

**DOWNS INFANT SCHOOL  
MINUTES OF FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD  
WEDNESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2014**

**PRESENT:** Regine Kruger, Georgina Gates, Jonathan Cave, Sarah Axtell, Jenny Smith, Katie Salvidge, Valentine Mulholland, Jules Gallagher, Iain Parks, Oli Rahman, Rachel Attwell

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Chris Taylor (Deputy Headteacher)

**1 APOLOGIES**

**All apologies should be sent to clerk.**

Apologies were received and accepted from Anna Korman, Niall Howell, Sheila Cullen, Claire McCann and Alan Cronshaw.

Apologies accepted

**2 OPPORTUNITY TO DECLARE BUSINESS INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

**3 APPROVE MINUTES FROM 3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2013 & 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2014 MINUTES**

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014 minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting and were agreed and accepted as an accurate record.

Agreed

**Matters arising not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda**

Pink paper actioned. Valentine Mulholland questioned the part mentioning value of all staff and not just leadership?

*School Vision* - Chris Taylor and Jules Gallagher will look at meeting to discuss this once we know what is happening in the future i.e. headship etc.

*Attendance Policy* - has been updated by Regine Kruger and put on the school website. Changes relate to LA guidance, these changes do not need to be approved by FGB as they were made following LA instruction. Regine Kruger to e-mail Valentine the new policy.

Regine Kruger

*FODIS visit* - governors discussed to enable feedback to FODIS. Jules Gallagher has spoken to some parents who do not get involved in FODIS because they were unsure what funding is going to be spent on. There would possibly be more enthusiasm to get involved if parents knew what the money raised was going to be spent on.

Regine Kruger mentioned that the funds FODIS raise enabled us to buy luxury items rather than what the school needs. Who makes the decision on what the money is spent on? In the early days FODIS had raised money to pay for improvements to the playground.

Our playground is now full, there is no room for further equipment. Currently FODIS funds are being used to pay for smaller projects and workshops etc. IT costs are sometimes met. FODIS have recently agreed to fund the development of the area next to the new garden room and also the current mosaic project.

Jenny Smith asked if the FODIS newsletter could be circulated to Governors. Consideration has to be given to items funded by FODIS which may result in on-year maintenance costs for the school - i.e. wood painting, plant maintenance etc.

Sarah Axtell said it would be important for school parents not involved in FODIS to maybe have input in decisions on activities and spending - give ideas.

#### **Minutes from Extraordinary Meeting 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014**

These minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. *Amendment to minutes - Rachel would have replied to LA whichever way we voted - take this out.*

#### **4 SUCCESSION PLANNING**

Rachel Attwell confirmed that Downs Junior School had met the day following our extraordinary meeting with the LA about possible merger. They voted marginally in favour of a merger. Hilary Ferries has asked to meet with both chairs of governors. Jo Lyons, Hilary Ferries, Martin Cross and Rachel Attwell are meeting tomorrow and Rachel Attwell will report back via e-mail tomorrow after the meeting. She feels we should decide on an interview panel at this meeting so that we can proceed if able. 5 governors (different types) are needed, generally staff governors are not on the interview panel but can be involved in drawing up the job description/person specification etc. Valentine Mulholland said that it could be disadvantageous or over advantageous for an internal applicant, generally it is not common practice for staff governors to be involved. Governors felt that having a staff governor on the panel should be an option. It would be a two-day process and also a big time commitment in advance devising the job description, advert, format of interview etc. There would be a LA adviser and HR representative involved to ensure correct processes are followed.

