

Darell Primary and Nursery School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held at the School on
Monday 10 December 2018 at 6.30 pm

Constitution and Membership

(including appointments made under item 2)

Membership Category	Appointed By	Name	End of Term of Office
LA (1)	LA	Vacancy	
Parent (2)	Election	Vacancy Alan Hamilton	Mar 21
Headteacher		Karen Bos	N/A
Staff (1)	Election	Vacancy	
Co-opted (9)	Governing Body	Janet Deboo Luke Martyr Jenny Mikkelsen Joanne Winship Fiona Booth Jane Spencer Toshko Botev Vacancy Vacancy	Dec 22 Dec 21 Dec 19 Dec 22 Feb 22 Sep 22 Nov 22
Associate Members	Governing Body		

bold = absent Also present: Kate Nepstad (Clerk)

		ACTION
1	<p>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest The meeting began at 6.33pm. There were no apologies for absence and no new interests declared. Toshko B completed a declaration of interest form, which will be filed by the clerk and added to the published summary on the school's website.</p>	KN
2	<p>GB membership updates Governors noted that Toshko Botev was co-opted onto the GB on 26 September 2018. His appointment was confirmed by email. Toshko is part of the Finance Priority Group this year. Janet Deboo and Joanne Winship declared that they were willing to continue for another term of office and were re-appointed as co-opted governors. Janet is a member of the EYFS Priority Group and Joanne is a member of the Teaching and Learning Priority Group this year. Kate Scally's term of office as a governor has now come to an end and governors noted their thanks for her commitment to this important role over a number of years. ACTION: KN to update the membership records and file with AfC Governor Support and DfE Get Information about Schools.</p>	KN
3	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting and update on actions The minutes of the FGB meeting on Tuesday 11 September 2018 were accepted as an accurate record. The minutes were signed by the Chair and will now be published on the</p>	KN

	<p>school website. The updates on actions noted at the meeting have been added to the table at the end of this document. Also:</p> <p><u>Testing 'lock-down' procedures</u> KB proposed that the school should adopt AfC's forthcoming model procedures for responding to a critical incident which requires staff and pupils to take shelter within the building. KB reminded governors that the Fire Brigade carried out work at school last year to ensure that the main routes were fitted with fire doors. However, she was aware that classroom doors may need to be adapted if they are to be lockable in a 'lock-down situation'. Governors supported the adoption of the AfC model protocols when they are produced but requested that all staff should be asked to consider their own emergency plans as soon as the opportunity arises.</p> <p>ACTION: KB to liaise with the H&S group (Karen, Sara, Luke, Susanna) about plans for 'lock-down' training and report back to FGB in March 2019.</p> <p><u>Parent Governor vacancy</u> It was agreed that it would be helpful to try again to appoint a second parent governor. Alan H was asked to write a short blurb for parents and to oversee a parent governor election next term.</p> <p>ACTION: AH to write a blurb to attract nominations from parents. KN to send him the AfC guidance pack.</p> <p>Governors noted the following additional updates since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Priority Groups are up and running • The content of a new data sheet for governors is being discussed and will be shared before the next FGB meeting • The Finance Priority Group has received training from Grahame Craig • A marketing group has been set up by former governor Tracey Mullins. Several parents have joined. 	<p>KB</p> <p>AH</p>
<p>4</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p>School Improvement</p> <p>Governors reviewed the Headteacher's report and associated documents. The following questions were noted:</p> <p><u>Safeguarding and Behaviour</u></p> <p>Q Why have the number of behaviour incidents increased this term? KB explained that this is due to more effective data capture: this report shows all logged incidents. Governors will be sent directly comparable data before the next FGB meeting in March and will be able to monitor changes over time.</p> <p>Q Do staff have a code of conduct and is their safeguarding training up to date? Yes there is a staff code of conduct which was reviewed by governors last year. Staff need to refresh their level 2 safeguarding training and this will be delivered on the next available INSET day.</p> <p>ACTION: KN to circulate the current staff code of conduct with the minutes of this meeting.</p> <p>Governors agreed that safeguarding should continue to be a high priority for the school. Jenny M is the Safeguarding lead governor and will liaise with KB and ensure that a safeguarding audit is completed and that the single central register is monitored, preferably each term. It was noted that Luke M and Janet D are both trained in safer recruitment.</p>	<p>KN</p>

