

GOVERNING BODY OF HARBINGER PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Date of Meeting	16 th January 2020
Venue	Harbinger Primary School, 8 Cahir Street, Isle Of Dogs, London, E14 3QR
Chair	Martin Young
Clerk & Minutes	Suzette Nicol
Time	5:00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP

Governor	Category
Martin Young (Chair)*	Co-opted
Andy Smith (Headteacher)*	Staff (Head)
Charlie McKnight*	Co-opted
Robyn Bruce*	Co-opted
Father Tom Pyke	Co-opted
Ranjani Shrutisagar	Co-opted
Vacancy	Co-opted
John Bradshaw*	Local Authority
Susannah Abdelouahed*	Parent Governor
Kiran Rahman*	Parent Governor
Vacancy	Parent Governor
Eddie Miller*	Staff

Also In Attendance	Role/Title
Lawrence Houldsworth (By Skype)*	Associate Member
Mai-Anh Dien (School Business Manager)*	Observer

*Denotes attendance

PART 1 – OPEN SECTION

ITEM

1. Welcome, Apologies For Absence and Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. All present introduced themselves for the benefit of the new Parent Governor, Susannah Abdelouahed. A warm welcome was extended to Susannah.

Apologies were received from Father Tom Pyke and Ranjani Shrutisagar.

There were no pecuniary interests declared on items on the agenda.

2. Minutes Of The Meeting Held On 7th November 2019 And Matters Arising

The minutes of the governing body meeting of 7th November 2019 had been circulated with the agenda. Most of the items on the present agenda had been deferred from the previous meeting due to the Ofsted inspection.

Governors **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the governing body meeting of 7th November 2019.

Matters Arising:

Page 5, agenda item 6 – A Governor raised the issue of subscription to the Key which had been suggested at the last governing body meeting. The Chair said that this had been discussed at the last meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of 9th January 2020. The committee had decided not to purchase this service for now in view of the school's financial position. It was noted that there were other sources of information which were free for Governors to use.

3. Governing Body Matters

- To Note the Re-appointment of Eddi Miller as Staff Governor

The Chair welcomed Eddi Miller back to the governing body. Eddi had been re-elected as Staff Governor.

- To Note The Resignation of Sunara Bint Ali as Parent Governor

Governors were informed that Sunara Bint Ali had resigned her position as Parent Governor as her child had left the school.

- Parent Governor Positions

The Chair mentioned that with the departure of Sunara, there had been two vacancies for Parent Governor. One of the positions had now been filled by Susannah Abdelouahed who had been elected Parent Governor.

RESOLVED: To confirm Susannah Abdelouahed as Parent Governor for a 4 year term.

It was noted that there was still one vacancy for Parent Governor on the governing body. It was agreed that the PTA would be informed of the vacancy and that the Head and Chair would decide on a suitable time to advertise the position.

Action: Headteacher/Chair

- Election of Vice Chair

The Chair asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chair. As there were no nominations, John Bradshaw volunteered to take on the role and he was appointed to the position.

RESOLVED: To appoint John Bradshaw as Vice Chair for the 2019/20 academic year.

- Appointment of Healthy School Link Governor

Governors **RESOLVED** to appoint Susannah Abdelouahed as Healthy School Link

Governor to replace Sunara Bint Ali who had resigned from the governing body. It was agreed that the Headteacher and Susannah would meet to discuss the role in detail.

Action: Headteacher/Susannah Abdelouahed

- Other Link Governor Appointments

The following Link Governors were appointed:

- i. Kiran Rahman – KS1 Link Governor
- ii. Susannah Abdelouahed - KS2 Link Governor

The Headteacher said that teachers preferred to be contacted by Link Governors about when they wanted to come and visit the school. It was agreed that work needed to be done on a Governor Visits plan.

Action: Headteacher/Chair

4. **Ofsted Inspection Report**

Governors received the Ofsted inspection report. Governors advised the Headteacher to update the school's website with the results of the inspection.

Action: Headteacher

5. **Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher presented his report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Highlights of his report included the following:

- A report on progress and attainment was given.
- Pupil numbers and leavers' destination data were a source of concern for the school. It would appear that Harbinger was being used by parents as a temporary position before getting a place at the school of their choice.
Charlie McKnight joined the meeting at this point.
- One child had a two day fixed-term external exclusion and a three day fixed-term external exclusion.
- There have been 4 racist incidents since the start of October 1999. All have been dealt with through the school's behaviour policy.
- An HR update was given as well as a premises update.
- The school had a safety audit in December which highlighted some 'high' priority ratings which will need to be addressed.
- The school is continuing with its partnership work.
- CPD – Teachers have been engaging in a lot of CPD training.
- Children have been undertaking curriculum enrichment activities.
- Coffee mornings have been organised for parents.

