



Minutes of the Christ Church (Brondesbury) Church of England Primary School  
Governing Board meeting held on Thursday 7 November 2024, at 5.30pm in school

Name	Initials	Attendance 02/05/24	Attendance 22/05/24	Attendance 11/07/24	Attendance 26/09/24	Attendance 07/11/2024
<b>Governors</b>		In school	via Zoom	In school	via Zoom	In school
<b>Headteacher (1)</b>						
James Kelly (head teacher)	HT	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
<b>Foundation ex officio (1)</b>						
Mother Christine Cargill	MC	Apologies	Present	Present	Present	Present
<b>Foundation PCC (2)</b>						
Alison Schulte (Chair)	AS	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Tonye Oji	TO	Present	Present	via Zoom	Present	via Zoom
<b>Foundation Deanery Synod (2)</b>						
Lesley Daisley	LD	Via Zoom	Apologies	Present	Present	via Zoom
Ian Woolgar	IW	Present	Present	Apologies	Present	Present
<b>Foundation LDBS (2)</b>						
Davina Marie	DM	Present	Present	Present	Present	via Zoom
<b>1 Vacant post</b>						
<b>LA (1)</b>						
Rohin Murari	RM	Via Zoom	Present	No	Present	via Zoom
<b>Elected parents (2)</b>						
Tara Stroud	TS	Via Zoom	Present	No	Present	Present
Alexandra Sandor	AL	Present	Present	No	Present	No
<b>Elected staff (1)</b>						
Eman Yaseen	EY	Present	Apologies	via Zoom	Present	Present
<b>Associate members (3)</b>						
<b>Observer/advisers</b>						
Jacqui Carrington	SBM	Present	Present	N/A	N/A	Present
Parita Shah	PS	N/A	Present	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jasmine Jude	JJ	Not in post	Present	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Clerk</b>						
Lynda Rees	Clerk	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present

Part one - public

Item	Who	When
<p><b>1. Welcome, Opening Prayer and Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>The Chair (AS) welcomed everyone to the GB meeting and stated that no apologies had been received for this meeting.</p> <p>Tonye, Lesley, Davina and Rohin were attending the meeting via Zoom.</p> <p>The Chair asked Mother Christine to open the meeting with a prayer.</p>		





Governor A asked the drop on the attendance figures for Year 6 (St Peter) for week commencing 7 October – HT explained that a number of pupils were undertaking secondary school visits as part of the transition to secondary schools and these would be recorded as authorised absences.

Governor A asked whether any illnesses/bugs have affected the percentages for those classes recording 80 plus percentages – HT explained that some children were late returning from holidays, and these are being followed up by EWO.

EY added that pupils have been affected by flu this term with 2 children having been recently admitted to hospital.

HT added that some parents had not previously followed up on the flu vaccinations for their children – the school is offering flu vaccinations at the school on 19 November – and parents are being given the option for pupils to be given either the flu injection or the nasal procedure.

EY added that the EWO has been very proactive during their visits to the school and following up on absences which progress to letters etc.

Governor A asked about the Safeguarding report and whether the monitoring of 27 pupils was an unusually high figure for the school – HT explained that this figure includes pupils that are classed as vulnerable pupils which will include those that are new to the country, lack of funds etc and may need extra support – which is done through very informal monitoring with the families.

#### **RM arrived at the meeting at 5.45pm**

##### **b) Latest Budget update – Budget monitoring report for 30 September 2024**

SBM gave an overview of the key points to note from the 30 September 2024 budget monitoring report as follows;

- The total income figure has gone up by £113k – the increase included the £68k from the Parish Trust for the St Joseph's unit to cover the start-up costs - teacher salary, resources and equipment; £22k for the Core schools budget grant; £27k increase in funding for EHCP that have been submitted by the Inclusion Leader; Teachers Pension Grant of £9k and TPAG of £7k
- For salary expenditure, this has decreased by £57k but this must be measured against the increase in supply costs – to cover a teacher vacancy and Long term absence costs
- The 5.5% pay award has been included in the staffing budgets- the school provisionally included 4.5% for the teachers' pay awards, so has 1% more in reserves
- For Premises Expenditure, this has increased by £15k due to the purchase of new school signage for marketing/promoting the school and it is hoped that this will be reimbursed by the recent bid to the Parish Trust for £5k;there



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have been increased callouts for the kitchen/server equipment which are £3k; electrical work totaling £5k have also been included in the premises figures.

