



**DOWNS INFANT SCHOOL  
FULL GOVERNING BODY**

**Minutes of the conference meeting of the Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022, at 6.00pm**

**Attended by:**

Anita Bullock  
Tony Fallowfield  
Jalia Kangave  
Gill Hammett  
Vera Jakimovska  
Hildi Mitchell

Loren Davies  
Aisha Hoten  
Sarah Digon  
Jon Hughes  
Kirsty Cargill  
Gaynor Newnham

No.	Item												
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p><b>1. Welcome</b> TF, as Vice Chair, welcomed governors</p> <p>2. Apologies were received from Hesione Quinn</p> <p><b>3. Review Agenda</b> <b>It was agreed to make OFSTED and Governor Effectiveness standing agenda items</b></p>												
2.	<p><b>Register of Business Interests</b></p> <p>1. Interests related to the current agenda to be declared None</p>												
3.	<p><b>Previous Meeting Minutes</b></p> <p><b>1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting November 2021</b> <b>The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting</b></p> <p><b>2. Review of actions</b> The summary of actions was reviewed, as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1261 1407 1968"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="320 1261 799 1292">Action</th> <th data-bbox="807 1261 1407 1292">Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1292 799 1386">Complete the Google Form on meeting times, as soon as possible.</td> <td data-bbox="807 1292 1407 1386">On agenda</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1386 799 1693">Follow up with Albion in the Community</td> <td data-bbox="807 1386 1407 1693">It was explained that it is planned to use Sports Premium to improve continuous provision for all children. Contact has been made with Albion in the Community, but no response has been received. Following further discussion, it was agreed to investigate whether they may be able to provide any after-school clubs, though this is not a priority for the PE funding. TF to action</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1693 799 1787">All governors to complete the new safeguarding course, on receipt of the link from JH</td> <td data-bbox="807 1693 1407 1787">Complete – TF to send the spreadsheet to GN</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1787 799 1910">Check if the Discipline Policy is an appendix to the Staff Code of Conduct, or a separate policy</td> <td data-bbox="807 1787 1407 1910">Confirmed – HM explained that staff conduct would be followed up under the Capability or Disciplinary Policies, and there are clear procedures in place</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1910 799 1968">Obtain quotes from a few companies, for redesigning the website.</td> <td data-bbox="807 1910 1407 1968">Complete</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Action	Notes	Complete the Google Form on meeting times, as soon as possible.	On agenda	Follow up with Albion in the Community	It was explained that it is planned to use Sports Premium to improve continuous provision for all children. Contact has been made with Albion in the Community, but no response has been received. Following further discussion, it was agreed to investigate whether they may be able to provide any after-school clubs, though this is not a priority for the PE funding. TF to action	All governors to complete the new safeguarding course, on receipt of the link from JH	Complete – TF to send the spreadsheet to GN	Check if the Discipline Policy is an appendix to the Staff Code of Conduct, or a separate policy	Confirmed – HM explained that staff conduct would be followed up under the Capability or Disciplinary Policies, and there are clear procedures in place	Obtain quotes from a few companies, for redesigning the website.	Complete
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	Standards Group to meet on Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> December at 09.10, in the school.	On agenda
	Governors to observe guided reading, mathematics, and phonics sessions with willing teachers, who will be approached by HM.	Due to rising numbers of COVID cases this is not currently possible, but could be included in the next governor day in March
	Circulate the EYFS and KS1 framework to governors.	Complete – governors were asked to read the document, which will be explained more fully later – re changes and rationale for them
	TF to be Link Governor for the Governor Monitoring Days.	On agenda
	Governor to support with the School Streets Consultation.	Complete
	Autumn Safeguarding Visit to be arranged	Complete
	Add 'Review of PAN' to the April FGB agenda and annually thereafter.	Ongoing
	<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Follow up with Albion in the Community (TF)</b></li> <li>• <b>Send Safeguarding Training Spreadsheet to the clerk (TF)</b></li> <li>• <b>Governors to observe guided reading, mathematics, and phonics sessions at the next Governor Day</b></li> <li>• <b>Read EYFS and KS1 framework</b></li> <li>• <b>Add 'Review of PAN' to the April FGB agenda and annually thereafter</b></li> </ul> <p><b>3. Matters arising</b> Rearrangement of the school day will be added to the agenda for the next meeting</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p><b>1. HT Report + demographics report</b> The HT report had been circulated with the agenda, and several points were discussed. Pupil data was also shared with governors and it was explained that the staff have been using it effectively. Governors <b>noted</b> pleasing movements in phonics and reading.</p> <p>It was explained that attendance data in the demographics report is for the previous year; Downs is well on attendance compared to other schools, and pupil absences have normally been short, though staff with COVID have tended to be off for 10 days+. There have been preliminary discussions about staff wellbeing.</p> <p>Governors <b>commented</b> that the demographic sheet was useful and look forward to seeing progress data.</p> <p>In response to a <b>question</b>, it was confirmed that current attendance is 93%, which is much lower than in previous years (96%). It cannot be assumed that all absence is related to COVID and it is concerning that PPG (Pupil Premium) and EAL (English as an Additional Language) attendance is low.</p> <p>Governors <b>asked</b> if there is any more that the school can do to improve attendance, and what information could be shared at an OFSTED inspection to show that the school is working hard to make improvements in this area.</p> <p>Governors also <b>asked</b> if absent pupils are following online learning and how Downs compares to other local schools. HM explained that the local authority does not supply live termly data to schools, but it is not a surprise that attendance has dropped while COVID cases are high. A governor reported that they have seen up to date attendance information on BEEM, and that Downs attendance compares favourably to attendance across the trust they work for.</p>	



