The Mulberry Primary School
OPEN Minutes of Governing Body Meeting
Thursday 26TH March 2026 at 6pm
Held in person at the school
PART 1

Governing Body Membership

GOVERNOR TYPE	NAME	INITIALS	TERM END DATE
LA Governor (x1)	Mizanur Rahman, The Vice-Chair	MR	07.12.27
Co-opted Governors (x7)	*Vacancy*		
	Dean Britton, The Chair	DB	26.09.28
	Cllr. Reg Rice	RR	11.11.29
	Helen Sweetlove	HS	21.05.29
	Joseph Unadike *	JU	26.09.28
	David Vigoureux *	DV	02.02.27
	Father Lee *	FL	24.09.29
Parent Governors (x3)	Tom Webster	TW	03.12.29
	Jasmine Green	JG	20.03.27
	Mustafa Hassan	MH	21.02.28
Staff Governor (x1)	Manuela Errigo	ME	06.01.27
Headteacher (x1)	Michelle Akarsu	MA	*Ex officio*
Associate Member (x2)	Anita Gray	AG	24.09.29
	Natalie Ducile	ND	24.09.29

**Asterisk denotes absence. The Quorum is five governors.*

Also in attendance: Jane Ware (JW) - HEP Clerk

ACTIONS LOG

Date	Item	Action/status	By whom	Status
28/12/25	9.5	Complaints Policy to be reviewed by MH, TW, RR and the Chair via online Teams meeting, with outcome fed back at the next Resources Committee in February 2026.	MH, TW, RR and the Chair	Completed
28/12/25	10.5	TW to complete safeguarding and new governor training. *Update: Safeguarding training has been completed, new governor training is outstanding. Governors were reminded of the **full training programme** on the HEP Website and the Governor Training Brochure.*	TW	Partially completed
28/12/25	11.2	DV to discuss fundraising and marketing at the next meeting.	DV	Pending
05/02/26	4.3	Clerk to request HEP Ofsted training for Mulberry Governing Body.	Clerk	Completed
05/02/26	4.4	Link governors to arrange visits to the school.	Link governors	Completed
05/02/26	4.5	Aide memoire to be provided to governors to support them around Ofsted visit.	MA	Pending
05/02/26	9.3	Governors to update Governorhub with any training they have attended.	All governors	Ongoing

PART 1 - OPEN MEETING

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Father Lee and DV had sent apologies which were accepted.

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made in relation to any item on the agenda.

3. Part 1 minutes of the previous FGB meeting 5 February 2026; matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th February were APPROVED as an accurate record.
The FGB reviewed the actions from the last meeting as per the action log (page 1).

4. Membership of the Governing Body

4.1 Vacancies/Recruitment

- There is currently one co-opted governor vacancy and Joseph is being removed from the governing body so there will be two vacancies, and recruitment is ongoing.
- Governors were reminded to upload any training they have done to their Governorhub profile, under training.

5. Chair's Items

5.1 Ofsted

The Chair encouraged Governors to get Ofsted ready.
Governors were advised that:

- Prior to their visit, Ofsted inspectors circulate a parent questionnaire and review the school's:
  - self evaluation form (SEF)
  - school improvement plan (SIP)
  - inspection data summary report (IDSR)
  - website
  - local safeguarding context

- An inspection would take two days and there would be three inspectors on the first day and two inspectors on the second day, and they would:
  - meet the senior leadership team (SLT)
  - observe teaching
  - on the second day, meet two or three governors, to talk through the school's priorities, strengths, areas of development and the governors' roles

6. Headteacher's Report – MA

- *Whole School Behaviour Report*
- *Whole school attendance and ethnicities*
- *Year 6 progress and attainment data*
- *School calendar for 2026-27*

6.1 Staffing & Staffing Structure

- The school improvement officer quality assures special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in the mainstream and autism provision and felt a strong sense of belonging, passion and dedication from staff.
- The school's year's 6 teacher has resigned due to relocating to Manchester so this post is being advertised.
- One teacher has returned from maternity leave.
- A sports coach/teaching assistant is being sought as a more financially viable than the current arrangement with an outside company.

Q: Do the staff have the opportunity to act up?
A: Yes, when I am off site the most senior assistant headteacher acts up. The assistant headteachers have a lot of experience and have all done an MPQ in headship and studied at Masters degree level. The assistant headteacher who left last year wasn't a deputy but she got a headship, so there is progression.

Q: Have any of the current assistant heads suggested any interest in becoming a headteacher?
A: I think two of them will, but currently they all say they are happy to stay and gain experience.

Q: What is the cost of this? Do we save money by not having a deputy?
A: We save the deputy head's salary which is about £70k, and with on costs it was about £100k in total.

Q: Why are the classes named as they are?
A: We call the classes after towns in the UK, Aberdeen being nursery, Birmingham and Belfast being reception and so on, to increase children's geographical knowledge.

6.2 Nursery

- The school has received a £126k grant from DfE to extend the two year old and nursery provision and plans to use it include revamping the provision, and creating new playgrounds and toilets.

