



**Governing Board Meeting
Wednesday 27th April 2022 at 6.30 pm
via Zoom**

DRAFT MINUTES

Name	Role	Present	Name	Role	Present
Jayesh Bhudia	Co-opted	√	Will Leaf	Foundation	√
Dan Brandt	Foundation	√	Zoë Miller (Chair)	Parent	√
Kwamena Duker*	Staff	√	Anthony Richards (Headteacher)	Ex officio	√
Richard Finch	Parent	√	David Sin*	Foundation	√
Victoria Heald- Barracough*	LA	√	Leandros Taliotis	Foundation	√
Lucas Janssen*	Foundation	√	Joel Wolchover	Foundation	x
Marianne Jenkins	Foundation	√			

* Present for part of the meeting

Also present:

Hava Brookes Teacher, presenting (present until the end of item 4)
Janet Gordon Clerk

1. Opening Prayer, welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed governors and invited Revd Will Leaf to lead a prayer then asked Jayesh Bhudia to introduce himself, as this was his first meeting since being appointed as a Co-opted governor.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for late arrival had been received in advance from Dan Brandt, David Sin and Victoria Heald-Barracough and from Nicola Christopher for absence. Kwamena Duker had explained that he would need to leave the meeting early. Apologies for absence were received after the meeting from Joel Wolchover.

Documents:

- Attendance Report spring 22 Governor Report.docx
- Lone Working Policy Spring 2022.docx
- Peer on Peer Abuse Policy Summer 2022.docx
- Pupil attendance webinar SLIDES.pdf
- SIP- Sept 2021 to Dec 2022 v4 including review of aut and spr.docx
- Writing visit report ZM DB March 22 v4.docx

3. Declaration of interest for items on this agenda

None.

The Chair asked governors to keep their cameras on where possible and to indicate in the Chat if they had to leave and rejoin the meeting to ensure an accurate record of who was present.

4. Presentation: School environment and P4C

Philosophy for Children (P4C)

Mrs Brookes, a Year 5 teacher, shared a presentation with the Board. She began with a warm up game, an activity that begins each P4C session.

Since becoming P4C lead, Mrs Brookes has assessed the curriculum overview and made it more user friendly, covering Nursery to Year 6. Early Years has one stimulus per term, focusing on specific Early Learning Goals. Years 1-6 have three stimuli per half term. P4C happens weekly in all year groups. After a warm up game, a stimulus is presented and then a philosophical concept question is created by the children to be answered, debated and discussed as a group about life's big questions.

P4C provides time with the children away from the curriculum. In every session there is focus on the 4 Cs: Caring, Collaborative, Critical and Creative. Teachers are free to choose the focus area each week, depending on the needs of the class and all are covered across the school year. These are transferable skills from P4C to all lessons.

Mrs Brookes gave examples of questions being answered in Year 5 and how Collaborative: "build on each other's ideas" is demonstrated in practice.

Benefits of P4C:

- Cognitive and social benefits for children and schools
- Children learn to listen carefully, explore differences of opinion respectfully and value the ideas of others
- Builds self-confidence and increases willingness to participate
- The verbal approach is particularly motivating for children who struggle with writing

If there is an area of need – playground, social or value issues – the class teacher can choose an appropriate focus without needing to be explicit about the issue.

Q Is P4C all verbal? How do you engage the shyer children?

During closing thoughts, the children can write on their whiteboard or share verbally – they don't have to talk if they don't want to. Mrs Brookes has found that shyer children begin to join in more they gain confidence. The Headteacher added that the very structured

approach to producing the enquiry question has different stages involving collaboration and talk, including pairs and groups, not just the whole class discussion.

Q What does the training for P4C look like to make it work well?

When P4C was introduced, a trainer came to the school and all staff members completed a Level 1 course. As new staff join, they complete Level 1 training over three afternoons. Additionally there are internal staff Inset sessions – Mrs Brookes led a session for the whole teaching staff earlier the same week and she is available to answer questions. Mrs Brookes is completing the Level 2a qualification. The school has maintained a connection with Sapere, who run P4C and have led sessions for parents in the past.

