

**SACKS MORASHA PRIMARY SCHOOL
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING MINUTES**

15th May 2019

PRESENT

Mark Nicolaides	CHAIR
Simone Gershon	
Annabel Reis	
Chaja Green	
Naomi Samuels	
Elliot Goodman	
Scott Aaron	
Leonie Sher	
Irene Mansfield	
Hayley Gross	HT
Sarah Woodward	
Kirsten Jowett	CEO JCAT
Eleonora Holyanova	Minute Clerk

APOLOGIES

Ben Morris
Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence

ABSENT

Miriam Kaye
Justin Kett

Glenn Bezalel (Link Trustee)

The meeting began at 6:00pm

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from BM and RJL.

The Chair welcomed all the governors and presented KJ as the CEO of JCAT. He also welcomed EH as the minute clerk of the LGB meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Governors were reminded that they should declare any interest relating to items on the agenda.

The following was declared:

CG: parent whose children attend SM.

MN: parent whose child attends SM.

IM: Governor at Riverside Special School since 2016 to present.

SG: parent whose children attend SM and also married to RG who is currently Trustee of SM.

NS: parent whose children attend SM.

LS: Governor at Independent Jewish Day School since 2018 to present

SA: 2 children at school and wife works as P/T Teaching Assistant

These were not considered to conflict with agenda items to be discussed.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

4. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN/HEAD TEACHER REPORT

HT gave the Governors a verbal report. She explained that SATs are now in progress. Results will be ready in July 2019.

- a) Teachers` meeting with the other MAT schools: HT pointed out that the teachers` meeting with the other MAT schools was very useful for teachers to compare their work through their internal data. She also explained that from this meeting it was clear that SM together with WH were doing better compared to the rest of the MAT schools, with SM results being on a par with WH results. In response to LS`s question, HT clarified that the school is always working to improve results and to work out challenges in order to do that. For example, SM is educating teachers to understand what makes a WT, WA, or WAGD piece of writing and to be able to talk confidently about how to improve each piece of writing. This is a skill WH teachers can do.

HT had a meeting with the Head of Barnet with regards to training certain teachers and the feedback from this meeting was very positive.

ACTION	Teachers at Sacks Morasha to improve subject knowledge and to focus on writing including handwriting in terms of Literacy.
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- b) Marking in school: a governor asked whether marking in the school should be removed and gave as an example other Barnet schools using this practice if it helps children to improve. Some of them use a combination of both verbal and written marking and some of them put positive comments 2-3 times a week.
HT replied that she is unsure how efficient the school's current marking system is and she prefers to hear feedback from parents. She added that JFS and Yavneh don't mark anything but there is no feedback on how efficient this is. The Chair said that he thinks that the school is not going to take on the model of no marking in school.
- c) Teaching and Learning Data: Final assessment week is July. All teaching is strong. Two Schools Direct Teachers in Reception and Year 3 have made good progress
- d) Appointing a new Deputy Headteacher: LS asked the HT for more information on selecting a new Deputy Headteacher. HT explained that she would like the person who takes on the position to have a more class-based role rather than office-based one.
She added that the position has been offered and verbally accepted by one of the strongest candidates interviewed. Governors asked how many candidates there were and HT confirmed there were 3 of which 1 was not ready for the role. SG added that the chosen candidate was an excellent choice out of the two. HT explained that the Deputy Headteacher role will be a step up for the new candidate but this is a positive thing as they can train her to work their way. HT pointed out that she is a KS2 teacher who comes from a 3-form entry school which involves more responsibilities than working in a smaller school.
HT also reminded all the Governors that she and the current Deputy Headteacher have been working in a great partnership together but when they both started 6 years ago they had to learn on the job and therefore she feels strongly about training people for certain roles in a similar way.
- e) Phase Leaders: HT said that she is teaching the current Phase leaders to take more responsibility but she feels that there is a lack of creativity and that they are not thinking outside of the box.
- f) Middle Management: HT explained that this is the second year of the plan related to the Middle management and next week an open inset is taking place when everyone will share what has been achieved.
- g) Office update: HT described the state of the office as good but not great. She would really like to hire one more person to help M as she is doing everything in the office by herself which is slowing things down. They still haven't found anyone and they do not know what is the reason. In response to a governor's question whether the school is offering the right salary to advertise the job, HT replied in the positive.
- h) Mental Health: HT said that St John's Ambulance are running it and she considers it very helpful for the children when they see her being involved with them. Governors asked how many children come to these groups and the HT explained that it varies between 10 and 18 (KS2 only). She also pointed out that children share their thoughts and concerns with her by writing her notes which promotes the behaviour of not fearing the HT.

HT suggested that the current Deputy Headteacher's office should be turned into a well-being room where children can spend time and also where the well-being club can take place. All the governors agreed with the idea.

- i) Smarttech: HT would like to discuss the way forward with relation to Smarttech (e.g. children's Instagram accounts)

HT updated everyone present that the new Calendar will be ready in July 2019 and that the Heads up Programme is going well.