Q: What has happened to the nursery in Hartington Park?
A: We are waiting to see if we can lease it for three days a week.

Q: In terms of wrapround care for the early years provision so that it would be more accessible to working parents, who had 30 hours funding, would this money enable that to happen?
A: Possibly, yes. We are still talking about what that would look like. We only got awarded the funding earlier in the week so I will let you know. I think we would be in a really good position now to have that facility for wraparound care for before and after school.

6.3 Self evaluation form (SEF)

- Safeguarding is graded as good, there is a very strong safeguarding team and a disproportionately high amount of children who are child protection (CP), child in need (CIN) or early help.
- The caseload is big but managed really well, prioritising and challenging safeguarding appropriately to get the needed outcomes for the children.
- Inclusion is strong as the school's children with SEND achieve in line with national expectations and their attendance likewise is in line with national expectations.
- Strong quality first teaching is why the children do achieve in line with national expectations.
- Quality of education is graded expected because the data never quite hits national unless the provision for autism data is removed, but strong data areas are listed: KS2, disadvantaged and SEND, years 4 times table check, phonics screening, good level of development (GLD), combined KS2 GDS (working at greater depth) and writing GDS.
- Quality of teaching and curriculum is strong, the Head curriculum is used and the techniques are shared with all the staff in the shared understanding of teaching and learning document.
- There is an adapted teaching programme in place to meet the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children.
- The coaching programme is well embedded throughout the school.
- Early years is GLD which is why this has been graded strong.
- Behaviour is exemplary throughout the school, there haven't been any exclusions over the past three years and free school meals (FSM) and pupil premium attend in line with national expectations.
- Personal development is strong because there is a consistently good personal, social, health and economic (PHSE) curriculum, pupils say that they feel they belong and feel safe in the school, and there is a strong enrichment programme for pupils with trips and experiences.
- The governing body is strong and supportive, they challenge and know the school's next steps.
- In terms of next steps, there is whole school writing with a large focus on handwriting which is also an

Ofsted focus, reading and language development in the early years area.

Q: Year 6 data is on track with reading and slightly ahead with spelling and grammar, but maths is quite far behind and has been for the past two years. What are the factors driving that?
A: The year 6 teacher was off for a whole week, due to a really bad chest infection, so the children did the test without her being present and when she came back she was slightly shocked at their results. The children are doing extra maths every afternoon to push that forward and hopefully close that gap.

Q: Year 6 data is lower in maths than spelling, grammar and reading. Do we know what is driving that?
A: This year 6 are the real Covid children who came back in year 2 so had a lot of gaps in their learning that the teachers have been plugging. The children are tested on the whole of the curriculum all the way through year 6 even though they don't finish teaching that curriculum until the end of April, so for example they would have been tested on percentages and fractions but would not have been taught or revised that.

Complaints Policy
See 8.1.

Premises Committee

- There as a health and safety audit, which was very thorough and happened on 12th March and we are awaiting the outcome.
- There was a financial audit, which had appositive outcome of adequate assurance, and four minor points to address.
- A draft budget was presented to the Resources Committee, and a 2% teachers pay increase was awarded for staffing and 6% pay increase is expected over the next three years for teacher pay although this is unconfirmed as yet.
- Predicted outturn is £380k which is below the clawback figure.

Q: What is the actual clawback figure?
A: I think it is over £420k.

Q: What is this?
A: The surplus carry forward. If it is over £420k, the local authority will take some back, but we will make sure it is committed to various projects so that it is not clawed back.

Q: But if it's clawed back, it's all money for education, isn't it?
A: I think so, but we would rather use it.

Q: Where are we at with the catering contract tender?
A: This is about to start, tomorrow. The Resources Committee meeting agreed to tender the contract and not bring the caterer's contract back inhouse. It is a six to eight week process.

Q: Will a governor be invited?
A: A governor will be invited to the caterer's final presentation where there is the tasting.

7. Committee Updates

7.1 Education Committee - 12 March 2026
Highlights were:

- French, computing and music were covered.
- Pronunciation is a focus.
- The computing curriculum is from the NCCE, focusing on programming, debugging, online safety, copyright images and fake news.
- Every child should enjoy music and **Charanga** is the scheme that is being used.
- SEND and disadvantaged children are particularly enjoying music.
- There are lots of musical instruments, various showcasing musical events, rock steady musicians, after

school club and opportunities including private piano lessons.

- There are outings to the Royal Albert Hall, the Barbican, the Royal Festival Hall and there is also weekly choir and engagement with other schools.
- Practice data for the GDS and test techniques were reviewed.
- The chief executive officer (CEO) of Haringey Educational Partnership (HEP) reviewed the SEF and advised that the school was underselling itself so it has now developed to strong in many areas.
- There is going to be a mock Ofsted to ensure that everyone has had the opportunity to prepare for when it does happen.
- There is a new supervisors policy for early years practitioners.

