

Burlington Junior School
Minutes of the Governing Board Meeting
Wednesday 26 November 2025

Membership Category	Appointed By	Name	Term of Office
LA (1) (<i>Vacant</i>)	Governing Body		
Parent (2)	Election	Sarah Finch (Chair)	22.11.23 - 22.11.27
Parent	Election	Mariam Uteem (Vice Chair) (SEN)	31.01.24 - 31.01.27
Headteacher (1)	Ex-Officio	Pip Utting (Head Teacher)	
Staff (1)	Election	Jemima Harris	22.03.23 - 22.03.27
Co Opted (9) (2 <i>Vacant</i>)	Governing Body	Stephen Arbuthnot (Curriculum Committee Chair)	26.09.23 - 26.09.27
Co Opted	Governing Body	Stefan Bown, (Resource Committee Chair)	02.05.23 - 02.05.27
Co Opted	Governing Body	Rebecca Campbell (H&S/Safeguarding)	28.08.22 - 28.09.26
Co Opted	Governing Body	Simon Gilmour (PPG) (Pay Committee Chair)	21.11.22 - 21.11.26
Co Opted	Governing Body	Mariam Hakim (EDI)	27.09.22 - 27.09.26
Co Opted	Governing Body	Julie Hickman (LA/PTA/SEN)	21.06.23 - 21.06.27
Co Opted	Governing Body	Kita Ikoku (EDI & Wellbeing)	19.03.25 - 19.03.29

In attendance: No observers in attendance

Clerk: Aniq Mir

The Chair welcomed all attendees and requested consent to audio-record the meeting to support accurate minute-taking. The Board unanimously consented.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Miss J Harris. No other apologies were noted. The Clerk noted the apology and recorded absence. No further apologies were received.

2. Declaration of Business Interests

The Chair reminded governors to ensure declarations are confirmed and up to date on Governor Hub to maintain compliance.

Actions: All governors to confirm and update their declarations on Governor Hub.

3. Organisational Matters

(i) Committee Vacancies

The Chair noted the vacancy for Curriculum Committee Chair. She reminded governors that The Clerk had circulated the role description and person specification. Following discussion, Stephen

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Arbuthnot volunteered to take on the role. The Board agreed to the appointment without a formal vote due to sole nomination.

Action: Clerk to update records and Governor Hub to reflect Stephen Arbuthnot as Curriculum Committee Chair.

The Clerk updated on other vacancies: the Local Authority (LA) Governor appointment remains pending subject to reference confirmation from Achieving for Children (AFC). Two co-opted governor vacancies have attracted interest. References and clearances are being progressed.

Action: Clerk to progress references for governor candidates

(ii) Pay Committee

The Chair confirmed that, per AFC guidance, the Pay Committee should comprise three independent governors not involved in the Headteacher's Performance Management, with the Headteacher in attendance as appropriate. Membership was agreed as Simon Gilmour, Stefan Bown and Rebecca Campbell. The Committee will meet virtually once a term on the agreed dates.

Action: Clerk to schedule Pay Committee meeting (virtual) and circulate papers.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Chair invited comments; none were raised. The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September were approved as a true and accurate record. The Chair will sign them digitally on Governor Hub.

Action: Chair to sign the approved minutes on Governor Hub.

5. Any Urgent Matters

The Head Teacher marked the change in Board roles and formally recognised the contributions of Stefan and Steven as Vice Chair and Chair, respectively.

6. Follow-ups from Last Meeting

(i) Governor Code of Conduct – Apologies Guidance

The Chair noted that detailed discussion on apologies and attendance thresholds would be addressed under the Working Party/Code of Conduct item (see Item 10).

(ii) Recruitment Advertisement and Process

The Clerk reported that a recruitment advert and poster had been prepared and uploaded to the school website (Governors section). The Board discussed widening reach via the school newsletter and Kingston Volunteer Service to maintain a semi-rolling recruitment pipeline (6–12 months).

(iii) SLT Workload

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The Head Teacher outlined the continued impact of building works on SLT capacity. Regular Google Meets with contractors are now scheduled every other week to review snagging, aiming to reduce ad-hoc demands. The Deputy Head has returned three days per week, providing additional leadership capacity.

(iv & v) Induction – Feedback and Improvements

The Clerk confirmed a recent review of the governor induction. A two-part induction will be implemented: (1) school-led orientation and documentation, and (2) Board-led welcome and role expectations. The AFC new governor checklist will be used as guidance.

