

**Biddenham International School & Sports College: Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Board (FGB)  
held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 7.00pm**

Governor	Position	Attendance 2022/2023	Present
David Bailey	Head Teacher (Ex-Officio)	5/5	David Bailey (DB)
Carole Bell	Co-opted Governor (Chair of Governors)	5/5	Carole Bell (CB)
Abdul Shakoor	Staff Governor	2/5	
Anne Day	LA Governor	3/5	
Sarah Crafter	Co-opted Governor	5/5	Sarah Crafter (SC)
Saqib Hussain	Co-opted Governor	4/5	Saqib Hussain (SH)
Nezma Begum	Co-opted Governor	3/5	
Carlene Nisbett	Parent Governor	1/5	
Catherine Walters	Parent Governor	4/5	Catherine Walters (CW)
Georgina Ainscough	Partnership Governor	4/5	Georgina Ainscough (GA)
Nikhita Saggu	Partnership Governor	3/5	

Apologies: Abdul Shakoor, Anne Day, Nikhita Saggu, Nezma Begum, Carlene Nisbett
Not in attendance:
Also in attendance: Eleanor Grylls (EG) – Head of School
Minutes: Sue Newman (SN) - Clerk to Governors

Item No.	Item	Action
1.0	<b>Welcome and apologies</b> Apologies were accepted from Abdul Shakoor, Anne Day, Nikhita Saggu, Nezma Begum and Carlene Nisbett. A number of these apologies were due to the meeting coinciding with Eid. The two new Head Prefects had only very recently been appointed and had sent their apologies to the meeting as they had been unable to arrange time off work.	
2.0	<b>Declaration of Pecuniary and Other Interests</b> There were no interests to declare.	
3.0	<b>Governing Board:</b> <b>Governor reappointments, resignations and vacancies</b> – Caron Vacciana had recently resigned due to her personal circumstances. CB had written to thank her for her contribution and to say that she would be welcome to get back in contact should her circumstances change. This meant there were now two co-opted Governor vacancies on the Governing Board. DB had written out to parents to explain the school were actively seeking new Governors with financial experience and had received three replies so far. Anne Day’s term of office as the LA Governor was due to come to an end in September. She had agreed to continue as a Governor for the time being but would like to step down as the Chair of the Business & Welfare Committee due to the pressure of her other commitments. <b>It was agreed that SN would write to the LA requesting that Anne be appointed for a further term. A new Chair of the Business &amp; Welfare Committee would need to be appointed at the beginning of the Autumn term.</b> <b>Schedule of meetings for 2023/24</b> – A draft schedule of meetings for next year had been circulated. <b>This was agreed subject to the dates being checked against the main religious festivals of the year and consideration being given to separating the first two meetings of the Business &amp; Welfare Committee by a week or two.</b>	SN SN
4.0	<b>Minutes of the last Governing Board meetings held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 (FGB) and matters arising</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 22 <sup>nd</sup> March were agreed as a true record and were signed as such. The search for additional Governors was underway. The Skills Audit was tabled later on the agenda. There was just one Governor who hadn’t completed the on-line Safeguarding training. The Student Forum had reviewed the welfare policies and their condensed versions had been considered by the B&W Committee. The Committee had suggested these be placed on the school website. The student version of the Safeguarding policy was already available on the school website. A number of student-facing policies were to be included within the student planners this year. CB and CW had met to discuss the PREVENT data and this would be included in the annual Safeguarding report in future. The SFVS submission had been amended as agreed. A summary of the school’s key data had been circulated for this meeting (taken from the IDSR). Attention was drawn to the deprivation data for the school, and it was noted that the school was in the somewhat unusual position of falling within the least	

*Signed as a true and accurate record*

Chair:..... Date:.....