- For Supplies, Services and Transport expenditure, this has decreased by £1k
- The latest report shows that the previous forecast of an in-year deficit has been eliminated and is now showing an in year surplus of £17,854. This is a variance of £41,802 to the start of the year forecast and will give a predicted end of year surplus of £171,225 which will increase the carry forward position into 2025/26.

Governor E commended the school on the improvement in the surplus balances and for the very detailed notes on the budget variances and projections for the income and expenditure outcomes which gives a very reassuring picture to governor's mid-way through the year.

Governor E asked about the expenditure figure of £1,736 for long term sickness and whether any claims have been made – SBM explained that the school currently does not subscribe to a sickness absence scheme and this expenditure is part of the de delegation total charged by the LA. The LA charge the de-delegation amounts to all schools and add the same amount to the budget share funding at the end of the financial year – resulting in a nil effect for income and expenditure and just re states these figures in the school's accounts.

Governor E suggested that the sickness insurance options be added to a future agenda which could include some background information on the past few years to show the cost of sickness cover when compared against the annual scheme subscription costs to see if it would be value for money to buy into a scheme in the future.

**Action SBM SBM**

Governor C added that the increase in the projected surplus balances is really positive news – but asked how confident the school is that this position can be maintained for the remainder of the year – SBM explained that she keeps an eye on spending which includes careful monitoring on all major budget areas.

HT added that the curriculum budgets have been set at the same level as last year but there are some new schemes that incurred start-up costs last year which will not be needed for this year, so there should be some flexibility in the budgets.

Governor C asked about the pupil numbers in the Nursery which are on the low side and whether the 3 year budget plans are still viable with the reducing numbers – SBM added that for the pupil numbers in the Nursery, the trend for previous years show that the numbers are lower at the start of the year but increase from January onwards.

Governor M asked if there was a way that the HT could identify the current numbers for Nursery pupils in other schools to see if they are in the same position as Christchurch with the lower numbers – HT explained that the nursery pupil



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<p>numbers are low across the LDBS schools and also across a number of schools in London.</p> <p>HT added that he will ask the schools in the Kilburn cluster what their Nursery pupil numbers are to compare with Christchurch. <b>Action HT</b></p> <p>Governor C added that many local nurseries seem to have lower numbers on roll, with many having a drop of 25%.</p> <p>Governor M asked whether a change in the structure being offered for Nursery places would improve the numbers – for example offering full days rather than half days – HT added that he is currently looking at options with SLT but would need to consider how new Rising 3’s would fit into the new structure, compared to September starters staying all day.</p> <p>HT added that he is anticipating an increase in numbers from January with the Rising 3 year old places if we can make these places work.</p> <p>Governor A asked whether the trend has seen most of the Nursery pupils transferring to the reception classes in previous years – HT confirmed that usually the Nursery pupils do apply for the Reception places apart from when the families move out of the area.</p> <p>HT added that the Government is offering grants for schools to consider admitting 2 year olds but this would require a quota of 1 staff member to 4 children and having the space for naps/changing etc which would need to be looked into very carefully in the future and whether this was a viable option.</p> <p>Governor A also mentioned that future meetings would also need to look at the sustainability of the SEND class (St Josephs).</p> <p>Governor J asked whether further considerations have been given into looking at partnership options as numbers are going down and the school may still face budget shortages in the future – HT explained that he is working with the LDBS to look at suitable partnership schools and the LDBS are actively looking for schools that may be interested in this joint venture.</p> <p>Governors had no further questions on the budget monitoring report and thanked SBM for her comprehensive update.</p> <p><b>c) Benchmarking Exercise</b> SBM informed governors that this agenda item will be carried forward to the next meeting that has a Finance focus. <b>Action SBM</b></p> <p><b>d) PE and Sports Premium Funding report for 2023/24</b> The GB Chair thanked HT for a very clear and comprehensive report on how the PE/sports premium grant has been used and its impact.</p>	<p>HT</p> <p>SBM</p>
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HT added that the report is uploaded onto the school website to show parents and visitors how the funding is used and its impact for the pupils at Christchurch.

