

**Holbeach Primary School**

**Non-confidential minutes of a meeting of the Governing Board of  
Holbeach Primary School  
held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 6.30 p.m.**

**In attendance**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Governor Type</b>	<b>End of Office</b>	<b>Present</b>
Ross	Baptie (RB)	Co-opted Governor Chair of the Resources Committee	26/11/2027	Yes
Emma-Jane	Boyd (EJB)	Parent Governor	18/10/2027	Apologies received
Tom	Bulpitt (TB)	Headteacher Ex-Officio	-	Yes
Katie	Drew (KD)	Co-opted Governor	27/03/2027	Yes
Glenys	Englert (GE)	Co-opted Governor Vice Chair of Governors	18/09/2027	Apologies received
Sharon	Farnley (SF)	Co-opted Governor Chair of Governors	06/04/2027	Yes
Charlie	Killick (CK)	Staff Governor	17/01/2027	Yes
Sylvia	McCloskey-Quigg (SMQ)	Parent Governor	01/12/2026	Apologies received
Tom	Orpin-Massey (TOM)	Parent Governor	05/01/2029	Yes
Steven	Orpwood (SO)	Co-opted Governor	06/07/2026	Yes
Ben	Pitcher (BP)	Local Authority Governor Vice Chair of Governors Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee	19/03/2029	Yes
James	Ransom (JR)	Parent Governor	05/01/2029	Yes
Miriam	Baguley (MBy)	Governance Professional	NA	Yes

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from EJB, GE and SMQ. Apologies for late arrival were received from SO.

The newly elected Parent Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the apologies of EJB, GE and SMQ were accepted, and the absences were consented to.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations, in addition to those already registered, were made.

### **3. GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

#### **3.1. Resignations**

- Colleen Boxall (CB) – Co-opted Governor - 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025

#### **3.2. Appointments**

- TOM – Parent Governor – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025
- JR – Parent Governor – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025
- BP – Local Authority Governor – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025

#### **3.3. End of Office**

None.

#### **3.4. Vacancies**

- One Co-opted Governor

Governors noted that it would be preferable to fill the remaining vacancy from someone in the local community. A skill set including HR or IT would be of value.

RESOLVED:

1. that the resignation of CB was received
2. that the elections of TOM and JR as Parent Governors effective 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025 for a term of four years were received
3. that BP, following renomination by the LA, and agreement at the last Full Governing Board (FGB) meeting, was unanimously reappointed as LA Governor effective 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025 for a term of four years.

### **4. NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> AND 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024**

The non-confidential minutes of the meetings held on 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were circulated to the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the non-confidential minutes of the meetings held on 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were approved to be signed as accurate records of the meetings.

### **5. MATTERS ARISING**

#### **Schoolhouse strategic plan update**

TB advised that, further to discussion at the last FGB meeting, Fiona Gavin (FG) had been asked to provide an update, but no response had been received. While this was not unexpected, given the level of reorganisation currently underway across all LA departments, it was likely that the phase two plans would come back for scrutiny at a later date. In the meantime, the school would continue to embed services for the community within the schoolhouse.

Governors asked if the likely cost of upkeep had been determined. TB said exact costs were not yet known, but the aim was to meet overheads through the services using the building.

Governors asked about use of the garden space. TB said that Reception and Nursery used it as an outdoor learning space and there was potential to develop it as a forest school, gardening club, or nature space.

Governors acknowledged the primary consideration of the LA was to provide accommodation for children in care but noted this had to be balanced against the existing value of the schoolhouse to the community.

#### **School Development Plan (SDP)**

The updated SDP had been circulated with the agenda for information.

There were no other matters arising and all actions were completed or were part of the items within this meeting.

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### **6. CHAIR'S ACTION**

None.

### **7. CHAIR'S REPORT**

- Regular meetings with TB to be made aware of strategic concerns and to act as a critical friend, offer support and provide a check in on wellbeing.
- Regular meetings with TB, GE and BP to discuss training and other Governing Board issues.
- SF had attended the leaving celebrations for the retiring Assistant Headteacher and presented a gift on behalf of the Governing Board.

