

THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE ELIOT BANK AND GORDONBROCK PRIMARY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of the Eliot Bank and Gordonbrock Primary Schools Federation held on Thursday, 10 June 2021 at 6.00 p.m.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting took place remotely via Zoom.

PRESENT

Ms J. Bishop	
Ms B. Eadie	
Mr P. Fidel	Chair
Ms M. Gilmore	Executive Headteacher
Mr C. Hale	Vice Chair
Mr T. Hardy Hall	
Mr P. Jenkins	
Ms H. Keyte	
Ms K. Knowles	
Ms N. Sood	
Mr B. Stephen	
Ms T. Stickland	
Ms M. Worthington	

Also present:

Ms M. Barry	Deputy Headteacher, Gordonbrock
Ms L. McGuire	Deputy Headteacher, Eliot Bank
Mrs A. Osmond	Deputy Headteacher, Eliot Bank
Mr M. Ridler-Mayor	Acting Deputy Headteacher, Gordonbrock
Mrs K. Walsh	Head of School, Eliot Bank
Ms J. Wright	Head of School, Gordonbrock
Mrs J. Woods	Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS / WELCOME TO NEW PROSPECTIVE GOVERNORS

Apologies for absence were received with consent from Mr Bremner and Ms Quinn.

Governors were reminded that they must declare conflicts and pecuniary interest before items were discussed, and must withdraw from the meeting while the item was under discussion. If there is a change to a governor's declarable interests, the governor concerned must complete and return a new Register of Interests form.

The Chair welcomed Ms Jen Bishop and Ms Nutan Sood to the meeting. It was noted that Ms Sood was a class teacher at Eliot Bank, and it was proposed that she should fill the vacancy for a co-opted governor that had been set aside for a member of the Eliot Bank staff. Mr Fidel had met Ms Bishop recently to discuss her skills and experience and felt that she would make an excellent addition to the Governing Body, to fill the remaining vacancy for a co-opted governor.

2. TO AGREE THE BUSINESS FOR THE MEETING

The order in which items were to be discussed and those items which would be considered as urgent business was agreed upon.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING

(a) To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2021

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2021 be approved as a correct record. In view of the ongoing pandemic, the Clerk was requested to sign the minutes of behalf of the Chair.

(b) Matters arising

(i) Page 1, Minute 3(b)(i) – Register of Interests

The Clerk informed governors that one Register of Interests form was still outstanding. She undertook to check whether the governor concerned had returned the form directly to Anne-Marie Kucukkaramuklu.

(ii) Page 1, Minute 3(b)(ii) – Governing Body self review

Ms Gilmore informed governors that she had discussed the proposal for the review with the Headteacher at Kelvin Grove, who was in favour of going ahead with a review by Ms Worthington and the governor that she knew from Kelvin Grove before the end of term if possible. ***Ms Worthington said that she had already had an informal discussion with the other governor to reflect on their experiences during the lockdown***, and it was RESOLVED that Ms Gilmore would contact Ms Worthington to progress this further.

(iii) Page 2, Minute 3(b)(iii) – Governing Body Code of Conduct

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would email any governors who had not yet provided written confirmation that they had approved the Governing Body Code of Conduct

(iv) Page 3, Minute 5(a)(i) – Catering contract

Ms Keyte and Mr Fidel had attended a recent meeting on the catering contract which had been chaired by Fiona Gavin at Lewisham. Due to the sensitive and commercial nature of the contract, Ms Keyte was not able to share full details, but informed governors that Lewisham had only received one tender, with 12 companies declining to bid because they felt the contract was too small and they could not meet the specification. Ms Gilmore said that she was disappointed that only one bid had been received, from the existing contractor, and had hoped that the tender would attract a wider and more competitive field; no explanation had been given by Lewisham as to why the tender had not been attractive.

Ms Keyte said that it was apparent that Lewisham had not taken into account that a number of other tendering processes were taking place at the same time, and some of the companies concerned had tendered for other contracts. There had been an overarching feeling from those present at the meeting that the tendering process had been handled poorly by the local authority, and if this had been carried out a couple of weeks later and the contract had been made more attractive, the level of response might have been much better.

Lewisham had indicated that the cost per meal for the new contract would be £2.61, which was cheaper than the previous contract, but utility and waste costs were likely to be higher. Fiona Gavin had confirmed that this was competitive and was not much different to what had been seen elsewhere in the market. The local authority had been insistent that the new contract would provide better quality food than before; however, Ms Keyte said that the meeting had been quite negative overall.