Governor M asked whether the grant is used for PE activities or PE equipment- HT explained that the grant is used for all types of PE activities – for example for PE equipment, travel to PE events, sports day activities or after school clubs.

Governor Masked if the after-school clubs were sport related – which was confirmed by HT.

Governor A asked if the school loses the £158 underspend – HT explained this will be carried forward into the next year.

**e) Teachers and Support Staff Pay awards 2024/25 updates**

HT stated that the Teachers Pay award of 5.5% has been agreed and the Support staff Pay award has been recently approved – with updates being shared on Best Brent by the LA.

**f) Premises and H&S updates**

HT informed governors that he is working on a template which should enable the H&S audit by the school and governors to be more manageable.

HT added that the template will cover the day-to-day H&S activities which will also include an annual sign off by the H&S governor.

HT added that he will send the completed H&S template to Davina (H&S governor) who will then be able to ask questions on the template content and use the document to report back to Governors.

**g) Parish Trust bids**

HT spoke about the latest bid for £5,500 for school signage and banners which has been shared with Governors on Governor Hub.

Governors had no questions on the bid and recommended that it be submitted to the Parish Trust.

HT added that he is in the process of preparing another bid for a larger project for the Early Years area and will submit to a future GB meeting.

**Action HT** HT

**h) GDPR Compliance**

HT added that there are no GDPR matters to report to governors at this time.

HT stated that the school has a new Data Protection Officer (DPO) from the LDBS, and he will be inviting the person to the school for the Inset training session in January 2025.

**i) School Improvement Plan**

HT informed governors that the latest school action plan document has been uploaded onto Governor Hub.



	<p>The Chair suggested that this document be further discussed under the Governance section of the agenda (for priorities for link Governor visits).</p>		
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Governance/Chairs update</b></p> <p><b>a) Governors’ Strategic Plan priorities for 2024/25</b> The Chair stated that the Governors Strategic Plan will be the basis for the link governor’s visits and will cover the strategic priorities as outlined in the School Action Plan prepared by the school.</p> <p>The Chair added that the governor visits can then monitor the school priorities when undertaking the visits.</p> <p>The Chair added that at the last GB meeting, governors discussed briefly the options to consider in how best to structure a strategic training session which could then share ideas on how visits could be structured and perhaps this could take the format of combining a visit with a learning walk.</p> <p>The Chair suggested compiling a survey with governors to ascertain the best way that Governors would like to undertake future link governor visits, which would include preferred dates/times etc. <b>Action AS</b></p> <p><b>b) Feedback from School Sustainability working Group</b> The Chair stated that the working group have had 2 meetings to date, both meetings having been attended by Louise Ritchie from the LDBS.</p> <p>The Chair added that the notes from the first meeting have been circulated on Governor Hub and the minutes from the most recent meeting held on 31 October will be shared with Governors once finalised.</p> <p>The Chair added that there were useful discussions at the latest meeting and the meeting included discussions on the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The drop in pupil numbers and the impact on the school budget next year</li> <li>• The system that the LA uses to show the schools located within the borough is a very biased system which excludes VA schools. HT gave an example with a google search for the list of Brent Primary schools – which currently only shows maintained Brent primary schools and excludes church schools. This puts church schools at a disadvantage when prospective parents are looking at schools in the local Christchurch community, as Christchurch school will not be included in the google search.</li> </ul> <p>Governors expressed their concern in the way that Church schools were being excluded from the list of Brent Primary schools – The GB Chair informed Governors that she will be writing to the local MP and also the Director of Children and Families for Brent Council to highlight the current system that Brent primary schools listing excludes Church schools. <b>Action AS</b></p>	<p><b>AS</b></p> <p><b>AS</b></p>	



