

**DOWNS INFANT SCHOOL
FULL GOVERNING BODY**

Minutes of the conference meeting of the Tuesday 12th October 2021, at 6.00pm



Attended by:

Hildi Mitchell
Jalia Kangave
Loren Davies
Sarah Digon
Anita Bullock

Vera Jakimovska
Aisha Hoten
Kirsty Cargill
John Hughes
Gaynor Newnham

Hesione Quinn
Andy Croll
Tony Fallowfield

No.	Item
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>1. Welcome TF welcomed members to the meeting, as HQ had been delayed.</p> <p>2. Apologies There were no apologies</p> <p>3. Review Agenda There were no changes to the published agenda</p>
2.	<p>Governing Board Annual Business</p> <p>1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair HQ was elected Chair TF was elected vice chair</p> <p>2. Leavers It was reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Ayres and Suzanne Morgan are no longer governors at Downs Infant School. • Andy Croll's term is due to end, and he does not wish to continue as a governor. • Anita Bullock's term is due to end, and it was confirmed that governors would like her to continue, if she is happy to. It was agreed that she will complete another 4-year term of office. <p>Governor recruitment was discussed; targeting Y2 parents was suggested as an option for co-opting. HM will add this to the next school newsletter.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add governor recruitment to the next school newsletter, aimed particularly at Y2 parents. <p>1. Proposal to appoint John Hughes and Kirsty Cargill as Associate Members by virtue of their position as Assistant Head Teachers Governors agreed the proposal.</p> <p>2. Governors' Code of Conduct to be approved – propose to strengthen the para relating to sanctions available to FGB in respect of breaches of the code, wording to be agreed at FGB. HM explained that there was very little recourse during an incident last year and, in future, HM would like to be able to act sooner and replace governors more quickly, when necessary. It was agreed to adopt the NGA Model Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalise NGA Model Code of Conduct to the school <p>3. GB Terms of Reference to be approved</p>

The Terms of Reference were approved

4. Approval of Roles and Responsibilities

Governor Roles & Responsibilities 2021/22 were approved, as follows:

Role/Committee	Governor	School personnel
Standards, Achievement and Curriculum	Anita Bullock	HT, Hildi Mitchell
	Gill Hammett	
	Aisha Hoten	
Inclusion (Pupil Premium, SEN, disadvantaged children)	Tony Fallowfield	Senco, Jon Hughes
	Anita Bullock	
	Jalia Kangave	
Safeguarding	Vera Jakimovska + another governor **	Safeguarding lead, Jon Hughes
Self-Evaluation Governor	Gill Hammett	
Head Teacher's Appraisal Panel	Anita Bullock (Chair)	Hildi Mitchell
	Hesione Quinn	
	Jalia Kangave	
Appeals/Disciplinary Panel	Tony Fallowfield	
	Hesione Quinn	
	1 additional (source from another school)	
Pay review panel	Gill Hammett	Hildi Mitchell
	Vera Jakimovska	
	Vacant – non-parent	
Training Governor		
DJS Link Governor	Hesione Quinn	
Finance committee – to include income generation	Loren Davies	Ann Mitchell, Bursar
	Hesione Quinn	
	Tony Fallowfield	
Personnel Governor	Loren Davies	
Health and Safety Governor	Sarah Digon	
Wellbeing Committee	Anita Bullock Jalia Kangave	

**VJ asked the GB to consider appointing 2 safeguarding governors, as AC's support was useful during the previous year. It was agreed to appoint a 2nd Safeguarding Governor once vacancies have been filled.

VJ explained that she would be happy to step down from the Pay review panel if a governor can be found who has more experience.

It was suggested that income generation could be allocated to the Finance Committee; HM has considered this and agreed that this would be appropriate. It was explained that this role had been created when there was no finance committee.

Maintaining the school website was **discussed**, as AC had been involved with the website, and he has confirmed with HM that he is happy to continue to help. **Due to the time and expertise required, it was agreed to employ somebody to maintain the school website.**

JK raised having a wellbeing link governor, though it was noted that she and AB are already on the wellbeing group.

Meeting times were discussed. It was noted that some governors' daytime ability is limited, though HM and the SLT wish to have the broadest number of people in the school. HM asked that, if evening meetings continue, they could be virtual. GN explained that blended meetings are working well in some schools.

AC joined the meeting at 18.37

KC asked if it would be appropriate to have an Early Reading / Phonics Link Governor. This was discussed, and it was agreed that the standards committee will monitor Early Reading and Phonics.

