

**DOWNNS INFANT SCHOOL**  
**MINUTES OF FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2015**

**PRESENT:** Rachel Attwell, Tracey Jarrett, Iain Parks, Jenny Smith, Anna Korman, Katie Salvidge, Sheila Cullen, Jonathan Cave, Oli Rahman, Alan Cronshaw, Sarah Axtell, Jules Gallagher, Claire McCann

**1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Niall Howell and Craig Mathieson - apologies were accepted by FGB.

*All apologies should be sent to clerk prior to FGB meetings.*

Apologies agreed and accepted

**2 OPPORTUNITY TO DECLARE BUSINESS INTERESTS**

None declared.

**3 APPROVE MINUTES FROM 3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2014**

Minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. These were agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record.

Minutes agreed

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

i) Premises Assistant - recruitment of Premises Assistant has been successful, 2 month probation meeting taking place soon.

ii) CPD Report - will be circulated at next meeting

iii) Succession Planning - no one racing to take over Chair of FGB.

RA confirmed that as from July 2016 she would wish to resign as chair of governors.

**4 HEADTEACHER'S WRITTEN REPORT**

This had been circulated prior to the meeting. JS asked about a child whose parents had asked for an extended leave of absence; TJ reported that following no contact from the family the child had been removed from our roll.

JG asked about the increase in staff absence and asked what the process is for returning to work and the reasons for absence? TJ confirmed that all absences had been staff reporting in sick, with a large increase in respiratory illness. Some of the absence relates to staff off for long periods of time. 'Return to work' meetings are held with staff, and when they reach the threshold for illness absence formal meetings are held. No illness has been reported for stress reasons. Absence amongst SEN support staff has been particularly high.

JG reported that the Local Authority are tightening up on absence management. TJ has two formal absence review meetings arranged for staff who have reached the threshold for formal absence review meeting.

Regarding the current year one job share, TJ reported that we may have to advertise for a two-day a week teacher.

RA raised the problem with the old tree in the bottom playground.

TJ confirmed that it had been pruned 5 years ago and had cost £1,000 then. B&H are arranging for a tree specialist to inspect the tree. Governors suggested we look for our own (cheaper) tree surgeon. TJ reported this will not be possible as the tree is under a 'protection order' and all works have to be approved by the council.

## **5 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/ SCHOOL COUNCIL**

### ***i) Resources Committee(to include SFVS)***

Minutes had been circulated prior to this meeting along with the SFVS report which needs to be submitted by end of March to Local Authority, along with the Scheme of Financial Delegation (RA to sign). JS explained that FGB needed to agree and accept these two documents. FGB accepted the Scheme of Financial Delegation. JS then explained the SFVS document to governors. She explained that it was a self-evaluation of our financial processes which ensures that governors are aware of our financial processes. IP questioned that we had not been audited since 2007. CMcC said that on a training session she attended she was told that a financial audit can be requested at any time (free of charge). Resources Committee to discuss at next meeting.

JS said that a slight amendment would be made to Section 18 about internal audit by the Local Authority. It was agreed that RA to sign the document on behalf of FGB.

### ***ii) Teaching, Learning & Personnel Committee***

Minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. JS asked about Target Tracker, would it be LA-wide? TJ explained that it is used by many B&H schools but is not borough wide. TJ is very familiar with Target Tracker and it was felt that we need to be using the same tracker as the Junior School and TJ confirmed that the Junior School would be using the same software. RA pointed out that Target Tracker is widely used across the country and easier to compare own school's data with a number of other schools when national levels go.

JG questioned why our L3 targets for this year's KS1 are lower? TJ explained that this was due to the current year 2 cohort. TJ is looking at the end of year targets closely.

The minutes should have stated 85% of universal free school meals and not free school meal eligibility. TJ said that our figures are completely meal dependant i.e. Friday is chip day and roast is on Wednesday.

Scheme of Financial  
Delegation agreed

SFVS agreed and  
signed by Chair

**iii) Collaborative Working Party with DJS**

Minutes of recent meeting are yet to be circulated. RA outlined progress. TJ meeting with Junior School headteacher regularly. There is now a real sense of both schools working together. We will be looking at drawing up a memorandum of understanding between the two schools - a strategic overview of the collaboration. Once ongoing structures have been set up the working party may not need to meet.

CMcC asked how many attend the meetings - four from each FGB. SA confirmed that now she is SEND governor she will be looking at giving up membership of the Resources Committee as she has now joined the TLP committee, and leave the collaborative committee. JG agreed to take her place on the Collaborative committee.