Ms Gilmore said she was not convinced that schools would see a drastic improvement in the service they received, but recognised that the worst outcome likely was that there would be little difference. The new contract was for three years, and a number of schools had asked about the options for leaving after a year; although this was possible, the procedure was not straightforward. Approximately 25 schools had opted to stay with the Lewisham contract, but Ms Gilmore said that it would be possible to discuss the path that other schools had taken with them at a future time.

Because only one tender had been received, Ms Keyte said that Lewisham had been legally bound to accept this. Lewisham had asserted that all aspects of the tender had

been met, and had assured schools that they would monitor the contract very closely and would also visit each school to discuss an individual package.

Mr Fidel said that he had been pleased to have Ms Keyte's input but was also disappointed by the way that Lewisham had handled the contract, although he hoped that the delivery of the new contract may be an improvement on the current arrangements.

Mr Stephen had been in contact with the Lewisham branch of the NEU, and there had been discussion among members who wanted to open up communication with the local authority about catering. There was a feeling that the quality was not as good as it could be, and members had wanted to try to find a way to encourage the local authority to make improvements.

(v) Page 9, Minute 10 – Information to be published on the school website
Mr Fidel said that he understood a check had been made of the websites by a member of staff last term, and the schools were fully compliant with all requirements. Ms Worthington said that she had also reviewed the information on the websites relating to the remote learning provision, and was satisfied that this complied with the regulations; however, she had not undertaken a comprehensive review at this time.

(c) To approve the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 26 March 2021
It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 26 March 2021 be approved as a correct record. In view of the ongoing pandemic, the Clerk was asked to sign the minutes of behalf of the Chair.

(d) Matters arising

There were no matters arising which were not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

5. GOVERNING BODY

(a) Changes to the Governing Body

End of term of office

Name	Category	With effect from
Mr P. Fidel	Local authority	11/9/21
Mr T. Hardy Hall	Co-opted	11/9/21

Further to the discussion at the March meeting, the Clerk reported that Mayor and Cabinet had agreed to nominate Mr Fidel for re-appointment as the local authority governor. Mr Hardy Hall confirmed that he would like to be re-appointed as a co-opted governor.

Governors also considered the recommendation to appoint Ms Sood and Ms Bishop as co-opted governors, bearing in mind the skills they would bring to the Governing Body. It was **RESOLVED** that (1) Ms Sood and Ms Bishop be appointed as co-opted governors for a four year period of office with effect from 10 June 2021;

(2) Mr Hardy Hall be re-appointed as a co-opted governor for a four year period of office with effect from 11 September 2021; and

(3) Mr Fidel be re-appointed as the local authority governor for a four year period of office with effect from 11 September 2021.

Details of the induction training for new governors had been sent to Ms Bishop and Ms Sood, both of whom had received an email from Governors' Services to enable them to book onto forthcoming training sessions. Ms Gilmore said asked both new governors to let her know if

they had any difficulties in accessing the system. Unfortunately, Simone McAllister had been very unwell and would not return to school until 25 June, but Ann Carter had been providing support in her absence, and she would be able to help if necessary.

Mr Fidel informed governors that Ms Keyte had decided to resign from the Governing Body due to growing work commitments. Governors were very sorry to learn of this, and thanked her for her contribution to the Federation.

(b) DBS checks

Governors were reminded that all governors must have a valid DBS check in place, and new governors must begin the process to apply for a DBS certificate within 21 days from appointment. In Ms McAllister's absence, the Clerk undertook to send Ms Carter's details to Ms Bishop so that she could make arrangements for her check to be carried out.

(c) Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Where applicable, the chairs and vice chairs of all governing bodies had been asked to consider whether they wished to stand for re-election in the autumn term, and to engage in succession planning if they did not wish to continue. **Mr Fidel and Mr Hale both said that they would like to stand for re-election.**

The Governing Body reviewed their procedures for the election of the Chair and Vice Chair, and it was **RESOLVED** that the following procedures be agreed for the election in the autumn term.

- Term of office – one year.
If the term of office of Chair or Vice Chair is broken, the Governing Body will appoint a successor initially only for the remaining period of office.
- Nomination and self-nomination for appointment to be made at the meeting.
- Election procedure to be by secret ballot, but in the event of a single nomination, the Governing Body will vote on the nomination by a show of hands.

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS, VISITS TO THE SCHOOL, AND TRAINING

(a) Reports from committees

(i) Strategic Group

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2021 were received. The Strategic Group had received a report on the blended learning offer for both schools and had received a detailed update on the full reopening of the schools on 8 March. Updates had also been given on staffing and recruitment and governor recruitment, and the Lewisham Race Equality Pledge had been discussed.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May were still awaiting approval by the Chair, and would be circulated in due course.

