



# **Minutes of the Full Governing Body of Simon Marks Jewish Primary School**

**Held at 4pm on Tuesday 9 February 2021**

**Present:**

<b>Howard Pallis (HP)</b>	<b>Chair of Governors</b>
<b>Austen Garth (AG)</b>	<b>Foundation Governor</b>
<b>Zachary Jacobs (ZJ)</b>	<b>Staff Governor</b>
<b>Gulcan Asdoyuran (GA)</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>
<b>Liat Rosenthal (LR)</b>	<b>Parent Governor</b>
<b>Rachel Burns (RB)</b>	<b>Associate Member</b>

**In Attendance:**

<b>Mike Clayden (MC)</b>	<b>Consultant</b>
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**Clerk:**

<b>Jane Ware (JW)</b>	<b>Hackney Education</b>
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**Apologies:**

<b>Lauren Buck</b>	<b>Foundation Governor</b>
<b>Jonathan Freedland</b>	<b>Foundation Governor</b>

**This meeting was held virtually due to exceptional circumstances (Coronavirus pandemic)**

## Actions Log

Meeting Date	Item	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status
09/02/2021	4.3	Circulate Register of Business Interest forms to Governors for completion and return to the School Admin Officer.	MC	22/06/2021	Pending
09/02/2021	9.3	Governors are invited to attend online prayers along with the children and their families.	All Governors	ASAP	Pending
09/02/2021	15.3	Share the laptop fundraising link with Governors.	LR	ASAP	
09/02/2021	15.4	Consider who can support with recording a laptop fundraising video and/or alternative fundraising suggestions.	LR & RB	ASAP	Pending

### Part 1: Non-confidential business

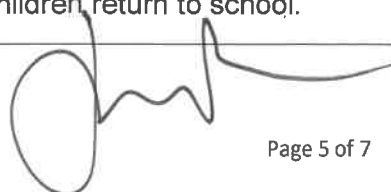
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>
1.1	The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting.
<b>2</b>	<b>Acknowledgment and Agreement of Virtual Meeting in line with GDPR regulations and school policy.</b>
2.1	Governors acknowledged and agreed that the meeting will exceptionally proceed virtually due to the Coronavirus pandemic.
<b>3</b>	<b>Receive and consider apologies from Governors not in attendance</b>
3.1	Apologies were received, with consent, from Lauren Buck.
<b>4</b>	<b>Declarations of interest and Register of Business Interests</b>
4.1	There were no declarations of interest relating to agenda items.
4.2	At the last meeting, MC agreed to circulate the Register of Business Interest forms to Governors for completion and return to the School Admin Officer. The declarations would be put onto the school's website. This is outstanding.
4.3	<b>ACTION:</b> MC to circulate Register of Business Interest forms to Governors for completion and return to the School Admin Officer.
<b>5</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b>
5.1	The minutes of the meeting on 22 September 2020 were <b>agreed</b> as an accurate record.
<b>6</b>	<b>Governing Body membership and agreement on named link Governors.</b>
6.1	No developments were discussed.
<b>7</b>	<b>Head Teacher's Report</b>

7.1	The school is trying to make the best of a difficult situation and working hard to ensure the children's engagement and motivation with learning.
7.2	Attendance is extremely high at 96-68% daily for remote learning and 100% attendance for the children attending on site learning.
7.3	It is anticipated that Reception and possibly Year 5 will be back at school after 8 March 2021.
7.4	For the return to school, space is being carefully considered in terms of if classes need to be split.
7.5	There will be a focus in work that the school plan to do on feelings and emotions and the ability to express them, using mediums such as art and supportive books in particular, to encourage resilience and address healing and suffering associated to Covid-19.
7.6	There are a large number of families that have been affected by Covid-19.
7.7	Lots of the children have family members who have passed away or have been hospitalised so bereavement is a significant, current issue.
7.8	Teaching and learning is quality assured with regular observations of the delivery of remote learning.
7.9	Risk assessments will be adjusted after half term in line with the school accommodating more children.
7.10	The school has been deliberately accommodating and loose with the definition of the occupations of Key Workers, in order to allow parents to continue to work and earn money.
7.11	Daily PE lessons continue which the whole school participate in for 30 minutes of exercise and this is good for staff morale.
7.12	Children have been enjoying the snow, and particularly building snow sculptures in the playground.
7.13	The school has taken on one extra child, and this child has special educational needs.
7.14	More families have made applications for free school meals and some of these applications are still in progress.
7.15	The children in school are generally happy.
7.16	There are two children in foster care and they are in school every day and thriving.
7.17	This week, one to one Zoom consultations have started with children in response to safeguarding. These were previously done by telephone. After half term there will be parent Zoom consultations as well. Some parents do need this outlet.
7.18	There is some anxiety in the community where people are bored and frustrated and the school is sensitive to this.
7.19	The school has lent out nine laptops and the Department for Education may in the future make a separate additional amount of laptops available to the school, this is to be confirmed.
7.20	The school is setting up a funding page to raise money for laptops.



