

**DOWNS INFANT SCHOOL
FULL GOVERNING BODY**

Minutes of the conference meeting of the Tuesday 16th May 2023, 9-11am



Attended by:

Tony Fallowfield
Hildi Mitchell
Sarah Digon
Kirsty Cargill
Jalia Kangave
Carrie Palmer
Gill Hammett

Anita Bullock
Caroline Dean
Aisha Hoten
Emma Smith
Gaynor Newnham

No.	Item
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome TF opened the meeting 2. Apologies Received from Loren Davies 3. Review agenda Complaints Policy and Financial Recovery Plan were late additions to the agenda
2.	<p>Register of Business Interests</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interests related to the current agenda to be declared No changes were declared <p><i>Anita Bullock joined the meeting at 09.11</i></p>
3.	<p>Previous Meeting Minutes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting, 28th March 2023 The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting 2. Review of actions The summary of actions was reviewed, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CD's biography has been received and will be uploaded to the website • Parent/ Carer Code of Conduct has been reviewed – visitors have been made more prominent in the document. • Asbestos report has been located and a hard copy has been received. The school is now compliant. • Governors' meeting re succession planning, etc. is in process. An awayday will be arranged. • OCOW will be added to the website by 7th June 2023. • Anti-racist strategy has been read by all • Safer Recruitment Training has been completed – certificates will be collated and sent to Molly and Ann, for adding to the SCR <p><i>Emma Smith joined the meeting at 09.17</i></p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upload remaining biographies to the website • Arrange governor awayday • Send Safer Recruitment Training certificates to the office
4.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>The Link Governor safeguarding report had been circulated with the meeting papers. The report was reviewed, and HM highlighted the following, in response:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lockdown is part of the emergency plan; it has been advised that the lockdown should not be practised. • The fire evacuation procedure involves relocating to the DJS but would not be practised with the current cohort, due to the risk involved. Procedures will be clarified with staff. <p>AH (DSL) reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The safeguarding audit is ready for submission. • Trauma informed training has been recommended; HM explained that it would be good for governors to take the training, and the B&H BEEM training link will be shared with governors. <p>Mental Health was discussed, and HM will check that the correct Mental Health Policy is on the system and on the website.</p> <p>The governors were advised that recent local OFSTED inspections are reported to have focused on Safeguarding and Health and Safety, though these are also audited elsewhere. Risk assessments have also been a focus, and shortened risk assessment checklists have been recommended. The school's checks are up to date.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Circulate the BEEM link to the trauma informed training</i> • <i>Ensure the correct Mental Health Policy is on the system and on the website.</i>
5.	<p>Mathematics</p> <p>The maths report had been circulated and HM gave a summary of new developments. It was explained that maths resources and planning have been a focus.</p> <p>A governor asked if the maths information evening for parents well attended. It was reported that two thirds of the school attended the meeting. This model will be repeated with other subjects, as it was very successful. A parent governor fed back very positively on the event, in which children were involved.</p> <p>A governor asked if written feedback from the evening will be added as evidence. This was agreed to be a good plan, as some positive emails have been received, and the sign-in book shows how well attended the event was.</p>
6.	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p>Questions were invited on the pre-circulated report.</p> <p>A governor asked if the school is on track to meet key issues in the School Development Plan (SDP) and HM reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most areas are green. • KS1 data is not on target due to handwriting and letter formation • more could be done to improve diversity. • Subject leadership is in a good place <p>The impact of the Hive for SEND was queried and it was explained that some pupils are still finding the environment outside the hive too challenging.</p> <p>A governor explained that lots of parents are keen for there to be an after-school club at DIS, as the DJS environment is frenetic for young children. HM explained that there was a club during COVID, but the LA HR team advised that DJS staff would be entitled to work at DIS. Now the junior provider is reaching capacity, there may be scope to open a facility, using DIS staff. This is on hold, pending a response from the DJS, but the school would like to be able to offer the provision, to include DA/ vulnerable children. If the club was OFSTED registered, it would be possible to apply for funding.</p> <p><i>ES left at 09.53</i></p>

	<p>1. Staffing update This was noted within the report</p> <p>2. Staff Wellbeing It was reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff on long term sickness absence impacts on the provision offered to the children. • Staff are beginning to worry about their jobs due to the reduced PAN and impact of school funding. <p>The 2 long-term absences were discussed, and HM explained that she feels the school has contributed to their stress. Governors gave assurance that this is not HM's fault. It was explained, in response to a question, that some absence has been due to stress, and reasonable adjustments have been made to support staff.</p> <p><i>Caroline joined at 10.01</i></p> <p>3. Attendance A governor asked about persistent absence (PA) and it was explained that there are now 60 PA children, a significant increase from the usual 20-25. This is also a local and national trend. Children's and parents' anxiety are deeper, and more people are working from home. The PA children are not always the same, though there are a few cases of flexi-schooling. Some extended holidays were so long the children will not come off the PA register this year. There has been work on the attendance policy being more supportive. Governors noted the impact of absence on social and friendship skills, as well as academic work. A governor asked about the crossover of Pupil Premium (PPG), Looked After Children (LAC) and PA. HM conformed that his will be reported at the next meeting. Attendance is discussed at safeguarding meetings and more vulnerable children are impacted.</p> <p>4. Impact of cost of living crisis This was noted within the report</p> <p>5. Marketing for the 2024 Reception intake A governor asked about marketing the school. HM explained that this will be thought about as new ways of marketing may be needed. Parent governors were asked to explain what they would like to know, and what they didn't get to see, when choosing a school.</p> <p>6. Update on extending the school day This was noted within the report</p>
7.	<p>Finance and Premises</p> <p>1 Finance Report It was reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a deficit of £86k in year 1, which will grow in the second and third years. • The finance committee agreed to apply for a licensed deficit, for which a financial recovery plan is needed. • Up to 80% of the schools in the LA will be requesting a licensed deficit. • The committee has discussed federation as part of the recovery plan. This would be a soft federation with the juniors, to share expenditure, staffing, etc. FGB approval would be needed for this. <p>Governors confirmed that they understand and support applying for a licensed deficit. Governors confirmed that they support the proposed recovery plan and the LA facilitating a soft federation with DJS.</p> <p>2 3-year Budget</p>

