

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Darell Primary and Nursery School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held at the School on
Tuesday 25 June at 6.30 pm

Constitution and Membership

Membership Category	Appointed By	Name	End of Term of Office
LA (1)	LA	<i>Vacancy</i>	
Parent (2)	Election	<i>Vacancy</i> Alan Hamilton	Mar 21
Headteacher		Karen Bos	N/A
Staff (1)	Election	<i>Vacancy</i>	
Co-opted (9)	Governing Body	Janet Deboo Luke Martyr Jenny Mikkelsen Joanne Winship Fiona Booth Jane Spencer Wendy Pitt <i>Vacancy</i> <i>Vacancy</i>	Dec 22 Dec 21 Dec 19 Dec 22 Feb 22 Nov 22 Mar 23
Associate Members	Governing Body		

bold = absent

Also present: Paul Gilbert (Assistant HT, Darell), Joe Porter (Acting HT, Darell), Emma Claridge (Assistant HT, Darell), Mark Hartley (HT, Barnes Primary), Sue Jepson (Deputy HT, Barnes Primary), Kate Nepstad (Clerk), Peter Hewer (prospective governor).

		ACTION
1	<p>Preliminaries</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence. There were no new declarations of interest. Governor Toshko Botov had resigned since the last meeting. Peter Hewer was introduced. Peter H lives in East Sheen and has a background in corporate communications and has been looking for a new challenge. It is hoped that he will agree to join the governing body as the new LA governor in September 2019. Mark Hartley and Sue Jepson from Barnes Primary were introduced. Mark H will be leaving Barnes at the end of this academic year and will be replaced as Headteacher by Sue J. Emma C will be returning to Darell after her maternity leave on 15 July 2019. Joe Porter is currently DHT at King Athelstan Primary School in Kingston and he is now working at Darell alongside Paul G on a 3:2 day split.</p>	

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	Jane S led the governors in expressing their gratitude to Paul G, who has been acting up since 1 May, when Karen B went on sick leave. It was noted that he has been ably supported by Amanda Blunden (after the first week, when she too was unwell and not at school). Together, they have been well supported by school improvement partner Karen Feeney and also Mark H, who has been visiting weekly.	
2	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on 26 March 2019 were approved, subject to one amendment on point 3.2.1: there will be two Y6 classes next year. This amendment was made by hand and the filed copy was signed by the chair.</p>	
3	<p>School Improvement</p> <p>Governors had read the Headteacher's reports before the meeting and asked the following questions:</p> <p>3.1 Attendance</p> <p>Q. Y6 attendance is at 94.4% which is below the 95% target. Why? Paul G explained that in this single class, there are a couple of historic cases of low attendance. This has a significant impact on the overall data. In addition, there have been a number of genuine absences, where pupils have been off school for a significant amount of time, through illness.</p> <p>Q. 21 Darell pupils have left and moved to other local schools this year. Do you capture information on which schools they are joining and why? The preferred schools have tended to be Queens, Marshgate and Holy Trinity. The parents have to complete a form as part of the process of leaving. There are also exit interviews when possible. Paul G reported that he had spoken to the families of three pupils who explained that the move was due to distance/locality. Governors did not accept that this was a genuine reason, given the proximity of all three schools. Joe P added that he had spoken to a parent whose child was leaving Nursery and the parent had said that the reason was poor communication from the school. Joe P noted that it was very important that this information was gathered, so that the core problems could be tackled. Governors agreed that this was essential.</p> <p>ACTION: Parents of children who choose to leave the school must always be encouraged to explain their reasons, so that core problems can be tackled. Governors requested an update at the next meeting.</p> <p>3.2 Behaviour</p> <p>Governors noted that the software system Arbor is now up and running. Paul G explained that this has made it possible to identify behavioral patterns: for example a small number of specific children with additional needs have been logged multiple times. Usefully, the data can be analysed by time of day and this can also help staff identify some of the triggers for these incidents. Governors asked these questions:</p> <p>Q. Has there been a genuine reduction in behavior incidents, or does this simply reflect different data reporting? Paul G explained that there has been a consistent message to staff about logging incidents. This would suggest there has been a genuine reduction. Joe P noted that on his first day at Darell, he observed that SLT were not being so frequently interrupted to assist with behaviour incidents.</p>	JP/PG

