



# PRATTS BOTTOM PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes of 11.05.2021 via Google Meet

<b>Date of meeting:</b> 11.05.2021 at 6:00pm		<b>Venue:</b> Via Google Meet	
<b>Chair:</b> Peter Ioannou		<b>Clerk:</b> Melissa Perry	
<b>Governors present</b>	<b>Governor apologies</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>In attendance</b>
Peter Ioannou (Chair)	Keeley Bentley		Emma Hodson (Head of School)
Chitranga Diyasena	Brian Ford (Vice Chair)		James Turvey (attending in his capacity as Executive Headteacher, also holds post of Trust Chief Executive Officer)
Sophie Perez			Melissa Perry (Clerk)
Emel Ibrahim			Kayleigh Shaw (Clerk – observer)
Cheryl Bone			
Sharon Hynes			
Reverend Susan Atkinson-Jones			
Saleha Fazal			

### MINUTES

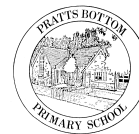
<b>1. To receive and approve apologies for absence</b>
1.1. Apologies were received and accepted for KB and BF. The meeting was quorate.
1.2. The Chair welcomed CD, newly co-opted governor, JT (EHT) and KS who will be taking over clerking at PBPS LGB. Everyone introduced themselves.
1.3. The Chair informed governors that Peter Cross had resigned since the last meeting.
<b>2. To declare any interests to the meeting and to record any alterations to Governors' pecuniary/personal interests</b>
2.1. No new interests were declared to the meeting and no other changes were noted to Governor's pecuniary or personal interests.
<b>3. To approve the minutes and confidential minutes of the FGB meeting held on 16th March 2021</b>

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- 3.1. The minutes and confidential minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held (virtually) on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were reviewed and agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.

**Action 1: Clerk to arrange for Chair to sign the minutes.**

**4. To consider matters/action arising from the FGB meeting and confidential meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and not included elsewhere on the agenda.**

Matters Arising - School Vision

- 4.1. The working party had met and a record of discussions and revisions of a working draft was presented at the meeting for the governing body's consideration and approval. The HoS read out in full the final draft of the mission, vision and values and invited governors to raise any questions and give views on whether there was consensus to move forward with the revised school vision.
- 4.2. A governor who had been part of the working party stated that the revisions took into account wider feedback (e.g. parent survey) to ensure that it encompassed a broader view across stakeholders. The governor said she felt the revised vision reflected the school's unique selling points and key values. It now incorporated elements around sustainability and technology that had been discussed previously at local governing board meetings.
- 4.3. Governors agreed that the vision reflected where they wanted to be in 5 years' time and that it made reference to pupils' future beyond PBPS. The reference to academic success was felt necessary to cover an important element of school life as the school has made significant improvement in this area.
- 4.4. Governors noted that some of the 5 key values put forward by the working party governors had been changed. The EHT stated that they felt that some of the key values might be characteristics rather than values and had been appropriately included in either the mission or vision statements.
- 4.5. The Staff Governor fed back that children had found happiness to be a key value although they had considered that 'happy' and 'kind' were not interesting words. Governors were content that happiness had been captured in the vision statement.
- 4.6. **Governors unanimously agreed with the revised mission, vision and values.**

Action Points

- 4.7. Governors reviewed the action points from the last meeting and the following were agreed to be rolled forward as ongoing or outstanding actions:
- 4.8. **Action 2 Clerk to add Review of Voluntary Fund and Gift Aid letter to Meeting 6 agenda** – The introduction of voluntary payments is scheduled for introduction in September 2021.

**Action 2 Clerk to add Review of Voluntary Fund and Gift Aid letter to Meeting 6 agenda.**

- 4.9. **Action 3 – Advance Questions** - The Chair thanked the two governors who had submitted advance questions but stated that the number of responses and questions across the governing board was disappointing. The Chair reiterated the importance of thoroughly reviewing the documentation in good time and submitting questions to help the HoS and her team to prepare and obtain all the relevant information. Questions could still be raised at the meeting. The Clerk stated that it was necessary for governors to raise questions in order to fulfil their core functions. It was agreed that this should remain as a rolling action point.

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**Action 3 All governors to review papers and submit advance questions to the Clerk 2 days before FGB meetings.**

4.10. **Action 5 – update on SIP priorities** – The HoS stated that she had added a document to the papers to show which actions are being carried forward and postponed. SIP reviews would be carried out by the next FGB meeting.

