

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

11 November 2025



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

Italics denote absence

Also attending: Mandy Newell (Minute and Advisory Clerk)

MINUTES

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Ann Campbell.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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

3. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

NOTED that Sophia Loizia agreed to be Chair for this meeting but was keen to step down this year as Chair of the committee.

RESOLVED that the Chair of the Committee for the next academic year be discussed at the Governing Body meeting and that Governors consider whether they would be willing to take on the role.

ACTION: GOVERNORS/CLERK

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June were agreed as a correct record subject to the amendment of the date.

RESOLVED these be signed on GovernorHub by the Chair.

ACTION: CHAIR

There were no matters arising to consider.

5. **ATTENDANCE**

RECEIVED attendance data, copies of which are included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub. The Headteacher used Insight to provide this data.

REPORTED that

- (a) overall attendance was strong and was at 96.4%. This was 1% above national and 0.8% above the LA. There was 3.6% overall absence, 2.9% authorised and 0.7% unauthorised. 11.3% had persistent absence and 0 pupils had unauthorised absence for 10+ days during the period 3/9/25 to 5/11/25. 20% of pupils had a risk of being close to persistent absence and 10% were at risk of being severely absent. [In response to a Governor's query it was explained that](#) the figure of 0.1% represented a child who was a school refuser. Work was being conducted with the family and social services and the LA could take action if the situation did not improve. The causes of the situation were known to the School;
 - (b) absence patterns showed that 16 pupils had been repeatedly late or absent on the same day, 68 pupils had been absent before or after a school holiday and 23 pupils had recently worsened from previous good attendance. 40 pupils had recently improved from previous poor attendance. Governors noted the data for attendance ranges, cumulative attendance and weekly absences along with the attendance overview for all absences;
 - (c) Governors reviewed the data for SEND and disadvantaged children which was likely to be a focus of any Ofsted visit either in the Summer term or next academic year. For pupils with SEND and who were disadvantaged attendance was at 93.5%. For Send only it was 95.5%. These figures were not bad. However, the Headteacher reminded Governors that a new Attendance Policy would be introduced as there was a need to take a harder stance around non-attendance. [Following a Governor's question](#), the Headteacher explained that if a child had under 90% attendance for two terms a meeting had to be held and the threat of fines would be introduced;
 - (d) [A Governor asked what the main reasons for absence were](#) and the Headteacher said that in many cases it was due to holidays taken in term time. The beginning of the academic year was always an issue and for some families over the year it just became easier not to come into school. There were situations where many days were being missed by some children. [A Governor questioned whether data was captured around reasons for absence](#) and was told that it was. It was clarified that at present the School did not issue fines but it was hoped the threat of these in the future might be a deterrent. The data being reviewed on the screen during the meeting was in real time and Governors commented on the value of this and the use of Insight to enable very detailed data to be obtained;
 - (e) following discussion, the Headteacher said that in order to understand the data fully there was a need to understand the demographics around the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. He explained that disadvantaged children were those who were classified as looked after (LAC) or children of forces personnel or whose parents had been on benefits some time over the last six years. SEND children at Highfield were just above the national average but those with an educational health care plan (EHCP) were significantly above. Data showed that 21% of disadvantaged pupils had
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SEND support and 14% had an EHCP so there was a great deal of crossover between the SEND and disadvantaged groups and everyone needed to be aware of this;

- (f) [in response to a question](#), the Headteacher clarified that the School had more than the national average of EHCPs – 6.5% compared to 3%. Figures were rising both nationally, in the LA and within the School. 14% of disadvantaged children had a plan in place which was important to note when considering closing the gaps. Governors discussed at length the importance of understanding the context of the School which the Headteacher would highlight to Ofsted during a visit. The SLT were working on this area and Governors were shown how Insight could be used to view detailed data across the various demographics;
- (g) Governors discussed the link between attendance and disadvantaged and reviewed the figures and gaps between disadvantaged SEND and non-SEND. [A Governor asked whether there were any differences in attendance at different times during the term](#). They were told the beginning and end of term were key points;
- (h) the Headteacher reiterated that overall, the School had good attendance but it was very important to break down the figures into the different demographics. [A Governor wondered if other Schools did fine parents](#) and was told some did. The Headteacher said that at Highfield they focused on pupils where there was general poor attendance rather than where the odd days were taken for holidays. They were focusing on looking at patterns around absence in order to try and deal with it and there were many factors to drill down into. It was vital to ensure that parents understood the way persistent absence affected attainment. [In response to a Governor's question](#), the Headteacher said that there were not really any particular trends across year groups;