Governors thanked the Headteacher for his report.

6. **Updated Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) report**

This item was not taken at the meeting as it had been discussed at the Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting which preceded this meeting.

7. **School Development Plan (SDP)**

Governors were informed that the School Development Plan had been changed to the Harbinger Post Ofsted Plan as the school had been rated 'Requires Improvement' after the recent Ofsted inspection. The plan had been discussed at the Curriculum and Standards committee meeting. Governors called for the plan to be referenced more clearly and for the Ofsted recommendations to be highlighted. The Headteacher agreed that the success criteria and evidence checks needed to be highlighted.

Action: Headteacher

8. **School Evaluation Form (SEF)**

Governors received the SEF which had been discussed at the Curriculum and Standards committee meeting. Governors were informed that the SEF was a living document.

Received

9. **Soft Federation Terms Of Reference**

Governors reviewed the Isle of Dogs soft federation terms of reference. The Headteacher explained that in the summer the governing body had agreed in principle to join the soft federation. As most of the Governors who had agreed to this had now left the governing body, the Head said that he thought it fit to re-present the proposal to acquaint the governing body of the proposal to join the soft federation and to secure approval from the governing body to move forward.

Q&A: Are all schools on board with the proposal?

The sense of direction is that we are moving forward. We are still to meet as Headteachers to see if we accept the terms of reference. The next meeting will take place in March.

Q&A: What is your preference?

It is that we sign and commit. We all need to be fully aware as the governing body members have changed.

Governors were made aware that this was an opportunity to share best practice and work with other schools.

Q&A: Is the federation executive board chaired by someone else other than the person who chairs the Leadership Group?

The Leadership Group is made up of professional Heads while the Executive Board is a coordinating lay body.

The Headteacher informed Governors that schools on the Isle of Dogs had been working collaboratively for years. The federation was just a way of giving their working arrangements a formal context and was not about relinquishing sovereignty. He added that the soft federation could not develop into a hard federation as St Luke's could enter into a hard federation (not within the next year or two).

Charlie McKnight advised the Head to obtain clarity on how the Chair would be elected. The Chair advised Charlie to send any comments to the Headteacher by email.

Action: Charlie McKnight

Following the above discussion, the governing body **RESOLVED** to give their approval for Harbinger to join the Isle of Dogs soft federation.

10. Safeguarding (Standing Item)

The Headteacher gave the following safeguarding update:

- The school's 2 Looked After Children have been moved to a long-term placement, in Essex. They will move schools shortly.
- One child is on a supervision order.
- One family is on child protection plan and one has recently been stepped down to a Child in Need (CIN).
- Four families are on CIN plans.
- Two families are on Team around the child (TAC).

Governors thanked the Head for the safeguarding update.

11. Committee Reports

a. Finance and General Purposes Committee – Oral Update on Meeting of 9th January 2020

Martin Young gave an oral update on the Finance & General Purposes committee meeting of 9th January 2020. Salient points from his update included the following:

- i. There was an unexpected £70k spend on agency staff. This will need to be addressed. John Bradshaw said that the school needed to be aware of potential overspend and the in-year deficit. He said that he would be working with the School Business Manager to identify which lines of budget needed to be cut. Each line of the budget will be scrutinized. It had been agreed that Mai-Anh would work with Ranjani Shrutisagar on the budget. However due to uncertainty about her availability, it was agreed that Mai-Anh and John would work on the budget in the first instance.
- ii. The school will be acquiring some new software (Windows 10) which will be funded by Capital underspend.
- iii. The committee decided to defer taking out the Key subscription as it is trying to rein in expenditure.

A Governor asked Mai-Anh whether she was expecting to set a deficit budget. She said that this year the school would be relying on their carry forward but they did not want to do so next year. The school has an in-year deficit of £111k. John said that the Local Authority needed to be alerted if the school was planning to set a deficit budget as the school needed permission to do this. Mai-Anh informed Governors that school would be having a LA audit in March.

The Headteacher mentioned that one of the things that the audit had highlighted was Governors' awareness of the school's financial situation. He mentioned that the LA and auditors were aware of what the school was going through and that he could not proceed with major savings without the process being supported by Governors. At this point John Bradshaw reiterated the fact that he would be happy to work with Mai-Anh on the budget. It was then agreed that they would meet at the end of February at the time when the school would have stopped spending.