	<p>HM explained that she is concerned that groups who are not performing as well as they should be, academically, also have poor attendance. There is a correlation between phonics/ reading progress and attendance /lateness, and not all this is due to COVID. HM reported that she will endeavour to secure staff training on attendance, including conversations with parents, as it may be more effective for teachers to have these conversations, than the headteacher. Governors agreed that this would be positive, especially as there is no longer an attendance officer at the school.</p> <p>Governors queried the reasons for absences. It was explained that illness absence tends to be authorised but, where there is repeated absence, confirmation of doctors' appointments may be requested.</p> <p>JH also explained that there have been referrals for safeguarding and attendance issues, and he has visited homes and met with parents to discuss attendance and persistent absence. Many families with persistent absence are known to social services or have safeguarding concerns.</p> <p><b>1. School Development Plan (SDP)</b> SDP headlines had been circulated and it was confirmed that the school is on track to meet milestones. Curriculum development has been good, thanks to KC, and leaders are confident that staff will be able to answer questions about the curriculum and the impact of subject leaders, during an inspection.</p>
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>Finance and Premises</b></p> <p><b>1. Finance Committee Minutes</b> LD reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The budget looks stable though there needs to be caution, due to staff absence and related costs.</li> <li>• The committee had discussed budget management, largely in relation to staffing and overspends. Effort has been made to look at what is staff-absence related and what is due to catch-up provision.</li> <li>• The committee approved the Charging and Remissions Policy– GN to add front cover and send to the business manager.</li> <li>• The committee considered spending capital funding on furniture but will complete an audit first.</li> <li>• The budget for the server replacement was agreed but the final decision has not yet been made.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Add front cover to the Charging and Remissions Policy</b> The Finance Committee will next meet on Thursday February 24<sup>th</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Expenditure on Website and Assessment data package</b></p> <p><b>Website</b> It was reported that there was a charge £900 for rewrite and £900 for photographs in school, and the work was completed by a company called SCHUDIO, who also check compliance. It was explained that the photographer beautifully captured the look and the feel of the school, and the process of seeing the school through a different lens was interesting and enlightening.</p> <p><b>Data Package (Insight Tool)</b> It was reported that the data subscription cost £1000 and, having seen the first reports, governors agreed this was money well spent and should free up time for other tasks. It was explained that the Insight Tool is easy to use and will provide consistent reports across year groups and the school, which will move through the school with the children. The reports also look professional and will ease the process of making referrals to external agencies and applications for EHCP's.</p> <p><b>3. Premises update</b></p>



