examples of SATs papers
Governors felt the papers were at a very high level and were impressed with the children's ability to answer such complex questions.

Governors discussed the impact of the children having not seen the papers for the secondary transfer test and the fact that the school does not support with tuition. The clerk explained that the consortium the school is part of have all agreed not to teach to test. Governors all felt that it was disadvantaging the children who are already from a deprived background. The parent governors felt that it would help the children to understand and thrive if there was further support. *Governors also felt if other local schools are offering the 11 plus support then the Trust schools also should be as this could be effecting the pupil numbers.*

The Chair will bring to Chairs meeting to discuss further.

Chair

- b) Termly Chairs meeting report

- The chairs meeting has not taken place yet this term.
- The school has applied for a grant from Watford Council for £20,000 and is waiting to hear if the school is successful.
- Congratulations to the school on the KS2 results.
- KS1 results were concerning and are now a focus for the school. Maths results were in line with national. The children make a lot of progress between KS1 and KS2 as the children tend to join the school lower than the national average. The teachers work very hard to support children's progress.
- In nursery at present there are 34 children out of 38 who have no English. The school is working hard to support the children's language acquisition. The EAL children in the school do tend to make excellent progress once they have gained the language skills. The governors were very concerned about the children's wellbeing as not understanding must be very stressful.

G: What are we doing to support?

HT: We are running the Welcome programme and it is being taught to the whole class. The nursery staff are trained to support EAL children. There is also a new role for an EAL lead in school which will support induction and teaching and learning. LHS have an EAL lead and so they are working together.

G: What is happening for the four children who already speak English?

HT: They are the role models and we are working to support them across the board. The whole curriculum is based around language and the subject leaders have academic vocabulary to support.



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Staff: We have a fluency session at the beginning of each lesson and this is in place with the progression of knowledge and skills grids to ensure staff are aware of the language children should understand by year 6.

G: Did Pupil premium children out perform the rest of the cohort at KS2?

HT: Yes. They achieved fantastically. The support at home was very good this year and we were also able to offer a tutor due to funding from the DFE.

G: Are we keeping the tutor this year?

HT: There is one teacher carrying out tutoring one day per week this year.

- A Trust EDI training day for all staff was attended by the Chair. There was a lot of collaborative working. The trainer was very enthusiastic and there was a lot to think about. Some of it was aimed at secondary schools but there were still good ideas.

Jennifer Batanga will look at possible support for the children regarding football and will let the HT know.

Jennifer Batanga/ HT

The HT explained that Warner Brothers are coming in tomorrow to support the children as part of the raising aspirations work. Year two are also attending the theatre to see Panto.

Another area of discussion was tolerance and how it is not good to be tolerated you want to be celebrated.

- EDI training for governors – the Trust are aware that governors would like training on this area and are looking at the best way to manage.

c) Governors annual skills audit results

Understanding and experience of chairing the meetings and HT Performance Management were flagged overall by governors.

Succession planning was discussed and how this could be considered for future proofing the governing body. This will continue to be an agenda item for the Trust at all levels.

Clerk (Agenda)

d) Governing body roles for 2022/23 allocation

The HT explained that the new format for linked roles for governors and trustees replicates the approach of curriculum leads working as a group across schools which staff have found a positive experience.

The Chair of Trustees explained that it is important to seek assurance that everyone is working to support the children through other means than the Executive Leadership Team. It is sensible to harmonise the core roles across the Trust to allow for information sharing and support. The Chair explained the system will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is working effectively for governors and trustees.

The clerk explained the expectation is:

First half of the term – Governor visit takes place in school or remotely and a report is submitted to the HT and clerk.



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Second half of the term – The allocated governors and trustees meet remotely to review the reports and information share.

Safeguarding - Sarah Wynne
Estates – Sarah Wynne
Grant Funding – Lesly Adams/ Rama
People Strategy including staff exit interviews – Kennedy Rodrigues
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – James Brown
Sustainability – Jennifer Batanga
Finance – Lesly Adams/ Rama
Leadership Appraisal – Lesly Adams/ Rama

Governors asked for a presentation on the English and maths curriculum next meeting

HT/ Clerk

8pm James Roach joined the meeting

10. **Finance report** - <https://app.governorhub.com/document/6324c691e284053844f27e3a/view>

G: The increasing energy costs, what are we doing?

