

**GOVERNING BODY OF**  
**HIGHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**STAFFING, CURRICULUM AND PUPIL DISCIPLINE**  
**COMMITTEE**

**11 March 2025**



**Members:** Tim Guha, David Wilson, *Sophia Loizia* (Chair), Emily Cloke, and Stephanie Morton

*Italics denote absence*

**Also attending:** Ann Campbell, Sandra Johnson and Mandy Newell (Minute and Advisory Clerk)

**MINUTES**

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Sophia Loizia.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Governors were reminded that they should **declare** any interest relating to items on this agenda. No declarations were made.

3. **MINUTES AND ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024 were agreed as a correct record

**RESOLVED** these be signed on GovernorHub by the Chair.

**ACTION: CHAIR**

There were no matters arising to consider.

4. **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP)**

**RECEIVED** the SIP, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that the Headteacher guided Governors through the priorities for this year and the overview was highlighted.

- (a) Quality of Education - to embed key Walkthrus Strategies. To embed the use of technology across the curriculum. To increase opportunities for creative and hands-on and outdoor learning (including Creative Writing). To develop and implement a whole school long term writing plan so that all pupils have varied writing opportunities. To ensure that maths lessons have the correct balance between arithmetic and reasoning and that reasoning is an integral part of the maths curriculum;
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- (b) Behaviour and Attitudes - to review and adapt the behaviour policy and systems so it is in line with the culture of the school;
  - (c) Personal Development – to develop responsible, respectful, active citizens;
  - (d) Leadership and Management – to have systems in place to ensure that SLT continued to work effectively. Establish and develop the nurture group so there was high quality teaching and learning focused on the needs of the children attending.
  - (e) Effectiveness of the Early Years Provision – to ensure high quality teaching of phonics was embedded throughout Early Years.
  - (f) the Headteacher highlighted the more areas under 1.0 - Quality of Education and explained that Walk Thrus were used to ensure there was real pedagogical understanding from staff as to how the children learnt. This was a focus for the year as was live modelling. A review had taken place last week but the report was still awaited. 60 % of staff were confident with this but 40% needed more help and the use of team teach would be considered;
  - (g) the embedding of technology – 1.2 was a complex issue around purchasing but also being able to have the finance for this. The School did now have a significant number of devices for the children to enhance their learning and training had taken place this week. The methods used were working well in Year 3. There were 30 devices per class and the Headteacher said he was keen to roll out more across the School. The resources used were Nearpod/IPads. Nearpod helped to get things done quicker and was being used for maths/English and science. It would be used for geography soon as well. The Headteacher said he was hoping the budget would allow the purchase of 90 more devices next year as the amount they had could be limiting for teachers as they had to be more organised amongst themselves as to who would use those available and when. [In response to a query from the Chair](#), the Headteacher said the evidencing of embedding was an internal exercise and he added he would like Governors to look at this during the Summer term. Digital Leads were undertaking team teaching;
  - (h) Governors reviewed the information on increasing the opportunities for creative and hands on and outdoor learning – 1.3. The Headteacher informed them that some classes were doing well in this area but it was not always consistent. A training session had been held to help teachers plan their outdoor learning. [A Governor commented how much her daughter loved this way of learning](#). The Headteacher was delighted to learn this and commented that it was an excellent way to help embed knowledge;
  - (i) a review of 1.4 had been held last week. This was around developing and implementing a whole school long term writing plan so that all pupils had varied writing opportunities. The Headteacher explained the need for clear medium term plans around what skills were being taught with a certain text and the fact there needed to be a clear build-up of skills over time and things must be taught at the relevant time. [In response to a Governor's question, the Headteacher clarified they did not use any preferred scheme of work apart from Little Wandle for Phonics](#);
  - (j) 1.5 focussed on ensuring that maths lessons had the correct balance between arithmetic and reasoning and that reasoning was an integral part of the maths curriculum. The Headteacher pointed out the importance of reasoning skills for all
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children and this was an integral part of maths now. [A Governor asked where the priorities in the SDP came from](#) and was informed that they were driven by the Leads and book looks. Discussions were also held with the children which could give an insight into their needs;