4.11. **It was agreed all other action points were complete.**

### 5. To receive draft 2021-22 Budget and revised three-year Budget Plan

- 5.1. The EHT was in attendance as the SBM was absent. The EHT stated that there were real challenges in the future. The revised mission and vision statements highlighted the schools strengths and ambitions but would need to be considered in the context of the budget and how the school can continue effectively.
- 5.2. The EHT highlighted that there was some difference between the original and current budget forecast but the values for the in year deficit and end of year outturn were not significant. *A governor asked if it was possible to obtain more detailed breakdowns of costs.* The EHT stated that this information was readily available and suggested that the governor could contact the SBM outside of the meeting.
- 5.3. The EHT went through the ABR in some detail explaining where the budget did not meet all the Trust targets since it forecasts a deficit in subsequent years. The school was meeting other targets, although lettings had been affected by the pandemic their main lettee would be returning in September.
- 5.4. *Governors noted that the deficit is increasing year on year and asked what the plan was to address the deficit and who would fund it.* The EHT acknowledged that it was a matter of concern, the Deficit Recovery Plan sits at Trust level where some reserves were held. The EHT stated that the Trust's position is that schools should not be in deficit and cumulative deficits could not be tolerated even utilising reserves. Additionally, when the Trust had been set up a decision had been taken that reserves for one school should not prop up another in the Trust. The EHT stated that it might be time to reconsider that position. The Chair stated that things had moved on since the Trust had formed and that there was more of a collective responsibility across the Trust. The EHT stated that small schools were at a significant disadvantage since Small Schools Grants had stopped.
- 5.5. Governors asked and the EHT replied that there was around £600-700K in collective reserves held by the Trust, which is being depleted over time. *Governors noted that this was a considerable amount and asked if it could be used.* The EHT stated that it was possible to make such representations to the Trust given that the school has unique selling points, has successfully raised the quality of education at the school and worked hard to reduce the deficit in very limited circumstances. *A governor stated that they would be willing to review the budget in more detail with the SBM to explore whether there was any areas savings could be made.* The EHT stated that the budget at PBPS is run very well and there was little space within for budget cuts.

**Action 4: CD to contact SBM to review budget and feedback to LGB**

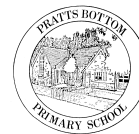
5.6. *Governors asked if it was unlikely the school would be viable even if all pupil spaces were filled.* The physical size of the classrooms meant that there can only be a maximum of 24 children per class (12 per year group). The EHT expressed the view that he felt that Primary School classes

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should have a minimum of 27-28 pupils to be viable so filling spaces was important but would not, of itself, relieve the deficit. The EHT stated that each pupil accounts to around £3300 per year so the addition of 4 pupils would have a significant impact on the deficit at PBPS.

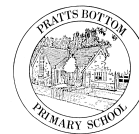
- 5.7. The HoS stated that they currently had 9 children in Reception as they had lost one family. The EHT stated that as a small school any fluctuation in numbers had a significant impact on the budget. The HoS said Year 1 had gone down to 7 pupils, in September 2020, and despite efforts with Bromley Admissions (there had been a low birth rate in the Biggin Hill and Pratts Bottom area for that year group) the current number is 10. The other year groups are quite full. The size of the classrooms means that the school is unable to increase the Pupil Admissions Number. There were other reasons which made filling vacancies difficult such as the lack of a reliable bus route, the perception that the school was in Kent rather than under Bromley, there was no breakfast or afterschool provision because previous arrangements had run at a loss due to lack of numbers. The HoS stated that the breakfast and after school provisions were being kept under review. This year there was a full intake for Reception starting in September 2021, this was a positive reflection on the school since there was a low intake across Bromley. The HoS continues to work hard to raise the school's profile and fill the remaining vacancies.
- 5.8. The HoS informed governors that she had invited the Director of Education to visit the school and showcase their work. The HoS stated that she wanted to increase the visibility of the school since larger schools often had more of a voice. The EHT stated that this was a good way of thinking outside the box and promoting small schools. The EHT stated that the Trust values PBPS hugely for its uniqueness and what it offers pupils.
- 5.9. *Governors stated that since there were limits to increasing income through pupil numbers whether they should explore alternative sources of funding such as grants and whether there should be a governor appointed to focus on fundraising.* The EHT stated that there could be other ways of raising funds although fundraising formed part of the SBM job description. The HoS confirmed that they were planning to set up the voluntary donations initiative in September 2021. This had been delayed as the timing had not felt appropriate during the pandemic. There was a discussion about whether the SBM could realistically commit a significant amount of time into looking at fundraising given her other tasks. The HoS stated that lettings were still being explored including the field for sports activities. Governors agreed that it would be helpful to have a Fundraising Governor to meet up with the SBM on a more regular basis and support fundraising.

