



**Minutes of a Meeting of the  
Sir Thomas Abney School Governing Body  
12 November 2015**

**EXCL CONF**

**Present:** Leonie Allister (Chair), Geraldine Fitzmaurice (Headteacher), Michael Jacobs, Olalere Ladipo, Lisa Neidich, Andrea O'Brien, Ivan Owen

**Apologies:** Simon Jackson, Ambreen Raja, Sarah Finch

**Clerk:** Susan Moyse

*Meeting opened 6.00 pm  
Leonie Allister in the Chair*

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1	Before the meeting the governors had reviewed examples of children's work in books. They noted that progress was evident and presentation excellent. They discussed marking and spelling. They thanked the Headteacher for the opportunity to see the children's work.	
1.2	The Chair opened the meeting formally at 6.00pm and welcomed all present. She congratulated the Headteacher and staff on the Ofsted judgement and it was <b>agreed</b> to write to all staff with thanks and congratulations.	<b>LA to write to staff</b>
1.3	Apologies for absence had been received from Ambreen Raja, Sarah Finch and Simon Jackson.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>GOVERNING BODY ORGANISATION</b>	
2.1	There were no declarations of interest in this agenda. Governors present updated their entries in the register of interests for 2015-16. Governors noted the new arrangements for recording interests. <b>Agreed</b> that the Clerk circulate the new format to include a section for information for the website.	<b>Clerk to circulate</b>
2.2	Nominations were requested for the posts of chair and vice chair. Nominations had also been sought before the meeting. The governing body <b>agreed</b> Leonie Allister as its chair and Lisa Neidich as vice chair until the first meeting of the autumn term 2016.	
2.3	Noted that John Larter had retired from the governing body. There were currently 5 vacancies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• parent elected</li><li>• co-opted parent</li><li>• co-opted staff – any</li><li>• co-opted staff – teacher</li><li>• co-opted - any</li></ul> The Headteacher reported that she had advertised the staff vacancies. Governors <b>agreed</b> : (i) to include both parent vacancies in the newsletter (ii) to approach SGOSS regarding the general vacancies	<b>HT incl in newsletter</b>  <b>LN to contact SGOSS</b>

2.4 Committee Membership was **agreed** as follows:

<b>Teaching &amp; Learning</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Performance Management</b>
Lisa Neidich (Chair)	Michael Jacobs (Chair)	Leonie Allister
Geraldine Fitzmaurice	Geraldine Fitzmaurice	Lisa Neidich
Leonie Allister	Lisa Neidich	Olalere Ladipo
Olalere Ladipo	Leonie Allister	
Andrea O'Brien	Olalere Ladipo	
Sarah Finch	Simon Jackson	
Ivan Owen	Ambreen Raja	
Ambreen Raja	Coral Wasyzlenzcuk (adviser)	

2.5 **Agreed** to adopt the terms of reference recommended by the committees. It was **agreed** to change the name of the Curriculum Committee to the Teaching & Learning Committee.

2.6 Link governors covered under item 4

### 3. MINUTES

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July had been circulated and were **agreed** as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Clerk

#### 3.2 **Matters arising**

##### **a. Item 3.2 Membership**

**Agreed** to seek a date for an event to mark the retirement of John Larter and Christopher Sills.

LA to arrange

### 4. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

#### 4.1 **Ofsted**

The school had received an overall 'good' judgement. Grade improvements were achieved in EYFS (now good) and Behaviour & Safety (now outstanding). This framework was more rigorous than the previous but had been updated again from Sept 2015. The Headteacher referred governors to the full report and she ran through the inspectors' detailed feedback. She highlighted:

- exemplary behaviour
- cohesive community
- improved attendance
- positive parent view ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk))
- teaching consistently good
- good use of other adults
- children with SEN make good progress
- useful marking
- little variation by groups in achievement
- achievement from low start better than national in maths
- achievement from low start comparable in reading & writing
- good leadership at all levels
- broad and balanced curriculum
- good capacity to improve
- effective steer from governing body
- excellent safeguarding
- strengths and weaknesses known
- observational judgements 'spot on'
- strong social, moral, cultural education

Governors noted that the school had not been judged outstanding because:

- ***Although marking and feedback are effective overall, they do not always provide sufficient challenge to help the most able pupils deepen or extend their learning. As a result, too few attain the highest levels at KS2***

The governing body discussed recent changes introduced in the school's marking and the Head showed examples in children's books. Governors noted that Ofsted does not specify 'how' improvements should be made.

- *Targets set for teachers for the management of their performance are not always challenging enough, particularly for those that are the most experienced and highest paid*

The governors noted that management at all levels and all teaching had been judged at least good. They noted the rigorous application process for the UPS. The Head said she would be reviewing the language used in the targets.

4.2

### **School Development Plan**

Governors noted the school development plan priorities:

- To raise standards in writing by; marking all written work to a high standard, by setting challenging writing targets and ensuring pupils develop sufficient writing stamina.
- To challenge higher attaining pupils in Literacy to secure high levels of attainment.
- To work with Hackney Learning Trust on the proposed expansion of the school.
- To ensure teachers are confident in their use of assessment to track pupil progress.
- To ensure outstanding provision in communication, language and literacy secures rapid progress in Foundation stage.

These had been supplemented with the Ofsted recommendations (see 4.1)

4.3

### **Link Governors**

The following links were **agreed**:

<b>Priority Area</b>	<b>Governor</b>
Literacy (including writing at KS2 and developing cross curricular opportunities)	Andrea O'Brien
Assessment	Lisa Neidich
More able children	Olalere Ladipo
Safeguarding including attendance, British values and prevent strategy	Leonie Allister
EYFS	Sarah Finch (TBC)
PE	To be confirmed at T & L

**Clerk for T&I agenda  
Head to advise key staff**

**Agreed** that the Headteacher advise key staff about link visits

4.4

### **Sports Premium**

Ivan Owen referred governors to the Sports report. The school had received £9.5k additional sports funding. Details of its expenditure and impact had been uploaded to the school website. The school had employed a PE specialist who led CPD and modelled lessons for the school's own teachers. He provided additional sessions for targeted pupils. The Make A Splash swimming pool had been a great success with over 1000 unique uses including 7 schools and members of the local community. 81% of Sir Thomas Abney pupils improved their swimming by at least one stage.

4.5

### **Pupil Premium**

Governors noted the 2015-16 Pupil Premium report which was available on the website. 38% of pupils had been eligible for Pupil Premium at £1320 totalling £219k. The Headteacher said that this funding would be increasingly important as real funding was anticipated to fall in the next few years.

4.6

### **Pupil Information**

Reception roll: 53

Year One roll: 61 (currently organised in three classes of 22/21/19). HLT was no longer recruiting to this year group. Governors discussed when it might be appropriate to consider moving to two classes. The Headteacher would keep this under review.

- 4.7 **Safeguarding & attendance**
- 1 LAC
  - 5 care plans
  - 5 children in need
  - Attendance 96.3%
  - Persistent absence 1.1% or 3 children
  - PA figures at this time of year can be deceptive

4.8 **Harassment & exclusions**

Noted

4.9 **Awards**

- The school had won 2 awards at the Hackney Music Gala: excellence in provision and an ensemble award.
- TFL had named Sir Thomas Abney as a school of excellence in road safety.
- Sustainable Travel European Award (Silver).

**5. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT (Three Form Entry)**

5.1 Michael Jacobs referred to the reply received in response to the letter sent by the Resources Committee to the Council. He said that the majority of the governors' requests had been met and the drawings provided. However the Council still wished the school to commit now to fund the future redevelopment of the Year 6 area at a cost of £202k.

Governors discussed effect of the Woodberry Down development on the current and potential rolls and it was **agreed**:

- i. to check drawings
- ii. to confirm level of finish
- iii. to write to the Council explaining that the governing body was not able to commit, at the current time, to approx £202k for the Year 6 development when there was such uncertainty about the projected roll.

Head/ CW to check drawings

Head/ CW to confirm

MJ to reply

**6. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

6.1 Received draft minutes of the Resources Committee held on 8 October.

6.2 Received draft minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee held on 15 October.

**7. POLICIES**

7.1 **a. Safeguarding policy**

Governors noted their responsibilities under the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. They understood that the school's policy had been updated this term to reflect the latest guidance, including FGM and 'prevent' strategy. They checked that staff had the appropriate training and **agreed** to adopt the policy.

**b. Attendance policy**

The policy had been updated to reflect new guidance (e.g. on persistent absence). The governors confirmed that the policy of Sir Thomas Abney school was to not authorise holidays in term time. It was **agreed** to approve the circulated policy.

7.2 **Documents recommended by the Resources Committee**

The governing body **agreed** the following documents:

- (a) Financial procedures
- (b) Financial scheme of delegation
- (c) Controls assurance statement

- (d) Best value statement
- (e) Pay policy
- (f) Appraisal policy
- (g) Threshold application procedure

7.3 **Policies adopted by the Teaching and Learning Committee**

Noted that the teaching and learning committee had approved

- (a) Restraint and (b) Managing Aggressive Behaviour policies

7.4 **Policy Working Group**

**Agreed** to convene a meeting of the group.

**HT/LA and LN  
to convene**

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

8.1 None

**9. BRIEFINGS, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

9.1 Noted that Olalere Ladipo had attended Headteacher Performance Management training. The Chair had undertaken Channel (prevent strategy) training through her employer.

9.2 Details of training opportunities offered by HLT had been circulated.

9.3 Governors were reminded about the NGA website: [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

9.3 All governors were invited to HASGA meetings. Noted website:

<http://www.hasga.org.uk/>

9.4 The HLT newsletter had been circulated. Governors had also received copies of the DfE safeguarding guidance (Keeping Children Safe/ Working Together/ social media/ prevent).

**All govs to use  
websites and  
attend approp  
training**

**10. FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS**

10.1 **Governor meetings 2015-16**

8 Oct 2015 Teaching & Learning	14 Jan 2016 Resources	28 Apr 2016 Teaching & Learning
15 Oct 2015 Resources	4*Feb 2016 Teaching & Learning	12 May 2016 Resources
12 Nov 2015 Governing body	10 Mar 2016 Governing body	16 Jun 2016 Governing body

**\*Clerk's note: later changed to 9 Feb**

10.2 **HaSGA meetings**

Wednesday - 8/07/2015

Monday - 21/09/2015

Tuesday - 24/11/2015 (Topic: Alternative Provision rather than Exclusions)

Wednesday - 10/02/2016

Monday - 21/03/2016

Tuesday - 10/05/2016

Wednesday - 29/06/2016

10.3 School events were listed in the Sir Thomas Abney newsletter. Governors were invited to attend the Christmas Fair on 3 December.

**All govs**

*Following confidential business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8.15pm*

**Minutes prepared by:**  
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**Chair**

.....  
**Date**