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	<p>deprived quintile for location but in the highest quintile for pupil profile. It was also noted that the school stability data had caused an issue during a previous Ofsted Inspection (due to high mobility / high number of students without Key Stage 2 data) but this had improved somewhat in recent years. DB confirmed that suspension days did count within the school's absence data. The Privacy Notice for Students would be considered later in the meeting. The Admission Policy had been changed as agreed. The Provider Access policy had been renamed the Provider Access (including Careers Guidance) policy and the table of activity was now available on the school website.</p>	
5.0	<p><b>Report from Head Prefects</b> The new Head Prefects had sent their apologies for this meeting.</p>	
6.0	<p><b>Governor skills (Round table discussion)</b> <b>What skills do we, as Governors, bring to the Governing body?</b> All Governors had been provided with a copy of the NGA Skills Audit template. This was felt to now be more geared towards an Academy Board and was looking to further professionalise the role of Governors. It was noted that the responsibility of a Governor was vast and could be quite daunting, especially when considering the legal obligations. Governors agreed that it was more useful to focus on what skills each Governor brought to the Governing Board, rather than on what skills individuals Governors were lacking. It was also noted that – as a maintained school – the Governing Board could draw on expertise from the LA where required (such as for appeals and exclusion panels) rather than having Governors complete training that they did not call upon for some time. The intention had been to break into small groups to discuss Governor's skills and to complete the template. However, due to the small number of Governors present, it was decided to have a round table discussion instead. Each Governor provided a brief explanation of the skills and experience they felt they brought to the Board. This included: Governor A - Associate of the Chartered Institute of Bankers, a qualified Level 7 dyslexia assessor, an Access assessor and a specialist teacher. Governor B – Had lived in Bedford all their married life so had a good, broad understanding of education within the Borough. They had also been involved with the school for many years, through many ups and downs. Had a degree in History and had taught this as a subject. Had worked for the Department of Education and the Department for Health, before moving into safeguarding and review &amp; quality assurance roles within a LA (including LAC reviews). Had been the Assistant Director of Children's Services for Hammersmith Council. Her children had attended the school and she felt an incredible on-going connection with the school. Governor C – Has a degree in Business &amp; systems and a Masters in Financial Management. Had previously worked in a bank as a financial advisor. For the last decade had been working in HR / Employment Law and as a Union representative. A particular strength was analysing information and identifying appropriate lines of questioning. Was a resident within the local community and understood the nuances and relationships very well. Played a vital role in providing a channel of communication / mediation between the school and the wider local community (not just parents). Had attended BISSC themselves and their children were attending the school. DB confirmed how vital this knowledge of, and link with, the local community was, especially during a period of school expansion. The school was central to the local community, and it was important the Governing Board was representation of the local community. Governor D – Had grown up in the Borough and brought a younger viewpoint to the Governing Board. Had a degree in English Literature and had worked in insurance / contract compliance in the City. Had completed a PGCE and was now working at Bedford College in an EDI role. Believed strongly in providing choice for students. During PGCE training, had gained a "big picture" understanding of how a school is run. Governor E – Had moved to the area in 2005. Professor in Cultural-Developmental Psychology and Director of Research in the School of Psychology and Counselling within a Higher Educational setting. Research work focused on children's experiences with migration and how that impacted on development. Worked with child language breakers who translate for their families, considering the social and emotional impact on them. Had been involved with BISSC's Young Translator Club last year (supported with EU finding). Involved with a project supporting unaccompanied minors and looking at how they can support each other. Governors discussed the huge impact of being a young language breaker and the historic impact of this within the local community. However, it was also recognised that this did help children develop fluency in both languages and allowed them to feel pride in their role supporting their families. Governors recognised the tremendous level of skills and knowledge present around the table, and noted there were also a number of Governors still to share. The strategic responsibilities of a Governing Board included oversight of school strategy, policy, budgeting and staffing and it was felt that these areas were well covered within the current skills base, with no particular areas of expertise lacking. Governors were reminded that a full programme of training was available through the LA's training programme, but it was acknowledged that it could sometimes be more beneficial to complete training when it was actually needed (as knowledge could be lost if not put to use soon after completion). Governors discussed the need for all new Governors to receive an induction</p>	