### **Action 5: Governors to consider whether they are able to take on fundraising role and inform Chair**

- 5.10. The EHT stated that he had included a link to the DfE document "Running Small Rural Schools Efficiently" which he encouraged governors to read since it covered challenges specific to small schools and creative measures to address these.

#### Bid Framework

- 5.11. There are 3 items on the bidding list which the school can put forward at the Annual Academy Review although there is no guarantee that any will be successful.
- 5.12. The EHT and HoS stated that the first priority was funding for a Teaching Assistant for 2 mornings a week. *Governors asked whether this was essential and what the purpose of the TA would be.* The HoS stated that it would support work around interventions. The EHT clarified



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that the amount included both funds that had been budgeted for (1 day a week) so the bid for the second day. The HoS stated that they anticipated that the impact of the pandemic would be far reaching and would be a longer term project to address its impact on pupils. The additional hours would be essential to providing the extra support and feedback to deal with these matters. The HoS stated that she could not understate the view that these hours would be hugely beneficial to the school. *Governors asked what type of interventions this would support.* The HoS stated that it would support closing the gap and disadvantaged children. The HoS stated that the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) supported interventions that were research led and evidence based. Whilst they had assessed that a TA has relatively low impact, 1:1 interventions had medium to high impact and this is aided by having a TA. *Governors stated that they fully supported this bid and its priority for the reasons given by the HoS.*

- 5.13. The second priority was for Bromley Youth Music Trust support to provide a package for music to enhance the curriculum. The HoS said that children would benefit from enrichment from music.
- 5.14. The third priority is for a digital phone system. This would be needed in the next few years and planned for in the next 3 years.
- 5.15. **Governors unanimously agreed with the bid proposals presented by the EHT and HoS.**

### 6. To review School self-Assessment form for discussion at the Annual Academy Review meeting being held in June 2021

- 6.1. The HoS went through the AAR document talking through the strengths and achievements of the year. The HoS invited feedback from governors and views on the form. There was a brief discussion and agreement that there had been a real sense of community during the pandemic and everyone had been supportive and stepped up to support each other and the children in their learning. It reflected one of the key characteristics of the school. The HoS stated that she was proud of how staff had responded and adapted to continuous challenges and changes to their working environment. The number of children that had been accommodated at school in the Spring Term lockdown would not have been possible without the commitment and flexibility of staff. The Staff Governor stated that she had been impressed with the responses from parents and how they coped with home learning on top of their jobs.
- 6.2. The Chair stated that as a parent he could not have asked for more from the school. Pupils had shown that they could pick up technology very quickly and there had been excellent feedback and communication from the school. The Chair thanked the school for all their work and going above and beyond during the pandemic.
- 6.3. The HoS reiterated the challenges around filling all pupil vacancies across the school. The school would continue to strive to obtain 100% success on staff surveys. The school had also reflected on how things should be done going forward under "Adopt, adapt or abandon". For example, online parents evening had been a success with greater engagement and supporting staff wellbeing because of the 10 minute limit for each slot.
- 6.4. **Governors agreed with the contents of the AAR presented by the HoS.**

### 7. To review Head's Report – Summer Term 2021

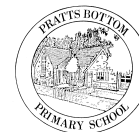
- 7.1. The Head's Report had been circulated ahead of the meeting and no advance questions had been received.