	<p>This was covered above</p> <p>3 Contributions to school funds A governor asked if businesses could be asked to sponsor classes, and it was agreed that this could be explored. Generating lettings income was discussed; it was noted that there would be associated staffing and insurance costs. The hall could be hired out for parties, as the ceiling is high enough to accommodate bouncy castles. It was agreed that further brainstorming could be factored into the possible 'awayday.'</p> <p>4 Health & Safety update Governors noted the asbestos report. It was reported that work to the rear wall should hopefully be completed by the autumn.</p> <p>5 H&S Monitoring This is planned for 17th May.</p>
8.	<p>Strategic Governance</p> <p>1. Staff Governor Wellbeing was covered under agenda item 6. AH reported that staff would be supportive of the ideas for funding and may like to be part of a sub-group.</p> <p>2. Strategic Working Party It was explained that TF and HM have discussed governor involvement in disadvantaged issues, and the inclusion mark, An INSET may be planned, to include governors. This would build on issues raised at the Governor Conference.</p> <p>3. Feedback from meeting with DJS The visit report had been circulated, and CPF fed back on the good meeting, which included positive interactions and strategic discussions, etc. JK will link with a parent governor at DJS, on wellbeing, and DJS are keen to take on the DIS governor day model. They may now be more open to federation.</p> <p>4. Governor Self-Evaluation [proposed meeting] CD explained the rationale for an awayday, hopefully before the end of the year. Governor availability will be polled for a half day meeting at a local venue. Governors were asked to suggest discussion topics. GH is updating the Governor Self-Evaluation from the last year.</p> <p>5. OCOW project It was reported that a strategy meeting has taken place; there is a mission statement and launch date of June 6th. The opportunities for outdoor work will be enhanced by the completion of the wall. HM explained that this is an urgent, but long-term, project, for which enthusiasm is growing.</p> <p>6. Disadvantaged Strategy HM explained that the disadvantaged strategy will be reviewed, and a meeting is planned, to discuss the PPG strategy with other schools. The School Partnership Programme may look at this. It would be positive to raise the profile of DA children and remove barriers.</p> <p>7. SATS A governor attended to review SATS procedures. Security and the delivery of the tests were the focus of the visit. The children observed were well-engaged and calm. Governors asked if any children were upset by the tests. It was explained that one child was affected by their sibling's Y6 tests. HM explained that high stakes accountability is putting undue pressure on the children but, at DIS, the experience was made as</p>

	<p>pleasant as possible. HM feels the school did a good job, and the children did their best. HM thanked the governor for attending.</p> <p>8. School term dates for 2024-25 These were circulated and HM explained that they align with other LA's and have been approved with the unions.</p> <p>9. Modification of the school name The LA has advised that there would need to be consultation with all stakeholders, including DJS, which has no desire to change.</p> <p>10. Governor Training It was agreed that there is currently nothing needed urgently, but this will be discussed at the Wwayday.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Governor Effectiveness – Governors discussed what they have done today to help pupils and deliver on our core functions, and agreed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction Trauma informed online training • Holding school leaders to account Continuing in-school monitoring Maths report • Overseeing financial performance Recovery plan / licensed deficit • Stakeholder engagement DJS meetings/ building partnerships DA strategy – conferences, etc.
<p>10.</p>	<p>Any additional or urgent business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Policy HM explained that the model BEEM policy has been personalised to the school. The Complaints Policy was approved • Financial Recovery Plan This was covered above <p>It was agreed to arrange a Standards Meeting, and a Wellbeing Meeting, before the next FGB. Dates will be circulated as an action</p> <p>Governor Day was confirmed for the 13th June, and governors were asked to confirm their availability and suggested topics with HM. Phonics, and Talk for Writing were suggested at the meeting, and governors were invited to the INSET on the 26th June, to look at Talk for Writing: non-fiction. A governor asked if the INSET materials could be shared with governors who are unable to attend, but this will not be possible due to copyright issues.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree date for Standards Meeting • Agree date for Wellbeing Meeting • Confirm availability for Governor Day on the 13th June, and suggest possible topics. <p>Date of next meeting: 18th July 9-11am at the school</p> <p>The meeting closed at 10.45</p>

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Actions:

No	Action	By	Notes
1.	Upload remaining biographies to the website	HM	
2.	Arrange governor awayday	TF	
3.	Send Safer Recruitment Training certificates to the office	All governors	
4.	Circulate the BEEM link to the trauma informed training	HM	
5.	Ensure the correct Mental Health Policy is on the system and on the website.	HM	
6.	Agree date for Standards Meeting	AB/HM	
7.	Agree date for Wellbeing Meeting	AB/HM	
8.	Confirm availability for Governor Day on the 13 th June, and suggest possible topics.	FGB	