Katie Salvidge  
to feed back to  
FODIS

Agreed

<p>A number of governors showed interest in being involved, Rachel Attwell will e-mail round all governors to check interest. Governors interested should express their interest to Rachel Attwell/Ann Mitchell (Clerk to Governors) by the end of Half Term. 30<sup>th</sup> April is the date for current head teachers to submit resignations. We would not be ready to interview before Easter.</p> <p>It may be useful to ask if governors have experience of the interviewing process.</p> <p>Valentine raised the Individual School Range which would have to be reviewed and agreed in time for the interview process.</p> <p>Rachel Attwell asked what FGB want her to do if more than five governors come forward. Governors agreed governors should ballot their choices.</p>	<p>All Governors</p> <p>all governors</p>
<p><b>5 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES/ WORKING PARTIES /SCHOOL COUNCIL</b></p> <p><b>i) Finance</b></p> <p>Jenny Smith outlined the minutes which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The current year's budget will hopefully end with a small underspend.</p> <p>Scheme of Financial Delegation had been circulated prior to the meeting. Jenny Smith outlined the reason for this document, and that it is based on a model LA policy. Needs to be signed off by the FGB. FGB agreed and accepted the document, Rachel Attwell signed the policy as required.</p> <p>SFVS (Schools Financial Value Standard) - Jenny Smith outlined the need for completion of the document, action plan etc. Jenny Smith and Ann Mitchell have completed the evaluation for governors to consider. The document is submitted to the Local Authority by the end of March 2014. We still have six weeks until submission. Jenny Smith suggested that should minor amendments be made before submission deadline that governors would be able to agree via e-mail. Governors agreed.</p> <p>Rachel Attwell asked about the R20 forms (self-assessment form relating to financial governance). Jenny Smith will put together an alternative document to be circulated to finance committee governors.</p> <p><b>ii) Learning</b></p> <p>Iain Parks outlined the minutes circulated prior to the meeting. He confirmed that the new national curriculum would be discussed at the next meeting. Current data available shows that we are where we would expect to be within the LA. Phonics test results have been an issue in the past, also the difference between the achievements of boys and girls, although our girls are consistently attaining higher than nationally.</p>	<p>Agreed and signed</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>Jenny Smith</p>

Valentine Mulholland asked about boys' performance - currently in maths our boys out-perform the girls but both out-perform their national counterparts.

The new curriculum will be discussed comprehensively at the next meeting, and also the INSET Day this week will be looking at the new curriculum.

Jenny Smith asked what 'Ever Six' related to - Answer: any child who has ever been entitled to free school meals over the last six years.

Valentine Mulholland said that 28% of the population qualify as 'Ever Six'. It will be a big challenge to identify the Free School Meal (FSM) children once meals are free to all KS1 children. Nationally they are the most under-performing group along with traveller children.

Rachel Attwell mentioned that schools also receive extra funding for forces children, and from April, adopted and special guardianship children.

We could look at including NI numbers etc., on our school admission forms to enable the LA to check for FSM eligibility. It is currently difficult to always identify these children as parents do not always come forward to claim.

ParentPay has encouraged children to have FSM as they are not so easily identified.

### iii) Premises Health & Safety

Minutes had been circulated with the meeting papers (following discussion at previous meeting).

### iv) GBSE

Unfortunately Sheila Cullen has been unable to circulate this, will discuss at next meeting.

Sheila  
Cullen

## 6 HEADTEACHER'S WRITTEN REPORT

This had been circulated prior to the meeting.

We are once again in Benchmark group 2 as our FSM proportion is 8.9%. Data is used to compare schools with similar criteria, but because we are on the cusp Regine Kruger looks at the finding of Group 1 also and we compare favourably with them.

It was confirmed that Tracey Grennan has returned to work on a phased-return. She will not be teaching in the first two weeks with a gradual increase of hours/days worked.

Two Reception teachers (job-share) have both left on maternity leave. The class is being covered by Victoria Brewer until Tracey Grennan is able to take on the role full-time.

Tracey Grennan will not be able to take over the support staff appraisals until the summer term. Throughout her absence her allocated appraisals have been shared out amongst the senior management team.

Pupil Premium (PP) - this funding does not have to be spent directly on each child, should be spent on need, sometimes children who are not entitled to PP but are very close (deprivation issues) - these would be given additional support. However, for a child entitled to PP but performing well with no issues, pupil premium funding would not be spent on this child.

