

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING  
DOWNSSELL PRIMARY SCHOOL  
HELD 10 JANUARY 2022  
AT 5.00 PM  
AT THE SCHOOL**

Present:       **Co Opted Governor**  
Ms Kerry Munden (Chair) (KM)  
Ms Harriet Patterson (HP)  
Vacancy

**Headteacher**  
Mr Deena Chetty (DC)

**Staff Governor**  
Vacancy

**Parent Governors**  
Mr Azeem Ahmed (AA)

**Local Authority Governor**  
Mr David Backhouse (DB)

Clerk to the Governors:       Mrs Angela Ferdinand-Sergeant  
Also in Attendance               Ms Rachel Alexander-Gordon

<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>
1.3	<u>Apologies for absence not accepted</u> Members noted that Ms Erienne, Parent Governor, and Ms Hall and Ms Sultanti-Jones, Associate Members, did not send apologies for absence. Clerk to check with Governor Services if invitations were issued and if apologies were received by the Governor support officer.	Clerk	11 January 2022
4.1	Chair to meet with prospective staff members to explain the role of the staff governor so staff do not have any misconceptions	Chair	

Chair's Initials:

**SPRING TERM 2021/22**

<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>
<b>4.3</b>	<u>DBS Checks</u> : All new Governors' DBS paperwork has been submitted, by the school and DBSs have been received. Yana Robinson to arrange for Governors to attend school with their DBS to check and issue to Governor services by 14 January 2022	<b>Jana Robinson</b>	<b>14 January 2022</b>
<b>5.1</b>	Governors approved the Minutes of the 15 November 2021 with one amendment: Correct typographical error to the spelling of Ms Paterson to Ms Patterson at 18.5 Ms Munden will sign the minutes electronically on Governor Hub	<b>Clerk</b>  <b>Chair</b>	<b>11 January 2022</b>
<b>6.</b> <b>6.1</b>  <b>6.1.4</b>  <b>6.10</b>	<b><i>Headteachers report</i></b> DB to follow up on how Twins are funded with the LA  KM to send a letter to staff welcome back letter thanking staff for their continued commitment  Governors requested a data breakdown for early years, phonics, and year 4 times tables.	<b>DB</b>  <b>KM</b>  <b>DC</b>	
<b>7</b> <b>7.1</b>	<b><i>Development Group Feedback</i></b> Governors <b>agreed</b> that purpose of the Development group this should be raised at the next Development Group Meeting.	<b>KM</b>	
<b>8</b> <b>8.3</b>	<b><i>School Effectiveness Report</i></b> DC to report back on the SEND visit carried out by Jeff Hart at the next Governing Body meeting.	<b>DC</b>	
<b>9</b> <b>9.1</b>          <b>9.2</b>	<b>POLICIES.</b> Governors to read all GDPR related documents and provide comments back to the school via Governors Hub by close of business Friday 14 January 2022.  Governors to read the ECT Policy and provide comments back to the school via Governors Hub by close of business Friday 14 January 2022	<b>All to Action</b>          <b>All to Action</b>	

Chair's Initials:
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**SPRING TERM 2021/22**

<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>
<b>10</b> <b>10.1</b>	<b>School Development Plan</b> School to reissue School Development Plan to all governors.	<b>All to Note</b>	
<b>11</b> <b>11.1</b>     <b>11.3</b>	<b>Financial Risk Register</b> The school are to raise the invoice for Whiteboards to Kier in order for the reimbursement to be actioned for the IWBs that form part of the PFI lifecycle costings. Governors <b>agreed</b> to postpone the Finance Committee Meeting to 31st January 2022. DB will arrange to visit before meeting to review quarter 3 with the DC and JR.	<b>JR</b>     <b>DB. DC JR</b>	
<b>13</b>	<b>Governors Training</b> HP to contact Governor Services to obtain presentation notes on the training she is unable to attend.  Governors to give some thought to whole GB training sessions such as Finance.  KM to send out note to governors re urgent training requirements and or bespoke. Training  DB needs to do refresher on Safer Recruitment.	<b>HP</b>   <b>All to Action</b>  <b>KM</b>  <b>DB</b>	
<b>14</b> <b>14.1</b>	<b>Link Governor Visits</b> Curriculum: DB and HP to plan a further Curriculum Visit for early March 2022.  SEND: AA to arrange a spring term visit for SEND with the school	<b>School/DB/HP</b>  <b>AA</b>	

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all members present to the meeting.  
The Chair informed Governors that DB has been awarded an MBE for 'Services to Education'. Governors congratulated him.

