



## GOVERNING BODY

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 7.30pm**

**Minutes approved:**

**Date:**

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**GOVERNORS (\* indicates present):**

<u>Parent</u>	<u>Co-opted</u>	<u>Authority</u>	<u>Trust</u>	<u>Staff</u>
* Ms P Dixon	* Mr M Dixon	* Mr C Kitson	Ms R Bynon	* Mrs K Wheeler (HT)
Ms R Medwynter	* Mr S Gascoine		* Mr T Williams (Chair)	Ms K Henderson
Ms M Thomas	* Mrs E Humm		Mr J Blair	
	* Ms A Ross			
	Ms B Whelan			
	* Mr T Wilkins			

**In attendance:**

Ms A Money, Business Manager and Clerk to the GB  
 Ms J Bowers-Broadbent, Head of Primary Phase  
 Mr M Parvez, Head of Secondary Phase  
 Mr M Beresford, Minuting Secretary

## MINUTES

<b>Min</b>	<b>Summary of Action Points or Matters Arising for next meeting</b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>
<b>03/16</b>	Fair copies of GB minutes 10th December to be signed by Chair and emailed to all Governors	<b>Chair, Clerk, Minute Secretary</b>
<b>04/16.2</b>	Communications working party: Governors interested in forming this to make arrangements to meet	<b>T Williams, J Blair, A Ross, B Whelan</b>
<b>04/16.3</b>	Governors profile: submissions required from 4 remaining Governors:	<b>M Dixon, P Dixon, R Medwynter, MThomas</b>
<b>04/16.4</b>	Building Project archive: possible involvement of English Heritage	<b>M Parvez</b>
<b>04/16.5</b>	Public Ethics declarations - query need for all staff to submit forms with LA	<b>Business Manager/ Clerk</b>
<b>04/16.7</b>	Staff Leave of Absence Policy: review and agree changes	<b>T Wilkins, HT, Chair</b>
<b>07/16</b>	Leadership & Management :	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form group of Governors to respond to OFSTED inspectors</li> </ul>	<b>M Dixon, S Gascoine B Whelan, T Williams</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor required for Resources Committee (not a school employee)</li> </ul>	<b>All Governors</b>
	<i>(Summary continued on page 2 )</i>	

<b>08/16</b>	SEF:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any comments / input to HT</li> </ul>	<b>All Governors</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Governors' Action Plan</li> </ul>	<b>Chair</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-circulate list of Link Governors</li> </ul>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>Min</b>	<b>Summary of Action Points or Matters Arising for next meeting</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>12/16.2</b>	Collaboration: convene & circulate agenda for special additional GB meeting 6pm 22 <sup>nd</sup> February	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>13/16</b>	DBS staff 3 year renewal and Governor clearance:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>seek firm advice from LBWF</li> </ul>	<b>Business Manager/ Clerk</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek Essex CC views on the issues</li> </ul>	<b>Minuting Secretary</b>
<b>14/16</b>	Governors' Conference - arrange venue on school premises and refreshments	<b>Business Manager &amp; Clerk</b>

***Governors' comments, queries, or challenges during debate are highlighted in these minutes in italic underlined text, with responses and debate following in italic text.***

