



## **PART A**

### **Kings Avenue Primary School**

#### **Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held Via Zoom on Monday, 17 July 2023, at 5 pm**

##### **Present:**

Matthew Bryant (MBr), Co-Opted Governor (Chair)  
Gay Wenban-Smith (GW), Co-opted Governor  
Oliver Butcher (OB), Co-opted Governor  
Robert Lowerson (RL), Co-opted Governor  
Bisma Jones (BJ), Parent Governor  
Alan Sendorek (AS), Local Authority Governor  
Edison David (ED), Executive Headteacher

##### **In Attendance:**

Joy Clarke (JC), Head of School  
Rebecca Stephenson (RS), Assistant Headteacher  
Mel Brown (MBr), Clerk to Governors

#### **1. Welcome, Introductions, Apologies for Absence, and Attendance**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for the absence were received from Tanya Jonas (TJ).

#### **2. Quorum**

The Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no new declarations of interest.

#### **4. Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 March 2023 were reviewed and approved, subject to the following amendments:

- On page 2, item 7, Chairs action. Instead of the school being closed for two days due to teacher strike actions, this should reflect 'one' day.
- Item 4, under the Headteachers report. Instead of 'there was reported staff bullying', it should reflect that 'there was *no* reported staff bullying'.

#### **5. Matters Arising/Actions**

Regarding item 11 (Training and Development), MBr will follow up with Peter Compton to ensure that the Local Authority list of governors for KA is up to date. MBr confirmed that this action was completed.

#### **6. Governing Board Business**

Governor recruitment - there was no significant update regarding the vacant governor positions. The Chair proposed hosting a meet and greet with parents and potential governors in the Autumn term.

## 7. Chair's Action

There were no Chair's actions to report.

## School Performance, Self-Evaluation, and Statutory Responsibilities

### 8. Committee Reports:

- APCC

- During the June ACPCC meeting, the committee reviewed the report of the School Improvement Advisor's visit, which focused on the quality of education in science. The report was well-received by the committee, who were satisfied with the outcomes as presented by the SIA.
- Committee members reviewed and scrutinised the data presented on Spring outcomes, and it was observed that the outcomes for almost all pupil groups were above the benchmark set by 6,500 schools nationally and 27 locally, which indicates a positive performance by the children.
- The committee reviewed the results of the comparative judgement process, which involves evaluating writing samples. Specifically, they compared the writing skills of Year 2 students at Kings Avenue with 48,418 samples from across the country. The findings indicate that the average writing age of Kings Avenue students is eight years and 0 months, one year ahead of the national average of 7 years and 0 months. This holds true for both regular and pupil premium students.
- The committee examined the results of the comparative judgement for the present Year 6 pupils. The samples were compared to 51,194 samples across the country. KA pupils had an average writing age of 11 years and ten months, whereas their peers in the country recorded an average age of 10 years and one month. This is an exceptional outcome for our Year 6 pupils.
- In terms of the Attendance Report for the Spring term, the school's attendance rate is still higher than the national average. The report also highlighted the issue of persistent absence, which was a similar picture across the country.
- The safeguarding team's work was reviewed with a particular emphasis on the register for 'at-risk' children. The Pastoral team's core work summary was also scrutinised, along with the number of children on the register for SEND and the assistance provided to pupils with Education Health Care Plans. Additionally, the support given to these students was evaluated, including the work of the Educational Psychologist and the Speech and Language therapist. The following steps for SEND pupils were also reviewed.
- ED confirmed that the school's results were strong. The national examination's interim results will reflect the Spring data, which will be reported later. **A governor asked** how the school achieved such good results, and ED responded that Kings Avenue has a

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clear curriculum with high-quality delivery and focuses on improving pupil outcomes. The school also prioritises curriculum enrichment activities.

- Resources

OB provided updates and essential highlights from the Resource Committee. The school had 190 pupils last year, which fell to 157. OB highlighted that a loss of Iqra's income for 2025/2026 would have a significant impact on the school.