	<p>It was reported that a premises assistant is on maternity leave, which is being covered by staff working additional hours and reallocation of roles; this has been discussed with Downs Juniors School, as the cost is shared across both schools and needs to be equitable. In response to a <b>question</b>, it was confirmed that this has been managed so far, though the spread of work over the academic year and holidays will need to be managed. The Site Manager's wellbeing also needs to be considered, as well as succession planning if he were to become ill. The PIL partnership schools have been contacted and supply agencies have been found in case of need.</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p><b>1. DSL Report</b>  The DSL (JH) reported that the number of EHCP'S has increased to 8, with 4 applications in process, so there could be 12 by the end of the year. There are also 2 looked after children at the school.  It was explained that safeguarding is becoming more prominent and time consuming, with many children struggling post-lockdown. There have been 13 referrals since November 2021, with police involvement with some cases.  Behaviour is largely good but there are some vulnerable children taking time and resources, and parental requests for support have also increased.  The DSL gave a verbal example of one case the school is currently dealing with.</p> <p>Governors <b>asked</b> about the DSL's wellbeing and he confirmed that he has a good support network and manages not to take the work home with him.</p> <p><b>2. Safeguarding Monitoring Report</b>  The safeguarding link governor (VJ) gave feedback on the December monitoring visit, which included discussion of the safeguarding audit report, which showed that most actions are being dealt with.  Amber areas include safeguarding checks for after school club providers and training for staff and governors.  The link governor is confident that the Single Central Record is properly maintained, and that CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System) is used effectively by all staff.</p> <p>It was reported that the safeguarding link governor will step down from the role in September 2022 and will be supported by TF until then. Succession planning was <b>discussed</b>, and Sarah Digon agreed to take on the role from September, with the handover period beginning in Term 4. TF and SD will endeavour to attend the next safeguarding monitoring visit.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>SD to shadow VJ as safeguarding link governor from Term 4-6.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>TF and SD to attend the next safeguarding monitoring visit.</i></b></li> </ul> <p><b>3. Governor Safeguarding Training</b>  It was confirmed that all governors have completed training</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Policies and Reports</b></p> <p><b>1. Charging and Remissions Policy</b>  <b>Approved</b></p> <p><b>2. Standards Group</b>  AB reported that there was a meeting in December, but as the data shared for this meeting supersedes those discussions, feedback is not needed.  HM explained that the new data package will provide more data, in more detail, and it will be possible to drill down into different groups at future meetings of the Standards Group. It was also explained that pupil outcomes are not likely to be as good as in 2019, in line with most schools.</p>



A governor queried the frequency of data captures, using the new Insight tool, and it was explained that the data schedule remains the same, with half termly reviews of phonics and reading bands, and termly reviews of writing and maths. Attainment will be seen termly, and there will be an annual 'no more marking,' national comparative report.

A governor **asked** if the progress of specific groups will that be reported via PPG reports, HT reports to the FGB, or to standards group. It was explained that there will be a combination of reporting methods, and the standards group will meet each term and report back to the FGB. **It was agreed, after a brief discussion, that TF will attend meetings of the Standards Group, as PPG/ SEND link.** JH will also attend the Standards meetings.

It was also explained that a governors' reporting sheet will be attached to the HT report, once intervention data has been added, to show what gaps there are and how they have been filled. The reports will be anonymised though it will be possible to discuss case studies at the meeting.

A governor **asked** about determining short, medium, and long-term priorities, as the data must have a positive impact on teaching and allow governors to fulfil strategic obligations. HM agreed that this must be borne in mind when using the reports.

### 3. Wellbeing

It was reported that:

- A governor has discussed wellbeing with the HT
- A wellbeing survey was conducted in December, with a participation rate of 50%, which is higher than previously. Most staff were positive about their experiences but noted some issues to unpick, such as feedback received and frequency of feedback, career development, and access to opportunities. Governors suggested arranging themed group discussions, or meetings involving specific staff groups, to discuss different concerns and feedback.
- Wellbeing training received positive feedback and people wanted more information on supporting their own wellbeing; further training has been organised for the summer terms.
- An action plan will be created and there will be a repeat survey in 6 months.

SLT dissemination of the survey results was discussed and it was confirmed that there will be feedback to staff, which may encourage higher engagement next time. It was noted that some things can be fixed relatively easily and will boost morale.

The use of wellbeing money was discussed, and possible uses were suggested, such as redesigning the staff room, or introducing yoga, or something similar.

### 4. Health & Safety (H&S)

It was reported that the H&S link governor completed a walk before Christmas with the caretaker, which highlighted the following:

- Overcrowded store cupboard shelves obscure a fuse box; this has been addressed and staff have been reminded to keep the shelves tidy. HM also reported that clutter under desks is known to present a similar risk to electrical sockets, and staff are also reminded of the need to prevent fire hazards.
- There are holes in fence, which will be fixed
- The East boundary wall is in disrepair and has been raised with the council; there will be follow up with the council, due to the possible risk of injury to passers-by, or trespass.