(vi) Link Governor Feedback

The Clerk acknowledged that follow-up with link governors for feedback was pending and would be progressed.

(vii) Chair/Vice Chair Termly Governor News

The Chair and Vice Chair agreed to submit a termly Governor News update for the school website/newsletter.

(viii) Review of Working Party Presentation Materials

The Clerk confirmed the materials have been uploaded to Governor Hub. No follow-up questions were raised at this meeting.

(ix) Council Meetings – Hobkirk House Update

The Chair noted that monthly council meetings had concluded. An update was provided that the school's play space is secured and landscaping preparation is visible from upper classrooms. Residential elements remain subject to appeals; however, the play space element is confirmed.

7. Safeguarding – Playgrounds and Gate Security

The Head reported an unusual number of significant playground injuries, some requiring hospital assessment (possible fractures). On the Year 3 playground, staff and pupils noted excessive slipperiness, possibly linked to finish or expanse. An investigation by contractors is underway. Mitigations include increased adult presence, zoning, and adding equipment to break up large running areas. Additional temporary measures will be put in place for the Christmas Fair (e.g., barriers/grip) due to dark/wet conditions.

Gate security was discussed. New low-level push-release buttons designed for accessibility have enabled pupils to exit. Governors agreed this presents a higher safeguarding risk in a school context than the accessibility benefit when unaccompanied. The school will seek to raise button heights and review risk assessments; similar concerns exist at the Infant School. The Burlington Road exit poses significant danger due to traffic.

Actions:

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- Site team/contractors to assess slip resistance and propose remediation; SLT to implement Opal zoning and temporary fair measures.
- The Headteacher to request contractor adjustment to gate release heights; update risk assessment; liaise with council on compliance and school safety needs.

8. Building Update

(i) Outstanding Snags

The Headteacher expressed improved confidence now that regular snag-review meetings are scheduled (fortnightly). Nevertheless, key issues remain: acoustics, blinds, heating, and the atrium classroom wall height. Governors reiterated the expectation that the client-side project team proactively identifies and resolves snags.

(ii) Glass partitions – atrium classroom

The atrium classroom currently uses temporary raised walls (installed to meet safe height requirements prior to occupation). These walls carry a 10-year guarantee but are not fully soundproof. A permanent glass partition solution has been quoted at approximately £28,000. Governors debated whether to pursue immediate installation, secure a formal commitment for installation when the guarantee expires, or obtain three competitive quotes to test value for money. The Headteacher highlighted constraints when commissioning works via council-approved contractor lists and noted historically high quotes for comparable works.

Governors questioned whether remaining expansion budget could fund the permanent solution and whether any junior budget had been diverted to infant works. An FOI was proposed to clarify remaining budgets.

Governors asked about simpler mitigations (e.g., mesh). The Headteacher noted aesthetics/ventilation/weight-bearing issues; the quoted glass solution is the approved permanent option.

Actions: The Headteacher to explore FOI on expansion budgets and request three quotes for permanent glass partitions; evaluate priority against other snags.

9. Governor Training

Governors reaffirmed the commitment to complete a minimum of three CPD courses per academic year, including mandatory Safeguarding and EDI. Staff governors are encouraged to attend Away Days and CPD. Training will remain a standing agenda item. The Clerk confirmed training logs can be updated on Governor Hub and certificates are issued once course feedback is completed.

Actions: All governors to complete at least three CPD courses per year (including Safeguarding & EDI) and to update training records on Governor Hub; Clerk to monitor and report progress.

10. Working Party Update

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Away Day (15 November): Six governors attended. A skills matrix was completed (including risk-management knowledge). A statutory policy audit was completed; each statutory policy will have a lead and a second governor for accountability.

Policy review process: A dedicated Governors' SharePoint site will host draft policies for a two-week consultation window. Governors will add comments (tagging authors); SLT will reply and incorporate changes. Final versions will be presented on Governor Hub for approval and then added to the school website. An archive folder and renewal-tracking spreadsheet will be maintained.

Communications: The Governors' WhatsApp group will be used solely for social/operational matters. All governance business will be conducted via school email, SharePoint and Governor Hub. Passport photos to be provided to the Clerk to produce lanyards.