HT: We are hoping that there will be an announcement tomorrow of funding from central government.

G: There are also the increases in salaries from the budgeted 3%, what impact will that have?

HT: Again, we are waiting to see if there is any support from the DFE.

G: The quote for the fence work has that been budgeted?

HT: We had budgeted £12,500 for the roof work and as we don't now need to complete this work we will use the money to fund the fence work.

Governors thanked Sarah Hamilton and Sharon Carlyon for all their work managing the finance work at the school.

Item 4 – James Roach – Safeguarding presentation – distributed prior to the meeting.

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
 - Governors should receive appropriate training and updates to ensure that the organisations own safeguarding arrangements are robust.
 - *The DSL's will be emailed to governors by the HT*
- HT**
- Procedures in school were discussed including the use of CPOMs as a recording system.
 - Online safety support from the school including parent workshops, classes for children and ensuring they are safe users.
 - The governors oversee safeguarding through termly reports, governor visits, Senior leadership review of safeguarding, external reviews, speaking to the children, training and policies and procedures in place.
 - Key changes to KCSIE were explained and discussed.

The HT will present on procedures for safeguarding children next meeting as part of the HT report.



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HT

8.24pm James Roach left the meeting

11. **Headteacher report** - <https://app.governorhub.com/document/6320a19f262a273e975338b1/view>

The governors thanked the HT for her open and honest report.

The EYFS transition tool with Beechfield and Watford level of need.

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6324c655e284053844f269a7/view>

a) Safeguarding

Safeguarding report and checklist

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6320a2923517706a01863fe2/view>

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6320a281bb290b882dd1b586/view>

i. Annual report completed by the HT and safeguarding governor

Amendments to be made to Annual Safeguarding report

- *Vice chair to be updated*
- *The footer states: September 2020*
- *The front page of the safeguarding audit reads annual-safeguarding-practice-audit-2020-21*

The HT will make the changes

HT

ii. Any Safeguarding issues to discuss – nothing further discussed

b) Health and safety

i. Termly H & S audit to be completed by the HT and site manager and reviewed by the LGC. <https://app.governorhub.com/document/6324c62f0eb544834b35ef20/view>

ii. Any H&S issues to discuss – nothing further discussed

The annual H&S update will be presented at the next meeting

Clerk (Agenda)

c) Premises

i. Update of Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) projects

d) Pupil numbers

e) Attendance <https://app.governorhub.com/document/6328a9276e92fd2e261f264f/view>

f) Suspension/ exclusions

g) Behaviour monitoring - <https://app.governorhub.com/document/6320a2ec6b9f01ebb7b123ab/view>

h) Children's progress and attainment



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KS results

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6320a212dc6225e378b78c9d/view>
<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6320a22a5ca14ec3b347158a/view>

Please find PPG report uploaded

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6328a8f58946e242aec75516/view>

- i) HIP visit feedback and progress against actions
- j) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- k) Stakeholder engagement
 - i. Feedback from Edurio surveys for parents and pupils
 - ii. Staff exit interviews
 - iii. *Staff survey planned for Autumn term*
Governors asked that Staff surveys include questions relating to sense of belonging and how psychologically safe they feel. The clerk will forward to the CEO to request inclusion.

Clerk

Response after the meeting from the CEO on the 27.09.22

With regards the Staff survey planned for Autumn term, there are questions included about connection and being part of the school/Trust. Additionally, the following question has been included:

How easy or difficult is it to get support with your mental and emotional wellbeing?

30/9/22 A further response from James regarding the Staff Survey:

Following on from the request I have gone back to the survey people to get the following added in.

- How well do people at your school understand you as a person?
- How much do you matter to others at your school?
- How connected do you feel with the Trust as a whole?
- How psychologically safe do you feel at your school?

