

Holbeach Primary School

**Non-confidential minutes of a meeting of the Governing Board of
Holbeach Primary School
held on Thursday 28th November 2024 at 6.30 p.m.**

In attendance

First Name	Surname	Governor Type	End of Office	Present
Gbolahan	Adedoyin (GB)	Parent Governor	05/01/2025	No
Ross	Baptie (RB)	Co-opted Governor Chair of the Resources Committee	26/11/2027	Yes
Colleen	Boxall (CB)	Co-opted Governor	10/07/2028	Apologies received
Emma-Jane	Boyd (EJB)	Parent Governor	18/10/2027	Yes
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	Yes
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
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	29/11/2024	Yes
Miriam	Baguley (MBy)	Governance Professional	NA	Yes
Fiona	Gavin	Estate Management and Contract Manager, Lewisham Local Authority	NA	Yes, to item 3

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from CB and SMQ. No apologies were received from GA. Apologies for late arrival were received from KD.

RESOLVED:

1. that the apologies of CB and SMQ were accepted, and the absences were consented to
2. that the absence of GA was not consented to.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. PRESENTATION AND QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION REGARDING LOCAL AUTHORITY PLANS FOR THE ON SITE SCHOOL HOUSE

FG was welcomed to the meeting. FG presented the following information and responded to questions.

- In the past, most schools owned or rented a school house for the purpose of housing a premises officer/caretaker on site or close to the school. Such houses were designated as for the purpose of education, rent was not payable, and occupants were not given the right to buy. Current advice was that premises managers were not provided with housing due to complexities arising from the termination of their employment in certain circumstances.
- Over the past year, an assessment of all LA owned school houses had been carried out with a view to disposal or repurposing given that some were derelict, not used, or used for activities that could be relocated. The requirement to balance the needs of the school and local community was noted, as was the growing need within the LA for housing children in care in family type accommodation.
- The school house at Holbeach had been identified as suitable for temporary accommodation in a limited way given that it was linked very closely to the school; however, modifications could be made to provide a greater degree of separation.
- Although there had been agreement by the mayor and cabinet that plans for using the school house for temporary accommodation could be explored, stakeholder views would be taken into account. If the proposal regarding temporary accommodation was to be rejected, future plans for use would need to be clearly articulated.

Governors noted safeguarding and privacy concerns given that the school house overlooked the playground on three sides. FG said an initial assessment had been carried out and that the proposed use as a home for children in care meant that safeguarding risks were lower than for other types of housing; however, the safety and wellbeing of pupils at the school would be of paramount importance.

Governors noted that the school house was currently being used as a community hub and shop, and the school was building links with charities within the local community such as Help the Aged via this resource. Other services were also being explored, such as provision of financial and housing advice, councillor surgeries, and SEN wraparound care, which could not currently be provided in school because of the need for one-to-one support. FG agreed to link TB with other organisations who might have an interest in using the property as described, but noted there would need to be a focus on service provision rather than profit.

FG highlighted that the provision of services within the school house would need to be those that could not be relocated elsewhere on the school site. TB noted that there was limited storage in school, and access to the school outside of school hours came at a cost.

In response to comments, FG said that the part 2 minutes of the council meeting were not publicly available, but that she would be able to provide relevant excerpts for information.

Governors asked about the possible timescale for implementation of LA plans. FG said that the project management work would be completed within six months, with reconsideration at council by May 2025 at the latest.

Governors discussed potential ways forward. FG advised that any plans would need to be specific and robust, detail how the maintenance of the school house as a listed building would be funded, and how it would be of benefit to the community.

In response to concerns around risk, FG detailed ways in which modifications to the school house could be made, and noted that other properties outside the school site also overlooked the playground.

Governors asked about the likely profile of residents. FG said it was the responsibility of the housing department to ensure residents were appropriate for the site.

Governors discussed potential maintenance costs. TB noted that the school was already responsible for some costs, but that there was a risk if the school was wholly responsible for the upkeep of the building. An analysis of spending over the last 20 years could be carried out to provide an indication of upkeep.

FG noted that capital budget funding was not currently applicable to the school house as it was residential rather than a teaching space. Approval from the Secretary of State would be required for any conversion from residential. Even then, school condition allocations were limited, especially in the current financial climate.

