

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
DOWNSSELL PRIMARY SCHOOL
GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 17:00hrs
AT THE SCHOOL**

- D R A F T -

Present:

Chair

Martin Doré [MD] **Local Authority Governor**

Co-opted Governor

Mandeep Hothi [MH] (*left at 17:30hrs*)

Thissa De Silva [TS] (*arrived at 17:30hrs*)

Parent Governor

Robert Morini [RM]

Staff Governor

Karen Britton [KB], Elected Staff Governor (voting)

Deena Chetty [DC], The Headteacher (voting)

In attendance

Leonie Daly [LD], Deputy Headteacher (non-voting)

Claretta Jean [CJ], Assistant Headteacher (non-voting)

Marina Kaloki [MK], School Business Manager (non-voting)

Clerk to the Governing Body: Victoria Mitchell [VM]

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
4.4	Governors to sign Code Of Conduct.	All governors	Immediate
10.1	Leonie Daly to e-mail Gobs data on a comparison between pupil premium pupils and non-pupil premium pupils in the school.	Leonie Daly	Immediate
11.1	Marking and Feedback Policy – governors to read this updated policy and note the changes.	All governors	Before next meeting
14.1	Governor Thissa De Silva to present the Maths Link Governor Report to the next FGB meeting – agenda item.	Agenda item	Next meeting
15.1	All governors to complete their skills audit	All governors	Before next meeting

Chair's Initials:

Next meeting	Monday 27 March 2017	All governors	To note
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1. NEW PARENT GOVERNOR

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Robert Morini who had been elected as a parent governor. The governors welcomed him to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 The meeting received apologies from Joanne Caesar. These were accepted. The meeting was quorate with six governors present.

2.2 The Chair stated that there were two confidential matters to be discussed at the end of the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Governor Karen Britton declared that she was also in post as the Treasurer of PODS (a Downsell School parent organisation).

4. GOVERNING BODY

4.1 The governing body was informed that since the election of the new parent governor there were now no vacancies on the governing body.

4.2 The Chair reminded the governing body that they were able to appoint a number of associate governors to sit as non-voting members and to suggest anybody that may be of value to the FGB in this position.

4.3 The school was required under section 538 of the 1996 Education Act to keep updated governor details on the National Database of Governors, as well as publish a number of details on the school website. The Chair stated that the school had been given this power and were maintaining this information as necessary. The Chair suggested photographs of the governors would be a useful addition to the school website.

4.4 The Chair informed the meeting that any governor who had not signed the Governor Code Of Conduct this academic year must do so urgently and before the next meeting of the FGB.

ACTION: Governors to sign Code Of Conduct.

5. MINUTES

5.1 The meeting received the minutes of the inquorate FGB meeting held on 14 November 2016. These were accepted as an accurate record with no amendments and signed off by the Chair.

5.2 The meeting also received the minutes of the FGB meeting held on 17 October 2016. These were accepted as an accurate record.

5.3 Matters arising from the minutes of 14 November 2016

5.3.1 Action 3.2.4 – a new parent governor had now been elected.

5.3.2 Action 4.2 – the Headteacher had now circulated the School Monitoring Schedule.

5.3.3 Action 6.2 – the School Business Manager confirmed that the school received a platinum service from Governor Services. The Chair stated that this was in excess of the school's current needs and proposed having this changed to a gold service agreement.

5.4 The minutes of the meeting of the 14 November 2016 were then signed off by the Chair of the Governing Body and placed on file at the school.

6. FINANCIAL REPORTS

6.1 The School Business Manager presented period 9 budget monitoring reports to the governors for their perusal.

6.2 The School Business Manager stated that so far 75% of local authority funding had been received. This was in line with the expected allocation.

6.3 It was expected there would be a £25,000 clawback of SEN funds due to pupils with high needs leaving the school. The School Business Manager stated that one of these high needs pupils had since returned to the school after leaving. She had contacted the local authority to ensure the correct amount of local authority SEN funding was provided to the school as a result.

6.4 There were less pupil premium children at the school this year. This would result in a drop in pupil premium funds.

6.5 The school expected to receive just over £5,000 income from catering and contributions.

6.6 A staff welfare fund of £2,000 had been set up as requested by the governors.

6.7 Teachers salary costs would now be less than expected as result of a high wage member of staff leaving the school. The vacancy has been covered by in-house staff leading to a cost saving.