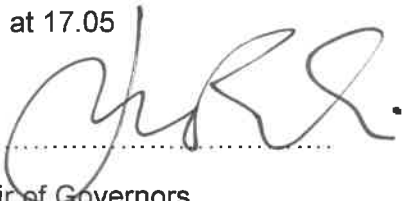
7.21	In terms of leadership, the school's role at present is about making sure everybody at school is happy on a day to day basis and managing their issues, such as bereavement and family hospitalisations, in the form of counselling sessions and general sensitivity and recognising the increased pressure everyone is under.
7.22	Risk assessments are updated regularly in response to changes and are all reviewed by Hackney Education.
7.23	All staff are currently taking regular lateral flow tests, some more than others according to their postcode. Children, when necessary, are tested but only with their parents' consent. Parents are being invited in to test their children where possible. The school has plenty of tests available. Children are sent home immediately if they appear unwell.
7.24	The new computers have arrived but are waiting to be installed which will not happen until after Lockdown.
7.25	The school is working very well in response to Covid-19. The standard of teaching and learning is excellent and staff are also supporting the school with cleaning and other additional Covid related requirements.
7.26	There have been donations made to school collections for staff.
7.27	There have been discussions with other local Jewish schools particularly in relation to children with special educational needs and these need following up as contacts can be shared.
<b>8</b>	<b>Strategic focus points</b>
8.1	Covered by head teacher's report.
<b>9</b>	<b>Risk Assessments and Safety Procedures</b>
9.1	Regarding online safety, there have been reports of lesson bombing in the media which is when login details have been shared inappropriately and this is evident where there are log ins with no image and the voice does not match that of the child and in this situation staff switch them off. There have been about fifteen reported cases of this, this week. Children and parents have been advised not to share their login details with anybody.
9.2	Children engage well with online prayers and parents and wider family are encouraged to participate.
9.3	<b>ACTION:</b> Governors are invited to attend online prayers along with the children and their families.
<b>10</b>	<b>Wellbeing, Mental Health, Resilience and Stakeholder Engagement</b>
10.1	Governors are encouraged to have regular touch with teachers to motivate them in terms of the current pressures they are under.
10.2	It was agreed that a digital detox day where all learning is off line would be a welcome break in the future, this was recently carried out by a local school and was very successful.
<b>11</b>	<b>Quality of Education - curriculum, assessment and gaps in learning</b>
11.1	It is anticipated that there will be lots of gaps in learning and this will be fully assessed.
11.2	<b>QUESTION:</b> Is there any indication of the government's plans for post Covid support