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7.2.	<i>Governors asked for an update on behaviour at the school.</i> The HoS stated that they had seen a rise in low level incidents which were most likely attributable to adapting to returning to school after an extended period at home. The Behaviour Policy is being applied and teachers feel supported to adapt and address individual needs of the children. The HoS stated that it was something that they would monitor closely since it was understandable that children would experience anxiety.
7.3.	<i>Governors asked if there were any indications of in the impact of intervention.</i> The HoS responded that it was too early to say. The school had just carried out assessments for Years 1-5 and will analyse the results and review the interventions needed.
7.4.	The HoS stated that Pupil Absence data had been significantly skewed as Spring Term only covered a 3.5 week.
7.5.	The HoS also thanked DV who had worked to secure a donation of £3K from Direct Line Group. The money has been used to purchase Chromebooks and a charging trolley to keep them in. The school has also received a donation of 7 laptops from the BBC Make a Difference campaign. There were now enough devices for a whole class to use them in a lesson. Governors thanked the HoS and school for their work and creativity in improving the technology resources for the children.
<b>8. To receive reports from Governors with specific responsibilities not already covered on the agenda</b>	
8.1.	There had been a report by the Safeguarding Governor, no questions or concerns were raised. The SCR was checked by the Safeguarding Governor in the Spring Term.
8.2.	The Chair asked whether anyone wanted to step forward for the role of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Governor. It was suggested the KB might be suitable since she is already part of the Diversity Working Group and leads on Diversity within the SIP. It was agreed that the Chair would follow this up with KB who was not present at the meeting. CD stated that he had significant experience in diversity and would be willing to support or consider the EDI role.
<b>Action 6 Chair to confirm appointment of EDI governor(s) by next FGB meeting.</b>	
<b>9. LGB Self Evaluation Review – May 2021</b>	
9.1.	A governors' only meeting is scheduled for Monday, 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7pm to discuss the review. The Clerk stated that the deadline to return the review was 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2021.
<b>10. To review Governor Development/Training</b>	
10.1.	Governors fed back on the training they had undertaken since the last meeting.
10.2.	The Chair stated that he was coming towards the final stretch of his NGA Development for Chairs course and would be attending another LGB meeting (GSGPS) and would feedback at the next meeting. The Chair stated that observing another board was a good opportunity for governors to broaden their experience.
10.3.	The EHT reminded governors of the Octavo bespoke training session on <b>Wednesday, 16th June 2021, commencing at 7pm</b> covering Diversity and Inclusion. Governors asked if this training was compulsory. The Clerk reminded governors that diversity is a key focus for the Trust and governors should attend if possible.
<b>11. Any other business</b>	

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11.1. The Clerk reminded governors that they would need to complete the Skills Audit Form for review at the next FGB. Chair and Vice Chair elections would also take place at the next meeting. The Chair stated that these were open to all and welcomed anyone interested in the roles to get in touch with him.

11.2. It was agreed that the Governors Day scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> June would not go ahead. It presented logistical problems in maintaining distance given the size of the school building. It was agreed that it was important for new governors to be able to visit the school. The Chair and HoS proposed that the final FGB meeting of the year be held face to face. This would enable a tour of the school which could be managed adhering to social distancing with the children not at school. Governors were invited to consider the proposal and inform the Clerk or Chair if they had concerns or did not feel comfortable attending in person. The HoS confirmed that there would be plenty of ventilation and spaced out seating arrangements.

**Action 7 Clerk to email governors with proposal for face to face meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021, any governor with concerns should inform Clerk or Chair as soon as possible so that options can be considered.**

11.3. All governors with a SIP area must contact their staff lead after half term (from 7<sup>th</sup> June) and complete their written report by 25<sup>th</sup> June so that they can be added to the meeting papers.

**Action 8 Clerk to email reminder to governors to contact staff leads from 7<sup>th</sup> June and file completed reports by 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021.**

### 12. To determine the matters to be treated as confidential (in accordance with Article 125 of the Articles of Association)

12.1. It was agreed that one item was confidential.

### 13. Future Meetings

13.1. Governors noted the dates and key focus areas for the Governing Body meetings 2020-21:

- **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021** – *Governors only meeting to discuss LGB evaluation and governance action plan* – 7pm via Google Meet
- **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021** – *Governors Day* – CANCELLED
- **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021** – *Celebrating achievement and future planning* – 6pm at Pratts Bottom Primary School

**The meeting closed at 8:20pm**





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### ACTION POINTS

Reference	Action	Owner	Status
Action 1 Para 3.1	Clerk to arrange with Chair to sign minutes.	Clerk	<b>Completed</b>
Action 2 Para 4.8	Clerk to add review of Voluntary Fund and Gift Aid letter to Meeting 6 Agenda	Clerk	
Action 3 Para 4.9	All governors to review papers and submit advance questions to the Clerk 2 days before FGB meetings.	ALL	
Action 4 Para 5.5	CD to contact SBM to review budget and feedback to LGB	CD/SBM	<b>Completed</b>
Action 5 Para 5.9	Governors to consider whether they are able to take on fundraising role and inform Chair	ALL	
Action 6 Para 8.2	Chair to confirm appointment of EDI governor(s) by next FGB meeting.	Chair	<b>Completed</b>
Action 7 Para 11.2	Clerk to email governors with proposal for face to face meeting on 6th July 2021, any governor with concerns should inform Clerk or Chair as soon as possible so that options can be considered.	Clerk/All	<b>Clerk email to governors 12.5.2021</b>
Action 8 Para 11.3	Clerk to email reminder to governors to contact staff leads from 7th June and file completed reports by 25th June 2021.	All governors with SIP leads	

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