James Roach
Chief Executive Officer
Inclusive Multi Academy Trust

Additional item:

There has been a request for leave in term time. Governors discussed the schools position in line with the [Leave of absence policy](#) paragraph:

Time off during term time

It is expected that all holidays will be arranged outside of term time and no further leave of this nature will be approved. However, we appreciate sometimes exceptional



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events may occur at times during term time (e.g. a wedding, graduation or passing out parade for military service of a close relation). In very exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may approve leave to attend events of close relatives in term time. Any requests for such leave should be made to the Headteacher in writing as soon as is possible.

The granting of any such leave will be entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. The maximum number of paid days of leave in these circumstances is: 2 days

Governors agreed it was the HT's decision whether to approve individual cases but requested that any leave in term time be offered unpaid whether the member of staff is part time or full time.

12. Review and update School Plan/ discuss targets -

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6320a1defea0ccb4e9950b4c/view>

Governors discussed whether the school plan should be on the website. Governors felt it would need to be reworded for a different audience and felt that this was unnecessary work for the HT. The Chair was asked to bring this to the chairs meeting as the other schools do not have their plans on the website.

Chair

13. Policy tracker review and policies due

a) Trust policies approved and available via Governor Hub policies folder

b) School policies

i. Business Continuity plan approved until September 2023

The Business Continuity Plan has been uploaded to Every by the HT

ii. *Health and safety policy – to be reviewed at the meeting on the 8th November 2022*

HT/ Clerk (Agenda)

14. Training

a) Trust governance training dates to be added to calendars

Tue 15 Nov 2022 19:00 Trust Governance Training – EDI training at CTS

Tue 28 Feb 2023 19:00 Trust Governance Training – TBA

Tue 13 Jun 2023 19:00 Trust Governance Training - TBA

b) Ideas/requests for future sessions

c) Governor training booked /to be booked/ completed

The clerk has created a training spreadsheet which lays out the courses to be completed by governors and trustees. This will be distributed by the end of September so that governors can ensure all training is in place.

Clerk/ All governors



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15. Clerks update – *Distributed via Governor Hub*

New guidance to be reviewed – [Behaviour in schools: advice for Headteachers and school staff](#), [Exclusions guidance](#), DfE's latest [working together to improve school attendance](#) guidance

16. Any other business

None requested at the beginning of the meeting.

17. Items to be sent to Trust/ LABs

None requested

18. Future Dates

Date	Start	Meeting
Tue 8 Nov 2022	19:00	Local Governing Committee
Tue 15 Nov 2022	19:00	Trust Governance Training
Thu 8 Dec 2022	19:00	Trust AGM
Tue 7 Feb 2023	19:00	Local Governing Committee
Tue 28 Feb 2023	19:00	Trust Governance Training
Tue 6 Jun 2023	19:00	Local Governing Committee
Tue 13 Jun 2023	19:00	Trust Governance Training
Fri 7 Jul 2023	All day	Local Governing Committee - Governor day

Meeting ended 9pm

Appendix A	Matters arising from 14.06.22
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Action	Update/ notes/ agenda item to be covered under
<i>Item 7: Governors recommended the LGC terms of reference for approval by Trustees.</i>	Completed
<i>Item 8: Governors to complete annual skills audit Link here – Governors were asked to forward to the clerk once completed</i>	Agenda item 9
<i>Item 9: The budget was delayed as a result of the Ofsted visit. It will be distributed once approved by Trustees to all governors.</i>	Completed



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<i>Item 10: The H&S summer audit will be sent to governors once available via Governor Hub</i>	Completed
<i>Item 10: Once available the results from the phonics, timetable test, KS1 and KS2 SATs will be sent to Governors via Governor Hub for review on Governor Day</i>	Completed
<i>Item 14: Governors requested further training on EDI</i>	Agenda item 14
<i>Item 14: Grants and finance training governors to put on GH if completed or attended</i>	Completed

Discussion via Governor Hub ahead of the meeting

Sarah Wynne

Hi Gillian,

Thanks for uploading everything, looks good, especially the KS2 SATs results!! Reception definitely sounds like a challenge, as Lesly said would be interesting to know if there is any money elsewhere we could redeploy, even if short term.