Responsibility to complete fire safety checks was **discussed**, and it was confirmed that these should be completed by an outside body and recorded in the fire log. **It was agreed that the date of the last Fire Safety Risk Assessment will be checked.**

**Action:**

- **Check when the Fire Safety Risk Assessment was last completed.**



	<p>In response to a <b>question</b> about governors' health and safety responsibilities, it was explained that governors need to ensure the external audits are completed, and that governors audit the paperwork. The LA completes H&amp;S audits on a rolling programme, and governors should review the report and action plan. There is an annual governor checklist for governors from the LA, which will be shared.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Share annual H&amp;S checklist for governors with the HT</b></li> </ul>
5.	<p><b>Governance</b> <b>Governor Day reports were noted</b></p> <p><b>1. Meeting times</b> AH reported that the meeting times questionnaire showed that most governors would prefer daytime meetings and, with advance notice and communication with employers, this should be possible, from September 2022. It was also confirmed that most people preferred remote meetings HM explained that she is grateful that this is being considered, and that the governors are valued volunteers with a good range of experience.</p> <p><b>2. Staff Governor</b> The staff governor emphasised the need to share the results of the wellbeing survey. It was confirmed that leaders will create an action plan and feed back to staff.</p> <p><b>3. Governor Recruitment</b> The need to appoint more governors was <b>discussed</b>, and it was <b>noted</b> that VJ will resign in September. Several suggestions about how best to recruit new governors were made, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-opt Y2 parents who will not be parents at the school after September</li> <li>• Arrange a coffee morning to meet governors and discuss governance with them – AH agreed to arrange/ promote this via posters, website, twitter, Fiveways noticeboard</li> <li>• Advertise in the local area for co-opted governors</li> <li>• Approach junior school staff or parents</li> <li>• Approach secondary schools, as governance would provide good CPD for staff</li> <li>• Approach private schools</li> </ul> <p>A governor <b>asked</b> if there are any skills gaps to be filled and <b>it was agreed to conduct a governor skills audit as soon as possible.</b> A possible lead on an LA governor is being pursued; it was also noted that teachers at Brighton and Hove schools could be appointed to LA governor vacancies. It was <b>noted</b> that HM is now an LA Governor at a local school.</p> <p><b>Action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Arrange 'Governor Recruitment' coffee morning</b></li> <li>• <b>Approach secondary schools for possible governors</b></li> <li>• <b>Circulate the NGA skills audit to all governors, including associate members – GN to complete the dashboard for the next meeting</b></li> </ul> <p><b>4. Governor Day</b> <b>The date was agreed as 22-03-2022</b> <b>Foci for the day were discussed and agreed, as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How the school delivers the National Curriculum in KS1</b></li> <li>• <b>Impact of changes to subject leadership</b></li> </ul> <p>Governors also reported that they would like to observe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracking of continuous provision and learning journeys, to follow previous monitoring in this area (LD)</li> </ul>