Action: John Bradshaw/Mai-Anh Dien

- Approval of Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)
The SFVS was not approved at this meeting as it had been incomplete. The completed form will be circulated to Governors for approval by Chair's action.

Action: Mai-Anh Dien

b. Curriculum & Standards Committee – Minutes of 28 October 2019 and (Oral Update) of meeting of 16 January 2020

Committee members received the draft minutes of the Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting of 28th October which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair gave a brief oral update of the Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting which had preceded the governing body meeting.

12. Policies For Review and Approval

- Financial Code of Practice – Approved
- Appraisal Policy – Approved
- Grievance Policy – Approved
- Safer Recruitment Policy – Approved
- Anti-Bullying Policy – Governors identified a couple of typos in the policy. - Approved subject to amendment.
- Teaching & Learning Policy (to encompass Ofsted recommendations) – The policy had been revised based on some of Lawrence's recommendations. A Governor commented that the policy did not include the Ofsted recommendations. Governors were informed that there would be a different document including the things that the school valued and will also include Ofsted recommendations. This will come in a different curriculum document. The Head said that that document was now ready, staff had been consulted and it fits into their current expectations. – Approved.
- Behaviour Policy – The Head said that Nicola from the Behaviour Support Team had met with TAs, staff and the School Council and that they had fed into the policy. All class will have a learning behaviour approach and there will be a stepped approach.

A Governor warned the Head to be cautious about having a system that had

exclusion at the end of it and advised the Head to include the word 'may' in this sentence:

'If the pupil is not able to return to class the behaviour 'may' be managed by the local authority guidance on the use of pupil exclusion.'

Governors were informed that the Behaviour Policy would be reviewed in the summer.

RESOLVED: To ratify the above policies subject to any amendments.

The following policies were deferred:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Visitors Policy – Until the new Visitors Policy is completed and approved the current policy will remain in force.
- Relationships & Sex Education policy (RSE) (Update) – The school is waiting for advice from the Local Authority.
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy (to incorporate recent updating) – There was a massive re-write of this policy but it is still work in progress. The staff will need to be consulted on the policy. It is expected to be ready for the March meeting. A Governor advised the Headteacher to laminate the policy and put it up inside the visitors' toilet. The Headteacher undertook to look into this.
Action: Headteacher
- Accessibility Plan – Deferred as the school does not have an Accessibility Plan.

13. Reports from Governors

- Including Training and Visits to the school
 - i. Kiran Rahman and Martin Young attended the Governors' Conference in November.
 - ii. Kiran attended safeguarding training the day before. She said she found it quite informative and there was some information she had been asked to take back to the school. The Headteacher said that all staff training had been done in September. All staff had signed to say that they had read the KCSIE 2019 document. The safeguarding audit had also been completed. The school had also signed up to Operation Encompass.
 - iii. Kiran had attended the poverty proofing event at the school.
 - iv. Susannah Abdelouahed visits the school 3 times a week and works with Year 1 and the EYU.
 - v. John Bradshaw had come into the school a week ago to hear a grievance. The grievance was concluded positively.
 - vi. Charlie McKnight will be attending training on engaging with parents.
 - vii. Charlie is to attend the 'Meet a Governor' workshop with parents and will

work with other Governors on a communications plan.
viii. Martin Young meets with the Headteacher regularly. He would now like to meet with the Deputy Head as well, subject to the timetable.

- Chair's Action
There were none.

14. Items For The Next Agenda

- Finance Update
- Other agenda items will be forwarded to the Chair a fortnight before the meeting.

15. Any Urgent Business

- Post Ofsted Situation
A Governor asked Eddi how teachers were feeling two weeks into the year. He stated that there were good days and bad days. Teachers were now double checking themselves as a result of the Ofsted inspection. It was very different in different areas of the school. The Governor said that staff needed to feel that the Governors were supporting them. It was noted that it was harder for the teachers for whom it was their first Ofsted. He asked for teachers to be informed that Governors were impressed with their collaborative work. It was also noted that the children did not have any idea that teachers were feeling this way and that this was due to the professionalism of the teachers.

16. Date Of Next Meeting

Thursday 19th March 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

17. Confidential Business

See Part II minutes.

Staff members with the exception of the Head left the meeting at this point.

Chair's signature: _____ **Date:** _____