One question on safeguarding- you said there's already been two child protection strategy meetings- is this normal for the start of a new school year or could be indicative of a difficult year ahead?

Saw your note on dates for H&S annual visit- I'll email some potentials over later this week when I've got my work calendar in front of me.

Thanks!

Gillian Jackson

Hi Sarah,

It is very unusual to have two police strategy meetings. Last year I had one over the whole year so two in two days is a lot!

11. Thanks Gillian for such detailed answers..it certainly sounds very pressurised in Reception in particular !Can we 'find' any more money for additional support in the interim until funding becomes available ?

With regards to helping our vulnerable families with the cost of living crisis - anything from the Salvation Army etc...?

I have been reading the Laurance Haines article on developing a safe space for discussion (about race)... on addressing racial bias (conscious and subconscious)...it says they have developed a 'glossary of terms' to enable people to talk about difficult issues... have you access to it ? do you know anything about it ?

Gillian Jackson



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The 1:1 that is starting on Tuesday is interim until funding comes through. I will have to talk with Lizzie and Sharon about the others.

The Salvation Army have again got some support for vulnerable families in terms of vouchers and I think they will support for Christmas again.

Yes I have seen the LHS glossary, Seb shared it with us.

Lesly Adams

Gillian thanks for all the information.

I have a few comments in advance of the meeting - apologies for the lateness and please feel free to respond verbally in the meeting.

KS1 Sats results - there seems to be a mistake in the comparison percentages? some say compared with National but the figures are compared with Herts ?

The difference (combined) is significant between **Boys 38 and girls 73** - what are we doing about this ?

Phonics at 71% is disappointing as you say and unusual for us (Covid?) but good to see that catch up provision is already in place.

KS2 SATS - WOW , well above National -and even above Herts in some areas !!

Safeguarding report names James Brown as Safeguarding governor - should be Sarah

H AND S

Electric gates scheduled to be fitted this month - great news!

BOUNDARY/PASTORAL AREA FENCES - need work , how are the quotes coming along?

Woodland path is the only path open all day...I always feel slightly uncomfortable about the woodland path - is there any alternative ?

Reception Transition Needs - can you please talk us through this diagram /information?

INCREASED ENERGY COSTS of £40k predicted - any news from Sharon/the Government re help?

Heads Report

21 new children to the school in Reception ? great news but..how are the staff coping?

Parent wellbeing- ideas/plans to help our vulnerable families?

8 days leave request from staff? thoughts from governors ??

Whole school progress is looking good - can you put this into perspective for us ?

Identified priorities for disadvantaged - could you tell us what they will be please?/when the

Disadvantaged Plan will be ready - good to see that is a **collaborative piece of work** between the 3 schools !

Progress against Ofsted actions - good to see actions already underway

Good to see **Toilets have been refurbished and classrooms repainted in old block** (well done for getting the Community Payback scheme involved !!!)

40 First choice applications for Reception -this is wonderful to see and we must acknowledge

Gillian's personal influence here !!

Gillian Jackson

Answers to Lesly's questions

KS1 Sats results - there seems to be a mistake in the comparison percentages? some say compared with National but the figures are compared with Herts ?



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Sorry that I have confused the issue here. The difference column is the difference between Beechfield and the National. Last week we got the Herts data sent through so I added it in, but of course that only makes sense to me as I haven't explained what I did!

The difference (combined) is significant between **Boys 38 and girls 73** - what are we doing about this ? There are 9 boys in that cohort with SEND, there are some boys who joined in Year 2 part way through with no English and/or no prior schooling. These children all have support in place either through scaffolded support in class, specific SEND targets, additional provision e.g. phonics, reading, maths, spelling support.

Phonics at 71% is disappointing as you say and unusual for us (Covid?) but good to see that catch up provision is already in place.

Covid plays a part, however, I don't want to use that as an excuse. I was disappointed because if children can't read they can't access the curriculum. 1:1 phonics support has already started in Year 1 to support those children who are working below where they should be at this time of year. We are having an even more rigorous approach to phonics this year - last year phonics was cancelled quite a few times through staff absence but we will not do this year. Groups will continue and will have to join together. Rachael (RWI Lead) will continue to monitor teacher and ensure children are assessed quickly and accurately. We will also involve parents quicker when we feel their children need additional support.