JG

**iv) PILL (Partners in Leadership and Learning)**

RA explained that these are groups of headteachers, governors, teachers, etc supporting each other. We need to look at whether these groups support our needs as a school. The Local Authority have said that each school has to be part of a cross-phase partnership group. TJ had asked at an infant heads meeting whether we could choose which group you joined. We would need to be in the same group as the Juniors to continue the collaborative process. All headteachers are concerned about a statement from the LA saying that schools are responsible for the attainment of all children in their PILL group. TJ also raised the issue of how this support is financed, i.e. if a teacher from one school attends another offering teaching support who pays for the supply cover for their class while away from the classroom? Accountability needs to be looked at. RA mentioned that at the PILL meeting attended by governors it was suggested that schools collaborate with regard to grievance, complaints etc. We could agree as a governing body that we could support another governing body in our PILL group to sit in the meeting as an unbiased governor and vice versa. We could also use the senior clerk from the PILL group to attend meetings requiring external clerking. Confidentiality must be considered at all times. RA to go ahead and take agreement back to her next PILL meeting.

RA to take to PILL meeting

**v) School/Eco Council**

TJ reported she had met with MW (teacher), to discuss our green flag status. TJ does not feel awards are necessary for the school unless it benefits the children. Good eco-practice can be part of our school curriculum we do not need to have an award to do good work. We will continue to have an eco council, but will discuss what the children want and not what the 'award' providers require. The responsibility for the children's eco learning will fall on everyone and not just a designated teacher. TJ wants to expand our outdoor learning next year which could reflect eco work.

## **6 RECONSTITUTION**

Our new constitution has been finalised. Rachel said that we need to agree who is what type of governor.

### **Local Authority Governor**

Rachel Attwell

### **Headteacher Governor**

Tracey Jarrett

### **Teacher Governor**

Anna Korman

### **Parent Governors**

Oli Rahman

Sarah Axtell

Katie Salvidge

Jules Gallagher

### **Co-Opted Governors were unanimously agreed as:**

Jenny Smith

Iain Parks

Jonathan Cave

Alan Cronshaw

Claire McCann

Craig Mathieson

Niall Howell

### **Associate was unanimously agreed as:**

Sheila Cullen

We now have a full governing body.

## **7 SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION REPORT**

Unfortunately OR has not been able to meet up with Designated Safeguarding Person. Unfortunately TG is off sick at the moment (will report at next meeting).

## **8 ANNUAL SURVEY TO PARENTS**

Last year's questionnaire had been circulated with meeting papers.

Do we want the same format? Or are there other questions governors would like to suggest.

JS suggested moving 'my child is in year....' To bottom of form.

AC suggested saying that questionnaire could be anonymous or not.

IP said that parents could be asked they understand the school's values?

TJ said that she had discussed the survey with teachers earlier today. She suggested adding something about school uniform which had been raised with TJ by some parents.

IP said that at his school parents had completed the questionnaire at the parents' evenings.

Governors agreed for RA & TJ to add additional questions covering the three issues raised to her.

RA/TG

Governors felt we should continue with the usual format but add a question 'I am happy with the current uniform policy yes / no'.

### **School Values**

CMcC and IP had attended the recent governor surgery. A parent had attended saying that she loved the school but had been unable to find the school's mission statement/ethos.

She felt that we did not appear to have a message to communicate to parents. She was told that the school website was new and that the homepage does state clearly what our values are. TJ said that our old mission statement needs updating. The staff have looked at it, but governor input is required. TJ explained that the school prospectus on the website is currently out of date and she is currently working with a school parent to update it and make it web-friendly. JS and JG offered their support to TJ, agreeing to set a date soon.

IP said that they had received more responses incorporating the parent survey into parents evening than before. A number of governors offered to be available at parents evening, to hand out questionnaires in the foyer to be completed while waiting to see the teachers.

JS agreed to correlate responses.

JS, JG & TJ

any available govs

JS

### **9 SCHOOL'S PARTNERSHIP ADVISOR**

Maggie Brackley (SPA) visited last Friday and completed a learning walk in EYFS, followed by time spent with the EY co-ordinator. No report received yet. She spent time looking at our provision in early years which had been identified as an area of development in the last OFSTED report. As TJ is a new Headteacher she receives two more SPA visits this year which will probably be spent in EYFS. Maggie is coming back in the summer term. We have physical challenges in relation to the outdoor learning area of early years. We need to look at more training for our Reception support staff. There are huge budgetary implications in developing the outdoor learning space and training for support staff.

### **10 GOVERNOR SURGERY**

Next surgery to be hosted by JS and SC. Date tbc.

JS/SC

### **11 FEEDBACK FROM GOVERNOR TRAINING**

CMcC attended a 'leading efficient schools' which focussed on school business managers - with small schools sharing the services of a school business manager.

The session also covered internal auditing as mentioned before - IP will check with his school's governors who regularly undertake the audit process.

IP

**12 GOVERNOR VISITS**

None.

**13 URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY CHAIR**

Previously discussed.

**14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

AC raised building works health & safety regulations which are all about to change and raised issues surrounding work in schools and premises manager involvement.

RA has been invited to be involved in the Chair for Chairs support group, i.e. to support failing schools where OFSTED has identified a need for support to governing bodies.

TJ's performance management has taken place. RA feels she should not be part of this process in future. Please let her know if you are available.

FGB self-evaluation process needs to start again. SC to bring to next meeting SC

**Dates of next FGB meetings**

4<sup>th</sup> June 2015 @ 6.00pm

14<sup>th</sup> July 2015 @ 5.00pm