

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DOWNSSELL PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY  
HELD ON MONDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 5.00 PM AT THE SCHOOL**

Present: Mr Martin Doré (Chair)-Local Authority Governor

**Co-opted Governor**

Mr Robert Morini

**Head Teacher**

Mr Deena Chetty

**Parent Governor**

Ms Kirsty Sultani-Jones

**Staff Governor**

Ms Maryam Osman

Clerk to the Governors: Ms Caroline Russell

Also present: Ms Claretta Jean, Deputy Head Teacher  
Ms Maria Regan, Deputy Head Teacher  
Miss Monwara Rahman, ICT Leader  
Ms Marina Kaloki, School Business Manager (Item 8)

**Summary of agreements and actions:**

<b>Minute reference</b>	<b>Formal agreements and/or actions identified</b>	<b>Named person(s) for action(s) identified</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
6.2.6.	Staffing Overview: Head Teacher to provide to Governing Body after 31 May resignation date.	Head Teacher	
8.	Finance Items: (i) Budget options to be presented on 13/05/2019 (ii) Schools' Financial Value Standard Return: School Business Manager to complete for signature by chair of governors	Head Teacher  School Business Manager/ Chair of Governors	13/05/2019  31/03/2019
9.	Revised OFSTED Inspection Framework: Jeff Hart to provide a GB training session.	JH/GB	Ongoing
11.	Date and Time of Next Meeting: Monday 25 March 2019-5pm-School. Agenda items per minute.	All to note and Governor Services to action	25/03.2019

Chair's Initials:

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Welcome

All were welcomed to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Dave Leaker and Ms Sumy Choudhury.

1.3. Quorum

The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 5 governors present.

1.4 Notice of Any Other Business/Confidential Items

-Staffing-Confidential Item

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1 Declarations of Pecuniary and Personal Interest Relating to the Current Agenda Item

There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting.

**3. MINUTES**

3.1 Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting Held on 14 January 2019

These were received and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting. Mr Doré signed a copy of the minutes for retention by the School.

3.2. Matters Arising

3.2.1. There were none not considered elsewhere on the agenda.

**4. CHAIR'S ACTION**

4.1. MD reported that he regularly visits the School and meets with the Head Teacher.

**5. CURRICULUM PRESENTATION-ICT AND COMPUTING BY MISS MANWARA RAHMAN, ICT LEADER**

5.1. Curriculum Content and Definitions of ICT and Computing

A handout was circulated explaining this (ICT relates principally to the communication infrastructure and computing to technical aspects including coding, digital literacy, programming, algorithms, use of laptops and microscopes and use of cameras.

5.2. Computer Pioneers

These are regularly referred to when teaching children e.g. the life and work of the late Steve Jobs.

5.3. Pupil Digital Leaders

These support children in Early Years.

5.4. Curriculum Progression

Provision includes a Key Stage 1 coding club and programming in Year 6. Extensive staff training is provided via continuing professional development and a part time ICT technician is employed to address and rectify reported problems with the ICT leader.

5.5. Internet Safety

The School won the first e-safety award in LBWF. It holds regular themed safer internet days, class discussions and assemblies re e-safety. Parents are also informed of e-safety principles and alerts are given re current dangers. Pupils recently devised a Downsell School internet safety acrostic which is widely displayed.

**Q.** What are PEG ratings? **A.** A number indicating the suitable minimum age of use on games and applications.

5.6. Involvement of Wider Community

5.6.1. The School has a well-developed website (displayed) and Twitter with very positive feedback received on both. The latest news section includes teacher uploads, diary and awards. The Key is regularly checked for new and relevant online requirements.

5.6.2. The site includes information about school policies and performance, General Data Protection Regulation and photographs. There are articles for parents to access and copies of present and past newsletters. Pictures of children are locked to external users.

5.6.3. There are sections relating to pupil voice and the Parent Teacher Association. There are regular emails to parents and quick links for reporting of absences.

5.7. Next Steps

These include applying for ICT mark accreditation.

5.8. Questions/Discussion /Comments

E-Safety work in school was commended.

5.8.1. **Q.** Is there anything that we as governors could do? **A.** A governor could be invited to join a digital leaders meeting.

5.8.2. **Q.** How is work on internet safety organised? **A.** By use of age appropriate language and images from Reception to Year 6 to explain internet safety principles e.g. 'tell an adult', 'don't click messages'. There are regular internet assemblies in which principles are outlined e.g. re privacy of passwords, permissions, control, applications consent using realistic scenarios.

5.8.3. **Q.** Do children raise specific issues? **A.** Yes and we address any safeguarding issues. There will be an ICT revamp for September with online safety concerns regularly revisited.