5. JCAT CENTRAL UPDATE

KJ informed all the governors that she and ML are the current employed team in JCAT and the other divisions have been outsourced to avoid losses.

KJ explained that the JCAT structure consists of two parts:

- a) Operations – outsourced to a company who is responsible for putting in place and renewing all contracts such as building, cleaning, all business manager's functions. The cost of having this division outsourced is the same as paying one person to perform this job.
- b) Finance – academy subdivision is to be created in KPMG as a part of a trial. As part of this process JCAT negotiated a good deal which will cost £8000 per year and half price for the first year (£4000). The school's office will be placing orders through PS Financial and KPMG are taking over from there (dealing with payments, etc.).

The school budget will be uploaded into the PS Financial and there will be a live dashboard accessible for all the Governors and HT.

6. STANDARDS DATA

Data has already been discussed in the HT's report.

KJ explained that in the future target tracker reports will be collected and compared across all schools under JCAT. In July, all the Governors will be trained to read the data and all the schools will be using the same system.

7. SAFEGUARDING

- a) Safeguarding and Pastoral Update

- 0 Complaints;
- 0 Child Protection (Safeguarding) referrals to social care;
- 0 Allegations against staff reported to the Lead Officer for Child Protection;
- 0 Reported racial Incidents;
- 0 Reported serious bullying Incidents;
- 0 Significant safeguarding issue, whether to do with sexual behaviours;
- 0 Radicalisation or any other form of threat or risk to young people

- b) Email Complaints system: SA was unsure whether everyone was aware that when parents are emailing certain teachers they are actually sending the emails to the whole year group of teachers. HT replied that she is reluctant to give teachers' personal work email addresses to parents because of some parents' aggressive/rude emails. HT clarified that parents know that they are emailing the whole group when emailing a complaint towards a certain teacher.

KJ suggested that emails are sent to the office and then forwarded to the specific teacher and confirmed that it is a bad practice for teachers' private emails to be given to parents. Governors asked what the school can do to prevent from receiving such emails. HT replied that she thinks no further action is necessary at this point because once parents send such an email and feel they have said what they wanted to say, the whole issue dies down. The Chair agreed to leave things the way they were but if in any case the parents' attitude gets too abusive to let him know so that he can take further actions.

8. JEWISH WAY OF LIFE

- a) Pikuach – JK to report but he is on a course.
- b) Trustee meeting: Trustee meeting will take place on 19th May 2019 to discuss the type of families that are coming to the school, efforts to keep the standard, dress code in school and its ethos.
- c) Level of religious observance: HT said that the school needs to be clear on 'who we are' but at the same time to find the balance in order to enrol more children. IM asked the HT why the level of religious observance has dropped. HT replied that it depends on the cohort as some families are more religious than others and it is a journey to make them more religious. At the same time there has been a change in the overall acceptance of less religious families. It has been observed that a few years ago children who were more religious wouldn't be allowed to go to their classmate's house if they were not as religious as them; this has now changed and parents are not as concerned as they used to be. The Chair added that the ethos comes from the Finchley Jewish Primary School Trust and what the school needs to do is to find out how to make the school more attractive for new admissions without diluting the school's ethos.

9. FINANCE

- a) Bank issues: KJ apologised to all the Governors on behalf of Lloyds Bank as there was a lack of facility to pay online. She explained that for six weeks KJ and her team had to write cheques because of this. However, suppliers have been reassured that settling their payments in that manner is not an ongoing issue and will be resolved in due course. KJ has raised a compensation claim with Lloyds Bank for taking so long for the issue to be resolved and they have upgraded the banking status of JCAT for free.
- b) School budget: KJ informed everyone present that the budget is tight and as an academy the school still needs VCs and the Finchley Jewish Day Trust to pay employees' salaries. When the budget was created for the current school year two things were not considered: the national pay award and the new pension scheme. She added that the position of the school is the same but cash flow is restricted because before as an LA Barnet used to pay for everything and then settle the payment with the school opposed to now as an Academy Barnet are waiting for all the payments from the school to be made before releasing the amount due. As a conclusion, nothing has really changed. KJ added that a new budget has been created and it will be uploaded the day after the meeting. KJ said that the expenses for KPMG, COO and JCAT CEO are matching or less than what they used to be when the school was receiving the service from Barnet. IM asked KJ who is overseeing the work of KPMG and KJ replied that she is the one who does. KJ added that she will be appointing the exact functions of KPMG and had not done it previously as she was unsure whether there was enough money for that.

- c) New schools joining JCAT: KJ disclosed that Hertsmere Jewish Primary School has now joined JCAT which was not their choice. Because of their OFSTED report the school went to special measures switching from voluntary-aided status to an academy and JCAT has been approved to be their sponsor. Governors asked KJ whether she thinks this change will have a positive or negative impact for the school moving forward. KJ replied that taking on a 5th school of this size under JCAT will be good for all the schools within the trust as there will be economies of scale related to central costs (IT, cleaning, utilities, catering, security, etc.). In addition, KJ explained that Hertsmere Jewish Primary School is solidly good in all areas but Safeguarding. This issue had nothing to do with the children not being safe in school but rather with the existing culture within the school and the community such as lack of confidentiality because everyone knows each other.