- The school has met the local authority's target of having a PAN of 30. Since offer day, the school now has four more Reception pupils and has received several in-year applications.
- ED noticed significant movement from different countries and local authorities within and outside London. Specifically, at Granton, many looked-after children from authorities like Luton and Sussex were relocating to London in search of foster care.
- The school is currently in mediation with Iqra School regarding payments owed. Iqra 101 is being charged interest every month whilst the dispute is ongoing. A compromise may be reached on the interest owed following mediation but not on the original amount owed. In terms of their concerns about the cost of the cleaning contract, this has been reviewed by both parties. The Chair clarified that Iqra has issues with how cleaning costs are split and believes the overall cost is too high. The contract was benchmarked against similar contracts and is on the higher end. However, ED noted that the amount they are spending is not the same as a standalone cleaning contract. A governor asked about the next steps and timeline. ED informed that the mediation process is scheduled from 15 August to 31 August. However, September dates have been requested as ED is travelling in August. The aim is to complete the process within a week, but the concern is whether the outcome of the mediation will be followed as there is no written contract. The Local Authority Accounts Department has clearly stated that no school can owe another school money. Therefore, if mediation fails, the Accounts Department may need to either recover or pay the money.
- **A governor asked** about the school's financial position for the first quarter, and ED reported that the school is performing well but still needs to make significant savings.
- **Another governor asked** if any surplus would be given to the local authority. ED clarified that the school retains the surplus.
- **A governor asked** about the school's numbers in September last year, and ED provided the numbers.
- **A governor asked** if the school could use its building space for other purposes to generate income. ED confirmed that it is possible, but Lambeth is responsible for ensuring all children have access to a school.
- **A governor asked** about the budget projections, noting there was no budget for agency staffing. ED explained that the school's senior leadership team could cover classes if needed, reducing the need for expensive agency staff. However, if necessary, the school will use agency staff and adjust the budget accordingly.

## 9. Executive Headteacher's Report (including SIA Autumn visit report)

The Headteachers report was discussed and covers the period from 3 January to 31 March (Spring 1 and 2). The report showed that Ofsted's rating remained 'good' and self-evaluation was 'good' in all areas. Moving forward, the school will focus on the higher grades in certain areas, which will be included in the school improvement plan for the upcoming academic year.

The following matters were highlighted:

- **School Context.** The school's capacity is still 110 during the spring term, with 173 students enrolled. The percentage of students receiving Free School Meals is 57.8%; the school exceeds both the local authority and national averages in terms of students receiving free school meals, which is more than double the national average.
- **Free School Meals.** Starting in September, all children will be provided with free school meals. However, it may be difficult to distinguish between different student groups.
- **Holiday free school meals.** Lambeth has shared additional information regarding their Holiday Free School Meals program for students eligible for free school meals. This summer, they will distribute holiday vouchers to children not receiving free school meals. These children must meet three requirements: they must be primary school children resident in Lambeth, parents/guardians must receive support for council tax or discretionary housing payments, and not receive free school meals. The children who meet these criteria have been identified by Lambeth, but their details have not been shared with the school. How this will impact the school's income in September is still being determined. **A governor asked** about the school's ability to provide more school meals, and ED confirmed that they could accommodate the request, but it would require twice the amount of food because they also cater to another school.
- **SEND.** 4% of KA children have an EHCP, and 16% are on the SEND register. Compared to similar schools, Kings Avenue has a lower percentage of pupils on the SEND register but a higher percentage with EHCP. The school's EHCP average is higher than Lambeth's, but the school also has a higher rate of pupils requiring SEND support. Additionally, the school's percentage of pupils with EHCP is higher than the national average and higher by about 3% requiring SEND support.
- **EAL.** Numbers remain high at 59%, while similar schools are 45%, 46 local authorities average, and the school is higher than the national average at 21%. The report also shows a breakdown into boys and girls and the various groups, FSM, Ever6, and the FSM, and two looked-after children across the school, seven pupils who are EHCP, 28 SEND and others. Among the student population, 59% have English as an additional language, higher than similar schools (45%) and the local authority average (46%). This is also above the national average of 21%. The report provides a detailed breakdown of boys and girls and various groups such as FSM, Ever6, looked-after children, EHCP pupils, and SEND students.
- **Safeguarding.** During the Spring term, one student was added to the list of those with a child protection plan, while another was removed. As of the end of the term, two students were on the child protection plan. The school has a designated Safeguarding governor, an up-to-date SEND information report on the website, and a governor

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specifically for SEND. The Pupil Premium Strategy on the website is current, and there is an identified governor for Pupil Premium.

