



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

20<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 7.30 pm on Zoom

**PRESENT**

Zoe Silverman	Chair	Irene Mansfield	
Rabbi Lawrence		Hed Amitai	
Tamar Rockman	Staff Governor	Simone Gershon	
Mandy Lawrence			
Elliot Goodman		Gareth Jones	CEO JCAT
Rabbi Sager	Interim Head		
Justin Kett		<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
Chaja Green		Daniel Dahan	
Luci Joseph		Dean Jayson	Link Trustee
Scott Aaron			
Ele Osen		In attendance:	
Elisa Angel		Zoe Abrahams	Clerk

The meeting started at 7.39pm

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

ZS welcomed all present. She welcomed RS, ML, and a new governor, EO. Apologies were received and accepted from DD who was unable to attend and IM who was late.

**2. DVAR TORAH**

A Dvar Torah was given by RL.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No conflicts of interest relating to items on the agenda were declared. ZS requested that all those who have not yet filled out their Register of Interest Forms to complete them and return them to Mel Lawson, together with other requested forms.

**4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.  
Matters arising – none.

**5. HT REPORT (circulated prior to meeting)**

RS presented a summary of his first HT report since he joined as headteacher. He thanked everyone for making him feel welcome in his first few weeks.

- RS invited governors who wish to join him on either of his two planned learning walks to get in contact via email to arrange dates and times to join him. He promised to circulate a copy of his weekly timetable so governors know when he is in school. **ACTION**
  - Q ZS asked how the learning walk would work, specifically which sessions the governors should attend? RS agreed to share a timetable of walks with ZS. Governors could decide beforehand which sessions to attend according to availability, so governor numbers are spread evenly across the week.
- RS outlined some safeguarding initiatives he has put into place in addition to the school's existing systems. He noted that JCAT have arranged for an external safeguarding audit on

April 4<sup>th</sup>. GJ asked RS if he would like him to send over the audit from Hertsmere to get an idea of the scope?

- JS reported that he and JK had met with the PTA that morning to discuss the new playground. EG outlined two stages to the expansion. Phase 1: working on the land that the network building sat on. Phase 2: extending the footprint of the playground.

Q JS asked where portacabins will be moved to when the new buildings go up? EG replied that if the new phase of works goes ahead as planned, they will keep them, but they will be repositioned. He and ZS will keep all updated.

JK asked that a communication should be sent out, starting with the SLT then to parents, regarding the next steps in the building works. EG noted that a letter had been circulated that week to share 'what they know today' about the playground. JK added that there had occasionally been poor communication with him/other stakeholders and added that the PTA had a lot of questions.

ZS clarified that it was the Trust who own the playground and are funding it, it is not technically a governing body matter. Furthermore, when the building was being demolished, they didn't know how long it would take and, and were not aware that it would be a different phase from getting the playground ready. She emphasised that nothing has been intentionally withheld from anyone. ZS also noted that until this week it was difficult to get a sense of exact timescales because an acoustic fence was required, and they had to wait for confirmation of when that was going to be installed. The fence will arrive in the next couple of weeks and will hopefully be ready when the children come back after half term.

ZS outlined the role of the new PTA playground committee. She noted that PTA have historically got involved in the playground because it is easy to fundraise, and they have done so often over the years. The committee might do something nice in the temporary tarmacked space from the February half term.

EG opened a discussion of how much detailed information to share with the PTA as they currently have an expectation of being told about all the developments. LJ said that ideally governors ideally shouldn't be having conversations with the PTA directly. SG agreed that there has been some recent misinterpretation of roles and responsibilities and there is a need to make boundaries clear.

Q JK and EG mentioned playground supervision. The latter asked why there is not much in the Behaviour policy that directly addresses playground incidents and the consequences when those occur. He said he would like this to be reviewed, particularly in a larger playground. RS replied that he is looking at behaviour, expectations, consequences, and ensuring consistency within that. He said that in his other school he has a clear structure in place guiding responses.