7.2 Premises Committee

Highlights were:

- There was a health and safety audit on 12 March 2026 and the result will be available in two weeks.
- Training was up to date.
- A tree surgeon will be reviewing trees.
- Fire doors are in the process of being changed.
- The decision for the £4M will come in April.
- The local authority have gone out to tender for the works.

Q: You posted on Instagram about the band event, how is permission given by parents for pictures of their children to be shared on social media?

A: They sign a form every year to give permission.

7.3 Resources Committee

Highlights were:

- The audit and draft budget were discussed.
- The catering tender was reviewed.

Q: Why is the draft budget still in draft?

A: Because we had to do the outturn, and close the budget, and we have until 31st May to submit this to the local authority. We are still waiting for the costs of some of our service level agreements (SLAs) from Haringey. This should be completed and finalized by the end of April at the next Resources Committee meeting.

It was noted that RR was present at the Resources Committee meeting and should be marked as such on the minutes.

8. Policies and other items for ratification/review

8.1 Complaints Policy

- Recent Ofsted training is about really pushing complaints back to the school.
- Since artificial intelligence (AI) has been widely available, the previous complaints policy lacked the gravitas to deal with how parents communicate with schools.
- This policy protects the school and staff and provides clear guidelines on how the governing body and school can gauge and interact with parents.

Q: Does the policy explain how the parents can seek advocacy for a complaint hearing?

A: Yes. SENDIASS and Coram contact details could be added.

8.1.1 Governors AGREED the Complaints Policy subject to the addition that the parents can seek advocacy from SENDIASS and Coram.

8.2 Governors reviewed the following policies:

- Smoking
- RHSE
- SEND and Inclusion
- Social Media
- Uniform
- Virtual Parents Evening
- Volunteer
- Supervision
- Cookie
- Data Breach
- Data Protection including SAR
- Data Retention
- Freedom of Information
- Privacy Notice for Pupils
- Privacy Notice for Governance
- Privacy Notice for Children in Need or Children Looked After
- Violence at Work
- Accessibility
- Equality and Diversity in Employment
- Equality Objectives
- Menopause in the Workplace
- Privacy Notice for Job Applicants
- Privacy Notice for Parents and Pupils
- Privacy Notice for Staff
- Privacy Notice for Visitors and Contractors
- Teachers Pay Policy
- School Personal Relationship at Work
- Job Evaluation

8.3 Governors RATIFIED all of the above policies.

9. Governor Visits, Training and Link Work

9.1 It was noted that:

- TW is waiting for a date to come in.
- DV came into the school and uploaded details of his visit.
- The Chair also has visited the school yesterday on 25th March 2026.

9.2 Governors noted HEP Governor training.

9.3 Racial Equity

AG gave an overview of the racial equity training which she had attended regarding how to build your anti racist classroom which was delivered by educational leadership consultant, Orlene Badu. Highlights were:

- Educators need to speak and write positively about children in their care.
- Phrases such as a child is aggressive, sassy, hard to reach, ghetto, pushy parents, or parents that do not value education, and they label identity rather than children's behaviour and these narratives can follow children through school and influence their relationships, education and outcomes.
- References to Orlene Badu's book.
- Deficit language can lead to unnecessary behaviour referrals, damage trust within families, and is a systemic issue affecting outcomes for children.
- Adults might think behaviour was worse than what it was due to language used.
- Normal behaviour gets misunderstood – e.g. excitement, frustration, but deficit language can make it sound

negative.

- If a child is a repeatedly described negatively teachers might unintentionally lower their expectations in what that child can achieve.
- Sometimes families can feel judged and not respected.
- Educators need to be careful how they speak to parents because parents can pick up negative language which can damage the trust between schools and parents.
- The meaning of systematic issue was discussed, in terms of patterns and habits of language developed over time in schools and also, outside of schools, unconscious bias related, for example, to the automatic association between black boys and trouble with the police.
- Language around respect was also discussed, such as "hard to reach families" suggesting that they don't care where there may simply be communication barriers, and labels which might mean different things to different people, which could also reinforce racial stereotypes. There could be the description of "pushy parents" where parents just want the best for their children.
- Various racial equity SLT training and review of inclusive policies was recommended alongside staff onboarding and long term commitment to racial equity.
- Racial equity leads from local schools met to discuss best practice and strengthen best approaches.
- The governors' role is to challenge deficit language in reports and practice, and ensure that policies reflect racial equity.
- There is an audit taking place across all primary schools.
- Year 5 Caribbean children are currently being tracked.

Q: Is there any teacher training on unconscious bias?
A: No, we haven't. It would be really good to have this.

Q: Was the evidence base for the book from primary or secondary schools?
A: It is across the whole system. It is what people say that can affect children, so it is about making people aware of the language that they use and that it is positive for the children and the adults.

10. Fundraising and Marketing

10.1 Highlights were:

11. AOB

There was no other business.

12. Next meetings

Next meeting: 6pm, 21 May 2026

13. Confidential Items - See Part 2.

Part 1 closed at 7.40pm. Following the conclusion of Part 2, the meeting closed at 7.45pm.

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Signed by the Chair of Governors Date