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	<p>session, including an outline of the roles and responsibility of a Governor. It was confirmed that DB and CB always offered a short introductory session with a tour of the school (although this had not been possible during the pandemic). Governors also noted that providing too much information about the legal responsibilities of being a Governor could be quite off-putting for people considering joining a Governing Board. It was believed that, as the school “bought back” HR services from the LA, they would provide cover against any legal claims made against the Governing Board.</p> <p><b>Proposed training session / Away Day for Governors – It was agreed to discuss this further in September.</b> It might be useful to bring in an external trainer / facilitator to manage the event, which should include a session on the key Governor responsibilities, a session on governance and another to help familiarise new Governors with what to expect during an Ofsted Inspection.</p>	CB
7.0	<p><b>Budget update and financial approvals</b></p> <p><b>Budget for 2023/24</b> – The draft budget for 2023/24 had been considered by the B&amp;W Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023, and recommended to the FGB for approval. Due to the timescales involved, this had then been circulated by e-mail to all members of the FGB for final approval. All but one Governor had responded to confirm they were happy to approve the budget as circulated (the remaining Governor did not respond). All present were happy to ratify the decision made by e-mail to approve the budget. It was noted that the budget was now in the region of £9.7M and the cost of running a school increased every year. However, the school were currently in a good financial position, helped by the rising role. Governors were advised that additional resources had been drawn from the school’s budget to complete the new build project. This included £30k for the new patio area (which was considerably cheaper to complete whilst the builders were already on site). The builders had also been required to provide a new long / triple jump pit as the original pit had been impacted by the new building (built to Sports England standard and at a cost of approximately £35k). There had also been considerable expenditure on kitting out the new science labs, dining room and new building. The school had claimed back £118k to cover the cost of fixtures and fittings. Staff were also currently purchasing furniture for the new block and may need to purchase some new standalone computers for the new ICT rooms.</p>	
8.0	<p><b>Progress &amp; Attainment</b></p> <p>The Curriculum Committee had discussed the current predictions against targets in detail at their last meeting and EG provided the FGB with a copy of the data summary that had been presented. Overall, this year’s exams had gone well, and staff had been content with almost all of the papers (with just a couple proving trickier). The Health &amp; Social Care exam was felt to have been harder than the 2019 exam. Students had been extremely well behaved during the exams and had felt well prepared. Although staff were happy with how things had gone, they were now waiting to see how the grade boundaries would be set. Due to all the uncertainty, staff had been asked to be cautious in their predictions, so it was hoped that the predictions presented a worse-case scenario. The predictions for English were felt to particularly cautious, which also impacted on the rest of the data (including Basics). At this point last year, the predicted Progress 8 had been +0.22 and the final outcome had been +0.33 so it was hoped that the current predictions would be bettered. It was noted that the Maths Department were usually very good at predictions and had been in the top 20% nationally for progress last year. As there had been consistency in the team, it was hoped this would be maintained this year. <i>Governors queried the Science predictions and were advised that both Biology and Chemistry were predicted below target (although Physics was above target).</i> Most students at BISSC took single sciences, but there were a small number of students put forward for combined. However, this decision – and therefore the predictions – were made quite late in the year, depending on how well students were doing. Staff continued to evaluate whether this was the most effective approach. <i>Governor then noted that Science hadn’t done as well as English and Maths last year and it was confirmed this would likely be the position again this year for Biology and Chemistry. However, the Value Added for Science was in line with national, and it was likely the current predictions were overly cautious.</i> Staff believed things were on / close to target for English Language, RS, Maths, Computing, Dance, DT, Drama, Business, IT, French, Graphics, Music, PE, Spanish and Health &amp; Social Care. The -0.35 currently predicted for Disadvantaged Students would be better than national for that group (74 students). SEND / EHCP was recognised to be a small cohort but should be comfortably above national this year. Progress 8 for K students had gone down slightly but should still be above national (32 students). <i>Governors queried whether this cohort would include a student who required a reader, and it was confirmed this was probable, but the identification of a K student was not always based on access arrangements.</i> Of the 12 HAPs, 7 were making positive progress. However, 4 (including 2 school refusers and reduced timetable students) had considerable negative progress (although this might improve if the English predictions proved to be overly cautious). Boys were performing very well compared to national (105 of the 201 students). The current prediction of -0.51 for White British was lower than previously predicted but was still better than in previous years. The Committee discussed the difficulties associated with students without Key Stage 2 data, late arrivers to school, school refusers, students with less than 85% attendance, and the correlation between attendance and positive progress. If these outliers were removed, the Progress 8 prediction would increase considerably. Despite the great national problems with</p>	