6.8 The school may need to use its contingency fund at the end of the financial year to cover the cost of teaching staff opting to join the local government pension scheme. A number of high salary staff were not members of the pension scheme and if they were to join this would be a high cost to the school.

6.9 As Downsell Primary School was a PFI school the premises budget was expected to be fully spent at the end of the financial year.

6.10 Question: Why is the professional services budget overspent by £23,478?

Answer:

The school has employed some elite sport services. This was not anticipated at the start of the financial year. This is as a result of the pupils doing well in sporting competitions. A lot of the cost is for transport to the events.

6.11 Question: Would there be an additional cost to the school of a number of staff joining the pension scheme?

Answer:

The School Business Manager explained to the FGB at a previous meeting that there were three long-term members of staff who were not members of the pension

scheme at present. If these three members of staff were to join the pension scheme, which they can do at any time, the total employer contribution to the pension fund would increase significantly. As result a contingency fund has been established to cover that potential cost. However there is an inbuilt flexibility to this contingency fund if these members of staff do not join the pension scheme before the end of the financial year.

- 6.12 The School Business Manager explained that due to delays with capital projects there had been no expenditure as yet.
- 6.13 Question: What was the purpose of this capital fund?
Answer:
It was going to be used to build a canopy across the EYFS play area. However it was subsequently decided to spend on IT equipment instead which was more urgent.
- 6.14 Question: Can capital expenditure be spent on computer hardware and software?
Answer:
Yes both.
- 6.15 Question: We understand the school can claim back money from Keir?
Answer:
Yes the school can usually get between £2,000 and £2,500 returned from Keir as a result of issues being put on the Keir helpdesk.
- 6.16 The School Business Manager reported that the predicted capital and revenue balances at the end of the 2016-17 financial year were forecast to be £75,167.
- 6.17 The School Business Manager informed governors that the local authority had informed the school that its PFI figure had been wrongly calculated in the past as it should have been calculated based on pupil numbers. As result the school will be due money back. The school was waiting to be informed by the local authority of the correct calculation.
- 6.18 The Headteacher informed governors that it was anticipated that the school would receive £300,000 less funding next financial year due to the government changing the way schools are funded.
- 6.19 The School Business Manager issued a benchmarking report to the governors based on the school's expenditure in 28 categories. Governors looked at the graphs in this report.
- 6.20 Question: Is the school being benchmarked against other local schools or other London schools in this report?
Answer:
Outer London schools.
- 6.21 Question: Is Downsell Primary School the highest funded local authority school?
Answer:
No it is one of a group of second highest funded schools.

- 6.22 The Chair thanked the School Business Manager for the benchmarking report which he said was very useful for the governors as it posed various questions on how the school spends its money compared to other similar schools.

7. THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- 7.1 The Headteacher issued his report to the FGB.

- 7.2 The Headteacher stated that the number of pupils in the school was fluctuating around 600 pupils.

- 7.3 Question: How many pupil places does Downsell Primary School have?

Answer:

702 places. About 600 of those are filled.

- 7.4 Question: Why are so many pupils leaving Downsell Primary School?

Answer:

A few years ago there was an increase in the number of pupils leaving the school due to the opening of the nearby Chobham Academy. More recently the benefits system has led to many pupils moving out of the local area. Some of the school pupils now live as far away as Romford and they journey in from there each morning. This results in some of them eventually transferring to schools closer to their new homes.

- 7.5 The Headteacher stated that the school improvement targets were those that were identified by Ofsted in their last inspection. Evidence was being gathered to share the work that had been done at the school to achieve these targets. As the Headteacher had joined the school at the beginning of the academic year 2016-17 he was also identifying new targets to add.

- 7.6 The Headteacher informed governors that the school effectiveness adviser had looked at the senior leaders' job descriptions in the school.

- 7.7 A local authority review will take place at the school on 23 February 2017. The Headteacher would speak to the Chair of Governors about how the day would proceed prior to consulting the rest of the governors.

- 7.8 Question: Has this local authority review been triggered for a reason?

