**Present**

CHAIR: Eric De Regnaucourt, (EdR)

Headteacher: Paul Lufkin (PL)

Katy Gandon (KG)

Tash Gourlay (TG)

Georgia Harris (GH)

Martin Pfutzner (MP)

Milly Williams (MW)

**In attendance**

Steve Cleary, Clerk (SAC)

Lisa Kingsbury (LK) (Deputy Head)

June Crame (Head of Governor Services, LB Merton)

Joe Williams (prospective member of board)

*The features of effective governance from the competency framework: -*

*Strategic Leadership, Accountability, People, Structures, Compliance, Evaluation*

*All original papers are available on the LGFL MyUSO drive.*

1. **GOVERNANCE**

The meeting began at 6.30pm and was deemed to be quorate. Governors confirmed that they had received and read papers in advance. There were no apologies received.

In accordance with the Education (School Government) Regulations, governors were invited to declare any interest they might have in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

Governors **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the full governing board of the Wimbledon Primary Federation held on 1 September 2023 and publish on the website.

The Chair reported that he is to relocate to America at the end of term and will consequently cease to be a member of the governing board. The board were apprised of approaches from four potential co-opted governors: Will Maillard[[1]](#footnote-1), Rosalind Graham-Hunt[[2]](#footnote-2), Sam Rickman and a further candidate suggested by MP.

The annual ’declarations of register of interest were circulated in advance alongside the Code of Conduct. There were no declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

* Maintain the governance approach followed in the 2023/24 academic year without committees with each meeting following a particular theme dictated by the school development plan and school cycle[[3]](#footnote-3). schedule
* Appoint Joe Williams as an associate member for the 2023/24 academic year;
* Note the pending departure of EdR and appoint MP as acting Chair from the end of the autumn term to the February meeting whereupon a new Chair would be elected.

Governors were apprised of the need for a safeguarding and health & safety link role. Further link roles are needed to cover equalities and pupil premium, although these could be combined into an inclusion link governor role. Appointments to link roles were **RESOLVED** as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Area of Responsibility** | **Name of Governor(s)** | **Subject Area Staff Contact(s)** |
| Health and Safety[[4]](#footnote-4) | Eric De Regnaucourt (to be replaced Spring 2024) | Paul Lufkin  Helen Gaffney |
| Inclusion/ Equality and diversity / SEN/ EAL/Pupil Premium[[5]](#footnote-5) | Milly Williams/  Tash Gourlay  (to be replaced Spring 2024) | Esther Bird  Paul Lufkin |
| Safeguarding/LAC/PLAC[[6]](#footnote-6) | Milly Williams | Esther Bird  Lisa Kingsbury (LAC/PLAC) |
| Staff and Pupil wellbeing/ Attendance [[7]](#footnote-7) | Tash Gourlay | Paul Lufkin  Esther Bird (mental health lead)  Vicki Goodman (NEU rep) |
| Curriculum/outcomes[[8]](#footnote-8) | Joe Brasse | Lisa Kingsbury  (and she can link to other curriculum leaders as necessary) |
| Finance[[9]](#footnote-9) | Martin Pfutzner | Helen Gaffney  Paul Lufkin |
| Governor induction and training[[10]](#footnote-10) | Katy Gandon | Paul Lufkin  June Crame |

Governors were encouraged to complete the NGA skills audit and noted that link roles could work in pairs or be reassigned as new governors join. Monitoring visits would be scheduled on a one-to-one basis.

The TGB has an instrument of governance of 7 places which can be increased to a number between 12 and 14 in line with governing board practice for schools of a comparable size. This could be achieved through the appointment of governors or associate members through such means as Governors for Schools, Inspiring Governance or approaches to known contacts in local businesses. It was agreed that the skills audit would include those potential governors already identified to confirm gaps which need to be filled although there is a need to bear in mind that on moving to the substantive governing board, there would be a need to hold parent governor elections with no guarantee that existing governors would be re-elected. Governors could be co-opted in due course or associate members appointed. It was noted that there is a need for the local authority to nominate a governor to replace EdR when he steps down from the board. There would be a benefit in appointing someone from the community who is older or reflects its particular diversity and has skills which meets the needs of the governing board. JC offered to provide assistance in sourcing a prospective local authority governor once the required skills had been identified[[11]](#footnote-11).

EdR agreed to send the skills audit template used at West Wimbledon from the NGA and it was **RESOLVED** to complete these by the next meeting. **ACTION: All.**

1. **SCHOOL REPORT TO GOVERNORS**

**Pupil numbers**

Pupil numbers is a key performance indicator, because it's a driver of finance and proxy for demand and perceptions about the school. Over the last year (since the beginning of September 2022), 51 children left the school other than at the end of year 6 and Nursery (down from 61 and 92 in the past two years respectively)[[12]](#footnote-12). During the same period, 53 children have joined other than at normal reception entry (down from 69 the previous year). There have been 20 new joiners already this term. The school has 31 vacant places (down from 46 at this time last year) and is currently 95% full with only Y5 being significantly empty. It is expected that ad-hoc demand will continue to fall as the local demographic changes. Nursery numbers have also stabilised at the new lower level. All nursery children attend the morning session only, and nursery staff are redeployed across Reception, year 1 and year 2 in the afternoons, mainly in support of high needs children. The view was expressed that a school could have a wraparound provision in different configurations which ultimately means that there is a 7am to 5pm daily all year round provision with a separate Ofsted registration, although it is not clear how beneficial this would be for the child in the long term.

The following governor questions were asked:

* *What is the long-term plan for the nursery?* The designation is agreed with the local authority and Merton is still a sessional provider with three hours as the core offer over five days per week. The school does not have the demand to open more than a class if it takes sessional place and six hour demand. The six hour demand is only about an additional 10 places a day which would not be economical. It is known that the demand is primarily in the private and voluntary sector for full time daycare and this is a very different model of nursery that the school cannot make the decision to move to as there would also be a fundamentally different employment structure with a year round offering.
* *Is there an awareness of the offer in the community or even in the school?* What is Merton’s response? This is a wider issue for Merton in its approach to sessional nurseries as almost all nursery schools are emptying out. Merton are aware of the problem and have to make the decision as to the model of nursery which they wish to provide or give schools the flexibilities to be able to work around the problems as they see fit. We currently don’t have that. The school needs to operate pragmatically within the constraints of both term time and sessional starting points.
* *Since the school is 95 per cent full, what is the likely impact on future admission patterns and the catchment areas?* Currently, the majority of places are allocated within the priority area.

**Summer works**

There have not been any major building projects this summer both for budgetary constraints but also because of recent significant investments mean the premises are in good condition. New fence panelling has been installed to the main school driveway and all lunch box sheds dismantled. Further air con units have been in the West Wing making this wing completely set up for both air cooling and heating. Systems will be trialled over the coming winter months with the expectation that the old gas plant will be decommissioned next year. The Studio was re-painted alongside the new Year 2 classrooms, caretaker’s toilet and part of the main nursery, the kitchen equipment has been deep cleaned and trees pruned (organised by Merton). In response to a governor question over the distribution of air conditioning in the school, the Headteacher commented that the key constraint is in terms of the availability of capital funding to undertake the required works. The other consideration in prioritising location was the desire to switch off the whole boiler plant as part of Merton’s strategy to move away from hydrocarbon based fuel and enhance fuel efficiency. No children have been disadvantaged and they will have half of their time at Wimbledon Park in learning environments where the temperature can be properly moderated.

**Operational update**

The new school term has started very smoothly, which has been helped by having low staff turnover and high continuity this year. Changes have been implemented in year group leadership, school day timetables, lunch timings[[13]](#footnote-13) and classroom locations. Swimming has also resumed very successfully this term for year 5 after a two year break. The school has fewer support staff but the same number of higher needs children and there has been a positive impact of the mix up policy. Last year’s Y2 and Y4 cohort are more settled and there has been a smooth start to the school year. SLT are providing cover where possible and the school is more creative in its approach to supporting absence.

**Financial Monitoring Report**

The financial monitoring report as of 30th June (end of first quarter) indicates that teacher pay and catering costs are balanced. Financial monitoring will be examined in more detail at the November meeting although the level of unanticipated staff absence has recently risen which will feed through into cover costs.

**Health and Safety**

The school’s health and safety policy has been updated to reflect staff changes, and updated for training carried out in the past year (e.g. first aid and educational visits). Governors **RESOLVED** to adopt the policy as circulated (copy on file).

The school last had an audit from Merton in 2019 (which are intended to be annual but Merton no longer have the resources to carry out as frequently). All actions from the audit have been carried out and procedures amended in response.

**Attendance**

Attendance currently stands at 95.8%, which wis markedly up from the previous year of 94.3% and significantly above the national level across the board, although still lower than the pre-Covid average of 96.5%. Persistent and chronic absence remains high across the school sector and at Wimbledon Park stands at 10%. Attendance issues at the school are concentrated around disadvantaged children and children with SEND.

**Annual Reports**

In July 2023, parents of every child, including those in nursery, received a written annual report on their child for the year. These contained achievement comments in reading, writing and maths, and achievement judgements in all other subjects. Reports also contained summaries for each child of the school internal assessment outcomes, their attendance and punctuality record for the year and targets or next steps to support progress. Children who sat statutory assessments also received the outcomes of any statutory assessments and where possible, comparative information about the attainment of pupils of the same age in the school and nationally. All parents were offered the opportunity to provide feedback on their child’s report as well as arrange a discussion about the report with their child’s class teacher.

**Early Years Outcomes**

The proportion of children at the end of Reception reaching the Good Level of Development was 87% (the same as last year), very much above the national level of 68% (which is still below pre covid levels). Outcomes across all individual areas of learning were strong. This is a very strong outcome overall. Other than children who have high levels of SEND, the school believes that individual children have made very significant progress and the gap from to get into the good level development is relatively narrow. Areas for continued focus include interventions and progress for children with lower starting points on entry including those from disadvantaged/language poor backgrounds and focused support for students with SEND.

**Year 1 and 2 Phonics Outcomes**

96% of children met the threshold for the Year 1 phonics check, 10% up on last year and back at pre covid levels. This is significantly higher than the national benchmark of 81% (which is also broadly back to pre-covid levels). There were no appreciable gaps other than SEN (which is still at the national benchmark). The average score achieved at 36.5 was 3 points up on last year.

By the end of year 2, 94% of children reached the threshold at the recheck at the end of the summer term. There is a small group of children with SEND who did not meet the threshold now in year 3 who continue to receive phonics and reading intervention.

The following governor questions were asked:

* *Is there a benchmark for SEND?* Unfortunately, it is not a homogenous group although it is important to monitor it. Almost by definition, having learning difficulties is going to imply that pupils are going to struggle to make the same progress as their peers.
* *Is there a mechanism for measuring value added?* Currently, this is based on progress from Y2 SATs, although this is transitioning from the reception baseline to year six outcomes. Progress is not only measured on a cohort, but on an individual child level. It needs to be noted that some of the base sizes are really small so it is hard to draw conclusions.
* *Why is there an inversion of the difference in boys and girls between Y1 and Y2, is this completely random?* No, it is directly related to the relative levels of SEND.

**Year 2 SATs Outcomes**

Year 2 outcomes in reading and writing are poor and lower that the school has achieved previously. However, it was known that this cohort have had a higher incidence of SEND (5 EHCPs, 6 SEN Support, 10 Early Concerns of which 4 are dyslexic) and have also had a Covid affected early learning journey. Adaptations and recovery plans implemented in the autumn term did not make a sufficient difference to the outcomes of all groups within this cohort. As learning to read precedes learning to write, the central issue has been this cohort of children has not learned to read well enough on their early journey through the school. The key factors in this have been timetabling and the compression of learning through lockdown which has not been reversed quickly enough. The mechanisms used by the school previously which had promoted very strong outcomes for Y2 children no longer had the same impact for this particular cohort of children. The school has identified elements of reception teaching in terms of less phonics and a an overemphasis on phonics rather than reading and fluency during recovery. Further factors included class disruption and disregulation in some children within their first year which used teaching assistant capacity. In response to the issues raised, the school has significantly invested in the reading stock, particularly in KS1 for the take home and class reading scheme. A fifth phonics lesson has been reinstated in reception, and amending timetables such that the current Y1 outcomes have increased by 10%. In response to a governor question (**Q**) around what areas had been cut to accommodate the expansion of literacy, the Headteacher stated that the wider curriculum had been amended, assembly time reduced and lessons restructured to enable more effective use of time. These changes are highlighted in the school development plan.

The Early Reading Lead and English Hub literacy specialist (new in role from Sept 2022) has received comprehensive training, with a wider range of external schools and resource benchmarks. This has impacted both on her training of WPPS staff and increased fidelity to the SSP scheme. Across Reception to Year 4, a much greater focus on whole class reading for fluency is being implemented.