- (k) 2.1 was to review and adapt the Behaviour Policy and systems so it was in line with the culture of the School. There was now a focus on relationships between pupils and pupils and staff. Following discussion the Headteacher emphasised the importance of children being greeted by staff, particularly in KS2 and the importance of staff knowing the children and their interests very well. Building strong relationships between staff and pupils was vital in order to understand behaviour and for children to understand that their actions could have consequences. The Headteacher added that recently they had been discussing the restorative side of behaviour and the fact children must take responsibility for their behaviour and have restorative conversations and learn from their behaviour. The Headteacher considered that the children could learn empathy and learn to recognise how their behaviour could affect others. The Behaviour Policy would be discussed next week at the Governing Body meeting and a consultation survey would be completed with parents in order to obtain their views about the Policy prior to its implementation in September 2025;
  - (l) the priority in 3.1 was to develop responsible, respectful and active citizens. The School continued to work with the community and help the children understand the positive impact they could have on the world around them. This was an ongoing priority. [A Governor commented on seeing children from Highfield litter picking](#);
  - (m) 4.1 focused on having systems in place to ensure the SLT continued to work effectively. The Headteacher determined that they were doing this but all of the SLT felt they were now at their limits due to their teaching commitments and other workload. [In response to a Governor's question](#), it was explained that the SLT were having to teach due to budget restrictions and increased need. However, the Headteacher was pleased to be able to inform Governors that they had appointed a SEND Learning TA which was working well. [In response to a further question](#), the Headteacher said he did not expect there to be any more vacancies to arise. A budget meeting was due to take place in a couple of weeks and whilst this was expected to increase so were the pay rises so they balanced each other out. Governors discussed the financial concerns all schools faced and it was determined that with current Government plans it did not seem as if there would be a boost for education. Governors discussed the SEND budgets and the financial difficulties being faced by Local Authorities. They also considered the unforeseen issues that could arise and impact on staff time and resources. [A Governor asked if official communications had been made to the LA about budget concerns](#). The Headteacher said they had but whilst the LA were sympathetic they had no money either, Enfield Council were £40m in deficit and this was a picture reflected around the country. [Following a Governor's query](#) the Headteacher said that the School had low turnover of staff and it was too early to know if anyone planned to leave this year. Governors discussed possible scenarios around staffing and the benefits and costs linked to these;
  - (n) 4.2 was to establish and develop the nurture group so there was high quality teaching and learning focused on the needs of the children attending. [Following a Governor's query](#), the Headteacher confirmed that the nurture group ran all day;
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- (o) 5.1 highlighted the need to ensure high quality teaching of phonics was embedded throughout Early Years. The Headteacher was pleased to report that phonics had improved significantly and an outside review of this was due to take place in May.
- (p) [A Governor asked why maths did not appear in the SDP priorities.](#) The Headteacher explained that it was a focus for pupil premium (PP) and thus linked into the area of reasoning and vocabulary skills – 1.5. He added that what was good for disadvantaged pupils was also good for all pupils.

## 5. **PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT\_**

**RECEIVED** the Autumn data, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that

- (a) Governors were guided through the data for each year group at Age Related Expectations (ARE) and Greater Depth (GD). Following discussion, the Headteacher assured Governors that he would present the data using Insight at the Governing Body meeting and this would be clearer to understand;
  - (b) it had been noted that the Reception figures were lower than would be expected. The Headteacher said he had spoken to the Reception Lead who had in turn spoken to the LA to seek advice. It transpired that the teachers had been assessing too harshly in terms of what constituted a good level of development and when reconsidering the School were looking at results on target to national or just above. [The Chair commented at it would be useful to see the benchmark figures;](#)
  - (c) the Headteacher assured Governors that the gap between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium would continue to be a focus. Following discussion the Headteacher explained that when pupils had time off for example, during Covid or in the long summer holidays, the gap widened and the disadvantaged children regressed more than the non-disadvantaged. The biggest gap was always seen at the beginning of the Autumn term and this reduced as the year progressed. The School had been very successful in reducing the gap in KS2 last year but every year group and every cohort were different. The Headteacher gave examples of this. He explained that overall the gap was just over 1% but current Year 6 group had their problems and work had to be done to overcome these barriers. Along with this SEND was also higher in the disadvantaged group. It would always be a School priority to reduce the gap but at the same time there was a need to be realistic about the challenges. 14% of the Year 6 cohort were in the disadvantaged group and whilst there were a good number who had greater depth in all three main subjects, this was not as good as in other year groups
  - (d) Governors reviewed the data in depth and noted the gaps. [Following discussion and Governor's questions,](#) the Headteacher assured them that measures were in place to try and make a difference but they did not have the budget for a great deal of resources or 1:1 help. Stephanie Morton informed Governors that whilst all disadvantaged children were a priority each term the teachers were asked to identify two PP children to focus on their key needs. [In response to a query,](#) the Headteacher explained that the data in yellow was PP and that in green was non-PP. The data was
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tracked from the previous summer and through the next year.