- 01/16 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** **Action**  
Apologies were received and consented from Governors Bynon, Henderson and Whelan. Governors Blair, Medwynter, and Thomas were also absent.
- 02/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**  
There were no declarations of conflicts of interest on items on the agenda or receipt of gifts or hospitality.
- 03/16 MINUTES OF THE GB MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2015**  
The open and confidential minutes were approved as a correct record. Fair copies to be signed by the Chair and emailed to all Governors by the Minuting Secretary. **Chair,  
Minutes  
Secretary**
- 04/16 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS OUTSTANDING**
- 1 *Minute 83/15.1 - Signing of July and September GB minutes***  
The minutes were signed by the Chair
- 2 *Minute 83/15.12 - Communications working party 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 5.30***  
A meeting had not taken place as planned for 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 5.30. It was left to Governors interested in forming the Communications working party to make alternative arrangements. **T Williams  
J Blair, A Ross  
B Whelan**
- 3 *Minute 83/15.3 - Governors profile***  
The Business Manager requested submissions from 4 remaining Governors: **M Dixon, P Dixon  
R Medwynter, M Thomas**
- 4 *Minute 87/15 - Building Project archive***  
Involvement of English Heritage - action yet to be taken **M Parvez**
- 5 *Minute 88/15.4 - Intrusiveness of Public Ethics declaration forms***  
The Clerk advised that she was attending a meeting with the LA on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February and would raise a query whether all staff needed to complete declarations. **Business Manager / Clerk**

**6 Minute 88/15.8 - Capability Policy**

A policy containing LA revisions had been circulated with the agenda for re-consideration by Governors. See minute 10/16.1 below.

**Action**

**7 Minute 93/15 - Staff Leave of Absence Policy**

The Chair of Governors had submitted some re-wording for consideration but this had not yet been agreed. Governor Wilkins offered to review and agree changes with the HT, Chair to be consulted again if necessary.

**T Wilkins,  
HT, Chair**

**8 Minute 98/15 - NUT London Schools Funding**

Governors were updated that a campaign event about re-distribution of schools' funding had been or was to be organised in Camden.

**05/16 CHAIRS' ACTION**

None to report.

**06/16 GB, COMMITTEE AND TRUST BOARD UPDATE**

**1 Performance Scrutiny Committee 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

The minutes had been circulated with the agenda. The Chair of the Committee, Governor Gascoine, drew Governors' attention to:

- Postponement of target setting (to be agreed at the next meeting 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016)
- Introduction of new "traffic light" coding system for attendance and punctuality
- Improvement of some examination results after partially successful objections to marking
- Underlying pupil performance encouraging despite 2015 English IGCSE setback
- Gender gaps being tackled and reduced

The minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016 were noted, and the Committee's decisions ratified.

**2 Resources Committee 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

The Chair of the Committee, Governor M Dixon, briefly described the main business that had been considered, which included:

- Budget - finances and cash flow healthy, surplus now exceeding £700,000
- Costs of building development not funded by Government to be met by LA
- Pupil numbers up since October 2014
- Staffing issue: new joiners and leavers
- Pupil Premium report
- Policies on Capability and Best Value approved - on this agenda for ratification see also minute below.

Governors noted and ratified the Committee's decisions of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

**07/16 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT**

The HT's report had been circulated with the agenda. She highlighted the following:

General

- Buxton's presentation evening had been held at WF Assembly Hall due to building works

Community

- Duke of Edinburgh's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary meal prepared by students held tonight and attended by Governors

Outcomes for pupils

- 2015 outcome of 47% 5 GCSE A\*-C inc English and Maths now published in league tables. The figure in RAISEonline would remain at 15% until data validation in March.
- OFSTED would refer to its own data "dashboard" rather than the RAISEonline figure when considering inspection
- Value added 1011, just below 1014.5 which would have been significantly positive.
- Current Y11 was a weaker group but 56% were on track for 5 A\*-C inc English and Maths with aspirations to exceed 60%
- Value added at 1011 was just below the significantly positive level of 1014.5 .
- Some pupils had taken English early - not those considered to be either stronger or weaker in the cohort - and achieved 60% A\*-C. School performance would be judged on the first rather than the best results, but the best of either English Language and Literature results would count.
- Speaking and Listening assessments had remained unchanged, which had boosted staff confidence.
- 21 Y12 pupils had re-taken English without receiving much further instruction between June and November 2015. 12 of these had achieved C, tending to confirm that they had deserved better results in the summer.
- As in KS4 the floor target in KS2 was higher meaning level 4B was required rather than Buxton pupils' more typical level of 4C. This would be hard to do and looked unlikely.
- While pupils entered well below national baseline assessments and made strong progress between EYFS and KS1, progress between KS1 and KS2 was not so good and of greater concern.