It was explained that the school is having its early reading curriculum audited, as there is a detailed curriculum that it wishes to continue to invest in, rather than spend a lot of money on an off the shelf accredited scheme. It was agreed that the standards committee should look at the scheme sooner, rather than later.

Governors discussed ways to quality assure the curriculum, such as inviting an external adviser in to work with the phonics lead, as the Ofsted inspectors will need to be convinced that the school scheme is good. It was explained that members of SLT are working with the phonics lead and will be able to articulate to inspectors why the school is following its own scheme. It was explained that the Year and Subject Leads meet SLT each week to discuss Ofsted deep dive questions; the SLT would also like to be 'grilled' to ensure they are confident to answer questions. It was agreed that the best way to review the phonics curriculum will be investigated.

Governors asked if any other schools have adopted a similar view; HM confirmed that none of the other local LA schools are using government accredited schemes, and they are auditing their own schemes. HM assured governors that the SLT believe this will have good outcomes for children.

Governors asked how support, guidance, training, and resources will be provided. HM explained that the school has worked hard to provide resources and the training is delivered in house. There has also been collaboration with other schools.

It was noted that the work of the new H&S link governor will be overseen by the finance committee. There is training available on BEEM, in November.

Action:

- Investigate alternative options for maintaining the website (LD)
- Standards Committee to review the phonics curriculum

5. Governor Monitoring responsibility

It was agreed that governors will complete 1 visit per term, before a GB meeting, so that reports can be reviewed at the next FGB.

It was agreed that HM will draft a schedule of roles and dates, to include remote meetings.

Action:

Schedule of monitoring visits to be drafted

6. Governor Activity and Impact Statements, Training

Governors were reminded to return their completed paperwork.

7. Annual Meeting Schedules for FGB, Finance Committee and monitoring days

Downs Infant School meeting dates 2021 22 were agreed:

Term	Finance Committee	FGB Meeting
Autumn 1	Thursday October 21st	Tuesday September 14 th

	Autumn 2	Thursday December 16 th	Tuesday November 23 rd
	Spring 1	Thursday February 24 th	Tuesday February 8 th
	Spring 2	Thursday April 28 th	Tuesday May 3 rd
	Summer 1	Thursday May 19 th	Tuesday June 14 th
	Summer 2	Thursday June 16 th	Tuesday July 12 th
	<p>Monitoring visits will be arranged for Tuesday 16th November Agreement of meeting timings was deferred to the next agenda</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add agreement of meeting timings to the next agenda <p>8. Governing body constitution – discussion - do we have the right number of governors per our Instrument of Governance? Appetite for FGB to explore amending it at this juncture? Following a discussion, it was agreed to review the Instrument of Government and consider a smaller group, with the ability to co-opt, and not be limited to categories of people. This will be added to the next agenda.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Review of Instrument of Government to the next FGB agenda 		
1.	<p>Register of Business Interests</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual declarations to be completed Governors were reminded to return their forms to the clerk as soon as possible. 2. Interests related to the current agenda to be declared None 		
2.	<p>Previous Meeting Minutes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting, 6th July 2021 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"> • It was agreed to remove actions re Suzanne • Website biographies are still being submitted <p><i>HQ joined at 18.44</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair's newsletter — complete • Pupil Voice reported were reported to have been woven into subject monitoring. KC explained that there are 2 foundation subjects monitored each half term. Maths and English are also monitored each week. It was agreed that samples/ summaries will be provided to governors. AB explained that governors should also complete pupil voice as part of their monitoring day in November. <p>SD asked how pupil voice is dealt with for children with communication needs; JH explained that it would depend on the need of the child. A 'translator' could be provided for pupils who sign. All pupil voice for children with an EHCP is recorded.</p> <p>There is also pupil voice as part of subject monitoring. HM explained that everything has context; books are never looked at without the children present. Children are observed, in terms of engagement, for example, and pupil voice is embedded in practice. KC also added that there is close work with the leaders on the sorts of questions being asked, to ensure they are appropriate and</p> 		

