

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEATHCOTE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON MONDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 2024
AT 6:00 PM
AT THE SCHOOL**

Present:	James Bore, JB (Chair)	Co-opted Governor
	Andrea Corbett, AC Tyron Julien, TJ Paul Leslie, PL Lauren Marchant, LM Shryene Yansen, SY	Co-opted Governors
	Sonia Close, SC	Headteacher
	Helen Douglas, HD Claire Feiner, CF Maria Slavovski, MS	Parent Governors

Clerk to the Governors: Kate Protsiv

Also present: Donna Miller, DM	Waltham Forest, Governor Services
Krista Mitchell, KP	Deputy Headteacher

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
	All committees to consider their ToR: if non-committee member governors should be able to join committee meetings as voting governors, at the committee’s request.	Committee Chairs	Pay Comm. 14 th Oct All other Committees 25 th Nov
4.2	SC to post the proposed committee structure on GovernorHub, along with a form for governors to respond. Link governors’ roles to be included.	Sonia Close	Immediate
4.3	Governors to raise comments or requests regarding the Committee Structure via GovernorHub.	Governors	November 2024
5.1	Governor Services/School to place an advert to recruit a professional Chair for the FGB	School	November 2024
6.1	Governors to comment with proposed amendments to the minutes via GovernorHub, prior to the next FGB.	Governors	November 2024
6.5	A report of equality and diversity form	Spring 25	Clerk/School

Chair’s Initials:

	responses to be brought to the next FGB		
6.5	Equality and diversity response form to be re-pinned to the noticeboard, and completed by all governors.	Governor Services	ASAP
	Agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.1: To formally ratify JB as Chair of the GB • 3.1: For the Deputy Headteacher to attend future FGBs • To continue with two Vice-Chairs • 3.2: To formally ratify CF and LM as Vice-Chairs of the GB 	-	
7	SC to ensure all slides are anonymised on GovernorHub for GCSE SEND results	SC	Immediate
8.2	LM to share a poll on GovernorHub for dates for School Safeguarding Training	LM	Immediate
9.2	Behaviour policy to be ratified by Committee	Committee Chair	November 2024
	Ratified policies and agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Terms of Reference • Deadline for comments and requests for committees: end of w/b 16.9.24 • Attendance Policy • Safeguarding and Child Protection (subject to a 10 day period for feedback following publication on GovernorHub) 		
	Date of next meeting: January 2025	All /GS	Immediate
	Agenda Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct • Minutes 22nd July • Behaviour Policy (Committee) 		

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 The Clerk welcomed all those present to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Laura Alexander and Leonie Alderman.
- 1.3 The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 Pecuniary Interests – Governors confirmed receipt of the register of interests.
- 2.2 There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS-RESULTS

- 3.1 DM reported the results of the online election for the position of Chair. There was one nomination for the position, which was also seconded. JB accepted the nomination and all present agreed to formally ratify JB as Chair of the Governing Board for the 2024/2025 academic year; up to the first meeting of the Governing Body in autumn 2025.

JB thanked MA for his 13 years of service to the Governing board, and noted his resignation from the GB. JB also noted Nerissa Bryden's resignation and thanked her for her service.

JB noted he would discuss the recent report received by governors at the end of the meeting, as AOB.

JB requested governors' permission for the Deputy Headteacher to attend future meetings, for her professional development. Governors agreed this request.

- 3.2 DM reported the results of the online election for the position of Vice-Chair. There were two nominations. After a brief discussion governors agreed to continue with two Vice-Chairs. LM and CF both accepted the nominations and all present agreed to formally ratify LM and CF as Vice-chairs of the Governing Board for the 2024/2025 academic year; up to the first meeting of the Governing Body in autumn 2025.

4. GOVERNING BOARD COMMITTEES

- 4.1 SC noted her request in the previous FGB to propose to governors a new model of committees. SC proposed four new committees, structured around the four parts of the SIP. Each proposed new committee would link to the area section of the SIP, and be joined by the SLT lead for the area at meetings. All four committees would be asked to report on EDI to the FGB.

- 4.2 SC proposed to governors sharing a draft plan for committee structure and membership on GovernorHub, linked to a vote. SC welcomed alternative suggestions for restructuring committees. SC noted if Vice-Chairs and the Chair were to continue chairing committees a fourth committee chair would need to be elected.

SC screen-shared a draft document.

JB and HD expressed support for the new structure in principle. SC noted it would enable link visits to be brought to committee, ensuring they had sufficient time to be fed back and actioned as appropriate.

Q: (HD) Is there a potential concern regarding quorum, if committees are too small?

A: It was noted that last year people were not always present. JB stated this meant feeding back to SC on the draft proposal was important. JB asked governors to ensure they were in the correct places, where their strengths could be valued. This would support quorum going forward, ensuring everyone is in the place they feel their contributions will be valueable.

Q(HD): Could there be a case for some governors being on more than one committee?