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	<p>Q. Would it be helpful to split the data between pupils in the SRP and in mainstream? Two of the five pupils most frequently mentioned in the incident log are in the KS1 SRP. Governors asked to have the data with the SRP included, and also with the SRP shown separately. It was noted that the SRP is very much part of the school.</p> <p>Q. Going forward, will it be possible to compare behaviour data, year on year? Yes, this will be possible from December 2019 – one year after school started using Arbor.</p> <p>Q. Which staff log incidents? How do you ensure a consistency of approach? All staff can log incidents. The system is simple and self-explanatory and the categories are clear. Paul G gets a notification and so is pre-warned that an incident has occurred. There is confidence that the logging process is robust. Paul G has spoken to a lunchtime supervisor (lunch is a common time for incidents to take place) and she has been helping to ensure incidents are logged consistently.</p> <p>Q. Do the parents know when their child has been involved in a behavior incident? Not necessarily, as persistent, low level disruption is managed within school but if a pupil's action is 'level 3' behaviour, this would result in a conversation with the parent.</p> <p>ACTION: Wendy P will work with Paul G to compare like data from next term, in order to report to governors at their December FGB.</p>	WP/PG
3.3	<p><u>Special Educational Needs</u> Governors passed on their thanks to Amanda B for her usual, detailed report. Most year groups are showing good progress.</p> <p>Q Progress in Y2 seems to be an issue, what is happening there? There are a number of children whose end of year data for Y1 was inflated. This was an historic inaccuracy which was corrected when they moved into Y2.</p> <p>Q Was this related to the whole year group or just children with SEN? This was particularly the case for children with SEN and specifically for two children.</p> <p>Q Should there be a specific budget in place for this year group? Paul G explained that this wasn't a problem of resources.</p> <p>It was noted that Butterfly Class has been without its teacher for the entire term. Sadly, she is very unwell. Fortunately, the class have had a very good supply teacher. HR are involved and are providing advice; Joe P is implementing the Managing Health and Attendance policy but as Melanie is so unwell it is not possible to discuss return to work at this point. Paul G noted that in addition to SEN, Amanda B has taken on PPG and a lot of work with Butterfly Class, including writing their annual reports. This has taken a significant amount of time.</p>	
3.4	<p><u>PPG</u> The Governors noted that the report had been prepared by Amanda Blunden. Joanne W met with AB recently for a review of PPG spend and interventions. Staff shortages have had an impact on the ability to deliver some planned reaching interventions. The progress gap and current standards achieved by Year 2 PPG children are of highest concern. These children will receive additional focus in the coming school year.</p> <p>It was noted the PPG budget must always be clearly ringfenced and the balances and checks effective throughout the year to ensure the strategy is in place and being evaluated successfully.</p>	

