

Learning, Enjoying & Succeeding Together

The Local Governing Board of

# Bearwood Primary & Nursery School

Minutes of Local Governing Board Meeting  
Held on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom

---

**Present:**

Mrs Ann Harris (Chair)

Mrs Sally Wall (Acting Headteacher)

Mrs Carolyn Bennett

Mrs Nicola Best

Mrs Rebecca Bridger

Mrs Ingrid Fido

Mrs Kate Gunstone

Mr Michael Sussman

**In Attendance:**

Mrs Patricia Rushton (Clerk)

<p><b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>1.1 Mrs Harris welcomed Governors to the meeting.</p> <p>1.2 It was noted that all Governors were present.</p>	
<p><b>2. Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>2.1 Mrs Fi advised that the school in which she works has recently joined the Hilary Trust.</p>	
<p><b>3. Minutes of the Last Meeting</b></p> <p>3.1 Governors agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were an accurate record.</p>	
<p><b>4. Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>4.1 The Headteacher's Report had been sent to Governors prior to the meeting. Governors were invited to ask questions.</p> <p>4.2 <i>It was questioned how Mrs Wall was feeling about her first few weeks as Acting Headteacher and what has been enjoyable and gone well.</i> Mrs Wall advised that the first few weeks had gone well and whilst it has been a bit daunting, the staff have been really supportive and there is a real team spirit in school. Mrs Wall explained that the atmosphere in school is very positive and staff are just beginning to pick up the momentum again with a real focus on the teaching and learning that will happen in the summer term. Governors were advised that with Mrs Guarguaglini having only two days out of class, when leadership meetings take place they have to be highly focused.</p> <p>4.3 <i>It was further questioned whether there are any areas in which Governors could be supportive.</i> Mrs Wall advised that she cannot think of anything Governors can do to be more supportive and their usual good challenge is helpful in keeping things on track.</p> <p>4.4 <i>A question was raised about the expansion plans for the school and what was</i></p>	

*being considered in terms of time frames, obvious hurdles, etc.* Mrs Wall advised that Mrs Bennett and Mr Leddin are meeting with the Finance Manager at Hamwic tomorrow to look at housing implications and the impact on pupil numbers. Timescales are unknown at present. Governors were advised that the school is exploring whether it is possible to expand the school at the bottom initially and then build on this. Waiting lists have been reviewed but there is nothing significant and no huge influx of pupils is being seen.

4.5 Mrs Wall advised that Year R next year looks large, but not all these applications will materialise as the list includes applications from parents who have chosen Bearwood as either their first, second or third choices. There are also some late applications.

4.6 Governors were advised that the Local Authority have undertaken some statistical analysis looking at the numbers of children wanting school places that are generated compared to the number of houses being built.

4.7 *It was noted that staff absences amounted to 16.5 days in the Spring Term, with only 11.5 of these being for sickness, and questioned whether other absences were authorised and how they were managed within the school.* Mrs Wall advised that some of the absences were due to reactions to Covid vaccinations. Where absences were not due to sickness, this related to staff having time off in lieu. These absences were planned to take place when the school had capacity.

4.8 *It was noted that there had been no supply implications for the staff absence, but questioned how these absences have been covered and whether this was a long term solution to covering staff absence.* Mrs Wall explained that due to how people had to work during lockdown, TAs have grown increasingly confident to manage the class for one day in the teacher's absence, which reduces the reliance on cover. Governors were advised that if a longer absence occurs then the school will need to use supply as it cannot internally manage these absences. Mrs Wall advised that when considering cover the school has to be mindful of the needs of the children and the impact this has on their learning. It was considered that sometimes for short term absences having a supply teacher in class can be disruptive to the children's learning and greater consistency is achieved through the use of TAs.

4.9 *It was asked how the Catch Up Funding that has been identified as especially needing to go towards phonics learning in Years 1 and 2 being used and is the intervention teacher previously used coming in.* Mrs Wall advised that the school needs to put a statement on its website to say how much Catch Up Funding has been received and how it is being spent. Mrs Wall explained that in terms of phonics for Years 1 and 2, there is only one pupil in Year 2 who had not achieved the required score, although there are some pupils who lack strong fluency in using phonics. A TA is doing an intervention programme with these pupils.