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### **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Governors noted that the following Committee meetings had been held.

NB. All Governors were members of both Committees and were invited to all meetings. Full feedback of meetings would not be provided, and minutes would be circulated for information where available.

- Resources 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025
- Curriculum and Standards 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

### **9. HEADTEACHER'S SPRING TERM REPORT**

TB presented the Headteacher's report which had been circulated to the meeting and reported in detail on the following areas. Questions were invited.

- School Improvement Partner (SIP)
  - The SIP's experience as a current Headteacher in another school within the LA was of value. Her different approach to leadership and decision making helped provide alternative perspectives and was effective in holding the school to account.
- SDP.
  - The RAG rated SDP had been circulated to the meeting for information.
  - Progress was on track in the three main areas of development focus; items rated as red were those where actions were scheduled for the summer term. These included monitoring of Phonics sessions, analysis of the impact of work completed on phonological awareness, research into new Maths interventions, parent workshops in relation to supporting sensory needs, and continued embedding of the relational approach.

TB noted that as time with the occupational therapist was limited to one day per month, the parent workshop on sensory needs had been delayed. Two other workshops around advising/signposting parents of upcoming changes in the new academic year had taken place.

TB said that while work on embedding the relational approach continued, its priority level had reduced. Efforts were being focused on explaining the approach to parents. Workshops were part of this, but the key was to raise the profile of the approach to increase engagement. A recent Maths workshop had been very well attended, and parents were keen to learn the new methods being taught.

- Quality of Education.
  - Monitoring of teaching and learning had been carried out through book looks (English and Science), observations of Maths lessons as part of an audit, and Maths learning walks. Some monitoring was delegated to middle leaders as appropriate, but there was greater involvement of SLT in teaching and learning audits.
  - Maths leads had presented to the recent Curriculum and Standards Committee.

In response to questions, TB said middle leaders were enjoying their roles and were enthusiastic. They were able to talk about their subjects well to him and the SIP and were demonstrating their potential as future leaders.

- Special events.

Governors asked if pupils had engaged well with the workshop on cyberbullying. TB said while they had a good knowledge of vocabulary and could demonstrate awareness, further work was needed to help them understand the risk they tended to be exposed to. This would be done through a computing workshop later in the term and workshops with parents.

- Saxon swimming gala. A pupil achieved four medals. They had honed their skills through school swimming lessons, and their incredible achievement was very motivating. All pupils challenged themselves and achieved personal goals in a supportive atmosphere. Increasing numbers of pupils were able to swim, and joining a swimming club was encouraged.
- CPD.

Governors asked if staff were expected to complete a certain number of hours on CPD. TB said that as part of performance management, there were three targets and the training that needed to be completed to achieve these was made clear.

Governors asked about support staff. TB said that career development meetings provided the opportunity for dialogue around training. While training was largely driven by the needs of the school, the aim was to become proactive in this area as opposed to reactive.

- SEND.

Governors asked if the collaboration with the Drumbeat School would continue. TB said this was uncertain, although it was likely that they would continue to support Early Years in some form. As funding had been reduced, it would not be unexpected for the provision to be impacted, in which case an alternative would be sought.

Governors noted that the percentage of pupils with an EHCP had increased to 4.9% but was only 0.6% above national average. TB said that as an inclusive school, which aimed to support all pupils, there was a higher level of need. A further seven EHCPs would more accurately represent that need. Numbers on the SEN register were accurate. A separate register of pupils who were being monitored was also kept. The stability of the numbers reflected the hard work of the outgoing SENCo. TB noted that for a pupil to be added to the SEN register required them to face sustained barriers to learning and need interventions beyond Quality First Teaching. Although the school ran a wide range of interventions, this did not mean that those pupils qualified for the SEN register.

TB undertook to update the SDP with the latest SEN figures.

