



Attended by:

Tony Fallowfield
Kirsty Cargil
Gill Hammett
Jalia Kangave
Andy Croll
Gill Hammett
Aisha Noten
Ian Ayres
Hesione Quinn
Hildi Mitchell
Loren Davies
Richard Hairsaine
Helen Barker
Aisha Hoten

No.	Item
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>1. Welcome HQ welcomed everybody to the meeting and introduced Loren Davies (LD), the new co-opted governor, Helen Barker (HB) and Richard Hairsaine (RH) as potential parent governors, and Aisha Hoten as potential staff governor.</p> <p>LD explained that she works for Swale Academies Trust as Head of Estates, where she leads on health and safety, buildings and compliance. She was previously the business manager at an ESCC school and has worked in schools as a member of support staff.</p> <p>HB explained that she has a son in Y1 and one at the Junior school and has a background in Public Affairs.</p> <p>RH explained that he also has a son in Y1 and a daughter at the Junior school. He has a finance background and is currently a management consultant advising banks in how to work responsibly and ethically.</p> <p>Kirsty Cargil, the new Acting Deputy Headteacher, was also welcomed to the meeting.</p> <p>2. Apologies Apologies were received and accepted from Suzanne Morgan and Laura Dinsdale.</p> <p>3. Review Agenda There were no changes to the published agenda.</p> <p>4. To confirm arrangements for this meeting Governors confirmed that they were happy to proceed with the 'virtual' meeting.</p>
2.	<p>Governing Board Annual Business</p> <p>1. Election (confirmation) of Chair and Vice Chair As discussed at the summer meeting, governors approved Hesione Quinn as Chair of the Governing Board, and Tony Fallowfield as Vice-Chair.</p>

2. **Governors' Code of Conduct to be approved**
The Governors' Code of Conduct was approved.
 The commitment of governors was **discussed**. HM explained that the board needs to be strong to meet the challenges faced by the school. Governors were asked to reflect on the time commitment and to raise any concerns with HQ. Similarly, if anybody would like to take on more responsibility, please let HQ know.

3. **Approval of Roles and Responsibilities – to include further discussion of the proposal to establish a Finance Committee**

- **Finance Panel**
Governors agreed to establish a Finance Panel of three governors. Panel members were approved, as follows: LD, TF, HQ and SM.
 Contact will be made with the bursar, to arrange the first meeting of the panel.

Action:

- **Arrange the first meeting of the Finance Panel**

Other responsibilities were approved, as follows:

Role	Governors
Pay Panel	GH, AC, VJ
Standards	AB, GH, AH and LD – whose term ends in November
Safeguarding	VJ
Health and Safety	IA
Personnel	VJ with the possibility of a new governor shadowing
Income generating projects	AC, AH – HM explained that she feels that this will be an important aspect of the work of the GB. HM also suggested that Kirsty could join this group, as an Associate member.
HTPMR	AB, HQ, JK
GB Self Evaluation	GH It was explained that the evaluation document is complete and will require updating regularly
Inclusion - to include LAC, SEND and PPG	AB, JK and TF

4. **Governor Monitoring responsibility**
 It was explained that his will be covered under the Headteacher Report and linked to the School Development Plan.

5. **Governor Activity and Impact Statements**
 TF introduced the planned annual report on governors' activities, which will include reflection and evaluation of individual governors' contributions. Governors were reminded to complete and return individual reports to the clerk.

Action:

- **Governors to complete and return activity and impact statements to the clerk.**