- The system of pupil premium funding was also discussed
- The staffing costs at Christchurch were discussed as although the staff are very experienced, they are also expensive as there are no teachers on the lower pay scales – M1 to M3.
- The marketing initiatives will be revived to look at ways that the profile of the school could be highlighted and encourage more children to fill the vacant places.

The Chair added that more updates will be shared with Governors at the next GB meeting in December.

**Action AS**

**AS**

IW agreed to share a marketing template he has with governors.

**Action IW**

**IW**

**c) Skills Audit reminders/ Training and governor visits**

The clerk reminded governors to complete their skills audit questionnaires so that an anonymised analysis can be made which will enable an action plan to be produced to identify any skills shortfall that could be addressed through training or other methods.

The clerk agreed to share the anonymised summary report with Governors at the December GB meeting.

**Action clerk**

**Clerk**

MC spoke to governors about a recent wellbeing training day that was organised by the LDBS that she attended together with HT and AS.

MC gave feedback on the wellbeing training day;

- The training day had presentations from very impressive speakers with one being a consultant who provides wellbeing coaching to Headteachers which was a very relevant session
- A presentation was given by the new HMI Inspector who spoke about changes in the Ofsted Inspections
- Exercises were shared with participants – which included mindful practices and flourishing

MC also gave feedback from her recent SEND link governor visit;

- The visit took place at the same time the inclusion Leader held a session with parents from the new SEND class (St Josephs)
- The parents gave very positive responses to the access to the SEND provision in the St Josephs class and the questions that were raised at the session were answered by the Inclusion Leader
- The online resources provide by the LA to support the SEND provision were very good
- The Year 6 pupils provided the hospitality at the session and were very professional and attentive

AS informed governors that in her role as GB Chair she regularly visits the HT to talk through school related matters and to see the school day in action.



	<p><b>d) Governors Maintenance Fund – updates</b></p> <p>SBM informed governors that the donations for the Governors Maintenance Fund has been coming in very gradually and she sends out reminders to parents during the year.</p> <p>The Chair added that she has previously met with LD to prepare the criteria and use of the Maintenance Fund, which is currently at a work in progress stage at this time.</p> <p>Governor M asked about the Fund and what it is used for – AS explained that it is a fund that Voluntary Schools have in place to support the 10% school maintenance projects contribution that is paid to the LDBS when school maintenance projects are undertaken.</p> <p>Governor M asked whether the name of the Fund could be changed to make it more identifiable that the fund is being used for the school maintenance projects as parents may find the name of Governor maintenance fund as not being associated with school projects.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the fund could be renamed as School Development and Maintenance Fund which may help parents identify what their contributions will be used on – i.e. school development and maintain projects that will benefit the current pupils attending the school.</p> <p>The SBM agreed to change the title of the Fund for any future correspondence and notifications that are sent to parents. <b>Action SBM</b></p> <p>Governors suggested that a video could be produced to inform parents on the role of Governors and how the contributions for the maintenance fund are used to support the school maintenance projects etc. TS agreed to lead on the preparation work for this video. <b>Action TS</b></p>	<p><b>SBM</b></p> <p><b>TS</b></p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Policy Review</b></p> <p>HT outlined the policies that have been uploaded onto Governor Hub and asked governors if they had any questions on these policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Business Continuity Plan/Policy</li> <li>b) Charging and Remissions Policy</li> <li>c) Debt Recovery Policy</li> <li>d) Financial Procedures</li> <li>e) Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>f) Scheme of Financial Delegation</li> <li>g) Whistleblowing Policy</li> <li>h) Workplace Resolution Policy</li> </ul>		