In response to questions, FG confirmed that insurance would cover any costs arising from the school house being used as temporary accommodation. FG also confirmed that the school house had not been deemed as suitable for disposal.

FG concluded that the primary consideration of the LA was to provide accommodation for children in care, or to raise funds to adapt the other houses deemed appropriate for this purpose.

Governors thanked FG for attending the meeting and responding to questions.

RESOLVED:

1. FG to provide the excerpts from council meeting minutes as agreed
2. Governors to develop a plan for use of the school house for presentation to the LA.

FG left the meeting at 7.12 p.m.

4. GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

4.1. Resignations

None.

4.2. Appointments

None.

4.3. End of Office

- BP 29th November 2024 pending renomination by the Local Authority (LA)
- GA 5th January 2025

4.4. Vacancies

- One Parent Governor

Interest in current and upcoming vacancies had been generated by Governor presence at a recent parents' evening. SF and RB to make contact with interested parties, who were all noted as having relevant experience.

4.5. Outstanding due diligence

- GA

RESOLVED: that TB would arrange for a Parent Governor election for the current and upcoming vacancy to take place in January 2025.

5. NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH SEPTEMBER 2024

The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2024 were circulated to the meeting.

The following link roles were clarified. SF undertook to provide a complete list to MBy by email following the meeting, with new Parent Governors to be allocated to link roles on appointment.

- Finance – SO
- Safeguarding and Child Protection – SF and CB
- SEND – EJB and CB (not BP)

RESOLVED:

1. that the non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2024 were approved to be signed as an accurate record of the meeting subject to the clarifications noted
2. that approved FGB and Committee minutes would be emailed to Phil Morriss (PM) when available to be added to the website.

6. MATTERS ARISING

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

7. CHAIR'S ACTION

None.

8. CHAIR'S REPORT

- SF, BP and GE had met with TB to review the term, link Governor roles, and Headteacher wellbeing.
- SF met with staff during inset days. Small tokens of appreciation on behalf of Governors had been provided.

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9. 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 16th October 2024
- Curriculum and Standards 14th November 2024

10. HEADTEACHER'S TERMLY 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)/School Development Group (SDG).
 - The new SIP had a good understanding of the challenges faced at Holbeach and was effective at holding the school to account.
 - There was a focus on Maths as a key area of the School Development Plan (SDP) and the SIP would provide mentoring to the Maths Lead.
 - An additional visit may be arranged to allow for a learning walk and data review of Maths.
 - The school had not been allocated to a SDG in the current academic year.
- SDP.
 - Progress was on track in the three main areas of development focus.
 - Updated SDP to be circulated for information following the meeting.
 - Tackling Race Inequalities in Education (TRIIE) to be added to the SDP.
- Quality of Education.
 - Teaching and learning audit.
 - Maths learning walk. The walk conducted on 27th November 2024 with the SIP had gone well. The Maths Lead was continuing to work on developing their own resilience in the role. TB had spent time with pupils who were able to do 'show me' tasks effectively; capturing of pupil voice was an important way of demonstrating progress.
- CPD.
 - Information regarding whole school and individual CPD was provided.

Governors noted that CPD opportunities had increased, but that as much was delivered in-house, spend at £5k could appear low in terms of benchmarking. TB said he would refer to the financial consultant to see if the relative impact of training could be made clearer within the budget.

- SEND.
 - The SENDCo had worked very hard on the SEN register to ensure it reflected current diagnoses and pupils had clear learning plans.
 - 20 EHCPs with three applications currently being processed and a further three likely to be submitted by the end of term.
 - Numbers of pupils on the SEN register were likely to increase, particularly as there was a significant group of pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 with additional concerns.
 - External professionals such as the occupational therapist had made a huge impact. Three pupils were currently supported, but provision was demand driven and there was a high need across all year groups.
- Staffing and Human Resources.
 - There were no changes to the staffing structure in the autumn term.
 - Changes to SLT and line management from the spring term were as previously reported.

Governors asked about the transfer of responsibilities in relation to the upcoming retirement of an Assistant Headteacher. TB said additional teaching capacity from September 2025 would release phase leaders to take on key responsibilities such as educational visit co-ordination and curriculum development. All changes were budgeted within the three-year plan.

- The impact of wellbeing of SEN and the reduction in staff would be the main topic of discussion at the next Health and Safety Committee meeting. Opinions were being sought on ways in which staff could be supported when dealing with SEN pupils.
- Data and outcomes.
 - Attainment data. As reported to the Curriculum and Standards Committee.
 - Pupil roll. There were 424 pupils on roll, compared to 451 pupils in June 2024.
- Pupil Attendance and Punctuality.
 - Current attendance for pupils of statutory age to 6th November 2024 was 94.4%.
 - Persistent Absence (PA) had increased to 17%.
 - Staff attendance was 90%.
- Special events.
 - Events had been held to increase cultural capital.
 - Christmas events were due to start in the next week.
- Health and Safety including Premises.

In response to questions, TB said he would monitor use of the cleaning machine funded by the LA for use after the breakfast club.

EJB left the meeting at 8.00 p.m.

- Fire drill yet to be completed. The fire risk assessment was scheduled for completion in the next week.
- Asbestos survey had been completed.

- There had been four reportable accidents during the autumn term, including two staff hurt by pupils with SEN.
- Staff had always been encouraged to log all injuries in the first aid log, but there had been a significant increase. Accurate data was important to evidence levels of need for individual pupils.

In response to questions, TB said that ten recent staff injuries were linked to pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 3.

- Finance. Governors were referred to the detail provided in the report which was as reported to the Resources Committee in October 2024.

Governors asked if there were any further updates regarding the ill-health retirement funding. TB said the situation was due to be presented to the LA Schools' Forum in December 2024; what level of funding, if any, would be provided was unknown. In the meantime, TB would pursue all possible avenues of enquiry; however, it was possible that the school would be held liable for the total shortfall in pension funding.

- Wrap around care and enrichment.

Governors noted that extra-curricular clubs were only available for pupils from Year 3 upwards. TB said this had been considered, but demand in younger year groups was much lower as pupils were both exhausted by the end of the day and towards the end of term.

In response to questions, TB said the wraparound care provision was popular and working well. There were only two pupils on the waiting list and provision was limited by their need for one-to-one support due to SEN.

- Pupil Premium strategy statement. To be updated by the end of the autumn term.
- Confidential section. See confidential minutes.

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11. TACKLING RACE INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION

- Priorities to be made clear within the SDP and discussed during the Link Governor curriculum meeting.
- TRIIE lead was due to attend LA curriculum training.
- TRIIE linked to school events.

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12. STANDING ITEMS

Safeguarding, Behaviour, and Safety

- No urgent or reportable incidents.
- All exclusions would be reported to FGB meetings.

Premises and Health and Safety

- No urgent or reportable incidents.

GDPR

- No urgent or reportable incidents.

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13. POLICIES

Governors received and reviewed the following policies circulated to the meeting:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Governors' Statement of Behaviour Principles

Governors agreed to defer approval of the Statement of Behaviour Principles subject to detailed review to ensure it was consistent with the Behaviour Policy

Policies recommended for ratification by the Curriculum and Standards Committee 14th November 2024

- Equalities Statement
- Equal Opportunities Policy

RESOLVED:

- 1) the Whistleblowing Policy was approved
- 2) the policy and statement recommended for ratification by the Curriculum and Standards Committee were approved
- 3) to defer approval of the Governors' Statement of Behaviour Principles to the next FGB meeting in March 2025.

14. GOVERNORS' REPORTS

None.

15. GOVERNING BOARD ITEMS

- Annual Skills Audit. BP would circulate the skills spreadsheet after the conclusion of the Parent Governor elections to ensure all Governors were included.
- Governor Training.
 - Governors' Self-Evaluation. To be completed as part of a session with Michele Holmes on 27th February 2025 at 6.30 p.m.
 - Safeguarding training. 1st April 2025 at 6.30 p.m.
- LA/Clerk's information. None.

16. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- Resources Committee – Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 6.30 p.m.
- Curriculum and Standards Committee – Thursday 13th March 2025 at 6.30 p.m.
- FGB – Thursday 20th March 2025 at 6.30 p.m.

17. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Wraparound care presentation – PM
- Governors' Statement of Behaviour Principles approval

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

None.

Meeting closed 8.30 p.m.

CHAIR'S SIGNATURE:.....

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