## 6. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

**RECEIVED** the Autumn term core subject monitoring documentation, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that

- (a) the Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) had undertaken a review last week but the report had not yet been received. The focus of the review had been writing;
- (b) a reading learning walk had taken place in the Autumn term and it had highlighted the following strengths.

- Key Words chunked (and colour coded) with LW phonemes used too . Dual Coding clearly embedded in teaching, learning and environment. In some classes actions used to reinforce children's understanding of key vocabulary.
- Sentence stems were used as a scaffold for answering the comprehension questions
- Use of talk partners to verbally discuss questions before answering in their books
- Choral reading and individual reading highlighted by the children.
- Discussed key vocabulary using walk thru strategies, 'I say...you say'.
- Children were using the text to find the word and were verbally using it in their explanations.
- Modelled reading with great expression and tones.

Areas of development highlighted were

- Although there were some areas in which certain lessons could be improved there was no consistent area of development;

- (c) A Maths Learning Walk took place in the Autumn term

Strengths highlighted were that

- Children with SEND were included and were well supported
- Excellent use of the walkthru strategies were evident - YT & MT, cold calling, choral rehearsal, checking for understanding-
- Live modelling using manipulatives. I like how you modelled the shape activity, using mathematical language and then you switched roles with the child to assess their understanding.
- Adaptive Teaching - dual coded vocabulary on each table.
- Opportunities for Mathematical Reasoning throughout the lesson, not just as a challenge
- Cold calling/independent problem solving used to check for understanding.
- While working with the smaller group you also checked on the rest of the class when you had given them an independent task.

Areas of development were

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- Check for understanding through probing deeper and cold calling a range of children.
- Build in sufficient thinking and discussion time before getting children to answer questions.

(d) a Maths Book look took place in the Autumn term

The strengths seen were

- Manipulatives used to support tasks
- Marking in line with expectations
- Next steps based on what children needed to move learning on
- Clear build up from planning - teacher modelling, scaffolded group/paired work with concrete resources, abstract number work in books
- Well presented - children marking in squares
- Good balance of recording and practical
- Appropriate adaptation & challenge
- Verbal feedback effective in moving learning on
- Activities were matched well to the differing needs of each pupil, with opportunities for HA pupils to broaden/deepen their understanding.
- Challenging range of questions (including next steps) for children to apply their learning and promote deeper thinking. Example, convince me, missing numbers.

Areas for Development noted were

- More opportunities for outdoor learning and cross curricular links
- Ensure children used the mathematical language they had been taught when answering reasoning questions.

(e) a Writing book look was undertaken in the Autumn term

Strengths seen were

- Writing in books was well presented, all children writing within the lines. Letter formation was generally good and a teaching focus where incorrect.
- Children were supported to achieve learning outcomes. Lots of visual reminders to support children's writing. Greater scaffolding for lower attainer. Writing was at times with support but there were opportunities for independent writing.
- Lessons were following the writing progression map and the learning journey,
- Books were marked up to date in line with the policy. Verbal Feedback as well as regular Next steps.
- Technical/grammatical vocabulary practised
- Several examples of recordings of children's performance poetry -using QR codes.
- Good build-up of vocabulary and children used this in independent writing.
- There is good presentation in the vast majority of books

Areas for Development highlighted were

- A greater focus on letter formation and handwriting for some children.
  - Give children more opportunities to present their work to develop their oracy skills .
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- (f) [in response to a Governor's query](#), the Headteacher clarified that they did not use the HEP curriculum at Highfield but they did use their resources which were excellent and they did access the CPD which was also excellent.

