

AUTUMN TERM 2020/2021

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF
DOWNSSELL PRIMARY SCHOOL
HELD 16 NOVEMBER 2020
AT 5.00 PM
VIA GOOGLE HANGOUT REMOTE MEETING**

Present: Mr Martin Doré (MD) (Chair) **Local Authority Governor**

Headteacher

Mr Deena Chetty (DC)

Co-opted Governors

Mr Dave Leaker (DL)

Ms Kerry Munden (KM)

Parent Governors

Ms Kirsty Sultanti-Jones (KSJ)

Mrs Sumy Choudhry (SC)

Mr Robert Morini (RM)

Staff Governor

Maryam Osman (MO)

Clerk to the Governors: Mrs Angela Ferdinand-Sergeant

In Attendance: Mr David Backhouse

Summary of agreements and actions:

/Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
Ofsted Report	Governors agreed to add a conclusion to the report.	Clerk	11 January 2021
8 Headteachers report	Item 8.2.4: Mr Chetty to provide an attendance report to governors on a weekly basis. Item 8.2.8 Ms Sultanti-Jones will produce a report on attendance over a 3-year period	School KSJ	Weekly until further notice 11 January 2021

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all members present to the meeting.

1.2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received

1.3. No apologies for absence were not accepted.

1.4. Quorum

The meeting was quorate with 8 Governors including the Headteacher present.

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2. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

There were no Notice of Confidential items or Any Other Business to be heard at today's meeting.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

- 3.1. Standing Declaration: Angela Ferdinand-Sergeant, Schools Asset Manager for Waltham Forest.
- 3.2. No further declarations were made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting.

4. GOVERNING BODY

- 4.1. Clerk confirmed there are no vacancies to Governing Board membership at present.

5. MINUTES

- 5.1. Governors received the minutes of the 12 October 2020 and report on Ofsted Review of 9 November 2020 for Full Governing Body, and agreed these were an accurate record of the meeting. Mr Doré signed the minutes to be retained by the school as an agreed record of the meeting.

5.2. Matters Arising

- 5.3. 12 October 2020. Pg. 1 findings of the questionnaire emailed to governors this evening part of the head teachers report.

- 5.4. Pg 2 Governors confirmed that they have read Keeping Children Safe in Education.

- 5.5. Pg 5 item 6.11 Link Governor roles uploaded to the school website and GovernorHub. Further detail required in terms of Pupil Premium etc.

5.6. 9 Nov 2020 – Confidential Report.

Mr Dore summarised the report of the 9 November; One-year review looked at curriculum, the action plan has been enthusiastically implemented;

- Are there any other questions from Governors in relation to the curriculum element of the report? Governors confirmed no further questions.
- Mr Backhouse stated that he felt that generally the report was very positive.
- Mr Dore reminded Governors that in terms of Governance, Governors recorded their thanks to Mr Backhouse and had increased capacity by adding Kerry Munden to the Governing body along with the creation of the Finance Committee of which Ms Munden is Chair and has made a significant impact.
- Staffing structure, the appointment of the new deputy will help with capacity building. The school are advertising for a SENDCo.
- Partners and stakeholders. The school has had a lot of support from the LA and David Backhouse and governors wish to formally record their thanks to Genesis Education Trust.
- Governors agreed to invite Sir Robin Boshier to carry out a validation of progress early in the New Year.

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- 5.7. Mr Backhouse advised that Lady Anna Boshier sat in on an IEB at a school he is Governor at and is as equally experienced to undertake the review if Sir Robin cannot attend site.
- 5.8. Mr Backhouse stated that the report was quite succinct and recorded significant improvement. However it did not have a conclusion and he suggested that governors might wish to record an overall conclusion?
- 5.9. Governors were pleased with the progress made.

Action report to be amended to record a conclusion

6. CHAIR'S ACTION

- 6.1. The Ofsted action plan group is later this week.
- 6.2. The School have appointed a strong deputy head teacher
- 6.3. Staff appraisals have started this week.