	<p>ACTION: KN to circulate login details for online safer recruitment training with the minutes. All governors are asked to complete the module and submit their certificates for filing.</p> <p>4.2 <u>Attendance</u></p> <p>Q What are you doing to address the recent dip in attendance and punctuality? KB explained a number of different sanctions are applied, depending on the circumstance. She gave one example of the poor punctuality of Y6 pupils who walk independently to school. They have left home on time but are late arriving at school. Governors noted that in this case, the parents are informed when the pupils are late and that sanctions applied to the pupils in the form of detention. In another example, one pupil is driven to school by parents and they are regularly late – just be a few minutes each day – but this adds up to significant lost time. In this instance the school needs to work with the parents.</p> <p>Q Does the school receive support from an Educational Welfare Officer? Yes, KB and the office team work closely with the EWO. One initiative to be discussed with the EWO will be to consider ‘secondary school style’ sanctions to tackle Y6 poor punctuality. KB is also considering a walking bus to help the local children get to school on time.</p> <p>4.3 <u>SEN</u></p> <p>Q Is the school’s spend on SEN support coming in on budget? No, the school spends more on individual children; £9,000 has been spent this year to date in addition to current pupil’s EHCPs. However, the total SEN notional budget covers all the staff delivering interventions in school. Given the school’s financial situation, the finance group governors felt it important to review the spend on both PPG and SEN in greater detail. There will be a meeting on 19 December with Amanda B, Sara B and Karen B to discuss the separate budgets for SEN (and PPG, which is being led by Amanda B during Emma C’s maternity leave).</p> <p>4.4 <u>EYFS review</u></p> <p>Governors felt that the report was rather disappointing and look forward to hearing more about the development of this priority area next term. See also item 5.2.</p> <p>4.5 <u>PPG review</u></p> <p>Governors asked for a verbal update on PPG</p> <p>Q Is the school continuing to pay for a PPG Teacher? No, this year an existing member of staff, an HLTA, is carrying out this role. Sometimes the PPG pupils are taught by her and sometimes she covers the class while the class teacher does focus work with the PPG pupils.</p> <p>Q How will governors monitor the school’s spend on PPG this year? After some discussion about the specific needs of a number of families at school, it was decided that there should be a PPG focused meeting to enable governors to look at the spend in detail.</p> <p>ACTION: Joanne W to arrange a meeting with Amanda B to discuss the PPG spend, Fiona B, Jane S and Janet D also volunteered to be on a PPG-focus group.</p> <p>The letter from AfC concerning Deficit Recovery Plan was noted by governors.</p>	<p>KN</p> <p>JW</p>
<p>5</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Governing Body monitoring</p> <p>Governors noted the following verbal summaries from the Priority Groups:</p> <p><u>Teaching and Learning Priority Group</u></p>	

<p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p>This Priority Group has met once since the last FGB meeting. It has overseen in-school monitoring, the rolling out of the coaching model and the development of key strategies such as Teach Like a Champion. Fiona B explained that there had been a lot of internal monitoring this term. Karen B added that it had been focused on Reading, then Maths, and now Writing. Governors asked if they could attend some forthcoming monitoring.</p> <p>ACTION: Fiona B to circulate the dates for learning walks for Spring term.</p> <p><u>EYFS Priority Group</u> Janet D explained that this Priority Group has had an initial meeting with Karen B and Corinne T and they had planned to undertake EYFS training, but this was unfortunately cancelled and will need to be rebooked for next year. Jane S asked governors to note that AfC and other external parties felt that Nursery should be cost neutral at the absolute minimum and that the focus should be to look at how changes might be made in order for it to become a source of revenue for the school.</p> <p><u>Finance Priority Group</u> Jane S explained that this group had received and reviewed the budget figures up until the end of September, the end of October and the end of November. There has been two meetings and one virtual meeting by email. Governors on this group feel that they are not being provided with clear financial information. On Thursday 20 December, Karen B, Jane S and Sara B will meet with Antonia Lord, the experienced SBM at Barnes Primary School, for some assistance.</p>	<p>FB</p>
<p>6</p> <p>6.1.1</p> <p>6.1.2</p>	<p>Governing Body statutory duties</p> <p><u>Pay decisions 2018/19</u> Pay Committee met on 29 November in order to review pay decisions, scrutinising the evidence for staff moving up from one pay point to the next. The committee was very happy with the appraisal process. The minutes will be filed.</p> <p><u>Pay scales for 2018/19</u> Jane S explained the significance of the government announcement last summer that there would be pay increases for teachers. The grant provided by the government has not been sufficient to pay for the increase. Darell has £6,715 as a pay grant but the total cost to the school for the increased pay is c. £18,000. Most Richmond schools are following union recommendations for pay increases this year and will fund the difference out of their own budgets. For Darell, the extra cost would be over £10,000. Lack of assurance regarding the school's budget does not give governors confidence, given the school's movement from a healthy carryover to a large deficit in only a few years. Although it might be possible to find £10,000 from other areas of the budget, it should be recognised that this pay rise represents a permanent increase in cost to the school.</p> <p>Governors asked the following questions:</p> <p>Q What would be the outcome of not following union recommendations for pay? The danger of not paying the same as other local schools is that staff will leave. Governors were reminded that Darell is about to launch a restructuring plan which will result in some redundancies. This will increase the likelihood of staff mobility, irrespective of the pay scale decision. Staff retention is closely linked to pupil retention and Darell's pupil numbers (already low) are the chief cause of the current financial situation of the school. Karen B also asked governors to note that Darell has some very good and very expensive teachers who have benefited from increases over the many years of their employment. One of the financial benefits of staff mobility can be that these more expensive teachers are replaced by less expensive ones (who are perhaps at the start of their teaching career). It is important to keep a balance of experienced and newly qualified staff.</p>	

	<p>Q When does the decision about the pay scales need to be made? The decision is already overdue and needs to be made by the end of term in order to be reflected in January pay. Governors do not feel that they have been provided with the necessary data to establish the long-term impact of making the proposed pay increases now. It is hoped that Antonia Lord can help the Finance Priority Group project the figures and make this decision.</p> <p>ACTION: Finance Priority Group make a recommendation about the pay scales to governors, to approve by email before the end of term.</p> <p>6.2 <u>Policy approvals</u> It was noted that governors should be monitoring these policies in use, during their visits to school.</p> <p>6.2.1 <u>Pay Policy</u> The policy was APPROVED by governors, <i>subject to the addition of the pay scales as Appendix 1.</i></p> <p>6.2.2 <u>Appraisal/Performance Management Policy</u> The policy was APPROVED by governors.</p> <p>6.2.3 <u>Safeguarding and Child Protection</u> Governors confirmed that they had read and understood the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Safeguarding Policy is in the process of being updated.</p> <p>ACTION: KB to circulate Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for approval by email next term.</p> <p>6.2.4 <u>SEN Information Report</u> The updated information for the school website was APPROVED by governors.</p> <p>6.2.5 <u>EYFS Policy</u> This policy is still being updated.</p> <p>ACTION: KB/CT to circulate EYFS Policy for approval by email next term.</p> <p>6.2.6 <u>Behaviour Policy</u> The policy was APPROVED by governors, subject to the correction of a number of small typos: 'behavior'.</p> <p>6.2.7 <u>Relationships and Sex Education Policy</u> The new name of this policy was noted by governors. The policy was APPROVED.</p> <p>ACTION: KN to file and save the new versions of the policy documents on the school server and send on to Jayne B for website as required.</p>	<p>JS</p> <p>KB</p> <p>KB/CT</p> <p>KN</p>
7	<p>School Financial Position and Restructuring Plan</p> <p><u>Restructuring Plans have been made in response to the school's Financial Position</u></p> <p>Background</p> <p>Jane Spencer explained that the school was facing an in-year deficit of around £150,000. She also noted that the school's income is diminishing due to lower pupil numbers in the October census. Last April the school budget was approximately £1.5m and this April it will</p>	

be more like £1.35m. If the school continues to overspend to this degree it looks likely that we will be approaching a deficit of £500,000 by the end of the next financial year.

Karen B asked governors to note that this deficit is despite significant savings being made since she arrived (including restructuring of TAs, reducing the senior leadership team, losing other staff such as Play Therapist, Inclusion Manager and SEN teacher, and saving money in other ways like arranging for TAs to cover lunch playtime, instead of Fit for Sport staff). It is important that staff understand that there is an embargo on spending, in order that all possible savings are made for staff salaries.

As the letter from AfC indicated, immediate action must be taken in the form of a restructure. Staff costs account for approximately 87% of the whole budget and therefore reducing staff costs provides an opportunity to make substantial savings. Karen B spoke to staff about this situation in general terms last week and the response was mixed, with some staff feeling quite emotional.

It was noted that Charis Penfold, Director of Education Services, AfC, would be coming to talk to Darell staff on Monday 7 January. All governors expressed their regret about the forthcoming teacher redundancies.

The proposal

A proposal for restructuring staff has been written by Karen B and will be shared with staff and union representatives in a staff meeting on Tuesday 11 December. AfC have recommended redundancy for 5 members of staff. The end result will be following teaching plan:

- 1 Nursery teacher
- 1 Reception teacher
- 3 teachers to work across Y1 and Y2
- 1 Y3 teacher
- 1 Y4 teacher
- 2 Y5 teachers
- 1 Y6 teacher

Comments about Y1 and Y2

It was noted that in Key Stage 1 (Y1 and Y2) there is a legal limit of 30 children in each class. There are currently 41 children in Y1 and 42 children in Y2. Jane S stressed that there was no desire to use vertical integration to combine the year groups. Instead, there will be one teacher per year and one teacher across the two year groups. This will only work if the total number of children remains less than 90. Karen B noted that there are some difficulties around KS1 assessment time which will have to be resolved in due course.

Comments about Y3 and Y4

In these year groups there are currently 35 and 39 children respectively. There will be one teacher for each year. An HLTA will support both year groups and in addition, a Senior Leader will provide some teaching time.

Governors' Questions and Comments

Q Is it legally possible to have classes of over 30 in Y1 and 2?

In England and Wales, there is no statutory limit on the size of any class above Key Stage One and there is precedent locally of approximately 35 children in one class. Governors discussed the fact that class sizes vary across the country and flexible teaching arrangements are common. Governors anticipate parental concern about class sizes but felt that these staff reductions were vital and this would need to be clearly articulated to

parents in a planned meeting on Thursday 13 December 2018.

Q When will the changes take place and when will parents be informed?

The changes will be from April 2019. Parents will be told about the restructure on Thursday 13 December in general terms. Governors acknowledged that parents would want certainty about their child's education but that the school (with the support of HR consultant Kate Cockle) would have to work through the process transparently, without preference for one staff member over another.

Governors agreed that there would need to be a clearly communicated message to all parents, especially those who don't attend the meeting. The communication should include:

1. A list of the changes this year
2. An illustration of the structure we are trying to achieve
3. An explanation of how the school will ensure that each child's education doesn't suffer.

Q Why is the restructure being announced at this point in the year?

Richmond HR's advice was to launch the restructure before Christmas so that the four-week long consultation period can begin next week. This means that notice can be given to staff before February half term. This will enable the outcome to have a positive impact on the budget for the start of the next financial year.

Q How many of the staff facing possible redundancy are NQTs?

There are three NQTs working between Y1 and Y4. Karen B explained that these would receive no redundancy pay. They are all still in their training year. Governors noted that some of the school's HLTAs are more expensive than the NQTs.

Q Will the restructuring take Darell's budget out of deficit?

It is suggested that the redundancies will remove the deficit for the next financial year so the school can balance its budget in year. Jane S reminded governors that the school was facing a reduced budget share, due to lower numbers on roll. In the local area, a number of other schools are now heading towards deficit: Darell is not alone facing these difficult choices.

Q Would it be possible to restructure HLTAs instead of teachers?

Yes that is possible but our HLTAs are some of the longest serving staff and in some instances their redundancy costs would be higher (possibly £20,000). Karen B reminded governors that it was thanks to the HLTAs and SLT that the school was managing to save money by employing only minimal supply staff cover this term. Karen B reminded governors that there was one long term supply staff member in Y5. There is also one member of staff on long term sick leave.

Q Will the leadership team also be restructured?

Yes, this process will begin in the summer term. Staff are aware. It is possible that a full time School Business Manager is no longer the best solution for the school. A Finance officer might be preferred. Governors were informed that Sara B has begun to look for other employment opportunities.

Q Is this restructure part of the longer-term plan to become a single form entry school?

Not really, as there needs to be a two-year consultation before a school reduces its PAN. Karen B explained that the school would not be financially sustainable with one form entry and there are other difficulties in this model. It is our aim to make Darell a successful and full two-form entry school.

Q Is it possible to reduce the school's PAN so that we stop new children being admitted, once the number of teachers has been reduced?

No, it isn't possible to stop new children joining but AfC has promised that they will try to place them elsewhere where possible. Jane S confirmed that AfC will observe a 30-pupil maximum admission to Reception next year provided that the number of applications received in January is as they expect. The deadline for applications is mid-January 2019.

School to School support has been arranged in order to raise standards

Jane S explained that AfC has told the school that it needs to seek support from another local school in order to raise standards and attract more pupils. The local school that have been approached to build a significant relationship with Darell is Barnes Primary School. Headteacher Mark Hartley and Deputy Headteacher Sue Jepson have written a draft proposal to explain how they are going to support the school for the next two terms.

Q How does the school to school support relate to the financial situation?

The key challenge for Darell is to raise standards in order to attract more pupils. This will resolve its financial difficulties. School to school support is common practice. Another important strand of this will be marketing the school and Tracey Mullins has a group in hand, including parent volunteers.

Q Why does Barnes Primary School want to support Darell? What is in it for them?

Jane S explained that both Mark H and Sue J are strongly committed to inclusion. It was noted that they have no PPG pupils at KS1. They welcome a closer relationship with Darell as a positive learning opportunity for them. It provides a CPD opportunity for their staff and enables them to retain staff by developing them in a closely affiliated – but very different - school.

Q Why has Barnes Primary School been suggested by AfC?

Over the last 14 years, Mark H and Sue J have created an outstanding school. Prior to this, the school was called Westfields Primary and was not successful. One of things that the SLT did was to change the name of the school to Barnes Primary. Mark H has said that this had a significant impact. Governors noted that Sue J is an EYFS expert and will be able to share this expertise with Darell. They have a Nursery and they will help Darell to get its Nursery running at a profit for the school.

Q What do you anticipate the response of Darell staff will be?

Karen B suggested that the response would be mixed. The EYFS team might not feel very positive, having faced quite a critical assessment by an Ofsted inspector. However, for all staff, there will be advantages. They will see that Barnes teachers will be contributing to the coaching model already adopted at Darell. They will also observe that SLT will be teaching more at Darell, as a consequence of the restructure. Karen B reminded governors that staff have experienced support from different schools over the past few years, in most recent times from Latchmere School, and in support for Maths teaching. Only the very new teachers have not directly experienced the benefits of school to school support first hand, because the support was provided in-house last year.

Q When will this school to school support begin?

The School Business Manager is already offering financial advice and is hosting a meeting on 20 December. The other support will begin in the Spring term.

Q Is there an underlying strategic plan to make this arrangement more formal?

Jane S described this as 'try before you buy'. Partnership with a local successful school is essential for Darell. Jane S and Karen B feel that Barnes is the best local partner for Darell. Its ethos is a good fit, it has primary school expertise and is only 10 minutes away. Initially, the support will be seen in the form of help for Karen on the leadership role and an opportunity for teachers from the two schools to learn from each other. Governors noted that this was not the same as joining a MAT because Darell will keep its legal identity.

	<p>Q When will Darell governors meet Barnes Primary governors? The Barnes GB have been informed about the proposal and are supportive. Conversations with them will begin after their next FGB meeting.</p> <p>Governors requested further updates before the end of term. They were all thanked for their contributions to this important discussion.</p>	
8	<p><u>Order of business of 2018/19</u></p> <p>Governors noted the dates of the forthcoming Full Governing Body meetings: 6.30pm on Tuesday 26th March 2019 6.30pm on Tuesday 25th June 2019</p>	

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

Signed by the Chair _____ Date _____

Full Governing Body Actions

Updated as of 11 March 2019

Meeting/ Minute	Action	Assigned to	Update	Target date or DONE?
27/03/18 4.4	Propose a streamlined SEF format which is based on the new Ofsted framework.	KB/SZ	This will be put into practice in time for the FGB in March 2019	26.03.19
11/09/18 3	Contact Maggie B and explain that Darell is no longer pursuing conversion to academy status as part of ECED Trust.	KB	DONE	01.10.18
11/09/18 3	Discuss Darell's locality group membership with SIP Karen Feeney.	KB	DONE	01.10.18
11/09/18 6	Follow up with Governor Support's suggestion of potential candidates and liaise with Chair and HT.	KN/JS/KB	DONE	01.10.18
11/09/18 6	Agree a template for termly HT's report and the half termly school update paper.	JS/KB	This is in progress and will be ready by the next FGB	26.03.18
11/09/18 6	Explain the new priority groups to SLT and staff as soon as possible.	KB	DONE	ASAP
11/09/18 6	Priority group governors to meet their staff link as soon as possible and define their remit for the year.	All govs	DONE	01.10.18
11/09/18 6	Finance Priority Group should request training from Grahame Craig and seek immediate clarification about how the school can run on a deficit.	JS/LM etc	DONE	01.10.18
11/09/18 6	Plan an event (coffee morning and evening session as well) to get parents involved in marketing the school. A specific request will be	KB/JS	DONE	01.10.18

	made for help from parents with marketing/comms experience. Tracy Mullins will be asked to help.			
11/09/18 6	Amend wording on the frequency of FGBs, to reflect the intended practice this year of 'at least one FGB meeting per term'.	KN	DONE	01.10.18
10/12/18 2	Update the membership records and file with AfC Governor Support and DfE Get Information about Schools.	KN	GIAS still requires updating	21.12.18
10/12/18 3	Liaise with the H&S group (Karen, Sara, Luke, Susanna) about plans for 'lock-down' training and report back to FGB in March 2019.	KB		26.03.19
10/12/18 3	Write a blurb to attract nominations from parents. KN to send him the AfC guidance pack.	AH	Guidance pack shared	21.01.19
10/12/18 4.1	Circulate the current staff code of conduct with the minutes of this meeting.	KN	DONE	17.12.18
10/12/18 4.1	Circulate login details for online safer recruitment training with the minutes. All governors are asked to complete the module and submit their certificates for filing.	KN	Deferred due to cost	17.12.18
10/12/18 4.5	Arrange a meeting with Amanda B to discuss the PPG spend, Fiona B, Jane S and Janet D also volunteered to be on a PPG-focus group.	JW		21.01.19
10/12/18 5.2	Circulate the dates for learning walks for Spring term.	FB		21.01.19
10/12/18 6.1	Finance Priority Group to make a recommendation about the pay scales to governors, to approve by email before the end of term.	JS		21.12.18
10/12/18 6.2.5	Circulate EYFS Policy for approval by email next term.	KB/CT		26.03.19
10/12/18 6.2.7	File and save the new versions of the policy documents on the school server and send on to Jayne B for website as required.	KN	DONE	21.12.18