A: SC noted she would be also available as a floating governor when key decisions needed to be made. DM recommended committees to consider in their ToRs if they wish to be able to call upon additional governors to join meetings when meetings may not be quorate, or if specific governors have skills to bring to a decision making process

Action: All committees to consider their ToR, if non-committee member governors should be able to join committee meetings as voting governors at the committee's request.

6:20pm AC joined the meeting

Action: SC to post the proposed committee structure on GovernorHub, along with a form for governors to respond. Link governors' roles to be included.

--

Action: Governors to raise comments or requests regarding the Committee Structure on GovernorHub.

Governors agreed a nil response by the end of the week beginning with this meeting would be taken as agreement with the proposed structure and their assigned role(s).

- 4.3 ToR for committees were agreed, subject to any revision in the new Committee meetings.

5. GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 Governors discussed the previous proposal of seeking a professional Chair to support the board. JB indicated if a professional Chair was recruited, he would stand down as Chair. Governors agreed to seek as professional Chair as co-opted governor.

Action: School to place an advert to recruit a professional Chair to Chair the FGB

- 5.2 DM invited co-opted governors to complete the process to become a Local Authority governor, and explained the process in detail.
- 5.3 Constitution: It was agreed, other than to recruit a professional Chair, the governors would not seek to fill the remaining co-opted governor vacancies at this time.
- 5.4 DBS checks were confirmed for governors
- 5.5 The Code of Conduct was moved to the next FGB for consideration.
- 5.6 The school is to hold a Staff Governor election.

6. MINUTES

- 6.1 Governors received the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July. SY queried the minutes, if a discussion and action were recorded. The minutes were agreed to be deferred to the next FGB. Governors were asked to comment with amendments via GovernorHub ready for agreement at the FGB.

Action: Governors to comment with proposed amendments to the minutes via GovernorHub, prior to the next FGB.

- 6.2 Matters arising:

Q: Are the equality and diversity form responses ready to bring to governors?

A: Some responses are outstanding. It was agreed a report for submissions received would be reported at the FGB, regardless of any outstanding submissions

Action: A report of equality and diversity form responses to be brought to the next FGB

Action: Equality and diversity response form to be re-pinned to the noticeboard, and completed by all governors.

It was noted 5.2.4.3 was closed, following the resignation of a governor with an outstanding DBS.

6.40pm KM joined the meeting

7. SCHOOL DATA AND ACTIONS

SC screen-shared the PowerPoint 'Governors September Presentation', as previously circulated via GovernorHub. SC spoke through individual slides in detail, the following questions were raised during the presentation:

Q: The progress with Kier is excellent, what prompted action?

A: There has been a change in personnel. Works Kier have responsibility for were detailed.

Q: Where the ICT upgrades necessary, or planned works?

A: Many consumables were at the end of life.

Q: Regarding competition for pupils, how do Heathcote's results compare to other local schools?

A: SC gave a detailed comparison with other local schools, reporting a number of positive achievements.

Q: (GCSE results table) Are the highest results being achieved across a range of subjects?

A: They are particularly achieved in STEM subjects. Higher Prior Attainers (HAPs) also achieve well in psychology. SEND high achievements are of note, an anonymised table was shared, though a governor noted some results required anonymising on GovernorHub.

Action: SC to ensure all slides are anonymised on GovernorHub for GCSE SEND results

Q: Are GCSE pupils returning for the sixth form?

A: 85 pupils were retained. 30 joined from other schools, the highest ever number. Those who left sought specialist courses, such as photography, apart from 2 who joined siblings in another local school.

A: In response to a query SC explained how P8 is calculated, noting the data for this year is not yet validated. There was a discussion about the cost of remarking papers, and when it may be appropriate.

Q: What work is still needed to improve the accuracy of grade predictions?

A: There was a discussion about the historical culture and practice in the school. SC outlined how data is used to identify trends in predictions, so staff can be aware of areas to target. KM is also continuing to provide CPD.

Q: Should the aspirational targets of 70% of pupils achieving GSCE 4+ be raised to a target of 5+?

A: SC benched the target with LA and national achievements and gave a rationale for some individual subjects. TJ noted that a number of creative subjects would be a particular focus in regards to meeting this target. There was a discussion regarding the reason for this. KM noted many pupils missed, due to COVID closures, creative subject lessons in KS3. This may have impacted pupil choices for GCSEs. Individual subjects were discussed, it was noted Dance and Drama achievements were raised this year compared to last by around 10%. The school is still seeking to recruit a Music lead.

A: In response to a question SC clarified the term 'open buckets' for P8 calculations, as being the other three subjects, a child may choose.

Q: What is the plan for the notable underperforming groups; White British and Pupil Premium?

A: There is CPD for staff, using directed time. There is also bespoke CPD on Teaching and Learning, which has been sourced. Also data is fed back during meetings on an 8 week cycle, and actions are created with department leads. The intersectionality of key groups was also discussed. It has been noted all underperforming pupils have attendance below 80%. Strategies in place for attendance were discussed in detail.