- An EHCP application for a pupil in Reception had been rejected twice, which could be a sign of thresholds increasing as resources became more limited.
- £228k in top up funding had been received in the current year and was allocated to additional staffing to support those with SEN.
- The current educational psychologist was in their last year of working and consideration was being given to taking up an SLA through the LA.
- Staffing and Human Resources.
  - Retirement of the Assistant Headteacher and the positive impact on the budget.
  - Staff wellbeing survey completed at the start of the spring term.

Governors reviewed the results of the survey. TB noted that the Health and Safety Committee was due to meet to discuss the results and the potential impact on wellbeing of the solutions proposed. While some changes had already been made to inset days, other suggestions were still being evaluated.

In response to questions, TB said no comparison could be made with responses in previous years as these were specific questions developed to understand the impact on wellbeing of the reduction in staffing. CK highlighted that responses would depend on when the survey was carried out as the autumn term tended to be more difficult for staff. Governors agreed but noted their duty to consider concerns when raised.

In response to questions, TB said it would be possible to analyse responses at a more granular level, and it would be important to understand which group of staff had been particularly impacted. However, while it was the responsibility of leadership to improve

the experience of staff where possible, there were limits which staff needed to understand and accept.

- Data and outcomes.
  - Attainment data. As reported to the Curriculum and Standards Committee.
  - Year 6 were secondary ready and were at least at national average levels. Feedback from secondary schools indicated that pupils from Holbeach were all well-rounded individuals.

Governors asked if it would be feasible for ex-pupils of the school to return to support the transition to secondary. TB noted that an ex-pupil would be presenting on autism awareness day, and he would investigate if this model could be widened to include secondary transition.

- Pupil roll. The roll remained stable at 427 pupils. The school was 93.3% full, which was relatively positive in the context of the demographic change affecting all London boroughs. There had been a high number of first and second choices for Reception intake in September 2025. Based on these figures, it was expected that the classes would be full, but a certain amount of movement was likely to occur.
- Pupil Attendance and Punctuality.
  - Current attendance for pupils of statutory age to 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 was 93.5%.
  - Persistent Absence (PA) had increased to 24.4%.
  - Staff attendance was 94.5%.

Governors asked about the low attendance rate for those with EHCPs (79%). TB said this related to two pupils who required a specialist setting. They had SEN dependent school avoidance and were not settled enough to attend school full time.

Governors asked about staff absence where attendance levels were persistently below 92%. TB said a robust and consistent approach was taken. While there was challenge, staff were also supported well.

- Health and Safety including Premises.

Governors asked about the significant increase in incidents where pupils with SEN were causing physical harm to staff. TB said the advice received had been to provide positive handling training; however, there was a need to ensure techniques were used carefully to prevent an escalation of behaviours. CK said it difficult to determine if the training received had had an impact as it required two members of staff to be present if techniques were used. While the situation remained difficult and challenging, staff were becoming more attuned to the needs and triggers of pupils. TB said behaviour plans, of which staff needed to be fully aware, needed to be explicit and linked to zones of regulation.

In response to questions, TB outlined the procedures followed if an incident occurred where a pupil caused physical harm. Figures in relation to frequency were only as part of the reporting process if there was injury requiring first aid.

Governors asked about the preparations for admitting a pupil with severe allergies. TB said there had been contact with their current setting, who had not experienced any issues, and a joint risk assessment had been completed. While the risks were high, they could be managed. No additional funding was available.

- Finance.
  - £50k funding for wraparound care was being held as a contingency.
  - There had been verbal confirmation of funding support for the ill-health retirement charges.

Governors offered support in monitoring and applying for grant funding from the charity or private sector. TOM to liaise with TB.

- Wrap around care and enrichment. Club leads were enjoying their roles.
- Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) strategy statement. To be shared in the summer term.
- GDPR. One minor breach. The DPO was satisfied with the actions taken by the school and no further action was required.
- IT. The migration to a cloud-based server had occurred over the Easter break and the management information system changed to Arbor. Controls were tighter and reduced the risk of any GDPR breaches.
- Confidential section. See confidential minutes.

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## **10. LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE**

TB detailed the proposed change to the leadership structure, which comprised moving to a Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher model.