7. FEEDBACK FROM HMI VISIT

- 7.1. Mr Chetty informed governors that the school have received a draft HMI report. The report does not contain a lot of detail and will contribute to a national COVID fact finding report from Ofsted.

8. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- 8.1. Governors received the headteacher's report.
- 8.2. Mr Chetty summarised the report as follows:
 - 8.2.1. Pupil Numbers: Numbers are still falling. Currently numbers on roll are 500. The school is due to take on 3 more children and will be losing a further 2 children. The school have a meeting the LA to review current funding arrangements and the implications for its finance.
 - 8.2.2. A meeting has been held with Rob White Commissioning Manager – Pupil Place Planning to look at numbers across all year groups. In at least 4 year groups we have numbers averaging 62 which is not sustainable. This will go to the next finance committee, and by January we should have an idea of where we go next
 - 8.2.3. An email has been sent to many schools especially in the south of the borough regarding reduction of PAN across all year groups.
 - 8.2.4. Attendance: when the school resumed in September the school had large numbers of pupils returning to school. The school recorded attendance at 95.3%. Parents were called daily and now attendance stand at 97%.
 - 8.2.5. The School are in the process of off rolling 2 children as the families are abroad and will not be return until next year. Rather than fining families the school are meeting with parents, which has resulted in staff collecting children from their homes and bringing them to school.
 - 8.2.6. Absences are due largely to extenuating circumstances. One family agreed a penalty notice as it was cheaper to pay the fine than the addition cost of the holiday.
 - 8.2.7. There are no persistence absences.

Q – year 6 is recording 92% what is the reason for this?

A – this is one or 2 children. We haven't yet hit 100% in these year groups. In September, Year 6 was recorded 96.1%. We have a new attendance welfare officer from the LA. Rather than him coming into school, we send him the list for home visits that need to be held with families.

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Action: Mr Chetty to provide an attendance report to governors on a weekly basis.

8.2.8. Governors were pleased with the overall attendance figures since return to school from September.

Action: Ms Sultanti-Jones will produce a report on attendance over a 3 year period.

8.2.9. COVID has help bring children back to school, we are aspiring to 98% attendance with a view to achieving 100%. The school are doing something right to achieve 90% in the current climate.

Q – Does the EWO provide an attendance report of schools within the LA?

A – Not at present. This is something the school can work on them with.

8.2.10. COVID-19: The school have not reported any positive test yet. However, they are currently awaiting results from 2 children and 1 member of staff.

8.2.11. The school have sent home lockdown packs for some children. This was based on the parent questionnaire.

Curriculum

Q – The problem with some parents not liking Google Classroom, has this resolved?

A – the school undertook a review of other online platforms such as SEASAW as suggested by Ms Sultanti-Jones. Google Classroom allows continuity of the new curriculum to take place.

8.2.12. Mr Chetty gave governors an example of using Google Classroom. The school has converted the curriculum plans to PDF, which have been uploaded on to a platform so parents can see the bigger picture. We were trying to introduce a system during lockdown which was extremely difficult.

8.2.13. Every child has a reading record book and will put this on the cover of the book for pupil access. A video has also been uploaded. If the school can show the children how it works in school, then they can share this with the parents.

8.2.14. There is an opportunity bring this into the classroom that they can teach parents how to access this.

Q – Can work be marked on Google Classroom, or is there a way to comment on the work?

A – yes teachers should be able to see and comment on it. This is chased with staff. work must be marked. Mr Cook on the ball supporting teachers in marking. Mr Rodgers also checks marked work.

Ofsted raised concern around monitoring pupil progress and providing challenge. This needs to be a whole school approach. The school need to have something in place to monitor this.

About 2 weeks ago a staff meeting was held on homework and children not bringing homework in, which includes reading record books.