(ii) Resources Committee

It was noted that the meeting due to take place on 27 May 2021 had been cancelled due to Ms McAllister's absence. The budget papers for Gordonbrock had been circulated for consideration by the Governing Body.

(iii) Finance Working Party

The Working Party had held an initial meeting and had agreed that it was necessary to identify which areas of the school budgets should be highlighted for detailed scrutiny, and these would be agreed in the autumn term.

Ms Gilmore and Ms McAllister had presented a number of proposals to the Working Party relating to potential cost cutting at Eliot Bank, and there had been discussion about

whether these were substantial enough to work in the long term and how much they might compromise the Eliot Bank offer, bearing in mind the schools was in the Ofsted window. It had been agreed that significant changes should not be made at this point, but that governors would continue to monitor the situation. Mr Bremner and the Working Party were keen to look at potential savings across both schools at their meeting in the autumn term.

(b) Review of committee membership and link governor responsibilities

The membership of committees was reviewed, together with link governor responsibilities. *Ms Gilmore asked for a governor to take on the joint role of link governor for key school improvement issues, and Ms Bishop said that she was happy to be involved. Ms Worthington and Ms Eadie had both been in to monitor aspects of the curriculum work, and it was agreed that it would be helpful for them to share their experiences with Ms Bishop.*

(c) Visits to the school, meetings attended, and other activities

Mr Fidel had attended the Chairs' Briefing with the Executive Director. The Briefing had focused on two main issues. The first had been SEND expenditure, and Mr Fidel informed governors that Lewisham had currently overspent by £5m, and was looking to make savings. One of the measures being considered was bringing all students in special schools outside the Borough back into Lewisham, but this had not been finalised and no figures had been available. The other issue raised had been the term time only staff pay settlement. *A governor asked for more information about this, and Mr Fidel explained that term time only staff had claimed against their employers for a longstanding error in the calculation of their salaries.* This would affect all schools to different extents, but some schools could potentially face a significant financial liability for current and former employees. *Mr Fidel said that schools which had deficit budgets, or which were close to being in deficit, would be able to apply for a loan to meet this cost at reasonable rates, but schools which had a surplus would not qualify for a loan.*

Ms Gilmore informed governors that this was a central error and a miscalculation of the amount of holiday pay payable to support staff, and must be backdated to 2016 for previous employees. Schools were being asked to meet 14% of the cost, but Ms McAllister had already anticipated this and had included provision in the budget plans.

(d) Governing Body training

Mr Jenkins and Ms Knowles had attended the recent training session on unconscious bias, which they had found very interesting. It was agreed that Ms Knowles would forward the PowerPoint presentation used by the trainer to governors.

Mr Jenkins had also attended training on SEND and budget setting, which had given him a good overview.

(e) Half termly governors' newsletter

It was noted that the second half termly governors' newsletter had now been circulated to all governors and the training programme for the autumn term should be received towards the end of term.

(f) School term / holiday dates

Details of the school term and holiday dates for 2021/22 and 2022/23 had been included in the agenda, and were noted.

6. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

(a) Executive Headteacher's report

(b) Monitoring the recovery programme

The Executive Headteacher gave a presentation on the Federation's recovery programme; copies of her PowerPoint presentation had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting, and a version of this had also been presented to the Strategic Group at their last meeting. She began by giving the context of the recovery and catch up programme for both schools

Ms Gilmore said that she had asked Ben Stephen and Kate Angyalova from Eliot Bank to give a presentation on maths to the Strategic Group at their next meeting.

When the recovery work had begun, senior leaders had discussed how to help children, staff, and themselves to recover and return to school, making this as secure and stable an experience as possible. The Federation had based the work on the recovery curriculum around a thinkpiece published by Professor Barry Carpenter and Barry Carpenter. Initial discussions about recovery had begun last summer and had gained momentum. The aim of this work was to re-engage children as learners again, building on five levers to give a systematic, relationships-based approach.

The five levers were as follows.

1. Relationships – Schools could not expect their pupils to just slot back into the pre-pandemic situation, and it may be necessary to restore relationships that had been thriving previously and plan for this.
2. Community – It was important to recognise that the curriculum will have been based in the community for a long period of time, and it was important to listen to what had happened during the pandemic, understand the needs of the community, and help them in the transitioning of learning back into school.
3. Transparent curriculum – All children would feel that they had lost time in learning, and staff should be honest in accepting that they had not been able to teach everything. An individualised approach was needed to show children how the gaps were being addressed, and to recognise that while some children were thriving, others needed extra support.
4. Metacognition – Children had been learning in different environments and different ways during the pandemic, and it was essential to make the skills for learning in a school environment explicit to the children and to help to rebuild their confidence as learners.
5. Providing space to enable the children to rediscover their selves and to find their voice on learning, by giving them the opportunity to talk about their experiences.