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	<p>Q. Why is it so hard to ringfence PPG? Despite Emma C having a clear strategy at the start of the academic year, it is hard to calculate: for example each time a class goes on a trip, the proportion of the cost covered by PPG will vary according to the proportion of disadvantaged children in the class.</p> <p>Q. Why are disadvantaged children in Y4/5/6 doing better than Y1/2/3? The top end of the school have had extra teaching support by SLT and this has had a positive impact on progress.</p> <p>Q. Is there something that needs to be done in the new academic year to accelerate their learning? Paul G explained that there will be extra Y1 phonics support, targeting children who might not meet the expected level.</p> <p>Q. Is there an overlap PPG/disadvantage and SEN? Of the 71 children eligible for PPG, 21 have SEN and eight of these have an EHCP.</p> <p>3.5 <u>Safeguarding</u> Governors noted that neglect appears to be the biggest safeguarding concern at Darell.</p> <p>Q How does neglect manifest itself? It can be physical or/and emotional neglect. It is hard for staff to identify when the threshold is crossed. Governors would like more information on this issue next year.</p> <p>3.6 <u>EYFS</u> Reception has been a key focus for the year. Fiona B met with Corinne T (EYFS Lead) and Georgia B (Reception teacher) and agreed an action plan which responded to the recent review. In September, a target of 69% GLD was set and, pleasingly, 77% have achieved GLD and a number have exceeded that. These excellent results in Reception are the result of a great deal of hard work by Georgia B and the EYFS team as well as some support from Barnes. There has been a radical change in the learning environment, with the two classrooms being redesigned to create a free-flowing space. Governors noted that this has been a very stable cohort. It was acknowledged that the school's greatest resource is its staff, who are doing a great job of responding to children's individual needs.</p> <p>Sue J added that she had found the Early Years team inspirational. They have embraced everything and are committed to continuing to improve Early Years. Governors noted that the new classroom layout has created a beautiful space: this would be a good time to invite prospective Reception parents to see the environment. It was pleasing to hear that things are moving in the right direction, especially as EYFS was identified in the last Ofsted inspection as an area for development. Sue J explained that she would be happy to focus on Writing in EYFS, next.</p> <p>Governors noted that there had been some discussion to introduce Nursery places for 2yr olds. This won't be by September, but may occur during the next academic year.</p> <p>3.7 <u>KS2 Specialist Resources Provision</u> Joe P explained that one of the Y5 classrooms is being adapted to provide space for this new provision. The biggest issue is staffing: the deadline for the Teacher in Charge has closed with only one applicant. The KS1 SRP teacher is off on long-term sick leave: it would be disappointing to have to start the year with two supply staff.</p>	
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	<p>Q. How many places are there in the KS2 SRP and where do the children come from? The SLA states 10 places, however, this is only draft and the school has agreed with AfC that there will be 8 places when the provision is full. In the first year (2019/2020) there will be 5 places. We have 2 children from KS1 making the transition and are looking at moving further children from our mainstream to access additional support.</p> <p>Q. Why do you think there have been no applicants for the Teacher in Charge position? This is a difficult time of year to recruit. The position had been advertised initially before half term and two applicants were interviewed, but they were not of the standard needed. It is specialist role: these attract a smaller number of applicants. However, it is an interesting and attractive role because it involves working both within the school and also closely with the borough SEN department. Governors noted that Charis Penfold, Director of Education Services, is finding out if Clarendon School might be able to help by providing a member of staff in the short term, if we fail to recruit in time for September. Sarah Herbert (Lead School Improvement Adviser for SEND) has been helpful and has interviewed candidates with Paul G.</p> <p>Q Should we delay opening the KS2 SRP, if there is no teacher in place? This is not possible: children have been given the places already.</p> <p>Q Will there be more staff in the KS2 SRP, in addition to the teacher? Yes, there will be a TA and an HLTA. A TA in the school has expressed interest in the SRP role, but recruitment will be necessary over the summer. The staffing will be put in place for 8 children, although there will initially be only a maximum of 5.</p> <p>Q How much integration will the SRP children have with the rest of the school? The long term aspiration for children in the KS2 provision is for them to have 50% integration time. The idea is that they will register in their year groups and it is likely that it will be most appropriate for them to have their breaks in the KS1 playground.</p>	
<p>4</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p>Strategic Partnership</p> <p><u>Strategic level.</u></p> <p>Mark H explained how the strategic partnership had come about. He received a phone call from Charis Penfold in late November 2018, asking if Barnes Primary would like to get involved with Darell. The timing was bad, as he was just about to announce his retirement, but he was keen to help. Mark H met Charis P and Jane S and subsequently met with Karen B after which he created an initial action plan for the spring term. The plan included Sue J working closely with Early Years team. The Barnes School Business Manager also provided support on Darell's financial systems and budget. This was a big piece of work.</p> <p>Mark H set up a series of teaching partnerships: team teaching has taken place both here and at Barnes and teaching and learning remain a focus. Mark H came in to see a number of lessons being taught by Darell staff and used this experience to inform his next step, which was to lead a whole day CPD on highly effective teaching, before the end of last term. A number of specific areas for development were identified: for example, use of IT and the presentation of children's work, lesson structures and pupil voice. These observations informed the second action plan, which had been shared with governors.</p> <p>Barnes teachers and Darell teachers have been learning together through the strategic partnership and Mark H stressed that staff stability and retention is the key and professional trust is essential. Staff in both schools would like the partnership to continue and Mark H believes more can be achieved.</p>	

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<p>4.2</p>	<p>Staff feedback</p> <p>Paul G summarised the feedback. Nine members of staff were asked to give feedback but only seven responded. Paul G felt that this was probably due to there being so many other strands of work going on. The feedback indicates that the NQTs have really benefitted. There have been some really great partnerships but one pairing has not worked well. The response from Middle Leaders has been varied; one piece of feedback was that the more experienced teachers might prefer to work on a specific area of personal development, which is linked to their performance management goals. However, Paul G concluded that they have all benefitted from hearing about different teaching and learning strategies.</p> <p>Mark H responded that he was slightly disappointed with this feedback received, which was less positive than initial feedback in the Spring. Mark H suggested that the partnership would work best when the staff involved had chosen to do so, therefore perhaps staff should have been invited to be involved and given the option of not taking part if they didn't want to.</p> <p>Q. Do you think that the less positive comments are coming from staff who didn't really want to take part? Possibly: out of the seven respondents, three were not overwhelmingly positive, one of these three was in a pairing which did not work out.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the fact that professional trust was a prerequisite for the strategic partnership and that teachers needed to buy into it to ensure the maximum benefit could be derived. This could be seen in Early Years, where trust was gained through changing the learning environment together and the relationships are now in place for team teaching to be a success. Barnes Primary has provided substantial time and energy on this partnership at a time when their school has been going through major change; Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher recruitment. Darell has also experienced some instability at leadership level and this has been difficult. However, the general consensus was that this should continue but the discussion about what is needed must come from Darell.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Redevelopment Plans</p> <p>In the Spring, Mark H and Sue J spoke to Karen B and Jane S about possible rebranding/redevelopment. A plan was quickly put together. The most important job identified, was to give school a decent tidy up. Rooms needed to be decluttered, classrooms needed to be better organised, and teaching resources standardised and made more easily accessible to staff. The school office and SLT offices must be redesigned to make these spaces more efficient. There is a suggestion that the stairs in the KS1 classrooms might be removed and small additional resource spaces and a KS1 library created. A small building project has been proposed. Joe P visited Barnes to see how the space was used and found this very useful.</p> <p>The tidy-up has already begun, and the first skip has been filled. TAs in particular have been inspired to help declutter and everyone has found it very therapeutic. Joe P noted that in many instances old furniture can be sold instead of thrown away; Sue J will provide details of an eBay consultant who will organise this for a small commission.</p> <p>Joe P thanked Mark H for the useful plan, which Joe P and Paul G have split up into two week 'steps' and staff are being briefed on each step in turn. Staff are pleased to think of starting the new academic year in a refreshed building/working environment. They realise that it is a big job but they feel ownership of the plan and are ambitious.</p>	

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	<p>Sue J spoke about the use of space and its significance. The positive transformation of the Early Years spaces has had a great impact on morale. This can be extended throughout the school. Sue J has recommended the establishment of easily accessible resources rooms so that everything is on hand, and a 'house style' for the classrooms, simplifying the displays can have an impact on behaviour for learning. Corridors should also be de-cluttered.</p> <p>Mark H acknowledged that this is a change management process: not an event. There needs to be a change in the way of thinking. It is about creating a special place where special things happen. These changes will also help save money because resources will be streamlined and wastage reduced.</p> <p>Governors were asked to come and help out over the summer holiday. Jane S and Jenny M are using their contacts to get local businesses involve. A lot of the work will involve clearing cupboards, taking things off walls. Mark H explained that the 'commander in chief', is a painter and decoration called Paul Gilbert. He is coming into school on 8 July to receive a brief. School term ends on Tuesday 23 June and the work will start on Wednesday 24 June. He will need lots of help. Mark H has put in a bid to Richmond Parish Lands for £15,000 towards the project. Paul G, Joe P and Jane S are meeting Amy Vogel from RPL on Wednesday 3rd July.</p> <p>Q How will the project this be communicated? Joe P has drafted a letter to parents and will create a signup sheet. There will be a stall at the summer fair to encourage the whole school community to take part.</p> <p>ACTION: The timetable for clearing up over the summer holiday will be shared with governors, for them to sign up.</p>	PG/JP
6	<p>Budget</p> <p>Wendy P explained that we have finished the year with a revenue reserve of £153,000 and £40k capital reserve, however, it is planned to use the capital budget for an IT upgrade. Governors considered the fact that next year's income is difficult to forecast, because it depends on pupil numbers. Also, not having a headteacher is having an impact on budget and the extensions to Nursery and the SRP are not fully covered by the borough. We will need to continue to be very careful. These factors will be included in a budget modelling exercise in September.</p> <p>Q What is the problem with the IT at school? The server needs to be upgraded so that it is reliable, faster and more efficient. Also, much of the equipment in the classrooms need to be replaced. Currently, some classrooms have whiteboards that are older generation and don't work. Repositioning the screens will be part of the classroom re-design.</p> <p>Mark H thinks it might be possible to be given some more funding from Education Richmond, but there are other schools who are in a poorer financial position who might have more claim on these funds. Jane S is following up with Charis P.</p> <p>The budget was proposed for approval by the Resources Committee. A vote was taken and Governors APPROVED the budget.</p> <p><u>School Business Manager position.</u> Two candidates had been interviewed but neither were suitable for the role. Governors noted that this is a hard role to fill due to the range of skills required. For example in</p>	

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	<p>addition to the finance expertise this person would need to raise the professionalism of the office team. The role will be re-advertised, using the same advert. Sue J advised that they should also investigate new income streams. The building holds huge potential that isn't currently being used: for example, there is a music room but no music teacher. Consideration should be given to using the room to bring in income, for example Barnes have a piano which is rented out for paid-for piano lessons, creating an income but also enabling the school to support some piano lessons for disadvantaged students.</p>	
7	<p>Policies</p> <p>7.1 <u>Charging and Remissions Policy</u> Governors discussed the statement about contributions to school trips being voluntary. This is a requirement, but one sentence will be added to say that if insufficient people pay, the trip can't go ahead. Thought will be given to adding an administrative charge to the cost of the trip, as well as a facility to enable parents to 'donate' extra money to pay for disadvantaged pupils to attend for free.</p> <p>Subject to this amendment, the policy was APPROVED.</p> <p>7.2 <u>Finance Policy and Procedures</u> Governors noted the amendment, which included the revised spending levels which had been agreed by email since the last meeting. There was a discussion about DBS checks at school. The school's policy is currently to renew these checks every three years. There is a charge for the check (unless the DBS is for a volunteer). Barnes SBM has said they do not renew DBS checks unless a member of staff had been absent from the school for a significant period and a lot of other schools now don't renew them. There was a short discussion and there was a general concern about the removal of this 3-yearly check. There was also a discussion about whether this document was for publication on the website, given that it contained the hiring and lettings arrangements for the school. Further work is needed.</p> <p>It was agreed that the document should be reviewed in Autumn 2019 and annually, thereafter. Not approved.</p> <p>7.3 <u>Complaints Policy</u> Jane S explained that this is a DfE model policy. It includes a short appendix on serial and malicious complaints. Mark H explained that complaints had been discussed at a recent Headteacher's briefing and it was stressed that staff must understand the difference between a concern and a complaint (this is covered by the policy). They must be rigorous about confidentiality. If the complainant breaks confidentiality by discussing their complaint on social media, their complaint would be void. It was noted that the wording on the cover needed to be updated to avoid confusion. Not approved.</p> <p>ACTION: Kate N to update the synopsis on the cover of the Complaints Policy and recirculate for comment.</p> <p>7.4 <u>HR Policies</u> After a brief discussion, it was AGREED that the school should adopt the borough's HR policies.</p>	KN
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>Two issues were raised about the front desk:</p>	

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The sun shining onto desk is a H&S issue for the person working there. The computer should be relocated or a blind purchased. This will be resolved in the redevelopment of this area. 2. It was noted that the member of staff on the front desk is crucial to the overall impression of the school and professional standards must be extremely high. <p>Succession Planning – all governors should consider if they would be willing to take on one of the lead governor roles: Chair and Vice-Chair as well as Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs. It is hoped that the current Committee chairs Fiona Booth (Achievement and Curriculum) and Wendy Pitt (Resources Committee) will continue in their roles and they will be in touch with dates for next year's meetings in due course. It is also intended to have a third committee, Welcome, or maybe known by another name such as Parents and Community, to begin again in the Autumn.</p> <p>Dates for FGB meetings in the next academic year are: Tuesday 24th September, Tuesday 10th December, Tuesday 24th March and Tuesday 23rd June all at 6.30pm.</p>	
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The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

Signed by the Chair _____ Date _____

Full Governing Body Actions

Updated as of 25 June 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.	JP/PG		24.09.19
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.	JP/PG		24.09.19
28.03.19 3.1.1	Circulate the new HT data report template at beginning of next term as a dry run.	JP/PG		10.12.19
28.03.19 3.1.3	Provide dates for summer term governor learning walks.	JP/PG		01.05.19
28.03.19 3.2.1	Plan a communication to parents about classes next year.	JS/KB	DONE	05.04.19
28.03.19 3.2.3	EYFS group to attend this INSET day activity.	JM/JD	DONE	05.04.19
28.03.19 3.2.4	Check if there is a statutory responsibility to consult parent prior to rebranding.	JS	DONE	05.04.19
28.03.19 5.2	Contact AfC for a new LA governor.	KN	DONE	05.04.19
28.03.19 5.2	Run parent and staff elections.	JP/PG		10.12.19

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28.03.19 5.2	Review and revise the committee terms of reference and suggest dates for initial meetings in the summer term	WP/FB	DONE	23.04.19
28.03.19 7.1	EYFS Policy to come to Standards Committee in September for approval.	FB		24.09.19
28.03.19 7.2	Update equalities information on website.	JP/PG		24.09.19
25.06.19 3.1	Parents of children who choose to leave the school must always be encouraged to explain their reasons, so that core problems can be tackled. Update governors at the next meeting.	JP/PG		24.09.19
25.06.19 3.2	Wendy P will work with Paul G to compare like data from next term, in order to report to governors at their December FGB.	WP/PG		10.12.19
25.06.19 5	The timetable for clearing up over the summer holiday will be shared with governors, for them to sign up	PG/JP		10.07.19
25.06.19 7.3	Update the synopsis on the cover of the Complaints Policy and recirculate for comment.	Clerk		02.07.19

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