	<p>i) 2024/25 Pay Policy</p> <p>Governor A asked about the Terms of Reference for the F&amp;R committee still being within the Financial Procedures document as they are now absorbed within the FGB terms of Reference – HT stated that he will keep them as an Appendix to the Financial Procedures document and note their link to the FGB Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Governor A asked about the Vice Chair being added to the SERT list for the Business Continuity Plan – HT will update this minor amendment.</p> <p>HT spoke to Governors about the paragraph change that has been included in the 2024/25 Pay Policy circulated by the LDBS recently – there is no longer a statutory requirement to link pay and performance. Governors will need to decide if they are going to continue with their current arrangements of linking pay with performance or not.</p> <p>Governors unanimously agreed to remove the red highlighted paragraphs from the 2024/25 Pay Policy which related to linking pay with performance.</p> <p>Governors had no further questions on the above policies and unanimously approved them.</p> <p>EY left the meeting at 7pm</p>		
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Matters arising from GB meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b></p> <p>The majority of the action points have been addressed within this committee meeting and any outstanding action points were discussed and noted as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) HT explained that the Pupil Parliament has not been appointed as yet but will be appointed this term. He will ask the Pupil Parliament for their views on what they would like included to enhance the outdoor play facilities if the school received additional funding this year. <b>Action HT</b></li> <li>b) Action point outstanding from a previous GB meeting -The Chair agreed to send the SIAMS framework guidance to TO and DM for their reference. <b>Action AS</b></li> <li>c) An action point outstanding from a previous GB meeting - IW volunteered to send through his notes made on the day from the learning walk that was undertaken last term by himself, TO and AL <b>Action IW</b></li> <li>d) HT confirmed that he has reminded all staff about the Code of Conduct which was approved by Governors at the September GB meeting and this document has been uploaded onto the schools website.</li> <li>e) Action point outstanding from a previous GB meeting – HT confirmed that he will bring some examples of the Flash Academy Impact for pupils to the GB meeting on 7 November 2024. <b>Action HT</b></li> <li>f) HT has uploaded onto Governor Hub further information on the Laser Contract and Independent check carried out on the utility companies.</li> </ul>	<p>HT</p> <p>AS</p> <p>IW</p> <p>HT</p>	



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	g) HTPM panel has been arranged for Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 – AS and LD will be on the panel and DM will check and confirm her availability by the end of the week. <b>Action DM</b>	<b>DM</b>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Dates and Times of the next meetings</b>  The following Dates were arranged for the meetings in the Autumn Term  Governing Board meeting – Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 5.30pm Pay Committee meeting – Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 4.30pm (via Zoom)		
<b>8.</b>	<b>AOB</b>  Governor E asked about the laser contact additional information shared with Governors and whether the HT/SBM could give their view on which utility provider gave the better deal for the school.  LD suggested that further information on the consumption or usage figures by the school would help to determine if the current Laser contract provides value for money when compared to other utility providers and if a copy of the Laser contract could be shared with Governors.  LD added that it would be useful to see the terms of the contact/ notice period within the Laser Contract to enable all to see if there is an option to terminate the contract if the contract does not provide value for money.  HT confirmed that himself and SBM will do the comparison exercise and will also look for a copy of the Laser Contract and will bring the information to the next GB meeting with a Finance focus. <b>Action HT/SBM</b>	<b>HT/SBM</b>	
	<b>The public meeting closed at 7.10pm</b>		
<b>9.</b>	<b>Confidential matters</b>  a) Confidential minutes of the GB meeting held on 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 b) Pay Committee decisions – 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2024 c) Any other confidential matters d) Complaints – note those completed		

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES BY THE CHAIR OF THE GB**

These minutes are an accurate representation of the GB meeting which took place on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 5.30pm in school

Signed..... Date.....

Alison Schulte Chair of the GB

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