Governors were reminded that they had responsibility to monitor the success of implementation of the recovery plan, together with implementation of expenditure of the catch up funding. ***The Chair had carried out research using a number of different websites, and had produced a report on monitoring of the recovery programme. He had highlighted the likely areas that Ofsted might question governors about during an inspection, which included the following.***

- What is the value of each school's catch up funding?
- What is it being spent on?
- How are pupils selected for the spend?
- What is the planned timescale for recovery, with a clear entry and exit strategy?
- Is there any additional support/CPD required for delivering targeted academic interventions?
- Is there any extra measures/monitoring required to meet the social and emotional needs of pupils and staff?

The DfE had given only very brief operational guidance when the children had returned to school in March, which included focusing on the prime areas of learning in the EYFS and assessing and addressing gaps in language, reading, and maths in Reception, particularly ensuring children's acquisition of phonic knowledge and extending their vocabulary, as well as looking at how all groups of children could be given equal opportunities for outdoor education. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers were expected to prioritise the identification of gaps and re-establishing good progress in phonics, reading, increasing vocabulary, writing, and maths, whilst ensuring the curriculum offer remained broad to teach the majority of pupils the full range of subjects over the year.

Gordonbrock had received £49,000 in Catch Up funding and Eliot Bank had received £32,400, which equated to approximately £75 per child. Disadvantaged children had struggled the most; these children had generally been further behind before the pandemic, and were now even further behind in primary schools. Some children had engaged well at home, but others had really struggled during the lockdown, and the recovery process was complex and individual.

The government was now requiring schools to ensure that their Pupil Premium expenditure was based on research, but Ms Gilmore pointed out that the Federation's work had always been based on high quality research, particularly the Education Endowment Fund, who had published a COVID support guide for schools in June 2020. The main recommendation in this document had been that great teaching was the most important lever to improve outcomes. The guidance had looked at the benefits of targeted approaches, tutoring, and small group work, as well as extending the school day, improved access to technology, and support for parents and carers, but had concluded that the most important lever was high quality teaching.

Ms Gilmore highlighted key points from the Education Endowment Fund's COVID-19 Support Guide for Schools, which had been published in June 2020. Staff had shared their understanding of recovery at the first professional development meeting (PDM), and Ms Gilmore drew governors' attention to the dictionary definition. She stressed that recovery must be long term, sustained, far reaching, and would take time, with no quick fixes.

Sir Kevan Collins, the former head of the Education Endowment Fund, had been appointed to lead the government's catch up programme, but had since resigned because of the lack of commitment and piecemeal approach. He had been very well respected before this appointment, but education leaders had been very disappointed by his resignation. Sir Kevan Collins had also recommended that tutoring should become a permanent feature. A great deal of research had taken place on extending the school day, which had shown that extending the school day did not necessarily have an impact on outcomes.

The EEF guidance had been shared with staff so that they had a clear understanding of recovery, and they had been given a great deal of time to talk together about how they felt being back in school, which children were standing out and why, what they were struggling with, what was going well, and reviewing good practice. There had also been discussion of diagnostic assessment and how to identify children's gaps, looking at whether disadvantaged children were the ones who needed the most support to catch up. Staff had spent time in break out rooms, and had looked at English and maths in more detail, particularly the role of teaching assistants and how to involve parents. Ben Stephen and Kate Angyalova, and the literacy co-ordinators, had provided a wide range of resources for teachers.

Five recovery PDMs had now taken place. Ms Gilmore said that she had run three of these meetings, using the slides presented to governors, across the schools, and there had also been an opportunity to plan across the Federation. She said that the Senior Leadership Teams had been realistic in recognising that it was not possible to cover everything on the list, but had focused on the key initiatives which it was known would make a difference. One of the PDMs had been based around joint year group planning across the Federation with a focus on non core subjects, and the final PDM had been on vertical year group planning within the schools.

The progress made by disadvantaged children in most year groups this autumn had improved on the previous year. The progress made by disadvantaged children in Year 3 was lower than other year groups, but it was noted that there were only 8 Pupil Premium children in this year group, compared with 29 in Year 5. Mr Ridler-Mayor said that a high number of disadvantaged children also had SEND in most year groups, for example, 5 of the 8 children in Year 3 also had special needs. He said that the transition from Year 2 to 3 had been expertly managed, but there had been challenges because of the closures, and this must be taken into account. Progress for Year 3 was improving, and this cohort was being monitored closely during the summer to ensure that the catch up continued into next year.