HT added that Sacks Morasha has set boundaries to avoid such an issue between the school and the community. HT said that few years ago teaching assistants used to babysit for some of the families in school. She changed that to separate private life from school life in order to increase professionalism.

In response to IM's question whether more schools will be joining JCAT, KJ replied that two more schools are interested in joining JCAT but at this stage she is not allowed to disclose their names. It had been previously planned to add more schools to the trust with relation to both economies of scale and receiving additional funding once a certain size has been reached. KJ reassured all the governors that there is no rush to take on too many schools at one go but rather take them one at a time until ready for the next one.

10. PTA/ LOCAL EVENTS/ FUNDRAISING

On 9th May Yom Ha`atzmaut was marked in school and everyone agreed that it was excellent.

11. POLICY UPDATES

KJ informed all the Governors that it is a priority for the MAT to update and finalise all the contracts for all employees. All the policies will be centralised and all the HTs will meet to discuss and agree on it before adopting them as MAT policies. Until then all the existing policies will be valid. Teaching and Behaviour policies will be individual for each school.

HT expressed her concern on the complaints policy being different for each school and asked KJ whether this would be an issue with OFSTED. KJ replied that this will not be an issue.

ACTION	HT to upload on the school's website that the current policies are still in place until the MAT policy is agreed.
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12. ADMISSIONS (SIBLING DEFINITION AND PARENTS MEETINGS)

- a) Admissions September 2019: The Chair said that September 2019 Reception class is currently undersubscribed which is something that the committee didn't expect. If these places do not get filled the school is facing £9000 loss per child and therefore more children need to be admitted.
- b) Current demography: CG and KJ informed the Governors that it has been a low birth year within the Jewish communities not just across Barnet. SG added that this year's catchment area has been enlarged compared to previous years and CG confirmed that regardless of that she had not even one enquiry regarding more admissions. KJ informed all the Governors that there are more Jewish schools than before followed by extra years of expected low birth rates.

c) Increasing pupil take-up: There was a long discussion of the ways the school could increase pupil take-up, both for the September 2019 class and going forward. The Chair mentioned that there are two steps to the plan:

(i) Attract more children for the new school year and moving forward: a spreadsheet will be uploaded on the website to advise prospective parents which synagogues they can contact in the area and make them aware that the school is engaged with the local community, as well as the wider Jewish community. The Chair expressed his concern that there might not be enough pupils for Reception 2019. However, the process of advertising is ongoing. SG and CG will be meeting with nurseries to give the right message across that SM is a good school for parents to send their children to.

ACTION	SG and CG to coordinate the process of making calls and set up meetings to ensure all efforts have been made for the free spaces to be filled.
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(ii) Positioning: The admissions sub-committee is also meeting to decide how the school should be positioned moving forward. The Chair informed everyone that he is aware that the school's admissions policy cannot be changed for September 2019, but every aspect of the school relevant to admissions will be considered.

ACTION	Continued meetings of the admissions sub-committee.
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13. APPROVAL OF 6-MONTH BUDGET AND 2019-2020 BUDGET

This has already been noted.

14. AOB

a) Governor stepping down: The Chair announced that both AR and NS are stepping down from their roles as Governors and thanked them on behalf of everyone for their work. The Chair said that there are now two Governor positions available. He suggested that Ben Savery be brought in as a new Governor and everyone agreed. KJ informed everyone that the two Governor positions available do not necessarily need to be filled with new candidates as long as there are governors who match the skillset required for the relevant roles.

ACTION	BS to be brought in as a new Governor.
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b) School lunches: EG expressed his concern that the school lunches are not good enough and he feels he shares most children's opinion at school as he had lunch at school last week. HT agreed that the food provided by Barnet is not of a good quality and added that once the school kitchen is ready after the summer holidays it will be improved. KJ confirmed that all schools have complaints with regards to their school lunches but also reminded everyone the cost of making them has to be kept low and there are restrictions on adding salt in the food for the children.

c) Evacuation procedures: SA asked the HT what the current plan for incident evacuation is referring to a previous incident in school. HT replied that there is a policy in place and all staff are aware of it. She admitted that the fire escape route is quite narrow for a fast

evacuation of so many children and she has raised the issue before but nothing can be done to be changed at this point because of the size of the building. However, HT suggested that sample evacuations are made through different routes each time as it would depend on where the incident in the building has occurred.

NEXT MEETING: 15th July 2019

Meeting ended at 8:30pm

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Agenda item	ACTION	BY WHOM
4. a)	Teachers at Sacks Morasha to improve subject knowledge and to focus on writing including handwriting in terms of Literacy.	Teachers
11.	HT to upload on the school`s website that the current policies are still in place until the MAT policy is agreed.	HT
12. c) (i)	SG and CG to coordinate the process of making calls and set up meetings to ensure all efforts have been made for the free spaces to be filled.	SG and CH
12. c) (ii)	Continued meetings of the admissions sub-committee.	Sub-committee
14. a)	BS to be brought in as a new Governor.	BS