Would Performance Scrutiny Committee be looking at Primary progress in detail?

*Yes, but the key point was that pupil performance data did not show as strong a picture as might be expected from the observed quality of teaching, with Maths being weaker within that overall picture. A school effectiveness adviser (Rachel Singer) and specialist leaders in education were helping teaching staff with different teaching methods, data, tracking, assessment, and gap analysis.*

Did some pupils' lower performance in Maths stem from difficulty comprehending questions?

*Language could affect pupils' ability to apply a strategy. But the curriculum had also become more difficult in concept and idea, so Maths strategies were different. Heads of Years and Teachers in Years 3, 4, and 5 were beginning to track pupil progress over a longer time horizon and holding pupil progress meetings to identify gaps in pupils' skills earlier so that problems could be tackled over the whole 3 years.*

*Channeling more teaching effort into Maths, however, increased pressure on other areas of the curriculum. Buxton was still committed to maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum - unlike some schools - but the difficulties were growing. It had already been necessary to make space in the timetable for teaching skills in SPAG (English grammar,*

*punctuation and spelling).*

What were other local schools views about the rise in floor targets?

*Most appeared to regard 65% as achievable, but reaction to 85% was not yet known.*

**Action**

The HT pointed out the danger of Buxton being categorized as a “coasting school” if performance did not improve by 2017, for the 2015 IGCSE English results had been affected by re-classification, and the challenging rise in the floor target of 85% achieving 4B was unlikely to be achieved during 2016. This was potentially demoralizing and quite damaging for staff. The term “coasting” sounded as though staff weren’t working hard enough, whereas nothing could be further from the truth. From her own observations, Governor Ross provided strong affirmation that Teachers were working at their limits.

Personal Development, Behaviour, and Welfare

The HT pointed out that there had been fewer exclusions than last year, and overall attendance improving by 0.3% compared to the same period last year.

Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

The current focus for staff was mainly on development of middle leadership through in-house and external partner training, a KS3 Challenge group, and meeting more effectively.

The HT drew attention to preparing staff and Governors for the next OFSTED inspection. In her report she suggested forming a group of Governors - who could not also be members of staff - to become well informed about the school’s data and circumstances and could meet inspectors at short notice.

In the context of so much change going on in methods and evaluating data, several Governors thought they needed ‘coaching’ in how to interpret data, and felt that a clearer picture on performance might take another year to emerge. The HT also felt that some data were not yet reliable, notably benchmarks for comparisons with other schools.

After some further discussion about how to focus most effectively on school performance and be able to respond knowledgably to inspectors, it was agreed that a small group of Governors should take the lead in developing expertise. The most practical way forward was for this group to comprise the GB Chair and the Chairs of Committees.

**M Dixon  
S Gascoine  
B Whelan  
T Williams**

The HT also reminded Governors of the need for an additional independent Governor (i.e. not employed by the school) on Resources Committee. There were no volunteers for this role at present, so Governors were invited to nominate themselves at next GB.

**All  
Governors**

## **08/16 SUMMARY SEF JANUARY 2016**

Governors received and noted the contents of the summary SEF that had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that the system of Link Governors monitoring and evaluating aspects of school provision needed to be implemented more effectively or else dropped in favour of an alternative way of monitoring. The HT reminded everyone that an important focus in the SEF was Maths and invited comments or input on this from any Governor.

**All  
Governors**

One way of focusing evaluation would be for Governors to select a key objective in the School Development Plan and visit the school to monitor progress. It was also noted that an Action Plan for Governors had been discussed and agreed at last year's annual conference, and it was time this should be reviewed.