6. PUPIL PREMIUM

RECEIVED a report on pupil premium, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub

REPORTED that

- (a) the Headteacher guided Governors through information on Insight. He explained that the data fluctuated year on year but that the context around disadvantaged pupils was key in terms of the results. There was a significant gap between non PP and disadvantaged pupils, however, the School was still in line with the national figure for the disadvantaged pupils despite being low for Highfield. Governors were assured that this was due to the nature of the year group last year and not the teaching. 21% of disadvantaged children achieved GD for reading which was significantly higher than national. 13% of disadvantaged children achieved GD for maths and combined. The national figure for combined was 3%;
 - (b) in respect of phonics 60% of disadvantaged pupils passed the test, which was better than the national average, however last year it had been 80%;
 - (c) at the EYFS stage, the disadvantaged children outperformed their peers. 70% achieved a good level of development which was above the national average;
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- (d) the Headteacher stated that they must be aware of the context of individual year groups and the fluctuations in results due to this. Needs varied for every cohort and this had to be taken into account;
- (e) Governors were assured that the School was doing all it could to ensure as many pupils as possible passed their phonics test as this was a core reading skill. He reiterated that whilst high quality teaching made a difference the trends around the needs of disadvantaged children had to be recognised;
- (f) the average year group had around 18-19 disadvantaged pupils and needs varied across the board;
- (g) [in response to a Governor's query about PP funding](#), the Headteacher said that it was up to the School how they spent it but they had to ensure the disadvantaged pupils got the relevant support they needed. For PP+ (LAC and Post LAC children) the funding had to be spent on that particular group. Cultural capital was an important area for disadvantaged children along with core literacy and numeracy skills. Often disadvantaged children had low self-esteem and resilience and it was important for staff to work with them to improve this.

NOTED the contents of the PP 3 Year Strategy Statement.

RESOLVED to agree the 3 Year PP Strategy Statement and recommend it to the Governing Body for ratification .

ACTION: CLERK

7. **PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT_**

REPORTED that

- (a) the Headteacher guided Governors through the data on Insight. They reviewed this data and noted that this cohort had challenges with English as an additional language (EAL) and SEND. The Headteacher said they recognised that a reduction in results had been seen over a four year period and this needed to be addressed. It was part of the School Improvement Plan;
 - (b) high quality teaching for reading and phonics along with high quality interactions to embed core functions were vital. An outside report conducted last year was positive overall but it had been noted that at times there were missed opportunities for children's learning and for them to have high quality interactions with staff in order to embed their core skills. Improving this was a focus for this year;
 - (c) phonics results were at national and this had been the case for a number of years. The Headteacher said they would obviously like to improve these results and thus this was being addressed for EYFS and Year 1 and a phonics review was being undertaken with staff. The key was to have catch up groups with interventions being put in place quickly and regularly and it was vital to ensure gaps were reduced by the end of Reception. [Following Governor's questions](#), the Headteacher stated that he expected this year to be tough but was aiming for an 85%+ pass rate within two years;
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- (d) KS1 data provided was internal as was the multiplication data for Year 4. 24% of Year 4 had achieved full marks in the test which was below national. The Headteacher assured Governors they were working hard to improve this figure;
- (e) Governors reviewed the KS2 data from 2021-25 and issues around reading were reviewed. Governors were pleased to note that improvements had been seen in reading and that the combined scores had risen to 75% as a result of this. The Headteacher said they had recognised that reading was a key area that needed work and the results were now showing the effect of the work that had been undertaken in this area;
- (f) [following Governors' questions](#), the Headteacher said that the Ofsted lens would frame conversations over the next few months and staff would be prepared for the visit when it came. He explained that Ofsted did not necessarily look at internal data as schools produced their data in different ways and it could be manipulated. The Headteacher added that at KS1 it was vital to ensure pupils were secure in core skills so they were ready for KS2 when they could improve and develop these and learn from a wider and more varied/detailed curriculum. Again, contexts of year groups had to be taken into account and it was clear than when additional resources were added, improved results were being seen. The Headteacher gave an example of the Year 6 cohort last year and the issues that had been noted during their time moving through the School. Resources and interventions provided for this group had made a difference;
- (g) [in response to a Governor's question](#), the Headteacher said they did recognise the need to focus on KS1 key skills and that they had to be mindful not to overload children at a young age. It was vital to ensure they were taught about things that were relevant and age appropriate to them;
- (h) Governors reviewed the data for overall attainment for all pupils in the core areas and compared this to the disadvantaged data in depth. They noted the gaps in each area and it was commented that the gaps for children achieving ARE or above closed when SEND pupils were removed from the data. The Headteacher reiterated that Governors must recognise the context of the data. [A Governor commented how useful the richness of the data was and how much they could now see using Insight](#). It was agreed that Insight was a very valuable tool as live data could be viewed at any time;
- (i) [A Governor asked if Year 1 would be sitting the optional tests](#) and was told they would not. However, one Year 5 class would be taking the PIRLS test (progress in international reading literacy study) but the data from this would not necessarily be shared;
- (j) [in response to a Governor's comment around maths KS2 data last year](#), the Headteacher assured her that they would be working on this for this year's cohort. The results had gone against trend and were an anomaly. The last data input had been in Summer 2 and the next one was due to take place next week.

8. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

RECEIVED a report from the School Improvement Advisor at the Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) and detailed Key Stage data, copies of which are included in the Minute

REPORTED that

- (a) the last visit from the School Improvement Advisor had focused on data. Governors considered that the summary provided was a good one and useful for them to see. They determined that when Ofsted did come it would be helpful for HEP to provide further information like this. Following discussion, the Headteacher said that the next meeting would focus on what Governors would need to know for Ofsted to ensure they were ready;
 - (b) the report had highlighted a need to monitor Year 3 closely and the Headteacher said they were aware of this. Interventions were being put in place where necessary and relevant children were being targeted. Governors were assured that staff were aware of the needs of the pupils in each class. Two teachers in Year 3 were job sharing at present and on Wednesday afternoons they were both in class. This freed one of them up to conduct high quality interventions in addition to the excellent ones provided by the support staff. [A Governor asked if this year group were behind?](#) The Headteacher explained that this was again a context issue and there was no one particular area of concern. It was important to carefully consider where resources should be placed;
 - (c) the Headteacher stated that a key area for all was to ensure high quality teaching. This would ensure that those not needing interventions would thrive as well as those who required more help. The focus was always on key skills;
 - (d) Book Looks and Learning Walks continued to take place and feedback was given. Governors were shown a review of live modelling and they looked at the summary of findings. This review evaluated the effectiveness of live modelling across Early Years and Primary phases, with a focus on how teachers demonstrated learning processes, model thinking, and supported pupils in applying new learning. The quality of live modelling across the school was consistently strong. Lessons observed showed purposeful, structured teaching with clear steps, repetition, and visual demonstration. Pupils were highly engaged and able to articulate their learning. Staff demonstrated strong pedagogical understanding and application of instructional practices, aligning well with school priorities. Teachers consistently narrated the learning process, demonstrating step-by-step thinking and breaking tasks into manageable stages. Effective use of visualisers and real objects supported clarity and accessibility. Teachers modelled reflective language, encouraging pupils to self-assess. Sentence stems, partner talk and full-sentence responses were embedded across phases and dual coding and repetition supported comprehension and memory of key vocabulary. "My turn/your turn", cold calling, thinking time and success criteria was routinely used. Clear routines and pace ensured high engagement and excellent behaviour for learning and tasks were tightly aligned to modelled examples, supporting independent success. TAs were deployed effectively and inclusion for SEND pupils was strong. In the classroom the climate was warm with positive relationships evident. Classes were purposeful, enthusiastic learning environments observed from Nursery to KS2 and high expectations were maintained consistently;
 - (e) whilst practice was highly effective, minor refinements would further strengthen consistency. This would involve embedding questioning routines and building
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reasoning prompts (“Why?”, “Can anyone build on that?”) into checks for understanding. Modelling clarity would involve continuing to narrate “messy thinking” in every subject and in EYFS/KS1 to ensure consistent verbalisation of letter formation and encourage use of letter mats. It would be important to ensure visual resources were easily accessible to all pupils (e.g., table copies where needed) and to continue to streamline classroom environments to remove excess visual distraction. Overall, the school demonstrated strong and improving practice in live modelling, with a clear commitment to high-quality teaching and learning. Pupils displayed enthusiasm, confidence in speaking, and strong engagement as a result;