## 7. PUPIL PREMIUM(PP) FUNDING

**RECEIVED** the PP report, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that

- (a) Governors were guided through the evaluation of the PP strategy plan 2021-24 and the new plan for 2025-28. They noted the detailed information on challenges, impact and evidence. They also reviewed the individual year group data;
  - (b) the action plan for the Spring term 2025 was as follows
    - (i) High expectations for all pupils -Teachers know where their pupils are and offer an exciting, enriched curriculum with a strong focus on well-being. All teachers have high expectations for all groups of pupil
    - (ii) Continue to close the gap We will close the gap through high quality teaching, interventions/catch up programmes and clubs/enrichment opportunities. Ensure interventions occur regularly as well as DHT writing groups. Bespoke catch-up programs/interventions will continue for identified individuals/groups of Pupil premium children to close the gaps in reading, Writing and Maths;
    - (iii) Specific PP interventions include: Art Club and Nurture intervention. Interventions supporting progress: We have a range of interventions to support and extend accelerated progress – Talk Boost, Comprehension Groups, Pre-teaching is an effective intervention run by our support staff, Lego Club and extra phonic session. Also, a 5min daily phonic boost for targeted PP pupils will occur in the Autumn Term;
    - (iv) Tracking and monitoring progress continues termly. Half-termly in Years 2 and 6;
    - (v) To support pupils' mental well-being and emotional/social skills. Place2Be continues to offer counselling for pupils and offers Place2talk, through our curriculum, values, RSE curriculum, clubs/interventions and SMILE approach. PP KS1 Nurture lunchtime club was successful and will start again next term. There has also been a whole school focus on Developing relationships and using trauma informed practise to support pupils who have emotional needs;
    - (vi) Attendance-raise Pupil Premium attendance as a whole group back to 96%+ and target specific persistent absentees. Attendance for PP pupils this term is 95%. Highfield Bears, Early Bird, attendance certificates, first day calling and monitoring of attendance continue to happen;
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- (vii) Reading and phonics-whole school focus on developing early reading skills. Little Wandle Scheme-ensure consistency is embedded in Reception and Year 1;
  - (viii) Maths- generally, Maths has the lowest attainment in most year groups. Target specific pupils, scaffolding and breaking down of tasks for pupils. Staff have also had CPD on developing and planning reasoning skills as this is an area to develop in PP pupils;
  - (ix) WalkThrus strategies--continue to embed, Checking for Understanding and scaffolding. 2 PP Pupils per class will be a focus;
  - (x) Oracy Skills-CPD for staff will focus on developing oracy skills in the Spring term.
- (c) the Headteacher informed Governors that the PP Lead had undertaken a great deal of group work. Disadvantaged children had less resilience and were more concerned if they got things wrong than the non-disadvantaged. They were more prone to giving up if they found things difficult and work was ongoing to teach them to understand it was normal to get things wrong and make mistakes sometimes and this was a crucial part of learning but giving up was not good and you had to keep trying. It was vital to ensure interventions were having an impact.

## 8. STAFFING

**RECEIVED** staffing reports, a copies of which are included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

### **REPORTED**

(a) Update on staffing structure

There had been no changes.

(b) Update on the annual cycle of Performance Management

The performance management cycle would continue in the next couple of weeks with the midpoint appraisals.

(c) Continuing Professional Development

CPD was ongoing. Governors noted the CPD listed in the CPD log

(d) Update on staff absence

Governors reviewed the staff absence data from September 24 to present. The Headteacher said that 75% of staff to date had an absence this year compared to 70% last year. Total days lost to absence was 363 versus 364 last year. The reasons for absence included medical appointments, children's illness and some long term absences for operations or significant illnesses. Unfortunately there was not a lot that could be done about this but it was difficult to manage. Other reasons for

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absence included flu and viruses. [A Governor asked about the anxiety and stress figures.](#) The Headteacher said that very few of these absences were work related and usually related to other issues in people's lives but this was a challenge to manage. Governors discussed the issues around absence in depth and recognised that whilst some people needed to be off, some would come in with a minor ailment and get on with their day whilst others would take time off. Significant absences had been well covered by supply staff and very little impact had been seen on the children but these still had an impact on other staff and the budget as supply was needed to cover the absences. [In response to a Governor's query,](#) the Headteacher explained they had a strategic regime in place to cover teacher absence. Support staff covered for the first two days and then the DHT or an AHT for the rest of the week. After this supply would come in.

## 9. **POLICY REVIEW**

**NOTED** there were no policies due for review.

## 11. **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

**NOTED** that all training sessions were listed in the Governor Training Brochure 2024-25, available on Governor Hub.

Governor training could be booked via the School based booker, Catherine Moens.

<https://traded.enfield.gov.uk/professionallearning>.

## 12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Parental questions.

**REPORTED** that the Parent Governor asked what she should do if parents raised questions with her and wondered whether she should bring these to the Governing Body. The Headteacher said he liked to deal with things informally where possible and parents needed to understand the role of the Parent Governor which to hold the Headteacher to account along with the other Governors. He suggested that if parents had concerns they bring them to himself or the Chair outside of these meetings. Parents had to recognise that the Parent Governors were not parent reps.

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