- TR suggested that with the Platinum Jubilee coming up that it might be a good idea to plant trees to commemorate the occasion. RS agreed but ZS and SA were cautious about the potential for damage from footballs or construction work. SG added that the school have been allocated an allotment near Victoria Park and will start preparing it soon. JK said that children would be receiving a talk from Mrs Nicholai about planting at the right time to prepare them. There was no final agreement on tree planting.
- EG, RS and JK discussed the behaviour policy in detail. JK outlined that the aim is to strip it down to be as clear as possible 'Be ready, be safe, be smart'. The hope is that all behaviours will be related back to those 'B's by the member of staff dealing with it, and that there will eventually be a greater level of standardisation with consequences. EG challenged the policy

of sanctions and a discussion ensued. It was agreed to add reviewing the behaviour policy to the next agenda. **ACTION**

- LG suggested that the school mark the Diamond Jubilee and ZS asked if she would organise it. RL asked if Sacks Morasha pupils might join a ceremony at Kinloss in May.
- GJ suggested that staff update their DBS Checks following safeguarding audits at other JCAT schools. SA asked what the costs for this might be? After discussion GJ suggested that these certificates be reviewed by the HT to identify those older than 3 years. **ACTION**

## 6. PARENT GOVERNOR ELECTIONS

A letter has been sent out to parents inviting 2 new parent governors to join the LGB and requesting a written statement of their interest. LJ suggested that the class reps could share this invitation.

JCAT have approved SA and EG to convert to foundation governors. DD will step down unless the school gets no new parent governors. GJ suggested that governors could personally message people who they think would be a good fit for the role.

## 7. JCAT CENTRAL UPDATE

- JCAT has a new Chief Finance Officer and the DFE is financing an assistant to work with her for the first 10 weeks to ease the transition. GJ acknowledged that there has been some concern about the speed of getting detailed budget statements and hopes there will soon be an improvement.
- JCAT have appointed Tamar Cohen from Wolfson Hillel as Kodesh SIP. She will be communicating with heads of Kodesh in the 4 schools and will have timetabled visits.
- On the inset day on 25<sup>th</sup> April GJ will invite the group doing the safeguarding audit to do a session for all staff.
- GJ complimented the efficiency of the Headteacher Meeting, held the day before.
- GJ mentioned joint inset days to share good practice and strengthen support.
- JFS making good progress in joining JCAT with weekly meetings. The new Headteacher is very keen to create a positive link between primaries and secondaries.
  - Q CG asked if JCAT schools would become feeder schools for JFS? GJ said that this would be a benefit to ease primary to secondary transition, particularly with Jewish Studies. CG and GJ discussed the enhanced possibilities for smoothing the transitions e.g. Year 5 visits to JFS.
  - Q JK asked what the exact role of Tamar Cohen was within JCAT? GJ said that she will continue in a supportive school improvement role and will be visiting and have ongoing discussions with Heads of School/Heads of Kodesh to define her role. ZS added that there is a need to resolve the lack of consultation with the school over TC's appointment, given that it is SM's own trust which funds Kodesh. GJ agreed to take this further with Michael Goldstein
- LJ thanked GJ/JCAT for the work Engaging Education is doing to create great pictures/videos.

## 8. VC'S/SCHOOLS TRUST COMMITMENT 2021-2022

- ZS reported on a meeting with Sacks Morasha Trustee Rob Gershon. He estimates that the VC collection rate at the last collection was 76% (the current collection rate in the budget), but this is going down. The Trust have the money for phase 2 building works but once these are complete there will be little left. RG said that there needed to be action on getting VC's up as there might be a longer-term issue for the school if VCs are not paid e.g. the ratio of Kodesh etc.