	<p>sensitive, with good questioning. It is ensured that all children's needs are catered for.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide governors with pupil voice samples or summaries • Governors to talk to pupils as part of the monitoring day in November <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Safeguarding Audit was confirmed to be almost complete; HM and the LA safeguarding lead have reviewed the first draft and the audit will be complete by half term. • It was confirmed that the Caterlink risk assessment was forwarded; HM will share the updated version with the board. • The Albion in the Community sporting/ behaviour offer has not been followed up; JH will chase, as his first contact was not responded to • The appointment of Mental Health Champions was confirmed to be for children, and ongoing. • Errors in pupil admissions have been followed up – see below • Governor day will be covered at the next meeting • The staffing structure document was circulated • It was confirmed that an MDSA was recruited externally, and 2 parents with teaching experience were appointed • Investigation of gaps in the SCR is ongoing and almost complete. It was explained that some records were requested, destroyed, and needed again, for longstanding staff members • Most governor self-reflections have been completed and will be sent to the clerk <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forward the most recent Caterlink risk assessment to governors ▪ Follow up with Albion in the Community <p>3. Matters arising</p> <p>Admissions with false addresses were queried, and JH explained that one pupil never came, one parent had mis-clicked, and one child who lives in Lewes satisfied the LA admissions teams that the child has enough local links to attend the school. Though the child resides in Lewes, Brighton and Hove City Council will fund the place. HM confirmed that there is nothing to be done; LD was pleased that there had been a formal follow up.</p> <p>VJ explained that, though she missed the last meeting, she was fully briefed by HQ the day after the meeting.</p>
6.	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p>HM had nothing to add to the pre-circulated report.</p> <p>HM reported that she would like to consult on the organisation of the school day (lunches, breaks, etc) to maximise learning opportunities, space, etc. Papers will come to the next meeting.</p> <p>Action:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add consultation on the organisation of the school day to the term 2 agenda <p>1. School Development Plan This section of the HT report was noted.</p> <p>2. Update on school opening and risk assessment, to include attendance and catch up It was reported that there has been more absence than usual due to the need for COVID tests being taken when children would normally have attended school. Chesty colds and sick bugs are proliferating. Due to the high levels of calls to report absence, taking of the calls is delegated to several members of staff. It was noted that, at this point in the year, 1-2 days absence shows as a large percentage of absence.</p> <p>The absence is also impacting on staffing. In response to a question, it was reported that the supply budget is high, though cover has not just been due to sickness. £1000 spent to administer baseline tests.</p> <p>Governors requested data on exclusions and racist incidents, and it was explained that there are currently none, which will be recorded as a nil return. HM confirmed that future reports will include this data, including nil returns, as well as RIDL- reportable incidents.</p> <p>The Catch-up Report was noted. In response to a suggestion from a governor, it was agreed to add interventions for SEMH children to the report.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add interventions for SEMH children to the Catch-up Report <p>3. Staff and Pupil Wellbeing This section of the HT report was noted.</p> <p>4. Health and Safety This section of the HT report was noted.</p> <p>5. Trans toolkit HM explained that there is a Trans Toolkit available which will be circulated to governors; the toolkit enables the school to respond appropriately to children questioning gender. Governors need to be aware, as this can be controversial for families / guardians. This will be added to the next agenda.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Trans toolkit to next agenda
7.	<p>Finance and Premises</p> <p>1. COVID catch-up spending plan It was agreed that this will be fully discussed in the finance committee meeting.</p>
8.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>1. Keeping Children Safe in Education – changes from September 2021 It was reported that, as some staff were unable to attend the first INSET in September, which included Safeguarding an online training system has been purchased, which will be completed by all staff and added to the SCR. Following a request that all governors complete the Safeguarding training, it was agreed that this will be actioned within the next 2 weeks. It was also noted that all governors completed the NSPCC in June 2021, though the course is relevant to the current year. JH will send the link to the training.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All governors to complete the new safeguarding course, on receipt of the link from JH

	<p>2. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Governors requested a minor change to section 10.5 re training, as discussed under agenda item 8.1. In response to a question, HM confirmed that governors and staff have the enhanced DBS checks The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy was approved</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Policies</p> <p>1. Behaviour Policy In response to a question, it was confirmed that this is a bespoke policy that has been fully discussed with staff. There is not an LA agreed model policy. The Behaviour Policy was approved</p> <p>2. Appraisal Policy It was reported that this has been updated by the LA and will be circulated for the next meeting. LD asked how the policy impacts on the appraisal cycle and it was confirmed that they have already been completed, under the old policy.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Appraisal Policy to the next agenda <p>3. Staff Code of Conduct It was explained that this is a model that was amended due to changes in KCSIE, particularly related to low level concerns, and online safety. In response to a question about the Disciplinary Policy, HM confirmed that she will clarify whether the Discipline Policy is an appendix to the Staff Code of Conduct, or a separate policy. The Staff Code of Conduct was approved</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check if the Discipline Policy is an appendix to the Staff Code of Conduct, or a separate policy. <p>4. Early Career Teachers (ECT) Policy It was explained that this is a new policy. The new ECT system has created a massive amount of work for schools, more than the previous NQT policy. ECT's now have 2 years of monitoring and support. LD asked if the induction tutors have seen agreed the policy. HM explained that the tutors are school staff. This policy is based on The Key model. The Early Career Teachers (ECT) Policy was approved</p> <p>5. Induction Policy This was confirmed to be for all staff. The policy is based on HM's checklist and samples from other schools and is likely to evolve over time. The Induction Policy was approved.</p> <p>6. E-Safety Policy HM explained that the model policy will be tweaked so that the children's section is age appropriate. A governor asked if changes due to remote learning are reflected in the policy. It was confirmed that this, and the use of TAPESTRY will be included in the policy for the next meeting.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add E-Safety Policy to the next agenda <p>7. Governor Expenses Policy</p>