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- 8.2.15. Updated Risk Assessment: we have amended the RA where required. The school is making every effort to reduce the numbers of children in corridors. We are still operating in class bubbles. This is hard to sustain, for instance arranging booster classes was a challenge for the school.
- 8.2.16. Leadership and management: The new Deputy will officially start in January 2021 and her office has been sorted out. The Deputy has already undertaken some projects to support Mr Chetty and to become more familiar with the school her official start date.
- 8.2.17. SENCo. Frank Croft post comes to an end in December and he will be returning to Genesis. It would be useful if he could stay on. However the school have a contingency plan in place if this contract cannot be extended.
- 8.2.18. Challenge from LA: we are on track and Genesis and been very supportive. The DfE has approved more funding to Genesis to offer more support. Not sure how this will progress under lockdown as we need physical support. Genesis were scheduled to do an in-person review in November. However, they have had staff and children test positive and therefore are unable to come into Downsell. The school will continue to carry out an internal review on 25 November 2020, which will pick up the student voice. Arrangements will be made for Genesis to attend at a later date.
- 8.2.19. Mr Chetty advised that Sir Robin Boshier is happy to conduct a review on the 16 March 2021. The 16 March will provide the school with a further couple of months to strengthen the plan.

Q - Will the internal review add anything new?

A - This will include the children's voice and staff input. The school are making rapid changes and this review will take stock and assess what we are doing and make sure we are moving in the right direction at the right speed.

- 8.2.20. Subject leadership. All subject leaders had completed action plans and undertaken book reviews. Every subject leader will meet with DC. No subject lead looks at books alone; an SLT member works alongside this. There is also a curriculum team to review this work to ensure that there are checks and balances in place. The school needs to ensure that everyone is talking the same language and the messages are not being diluted.

Q – Link Governors, would it be possible for the Link Governors to have a report from Subject Leaders and set up a meeting where we would like to do a deep dive?

A – yes this would be most welcome

- 8.2.21. Ms Munden stated that governors need to have an understanding of where children are at in terms of progress

Action a meeting to be arranged with the Curriculum Lead Governors after this meeting.

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- 8.2.22. Staffing: All teaching staff appraisals have been carried out.
- 8.2.23. Mr Chetty's appraisal will be carried out this week with an external advisor, Mr Doré and Ms Munden
- 8.2.24. Mr Croft has undertaken training with support staff.
- 8.2.25. Lesson observations are underway. 8 have been carried out to date with 5 good 3 requiring support, plans and resources are in place already. Observations will continue for the remainder of this week and next.
- 8.2.26. Mr Backhouse advised that it would be a good approach for the school leadership team to sit down and assess with governors and the head teacher how the action plan is progressing.
- 8.2.27. Quality of education. The school are covered by the new curriculum and are adapting and changing where required. On 9 November the curriculum team reviewed book marking and gave feedback to teaching staff. The school noted that marking was not consistently carried out the way the school wanted it to be done, Page 9 of the headteachers report shows where there are gaps and example was given of year 2 use of rulers, vocab cards to be on display. Governors were advised on the 9 of the concerns around Year 4, there is a plan in place. 13 November is when their targeted action plan is due to be completed.
- Q – Is there anything for early years?**
- A – This is the only area of the school that has not yet adopted the new curriculum and Genesis have the funding to support this.
- 8.2.28. Mr Chetty highlighted to governors the sequencing and progression across the school, and the need to bear in mind that there have been 6 months of disrupted education. The school have done a lot of work on class bubbles. In some year groups the school have made changes to the to curriculum to support foundation subjects, with a view to focus on basic skills that have been missed, with a view of getting autumn data in promptly
- 8.2.29. The school has also requested the use of the building to operate a Saturday school, with no cost to Kier as it will be managed by staff, Andrew Hill is taking this forward with the SPV. The next set of data should see progress.
- 8.2.30. Ms Munden advised that if the school are going to drop some of the foundation lessons, they will need to have a clear rationale as to why along with a timescale and how they are going to catch up. It was suggested that the school look at consolidating some of the foundation subjects with core to ensure that there is a good balance of learning.
- 8.2.31. Mr Chetty advised that the schools plan was to deliver French and Music after the October half term. However the guidance states that they do not expect schools to

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deliver a broad and balanced curriculum without the core until the end of the spring term 2021.