Governors noted that Y2 is no longer a statutory assessment point and raised the following questions:

* *How will the Y2 cohort moving to Y3 be supported?* This will occur through streamed phonics and whole class reading lessons, targeted interventions for early readers, an emphasis on reading in the curriculum, adjusting planning to meet the needs of the cohort and more frequent in-year assessment. The Y3 teachers are the same team that have already successfully implemented revised approaches this year for a lower attaining cohort, significant planning has already taken place and senior leaders will work closely with the year group to provide guidance and monitor the quality of provision.
* *How will the school measure the impact of these changes?* There are strong supporting indicators that our identification of the issues and actions to address are accurate and will be impactful. Year 1 phonics and reading outcomes have recovered strongly this year after the changes described, Y2 NTS reading assessments at the end of the summer (six weeks after SATs) show an average standard score of 112 (up from 102 in the spring term) and 91% of children achieving within the standard score range for achieving the expected standard (up from 77% in the spring term). In addition, Y3 reading (and writing) progress and outcomes have accelerated. The combination of these different indicators gives the school confidence that its revised approach is going to address current gaps and ensure that it doesn't recur in other cohorts.
* *Is there an approach that parents could use to support phonics?* The school uses ReadWrite Inc and books have been put online for parents to read with their children with high quality decodable texts that all children can access.
* *Have the approaches used by the school to address the issues raised been validated elsewhere?* The school’s Merton Education Partner (MEP) has reinforced and supported the analysis and thinking which went behind it in her reports (copies on file).

**Year 4 multiplication tables check**

Outcomes in the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check are again very strong and comparable with last year which was the first statutory year of this test). 85% of children achieved a score of 22 or more out of 25 with an average score overall of 23.4. There were no significant gaps other than children with SEND (who scored at just below the national overall score last year).

**Year 6 SATs outcomes**

Y6 SATS outcomes were reported as follows:



Outcomes were exceptionally strong across all subjects – the outcomes in reading were the highest ever achieved at the school. Referencing the discussion last year about teacher assessment at the greater depth standard in writing, a much more rigorous moderation of writing was carried out this year, supported by the phase assistant headteacher being a Merton Key Stage 2 moderator this year[[14]](#footnote-14). The fall in the proportion reaching the greater depth standard is much more a reflection of the assessment and moderation process (and previous years’ misconceptions) rather than a fall in writing standards. 2022 outcomes are strong in all aspects – for example, the achievement of disadvantaged students at Wimbledon Park this year is above that of non disadvantaged students. Interestingly, the overall RWM combined outcome reflects the greater incidence of specific learning difficulties (dyslexia and dyscalculia) in this cohort leading to a profile where a greater number of children had one specific weak subject. The outcomes do not highlight any particular focus action areas.

**Outcomes across Year 1-6**

* Standard score attainment for the end for summer term NTS papers in reading and maths are generally very strong and consistent.
* Y1 scores have risen strongly over the year
* Y2 NTS scores show strong continued improvement from SATs outcomes (taken 6 weeks apart)
* Y6 results are very strongly aligned with SATs outcomes
* Disadvantaged students average score is above 100 in both reading and maths
* End of year teacher assessment outcomes for year 1-6 are generally strong
* Maths is more consistently strong across all year groups
* Years 4/5/6 are overall quite a bit stronger than years 1/2/3. This is particularly true in reading and writing
* Writing across years 1 to 4 will need adapted approaches to pick up from the lower average year group staring points and wider attainment span
* *What are standardised scores?* These are assessments in reading and maths which are standardised in a population around a median score of 100. For some children, for example the youngest, it is obviously more challenging to reach their standard score levels, but the school is looking for children to fall between scores of 92 and 113 to indicate that they are within expected age ranges. Above and below these levels would indicate working at greater depth or below expected accordingly.

**Approach to school development**

LK explained that the school development plan has a whole school overview with each phase completing their own plan which is derived from and feeds into this. The teaching of reading is a key focus across the school with a specific focus on early reading for reception up to Y3 and Y4 to Y6. As part of the approach to professional development and as a means to address gaps, the school is introducing lesson studies whereby colleagues support each other in determining what a good lesson looks like. An inset session has been held on writing.

The school is working on a professional development module focused on giving staff the time to collaborative plan in a guided way, supporting ECTs in their early careers and growing partnership networks with other schools, initially through the use of guided peer reviews and sharing observation practice.

PL added that the school has recognised that there is a need to consider the particular link between inclusion and the curriculum.

1. **POLICIES**

The Headteacher reported that the school is in its third year of the [pupil premium strategy](https://www.wimbledonpark.merton.sch.uk/ckfinder/userfiles/files/WPPS%20PP%20strategy%20statement%2022-23.pdf) statement with no significant changes in line. Funding has risen as a result of an increase in the number of pupil premium children, but the areas of focus remain around increasing engagement, attendance, wellbeing and seeking to accelerate progress. The [PE and sport premium strategy](https://www.wimbledonpark.merton.sch.uk/ckfinder/userfiles/files/WPPS%20Primary%20PE%20and%20Sport%20Premium%20Summer%202022.pdf) focuses on investment in wider sport opportunities in terms of additional swimming, lunchtime equipment, looking at the possibility of using some of the coaches for doing sport at lunchtime and making sure that as many children as possible have opportunities for competitive sport.

Governors **RESOLVED** to adopt the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as well as request the issue of an updated allergy list each September.

1. **SCHOOL VISION AND MISSION**

The Headteacher introduced a discussion on the school mission and vision where the following key points were noted:

The current motto is: Never Less Than Our Best

The mission is “To provide broad educational opportunity, using excellence as the benchmark for our provision, in order to enable all to achieve success.”

The leadership team has spent time in seeking to redefine the school’s DNA into four aspects as follows:

* FAMILY – the school community feels like belonging to a ‘family’. This is as a metaphor for the relational well being of the school;
* AMBITIOUS – this is core in a landscape of competition between schools as Wimbledon Park strives to provide an outstanding education that enables children to reach high academic standards and have the widest choice of secondary schools when they move on. We believe that the academic standards we have are important for keeping our school popular and full, attracting high calibre staff, increasing the life chances of each of the students here and part of our responsibility for a high-quality state education, vital for our national future economic prosperity. Excellence is the benchmark for all aspects of our educational provision across the curriculum.
* COLLABORATIVE - From the start in nursery and reception, a priority focus is on learning dispositions that enable children to work well together (e.g. sharing, showing respect, taking turns, listening to others). Throughout the school, children benefit from working collaboratively with different learning partners which are regularly changed. Teachers plan carefully with learning partner work in mind. The school seeks to share openly and support each other, collaborate deeply and learn from other schools, recognising our responsibility within the self-improving state school system.
* EVOLVING - Incremental and continuous improvement is at the heart of our school.

The aim is not to be reinventing, or trying to implement massive changes, but to have a restlessness. The next step in vision setting is to share with staff and children to evolve the statements and create a child-centred friendly version. The culture in the school is to be reinforced by linking each one of the houses to an aspect, lesson design, appointing key roles and embedding the values in its daily life. It is intended to share thoughts with the staff at the inset day in January and then use the spring term to start to develop the pupils and probably bring a finalised shape to governors in the summer term.

1. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Wimbledon Park[[15]](#footnote-15)** – 7 Nov, 6 Feb, 12 Mar, 21 May, 2 July

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Print Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Who will aim to attend on 7 November. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Met with the Chair and has been invited to visit the school, without current response. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Agendas cover governance, safeguarding, compliance and assessment of impact. Policies are to be reviewed according to their existing schedule. Follow up actions will be allocated to specific individuals and recorded in the minutes, although there is provision for ad-hoc working parties. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Spot check of compliance records, risk assessments and school condition review. Review Merton Health and Safety Audits and action plans [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Review equalities audit/action plan and adjustments. Review with SENCO of SEN development plan and impact. Review the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Review Safeguarding Audit/action plan with Designated Teacher, spot check of record keeping, SCR, systems and incidents. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Review of pupil survey outcomes, serious incident patterns, attendance patterns and action plans. Learning walk and pupil discussions - school council liaison. Review of staff survey outcomes and exit interviews. Meet with well-being committee. Review staff professional development provision and strategy (training, coaching) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. More detailed review of assessment outcomes and discuss trends and action planning.

   Review of curriculum progression overviews, meet with subject leaders. Learning walks alongside SLT. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Questioning and sampling financial controls. Review Self Evaluation of Financial Control Audit with school business managers and agree any actions. Discuss long term financial strategy/sustainability [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Carry out regular skills audit, liaise with Governor Support and signpost governors to training, liaise with new candidates and match against skills gaps to recommend to governors, meet with newly appointed governors to induct and familiarise with the role, including liaising with Head to meet new governors [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Governors indicated that these initially lay within management, project management, legal, HR, communications and strategic thinking, [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The majority of children leaving are those returning to their home countries or out of area. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The school now has the largest kitchen in SW London on a daily meals basis. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Whilst results in Y6 are particularly strong, there is a disparity between greater depth readers and greater depth writers. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. All meetings at 6.30pm [↑](#footnote-ref-15)