

Hazeldown School Governing Body

School Improvement Committee Meeting (Autumn Term 1) – Part 1 Minutes					
Date/Time	4 October 2023 at 6:30pm				
Location	Hazeldown Primary School				
Chaired by	Ruth Walters				
Attendees		Role	Attendees	Init	Role
Ruth Walters	RW	Co-opted Vice Chair	Kelly Harnett	KH	Parent
Stuart Ludford	SL	Headteacher	Kirsty Prentice	KP	Parent
Samantha Atkinson	SA	Co-opted			
Ruth Doughty	RD	Co-opted			

In Attendance	Initials	Role
Kit Hardee	KHar	Associate Member
Lee Goodenough	LG	Associate Member
Tim Synge	TS	Clerk

Minutes to
Attendees
School website

Apologies	Initials	Role	Absent without apology	Initials	Role
Dave Dawson	DD	LA Chair	Kevin Gough	KG	Parent
Jasmine Banning	JB	Staff Governor			
Paul Hamilton	PH	Parent			

	Agenda	Led by
1	Apologies	Clerk
2	Declarations of Interest	Clerk
3	Minutes of previous meeting: 5 July 2023	Clerk
4	Matters arising from previous meeting: 5 July 2023	Clerk
5	Headteacher's Report on data drop	SL
6	Draft School Improvement Plan 2023/24	SL
7	Governor Visits 2023/24	SL
8	Portfolio reports previously tabled at SIC	Chair
9	Impact from this meeting	Chair
10	SI Committee focus for the next meeting	Chair
11	Next meeting	Clerk
12	AOB	Chair

Item	Details of discussion				
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>There were apologies received from DD. PH and JB. KG was also absent.</p> <p>RW chaired the meeting.</p>				
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None declared.</p>				
3	<p>Minutes of previous meeting: 5 July 2023</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 July 2023 were confirmed as a fair record of that meeting. A set was signed by the Chair.</p>				
4	<p>Matters arising from previous minutes: 5 July 2023</p> <p>There was one matter arising from the last meeting.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="325 887 1369 994"> <tr> <td data-bbox="325 887 437 994">SI 22/12</td> <td data-bbox="437 887 916 994">DD to compose a 'note' to parents to keep up the profile of FGB among the parent body.</td> <td data-bbox="916 887 1369 994">DD had sent out a note in July 2023 with the final mailing of the Summer Term.</td> </tr> </table>		SI 22/12	DD to compose a 'note' to parents to keep up the profile of FGB among the parent body.	DD had sent out a note in July 2023 with the final mailing of the Summer Term.
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5	<p>Headteacher's Report on the July 2023 data drop</p> <p>SL introduced his report on the July 2023 data drop. He reminded Governors that this report reflected the work of SLT and of all staff. The documents which fed into and which were reproduced in this report were for the most part a product of normal school processes such as pupil progress meetings and these served to generate additional actions including some for inclusion in the School Improvement Plan ("SIP").</p> <p>The Y6 SATs figures were pleasing. Helen Eversett, DCC's School Effectiveness Advisor, had said during the course of SL's recent appraisal meeting that she was pleased with the School's position. The School's lowest score was in its age-related reading figure and there was room for improvement here. Good Level of Development ("GLD") was low at Foundation Stage. The reasons for this were known; there had been some disruption in the year group last year and the low figure was mainly due to progress in writing.</p> <p>SL turned to the areas of focus for the School set out on page 2 of the report and confirmed that these were included in the draft SIP.</p> <p>SL raised the potential drawback of the Reading Writing Maths combined figures. These included scores where a child was weaker in only one of the three subjects.</p> <p>KHee emphasized the transparent approach taken by SLT with teachers when analysing the data. A member of SLT would lead a pupil progress meeting with a teacher, so that there was a shared understanding of the data and the way in which this would inform the approach in the classroom.</p>				

5	<p>Headteacher's Report on the July 2023 data drop (continued)</p> <p>LG drew attention to the reading figures and agreed that these were disappointing following strong results in the mock exam. There seemed to be a widespread view that the Y6 SATs reading test had been more difficult than usual in 2023, but he acknowledged that there was still room for improvement.</p> <p>SL drew the attention of Governors to the significant need in Y1 (previously Foundation Stage). Additional TA support had been allocated here including at the start of the day. This could only be done to a degree without detrimental impact on other children. He reported that it was also difficult to take the stimulation and activity of a busy class away to the extent required to meet the needs of some pupils. Undoubtedly some pupils would benefit from being moved to an alternative setting, however this was a difficult option to achieve.</p> <p>KP described the School's approach to interventions where specific gaps were identified. SL confirmed that space was being created in a dedicated room.</p> <p>SL explained to Governors the approach taken where a child was working at a lower ability level than might be appropriate for his or her year group. The child was given access to all available materials and resources for that year group as well as to the material appropriate for his or her current ability level and this created greater clarity over expectations.</p> <p>RD commented that the report contained a comprehensive data set. The commentary and explanations were thorough and clear.</p> <p>Questions on the report had been raised by DD prior to the meeting and these, together with responses from SLT, had been noted on the report.</p> <p><i>1 With regards to some Y6 pupils not being 'secondary ready', are we able to identify pupils in danger of falling into this category as they exit Y5 so as to be able to focus on them. (SL) Yes, we track children through the school in terms of their RWM combined outcomes at Age Related Expectation and also at Greater Depth. This shows who is not achieving in one, in two or in all three areas. Those children who have one area to focus on are theoretically easiest to move to achieving all three and those with two areas to focus on are potentially more of a challenge to move to achieve all three. This information informs class focus sheets and is discussed at pupil progress meeting. We do still have ground to make up with achieving higher figures in RWM combined (the 'secondary ready' figure at Y6) across the school, hence it being a focus on the SIP.</i></p>
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Headteacher's Report on the July 2023 data drop (continued)

2 From the data foci for SIP, do we have a feel for why writing appears to be a weakness in a number of areas? (KHee) In a number of classes, staff absence and staff performance has affected the writing data. Last year's Bonsai class and Willow classes are examples of this. COVID catch up is still a factor: children were not writing as much at home, and when they were, expectations were low. We are still working hard to break habits. There is currently a whole school push on handwriting. LG led a handwriting CPD session during a recent twilight. We also have a new process to award pen licences. Since we made changes to the weekly timetable to ensure we were giving sufficient time to the reading activities (as a result of feedback from Rebecca Cosgrave), the stand-alone Spelling Punctuation and Grammar ("SPaG") teaching sessions are now integrated within the writing lessons. Although SPaG data is good, the application in independent writing is not. Therefore, this year, there is a big push on sentence structure and word classes. We have only had two years following the newer Babcock (Devon Education Services) structure, so we should see progress as this becomes more consistent. The introduction of Little Wandle will also have an impact. We realised that the way we were using our writing assessment grids (Writeria) was holding children back. Children who were working out of year group were spending far too long on previous years' objectives. Our Y3/Y4 Team Leader has made changes to this for this year:

1. Moved away from our own assessment grids to follow the structure of the Devon Education Services writing grids.
2. When children have not achieved previous years' objectives, there is a new individualised approach: for children with significant gaps, they will remain on the previous years' objectives but if there are only 1 or 2 areas to address, these objectives only will be highlighted and assessed alongside the current years' objectives (rather than assessing the whole 'out of year group' grid).
3. As Writeria grids are very similar when progressing within a key stage (KS1, lower KS2 and upper KS2), when catching up, children will be moved onto the next key stage grids sooner, rather than having to repeat similar objectives within their key stage.

3 In Holly class, 3 pupils are making negative progress in maths and 3 in reading, are these the same 3? (KP) Two of the three children are the same. Out of the two children, one of these had persistent absences throughout the school year. The other child had large gaps in her knowledge and arrived in Y6 working 1-2 years behind the rest of her cohort. She did however make significant personal progress through the year. The last child was identified as having SEND and required a large amount of emotional support with relationships. KP also supported the family with managing the child's emotions at home.

4 The report suggests that SEND children in Years 1, 2 & 3 are getting fewer interventions than necessary, do we know why this is? (KP) Due to a high number of children with complex/ significant SEND in these year groups, the only interventions that were able to take place were during assembly times. As a result, we are taking a different approach this year with regards to interventions; KP is in the process of streamlining groups across the school based on gaps in knowledge so that we can offer more interventions throughout the first hour of the school day and each afternoon.

5	<p>Headteacher’s Report on the July 2023 data drop (continued)</p> <p>RW thanked SL for a comprehensive and informative report. She noted that much of the content of the report fed naturally into the draft SIP which would be considered next.</p>
6	<p>Draft School Improvement Plan 2023/24</p> <p>RW referred to the draft School Improvement Plan 2023/24 which had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. She thanked SL and his team for their work on this, noting that useful operational detail was included in some places.</p> <p>SL reminded governors that the SIP was a living document and that it would be annotated and updated through the year. He described the evolution of the Plan and explained how objectives were identified.</p> <p>In the Curriculum section, the ordering of subjects was deliberate and focused on other subjects prior to looking at literacy and numeracy. The Plan included links to CPD sessions. Some of the Plan might resemble a “To Do” list and this made it accessible and relevant to all staff. Some elements were incomplete, for example history and geography requires subject leaders to be appointed. LG added that references to subject leader CPD were drawn from the content of the previous term’s Subject Leader presentations.</p> <p>SL reported that much of the Plan included unwritten links from SL's own appraisal earlier in the term and that equally the Plan would feed into all staff appraisals.</p> <p>Turning to the Attendance section, the school was performing above national average, however there was room for improvement.</p> <p>SL explained why some Ofsted actions had been included. This was a reminder for all staff and would help ensure that they were prepared and confident for the next Ofsted visit and the expected Deep Dives. LG added that the purpose of this was not to appear solely Ofsted focused, but to support the development of relevant subjects this year and to give staff confidence to speak about their own subject. Staff wellbeing regarding feeling settled and confident about the inspection process is important to the School.</p> <p>On Quality of Teaching and Learning, LG reflected on conversations with children about kindness and respect. These principles applied equally to staff. SLT was working on developing a coaching approach to the appraisal structure and this had already brought benefits to the nurturing and progress of the School’s Early Career Teachers (ECTs). KHee added that these review sessions included some probing into specific areas. The focus was on short-term activity and review rather than on an annual cycle.</p> <p>KHtt welcomed this approach and said that this reflected changes happening in other sectors where the practice of holding infrequent appraisal meetings was being replaced by regular light touch progress meetings.</p>

Draft School Improvement Plan 2023/24 (continued)

RD asked about the School's approach to self-evaluation and how this fitted in with the draft SIP. SL explained that SLT would be working on the SEF in the coming months and that this would be shared with Governors. He acknowledged that it might be more common to see the SEF informing the SIP, however the content discussed at his own appraisal meeting earlier in the term together with useful dialogue with Helen Eversett would drive both documents and ensure good consistency.

RW asked for an explanation of the assessment grid referred to under PSHE and how this was used. SL explained that this had been trialled by the Y1 teacher who leads on PSHE. The approach assumed that all children were in the mid range and then tracked variances against this. **SA noted that she had seen this being developed by this member of staff on her last Governor visit** LG added that the school was seeking a consistency of approach between those subjects which were in the Cornerstones system and those for which a bought-in package was used (such as Music, PE and PSHE).

RW asked how the School manages parental expectations in relation to SEND provision. Was there a good mutual understanding of what individual plans meant in practice, between the School and parents and their children? KP replied that the classroom teacher would carry out the IEP review with KP in her SENDCo role in reserve. She confirmed that the School sought, in conjunction with parents, to reformat EHCPs to make clear "this is what this Plan looks like in terms of our school and the provision that we can offer".

RD asked how many pupils currently had EHCPs. KP replied that there were 11 with one more in progress and the possibility of four more at a later date. SL agreed that he would add in to the SIP some content regarding clarity of expectations around EHCPs. **RW said that documentation of this process and agreement was important** and KP confirmed that this would be included.

LG summarised the challenges in relation to SEND provision and reminded Governors that one-to-one provision was simply not possible in a mainstream setting. Sometimes GPs or DCC's SEN 0-25 Team would express an opinion to parents that one-to-one provision was required and this could create unrealistic expectations among parents. General discussion followed on the challenges facing special schools in Devon and the lack of available places in these.

6	<p>Draft School Improvement Plan 2023/24 (continued)</p> <p>RW turned to the Governance section of the School Improvement Plan. This requires further work. Discussion ensued, and the following was agreed:</p> <p>Point 1 on portfolio holder visits and reports had been an area of focus in the previous year and could be removed.</p> <p>The second point on a review of effectiveness of Governance could be removed as this was dealt with last year.</p> <p>The third section on Ofsted should be an area of focus in the coming year. Detail should be added regarding Governor understanding of the SEF, triangulation of evidence and the need to be articulate about observations.</p> <p>On section 5, there was an opportunity to provide both parents and staff with a better understanding of the role of Governors. SA suggested that this could be “small and often” rather than a longer item in a termly newsletter.</p> <p>Action: following Governor visits, all Governors to provide KHee with a brief snapshot of their visit so that he can post a suitable “newsflash” on appropriate social media channels.</p> <p>A new section should be added covering both the School’s finances and the wider financial challenges facing the sector. This would dovetail well with the plans for a finance session later in the term [arranged for 29 November].</p> <p><i>RD suggested that some reference to the Ofsted Inspection Framework would help focus the work of Governors;</i> this requires that “those responsible for governance understand their role and carry this out effectively. They ensure that the provider has a clear vision and strategy and that resources are managed well. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education or training.”</p> <p><i>SA suggested that a new section should also include Governor monitoring and planning in relation to the option of joining a Multi Academy Trust (“MAT”) in the future.</i></p> <p>Decision: Governors approved sections 1 to 5 of the School Improvement Plan 2023/24 subject to the amendments discussed. Section 6 on Governance required some further work.</p> <p>Action: RW and DD to liaise over drafting of the new Governance section for the Plan so that this can be tabled and approved later this term.</p>
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7	<p>Governor Visits 2023/24</p> <p>SL tabled a program for governor curriculum visits 2023/24. This was approved by governors and governors will undertake visits as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 1 – EYFS – already carried out by KHtt • Autumn 2 – SEND - RW • Spring 1 - Curriculum – SA • Spring 2 – Attendance – RD • Summer 1 - EYFS – tba • Summer 2 - Curriculum – this will consist of attendance at Subject Leader presentations and the involvement of as many governors as possible will be welcomed. <p>Action: Clerk to remind Governors about Summer Term 2024 Governor Visits in Spring Term.</p>
8	<p>Portfolio Reports</p> <p>The three portfolios which previously reported to this Committee will now report to FGB2 each term. KP has already prepared the Community & Parent Links portfolio report and so this will go to FGB1 in two weeks' time.</p>
9	<p>Impact from this meeting</p> <p>RW summarised the useful and open discussions on the data drop and on the draft SIP 2023/24, observing that there had been a lot of helpful overlap in looking at the two documents at the same meeting. The new School Improvement Plan 2023/24 was well set to support the School in achieving the best possible outcomes for all pupils.</p> <p>The contributions to the discussions from all present suggested that the Governing Body was functioning effectively and that the more recent appointees were confident about their roles on FGB. RW thanked all Governors for their contributions and their commitment and thanked SLT for their work on the Plan,</p>
10	<p>SI Committee focus for the next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting, which will be on 24 January 2024 in the Spring Term, will review and analyse the December 2023 data drop and assess progress against the SIP.</p>
11	<p>Next Meeting(s)</p> <p>FGB1 – 18 October 2023 FGB special session on Finance – 29 November 2023 FGB2 – 13 December 2023</p>

12	<p>AOB</p> <p>1 Term dates 2024/25. SL tabled proposed term dates for 2024/25, noting that the very late Easter 2025 impacted on the length of the Summer Term and the half-term break and that this resulted in a longer-than-usual second half of term. He described plans for Staff INSET.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the term dates 2024/25.</p> <p>2 KP drew attention to the forthcoming Parent Evenings (three evenings on 17 to 19 October and agreed to circulate dates and times to all Governors. Some Governor presence at each of these would as usual be welcomed.</p> <p>3 The Finance briefing session to be led by SL and the SBM would take place in the available meeting slot on 29 November.</p> <p>4 A complaint about the School's SEND provision had been escalated to Stage 2 and a Governor Complaints Committee was being convened to hear this.</p>
	The meeting ended at 08:35pm.

Summary of decisions and proposed actions		
SI 23/01	Following Governor visits, all Governors to provide KHee with a brief snapshot of their visit so that he can post a suitable "newsflash" on appropriate social media channels.	All
SI 23/02	RW and DD to liaise over drafting of the new Governance section for the Plan so that this can be tabled and approved later this term.	RW/DD
SI 23/03	Clerk to remind Governors about Summer Term Governor Visits in Spring Term.	Clerk
Decision	Governors approved sections 1 to 5 of the School Improvement Plan 2023/24 subject to the amendments discussed.	-
Decision	Governors approved the term dates 2024/25	-

These minutes are agreed by those present as being a true record.	
<p>Signed (Chair of Committee)</p> <p>Name:</p>	<p>Date:</p>