The attainment figures for the proportion of children reaching expectations were in line with progress, and where they were lower, for example Year 5 maths, targeted support had already been deployed. Mr Ridler-Mayor said that as his intervention work with Year 6 came to an end, he would begin to work with Year 5 for the remainder of the summer term.

There had been a noticeable dip in writing, and this reflected the particular challenges in writing during lockdown; although adaptations had been made, it had still been difficult for teachers to provide the necessary level of support for writing remotely.

The table on page 2 showed the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. This was a mixed picture, but there had been gains for the current Years 2 and 6. Mr Ridler-Mayor said that there was a need to focus on Years 3, 4, and 5, but progress from earlier baselines was improving. The Fischer Family Trust data calculated the gap between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged children to be between 10-20%, but the school was bucking some of the trends. Of 28 Pupil Premium children in Year 6, 18 were on track in maths, and the others were only four months behind, which showed strong recovery.

Mr Fidel said that the data was very encouraging, and that it clearly showed the children were making progress. The school had reliable data to back this up, and it was clear that the assessment work was going well and the catch up work was having effect.

Ms Gilmore reiterated that the school had focused on high quality teaching, rather than the use of many extra initiatives.

School Improvement Plan priorities

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities had been reviewed, and the documents for both schools had been circulated to governors. There had been a focus on broad brushstrokes of the overall priorities, looking at the impact of the recovery work that had been carried out and it had been recognised that there was a need for the SIPs to reflect where the schools were. In reviewing the SIPs, the schools had used the EEF guidance document and the five levers, particularly in coming out of the second lockdown. The reviews included details of the work that had taken place, together with the evidence to support this. Governors' attention was drawn to the following particular points.

Curriculum - Peer reviews had taken place in the autumn and spring terms, and it had been agreed that it would be helpful to have an external view from another headteacher on the blended learning offer. The spring term peer review had been used to look at this, and Ms Wright said that this had been a good learning experience.

There had been high levels of engagement with Google Classroom during the spring term lockdown, with 85-90% of children logging in weekly, and about 80% sending work in weekly.

Quality of teaching and learning – Curriculum work was following a holistic approach, including Shirley Clarke assessment. The English and maths middle leaders had received training through CPD, which linked into Ms Gilmore's earlier presentation.

Attainment and achievement – Much of this work came from the EEF document, and the principle of quality teaching and targeted support.

Inclusion – Despite being in partial closure, pupil progress meetings had taken place with every teacher in the school to look at targeted SEND pupils.

Behaviour and attitudes - Because of the pandemic, the Heads of School had not been able to carry out the same level of monitoring as usual, but informal walks round the school had taken place primarily to ensure that the school was COVID safe and that teachers felt safe in their working environment, as well as getting a sense of what was going on; in addition, an autumn term book look had taken place. A learning walk had taken place earlier that week, and the learning environments in both schools had been of a very high quality. The children had been engaged and focused on their learning.

Personal development – Ms Wright outlined the five lever work and approach from all members of staff to ensure high quality relationships. Work was continuing to ensure a whole school understanding of how to support the children’s mental health and wellbeing, and the PHSCE Team Leader was working closely with the SENDCO to ensure that learning activities and discussions around mental health were embedded into the curriculum.

Effectiveness of leadership and management – The review gave details of the professional development which had been provided, including middle leader training by Mr Ridler-Mayor. During the lockdown, Lorraine McGuire had delivered a CPD for teaching assistants differently for teaching assistants, and this could now be accessed electronically via Google Classroom.

Staff wellbeing – Senior leaders were continuing with informal walks round the school, and staff continued to feel confident that the school was a safe working environment. Very transparent conversations took place with staff, with an open door policy for any concerns. In addition, Ms Gilmore worked in close partnership with the NEU representatives across the schools.

The main areas for development for the next academic year were highlighted, which included transition back to school, the blended learning offer, and the long term sustained plan.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring of the SEND remote learning provision had taken place in February and many strengths had been seen.

As noted earlier, a remote peer review had taken place with Kilmorie Primary School to look at blended learning and to identify transferable strategies that had impacted on learning, particularly with regard to higher achieving disadvantaged children at Gordonbrock. The review had identified a large number of strengths, which had included strong EYFS provision, as well as a small number of areas for consideration, including the provision of having more devices readily available for remote and blended learning and to ensure that Google Meets happened in all classes across the school.

Work would continue on Assessment for Learning, building on the work with Shirley Clarke, remote learning strategies which could feed into the blended learning approach, and the strategic/wellbeing approach.