Q Are children's discussions or responses ever recorded as rich evidence of the lessons?

Staff complete a planning pro forma before each enquiry, detailing the stimulus, which 4C is being focused on and the philosophical concept. Teachers indicate the chosen questions and record bullet points about the discussion. Mrs Brooks would like to apply for a Bronze accreditation with Sapere, but this requires at least 6 months of evidence.

Mrs Brookes invited Will Leaf to visit for a walkaround the school as link governor. The accreditation requires a link governor to be in place.

The Headteacher added that P4C does not stand in isolation – it has significant benefit in other subjects. This non-statutory subject is an important part of how the school develops the whole child. When the children talk, they automatically use the ways of addressing each other covered in P4C. These are important soft skills which will be needed in the children's future lives. Teachers act as facilitators, enabling the children to lead learning which has an influence across the whole school.

School environment

The other area which Mrs Brookes also began leading in September is the school environment. She was tasked with redecorating some areas of the school and she is trying to link this with the School Improvement Plan as far as possible.

Mrs Brookes shared a photograph of the alter and described the changes linked with developing the distinctive Christian ethos of the school: chairs and lights, electronic candles and bible quotes have been added. Each phase has created a prayer book, there is a prayer box and children can sit for quiet reflection time.

By the back staircase there is now a chalkboard where children from each year group have shared how they have shown or seen one of the school values. Proverbs are available in a basket for each value and the children can choose one to see if they can show that value. This is again linked to the distinctively Christian ethos and embedding the new vision and values of the school, involving children from Early Years to Year 6. The proverbs are also being used for Collective Worship.

Governors were shown pictures of the new meeting room, linked to the priority of ensuring that mental health and wellbeing remain central to school development. This was previously

an empty room with a table and chair which has been refreshed with new computers, a sofa and bookcase donated by a parent. On the walls there is a cross and cards collected during an Inset Day when all staff shared what they are proud of in their career at Princess Frederica. There is also a Random Acts of Kindness board, with envelopes containing cards with good deeds on them. The school improvement plan is on display and plants, lamps and pictures have been added.

Outside the middle hall, a large world map is on display. Working with the Reading lead, key questions have been added relating to books which are located in different countries and cities. This is to support moving short term learning into the long term memory. Outside Year 2 there is a large map of the local area which shows the key map features they learn about, with key questions based on medium term Geography planning. Similarly, for Years 5 and 6 there is a large world map for Physical Geography with key questions.

The Key Stage 2 intervention room was an empty Reading Recovery room which has been refreshed for use as a mini classroom by the catch up tutor (who is funded by Recovery funding). The Year 6 computer area has been revamped as a reading and Year 6 intervention area with views over London.

The Old Chapel has been converted into the ELSA room for emotional literacy support for children with emotional needs. It is now a sensory room with soft furnishings, lamps and positive affirmations above mirrors as children enter the room. Around 20 children attend weekly sessions, some music lessons take place in this room and staff can also book the room. This renovation also links to the school improvement priority of mental health and wellbeing of staff and pupils.

Outside the ICT room signs for each House group have been displayed with photographs of the house captains. The children enjoy seeing which house is winning. The music area walls have been decorated and the next project will be the music room. An unused room has been turned into a Sewing room, which staff can book when it is not used by the Sewing club.

Governors congratulated Mrs Brookes on the amazing work she has done in improving the school environment and her work on bringing the vision and values to life. The Headteacher acknowledged her hard work in transforming the building, something that has been positively received by visitors. Governors commented on the way the improvements help everyone to have pride in their environment. The Headteacher added that the children enjoy looking after the environment when they feel it is being cared for, so there are less issues such as graffiti.

[7.10 pm Hava Brookes left the meeting]

[7.11 pm David Sin and Lucas Janssen joined the meeting at the end of the presentation]

Governors discussed P4C as one of the strengths of the school's curriculum, running from EYFS to Year 6. Lessons become more formalised as the children progress through the school and develop the whole child.