4.10 Mrs Wall advised that she had undertaken a phonics screen with Year 1 via Zoom and that a second screening was done after Easter. It was noted that some of the children appeared to be stuck and staff were experiencing difficulties in moving them forward. Mrs Wall has undertaken a dyslexia screening with these children and some have been identified as being at risk of dyslexia. Phonological awareness work has been undertaken with the children and some of the children

have not grasped the early reading skills. Mrs Wall explained that Miss Doe has been doing interventions in the afternoons instead of covering PPA. The school is now looking at using a supply teacher for one day per week to release Miss Doe to work with these Year 1 children on a one-to-one basis every day. Some of these children would be prioritised to work with Miss Doe and the others would have some class teacher time every morning. Once the group working with Miss Doe had progressed then she would work with another group of children. Mrs Wall has made it clear to staff that they must make her aware if any of these children do not seem to be making progress. Mrs Wall explained that the weaknesses in phonics learning may be due to these children missing a lot of school during their Reception year due to Covid.

- 4.11 *It was questioned whether the parents are aware that their child needs this extra intervention work. It was further questioned whether parents have had the opportunity to attend a phonics workshop to support them in helping their child.* Mrs Wall advised that lots had been done during lockdown but some children's skills regressed due to the inappropriate support being provided. It was felt that further parental support may cause the issues to worsen.
- 4.12 *It was asked whether the teacher previously used for interventions was being used to support the children.* Mrs Wall advised that this teacher is currently covering Mrs Guarguaglini for two days per week in Year 6.
- 4.13 *Regarding the wrap around care, it was questioned how this was going this term, given Mrs Wilson has stepped in prior to the outside organisation taking over. It was further asked whether it was running in a financially viable way now and whether it was likely to be viable for the outside organisation.* Mrs Wall confirmed that the after school club is currently breaking even and that the school is able to operate the provision with fewer than 12 children, whilst the outside organisation would need a minimum of 12 children for it to be financially viable. Governors were advised that the after school club has been operated as emergency child care so the school has not pushed to achieve larger numbers.
- 4.14 Mrs Wall advised that the outside organisation intending to operate the after school club are looking to offer sporting and other activities and not just childcare. Governors were assured that the organisation running the after school club are required to give two terms' notice before pulling out should it not be viable. It was noted that it is a big national company so have capacity if pupil numbers do not meet expectations.
- 4.15 *It was also asked how the current afterschool provision fits in with the health and safety risk assessment for Covid, especially with the bubbles being broken.* Mrs Wall advised that the club has a small number of children and uses the practical room and outside areas. Mrs Wilson ensures that they are spread out whilst inside and that the outside area is used as much as possible.
- 4.16 Mrs Wall advised that there are no issues with the bubbles as the children are regularly going outside and are able to play more co-operatively. The school are currently waiting for updated guidance to be released and this should give the school a greater understanding of the implications moving forward.
- 4.17 *It was noted from the spring term data update that there had been some 'drop off'*

*in children's learning. It was questioned whether during lockdown all of those children with 'drop off' were taught remotely or were any being taught in school.* Mrs Wall advised that an action plan has been developed for all the children with 'drop off' and it has been noted that there is no correlation between 'drop off' and whether the children were taught remotely or in school.

4.18 *It was asked whether there was a timescale for when milestones 1 and 2 would be completed by.* Mrs Wall advised that it was hoped that the milestones would be completed by the end of the year but this could be a little bit erratic. Teachers have looked at Maths and English, especially the key skills that could be covered in this term. Mrs Wall advised that there has been a discussion around catch up and lost learning and it was considered that the lost learning will take a year or so to catch up. Teachers are looking at what it is possible to cover and what represents key learning which can be built on for the rest of this year and next year. The reaching of the milestones is dependent upon the effectiveness of the intervention strategies.

4.19 *It was questioned whether the loss of the Acorn Room had had any impact on the school.* Mrs Wall advised that the Acorn Room was mostly used by the Breakfast and After School Clubs and the new provider was looking to use the hall and outside areas. Previously the Acorn Room was used for cookery activities but the teachers are able to use the hall instead. Governors were reminded that the school had been built as a two form-entry school and so have a lot of available space that could be used with adjustments. Mrs Wall explained that the EYFS team are looking at their outside space as some of this will be lost. Mr Leddin is looking at moving one of the fences to give a bit more external play space in EYFS.

4.20 *It was noted from the Headteacher's Report that the number of children with EHCP's is high compared to the national average and questioned whether this had an impact on the staff when teaching due to the children needing more support during the day.* Mrs Wall advised that the figure in the report represented the number of EHCP children as a proportion of the SEN register and the percentage of EHCP's against the whole school is only 1.4%. Mrs Wall explained that further children may potentially receive an EHCP so this figure may increase slightly which will take the school above the national average. It was explained that many of the children needing additional support have come to Bearwood from other schools. This has also meant a sudden influx of EHCPs.

4.21 *It was questioned whether the increase in EHCPs made a difference to staffing levels and how it impacted on the rest of the school and class.* Mrs Wall explained that the number of children with EHCPs does impact on staffing and gave the example of one child receiving tutoring in Bearwood and is on the school's roll. This pupil is in our setting for two hours per day and is interacting with other children. Another child is on a part-time timetable and is working on a one-to-one basis with a TA; this arrangement has worked well and the child is now in the classroom and has not received any exclusions since this provision has been in place. Governors were advised that this TA is very skilled and the class now have the advantage of her working with them. Mrs Wall advised that two other children are in the same class and receiving support from one TA who is able to manage both of them. Mrs Wall advised that the level of need does have an impact but has to be managed. The school has appointed two TAs who started

after Easter. It was commented by a Governor that it was amazing to get one of these children into school and for them then to receive a period of tutoring before being successfully integrated into the classroom.

- 4.22 *The number of children achieving a good phonics score was noted and it was questioned how this compared to other schools in the Local Authority or within Hamwic and whether there was a similar picture in other schools because of the lockdowns.* Mrs Wall advised that the school does not have any data from either the Local Authority or Hamwic but she would try and get a sense from other schools as to what their phonics scores are looking like. Mrs Harris advised that she is seeing most schools highlighting phonics and Year 2 as having progress issues.
- 4.23 *It was further questioned what the school was doing to support the children experiencing difficulties with phonics.* Mrs Wall advised that the children identified as vulnerable readers in September have been re-screened and their reading ages have been re-assessed. The school has invested in reading material for the children in KS2 which focuses on the learning of phonics. One child in Year 4 has a one-to-one highly focused phonics teaching programme as his grasp of phonics appeared to be a barrier.
- 4.24 *It was considered that the 25 children identified with communication and interaction needs are unlikely to have been helped by lockdown and questioned what the school was doing to help them catch up.* Mrs Wall explained that when the children returned from lockdown the teachers undertook PIRA and PUMA tests. Vocabulary has been identified as an issue so this is now a high priority and is being taught in the classroom as a universal offer. Mrs Wall advised that the younger children have been supported using intervention programmes taught over Zoom. The NELLI programme has been started and some children are getting two group sessions and two individual sessions per week. Mrs Wall explained that she and Mrs Brierley have met with the Speech and Language Therapist who has been running interventions over Zoom for those children that need it. The Speech and Language Therapist is pleased that the children are making good progress with their speech and language targets. Miss Prince is also running some emotional literacy support programmes with some of the children.
- 4.25 Mrs Wall advised Governors that the school has a large number of children that go on to the SEN Register and then come off after a short period of time. There are, however, some children that remain on the SEN Register for their time at the school, this is particularly the case with those children on the autistic spectrum.
- 4.26 *It was noted that the report says there are a lot of emotional needs in Year 3 and Mrs Wall was asked to talk about this and say what is being done to help these children.* Mrs Wall advised that these children do not seem to have developed the maturity expected of Year 3 children and this potentially could be due to them not having had the opportunity to experience the stepping stones that usually happen to get them ready for KS2. There are some children that have identified needs and so the Educational Psychologist has undertaken an observation of them as a class and has recommended some strategies to assist. The class have been receiving more Jigsaw and PHSE lessons. It was considered that there are many egocentric children in the class who have difficulties listening to others and these

behaviours were getting in the way of their learning. There are also some issues around attitudes to learning so staff will start working with small groups in a more bespoke manner. Staff have also worked with some children on their emotional resilience and also working with the parents to give them strategies to try at home.

- 4.27 Mrs Wall advised that some work had been done on mental health and mental well-being with a series of assemblies being done to give the children a toolbox of strategies to try, for example, breathing activities to help them take control of their emotions. There are also displays in the hall as a reminder and also a booklet in the classroom for the children to refer to. Mrs Harris considered this to be a very effective way of working with the children. Mrs Wall advised that the PHSE Leader has asked for photos of the children doing these activities that can be used in displays.
- 4.28 *It was noted that Mrs Wall's report said that the final tranche of Catch Up Funding had not yet been released and it was questioned whether this was being withheld by the Government or Hamwic.* Mrs Wall advised that the funding for Catch Up was announced at the same time as the funding for summer schools so the school is taking the cautious route and not spending this money until it has been received.
- 4.29 *Mrs Wall was asked to talk about the Jurassic Hub and explain how it works.* Mrs Wall advised that Hamwic are funding this project which involves staff from five schools who will work with key facilitators from the Jurassic Hub. The project involves filming lessons and then reviewing and evaluating them. The project also allows all TAs to access 15 hours of free Maths training so all the school's TAs are involved in this. Mrs Wall advised that it has been challenging at times to release all the TAs at the same time to do this Maths training. In addition to the training time, the TAs will need to do project work in the classroom and have an opportunity to put their training into practice. Governors considered that it was well worth investing in TAs and that this investment in them makes them feel valued.
- 4.30 Mrs Wall advised that Chris Bulmer from Hamwic has been talking about the effective use of TAs and one key area is CPD. Mrs Wall explained that the school's TAs are getting training on a weekly basis plus they are receiving this Maths training so the school has invested a lot over recent years.
- 4.31 *It was questioned whether the school had any plans for Year 6 transition to secondary school.* Mrs Wall advised that the Local Authority has changed the dates for transition this year and it is being done during the week the children are at Osmington. The school has contacted the secondary schools and some have offered an alternative date. Miss Prince has had meetings with parents about supporting their children so they are ready for secondary school; fifteen parents have attended these meetings and the PowerPoint presentation will be put on the school website. Governors were advised that the Year 6 children have started to work on transition and Miss Prince is doing an hour a week on a transition project so as to prepare the children as best we can.
- 4.32 *It was questioned whether there have been any significant cost implications arising from Covid.* Mr Sussman advised that the budget looks healthy and is in

<p>surplus with the outlook for next year looking even better. Additionally, the school will receive a refund in respect of Mrs Bennett's salary whilst she is at Upton Junior School.</p>	
<p><b>5. Governance Matters</b></p> <p>5.1 <u>Chair of Governors / Headteacher Meetings:</u> Mrs Harris advised that no meetings have been held as yet with Mrs Wall but she will be visiting the school tomorrow. Governors were advised that the Accountability Schedule will be discussed tomorrow to look at the key aspects of the Accountability Schedule that need to be completed. Mrs Harris advised that she will allocate tasks to Governors once a decision has been made. <b>Action: Mrs Harris.</b></p> <p>5.2 <u>Parents and Communication:</u> Mrs Bridger advised that she spoken to Mrs Bennett about communication with parents and confirmed that decisions on what is communicated is dependent on how it impacts on the children's education. Governors were advised that the newsletter is sent home fortnightly and aims to celebrate sporting and achievements in curriculum areas. Mrs Bennett and Mrs Bridger also discussed the celebration communications, for example the PowerPoint presentation that was released during lockdown; this was well received by parents and will be continuing half termly. Concern was raised that some parents may possibly find the range of communications confusing as many different platforms are being used. This can make it difficult for parents to trace previous communications. Governors were advised that Mrs Bennett and Mrs Bridger discussed explaining the aims of each platform and how they will be used to communicate with parents.</p> <p>5.3 <u>Well-Being and Website Communication:</u> Mrs Bridger advised that she had also discussed well-being and the use of the website to signpost parents to mental health and well-being issues and Mrs Bridger will continue to monitor how this is being used in the future. Mrs Wall advised that one of the schools in Hamwic has been working on mental health and mental well-being for the last three years and is being used by Hamwic as a model that possibly can be used by other schools. Mrs Wall explained that she attended a meeting last week and an audit will be completed focusing on all aspects of mental well-being. This will inform a three-year action plan. Governors were advised that the model school have a universal offer for well-being and then use a graduated response to address any issues outside of the universal offer.</p> <p>5.4 <u>Health and Safety:</u> Mrs Bridger advised that she had spoken to Mr Leddin about the risk assessment for Covid. Governors were advised that Bearwood has its own risk assessment which was last updated for the 8<sup>th</sup> March re-opening. The main change to this risk assessment was twice weekly lateral flow testing for staff. Measures already in place such as handwashing, social distancing and staggered starts will be continuing. Governors were assured that there were no problems with compliance and the majority of parents were supportive of the measures put in place by the school. It was considered that the proof of the effectiveness of the measures is evident in that the school has had only one case of Covid which was back in October. As a follow up action, Mrs Bridger will continue to monitor as the lifting of restrictions and the vaccine rollout will likely see changes being</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mrs Harris</b></p>



<p>made.</p> <p>5.5 Mrs Wall advised that the school was mindful of how measures should be reduced as many of the children are not used to being together. The school is looking at what sensible actions can be taken, for example, extending bubbles for outside activities so that the children are beginning to get used to being with other children. It is likely that the school will take a staggered approach. It was acknowledged that many parents have had to make alternative arrangements to facilitate the staggered starts so any changes will be left until the new academic year. Governors were assured that the school will start with the children's needs and make any changes in a measured way. <i>It was questioned whether there were any concerns about parental pressure if other schools release measures</i> and Mrs Wall advised that the school will be putting the children first. It was acknowledged that the adjustment will be challenging for some children.</p> <p>5.6 <u>Staff Well-Being:</u> Mrs Fido advised that she had discussed staff well-being with Mrs Wall, the questionnaire completed by staff and the follow up actions to be taken. Mrs Wall and Mrs Fido discussed having a well-being champion for staff to go to. The questionnaire did show that a small number of staff felt that whilst staff well-being was talked about it was not followed through so Mrs Wall and Mrs Fido will be looking at how information is communicated to staff. Governors were assured that the majority of staff were supportive and the school is committed to supporting staff well-being. Mrs Wall advised that the audit tool discussed earlier in the meeting might support staff well-being.</p> <p>5.7 Mrs Harris advised that she had a meeting with Mrs Bennett just before Easter which focused on how well the staff were responding to the children's mental well-being and how they coped during remote learning. It was noted that the staff have gathered some significant new skills over the last few months, especially with online learning and delivering live lessons. Mrs Bennett had advised that EYFS were having two Zoom lessons a day with the teachers staying online so that the children can get extra guidance if needed. Overall, it was felt that the school's approach had been very positive and effective.</p> <p>5.8 <u>Safeguarding:</u> Mrs Best advised that she had met with Mr Leddin to discuss the Single Central Record. Mrs Best asked about security and who looked after the Single Central Record and Mr Leddin advised that he is the only person who changes anything and assured Mrs Best that it is up to date. As a follow up Mrs Best advised that she will shortly be visiting the school to view the Single Central Record in person. <b>Action: Mrs Best.</b></p> <p>5.9 Mrs Best advised that she had asked about the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead and was advised that Miss Prince is now Level 3 trained and is a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.</p> <p>5.10 Mrs Best advised that she had also spoken to Miss Prince regarding attendance and safeguarding. The school had kept a good track of those children attending virtually or in school and phone calls were made to parents if the children were not attending online. Those children that were not able to access the online learning had written packs sent home. Governors were advised that the school had one family with a clinically extremely vulnerable child who was not attending but were being seen regularly by staff, although there were no safeguarding</p>	<p><b>Mrs Best</b></p>
---	------------------------