The report listed a wide range of other events which had taken place during the academic year, including World Car Free Day, Languages Day, Black History Month, Walk to School Week, Show Racism the Red Card, Remembrance Day, Children in Need, Road Safety Week, Year 3 World War Two Day, Disability History Month, Children’s Mental Health Week, World Book Day, earth Hour, and the Big Ask. In addition, Gordonbrock had been awarded the ArtsMark Gold Award in January, which was a very prestigious award accredited by Arts Council England, and was the only creative supportive standard for schools. The children had also really enjoyed

taking part in the Re-create Arts Project in February, where everyone was encouraged to make their own version of a famous piece of art.

Professional development and INSET

The report listed the professional development meetings which had taken place during the summer term, and listed the very wide range of training sessions attended since January. Ms Wright said that the school was still trying to use online courses wherever possible.

Inclusion

The report included information on the current SEND statistics, and anonymised summaries of the progress of the looked after children at the school, as well as anonymised updates of the children on Child in Need Plans and vulnerable children who were causing concern.

It was noted that all of the children who had been on Child Protection Plans at the start of the first lockdown has now been moved down to Child in Need Plans.

Personnel

One of the teaching staff had resigned on 14 May, and two new class teacher appointments had been made, subject to DBS checks. A School Direct student had also been recruited, together with three new teaching assistants.

Attendance

Attendance was slightly higher than usual at 98.04%.

Visits

The report included details of visitors and special events since January, and it was noted that visitors were now starting to come into school now that the restrictions had eased.

The Chair thanked Ms Wright for her very comprehensive report.

(d) Head of School's report – Eliot Bank

The Head of School's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and included items on progress and attainment, School Improvement Plan priorities, monitoring and evaluation, professional development and INSET, inclusion, personnel, school roll, attendance, mobility, free school meals, fire drills, accidents and incidents, and special events, visits, and visitors. Ms Walsh elaborated on areas from her report and answered questions from governors.

Progress and attainment

Andrea Osmond presented the progress and attainment data for Eliot Bank, which had been gathered using the same process as Gordonbrock. She explained that there was a mixed picture, but there were some really engaging aspects. The context was different within each year group, and she went through the data for each year.

Year 1 – The children had made great progress, and writing was the only area where progress had not been quite as strong. This compared similarly with last year. Ms Osmond said that some of the success of the catch up programme may have been due to the high level of participation in the wider reopening, where there had been an uptake of 60%. The children had been back on track quickly when they had been back in school. There were now 13 disadvantaged children in this year group, 9 of whom had a SEND diagnosis and 5 had an EHCP. However, these children were making good progress in reading and maths, and were only slightly below expectations in writing.

Year 2 – This cohort had made strong progress, with 80% of children in school or the wider reopening. A high proportion of children were back on track. There was a comparable number of disadvantaged pupils to last year; Ms Osmond said that a couple had made accelerated progress, but some were not back on track.

Year 3 – A similar percentage of children were on track compared with the previous year, with 50% on track for maths and 40% for reading.

Year 4 – Strong progress was being made. Ms Osmond said that there was a high level of SEND in this year group, with 12 children on the SEND register. Two children had EHCPs, one of whom was a disadvantaged child. There were 9 disadvantaged children in this year group, who had made good progress.

Year 5 – These children had made steady progress. There were 9 children with SEND, 6 of whom had dyslexia which was an additional hurdle for writing catch up. Unusually, there was no crossover between disadvantaged children and those with SEND.

Year 6 – The progress of disadvantaged children was extremely strong in reading. There were 11 children with special needs in this cohort, 4 of whom were also disadvantaged. Two children had EHCPs, and a further two were pending. A total of 14 children were disadvantaged. Ms Osmond reminded governors that this year group had been highlighted in many governors' meetings over the years, and there had been a great deal of input to this cohort. This had included three teaching groups, with Ms Osmond teaching maths and English alongside her responsibilities as Deputy Head. She said that she would be moving from Year 6 to Year 5 to help with the recovery process. Despite strong reading data, there was still a need to focus on maths and writing.

The proportion of children working at greater depth was fairly constant across the school for all pupils, but would remain a focus for disadvantaged children, particularly writing in Key Stage 1.

School Improvement priorities

Ms Walsh highlighted key areas from the whole school review of the Priorities.

Quality of teaching and learning – Ms Walsh stressed the importance of quality first teaching in the recovery work. There had been a large number of new staff at Eliot Bank two years ago, and support for those teachers was ongoing, including through high quality CPD, and INSET from Shirley Clarke, which was threaded through work in all areas.

Curriculum - A great deal of work had been carried out on diversification of the curriculum and remote learning.

Attainment/achievement – Work was ongoing to look at improving higher outcomes for underachieving pupils, particularly girls in maths, and this had been part of the peer review work over the last half term.