Answer:

An inspection in the previous year found that the school SATS results were low. The Headteacher also decided to leave and a problem was identified with the governance of the school. As a result the school would be inspected this year to ensure the issues identified the previous year were being addressed.

- 7.9 The Headteacher stated that the number of reported homophobic or racist incidents in the school was two. However he felt the reality was much higher than those reported from what he had observed. He felt there was a need to address this and make sure the pupils learnt not to do it again. There was also a need to address the physical behaviour of some of the pupils. The school now had a zero tolerance of any form of physical behaviour or violence. The plan was to put in place in-house counselling for families with needs as there were some pupils who were bringing problems and behaviour from home.

- 7.10 Assistant Headteacher Claretta Jean then presented the Behaviour Ladder Guide for Governors (Spring 2017) to the FGB. She explained that different aspects of behaviour were noted by staff and a pupil ascended or descended the behaviour ladder throughout the day as a result of their individual behaviour. A house point system and rewards had been introduced to reward good behaviour. A marble jar system and bravo awards had been introduced to reward classes for their behaviour. The Headteacher predicted the high number of pupil exclusions would begin to reduce by the end of this academic year once the behaviour ladder had become more accepted in the school.
- 7.11 The Headteacher stated that there were many behaviour incidents during the lunch time period. The school was working on reducing the number.
- 7.12 Question: Are the rewards for good behaviour individual rewards or rewards for the whole class?
Answer:
The achievement is an individual achievement but the reward will be for the whole class.
- 7.13 Question: How does the school ensure that there is a consistent approach in giving the rewards from class to class?
Answer:
Previously there was a concern about a lack of consistency across the school but now Assistant Headteacher Claretta Jean is trying to ensure consistency from class to class. All incidents are recorded in a behaviour book in each class and she reads that book twice a week.
- 7.14 Question: This system of behaviour management seems to be very labour intensive?
Answer:
The teachers have to ensure pupil behaviour is managed anyway, and that is very labour intensive. There have been no complaints about this new system so far. The new system is seen to be working and the children understand it.
- 7.15 The Headteacher explained that this new system was designed to embed good behaviour and gave them time to reflect on bad behaviour when it occurred.
- 7.16 Governors thanked the staff for this presentation on the Behaviour Ladder Guide for Governors.
- 7.17 The School Business Manager gave a brief talk on the breakfast club at the school. Meals cost £1 per child and has proved to be very popular on some days of the week, depending on the menu served that day. Over 200 meals are served each week and this number remains fairly consistent from week to week.
- 7.18 Question: Has the school made any money on the breakfast club?
Answer:
No as there is a staffing cost to take into account.
- 7.19 School clubs are charged at £10 per pupil. This is very good value for the pupils. The Headteacher explained that he would advertise the school clubs on the school website as it showed Downsell was providing clubs that neighbouring schools were

not and therefore would help to promote the school. A named person in the school office will be assigned to take responsibility for enquiries about the clubs.

8. PUPIL ATTENDANCE - THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- 8.1 Governor Karen Britton explained the safeguarding issues that lead to pupils still being listed on the school roll despite having ceased to attend the school. The school was not allowed to remove them from the school roll until they have been placed in a new school, despite them moving out of the area or the country completely. The local authority is required to carry out safeguarding checks on their new school location. There have been delays in these checks being carried out which has led to the Downsell school roll being inaccurate.
- 8.2 The Headteacher stated that a formal complaint would be made to London Borough of Waltham Forest with regard to these delays.
- 8.3 Pupil attendance at the school was currently 93.4%, below the government target. Follow up interviews with the Headteacher are now taking place with the parents of any pupil with attendance below 95%.
- 8.4 Question: Are there many of these interviews?
Answer:
Yes a great deal.
- 8.5 Question: How do the parents take these interviews?
Answer:
It varies. The school tries to offer them things if the parents require some aspects of support.
- 8.6 The Headteacher informed governors that five truancy cases were approaching possible prosecution.
- 8.7 The school was working to try and improve attendance. Work was also being done to reduce pupil lateness in order to find out if the pupils had problems the school was not aware of. The Headteacher hoped attendance figures would improve towards the end of the academic year.