- **Governors** - currently, there are three vacant governor positions, two for staff and one for a parent governor.
- **GDPR** - there have been no GDPR data breaches since the last report.
- **School Development Plan update** - the school's primary objective is to promote early reading. As of the end of the Spring term, 89.5% of our current pupils have achieved this goal. In addition, our Phonics screening checks at the end of the summer term resulted in a remarkable 95%, significantly higher than national and local averages. Moreover, our school's pupil premium pupils performed exceptionally well in closing the gaps between them and non-pupil premium pupils. They outperformed their peers, exceeding both Lambeth's and the national average.
- **Quality of Education** - during the School Improvement Advisor's visit, the focus was on science. The Advisor conducted a learning walk of lessons, scrutinised books, and held discussions with pupils to review the strength of the curriculum. The Advisor found that the curriculum was well-designed and implemented as planned. The lessons were also clearly sequenced and delivered effectively. The subject leadership was effective, and teachers were clear about what to focus on when teaching. However, the Advisor identified three areas for development for the subject. These include being clearer about the purpose of each activity, providing pupils with knowledge more directly and simplifying some of the learning. The simplification of learning pertains mainly to the early years.

ED commented that he partially agrees with the point about simplifying the learning, but he also wants to clarify that it can be a strength for practitioners in the early years. When practitioners talk to children as adults and use subject-specific vocabulary, it can help children understand and use that vocabulary themselves. Therefore, there are instances where this approach can be practical for children.

- **Staffing.** During the spring period, there was no staff turnover or new recruits.
- **Attendance** - the attendance rate for this year was 94.3%, which is lower than last year, which was 96.3%. Additionally, the persistent absence rate has increased this year compared to the previous year, with the report providing a detailed breakdown of the reasons, such as illness and family holidays. However, when comparing the overall attendance rates for this year with the national average of 93%, the school is still performing better by 1%.
- **Persistent absence** - the school's persistent absence rate currently stands at 18.7%, which is lower than the LA's rate of 20.3%. ED stated that this had been the highest persistent absence rate he has observed. In the past, the national average was around 9-10%, and the highest rate was around 11%. The current rate is almost double that figure, and there are various reasons for it. Pupils are absent for extended periods when sick, and parents sometimes keep their children at home for different reasons. Some parents worry about their child infecting others, while others take their children on holiday during term time to catch up on missed vacations. However, the cost of airfares has increased by 100-200%, but families find it more cost-effective to pay the £50 penalty for term-time holidays.

**A governor proposed** issuing fines for absenteeism. ED pointed out that if a child has perfect attendance but requests time off for a family trip to a place like Israel, where they can gain educational experiences, then this might be dealt with differently. However, if a child has only attended school for 80% of the time and then requests time off, the school will issue a penalty notice.

**A governor raised a question** about monitoring persistent absence, and ED explained that if a student's attendance falls below 90%, they are considered a persistent absentee. This is a change from the previous threshold of 85% and includes absences due to illness. However, if a student receives education offsite or participates in activities such as a transition day or interview at another school, these absences are recorded as "educated elsewhere".

**A governor noted** that approximately one in five pupils could be regarded as persistent absentees or have an attendance rate below 90%. ED reported that medical appointments are also considered absences, even if authorised, so pupils with a morning medical appointment are advised to return in the afternoon. This is because each day is regarded as two sessions, with registration done in the morning and afternoon. Absences due to bereavement are also allowed but are still considered absences.

**A governor asked** about the academic progress of students who are frequently absent, and ED explained that prolonged absences are unavoidable for some children, particularly those with special educational needs and medical concerns. However, the school works closely with their families and follows a protocol that includes issuing warning letters and scheduling meetings with senior leaders and educational welfare officers. If the situation persists, it is escalated to an Attendance Panel. The school has not had to reach that point for any of its students so far.

- **Health and Safety.** During the Spring term, there were no incidents related to ambulance or hospital attendance or incidents resulting in serious injury. In preparation for the Summer term, the key stage 1 and nursery playgrounds have been resurfaced to mitigate potential health and safety risks.
- **Quality of Education.** For the Early Foundation stage in 2019, the national poll shows a score of 70.7%. The school's target is to have 70% of students on track, and in the spring term, they scored 71%. At this stage, the measure of achievement is the Good Level of Development (GLD), and a child who has achieved at least five out of the 12 areas of learning, including Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED), Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematics, and Communication and Language, is considered to have a GLD. Currently, the school is on track with a score of 71% for students who have achieved at least the expected standards in these five areas. The actual score for summer is expected to be higher and above the national average for the early foundation stage. The report for this will be available in the autumn term.

In Key Stage One (KS1), the Phonics target is 82%, the on-track in the spring term is 90% in the final term of the year, and 95% in the summer term. The school aims to have a proportion of pupils on track with Reading, Writing, Math, and Science from the Earliest Foundation Stage to Year 3, especially for those groups of children who have shown significant progress over the years.