Governors had received presentations from a number of subject leaders across the year and they could hear first-hand the importance that is given to all Foundation subjects.

P4C develops Cultural Capital, teaching the children how to have high level conversations, expressing their opinion, agreeing and disagreeing respectfully. Through P4C the children are exposed to a variety of stimuli including art. The focus is not topical, but follows an age-appropriate structured programme. The children are encouraged to listen and respond and have the opportunity to develop a high level of vocabulary through these discussions.

5. School Improvement Plan progress

The Headteacher reported on the four School Improvement Priorities

- 1 Embedding the Vision and values
- 2 Writing
- 3 Mental Health & Wellbeing
- 4 New EYFS framework

Writing was a target from the previous Ofsted inspection. Work has happened on Writing, although no validated data is available yet, but continued development is a priority because of the impact Covid had on Writing, particularly Spelling. The Writing lead continues to work with individual teachers and is doing leading whole school work on effective teaching of Spelling and how starters in English support them remembering spellings. A development point uses Ebbinghaus' theory: how children know and remember more.

The presentation to governors (item 4 above) demonstrated how the ELSA programme and school environment is being used to support mental health and wellbeing.

The school has finalised the approach to the new EYFS framework (intent) and external advice will be sought to develop what is working, building the teachers' confidence further. Children in Reception will have more opportunities for language and engagement with the teachers and LSAs.

Work on the Development priorities continues. For example, as part of creating a culture where diversity and inclusion are celebrated, a Unity Day is planned.

Q How do we ensure succession planning is built into the development of subject leadership?

More staff have become skilled at leading a subject, with support from the Headteacher and Deputy Head, including how to speak to children about the subject and look at books and lessons. The Headteacher has confidence in the subject leaders and continuation of this work.

Q On page 5 of the School Improvement Plan, there is mention of selection and presentation of a Safeguarding system. Has this happened?

The new electronic system will be presented to governors in the summer term. Link governors Lucas and Leandros have seen the paper based record system, but the new

system will be less time-consuming and more secure. The move will take place at the end of the school year.

Governors discussed the complexity of the School Improvement Plan as a document. They appreciated the updated comments being in red and suggested that headings repeated at the top of each page could help with reading the plan or separating the priorities onto different pages or slides.

Q Under Quality of Education (p9) there are references to the lowest 20% and higher achieving children. How do we ensure that the children between these extremes are not forgotten?

The Headteacher explained that in Writing, for example, lessons are generally pitched at the higher middle. Quality First teaching should enable all children to make progress in that lesson. The lowest 20% are the children most vulnerable to not making progress and who may need personalisation of learning. For a small proportion of children Quality First teaching may not be enough to extend the highest achievers to reach their potential, so they may also need some personalisation.

The majority of the class should be making good progress so that they reach the expected standard in Year 6 without anything additional above effective planning, teaching and use of resources. These children are more likely to be able to work independently without personalisation of resourcing or additional teacher input. Teachers move around the room, carrying out over the shoulder marking and providing verbal feedback which has instant impact. Proportionally more feedback and teacher input may be needed for the lowest 20%.

Q When you talk about focus on particular groups, does this include focus when planning or discussion in advance / after a lesson, not just focus on them in the classroom?

Effective personalisation of a lesson means that all children in a class can work. If a teacher had to work with three children to help them access the learning, the lesson hasn't been effectively personalised. What used to happen was that a teacher would teach a lesson, then help children who were struggling to access the learning, but this means that they become reliant on the person who is helping them. Teachers don't sit with the same children each lesson. They may support a middle-achieving child if they need support to access learning in a particular lesson.

[7.17 pm Dan Brandt and 7.30 pm Victoria Heald-Barracough joined the meeting during this item]

6. Attendance (data and school processes)

The Headteacher had shared Spring term Attendance Report and was happy to take questions at the next meeting.