1.2. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

1.3. Apologies for absence not accepted

Members noted that Ms Orian Erienne, Parent Governor, and Ms Beverley Hall and Kirsty Sultanti-Jones, Associate Members and, did not send apologies for absence prior to the meeting commencing.

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***Action Clerk to check with Governor Services if invitations were issued and if apologies were received by the Governor support officer.***

1.4. Quorum

The meeting was quorate with 5 Governors including the Headteacher present.

**2. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

2.1. No Confidential Items or Any Other Business would be heard at today's meeting.

**3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

3.1. Standing Declaration: Angela Ferdinand-Sergeant, Schools Asset Management Team Leader for Waltham Forest.

**4. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP**

4.1. Update on Governing Body Membership:

Currently the Governing Body has 1 vacancy for the position of Co-opted Governor and 1 Staff Governor Vacancy

The chair will be attending a governors' 'Mixer' to meet potential governors for the co-opted role. HP offered her assistance to the Chair with the process of reviewing applications prior to the mixer.

DC advised that he would be informing staff at the All Staff Briefing on the 11 January 2022, that applications to nominate themselves or colleagues to apply for the role of Staff Governor should be made to the headteacher.

***Action Chair to meet with prospective staff members to explain the role of the staff governor so staff do not have any misconceptions.***

4.2. Disqualification due to non-attendance: None.

4.3. DBS Checks: All new Governors' DBS paperwork has been submitted, by the school and DBSs have been received. It is the responsibility of the Governor to bring the issued DBS into school for the school to inspect for inclusion in the Single Central Record. The school is required to inform Governor Services of the DBS reference no for their records.

***Action: Jana Robinson to arrange for Governors to attend school with their DBS to check and issue to Governor services by 14 January 2022***

**5. MINUTES**

5.1. Governors approved the Minutes of the 15 November 2021 with one amendment:

- Correct typographical error to the spelling of Ms Paterson to Ms Patterson at 18.5

Ms Munden will sign the minutes electronically on Governor Hub

5.2. Matters Arising

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Update
	DC requested that DB undertake a sweep of the school's website to ensure that it remains complaint	DB	

**6. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT – Written report presented.**

6.1. DC summarised his Headteacher's (written) report which had been uploaded to GovernorHub.

6.1.1. Number on Roll: this is currently be reported at 497.

Zinc class have 31 which should take them over PAN this is due to this class having a set of twins which count as one child. DC raised this at a recent Headteachers meeting where it was noted that several schools are experiencing the same issue.

DC spoke with Rob White, the authority's Pupil Place Planning Manager who advised that this was the process.

**Q – How many sets of twins do the school have?**

*A - 1 set in year 2.*

**Q - Are they eligible for Pupil Premium?**

A - Not sure, the school will check and let DB know

**Action DC to check if twins are eligible for Pupil Premium and advise DB.**

**Q - Aren't twins supposed to be separated?**

A – This is mostly at school level; they are split to give them the opportunity to develop independently.

**Action DB to follow up on how Twins are funded with the LA**

Members were advised that Nursery figures are going up. Prior to covid the school had 55 children in the nursery.

**Q - Is this having an impact on staffing numbers?**

*A – No, given the large number of children with SEND in Year Years, the staffing balances out. We have 31 children with high needs; we had to change some of the mid-days' contracts to support children with additional needs in Early Years. We have SEND funding for 5 but that does not cover the staffing costs.*

6.1.2. Attendance: Currently the school is reporting the whole school attendance at 93.4%. The school is driving towards its target of 96% and are looking at ways of achieving this, such as class celebrations.

The school's Attendance Officer is continuing to invite parents in to discuss their child's absence; the school has noticed a drop in absence with this approach.

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- 6.1.3. SEND: The SENDCo has resigned. The school will be advertising it tomorrow (11 January 2022).

CD informed governors that the school is creating an Inclusion Team using the newly-appointed Senior Leaders to deliver 'accelerated learning'. The Senior Leaders meet every Wednesday to review SEND across the school. DC informed governors that Senior Leaders are accountable for every child that is not at their Age Related Expectation (ARE) age.

DC reiterated that the school has the highest number of children with SEN recorded in the borough. This is having an impact on staff morale due to the high level of need of individual children.

The LA is being made aware of the actions taken by the school to support the children, which could influence staff wellbeing.