	<p>once all children are back at school?</p> <p>ANSWER: This is likely to include funding for catch up tutoring programmes, but the details are not confirmed at present. The school was given £10k after the last Lockdown which was used to target individual children and booster classes, so it is hoped that there will be a similar future financial package following the current Lockdown. There has been discussion about summer holiday booster classes, tutors and before and after school sessions. The only concern is that the children are under the age of eleven years old and their concentration is limited, and they are already doing a lot of work so this might not be suitable for primary aged children and play and interaction might be more appropriate.</p>
11.3	<p>QUESTION: Will the school be celebrating Yom HaShoah in April and if so is any film content needed?</p> <p>ANSWER: Yes, it depends on whether the children are back at school or still at home. Normally this is presented in assembly in a child friendly manner.</p>
11.4	<p>The school is mindful that the same extra level of sensitivity will be included in the presentation of Yom HaShoah this year that is current in the school's general navigation at present, including books that are chosen for the children and the pre-discussions prior to this amongst staff, given the emotional pressure that the children are under due to the impact of Covid-19.</p>
<b>12</b>	<b>Staffing</b>
12.1	<p>Governors acknowledged that previous issues of retaining staff no longer exist, which is positive, as current staff have been working at the school for a number of years now.</p>
<b>13</b>	<b>School finance and resources, including discussion of budget</b>
13.1	<p>The two sets of finance meeting minutes were presented.</p>
13.2	<p>The pay policy was updated in line with Hackney Education's recommendations.</p>
13.3	<p>A number of small building works have been completed which include improvements to the kitchen, plumbing and window maintenance. There is a scheme to replace access to the roof and archives store. There are some schemes being considered to apply for a government loan to improve the lighting which would save electricity in the long term, and for some security alarms, via a pay back scheme but this is not being actively pursued at present given current priorities.</p>
13.4	<p>The school has secured a new catering contract with Cater Link after negotiating a new contract with improved pricing structure which should provide financial benefits in the future.</p>
13.5	<p>Regarding the budget, both quarterly reports of six and nine months are showing an improved out turn and the surplus is predicted to be over £50k surplus by the end of the year which is significantly more than was anticipated. This is partly due to around £5k government funding and there is a bit more to come.</p>
13.6	<p>The indicative budget for next year looks to be around £30k better than anticipated subject to confirmation.</p>
13.7	<p>The future challenge is that there is currently a plateau on numbers which is due to the current difficulties promoting as there are so few at school but it is hoped that this will improve by September when Lockdown ends and the children return to school.</p>



13.8	The other challenge is the school's trust fund as it has been difficult to raise money.
13.9	Regarding planning for next year, with this year's increased surplus and the likelihood of an improved budget for next year, it has been agreed to be proposed on the basis of reducing the dependency of recent years on the trust funding, moving costs on to the school's budget which will still be £80k but not as much as before and this is likely to be agreed by Hackney Education. This is likely to be over a four to five year period. It will return to Governors in May for ratification.
13.10	Regarding developing the school's special educational needs resources, the school has been working hard to get special educational needs statements agreed.
13.11	Currently the value for money statement has to be produced for the school including all the bench marking and this will be approved before the end of the Spring Term by the deadline of 31 March 2021 and this will be addressed by Governors at the next meeting.
13.12	There are further discussions about the Trust considering further donations and possible interest in future developments around raising money to work out. If there was not the current pandemic there would be more donations being made which has affected the trajectory. In September fundraising projects can be reviewed and consideration given to improving and maintaining the Trust's income.
13.13	Whilst the revised budgets have not been circulated today, Governors are welcome to view them upon request.
<b>14</b>	<b>Term Dates 21/22</b>
14.1	Governors <b>agreed</b> the term dates for 2021-2022.
14.2	It was <b>agreed</b> to ensure that all future Governors meetings are not held on Thursdays.
<b>15</b>	<b>AOB</b>
15.1	Regarding parents discussion of leadership of fundraising, this needs to be followed up after Lockdown which has overwhelmed recent plans.
15.2	<p><b>QUESTION:</b> Regarding the laptops as mentioned in the Teaching and Learning minutes, there are plans to raised £1000 for four laptops, is this being pursued?</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b> There is a link with further information about this which will be shared with Governors. The setting up of a Trust Fundraising Committee is being considered. A short video promoting fundraising for laptops will be considered featuring the school children and this would require parental consent and raising money currently is a considerable ask. The school could suggest that parents contribute £10. The digital divide is a significant current issue for all schools.</p>
15.3	<b>ACTION:</b> LR to share the laptop fundraising link with Governors.
15.4	<b>ACTION:</b> LR and RB to consider who can support with recording a laptop fundraising video and/or alternative fundraising suggestions.
<b>16</b>	<b>Self-Reflection</b>
16.1	Self-reflection was not discussed.
<b>17</b>	<b>Part 2: Confidential Business</b>
17.1	There was no confidential business to report.

The meeting ended at 17.05

Signed:  .....

Date: .....

Howard Pallis, Chair of Governors

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