Behaviour and attitudes – The main focus had been on the growth mindset, and making sure children were read to learn and wanted to learn. A number of actions had been embedded, including assertive mentoring.

Personal development – Weekly virtual assemblies had been taking place to help to embed understanding of the growth mindset among pupils and staff.

Leadership and management – The Inclusion Team was very much a part of the recovery process with their work with disadvantaged pupils.

Monitoring and evaluation

The report included details of the Green School meeting with Lewisham Learning and the peer review with Horniman Primary School, and she drew governors' attention to the areas for development, which the school was working on. Governors were reminded that Eliot Bank was in the Ofsted window, and Ms Gilmore emphasised that it was important for governors to be aware that work was taking place to ensure that all teaching was at least good, with as much outstanding teaching as possible. This was the main driver at present, and regular Senior

Leadership Team meetings had been taking place at Eliot Bank to discuss the Ofsted framework and self evaluation. She reminded governors that it had been 11 years since the last inspection, and many members of staff would not have experienced an inspection. Because of this, Eliot Bank would draw heavily on Gordonbrock expertise gained from their last inspection; Eliot Bank had previously supported Gordonbrock in the process, but this was now mutual.

A learning walk was due to take place early the following week to look at English, maths, and the learning environment in all year groups.

In preparing for the peer review, Ms Walsh had worked very closely with the Headteacher at Horniman to shape the review, and she and Ms Osmond had met the maths co-ordinator and worked to interview pupils to see how they felt about maths learning, particularly the girls. A joint professional development meeting had taken place, and further PDMs had been held since the peer review.

The report also listed key events which the schools had been involved with. The Recreate Project had been a great success, and the children had produced some fantastic artwork, which had been celebrated in the newsletter and on the website, and a selection were now on display in school. World Book Day had included a number of activities, which had helped to bring the children together and reconnect with adults. There had also been a Year 6 virtual Anthony Gormley workshop tour, and a Year 6 Urban Synergy workshop.

Professional development and INSET

A significant number of joint PDMs had taken place with Gordonbrock.

Inclusion

The report gave an anonymised summary of the children who were on Child Protection Plans, Child in Need Plans, and vulnerable children.

Attendance

Attendance was currently very high at 97.17%.

Mobility

The number of children leaving and joining the school remained high, and this created a significant amount of additional work.

Mr Fidel suggested that it might be sensible to include peer on peer harassment in future under the item on discriminatory incidents. Ms Knowles felt that this would be helpful, and it was agreed that this would be included and discussed at the next meeting.

Ms Walsh was thanked for her report.

Mr Stephen said that, from a staff perspective, most colleagues would say agree that although they were all very tired, they felt extremely safe in school, and thought that the risk assessments had been extremely thorough and had worked well. He felt that the support that teachers and staff provided for each other was a great asset, and although the teams had had to adapt, they had found ways to work with each other. In terms of the children, some had picked up on press articles saying that they had fallen behind and must catch up, but teaching staff had been focusing on building their confidence and did not want them to feel that they were being pushed.

Mr Fidel said that a lot of the recovery work was a continuation of the work that the schools had been doing for some time, well before the COVID-19 pandemic, and much of the research had been based on earlier papers from 2016. He stressed that the Federation worked on the principle of quality first teaching, and although the recovery programme involved extra effort at the moment, this did not mean a change in direction because this was what the schools had been doing successfully in the past. Mr Fidel

recognised that the situation was not easy for staff, but because of how the Federation had worked, they did not have to face the additional stress of picking up a new range of skills.

Ms Gilmore pointed out that during the pandemic, the *Governing Body had been concerned about staff wellbeing as well as the children's wellbeing, and had been monitoring this. Mr Fidel visited both schools on a regular basis, and asked about staff wellbeing and morale on every visit, and was concerned that this was maintained, and that staff were working as a team across the Federation as well as within individual schools.*

Ms Stickland felt that it was good that the schools challenged the idea that the children only had a deficit as a result of the pandemic; although some may have fallen behind in some aspects, it was clear that they had gained in others, and she was concerned that the idea that children had only suffered loss was dangerous. Ms Gilmore agreed, and said that most of the 1,000+ children in the Federation were thriving, and the rhetoric of a lost generation of children was very damaging.

(e) Assessment data

This had been covered under the Head of School reports.

(f) Pupil Premium and PE/Sports Premium

Governors' attention was drawn to the link to the guidance for what must be displayed online in relation to the Pupil Premium and PE/Sports Premium. It was noted that the deadline for spending the PE/Sports Premium which had been carried forward from the 2020/21 academic year was now the end of the current academic year.