Additionally, pupils at college on reduced timetables did not achieve well. In future pupils with similar needs will remain in school when possible.

Q: How were targets set for children who missed their KS2 SATs?

A: The school used CATs. This is not a national standard, and conversion is more complicated.

Q: What were the drivers for the significant improvements in Psychology, EPG and Sociology at A-Level?

A: The consistent practice and high expectations of a staff member were reported. It was discussed how this will be shared as good practice across departments.

Q: It was previously reported that there was a culture of teachers being afraid to make mistakes. What progress has been made?

A: The role of collective responsibility was discussed in building trust. KM noted previously unrealistic target setting and the importance of achievable targets in order for staff to engage meaningfully. SC described the 'nudge approach' of improving practice through achievable targets.

Q: 59/80 is a significant number of students to go to university, what were the barriers for those who did not go on to university?

A: Some chose apprenticeships or alternative courses. There were also some pre-planned gap years or gap-years to re-sit and raise grades in order to attend a first choice institution. More pupils are choosing London based university courses, possibly to manage costs.

Q: PL thanked staff and students for their hard work and praise their achievements. He also thanked SC for the level of detail and analysis reported to governors in the presentation. PL then asked for more detail regarding spreading good practice and sharing high achievement between departments.

A: KM and SC gave a detailed response of the operational measures in place. Feedback was discussed as well as workshops for staff, staff surveys, staff meetings, CPD and event specific feedback. SC noted AC's suggestion to include trust in data measures for staff feedback before and after sessions, to identify and share when work was notably reducing staff anxiety around progress measures. AC suggested a positive narrative may encourage other departments to engage.

8. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2024

- 8.1 Governors acknowledged receipt of the KCSIE Statutory guidance September 2024 and their responsibilities as detailed were noted. Governors were reminded to update declarations on GovernorHub.
- 8.2 Governors noted the school specific Safeguarding Training delivered by Neil for governors is compulsory. Governors were encouraged to attend training on GovernorHub.

Action: LM to share a poll on GovernorHub for dates for School Safeguarding Training

9. SCHOOL POLICIES

- 9.1 Attendance Policy: There were no significant changes, apart from the new DfE guidance on fines. LBWF are yet to finalise guidance. It was noted this is the policy most requested by parents. Agreed
- 9.2 Behaviour Policy: Key changes were reviewed last term. Due to a delay this policy was delegated to Committee. Tracked changes were requested.

Action: Behaviour policy to be ratified by Committee

- 9.3 Safeguarding and Child Protection: The model policy has not yet been released by LBWF. The policy was agreed in principle. Governors will have 10 days to read and provide feedback once the Policy is uploaded on GovernorHub.

10. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- 10.1 Date of next meeting:
- Pay Committee: 14th October 2024
 - All other Committees: 25th November
 - FGB: 6th January 2025

- 10.2 It was agreed all future meetings would be booked for 6:30pm
SC requested Governors report availabilities for GDC dates requested on GovernorHub

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Action Log Updates

The Actions below are tracked in the GB Sept 24 Action Plan.

- 11.1 JB stated there was no need for an official position on accepting or rejecting the report received in the Summer Term. The document has not been published, it is an internal document created to support the development of the governing body
- 11.2 JB reported there are some outstanding votes on the report's recommendations, and votes received are split.
- 11.3 JB proposed dismissing any recommendations linked to further investigations. Conversations with individual governors may be held, but individual matters do not require reporting to the full governing board.
- 11.4 The WhatsApp group has been ended.
- 11.5 JB proposed considering reconstitution in a future FGB, once progress has been made. There was a brief discussion to confirm current number of members.
- 11.6 SY asked about the recommendation on Public Service training for the Chair and GB. DM was noted this could be discussed alongside the Code of Conduct, JB stated a decision made alongside this discussion.
- 11.7 HD asked if the proposed work with Sharon Warmington had progressed. SC stated she had met DM and Rachel Bowerman to discuss this, and the possibility of sharing the cost of the £5k with other schools. DM reported the LA is planning to work with Sharon Warmington to deliver training for all schools. This may meet some of the GB's needs, and mean governors wish to choose to revise the school training proposal to reduce costs. AC noted some governors volunteer in other schools, which may open up spaces for more members of the GB to attend LA training. DM stated she would share the full scope of the training and spaces once finalised.
- 11.8 PL stated some bespoke training may still be needed.

--

- 11.9 The EDI recommendation was a split vote. After a discussion governors agreed that PL's suggestion on GovernorHub, of 2 agendas with EDI as an item per year, was a compromise. EDI will be on Committee agendas for discussion and reported bi-annually to the FGB.
- 11.10 After a further discussion it was agreed to maintain the current constitution.
- 11.11 JB stated he would be happy to stand down if a professional Chair was recruited, and it was agreed to place an advert. JB stated he would continue for the rest of the term as Chair, or until a Chair is recruited as a co-opted governor.
- 11.12 Future meetings were agreed to be two hours in length and begin at 6:30pm. The importance of timings was noted.

The meeting ended at 8:20pm