- 8.2.32. There are assessments still to be undertaken such as writing and the school needs to look at the quality of working being produced.
- 8.2.33. Governors were reminded of the school's need to consider mental health and wellbeing and where children struggle. Foundation elements of the curriculum help support this.
- 8.2.34. Governors were advised that the school is trying to give teachers 2 hours a week to focus on basic skills. The days are short and there is not enough resources or time to be able to teach the basic skills that some of the children lack. The school has been meeting with parents that are not sending children to booster sessions.
- 8.2.35. It is hoped that the next set of data collection will show an improvement and the school will be able to expand the enrichment element of the curriculum. The school is considering bringing back foundation subjects during spring term
- 8.2.36. Governors were advised that there is a limited time to prepare Year 6 for SATs. One class needs a significant push.
- 8.2.37. Class booster are up and running from year 2. Year 1 will be the first set of assessments coming out of this new way of working.
- 8.2.38. Exclusions: There have been no exclusions since Ofsted visited last year.
- 8.2.39. Post Ofsted action plan group update. We have children where passive learning is taking place and training is being provided for MDA with an external provider, Magic Behaviours, which is a company that the school have used previously.
- 8.2.40. Racial and homophobic incidents. 1 incident recorded in the first half of the term and 2 in the second. One incident was persistent, and the school have put systems in place to manage this with the child and their family.
- 8.2.41. Governors were advised that this week is anti-bullying week.
- 8.2.42. Safeguarding: The school have a large number of families that require support. Children use a worry box to record their concerns which is used extensively. It is a way for the children can express themselves and convey their concerns.
- 8.2.43. PHSE. The school is following the One Decision scheme. Deena would like to get a policy out to governors to enable them to do a deep dive before implementation in the summer term.
- 8.2.44. 13 children attending counselling at the moment. The financial implications of this will need to go to the Finance Committee. The SLA is for 9 children and are currently working with 13 as most of these children are linked with safeguarding issues.

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Q – is this for Covid, and do you think that this is required for more children?

A – yes. The safeguarding list is increasing. It is frightening the level of impact this is having. The school need to look at a way forward and would welcome governors' support. MASH referrals are behind about a year and some of these children need help now.

8.2.45. Parents' questionnaire: everything that parents have raised is in the action plan and has been covered.

8.2.46. Mr Chetty informed Governors that if they have any further questions pertaining to the report please raise them on GovernorHub.

9. SAFEGUARDING

9.1. Governor training on Safeguarding has been arranged for 25 November from 5 – 7pm, and invitations will be issued via GovernorHub.

9.2. There are 2 safeguarding officers linked to each child flagged with a safeguarding issue at the school. Every 2 weeks each child is reviewed and monitored. The list is updated daily. The safeguarding officer highlighted in green in the Headteacher's report denotes changes.

10. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

10.1. 2 items outstanding. The minutes have been approved by the Chair. The committee discussed income verses expenditure for the Breakfast Club. There is a huge difference in income into the school and expenditure out and the school is running at a significant loss

10.2. Schools Assets Register. Item deferred to 7 December

10.3. Equipment Write Off: item deferred to 7 December

11. SCHOOL POLICIES

11.1. Governors **formally ratified** the policies listed on GovernorHub.

12. 12. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

12.1. 11 January 2021 at 5.30 via remote meeting platform

12.2. Agenda items

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1. There was no other business to be heard.

Meeting Closed 19:00

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Signed

Date.....

Chair's Initials:

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