	<p>The policy had not been circulated. Governors were reminded that there is an amount for expenses, such as for the cost of babysitting while governors attend meetings. Last year the governor budget was spent on training.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Governor Expenses Policy to the next agenda
<p>10.</p>	<p>PAN update</p> <p>The HT and Chair fed back to the board on a meeting with the LA, which made it clear that the LA was unhappy with the actions taken by the governors over the PAN consultation. Governors agreed that the argument has not changed – this is an outstanding school and if places are reduced, parental choice would be reduced.</p> <p>TF explained that is attending the next governor briefing at which the LA’s new ideas will be revealed – as many governors as possible were asked to attend.</p> <p>AC confirmed that he has renewed the PAN consultation website in case it is needed in the future.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Strategy document</p> <p>It was explained that HQ and HM would like to engage governors on a strategic level, looking at long term aims of the school. This is not a departure from work already done, but it is more explicit.</p> <p>The school vision has been discussed with all stakeholders and the parents’ vision is for the school to be challenging and different. This will be discussed more fully at a future meeting, as it requires governor discussion and input, thought and reflection.</p> <p>HM explained that she feels this is the right thing for the school – the DfE (Department for Education) appears to be narrowing the curriculum. This is limiting ambition. We have no say in what DfE says, but we can control what is on offer for our pupils. Our children deserve more.</p> <p>HM suggested discussion in smaller groups, including HM and the team, before the next meeting. AB volunteered to come in and discuss this in more detail, and how the strategy links to the SDP. Previous SDP’s were driven just by the Ofsted framework. It was agreed to invite governors to an SMT meeting, and then report back to the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>HM stated that this is a supportive FGB, and leaders are trying to tweak what is already quite good. HM thanked governors for being so supportive.</p> <p>KC informed governors that HM spoke at the recent NAHT conference, about wellbeing and recruitment to senior leadership. HM explained that she had included that she had been off with stress and was able to say that the support of the SLT and FGB allowed her to return to work and feel brilliant.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors to attend SMT meeting to discuss the strategic vision for the school
<p>12.</p>	<p>Date of next meeting: Tuesday 23rd November 2021 6pm</p>

The meeting closed at 20.37

Number	Action	By	Notes
1.	Add governor recruitment to the next school newsletter, aimed particularly at Y2 parents.	HM	
2.	Personalise NGA Model Code of Conduct to the school	GN	
3.	Investigate alternative options for maintaining the website	LD	
4.	Review the phonics curriculum	Standards Committee	
5.	Schedule of monitoring visits to be drafted	HM	
6.	Add agreement of meeting timings to the next agenda	GN	
7.	Add Review of Instrument of Government to the next FGB agenda	GN	
8.	Provide governors with pupil voice samples or summaries	HM	
9.	Governors to talk to pupils as part of the monitoring day in November	FGB	
10.	Forward the most recent Caterlink risk assessment to governors	HM	
11.	Follow up with Albion in the Community	JH	
12.	Add consultation on the organisation of the school day to the term 2 agenda	GN	
13.	Add interventions for SEMH children to the Catch-up Report	HM	
14.	Add Trans toolkit to next agenda	GN	
15.	All governors to complete the new safeguarding course, on receipt of the link from JH	FGB	
16.	Add Appraisal Policy to the next agenda	GN	
17.	Check if the Discipline Policy is an appendix to the Staff Code of Conduct, or a separate policy.	HM	
18.	Add E-Safety Policy to the next agenda	GN	
19.	Add Governor Expenses Policy to the next agenda	GN	
20.	Governors to attend SMT meeting to discuss the strategic vision for the school	t.b.c.	