5.8.4. **Q.** Are there any areas of need e.g. digital presence, social media? **A.** We will apply for ICT mark accreditation, we discuss what has gone well, ask children regularly for their ideas and recently took children to an ICT workshop at the Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green.

5.8.5. **Q.** Is there an imbalance between the time spent by children on and off line do you think? **A.** It can be difficult to find a balance. Parents who don't have online access are offered opportunities to use computers in school. By the end of Year 6 children still need to be able to write well and both children and adults need to be able to adapt to changing technology.

5.8.6. **Q.** Is there too much exposure to technology in Early Years? **A.** School is a safe, secure contained environment in which we can teach vital skills and principles e.g. re internet safety which may not be taught at home. Similar messages are taught across year groups.

5.8.7. **Q.** Are children taught about different careers and business? **A.** Some of our cross curricular units cover this and we have Careers' Week.

- 5.8.8. **Q.** Could a Google Translate facility be offered to support parents with English as an additional language to read documents in English? **A.** Will consider that. Ms Rahman was thanked for her presentation.

## **6. HEAD TEACHER'S UPDATE**

### **6.1. Special Educational Needs and Disability Review-Mr Jeff Hart, 30-01-2019**

- 6.1.1. A report was received and considered including context, strengths, provision and recommendations. The report was generally positive but with recommendations for action including changes to processes and support for children with Education and Care plans.
- 6.1.2. A proposal for the special educational needs coordinator post will be made to make it more sustainable in the context of reducing school funding for special and additional needs and to make the provision better meet the needs of the children concerned.
- 6.1.3. The first 10 hours of provision are funded by the School, the remainder by the local authority. Some children have very high needs and need constant 1:1 in order to support them in the school.  
**Q.** So there has been a significant shift in approach from 1:1 support to identifying individual needs? **A.** Yes. 1:1 support can be isolating for children educationally and socially so more integration with peers is encouraged in lessons and at playtimes and lunchtimes. This has had the effect of reducing exclusions and negative behaviour with a managed handover at lunchtime.
- 6.1.4. **Q.** Are there issues re managing behaviour? **A.** High needs children are most vulnerable so the school works hard to avoid exclusions as there is likely to be less support at home if children are excluded from school. A parenting programme is planned with Early Help (Stepping Stones then Triple P).
- 6.1.5. Children have an individual plan and timetable and the supporting adult also has a timetable e.g. for speech and language support. All teachers complete an overview sheet re the need for external agency support as a basis for referrals e.g. educational psychologist, English as an Additional Language and for emotional and behavioural difficulties. Meetings are held with parents if necessary and supporting measures proposed to modify behaviour and keep children in the school (they are likely to regress in special school where they may see inappropriate behaviours). Staffing allocations have been changed to better meet children's needs. This links well to the new OFSTED framework which emphasises inclusivity.
- 6.1.6. **Q.** What is the reason for the high number of EHC plans? **A.** In response to children's needs with external assessments sought if necessary in order to support to the values and ethos of the School. 10 children currently attend The Limes in Walthamstow for a sensory soft play facility for ½ day per week in response to EHC plans.

### **6.2. Staffing Update**

- 6.2.1. A written update was received. Particular difficulties were noted with year 5 staffing re absences and supply cover. Induction and ongoing support has been instigated by senior leadership.
- 6.2.2. Maternity leave and staff changes were noted. School Centred Initial Teacher Training placements were noted with a number of trainees applying for permanent posts. Trainees from the University of East London are also used.

6.2.3. Significant continuing professional development (CDP) training is provided to support staff with input from sources such as Whitefields School, Davies Lane Primary School and Gwyn Jones Primary. 9 staff are now trained to deliver speech and language and social skills groups.

6.2.4. The local authority's Director of Special Educational Needs and Disability has visited and is supportive of the School's approach in this area. A proposal to amend the SENCO role will follow with a focus on supporting teachers.

6.2.5. **Q.** Re the year 5 staffing issues are parents aware? **A.** Yes and will be advised once staffing has stabilised.

6.2.6. **Q.** Re changes from September-the situation is challenging but temporary? **A.** We've been proactive in recruiting Schools' Direct candidates and have proposals to develop the curriculum empowering individuals and building leadership capacity. The School needs to change significantly reflecting funding pressures and changes to the OFSTED inspection framework emphasising curriculum content. The aim is for experienced teachers to internally cover planning, preparation and assessment time and staff absence.

**ACTION:** Staffing overview to be provided by the Head Teacher in the summer term after the May 31<sup>st</sup> resignation deadline.

## 7. GOVERNOR TRAINING

This item was noted.

## 8. FINANCIAL ITEMS-MS MARINA KALOKI, SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER

### 8.1. Budget Monitoring Report to Month 9

This was presented (tabled and prior e-circulated) with a predicted end of year revenue balance of £77,216 noted.

#### 8.1.1. **Revenue Income**

##### IO3 High Needs Top Up Funding

Additional LA income of £101,185 has been received but this may not be sustainable in 2019/2020 and PFI contract costs are expected to continue to increase.

Pupil numbers at the School are also reducing so a staffing restructure is likely to be needed in order to break even in 2019/2020 and thereafter with LA concern expressed about the level of school balances.

An adverse variance re pupil premium funding was noted of £11,659 due to falling pupil premium funding arising from changes to Universal Credit and rehousing of families out of the area. These factors are beyond the control of the School and have significantly reduced available funding for a future special educational needs coordinator role.

#### 8.1.2. **Revenue Expenditure**

##### E03 Education Support Staff

The negative variance is due to pay increases and internal cover costs.

E19 Learning Resources not ICT: The negative variance of £18,857 relates to use of additional resources e.g. paper and photocopying.

E28 Bought in Professional Services: The negative variance includes educational psychologist reports re additional special educational needs.

**ACTION:** Budget options to be presented on 13 May 2019.

#### 8.1.3. **Capital Expenditure**

The capital allocation has not been spent although works to the steps have been completed.

Planned work to the Reception gates have not been completed so £85,085 will be carried forward to 2019/2020. Pension changes will affect the 2019/2020 which are expected to be government funded next year but possibly not thereafter. A capital closedown template was noted with the in year allocation not spent. An additional grant allocation has been received with £34,324.10 to be carried forward.

8.2. Schools' Financial Value Standard

This was prior e-circulated and hard copy tabled. It was noted that completion of 25 questions by 31-03-2019 is mandatory.

8.2.1. Governors' Questions and Comments

**Q6.** Does the School have access to an adequate level of financial expertise, including when specialist finance staff are absent e.g. on sick leave? **A.** Yes, the Local Authority has provision for governors to buy ad hoc assistance when specialist finance staff are absent.

**Q14.** Does the School benchmark its income and expenditure annually against that of similar schools and investigate further where any category appears to be out of line? **A.** Yes, we benchmark against other schools of similar size.

**Q18.** Does the School consider collaboration with others e.g. on sharing staff or joint purchasing, where that would improve value for money? **A.** Regarding finance we share ideas via a school business managers group. Previously, we shared an education welfare officer with Norlington School.

**Q19.** Can the School give examples of where it has improved the use of resources during the past year? **A.** As above.

**Q21.** Are there adequate arrangements in place to guard against fraud and theft by staff, contractors and suppliers (please note any instance of fraud or theft detected in the last 12 months)? **A.** There is an LA audit group based on themed audits. In a previous year (2015) we had a case where our bank paid a cheque to a non-existent account. (Bank to resolve).

**Q22.** Are all staff aware of the School's whistleblowing arrangements and to whom they should report concerns? **A.** We have a whistleblowing policy available to all staff.

**Q24.** Does the School have adequate arrangements for audit of voluntary funds? **A.** There is a school fund which will be audited at the year end.

**ACTION:** School Business Manager to complete return for signature by chair of governors.

9. **REVISED DRAFT OFSTED INSPECTION FRAMEWORK**

9.1. The Head Teacher stated that 4 schools have been inspected in Waltham Forest on a pilot basis reflective of the revised framework. This will focus less on internal data and more on curriculum content and substance.

9.2. There will be a new quality of education judgement relating to objectives, implementation and impact. Schools currently categorised as 'good' should expect a two day inspection. The majority of inspection time is likely to be in classes including book scrutiny and talking to children. There will be separate judgements for personal development, behaviour and attitudes and provision for vulnerable groups e.g.

children with English as an additional language and pupil premium funding. The notice period for inspections has reduced from previous day to same day.

**Q.** So, on balance, this will be a better system with more emphasis on pupil experience? **A.** Yes, more emphasis on pupil experience and curriculum and less on passing tests. There will be more focus on progress made within an enhanced curriculum but schools will be still be held accountable for end of year results.

**ACTION:** Jeff Hart to provide Governing Body training session re new framework.

**10. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018/19**

This has been circulated to governors and earlier considered in detail.

**11. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

**11.1 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday 25 March 2019-5pm-School

**11.2 Agenda Items:**

-Standard+

-Head Teacher's Report.

-Update on 2 year provision.

-Curriculum Presentation re Personal, Social and Health Education.

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS-STAFFING MATTERS MINUTED AS CONFIDENTIAL UNDER SEPARATE COVER (STAFF LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT).**

The meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.

Chair: ..... (print)

..... (sign)

Date: .....

Chair's Initials:  
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