The Key Stage Two (KS2) outcomes have been positive this year and well within the average, but the school will report on this and the teacher assessments in the autumn term.

- **Extracurricular activities.** The children have been involved in various extracurricular activities. Year 4 visited a Buddhist temple as part of their Religious Education, while Year 6 participated in the 'The Louder I Will Sing' project in collaboration with the Cherry Grove Foundation. This program aims to bridge the gap between the police force and the people in Britain by promoting restorative justice. The children visited the Black Cultural Archives in Brixton as part of the project. Year 5 visited Wick Court Farm for five days to experience life outside the cities. They took care of the animals and talked to the locals. This program is highly subsidised and will be done yearly to encourage more students to participate. Year 6 went on an adventure trip to Kingswood, while Years 5 and 6 participated in the Lambeth Music Tracks Festival at the Royal Festival Hall. Bike-ability was also taught to Years 3-6 to boost their confidence in cycling. Year 4 had hockey lessons with Spencer Lynx, and some were even invited to join a club outside of school. EYFS visited the TFL museum as part of their transport topic. Parents were kept informed of these activities through Twitter.

## 10. Pupil Planning

The Chair updated the Board on the pupil planning work previously. The Local Authority has been exploring different options to manage the decline in pupil numbers over the past year. A consultation released just before Christmas last year suggested that across all primary schools in the area, about ten forms of entry would need to be lost due to fewer young pupils. For Kings Avenue, the recommendation was that it would become a half-form entry, with only 15 pupils per year from September 2022 to September 2024. Lambeth has now confirmed this.

Over the past two years, the school has only had ten pupils in Reception in 2021 and 2022, which has increased to 15 this year. This year was expected to be better because of the good Ofsted rating. The Board spoke about whether the current modelling of 157 pupils is accurate and whether it is possible to have more pupils by 2025. However, this is unlikely as the school will have only 15 pupils per year in its second year. By the time these changes are rolled out in 2030, the school will have 105 pupils plus the Nursery. While 157 pupils are a realistic estimate for 2025, unless the pupil admission number increases, the number is likely to decrease gradually over the next four years. The exception is if there is a change in the birth rate, which would mean that more school places are needed than originally expected.

Subsequently, the Local Authority assessed all schools and put them into four categories based on the level of concern for their viability, sustainability, and pupil numbers. Kings Avenue is in the bottom category, and the school is being asked to review its options for managing its future, including collaborating with other schools in the area.

The Local Authority has also expressed concern regarding schools' financial sustainability, with a yearly enrollment of only 15 pupils, deeming them financially unfeasible. KA must demonstrate its financial viability and plans for generating income through the building to address this. The school's highest fixed cost is running a much larger building than necessary, which affects the school's finances as enrolment decreases. Other concerns for a small school include overhead costs for the leadership team compared to the number of enrolled pupils.

**A governor asked** about the October session and whether it would be for brainstorming or if options would be presented. The Chair noted that the aim is to explore various possibilities and determine the best action.

A governor emphasised the importance of being mindful of factors beyond their control, such as changes in population numbers. However, they can take steps to increase awareness of the school's good reputation and demonstrate financial viability, such as highlighting the revenue-generating potential of the building.



ED emphasised that the school has a good Ofsted rating, pupil outcomes above the national average in many cases, and was in a financially viable position.

**A governor asked** about the advantages of a Federation if the school still has a limit of 15 students. ED explained that the situation would remain the same now, with the school not being at total capacity. However, despite the cap of 15 students, the school would be able to offer multiple classes.

The Board agreed that the October meeting would be a combination of the usual Board agenda items and also a Strategy session.

**Action:** Governors were asked to research different options in preparation for the strategy session.

### **Consultation, Advice and Statutory Responsibilities**

#### **11. Governor Visits**

MBr reminded governors to complete the form in the Governor Visits folder after each visit.

#### **12. Training and Development (including safeguarding training)**

ED agreed to forward an invite for joint Keeping Children Safe in Education training at Grantham School. The date will be confirmed.

#### **13. 2023/24 Meeting Schedule**

The meeting dates were received and had been circulated beforehand. The Board **agreed on** the schedule of meetings.

#### **14. Any Other Business**

There were no other matters of business.

#### **15. Confidential Matters**

Part B minutes.

#### **16. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting is Monday, 2 October 2023.

Signed ..... 

Date ..... 