	<p>6. Annual Meeting Schedule The annual meeting schedule was approved.</p>									
<p>3.</p>	<p>Register of Business Interests</p> <p>1. Annual declarations to be completed GN reminded governors to return the forms as soon as possible.</p> <p>2. Interests related to the current agenda to be declared None</p>									
<p>4.</p>	<p>Previous Meeting Minutes</p> <p>1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting, 1st July 2020 The minutes were approved as an accurate record. IA requested further discussion of the presentation by Richard Barker; it was confirmed that this will be covered later in the meeting.</p> <p>2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting, 13th July 2020 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>3. Review of actions The summary of actions was reviewed, as follows:</p> <p>a. Investigate best method of communication to parents about changes to the Ofsted Framework. It was agreed that this will be carried over until a more appropriate time, as inspections are currently paused.</p> <p>b. Information on the governor days to be circulated It was explained that this form of monitoring will take place virtually. Dates were agreed, as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="416 1144 1385 1301"> <tr> <td>5th November</td> <td>Raising attainment in writing</td> <td>Governor standards team</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18th March</td> <td>Assessment in foundation subjects</td> <td>Performance management team</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24th June</td> <td>School Development Plan</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>HM asked that all governors try to be available and let her know timings, so that activities can be timetabled through the day. Each day will focus on the calendar of milestones for the year.</p> <p>Following a further question, it was confirmed that governors will be allocated to the strands, in line with the roles agreed under agenda item 2.3.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HM to circulate the updated Governor Day plan and dates • Governors to RSVP <p>c. Training for teachers in how to teach left-handed children to write HM confirmed that she will raise this with the teachers. In response to a question, it was explained that some parents have been asked to provide equipment for their left-handed children. HM confirmed that there is equipment and she will follow up why this has happened.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff are aware that left-handed resources are available. <p>d. School Council to report to the FGB This will be followed up when the new council is in place.</p>	5 th November	Raising attainment in writing	Governor standards team	18 th March	Assessment in foundation subjects	Performance management team	24 th June	School Development Plan	
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	<p>e. Governor action plan to be linked to the SDP. This will be covered by the governor evaluation days.</p> <p>f. Check required governor actions regarding wraparound care. HM reported that she has spoken to Annette Barnard at the LA and it was confirmed that nothing additional is required from the governors. If the provision is for more than a term, a sub committee could be established, or oversight could be allocated to a H&S or finance committee.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Headteacher's Report HM explained that the format of the report has changed in a move to allow the GB to focus on key strategy.</p> <p>1. School Development Plan This will be a live and evolving document, based on the changes.</p> <p>2. Update on school opening and risk assessment It was reported that there have been no confirmed cases of COVID at the school. HM challenged the narrative of this as a 'lost generation,' explaining her view that, as the whole world has been affected, then nobody is behind anybody else.</p> <p>It was explained that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there has been baseline testing in Y2 which shows that, in most classes there is a range of ability – some have progressed, some have regressed. • The cohort has changed – families have been affected due to work, relocation, etc. PPG (Pupil Premium Grant) eligibility may look different to before. • The SDP will be reviewed as the situation changes; the approach to catch up needs to be considered. <p>A governor asked if individual tutoring would be likely to show impact. It was also asked if there would be funding for semi-curricular work after school. HM explained that children are tired and have less stamina than before though, as after school club is organised in year groups, some curriculum can be fed through, in an appropriate manner. After school club is at capacity in Y1 and Y2; YR has not yet started. Additional staff may be drafted to reduce the pressure of long days. Some catch-up work may need to be at home, possibly via online tutoring with children and parents at home.</p> <p>Governors asked if attendance has been negatively impacted by COVID. It was reported that attendance has been low, in line with other schools, though it has been up to 94%. There have been 7 absence due to possible symptoms, and 23 with other illness, such as colds. Anxiety is low; there is work with one or two vulnerable children. People are being cautious about illness; figures are hoped to settle over time. Individual children may be absent for short periods of isolation; staff absence may also rise as their children may need to isolate.</p> <p>The potential absence of the premises team due to illness has been discussed with Richard Barker at the LA, who has advised that this situation may need to be treated as a snow day. Similarly, lack of first aiders may necessitate partial closing.</p> <p>Governors asked if there is a blended learning approach for children not attending school. KC updated that home learning during lockdown has been reviewed. A blended learning policy is being written; staff planning will include blended learning sheets via Tapestry – so that absent children can access the main in-school learning. This will include differentiation and extension work. External resources, such as Oak Academy and BBC Bite Size will be posted alongside recordings of lessons in school. Reasonable expectations will be made clear, and evidence of learning will be requested.</p>

In response to a further **question**, it was confirmed that Tapestry will be available for all year groups, having originally been used in YR.

Governors **asked** if any families' lack of technology is a barrier to remote learning. It was explained that a laptop was provided for one child, and iPads were lent out during lockdown. Tapestry can be used on a 'phone, which was why it was selected.

It was also **asked** if all staff have internet access and technology for home use. The HT confirmed that this will be checked, though staff can use their 'phones to record lessons and upload them. Not all classrooms have webcams so more have been ordered.

3. Staff Wellbeing

Staff wellbeing was **discussed**, and the wellbeing group was asked to contact the staff, who are under considerable pressure for this stage of the year.

The governors expressed a wish to support the staff, and the HT, who they are aware work over and above their expectations.

It was **agreed** to ensure staff feel they can be proactive about struggling and ask for support. Their domestic responsibilities need to be considered; there needs to be a proactive approach.

SLT wellbeing was also **discussed**, as a form of role-modelling through the school. HM explained that she is encouraging staff to work from home whenever possible. It was **noted** that they may be more productive at home, due to lack of interruptions.