9. DATA - THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- 9.1 Deputy Headteacher Leonie Daly presented data tables to the governors. The data showed the following:

Phonics – predicted GLD 2017 = 73%

Phonics – predicted Year 1 2017 = 90% - *(the Headteacher stated that he felt this was a very aspirational figure, but the school would support the pupils to attain this figure)*

Reading – expected 2017 Key Stage 1 = 80%

Writing – predicted 2017 Key Stage 1 = 75%

Maths – predicted 2017 Key Stage 1 = 85%

Reading Test – predicted 2017 Key Stage 2 = 80%

Writing – TA predicted 2017 Key Stage 2 = 85%

Maths Test – predicted 2017 Key Stage 2 = 80%

9.2 Question: Is this teacher assessment data?

Answer:

Yes.

9.3 The Headteacher stated that there was a need to ensure the data was consistent across the school to ensure the school didn't suffer the consequences of inflated data at the end of the academic year. Leonie Daly was responsible for ensuring the data was consistent across the school.

9.4 Question: Some of the assessment data in these tables is unusual – has it been checked?

Answer:

Yes there is some unusual data in these tables at present.

9.5 Question: The percentage of EAL pupils in the school seems to be high?

Answer:

Yes 97% of pupils in the school are EAL.

9.6 The Headteacher explained that teaching observations would not take place this term. Instead teachers would observe and give feedback to each other.

9.7 The Headteacher explained that marking and feedback was currently inconsistent across the school. Teachers would be given dates to adhere to complete that marking and feedback.

9.8 The Headteacher stated that he was aware that some year 6 pupils had big gaps in their previous learning and the school was finding it a challenge to fill those gaps.

10. PUPIL PREMIUM - THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

10.1 Deputy Headteacher Leonie Daly agreed to e-mail governors data on a comparison between pupil premium pupils and non-pupil premium pupils in the school.

ACTION: Leonie Daly to e-mail governors data on a comparison between pupil premium pupils and non-pupil premium pupils in the school.

10.2 The Headteacher concluded his report to governors by including a calendar of school events for their information.

11. MARKING AND FEEDBACK POLICY

11.1 The Chair stated that an updated Marking and Feedback Policy had been emailed to governors and requested that they all read this policy and note the changes.

(at 19:20hrs Deputy Headteacher Leonie Daly left the meeting.)

12. SCHOOL WEBSITE – GOVERNORS' SECTION

12.1 The Chair informed governors that the minutes of governing body meetings since its reconstitution were now displayed on the school website.

13. CHAIR'S ACTION

13.1 The Chair informed governors that since the last meeting of the governing body he had attended the school to be shown around and also attend meetings regarding a matter that will be dealt with in the confidential section of this meeting.

14. LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS

- 14.1 The governing body agreed to receive a report from the link governor for Maths at the next FGB meeting.

ACTION: Governor Thissa De Silva to present the Maths Link Governor Report to the next FGB meeting – agenda item.

15. SKILLS AUDITS

- 15.1 Governors were asked to complete the skills audit that had been sent to them by Governor Services before the next meeting of the governing body.

ACTION: All governors to complete their skills audit as requested.

16. GOVERNOR TRAINING

- 16.1 Governors were informed of a training event taking place on 7 February 2017 at the school. Helen Jones was a trainer who would inform the school what the Ofsted inspectors were looking for during Ofsted inspections. The plan was for her to carry out a mock inspection of the school later in the year.

17. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 17.1 None to note.

18. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- 18.1 The dates of the next meetings were agreed as follows:

Monday 27 March 2017

Monday 8 May 2017

Monday 17 July 2007

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 19.1 The School Business Manager requested the school obtain a charge card for making online purchases. Buying online would allow the school to take advantage of more competitive prices.

- 19.2 Question: What system will be in place to ensure the charge card is not misused?

Answer:

The School Business Manager will look after the charge card but the purchases will be made by the administrator.

- 19.3 The governing body agreed on the purchase of this charge card so long as a £2,000 limit was placed on its use.

20. A CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

- 20.1 School staff then left the room and the governing body went into closed session to discuss two confidential items.

The meeting closed at 20:10hrs.

Print:

Signed:

Date:

Chair's Initials: