

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HANDSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025
AT 6:30PM AT THE SCHOOL**

Present: **Co-opted Governors**
Katherine Buckee, Chair
Candice Thorpe
Mano Emmanuel
Lousia Augustine-Fraser
Emma Dartey

Headteacher
Claire Nairne

Parent Governors
Beth Billington
James Baxter

Staff Governor
Marianna Jordaan

Also attending: Afua Addai-Diawuo, Deputy Headteacher

Clerk to the Governors: Donna Miller

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
0	Emma Dartey is not listed on the membership for this meeting	Governor Services	Immediate
2.2	A to update their declarations of interest immediately, Clerk to share link to each member	Governors/ Clerk	Immediate
3.3	Agreed: LA Governor appointment subject to pending LA nomination process completion	Clerk// LA	ASAP
5	Agreed: minutes of the meeting held 10 September 2025, Chair to sign	Chair of Board	Immediate
5.2	Carry forward action: Governors to update their declarations of interests and confirmations on GovernorHub	Governors	Immediate
5.2	Carry forward action: Action: To arrange a link visit including the review and development of the Abscondment policy, inc. considering purchasing Walkie-Talkies.	Headteacher	Spring 2026
5.2	Carry forward action: Action: To confirm if Emma Dartey accepts membership of the Resources Committee and Mano Emmanuel the Pay Committee and inform governor services if they do not.	GS to update membership on GovernorHub	Immediate

5.2	Carry forward action: Action: Agenda item – all Committees, Terms of Reference 2025-2026. To be reviewed as change in names of committee	Headteacher Clerk/Agenda item	Spring 2026
5.2	Carry forward action: Action: All members of the board to confirm their acknowledgement of the code of conduct	Governors	Immediate
7	Action: Agenda item – Fire Alarm update	Clerk	Spring 2026
8.1	Action: School to investigate the accessibility of exits at the Year 2 and 3 classroom exits	School	Spring 2026
	Policies agreed: School Accessibility Plan Safeguarding policy Policy as presented Online Safety Policy Procurement Card Policy	School	-
9	Action: All governors to attend safeguarding training in advance of the next board meeting	Governors	Immediate
10	Action: Agenda item for spring 2026: Term dates 2027/2028 Action: School to provide governors with contextual data to support change discussions	Clerk Headteacher	Spring 2026
13	Approved: School Financial Regulations The Financial Scheme of Delegation	School	-
14	Action: School to publish register of governor interests 2025/2026 once complete	Headteacher	ASAP
18.	Governors' briefing on 11 February 2026 and Ms Buckee agreed to book a place on this event.	KB	Spring 2026
19	Confidential	Headteacher	-
	The Schedule of future meetings was noted	All /GS	NA

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Katie Ball and Molly Hall.
- 1.3 The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate with nine governors present.

2. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

There was one item, school road.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 Governors confirmed receipt of the register of interests.
- 3.2 The Clerk noted to governors that Louisa Augustine-Fraser, James Baxter, Katherine Buckee Emma Dartey, and Candice Thorpe were yet to update their declarations for this academic year, and shared a link for them to each do this.
- 3.3 There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting.

4. GOVERNING BODY

- 4.1 Governor noted that Emma Dartey was co-opted at the meeting in September, and this was not listed in the current membership

Action: Governor Services

- 4.2 There was no consideration of disqualification due to non-attendance applicable at this time.

- 4.3 Ms Nairne advised that she had met with one individual that would be applying to join the governing board as a Local Authority Governor. This would be discussed in the spring term meeting

Action: Agenda item for spring

- 4.4 Governors noted that two governors would be coming to their end of terms,

- 4.5 Louisa Augustine-Fraser, Ends on 23/01/2026 and Kathryn Ball on 23/01/2026.

- 4.6 The Clerk confirmed that DBS checks had been completed by all existing governors and details are held on file by Governor Services, Ms Dartey newly appointed co-opted governors was to undergo a DBS check in the days following this meeting.

- 4.7 The Headteacher confirmed that all necessary details about governors have been provided to the Secretary of State via GIAS.

- 4.8 The Clerk encouraged all governors to add their personal diversity data on GovernorHub to enable a system generated anonymous report to be produced for consideration by the board.

5. MINUTES

- 5.1 Governors received the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2025 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting. The Chair agreed to sign a copy of the minutes on GovernorHub.

- 5.2 Matters arising

Minute	Action	Status update
3.1	Action: Outstanding governor declarations for 2025/26 to be completed on GovernorHub profiles.	Carry forward action
4.1	Agreed: Katherine Buckee elected as Chair of the GB	Completed
4.2	Agreed: Candice Thorpe elected as Vice-Chair of the GB	Completed
5.2	Action: To confirm Emma Dartey's acceptance of her appointment as a co-opted governor and inform governor services.	Agreed and actioned
5.5	Action: School to confirm GIAS has been updated for governance.	The school confirmed this was completed
5.6	Action: Governors to note diversity related questions on GovernorHub profiles	The Clerk clarified what the intention was for this data and encouraged governors to complete this for consideration at a future meeting
6.1	Agreed: 16 th July 2025 minutes, Chair to sign	Completed
6.2.12	Discussion with Headteacher regarding Safeguarding (HT report detail)	Completed
6.4	Action: To arrange a link visit including the review and development of the Abscondment policy, inc. considering purchasing Walkie-Talkies.	This was pending, the Headteacher was progressing this

7.2	Action: All governors to complete Safeguarding training pre next board meeting.	On-going – carry forward action
9	Action: All members of the board to confirm their acknowledgement of the code of conduct on school website.	On-going clerk sent reminder
10	Action: Governors were asked to complete the effectiveness questionnaire on GovernorHub.	On-going
11	Agreed: The template annual cycle, as on the school website.	Completed
12.2	Action: To confirm if Emma Dartey accepts membership of the Resources Committee and Mano Emmanuel the Pay Committee, and inform governor services if they do not.	GS to update membership on GovernorHub
12.3	Action: Agenda item – all Committees, Terms of Reference 2025-2026.	To be reviewed as change in names of committee
13.1	Agreed: Governors agreed to retain current link governor roles and embed recent developments.	NA
13.2	Action: To contact new governors and discuss potential link governor roles.	This was in progress, there was discussion re attendance and filtering and monitoring – the role was to be shared and agreed; agenda item for spring

5.3 Governors received the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2025 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting. The Chair agreed to sign a copy of the minutes on GovernorHub.

5.4 Governors received verbal reports from Committee meetings held:

- Resources committee meeting held on 10 October 2025 – Ms Buckee advised the board that there was a pending move of the nursery into using the school premises and the Friends of Handsworth were pending some payments to the school but overall, the financial position was as expected.
- Teaching and Learning committee meeting held on 10 December 2025 – Ms Billington gave an overview of the meeting and thanked the team attending for the information shared and welcomed the spring term meeting to focus on the work as defined by the terms of reference.

6. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

1.1 Governors thanked Ms Nairne for her written report issued for this meeting, Ms Nairne welcomed questions:

Q – A child appears to have joined the school, pushing the class size over 30>?

A - Yes, a child had been added to the school roll as their sibling was attending the school and the parents were facing a daily commute to another school out of borough and then back to Handsworth. The family and school had agreed for them to join the school to support the family that were waiting for a place.

Q – Is the teacher managing in this class?

A – Yes, regular check-ins are also taking place.

- 6.1 Governors thanked Ms Nairne for the detailed information on attendance as requested at the last meeting. Ms Nairne set out the processes applied by the school when a pupils attendance appeared to decrease, and external support had been secured to enhance the continuous provision approach to learning.
- 6.2 The school's current attendance rate was 96.3% above the National Average and the Local Authority average which was 95.4%.
- 6.3 Ms Nairne reported that the schools' OPAL Play was well received by the children and their families, there had been a significant reduction in the number of behaviour related incidents at lunchtime, at a recent school event for parents was well attended and provided positive feedback was received from those attendees.
- 6.4 Subject leader 'impact plans' were reviewed. Ms Nairne shared that the intention for those plans was to enable team/school leaders to present and detail their areas of work, improvement and impact as a result of their plans; all plans linked to the School Development Plan (SDP) and Self-evaluation form (SEF).
- 6.5 Ms Nairne noted that both the SDP and SEF documents had been shared with the school improvement partner and positive feedback had been received with any suggestions for updates being incorporated into a forthcoming Senior Leadership Team meeting. Phonics was an area for development, this was a focus for the school development plan and continued professional development plans for the school.
- 6.6 The Schools SEND pupil population was discussed as detailed in the heads' report, the proportion of children with SEN and EHCPs was increasing and whilst the school continued to be inclusive for all on roll, this came with resource demand and challenge.
- 6.7 Ms Ball had completed a link visit to the school and met with the schools inclusion lead to review Inclusion; the written report from this link report would be shared with governors.
- 6.8 The assessment of children and the action planning around each child and their progress was noted, the school was working to ensure children had the ability to articulate their learning journey
- 6.9 Ms Nairne advised governors that the schools 'monitored children' would be discussed at a leadership meeting, those meetings were designed to ensure all of those children were discussed once every two weeks for support impact and any necessary adaptations.
- 6.10 Safeguarding numbers and the number of concerns were noted as presented within the report to governors. Behavioural incidents were managed via 'my concern' and this enabled tracking of trends and themes over time.

Q - Mental health issues, are those issues increasing in the school?

A – Yes, some parents have raised concerns about their child's mental health. As a school we're getting better at noticing this and picking up matters, offering support via a 6-week mentoring programme with a LSA being offered. There was also an increase in know parent/carer mental health issues.

Q - The report suggested all the new teachers have settled into the school well, do they have support/mentoring?

A – Yes, the newly appointed members of staff have all had an induction, a great supportive atmosphere in the school and overall, a great term (autumn 2025). One member of agency staff had shared with the school that they would be stepping back from their role at the school due to their own personal reasons and their replacement has also settled into the school well and would be taking on the role longer term.

Q – The number of children on the inclusion register is increasing, is there any specific support need for colleagues with a higher number of children with needs in their classroom?

A – Teaching is challenging, especially in an inclusive school. The culture of the school is to challenge the higher attainers whilst supporting children with additional needs. The school continued to work to support the teams supporting those children with additional support time, additional PPA, training and an open approach to leadership support and guidance. In addition, the school holds inclusion surgeries where the Inclusion Manager will meet with the teachers to go through the support needs of each child and discuss any additional support/ PPA etc.

- 6.11 Governors welcomed the school development plan and the change in that the context shaped the priorities, the school was on a clearly defined plan to meet objectives and enable leaders to develop the earlier mentioned impact plans. The school improvement partners engagement in the school was acknowledged, whilst the school would have to pay for these resources, the Headteacher felt this was a value service.

6.12 School Autumn data

- 6.12.1 Governors noted the information shared and flagged that year 5 stood out as a group needing consideration and asked for context.

- 6.12.2 Ms Nairne set out to governors that autumn data also demonstrated the settling of the children into the school, the data is consistent, and the moderation of data had been completed and was accurate. The teachers now knew their children, their development needs and abilities; school leaders would be holding

Q - Year 1 in reading, there is a high proportion of children to just below, is this to be expected as the proportion is higher than any other year group?

A -Yes, this is due to the change from the Early Years to Year 1. The school knows why those children are just below and what needs to be done to bring them into expected standard. The school had made progress and was now able to evidence this.

Q – Writing, lowest proportion of children in the above standard?

A – Writing took a huge impact in COVID, the school had found the recover of this had taken more time. There was a new way of teaching writing, the children in Year 6 were making basic mistakes and it was hoped the new approach would continue to have a positive impact on the children and their abilities.

- 6.12.3 The schools current safeguarding report within the heads report was reviewed, the work undertaken by the school was acknowledged and those additional elements were included to ensure a depth of knowledge of what the school is doing in multiple areas.

Q - There is one child with two suspensions, is this correct?

A - Yes; it was noted the information shared on this is limited due to confidentiality. Ms Nairne assured the board that the school is working with the family to provide support to encourage better behaviour, and the impact of those actions was being seen in the Childs' behaviour at school.

- 6.12.4 The board thanked Ms Nairne for her report and their thanks to the whole staff for their work and progress being made by the school.

7. CHAIR'S ACTION

- 7.1 Confidential minutes were taken

8. FEEDBACK ON RECENT FIRE DRILL TO BE SHARED WITH GOVERNORS

8.1 Ms Jordan advised the board that in a recent drill, a couple of matters for feedback /action were:

8.2

- The classroom checks list for Fire Wardens had since been updated
- A review of the number of LSAs in each area had been completed to ensure there was an LSA in each area to close the doors
- Year 2 access was restricted, this was an area to be reviewed by the school
- The alarm sound could not be heard clearly if the doors were closed, there was investigation into moving sounders and the costs associated with this work was pending as there was a need to look at the system and what the possibilities of movement was.

Q – Does this apply to all classrooms?

A – This was the case for two classrooms in two different corridors

- The schools 'evaluation inventory' app did not work on the day; this had been checked since with SLT and office staff all having access to this (information on this app was shared)
- The schools meeting place on the neighbouring school needed to be affirmed following changes to the school's estate

Action: Agenda item – Fire Alarm update

9. POLICY REVIEW

9.1 Accessibility Plan

Governors received the accessibility plan

Q - Page 4, states all fire exists are suitable for a person with a disability and clear. Thinking about the main hall, year 2 and 3 classes, there is no ramp – what is being done to ensure accessibility via this exit?

A – This would need to be investigated as all evaluation points required accessible exists; the use of wheelchairs and crutches in the school was noted and potentially restricted in event of an emergency.

Action: School to investigate the accessibility of exits at the Year 2 and 3 classroom exits

Q – All school trips and events to be accessible, how can you ensure this?

A- This is in place; the school only use events and spaces that accommodate the children and their personal equipment; an example of a forthcoming event was shared.

Having noted the need to review the premises, the board agreed to approve the accessibility plan as presented

Agreed: School Accessibility Plan

9.2 Safeguarding Policy

Governors noted the discussion on this and **agreed to approve the Safeguarding policy** as presented

9.3 Pay Policy

This was the model LA policy, governors **agreed to approve the policy** as presented

9.4 Online Safety Policy

Governors noted the discussion on this and **approved the Online Safety policy** as presented

9.5 Procurement Card Policy (£3000 limit)

- 9.6 Governors received this policy and **agreed to adopt the Procurement Card Policy** as presented

10. GOVERNORS' TRAINING

- 10.1 The Clerk advised that they had issued the link for safeguarding on the notice board and encouraged all governors to attend this session before the end of the autumn term to ensure all governors have completed training as defined by KCSIE 2025.
Action: All governors to attend safeguarding training in advance of the next board meeting
- 10.2 The Clerk advised that a report had been added to the meeting folder for this meeting with information on that training had been undertaken by governors.
- 10.3 Governors asked if additional Ofsted training would be provided by the LA, the clerk confirmed that there was an intention to provide additional sessions and that dates would be shared as soon as agreed.

11. SCHOOL TERM DATES

- 11.1 Governors received the draft school term dates for 2027/2028 and the need to consider these in consultation with the local school context.
- 11.2 Ms Nairne set out that the local secondary school would be having a two-week October half term in 2027, this was discussed with colleague headteachers at a recent meeting where it was broadly said that primary colleagues would be moving towards a two-week October half term.
- 11.3 The school had considered the use of the five INSET days to be utilised in October, enabling a shift of some dates by one day to have one Safeguarding INSET in early September and a parent consultation day as was typically scheduled. There was no change in the number of statutory sessions being offered by the school, this was an adjustment to the dates and not the number of sessions.
- 11.4 The board discussed the impact of changes of the local secondary school, potential impact on attendance figures and the existing data around attendance in the week back after the half term break; sickness and attendance all being affected.
- 11.5 Ms Nairne shared that third party sports/club providers had shared an intention to provide support to the school should the governors choose a two week half term in October, ensuring families could access the support needed.
- 11.6 Governors asked that the board be consulted prior to parental communications on these matters and shared views that whilst the secondary schools are reviewing their dates, there was for a balanced discussion and a need to understand the primary perspective of this change. It was mooted that for the board to thoroughly consider the impact this change, there would need to be consideration of the families that do not have secondary children, and to ensure the decision is based on what's best for the school community and not led by a local secondary academy's decision to change.

Q - Who needed to be consulted on changes to the LA proposed term dates?

A - Advice received from the LA was that this was a governing body decision that must be shared to parents with sufficient notice.

- 11.7 Governors shared their perceptions, those from the playground; arising from the information in the school newsletter and things/areas they felt were factors for consideration, i.e. childcare costs, if there is a need to consult on this; acknowledging there is no requirement to do so, but to enable the parental community to share their views on such a change.
- 11.8 The intention regarding staff well-being was acknowledged and the pressures of the autumn term challenges, as were the need to consider the schools most vulnerable children and families when considering changes.

- 11.9 The potential need for a list of pros and cons was discussed, the sharing of this information with the parents/community before any decision can be taken.

Action: Agenda item for spring 2026: Term dates 2027/2028

Action: School to provide governors with contextual data for no less than 3 years to support change discussions

12. LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS

- 12.1 Governors received a report from the Safeguarding Link Governor, they were absent from the meeting, so the written report was acknowledged.
- 12.2 Mr Baxter advised they had met with the Wellbeing ambassadors in the school for a Q & A session, they shared that the session was positive and productive, the ambassadors were able to articulate what an ambassador was and how they delivered their role in the classroom and playground. The Year 5 children then took Mr Baxter for a tour of their learning environment, Mr Baxter shared that the view of a settled learning environment was observed with positive examples of behaviour observed.
- 12.3 Ms Augustine shared that they had attended a meeting in the school to look at Data, the meeting focused on Maths and the pupils progress, the tools and interventions for children that were not meeting age related expectations and then what is being done to challenge the greater depth children. Parental involvement in the school's maths strategies were also discussed, some parents were now attending meetings in the school and the language in the newsletters was welcomed by the parent community.

13. FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION

- 13.1 Governors received and agreed to **approve the School Financial Regulations** as presented.
- 13.2 Governors received and agreed to **approve the Scheme of Delegation** as presented.

14. PUBLICATION OF GOVERNOR INFORMATION

- 14.1 School web site review
Ms Nairne advised that the necessary governance information was published on the school's website except for the register of interests for the current academic year, this was due to this being incomplete.
Action: School to publish register of governor interests 2025/2026 once complete
- 14.2 Governors noted that the website displayed the current Governing Board membership with one picture pending.

15. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEWS

- 15.1 Confidential minutes were taken.

16. HEALTH AND SAFETY AT SCHOOL

- 16.1 Ms Jordan presented a report to governors, this is appended to the minutes of this meeting.
- 16.2 Ms Jordan advised that staff training had been completed to ensure compliance with the policies and procedures for educational visits; the proportion of children with needs and the individual risk assessments for those children acknowledged.
- 16.3 The school does not have any proposed residential visits for the board to consider, and governors were assured that Ms Jordan sees all plans for agreement as lead for health and safety.

17. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- 17.1 Governors noted the schedule of meeting dates:

Resources Committee Meeting	23 January 2026	8am (Virtual)
Governing Body Meeting	25 March 2026	6.30pm
Teaching and Learning Meeting	4 March 2026	8am (Virtual)
Resources Committee Meeting	13 March 2026	8am (Virtual)
Governing Body Meeting	13 May 2026	6.30pm
Teaching and Learning Meeting	17 June 2026	8am (Virtual)
Resources Committee Meeting	8 May 2026	8am (Virtual)
Governing Body Meeting	15 July 2026	6.30pm
Resources Committee Meeting	13 July 2026	8am (Virtual)

- 17.2 Governors noted the next full governors' briefing on 11 February 2026 and Ms Buckee agreed to book a place on this event.

18. TLR RESTRUCTURE CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Confidential minutes were taken.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19.1 School road change proposals

Ms Thorpe shared that the school must be a permit road before it could be a school road; with a left-hand turn at the bottom of the road also being implemented.

The need to be considerate of the local businesses, doctors and residents was discussed and the work.

The board acknowledged that there was an independent group of parents working to promote traffic change to the school road and the need to ensure the school and board had a mechanism in feeding into this work and that the voice is supportive of those businesses and service providers.

The Chair thanked all attendees for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 20.40