- (f) [in response to a Governor’s question](#), the Headteacher said that during a book look, the SLT chose books to review that included SEND and PP pupils. Usually they chose 4 books to look at;
- (g) [a Governor asked if the School had a results goal across each year group](#) and was told that they did. In order to do this staff reviewed the data set, compared it to Summer 2 results and reviewed targets accordingly. Pupil progress meetings took place with each teacher and targets were considered. Appraisals had a focus on quality of teaching rather than data outcomes now but data was still discussed. Key Ofsted points were focused on during Pupil Progress meetings which were held termly.

9. STAFFING

REPORTED

(a) Update on staffing structure

There was no changes to the staffing structure. One teacher was leaving at the end of term and this position had been advertised. The Headteacher said that it was rare for staff to leave but it did obviously happen sometimes. [In response to a Governor’s concern](#), he stated that he was happy that this would not impact on results. They would be looking to employ a strong teacher and to date had received a great deal of interest in the position.

(b) Update on the annual cycle of Performance Management

The performance management cycle had taken place. Targets had been set around teaching standards and responsibilities.

(c) Continuing professional development

Governors noted the details of CPD for this term and were assured that training requirements were discussed in appraisals and training provided where appropriate. Statutory training was in place and other bespoke requests would be considered

(d) Update on staff absence

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

There was one significant long term absence at present due a staff member needing

to undergo an operation. Three other staff were on long term absence due to family reasons. [Following a Governor's question](#), it was established that these three absences were logged under anxiety and stress as time off for a dependent was a category more widely used for taking time off for an unwell child or someone needing to take a dependent to a hospital appointment for example. Governors discussed the fact that days off for anxiety and stress were a challenge for the School and it was not possible to budget for cover. Therefore these absences impacted on other staff which was far from ideal. [A Governor commented that if unforeseen circumstances were removed from the data absence figures were not really bad](#). It was noted however, that they were worse than this time last year.

10. **POLICY REVIEW**

RECEIVED the following policy a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub

- Attendance and Absence Policy

NOTED that

- (a) this was a School Policy, not an LA one. Governors reviewed it in depth. The Headteacher explained that one of the key changes was that if a child were persistently absent (P/A) unless they produced a Doctor's note, the absence would be unauthorised. PA would also mean that if they requested to be off school to take part in a play for example, the School would not grant this absence if they had below 90% attendance over 12 months. The Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) would be involved in some cases but the success of this intervention did vary;
 - (b) [A Governor commented that the policy was quite large and considered it would be useful to have a summary of key points highlighting the changes in order for these to be clearer to parents](#). The Headteacher agreed and recognised the importance of parents fully understanding the main points of the policy;
 - (c) the Headteacher commented that 15-20% of disadvantaged children at the School had P/A and they were keen to close the gaps to ensure these children were able to access the best educational start in life. To do this , they clearly needed to be in School;
 - (d) fining information within the policy was taken from Government advice and a need to show Ofsted that the School were addressing issues around attendance. [A Governor asked if the changes would adversely affect some families](#). The Headteacher did not consider they would but it was possible they might if the School chose to go down the legal route. Governors were assured that the School knew their families well and would always take circumstances into account. Fining would only be considered where it might prove to be a useful deterrent and discretion would be used around whether a family could afford a fine anyway. The Headteacher hoped the threat of fining would improve the situation in some cases;
 - (e) following further discussion, the Headteacher added that over 50% absence required severe intervention. There was currently one child at the School in this situation and social services and other agencies were now involved. The matter was a case of educational neglect.
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RESOLVED to agree the above policy and recommend it to the Governing Body for ratification.

ACTION: CLERK

. 11. **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

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

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

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

NOTED there was no other business to consider.

13. **ITEMS TO REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL_**

RESOLVED that no items be regarded as confidential.