The Headteacher explained that the main reasons for absence over the last two terms was Covid. Attendance remains above the national and local average. More recently authorised and unauthorised absence for trips abroad has increased, some to see relatives who are unwell and some unauthorised longer holidays.

Persistent absence is when attendance is below 90%. Persistent absence was very high in the autumn term and has improved in the spring term, although it is still higher than in previous years.

Actions taken to increase attendance and decrease persistent absence are included in the Attendance Report. Strategies to ensure that attendance is high include incentivising regular attendance, for example the weekly attendance challenge, with a draw for a bike for children with 100% attendance. Governors are updated regularly in the Headteacher's Report. The Deputy Head is the attendance champion, maintaining a presence on the school gate, encouraging regular attendance.

Positive experiences in school are important, including the trips, workshops and clubs. The children say that they enjoy coming to school and it is rare to have a conversation with parents about children not wanting to come to school.

Messaging is getting stronger about the importance of attendance and there are clear systems for monitoring and analysing attendance. The Welfare Officer monitors attendance daily, then on a weekly basis with the Deputy Head, who meets the Headteacher to look at the reasons for absence and what is being done to improve attendance. Interventions may involve a referral to the ELSA programme, a meeting with parents to establish reasons for low attendance or work with the Education Welfare Officer

Q How does the school's approach to Covid and level of persistent absence compare with other schools?

Attendance is better than national average and the LA average. The school is following the national guidance on Covid absence. The school is actively seeking to support children to be at school. The level of persistent absence has reduced, the school is aware of reasons for individual absence and has whole school strategies to encourage attendance. The SENCO is involved in attendance issues when SEND / mental health support is needed at school.

Q How do you balance incentivising attendance, for example with a prize, with the fact that some children are genuinely ill and can't reach 100% attendance?

The Headteacher explained that it is a tricky balance, as sometimes he has to tell parents that their child is not well enough to be in school. On the other hand, there are high expectations for attendance. Good attendance is incentivised, but some absences are unavoidable. Although persistent absence is high, the school is aware of the reasons.

Q Is there information about the number of persistent absences which are children with SEND?

On page 2, in the spring term attendance year to date for children with SEND is 96.3% and is 97.7% for all children. The persistent absence data was removed to retain anonymity, but of the 57 children with persistent absence 2 children have SEND.

Q Is there in school evidence about the link between attendance and attainment?`

The Headteacher explained that this is discussed in individual meetings with parents – persistent absence means that a child misses at least a day a fortnight of school – and messaging is strong about the missed learning opportunities this causes.

Q Is there a level at which persistent absence is disruptive for the school in delivering the curriculum?

Absence is always challenging for individual children and their teachers, because learning is linked up. The teacher spends time trying to help children to catch up so that they can adequately access the curriculum content, which has an impact on successful progress and attainment. There have been conversations with some parents as children may get distressed because they have missed learning and find it hard to catch up.

Q Are there any particular year groups or classes with a higher incidence of persistent absence or where severe disruption is more likely?

The impact of absence is more acute in some year groups. The pace and depth of work in Year 6 is more significant, so time missed will have a greater impact. Extended periods of absence in Reception could mean a child would miss key and important points. The current Year 1 are experiencing the impact of time missed in Reception (some unavoidable, but some avoidable).

[7.44 pm Kwamena Duker left the meeting]

7. Policies (for approval)

These policies had been shared with governors in advance.

- **Peer on Peer abuse**

Leandros Taliotis had reviewed this policy, which had been developed in line with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021), on behalf of the Board. The policy contains clear explanations and definitions and lays out what practical steps the school would take in response to allegations of peer on peer abuse.

Q Does this policy sit alongside the Antibullying policy or does it supersede it?

The Headteacher confirmed that the Antibullying policy was still in place. Feedback from the recent external Safeguarding review recommended putting specific guidance in place for peer on peer abuse and there are aspects of the antibullying policy which don't cross over with the new policy. This policy ensures clarity about actions and expectations in response to peer on peer abuse and follows from the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

The Headteacher and Leandros Taliotis will discuss whether to retain or condense the antibullying policy.