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	<p>recruitment, BISSC had a full teaching staff compliment for next year so it would be possible to staff the full curriculum whilst maintaining the quality of teaching and current class sizes. Governors felt it would be interesting to see if the targets or predictions would need to be adjusted for next year. It was confirmed that work had been undertaken this year to help support staff with their predictions, but more support was still needed, and this year's results would be used to help moderate predictions for next year. It was acknowledged that the predictions for both Geography and History were still lower than desired. <i>In response to a Governor query, it was confirmed that there was no particular concern with girls (although this was no longer a target cohort as they had been performing consistently well).</i></p> <p>A levels – The expectation was that value added would be at least at expected levels. Governors were reminded that the Value Added for this cohort had still been calculated internally - using SISRA - as this year group had received CAGS and TAGs. Science had been a focus this year and both Biology and Physics had significantly improved and should meet or exceed target. Chemistry should be very close to target. Graphics had suffered from some attendance issues, which had impacted on the portfolio-based work. EPQ currently looked down but should improve follow the entry adjustments. In addition, staff had been really strict with moderation and justification last year, so they hoped results would prove better than predicted. It was possible there would be some U grades this year, mostly due to low attendance. <i>Governors expressed disappointment that any students would be receiving a U grade at A Level, having studied a subject for 2 years. They queried why students were in this position and it was confirmed that a range of factors were impacting, including mental health issues, students running out of steam, students who were in denial over the situation and some students who had chosen the wrong subjects (despite advice from teachers). It was confirmed that staff had provided support for all students suffering from mental health issues.</i></p>	
9.0	<p><b>Principal's report</b></p> <p>A written Principal's Report had been circulated, including a summary of the school year. This included a number of highlights from the year and provided a contextual narrative to supplement the data that had also been circulated. Whilst this was the first year in a while that students had not been directly impacted by the Covid pandemic, it was acknowledged that the pandemic had still impacted massively on these students during their years at the school. In addition, there had also been other disruptions during this school year, including strike action, the Ofsted turmoil and the challenges of recruitment and retention of staff. There was still no confirmation on pay issues – although the DfE had issues a holding e-mail today. There were two more strike days planned for the following week and the threat of co-ordinated strike action next term (to include the SLT). It was noted that the SLT had been required to work harder and more creatively than ever before to manage recruitment, and recruitment of good quality TAs was still a concern. Despite everything, the results last year had been positive, and the school was popular and oversubscribed. Attendance was currently much lower than staff would like, but this was a national issue. Staff continued to work hard to improve the situation and there had been some positive progress (although not as much as staff would like). A high than usual number of students were also disappearing off towards the end of term, for holidays etc. The school were in the process of appointing a member of staff to focus on attendance (both headline data and persistent absenteeism). There had only been one permanent exclusion this year, which was positive. It was recognised that behaviour in school post Covid was a national issue, and many schools were suffering from greater problems with this than BISSC. Fixed term exclusions had increased this year, but this was also recognised to be a national trend. The internal inclusion room was working well to manage internal fixed term exclusions, and it was hoped this could be put to greater use next year with a focus on restorative work. Just before the last half term, the school had commenced a series of surveys with staff, students and parents. The results were now in, and staff had already started to work on issues identified. The intention was to provide feedback on the surveys in the form of "you said you wanted..... we have done". <i>In response to a Governor query, it was confirmed that all issues that had been identified through the surveys were things that could be addressed in a positive way. In response to a further Governor query, it was confirmed that 65 parents, 83 staff and 561 students had responded to the surveys to date, and the surveys remained open. As the response from parents had been quite low to date, it was suggested that a reminder be circulated.</i> The LA had also circulated a survey for parents of SEND students. Governors noted that the parents' survey did not include the facility to make comments, but the staff and student surveys allowed this. The responses received had included some tough comments, but this was felt to be more useful than only receiving positive comments, and it was important for stakeholders to feel they had a genuine opportunity to raise issues. The report included some headline areas identified for improvement, and staff would be looking at what could be delivered to address these, and how this could be built into future improvement planning. The key strategic issues for the future included managing the growth and success of the school, enhancing the core values and strengths and not compromising on the quality of recruitment / teachers (recognising that anyone was not better than no-one).</p> <p>At this point DB had to leave the meeting to deal with an emergency, meaning the meeting was no longer quorate.</p>	