Actions: Clerk to maintain the Governors' SharePoint site and archive; implement the renewal-tracking spreadsheet

11. Headteacher's Report – Questions and Responses

Ofsted changes: Governors asked about upcoming Ofsted framework changes and increased SEND scrutiny. The Headteacher noted inspections are expected to resume from January, and curriculum/SEND updates will be presented at the spring Curriculum Committee once national guidance settles.

Admissions: Governors queried Burlington's plan to increase to five-form entry. The Headteacher explained a shift to five-form entry would only be considered when sustainable demand exists to avoid inefficiencies in staffing/finance.

Computing suite: Governors asked when the computing suite would be operational. The Headteacher confirmed it should be ready by January; Chromebooks are being used and in the interim the curriculum will revert accordingly.

Math's challenge/greater depth: Governors asked how higher-attaining pupils are challenged to ensure they are learning at greater depth. The Deputy Head explained retrieval practice is a deliberate approach; staff have received training to push reasoning and deeper application, with expectations to move swiftly to challenge once core understanding is shown.

Physical activity and equality: Governors asked about girls-only football and broader activity inclusion. The Head teacher outlined the equality rationale (girls' access during mixed play is limited) and plans to increase opportunities for other groups, including SEND and PPG pupils, aligning with Ofsted's emphasis on vulnerable groups.

Pupil Premium/FSM: Governors asked about PPG trends. The Headteacher noted that London-wide universal infant free school meals reduce FSM registration; thresholds remain low, so the headline PPG figure likely understates need. The school continues to promote eligibility and support working families on the cusp of thresholds.

12. Policy Approvals

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The Board confirmed the move to SharePoint for collaborative consultation prior to Governor Hub approval. Five policies are currently in circulation on SharePoint (four Word documents; one PDF being converted). SLT will reply to governor comments; final drafts will be uploaded to Governor Hub for approval and added to the website.

Code of Conduct: The Board reviewed and adopted the updated Code of Conduct covering attendance expectations (75% across all meetings except Pay Committee and HTPM), confidentiality, ICT security, GDPR, and appropriate use of communication channels (e.g., WhatsApp for social only). Governors discussed whether attendance thresholds should apply to committees as well as FGB meetings; it was agreed to apply across all meetings for now and revisit after implementation.

Governors debated applying the 75% threshold to all meetings versus FGB only. The Board agreed to apply across all meetings (excluding Pay Committee and HTPM) and review after implementation.

Actions:

- Clerk to move consulted policies from SharePoint to Governor Hub for approval and website publication.
- All governors to sign the Code of Conduct on Governor Hub.

13. Resources Committee Update

The Committee Chair reported that the budget position is broadly sound. The recent audit (covering financial and wider compliance) was positive, with minor actions to address.

14. Curriculum Committee Update

Next meeting: Wednesday 12th February at 7:00 p.m. Focus to include Ofsted/SEND changes.

15. Governor Visits

Governors conducted conversations with staff and pupils to assess the impact of the new build on teaching, learning and wellbeing. Overall feedback was strongly positive about facilities and outdoor spaces. Themes included: crowded stairwells at peak transitions (already easing as Year 3 relocated); acoustics and blinds in specific rooms; water-fountain pipe noise; and consistency of playground turn-taking rules. Pupils praised the zip line and den-building; minor equipment maintenance (e.g., skipping ropes, rocking horse) was requested.

Year 3 block: Some staff noted potential isolation due to a separate staff room. Mitigations include scheduled use of specialist rooms (art, computing, music, cookery), SLT presence in the block and shared lunches. Governors recommended a follow-up visit cycle in March to review progress.

Actions:

- Working Party to standardize a governor visit template aligned to the School Improvement Plan and clarify confidentiality/anonymity.
- Next governor week scheduled for week commencing 02nd March 2026

16. Governor Impact

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Governors provide challenge and support across operational and strategic areas. Securing a practical policy review mechanism; adopting a robust Code of Conduct; and focusing safeguarding attention on playground safety and gate security. Through visits, governors gather feedback from staff on the new build and ensuring curriculum continuity.

17. Staff recognition

The Head Teacher to send recommendations to the Chair of Governors.

16. Agenda Items for Future Governing Board Meetings

- Headteacher's Report (full) and SIP discussion
- Ofsted framework changes – spring Curriculum Committee
- Building snag progress and glass partition options
- Policy approvals via SharePoint/Governor Hub – standing item
- Training and governor development – standing item

Dates of Next FGB Meetings

Wednesday 21 January 2026

Wednesday 11 March 2026

Wednesday 10 June 2026