(g) Pupil Premium Strategy Statements

Governors were informed that schools must use the new template for publishing their Pupil Premium Strategy, and from the next academic year, it would be necessary to demonstrate that spending decisions were informed by research evidence.

The Chair asked whether this was in hand. Ms Gilmore confirmed that the Pupil Premium, PE Premium, and Catch Up funding information was on both websites. The schools had been intending to redesign the template for the Pupil Premium funding, and so would move to the new template once available. *Mr Fidel asked if the templates had been made available to schools yet.* Ms Barry said that it had been possible to look at the new document.

(h) Ofsted monitoring visits

It was noted that Ofsted had been inspecting schools during the summer term to provide reassurance about how well children and learners were catching up, and it was the intention that a full programme of graded inspections would resume in September.

7. 2021/22 BUDGETS AND THREE YEAR PROJECTION

Ms Gilmore explained that the Eliot Bank budget plan and report were not available because of Ms McAllister's absence, and further changes had been due to be made at the time she had been taken ill. She had spoken to Lewisham Finance, who had been very concerned about Ms McAllister, and it had been agreed that it would be acceptable for the Eliot Bank budget plan to be submitted at the end of June. It was noted that it would be necessary for an extraordinary meeting of the Governing Body to be convened to approve the budget later in the term.

The Gordonbrock budget for 2021/22 and three year plan had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Ms Gilmore explained that the budget showed a deficit in year 3, but this was not large, and was based on every part of the budget being fully spent over the next three years, which was highly unlikely to happen. It was **RESOLVED** that the Gordonbrock 2021/22 budget and three year plan be approved.

8. PERFORMANCE RELATED PAY AND APPRAISAL

(a) Governor appraisers

Governors reviewed the appointment of the four governor appraisers to review the performance of the Executive Headteacher. It was **RESOLVED** that Mr Fidel, Mr Bremner, Ms Stickland, and Mr Jenkins should continue as the governor appraisers and that Kathy Palmer should continue as the external adviser, subject to Ms Gilmore confirming that she was willing to do so.

(b) Pay Committee and Pay Appeals Committee

The membership of the Pay Committee was reviewed, and it was **RESOLVED** that membership of the Committee should remain unchanged.

(c) Policy review

Governors discussed arrangements for the review of the Performance Appraisal Policy and Pay Policy and noted that the Pay Policy must be approved by the whole Governing Body. It was **RESOLVED** that both policies would be submitted to the autumn term meeting of the Governing Body, together with the updated Safeguarding Policy.

(d) Review of staff appraisal and performance related pay awards

It was **RESOLVED** that the annual written reports on staff appraisal would be submitted to the Pay Committee for consideration at the autumn term meeting.

9. SAFEGUARDING, HEALTH AND SAFETY, AND RISK MANAGEMENT

(a) Safeguarding report

The detailed inclusion reports for both schools had been circulated prior to the meeting. The reports gave details of the current SEND statistics, information on looked after children, children on Child Protection Plans, Child in Need Plans, and other vulnerable children, all of which had been anonymised.

(b) Keeping Children Safe in Education

Governors were reminded that new governors were required to read and understand Part One and Part Two of the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance, and all staff in their school must read at least Part One of the guidance. Ms Sood had already provided written confirmation that she had done so, and it was noted that the Clerk would include the link to the guidance in the letter of appointment that she would send to Ms Bishop.

(c) Health and safety report

The Premises Manager's termly report had been circulated to members of the Resources Committee for consideration. There were no further issues to be discussed.

(d) Risk management

Governors were reminded that it was a legal requirement that schools should revisit and update their risk assessments (building on the learning to date and the practices that had already developed). Although the implementation of operational plans is the responsibility of school leaders, governing bodies should continue to have oversight of ongoing risk assessments and should seek assurance that the measures in place are working effectively, particularly in the current circumstances. ***Mr Fidel and Mr Hale had been keeping the risk assessments under review, and it was noted that the Premises Manager would be contacting them in the near future to review the risk assessments, and to make arrangements to carry out a health and safety document check. Mr Fidel said that he and Mr Hale would be arranging for a health and safety walk to take place in September with the trade union health and safety representative.***

10. URGENT BUSINESS

Mr Fidel informed governors that the parent governor election had been delayed because of Ms McAllister's absence, and the election would now take place early in the autumn term.

11. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the proposed schedule of meetings would be circulated as soon as possible.

These minutes were approved at the virtual meeting of the Governing Body held on 2 December 2021. In view of the ongoing pandemic, the Clerk was asked to sign the minutes on behalf of the Chair.



Jackie Woods, Clerk to the Governing Body

Signed on behalf of Peter Fidel, Chair 2 December 2021