Safeguarding report names James Brown as Safeguarding governor - should be Sarah
Sorry James and Sarah i will change this and re add.

H AND S

BOUNDARY/PASTORAL AREA FENCES - need work , how are the quotes coming along?
David (Estates Manager) is doing this currently.

Woodland path is the only path open all day...I always feel slightly uncomfortable about the woodland path - is there any alternative ?

No, however, this gate will be on an electric opener (once the new gates are fitted) so during school time it will be locked. There will be an intercom system so that people will press it and it will go through to the school office between 9-3. At the other times it will be on a magnet to keep it open.

Reception Transition Needs - can you please talk us through this diagram /information?

Only 8% of Reception don't have additional needs! See below for more information about this.

INCREASED ENERGY COSTS of £40k predicted - any news from Sharon/the Government re help?
There has not been any information yet due to death of the Queen but we are expecting an announcement of some sort in the coming weeks.

Heads Report

21 new children to the school in Reception ? great news but how are the staff coping?

The staff in Reception are finding it very, very difficult. Many of these children -9 in just one class seem to have additional needs. Not all of the parents have disclosed this information before their children have started school. We have 2 adults in each class in Reception. In Pear class this week I have redeployed staff to say there has to be a minimum of 3 in Pear Class at all times because of the safeguarding. The children with needs have meant that the children without needs haven't had access to the teaching they should have yet which is unacceptable. On Tuesday I have a 1:1 starting for one of the pupils with ASD. He is non verbal and has been headbutting the floor as he is distressed. I spent two hours looking after



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him on Friday as the classroom and dining hall is too overwhelming for him. We are applying for funding for him which will be backdated to September. We also have other children with needs such as a child with SEMH - and EHC is in process but no funding or additional support yet. A pupil on the Child Protection register who can't talk yet, has learning and social and emotional needs - no support yet. 3 children who have come in with undisclosed needs but appear to have no understanding of language, colours, animals names, unable to follow a one step instruction, unable to sit up - lying on the carpet. There is another child who has a 1:1 and an EHC. she is waiting for a place at Colnbrook - she has been told there will be a place in September 2023. She is screaming all the time and is very self directed. Many of the children are starting to copy the behaviour of the children with additional needs. This is a lot of information but I want the governors to have a good understanding of the level of need that has come into our Reception. I haven't mentioned the others that we are worried about! Lizzie Butler, Melissa (new Inclusion Lead) and Lara are all working to support these children but unfortunately it all takes time to put things in place. The Reception staff - Rachael Morgan, Sue Collins and Charis Williams (new EYFS TA) are being brilliant but the level of needs at the moment outweighs the good work they can do.

We also have many new children in addition to reception. Jacqui in the office who deals with all of the admissions is seriously under pressure. Most schools don't have this many children leaving in a year yet alone in the first two weeks! It is also hard for the staff. We have some children new to the country who haven't been to school for 3 years. Some of the children further up the school are presenting as having additional needs but of course we need time to get to know them and see what they can and can't do.

Parent wellbeing- ideas/plans to help our vulnerable families?

Lara (pastoral lead) has already been working with many of our vulnerable families so far this term. Daily contact with many families. We will continue to get as many people into school as we can. Reception are planning regular stay and play sessions which will involve teaching parents how to help their children and then getting them to practise with their children in the class. Emily Fuller is planning something similar for times tables and Rachael is planning something for phonics.

Whole school progress is looking good - can you put this into perspective for us ?

This means the children making progress from their starting points, however, we still have a really big job to meet age related expectations as many children have such low starting points.

Identified priorities for disadvantaged - could you tell us what they will be please?

High quality teaching is the priority because if you are taught well then every child regardless of their context achieves and makes progress

whole school focus on writing

whole school focus on communication and language

The Assistant Heads will plan together and then we will personalise to our school. This should be in place by the next governors meeting as the assistant heads are meeting at the end of September.