The potential appointment of a 'Wellbeing Champion' was **discussed**.

In response to a **question**, it was confirmed that the employee assistance programme provided by the staff insurance scheme will be investigated.

It was agreed that AB will arrange a wellbeing meeting, and that HM will role model prioritising to staff.

Action:

- **Wellbeing meeting to be arranged to support staff**
- **HM to role model prioritising**

4. Finance and Premises

A verbal update on the after-school club was given to governors. It was explained that long-term financial viability will need to be considered by the board.

Governors **queried** the support of the Junior School for the provision, and it was confirmed that there does not seem to be any sense of competition.

It was explained that the Junior School has asked if the infants would support the junior holiday club. Governors noted that the infant school is not in a position to run a holiday club, but it is not clear that the juniors could sustain bubbles and follow all the guidance. A compromise between the two schools may be needed.

This will be reported to the finance panel.

5. Health and Safety

Health and Safety was discussed, and it was confirmed that HM will send questions from the Health and Safety Executive to the governors so that they could talk to inspectors, if needed.

Action:

- **Send questions from the Health and Safety Executive to the governors**

PAN consultation

The GB agreed that they do not feel able to support any move to reduce the pupil admission number, for the following reasons:

- **The school is over subscribed**
- **50% of pupils are consistently siblings**
- **The school is strong in SEND**
- **Potential negative impact on Downs Junior School**
- **Equalities concerns as restricting choice reduces diversity**
- **Parental choice would be restricted by a reduced PAN**
- **The nearest local school is in the process of reducing numbers**

	<p>It was explained that parental views need to be sought and collated. It was agreed that GH will talk to parents, and the class representatives' network can also engage with the process.</p> <p>It was explained that the proposal was discussed with the staff in the summer; there is a list from Hannah Gates which can be incorporated in the response, and KC and AH will have further discussions.</p> <p>Governors noted that the consultation is due to start soon; there is a responsibility to support the process.</p> <p>It was asked if the HT must be politically neutral; it was explained that she does not have to be – though it would be better for governors and parents to lead the campaign. Parents mat also need to be told that HM wishes to appear neutral.</p> <p>It was agreed to submit a pack to the LA, in response to the consultation, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent PAN • Stakeholder views (parents, staff, Downs Junior School) • Data to show how far away the furthest child lives from the school. • Data to show the number of applications, if possible. HM advised that this may be needed via a FOI request. HM explained that the school is always over-subscribed, and some parents don't apply, as they live some distance away. <p>It was agreed that collating the information and circulating it to the governors is a priority.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Collate information required for a pack, in response to the PAN consultation.</i> <p>It was reported that HQ and HM have discussed developing a strategy document on the role of the GB – this will be circulated for comment, once it is available.</p>
7.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Safeguarding procedures were discussed, and it was explained that in the event of three days' non engagement the school will make contact and see if hard copies of work are needed. The communication will also include offers of other support, such as care or shopping. The initial calls will be made by the school office, and follow-up will be by the teacher or DSL.</p>
8.	<p>Any additional or urgent business</p> <p>A governor asked if the LA will provide a replacement LA governor. GN confirmed that the LA is looking for one.</p> <p>Training for new governors was queried. LD confirmed that she has received links to online training, to be booked via BEEM. It was confirmed that all new governors should complete the induction course, and all governors should complete finance training and at least one other course this year.</p> <p>A governor asked when the governors page on the website will be updated. AC confirmed that he has this in hand, and it will be complete by the end of the week.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New governor to complete induction course</i> • <i>All governors to have completed finance training</i> • <i>All governors to attend one training course per year.</i>
9.	<p>Date of next meetings were confirmed, as follows:</p>

	17 th November 9 th February 30 th March 4 th May 6 th July
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The meeting closed at 19.57

Summary of actions			
No	Action	By	Status
1	Arrange the first meeting of the Finance Panel	HM	
2	Governors to complete and return activity and impact statements to the clerk.	FGB	
3	HM to circulate the updated Governor Day plan and dates	HM	
4	Governors to RSVP re Governor Days	FGB	
5	Ensure staff are aware that left-handed resources are available.	HM	
6	Wellbeing meeting to be arranged to support staff HM to role model prioritising	AB HM	
7	Send questions from the Health and Safety Executive to the governors	HM	Complete
8	Collate information required for a pack, in response to the PAN consultation.	FGB	
9	New governor to complete induction course	LD	
10	All governors to have completed finance training	FGB	
11	All governors to attend one training course per year.	FGB	