Pay scales for Assistant Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher would revert to the correct range for the school's size.

As part of the change, it was anticipated that the Deputy Headteacher would attend some Governor meetings.

The deadline for responses to the internal advertisement for the post was in the next seven days.

RESOLVED: to approve the changes to the leadership structure and pay ranges as presented.

## **11. FINANCE**

### **Schools Financial Value Standards (SFVS) submission**

Discussed.

### **Budget approval – timeline for submission**

The deadline for submission was 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

RESOLVED:

1. that the SFVS was approved to be submitted
2. that a short FGB meeting would be held following the Resources Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 to approve the budget.

## **12. TACKLING RACE INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION**

Pledge point – Actively developing high quality relationships with Black Caribbean heritage and Black and Minority Ethnic pupils and their parents.

- The Friends of Holbeach had the pledge point as part of their strategic plan. Parents of the communities listed were increasing their engagement with the school.
- Members of the Black Caribbean and BAME communities were invited into the school during culture weeks, black history month and other events. The school conscientiously considered ways in which underrepresented groups could become involved with the school.
- As link Governor for the curriculum, BP would meet with the TRIIE Committee to review their terms of reference. BP noted that there was scope for a Link Governor for Race and Equality to provide wider oversight beyond the curriculum.

In response to questions, TB said there was a need to develop existing long-term connections systematically to mentor pupils from underrepresented groups and share successes.

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## **13. STANDING ITEMS**

### Safeguarding, Behaviour, and Safety

- No urgent or reportable incidents.

### Premises and Health and Safety

- No urgent or reportable incidents.

### GDPR

- No urgent or reportable incidents.

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## **14. POLICIES**

TB advised that the locally agreed Pay Policy was not yet available from the LA.

Governors agreed to defer approval of the Statement of Behaviour Principles subject to detailed review by SF, GE and BP to ensure it was consistent with the Behaviour Policy

### Policies recommended for ratification by the Resources Committee 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025

- Business Continuity Plan (subject to the revisions agreed)
- Asset Management Disposal Write-Off Policy



- Financial Management Policy
- Premises Management Policy
- Debt Management Policy
- Staff Expenses Policy
- Cyber Response Plan

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the policies and documents recommended for ratification by the Resources Committee were approved
- 2) to defer approval of the Governors' Statement of Behaviour Principles to the next FGB meeting in July 2025 following review by SF, BP and GE.

## **15. GOVERNORS' REPORTS**

It was noted that detailed feedback and written reports from Link Governor visits had been provided to the Curriculum and Standards Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025. Visits for the spring term had been arranged.

- English – GE and SMQ 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025
- Curriculum – BP 17<sup>th</sup> December 2025
- Maths – SO 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025

There had been a Governor presence at all school events.

RESOLVED:

1. to appoint JR as Link Governor for curriculum, mentored by BP
2. to appoint TOM as Link Governor for Safeguarding with SF, mentored by SO
3. all link roles to be reviewed at the start of the next academic year.

## **16. GOVERNING BOARD ITEMS**

- Annual Skills Audit.
  - Michele Holmes to feedback from the session on Governor Self-Evaluation prior to BP circulating the skills audit for completion.
- Governor Training.
  - Governors' Self-Evaluation. Completed as part of a session with Michele Holmes on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025.
  - Safeguarding training. 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 at 6.30 p.m.
  - Governors to add any training completed to the record via the link on all agendas.
  - SEN training via the LA was highlighted.
- LA/Clerk's information. None.

RESOLVED: TB to circulate links for The Key.

## **17. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- Resources Committee – Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 6.30 p.m.
- Curriculum and Standards Committee – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 10.00 a.m.
- FGB – Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 at 6.30 p.m.

**18. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- Wraparound care presentation – PM
- Governors' Statement of Behaviour Principles approval
- PPG strategy statement.

**19. ANY URGENT OTHER BUSINESS, AGREED WITH THE CHAIR IN ADVANCE**

None.

Meeting closed 8.34 p.m.

**CHAIR'S SIGNATURE:.....**

**DATE SIGNED:...../...../.....**