Governors were informed that Eva Gunkova, Assistant Director, SEND, visited the school to discuss the it's concerns before the Christmas break.

- 6.1.4. Staffing: The school has recruited 6 Senior Leaders (SL) internally. The SLs have responsibility for Rapid Learning, Registers and SEND. From next week the new SL team will start taking support group in the mornings.

Staff attendance needs to be reviewed. The school currently have 19 members of non-teaching staff off sick, i.e 20%, which is not sustainable.

Governors expressed thanks to teaching staff for their continued commitment.

***Action: KM to send a letter to staff welcome back letter thanking staff for their continued commitment.***

DC informed Governors that one of the newly appointed SLs will oversee EAL, which is delivered by the Teaching Assistants. The school has a high proportion of children where English is not their first language and the TAs will report issues back to the SL in the first instance.

Mental Health and Wellbeing: The school is focusing on Mental Health and Wellbeing of staff and children. During a recent INSET Day, the school asked staff what they knew about their entitlement in terms of health and wellbeing being provided by the school. Staff were asked to write down key concerns and what they felt the school could do to improve it. One of the points raised was another Microwave in the staffroom, which was resolved the next day. The Marking Policy was raised as a concern, this was reviewed with in relation to points raised and improved on with Senior Leaders and reissued to staff, the amendments have been well received.

Chair stated that this approach shows that the school is listening and showing empathy.

***Q –By adjusting the Marking Policy, has there been any reduction in its effectiveness?***

A – No, the review has improved it by making it smarter with more specific outputs. For example, reading a deep marking was expected each day but felt that if the children get all the questions right there was no need and so focus has changed so

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that in science, every child will have 2 pieces of science work deep marked per half term.

- 6.1.5. Health and Safety: the school held a fire drill on the 9 December 2021 when everyone was evacuated in 2 minutes and 34 seconds. As a result of the drill, 2 children will require a Personal Evacuation Plan because of their disabilities.

***Q – Where the parents of the children requiring additional assistance informed?***

*A – Yes, we are working with them on how children should evacuate. We will also look at getting the Fire Brigade in to do an assembly on Fire safety with the children.*

It was suggested that the school could report this in the weekly newsletter.

- 6.1.6. Behaviour and Attitude: There have been zero exclusions since 2019. There have been 2 racial incidents and 4 homophobic incidents during the Autumn Term.

When an incident arises, it is automatically raised on CPOMs, which is tracked and monitored, by the DSL, i.e. the Deputy Headteacher, who actions it instantly.

***Q – What are the avenues for parents to raise issues?***

*A – Parents can raise concerns direct to the school which held an anti-bullying workshop recently and information is provided in the school's newsletters. The school also has a texting system, linked to the Headteacher's phone.*

- 6.1.7. Pupil Progress Meetings: All teachers have met with the Headteacher to review end of term data and outline interventions and support required for their pupils in the Spring Term.

- 6.1.8. After-School Clubs: Football Club has started, with cooking, arts and crafts and tennis to start next week (week commencing 17 January).

- 6.1.9. Safeguarding: Governors reviewed the table included in the Headteacher's report. DC highlighted the 2 children being assessed one is being monitored closely by the school.

All staff are aware of children in their class who fall within the safeguarding vulnerability category and at what stage the children are at.

- 6.1.10. Data: The school has an action plan for every child and are aiming for realistic targets. DC stated that it would be good if governors visited the school and attended an intervention session to gain a better understanding of the school's pedagogy, which includes pulling together all support e.g. counselling and learning mentor. It is about developing the whole child.

Governors requested a data breakdown for early years, phonics, and year 4 times tables.

***Action School to email all data information to all governors.***

## 7. LA DEVELOPMENT GROUP VERBAL FEEDBACK

- 7.1. The next meeting the 11 February 2022. The Chair informed governors that there is no clear strategy regarding the purpose of the meetings now. Initially, the aim was to support the school to become OFSTED ready, which has happened effectively.

- 7.2. Governors **agreed** that purpose of the Development group this should be raised at the next Development Group Meeting.

***Action Chair to raise at the next Development Group Meeting***

**8. SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS REPORT**

- 8.1. Governors were asked to review and provide comment on the report uploaded to Governor hub by 14 January 2022.
- 8.2. Governors were informed that a site visit had been carried out on 6 December 21 with Amir Lemouchi and Beverly Hall from the Genesis Trust, as part of a Learning Walk; however, no written report has yet been produced.
- 8.3. Governors were informed that Jeff Hart would be visiting the school shortly for a SEND review.

***Action DC to report back on the SEND visit carried out by Jeff Hart at the next Governing Body meeting.***

**9. POLICIES**

- 9.1. Governors were advised that these are local Authority policies that require adoption by the school as part of the schools SLA for GDPR.  
***Action Governors to read all GDPR related documents and provide comments back to the school via Governors Hub by close of business Friday 14 January 2022.***

**Governors agreed to approve the policies with comments by e-mail, subject to no objections being received.**

- 9.2. Governors were informed that the Early Career Teacher (ECT) Policy replaces the Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) Policy.  
***Action Governors to read the ECT Policy and provide comments back to the school via Governors Hub by close of business Friday 14 January 2022***

**Governors agreed to approve the policy with comments by e-mail, subject to no objections being received.**

**10. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

- 10.1. The Chair requested that the school email all governors a copy of the Schools Development for a refresh and for new governors to familiarise themselves with the school's targets.

***Action: School to reissue School Development Plan to all governors for them to note the targets agreed.***

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**11. FINANCIAL RISK REGISTER**

- 11.1. DB provided a verbal update on the Finance Committee meeting held
- DB produced a simplified format of the budget that would be used to populate for quarter 3 to be shared with governors.
  - Cashflow is tight, the school has a loan for £120,000, which has been used to pay urgent outstanding debts. Some of the loan was used to pay staff salaries.
  - The loan has not been fully expended; the school have a balance of £110,000 which is supporting cashflow.
  - A recent meeting with the LA highlighted that the school has an outstanding debt of £120,000 for school meals. It has agreed to payback £20,000 per month until the debt is cleared.
  - Keir has agreed to fund the replacement interactive whiteboards as part of the PFI lifecycle process. The school is awaiting confirmation from Kier as to how this will be paid

***Action DC to raise the invoice for Whiteboards to Kier in order for the reimbursement to be actioned for the IWBs that form part of the PFI lifecycle costings.***

- The school operated a Winter School and are expecting an income of £20,000.
  - The schools need to develop an Action Plan for paying back the loan(s) over the next financial year and do it in a way which does not affect the running of the school.
- 11.2. Governors **agreed** to postpone the Finance Committee Meeting to 31st January 2022 as it will not be ready in time for the planned finance Committee meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022. DB will arrange to visit before meeting to review quarter 3 with the DC and JR.

**12. LINK GOVERNORS' VISITS**

- 12.1. Curriculum DB and HP Link Governors: One of the strengths was the consistency of marking and learning intentions throughout the school. Noticed the general calmness and the engagement was very high.

Link Governors had an opportunity to meet with the Subject Leaders and noted the consistence of the team as a group; they were very much aligned.

DC advised that the leaders really enjoyed the session.

***Action: meeting DB and HP to plan a further Curriculum Visit for early March 2022.***

- 12.2. Send – AA Link Governor: reiterated the calmness was good across the school during his visit also.

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Support staff were working well with children and the children took pride in presenting works when book looks were requested

***Q - Did the visit and talk give you a new perspective?***

A - Yes, I would normally focus on my own child. However, visiting was very enlightening and seeing what the school has in place is very good. I would like to visit again and will arrange this with the school.

***Action AA to arrange a Spring Term visit for SEND with the school***

**13. GOVERNORS' TRAINING**

- 13.1. Chair reminded governors of the training information available from Governor services and on 'The Key'.
- 13.2. AA has attended several sessions. HP advised that she like to attend more training, but they are Tuesdays which makes it difficult for her to attend.

***Action HP to contact Governor Services to obtain presentation notes on the training she is unable to attend.***

***Action Governors to give so thought to whole GB training sessions such as Finance.***

***Action: KM to send out note to governors re urgent training requirements and or bespoke training***

***Action: DB needs to do refresher on Safer Recruitment.***

**14. SCHOOL TERM DATES 2022-2023**

- 14.1 The dates for 2022/23 were noted.

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

- 12.1. The Finance Committee will meet on 31<sup>st</sup> January at 5.00pm both via Teams and in school.
- 12.2. The next meeting of the full Governing Body will be on 21 March 2022 in school.
- 12.3. No Agenda items were suggested/requested for the next meeting.

**16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

Chair: ..... (print)

..... (sign)

Date: .....

Chair's Initials:
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