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early literacy, phonics and reading (AB). A governor who had attended a recent LA briefing on OFSTED confirmed that these areas have been focus areas at inspections. The briefing had recommended that the SLT prepare a script on how curriculum flows through different age groups and discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the school. HM explained that this information is included on the SEF, which is updated each term.</li> <li>• Wellbeing, though this was <b>discussed</b>, and it was <b>agreed</b> to repeat the survey when actions from the previous survey have been implemented.</li> </ul> <p>KC reported that work on subject leadership has been completed and could be shared with governors. The '90-minute call,' at which the inspection will be announced, will allow school leaders to guide the focus towards stronger subjects, with considered reasons why inspectors might like to look at these areas. For example, it might be more worthwhile for inspectors to consider subjects already looked at. The staff have been developed as middle leaders so they can talk about their subjects and highlight pockets of outstanding teaching and areas to develop.</p> <p><b>5. OFSTED and governor training</b> Governor preparation for OFSTED was discussed. It was suggested that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All governors complete the NGA learning link module, 'Ofsted Step-By-Step.' It was noted that there is a second module, which may also be useful.</li> <li>• Governors read the OFSTED questions for governors available on The Key – KC to share</li> <li>• Governors read and give feedback on the OFSTED prompt sheet created by TF – this will inform the content of future Governor Days</li> <li>• Governors hold a brainstorming session in preparation for Ofsted – so that governors remember key messages and can draw on group knowledge and experience</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governors complete the NGA learning link module, 'Ofsted Step-By-Step.'</b></li> <li>• <b>Circulate OFSTED questions for governors available on The Key</b></li> <li>• <b>Read and give feedback on the OFSTED prompt sheet created by TF</b></li> <li>• <b>Arrange brainstorming session to discuss OFSTED</b></li> </ul>												
11.	<p><b>Strategy document</b> It was reported that the Strategic Plan is on the website, having been agreed at the last meeting in principle and improved by HM and GH. There is good focus on the school being an infant school and celebration of the school.</p>												
12..	<p><b>Governor Effectiveness</b> Governors reviewed their effectiveness during the meeting and noted that they have ensured there are correct safeguarding systems in place, discussed staff wellbeing, to provide a good, confident and well staff for the good of the children, discussed attendance, governor recruitment and skills, the Downs Infant strategy and focus on being an infant school, and OFSTED preparation for staff and governors.</p>												
14.	<p><b>Date of next meetings:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="316 1711 1236 1870"> <thead> <tr> <th>Term</th> <th>Finance Committee</th> <th>FGB Meeting</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Spring 2</td> <td>Thursday April 28th</td> <td>Tuesday May 3<sup>rd</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summer 1</td> <td>Thursday May 19th</td> <td>Tuesday June 14<sup>th</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summer 2</td> <td>Thursday June 16th</td> <td>Tuesday July 12<sup>th</sup></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Term	Finance Committee	FGB Meeting	Spring 2	Thursday April 28th	Tuesday May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Summer 1	Thursday May 19th	Tuesday June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Summer 2	Thursday June 16th	Tuesday July 12 <sup>th</sup>
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15.	<p><b>Any additional Business</b></p> <p><b>1. 1<sup>st</sup> choice places for Reception</b> HM reported that initial preferences for the September reception class intake have been reported, as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> choice - 102</p>												



	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> choice – 110 3<sup>rd</sup> choice - 71</p> <p>This is a drop from last year when the school was over-subscribed. It was reported that other schools have been similarly affected by falling pupil numbers across the city. Final allocations will be announced on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2022, and this should not be a cause for concern this year.</p> <p>It was noted that Brighton and Hove’s decision to ask schools to reduce PAN has been deferred by a year.</p> <p>It was agreed to be the correct decision, to review PAN each April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Literacy training and racism</b></li> </ul> <p>A governor <b>asked</b> about literacy training and racism, as the DfE have contacted the LA about it. HM explained that the LA has an anti-racism strategy and there has been challenge from different sources, which the LA is looking into. It was agreed that governors need to be aware and any questions should be redirected to the LA.</p>
	<p><b>Agenda items for next meeting</b> <b>Tuesday May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Review of PAN’ – April</li> <li>• Meeting dates for 2022-23</li> <li>• Changes to the school day</li> <li>• NGA Skills Audit</li> </ul>

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.11

Summary of actions			
No	Action	By	Notes
1.	Follow up with Albion in the Community	TF	
2.	Send Safeguarding Training Spreadsheet to the clerk	TF	<b>Complete</b>
3.	Governors to observe guided reading, mathematics, and phonics sessions at the next Governor Day	FGB	
4.	Read EYFS and KS1 framework	FGB	
5.	Add front cover to the Charging and Remissions Policy	GN	<b>Complete</b>
6.	SD to shadow VJ as safeguarding link governor from Term 4-6.	SD	
7.	TF and SD to attend the next safeguarding monitoring visit.	TF / SD	
8.	Check when the Fire Safety Risk Assessment was last completed.	HM	
9.	Share annual H&S checklist for governors with the HT	LD	
10.	Circulate the NGA skills audit for all governors, including associate members, to complete. GN to complete the dashboard for the next meeting	GN/ FGB	<b>Circulated</b>
11.	Arrange ‘Governor Recruitment’ coffee morning	AH+	
12.	Approach secondary schools for possible governors	HM	
13.	Governors complete the NGA learning link module, ‘Ofsted Step-By-Step.’	FGB	
14.	Circulate OFSTED questions for governors available on The Key	KC	
15.	Read and give feedback on the OFSTED prompt sheet created by TF	FGB	
16.	Arrange brainstorming session to discuss OFSTED	FGB	