This same approach will apply to the additional funding for adopted children. Adoptive parents are aware of the funding and some have already asked how this funding is to be spent on their child. The policy for spending this money needs to be clear. Learning Committee to look at the Pupil Premium Policy with a few to the additional funding. *School Counsellor* - have agreed additional hours to be funded by Pupil Premium.

*Racist & Bullying Incidents* - 2 incidents reported.

*Indoor Garden* - finally finished and all invoices paid.

*School Hall Floor* - the Local Authority look like they are taking responsibility and a replacement floor will be done next summer holiday.

*BLP* - Valentine Mulholland asked what this was. Chris Taylor outlined the scheme developing lifelong learning. This is being embedded into our curriculum. Each half term a new character is introduced across all three years. Downs Junior School are taking on a similar programme. Jonathan Cave said that the children are very enthusiastic and they use the skills of the characters in their class work to identify skills needed. Chris Taylor said that by the end of the year all characters will have been introduced to the children. Oli Rahman asked if other schools are doing this? Yes similar projects. This initiative started with an INSET day last Easter and we have a school working party deciding on how it is implemented in school. Oli Rahman commented on how good it was we were working with the Junior School.

## **7 SCHOOL'S PARTNERSHIP ADVISOR**

No visit to report. Next visit 4<sup>th</sup> March 2014 to look at Reception, identified in OFSTED report. We are not sure if our SPA would be able to support us during the forthcoming succession period.

## **8 GOVERNOR SURGERY**

Katie Salvidge confirmed that she had fed back to the parent who attended the last session.

FGB raised the question - Do we want to carry on with current format of governor surgeries? We currently have 3 per year at different times of the day. It is an informal drop-in for all parents.

Jenny Smith said that even though they may not be as well attended as they could be that it is still the best option we can offer.

Oli Rahman said that they show parents that the governors are accessible even if they do not access them or that issues raised are not always brought through the correct channel.

Regine Kruger felt that quite often issues raised at the surgeries are discussed at FGB when these meetings is not really the right forum for such discussion.

The governors holding the session need to decide who the issues should be dealt with, whether they are strategic. Rachel Attwell said that by bringing these issues to FGB it identified issues being raised.

Valentine Mulholland said it was good that FGB/Governors were accessible to parents. It does give governors a flavor of issues the school deal with. Regine Kruger said that a short summary of issues raised may be a better idea. Oli Rahman said that in the NHS often people at the bottom layer of an organization don't know what goes on at the top.

Sarah Axtell said we could just minute that the issues raised had been discussed.

The next surgery will be held early evening (5pm) by Oli Rahman and Jenny Smith (date to be liaised with Regine Kruger).

Oli Rahman  
& Jenny  
Smith

**9 FEEDBACK FROM GOVERNOR TRAINING**

Sarah Axtell and Valentine Mulholland are both going on Governor Induction Training. A number of our governors attended RaiseOnline training at Hertford Junior School.

**10 GOVERNOR VISITS**

Valentine Mulholland and Iain Parks to do visit and will arrange with Regine Kruger.

Valentine  
Mulholland  
/Iain Parks

**11 URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY CHAIR**

None.

**12 PROVISIONAL EXTRA FGB MEETING FOR SPRING 2**

If we are looking at recruitment we should have a meeting in March. Jules Gallagher mentioned that 5 people on an interview panel added up to nearly a third of the governing body. It was suggested that all governors could be invited to attend the next Personnel Committee meeting which would discuss this.

**13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Ann Mitchell asked if any governors were having trouble accessing the new e-mail? Please could governors contact her (296868) with any issues. PLEASE COULD ALL GOVERNORS CONFIRM THAT THEY ARE USING THEIR SCHOOL E-MAIL ADDRESSES.

Valentine Mulholland asked if teachers were striking on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014? No decision as yet.

all  
governors

**DATES & TIMES OF FGB MEETINGS 2013/14**

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2014, 6.00pm

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014, 7.00pm