Action: Headteacher, Leandros

- **Lone Working**

David Sin explained that this policy was in place to ensure that the school complies with the law around lone working, which has Safeguarding and Health and Safety dimensions. The approach is to avoid lone working where possible and where this is not possible, to minimise and have robust processes in place for lone working.

One small amendment regarding proactive measures was made to the policy after discussion between the Headteacher and David, who recommended this policy to the Board.

Governors **approved** the Peer on Peer abuse and Lone Working policies.

[Victoria Heald-Barraclough and Lucas Janssen left the meeting temporarily during this item]

8. Governor visits

- **Health & Safety**

As link governor, David Sin had visited the school at the end of March to meet the School Business Manager (SBM) and Caretaker and look through files and reports relating to all aspects of Health & Safety. David accompanied the SBM and Caretaker on their walk around the school.

During this visit, David saw evidence of the robustness of Health & Safety management. Potential risks can be identified during the Health & Safety Work and avoided or mitigated.

David recently completed a Health & Safety course through Brent and the SBM and Caretaker had taken the same course, which was helpful for shared understanding.

- **Writing**

Dan Brandt and Zoë Miller had visited the school on 16 March to look at Writing. Their visit report was shared in advance with governors.

During the visit, governors were able to speak to different year groups about Writing and spoke to the subject lead and Headteacher about what is in place to improve Writing.

Governors met three pupils from each year from Year 1 to 6, chosen by teachers as perceived high-, mid- and low-attainers, and spent time looking at their books. The pupils all seemed very engaged with their writing. Pupils were clear about aspects of Writing that governors had previously heard about, such as the boxed success criteria, mentioned at the last Board meeting.

Governors had found it reassuring and positive that during their visit, it was not always obvious which child had been chosen as a high, middle- or low- attainer. Pupils all talked about the support that they were receiving in lessons and spoke sensitively about those who

needed extra structure and scaffolding; even those receiving additional help spoke about this as something normal, without any stigma attached. The pupils demonstrated connection with what they were doing and knowledge about the books they had studied to inspire their writing.

The subject lead had shared the planning document which shows the progression of Writing term by term and year by year, showing how the curriculum builds. He also discussed marking with governors and they saw peer marking and came away with a better understanding of why and how this is different from teacher marking and feedback.

The Headteacher commented on the spiral curriculum and the progression overview which means that layers of complexity are added when the children revisit something such as diary writing and avoids the same thing being taught again.

- **Any other visits**

Marianne Jenkins and Lucas Janssen would report on a budget monitoring meeting at the FGB meeting when the agenda includes the year end and budget.

9. Governor training

Zoë Miller attended the NGA webinar on attendance and shared the slides with the Board.

10. Minutes from previous meeting (16th March 2022)

Approval was deferred to the next meeting.

All actions were complete apart from completion of Safeguarding training. All governors were asked to ensure that they have logged or informed the Clerk about any training they attend.

Action: Governors

11. Board membership

- **LA Governor reappointment**

The nomination from Brent for Victoria Heald-Barraclough's reappointment had been received by the Clerk. Governors agreed to **reappoint** Victoria as LA governor with a further term of four years.

- **Foundation governor vacancy**

A vacancy for a Foundation governor representing St Martin's remained unfilled. Revd Graham had been unable to identify a suitable member of the parish. Governors considered the need to monitor the number of current parents on the Board. They discussed the idea of writing something to be read out at church to encourage someone to step forward.

Governors agreed that a brief personal appeal may work better and Leandros volunteered to do this.

Action: Leandros

12. Any other urgent business

Admissions

The Clerk reported the admissions statistics from the review of applications for Nursery and Reception completed by governors on 22 February 2022.

	Nursery (30 places)	Reception (60 places)
A – LAC	0	0
B – staff	1	0
C – siblings	5	25
D1 – St Marks & St Martins	1	2
D2 – Other faiths	3	6**
D3 – In parish	13	71
E – outside parish	6	109
Total	29*	213

*One Nursery application was received late, but as Nursery was not oversubscribed, this child was also offered a place in the first round.

**At the time of the admissions meeting, there were 6 children applying for Reception with Supplementary Information Forms for other faiths, but 3 of these were going to be checked and if not accepted, these children would fall under category D3, as they lived within the parishes.

Reception is still oversubscribed for 2022-23.

Governors discussed the dip in applications for Nursery, which was something also experienced in other local settings. Governors were reminded that funding is per child, counted on a termly basis in Nursery, so the number on roll is important for the budget.

Q Do we know why there has been a reduction in applications for Nursery?

Governors noted that there were more applications for Nursery when a place in Reception was guaranteed, but this change to the admissions criteria was made to comply with the School Admissions Code.

The lower number of applications may be down to a combination of factors. The Headteacher suggested that this is something to think about and monitor over the next twelve months. In recent years children have been admitted to Nursery from further away than any Reception child lives, because there were vacancies. This causes problems at the end of Nursery, as these children may not be able to join Reception.

Q Have there been any appeals this year?

No appeals had been submitted at the time of this meeting.

Education Recovery

The Headteacher informed governors that the Kilburn Cluster of schools had been successful in securing £5,000 funding per school for Education Recovery to be used for resourcing and further training to support Phonics. The focus will be Year 1 and progress will be reported on a termly basis. An additional £20,000 is to be spent on something still to be determined to benefit all schools in the cluster.

Governors thanked the Headteacher who left the meeting at 8.45 pm, before item 13 (confidential).

13. Chair's Confidential item

The Chair provided governors with an update on Headteacher recruitment.

After an unsuccessful round of recruitment, the Board had given the recruitment panel authority to investigate other options rather than re-advertising immediately, as on advice from the LDBS and Brent, the Board did not feel that this would have been successful. These options included appointing an Acting Head, secondment from another school or appointing an interim Executive Headteacher.

The Chair reported that she and Marianne Jenkins had met a Headteacher called Sarah Bouette, who had come forward with an offer of support. The LDBS confirmed her outstanding reputation. Sarah leads a small federation of two Church of England schools in the North of Kensington & Chelsea with a similar ethos to Princess Frederica.

In the recent positive meeting with Sarah Bouette and her Chair of Governors, Sarah had spoken about what motivated her and how a partnership could support the school.

Sarah visited the school earlier in the week to meet the Deputy Head, Headteacher and to look around. The Chair was reassured by the Headteacher's impression of Sarah and explained that if governors appointed an interim Executive Headteacher, the Deputy Head could stay in her role or become Head of School as part of the temporary arrangement. The arrangement between the two schools would be confirmed in a Memorandum of Understanding which would be kept under review.

The Deputy Head was due to visit one of the federation schools the following week, after which the Chair would meet her. Will Leaf and the Chair would visit on 13 May. Governors were invited to join this visit. The recruitment panel would like to get to a position where they know whether such an arrangement is a strong possibility, as there is not long to make a decision.

Q Has the Deputy Head been sounded out, in general terms, about her interest in leadership progression?

The Deputy Head did not apply for the Headteacher vacancy. When the Chair met the Deputy Head before meeting the prospective Executive Head, she was positive about the benefits of strong strategic leadership and mentoring. An Acting Head would be responsible during an Ofsted Inspection, whereas a Head of School would lead at the school on a day-to-day basis while an Executive Head would take on strategic leadership including inspection.

Governors discussed the Education White Paper and direction of travel towards MATs. With a partnership arrangement, the Board remain in place, whereas a federation has one Board.

The Chair informed governors that the Headteacher had offered to stay on if governors were not successful in recruiting a replacement. While governors were grateful for this offer, they were concerned about the potential risks of this for the staff, school community and Headteacher, as pointed out by the LDBS.

Q Is there any issue with the other schools being in a different borough?

Apparently not. The arrangement would be between the schools.

The panel will continue to meet and the Chair will update governors and bring any decisions to the Board for approval.

Governors thanked the Chair who closed the meeting at 9 pm.