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	<p>Governors noted that a significant number of students survey responses had been received and it was confirmed that there had been a particularly high response from students in Year 7 and 8. <i>Governors noted that both the staff and student surveys had picked up issues regarding behaviour and felt it would be interesting to interrogate these matters in more depth.</i> It was confirmed that the SLT Group had already considered all the issues raised, grouped them into key headings and started to unpick what could be done to address each key area. These actions would be pulled together into an action plan in due course. <i>In response to a Governor query, it was confirmed that the Student Forum would be involved in further development once an initial action plan had been agreed.</i> Governors recalled that a “feeling safe” survey had been carried out in school a while ago and wondered if there was any benefit in comparing responses with the latest surveys. It was confirmed that surveys had previously been carried out to consider wellbeing, race and gender issues in school, but there was not enough crossover with the more recent surveys to make comparison useful. Governors again noted that the school’s parental survey did not allow comments to be added. However, the Ofsted / Parent View survey did (although the school did not get to see these comments). Governors were advised that each subject had now developed a “learning journey” setting out what students would learn and when. These were available on the school website. In the Autumn, staff were also planning a letter home to all parents, setting out by year group what would be covered in the PSHE curriculum. It was hoped this would help parents feel more comfortable about what was being taught and allow them to have their own conversations with their children about more sensitive topics. Governors then discussed the national debate on promoting gender identities and recognised that it was a real challenge for teachers to navigate through these issues as teachers could have a huge influence on the students within their care. The school were recruiting an additional person as Head of the Sixth Form to allow Alan Brown to move into a more strategic role within the Sixth Form. Three Heads of Year were being appointed as Progress and Culture leads, who would take responsibility for specific year groups, with more direct accountability. <i>In response to a Governor query, it was confirmed that an internal candidate had applied for and been interviewed for the new Head of Year position.</i> A new deputy had been appointed to support the SEND lead – a role that was now necessary due to the high number of students and level of SEND needs in school. It was noted that the school’s SENDCO was particularly effective but needed strong support to manage the current high level of need. It was also recognised to be a real challenge to provide an appropriate curriculum provision for students with significant needs and this work was ongoing. <i>In response to a Governor query, it was confirmed that all TAs in school were employed on core contracts.</i></p>	
10.0	<p><b>Chair’s report</b> A written Chair’s report had been circulated, providing a summary of all the Chair’s recent activities in school. During a recent meeting with the Librarian, the Chair had been really impressed to hear how much work was being undertaken to improve the popularity of the library. The Librarian also had a degree in Geophysics, and this was being used to develop closer working with the Humanities Department. Abi Speight had recently identified all the young carers in school, and it was noted that there were a significant number of students in school with some form of caring responsibility. It was also noted that Bedford Borough had been placed second in the country for identifying young carers despite 76% of schools in the Borough having identified no young carers (suggesting that BISSC had contributing highly to the number identified within the Borough).</p>	
11.0	<p><b>Report from:</b> <b>B&amp;W Committee (4<sup>th</sup> May and 8<sup>th</sup> June)</b> – Both minutes had been circulated for information. The May meeting had completed an interesting review of the student safeguarding policies. The June meeting had included a long discussion about SEND needs and the complexity of additional needs being managed within school (including new students joining in Year 7 and low reading age). Governors discussed the lack of special school places across the Borough and the pressure this was placing on other non-specialist settings. It was noted that “SEND” now increasingly included social, emotional and mental health needs. Governors discussed the difficulty of providing a curriculum / lesson that appropriately met the needs of the wide range of abilities / needs within the classroom. <i>In response to a Governor query, it was confirmed that the school did provide a work skills course, which focused more on life skills such as employability, communication etc.. In addition, some lessons already provided entry level access, covering basic concepts at an appropriate level.</i> Staff were also looking to build a better SEND curriculum, with units built around individual student’s needs. Governors discussed whether there was an argument to build a separate provision, but staff were keen to support a curriculum that delivered at the right level for all students (with social / communicational requirements also recognised as important). <b>Curriculum Committee (25<sup>th</sup> April and 20<sup>th</sup> June)</b> – Both minutes had been circulated for information. Much of the discussion had already been covered earlier in this meeting. The Committee had reviewed a proposed new template for the School Improvement Plan, which was designed to be more manageable and easier to evaluate. The new template was shared with the FGB, and Governors felt it was extremely helpful to have a three-year plan – with linked actions and evaluation – as this would provide a clearer overview of progress. Governors were advised that the one-page summary / cover sheet had been reformatted to mirror the Ofsted headings. <i>In response to a Governor query, it was confirmed that the new Plan should be completed by the end of term, ready for</i></p>	

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	<i>implementation in September. It was agreed this should be considered at the September FGB meeting. All Governors were reminded of the need to undertake their Governor Visits and to provide a written record of their visit (preferably on the provided template).</i>	CB/EG All
12.0	<b>Policies and other documents for approval:</b> <b>Annual Policy Schedule</b> – This had been circulated to Governors to provide an oversight of the policy schedule for the year. <b>Privacy Notice for Students</b> – This had been amended as requested at the last FGB meeting. All Governors present approved the policy for immediate use. However, as the meeting was no longer quorate, <b>it was agreed that DB should be asked to confirm his approval by e-mail following the meeting.</b>	SN/DB
13.0	<b>Any Other Business</b> There was no other business to discuss.	
14.0	<b>Next Meeting</b> 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	

ACTION POINTS		
Item No.	Item	Action
1	It was agreed that SN would write to the LA requesting that Anne Day be appointed as the LA Governor for a further term.	SN
2	A new Chair of the Business & Welfare Committee should be appointed at the beginning of the Autumn term.	SN
3	Schedule of meetings for 2023/24 - dates to be checked against the main religious festivals of the year and the first two meetings of the Business & Welfare Committee to be reviewed.	SN
4	Proposed training session / Away Day for Governors to be discussed further in September	CB
5	New School Improvement Plan to be considered at the September FGB meeting.	CB/EG
6	All Governors were reminded of the need to undertake their Governor Visits and to provide a written record of their visit (preferably on the provided template).	All
7	Privacy Notice for Students –DB to be asked to confirm his approval by e-mail following the meeting.	SN/DB