<p>issues.</p> <p>5.11 Mrs Best advised that the school had recently moved its recording of safeguarding issues to My Concern. Miss Prince has been training staff in the use of this software and given them a refresher on safeguarding. The Safeguarding Leads have received training on the expected level of concerns.</p> <p>5.12 Governors were advised that Miss Prince will be reviewing the children who are persistently absent to see what can be done to support these families.</p> <p>5.13 Mrs Best advised that the school is participating in Operation Encompass which is a domestic abuse initiative.</p> <p>5.14 Governors were informed that the Everyone's Invited initiative was included in a recent newsletter and the Safeguarding Policy has been updated.</p> <p>5.15 <u>Skills Audit:</u> Mrs Harris advised that the skills audit showed that there were no essential skills that were rated below a 3. Three Governors identified training needs and Mrs Harris advised that she will review this and decide whether this is best done as a whole Governing Board or in small groups. It was noted that many of the lower scoring areas were related to strategy but this is challenging as Hamwic set the strategy rather than Governors.</p> <p>5.16 It was noted that whilst a number of Governors had identified financial planning as an area for development, the planning is now done by Mrs Bennett and the Hamwic Finance Manager with Governors validating the budget. Mr Sussman explained that his role is mostly checking that we are running within budget.</p> <p>5.17 It was agreed that Mrs Harris would discuss Governor training with Mrs Wall and would tackle one or two of the areas raised within the audit to see if we can enhance the skills of some Governors. <b>Action: Mrs Harris and Mrs Wall.</b></p> <p>5.18 Mrs Harris advised that she would arrange a Zoom call with each Governor and have a discussion about the areas that Governors want more help with, any concerns they have and review how the year has gone. From this information a plan will be developed for the coming months. <b>Action: Mrs Harris.</b></p> <p>5.19 <u>Governor Training:</u> Mrs Best advised that she had attended BCP Safeguarding training last week which covered Everyone's Invited, Operation Encompass, county lines, managing allegations and the safeguarding audit. Mrs Best confirmed the training was well worth attending.</p>	<p><b>Mrs Harris &amp; Mrs Wall</b></p> <p><b>Mrs Harris</b></p>
<p><b>6. Policies</b></p> <p>6.1 Governors' attention was drawn to the following Hamwic policies which were available on Governor Hub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Expenses Policy</li> <li>• Disability and Equality Policy</li> <li>• First Aid and Medical Conditions Policy</li> <li>• Lone Working Policy</li> <li>• Staff Absence Policy</li> <li>• Adoption Policy</li> <li>• Capability Policy.</li> </ul>	

Learning, Enjoying & Succeeding Together  
Bearwood Primary & Nursery School  
Minutes of Local Governing Board Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021

6.2	Mrs Wall advised that the Disability and Equality Policy required review and for new targets to be put in place. <b>Action: Mrs Wall.</b>	<b>Mrs Wall</b>
<b>7. Date of Next Meeting</b>		
7.1	It was noted that the next meeting is due to be held on Wednesday, 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 6:30 p.m.	

**END OF MINUTES**

**Action List**

<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Governor</b>	<b>Date</b>
5.1	To discuss the Accountability Schedule with Mrs Wall and allocate tasks to Governors.	Mrs Harris	May 21
5.8	To visit the school to view the Single Central Record.	Mrs Best	May 21
5.17	To discuss Governor training.	Mrs Harris & Mrs Wall	May 21
5.18	To arrange Zoom meetings with all Governors to discuss the support they need and review the year.	Mrs Harris	May 21
6.2	To review the Disability and Equality Policy.	Mrs Wall	July 21