- Q LJ asked if there had been any background analysis done of the types of people who aren't paying so they can market VC's? ZS said some analysis had been done by RG who had found that it was potentially newer families who were less involved in the ethos. SG agreed that there were differences in attitudes between the different years. EA added that COVID might be reducing connection to the school.
- Q SA asked if there was any specific information about what parents thought about VCs, but ZS noted that because the payments are voluntary, the school can't ask. SG suggested that governors shouldn't be directly involved in VC's.
- Q HA highlighted that the collection rate at Sacks Morasha is much higher than at other primary schools, and it is reasonable that it will reduce if it is not the same families who began the school who have a different level of commitment. He added that the amount requested is one of the highest compared to the other JCAT schools and suggested that addressing the cost could be considered. GJ confirmed that SM do have a much higher rate of both collections and VC rates.
- JK, LJ and CG all agreed that there was a need to communicate the breadth and importance of what the VC's go towards.

- HA summarised the Budget Report and noted that there were gaps in the budget like school meals, clubs, increase in teaching staff salaries etc.
- Q RS asked GJ why there is lack of clarity from JCAT with respect to budgets. He highlighted that many Headteachers don't know what's in their respective budgets and thought this lack of clarity is hindering the day to day running of the school and they needed to have more budget oversight. GJ reassured those present that the new Chief Finance Officer is very experienced, and he is keen for her to go out to the schools and explain some details.

## 9. GOVERNOR QUALITY ASSURANCE – MONITORING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

### *Communications*

LJ spoke about the need to advertise the school, including through growing a social media following. She also mentioned the number of events going on in the school, which JK suggested might be effective in creating stories, and other opportunities to get good photos of the school.

### *Admissions:*

EO is now assisting CG with admissions, the date for which has closed. There have been more than 60 CRP forms received, slightly fewer than last year with fewer siblings but CJ concludes that there are sufficient places and doesn't foresee any issues with allocating those places.

IM suggested that if SM became a feeder school that would considerably raise admissions. CJ agreed that this would be good, and that they might use it in their marketing.

LJ, EO and CJ will sit down in February to start planning the next round of admissions so will be ready from after Pesach.

CG and LJ spoke about the need to update the prospectus and website, both very dated.

### *Quality of Education Report:*

EA summarised her report. RS thought that phonics checks are currently experiencing a pushback from educators, and their use in teaching reading is being reassessed.

ZS said that every governor should be contributing, if not on the learning walks, then on the 'deep dives'. COVID permitting, governors should be in the school this term. RS added that they need to discuss which subject to do a deep dive on in addition to reading.

*Kodesh:*

- ML discussed her Megillah Club and mentioned the care shown by her students.
- ML summarised her findings from the school which are generally positive. She was impressed by the conduct of the children during the Israeli Ambassadors visit.
- ML spoke to children and found that in KS1, art and Kodesh are their favourite subjects. All told ML they were happy and lunchtime behaviour was good, although there is little supervision.
- She said she got the impression that the Kodesh staff were overstretched and unable to do the curriculum the way they wanted. This term, with assistance they will hopefully be able to finish their plans.

**10. GOVERNOR TRAINING**

- ZS thanked all those who followed the National College links she sent out and said she might send more before the next meeting. She reminded all to update the google spreadsheet so that everything is logged.
- ZS said she will make a template ready for the learning walks so everything is logged.

**11. PHASE 2 BUILDING WORKS**

EC wanted to ensure they have enough space on the land for the works and should be mindful of the disruption to everyday learning from the building.

**12. AOB**

- SA mentioned that there are 9 children in the after-school Ivrit class with a possibility for a second class in due course.
- JK noted that the school have had a new lunch supplier since September. Recently the kitchen manager and her boss came in and held focus groups with some children to identify issues and received good feedback.

**ACTIONS**

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
5	Arrange dates and times of learning walks and assign governors to them	ZS/JS	ASAP
5	Identify which DBS certificates need renewing	JS	ASAP
5	Review Behaviour Policy	JS	Next meeting
	School to review Equalities policy and implement		