**Action**

It was therefore agreed:

1. To review Governors' Action Plan
2. To re-circulate list of Link Governors

**Chair  
Clerk**

## **09/16 BUILDINGS DEVELOPMENT**

Pictures of building progress were tabled for Governors' information. The HT confirmed that building progress was on course.

## **10/16 POLICIES**

The following policies had been approved by Resources Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> January and circulated with the agenda:

### **1 Capability Policy**

The HT reported that the LA model policy had been modified to meet union objections. Governors voted unanimously to ratify the policy.

### **2 Best Value**

Governors noted that this there had been no material change in this document since last year and voted unanimously to ratify the BV policy.

### **3 Statement of Internal Control 2015**

Governors noted that there had been no material change in the Statement of Internal Control since the previous year and voted unanimously to ratify the statement.

## **11/16 TARGET SETTING**

Proposed targets for KS2 and KS4 had been circulated with the agenda for Governors to comment in advance of detailed consideration at Performance Committee 11<sup>th</sup> February.

*[20.45 Governor M Dixon left the meeting]*

## **12/16 SOUTH AREA PARTNERSHIP COLLABORATION, SECONDARY CHALLENGE AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS ADVISER**

### **1 School Effectiveness Reports**

A report on visits 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> January by School Effectiveness Adviser (SEA) Rachel Singer had been circulated with the agenda.

*Wasn't Maths Mastery liked by Teachers, had it been dropped?*

*No: positive aspects of Maths Mastery were being incorporated into the new teaching structure. It had been liked by Teachers in one year group, but the SEA had recommended using other methods as well.*

### **2 Collaboration**

It was noted from Confidential minute 95/15.1 that the GB had agreed time should be set aside for collaboration and Government plans regarding schools' status to be discussed thoroughly both at this meeting and also at the next GB. The Chair also reported that the Trust Board had met and agreed it would make a decision but wanted input from Buxton GB and BLT.

**Action**

In view of the later start to this meeting, it was agreed to convene a special additional meeting of the GB to consider the issues on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 at 6pm, Clerk to circulate agenda to all Governors.

**Clerk**

**13/16 DBS [DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE] 3 YEAR RENEWAL**

The HT reported that the LA appeared to view 3 year renewal of DBS poor value for money and was now considering introducing a pro forma for existing staff. DBS clearance was mandatory for new staff, but Buxton would incur a cost of around £50 for each member of c250 staff to be renewed. The HT felt that firm written advice from the LA had to be obtained, as its auditors had previously criticized the process at Buxton when administrative delays had resulted in renewal dates slipping over 3 years. Governors also asked for clarification whether the DfE proposal to introduce mandatory DBS checks for new and existing Governors by April and September 2016 respectively was still proceeding.

Wasn't there an on-line system that staff could update themselves?

*Yes, but this had to be done annually and cost £13, although still cheaper over 3 years*

What was OFSTED's view ?

*Mandatory for new joiners, renewal not required at all.*

It was agreed:

- To seek firm advice from LBWF on staff renewals and Governor clearance
- To seek views of Essex CC on same issues

**Clerk**

**Minuting Secretary**

**14/16 GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE 23<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2016**

The date was confirmed. It was agreed to hold the conference on school premises with refreshments available during proceedings rather than lunch afterwards.

**Clerk**

**15/16 GOVERNOR FEEDBACK**

**1,2,3, 4 *Link Governor Reports, School related events attended, Training planned or undertaken, and any other contributions to school life***

Most Governors present had before the meeting attended the meal prepared by students to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme. The HT reported that Governors Whelan and Thomas had attended Buxton's Presentation evening at WF Assembly Hall.

**16/16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**1 *Admissions policy September 2017-August 2018***

For information: the HT tabled copies of the policy incorporating points previously agreed by the GB.

**2 *Proposed visit to Japan: Science Aspiration***

The HT asked for Governors to be made aware of this proposal: further information to be provided at the appropriate juncture.

*There being no further business the meeting was closed at 21.00*