

Hazeldown School Governing Body

Full Governing Body Committee Meeting – Part 1 Minutes					
Date/Time	29 March 2023				
Location	Hazeldown Primary School				
Chaired by	Dave Dawson				
Attendees		Role	Attendees	Init	Role
Dave Dawson	RW	LA Chair	Paul Hamilton	PH	Parent
Stuart Ludford	SL	Headteacher	Kirsty Prentice (items 1 to 8)	KP	Parent
Kelly Harnett	KHtt	Co-opted	Laura Parfitt	LPar	Parent
Samantha Atkinson	SA	Co-opted			
Jasmine Banning (items 8 to 18)	JB	Staff			

Apologies	Initials	Role	Absent without apology	Initials	Role
Ruth Walters	RW	Co-opted			
Kevin Gough	KG	Parent			

In Attendance	Initials	Role
Tim Syngé	TS	Clerk
Lee Goodenough	LG	Associate Member
Kit Hardee	KHee	Associate Member

Minutes to
Attendees
School website

	Agenda	Led by
1	Apologies	Clerk
2	Declarations of interest	Clerk
3	Agree minutes of last meeting: 8 February 2023	Clerk
4	Matters arising from previous meeting: 8 February 2023	Clerk
5	Review terms of office	Clerk
6	Headteacher's Report	SL
7	Staffing and strategy	SL
8	Portfolio Report: Finance	PH
9	Portfolio Report: Personnel	KHtt
10	Portfolio Report: Safeguarding	SA
11	Portfolio report: Premises and Health & Safety	KG
12	Ofsted preparation	SL
13	Policies for review and approval	Various
14	Governor Training	Various
15	Safeguarding Training	-
16	Impact from this meeting	DD
17	Next meeting	Clerk
18	AOB	Clerk

Item	Details of discussion
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from RW and KG. JB joined the meeting after Item 7 and KP left the meeting after Item 8.</p> <p>DD chaired the meeting.</p>
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest in respect of the business of this meeting.</p>
3	<p>Agree minutes of last meeting: 8 February 2023</p> <p>The minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 8 February 2023 were agreed as a fair record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>

4	Matters arising from previous minutes: 8 March 2023		
	FGB 22/21	Action: DD to summarise proposals on review of FGB effectiveness and bring back to FGB before the end of this school year.	DD will circulate a summary in the Summer Term.
	FGB 22/22	Action: DD, KP and RW to meet as a separate subgroup to examine opportunities for Governor engagement with parents and bring forward proposals. Other Governors welcome to join them. DD to arrange.	DD will arrange this for the first week of the Summer Term.
	FGB 22/23	Action: Governors to consider whether they can attend the feedback session on 26 April when Helen Eversett of DCC will summarise and offer feedback on the Ofsted readiness day.	SL reported that this has been moved to 27 April and he will share details; the feedback session is expected to be at 4:00pm. [Email sent out on 31 March.]
	FGB 22/24	Action: SL to table the revised Equality Policy (and Equality Objectives) for Governor review when the update is ready.	See agenda item 13 below
	FGB 22/25	Action: All Governors not working in an educational setting to consider whether they can attend another iteration of this course. (Ofsted readiness: 20 April)	Clerk reminded Governors about this by email on 20 Feb 2023
	FGB 22/26	Action: SL to liaise with Chair and Clerk over adding an Ofsted-specific agenda item to future FGB meeting agendas.	Added to this agenda as a new standing item.
	Matters brought forward from School Improvement Committee		
	SI 22/09	Given his expertise in project management fabric matters, DD to contact Associate Member JH to establish his availability for the kitchen project working party.	In progress.
	SI 22/10	Clerk to add formation of the kitchen project working party to the agenda for FGB on 29 March 2023.	The Working Party will include SL, the School Business Manager, DD, PH and KG. Any other Governors wishing to be involved should contact DD.

5	<p>Review terms of office</p> <p>DD reported that the School had received an enquiry from an individual who was interested in joining FGB. This individual had recent experience as Chief Executive of a five-school MAT and this experience could be of value to the School as it develops its strategy. The individual would be invited in for a visit early in the Summer Term.</p>
6	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p>SL referred to the written report which was available on OneDrive and provided several oral updates.</p> <p>Much of the Report addressed the need to lengthen the timetabled school day by ten minutes to meet the Government's requirement for a minimum 32.5-hour week from September 2023. The School was currently 10 minutes a day short of this. SL said that the School needed to liaise with the bus companies; also to research the process required by Devon CC for making changes to the school day.</p> <p>Informal feedback had already been received from staff and some were not supportive of an earlier start time, as they saw the time prior to arrival of pupils as marking and preparation time. This was not an easy matter to resolve. LG and KHee shared some of their experiences of teaching when timetabled from the start of the day.</p> <p>SA asked whether the School had considered the impact of any change on the pupils. Further discussion ensued and it was felt that an additional ten minutes in the morning may not be productive for pupils. Adding on the time in the afternoon would impact adversely on clubs and meetings. The flexible morning drop-off times which had been introduced as a response to COVID-19 risks was seen as a positive feature of Hazeldown's day. The ability of pupils to come into the classroom (rather than have morning playground time with its attendant challenges) was welcomed by many.</p> <p>SL noted that the School needed to make a decision during the first half of the Summer Term so that this could be communicated to parents and other stakeholders in good time.</p> <p>DD commented on the findings from the Health & Safety portfolio visit, which SL had commented on in his report. There was some uncertainty over the extent to which the MTA (meal-time assistants) team understood some of the formalities of their role, although the evidence showed that they were able to fulfil the role. For example, they had received induction training but had not necessarily realised that they had been through an induction "process". SL confirmed that there would be some clarification to them of these aspects.</p> <p>In other updates, SL drew the attention of Governors to the recent report "Teacher Labour Market in England Annual Report 2023 which had been published this month by the National Foundation for Educational Research ("NFER"). This report contained a number of conclusions including that fact that teacher earnings had fallen in real terms while workload had increased. The lack of any ability to work from home was an issue at a time where many professions were adopting a mixed approach to WFH. Recruitment vacancies were up and the outlook for the profession was not characterised as positive.</p>

6	<p>Headteacher's Report (continued)</p> <p>Meanwhile, unions were balloting both teaching and support staff about the prospect of further industrial action. The media narrative about the teaching profession at present suggested that unhappiness in the sector was all about pay and this was far from true according to the survey.</p> <p>SL reported that two new permanent teaching posts had been confirmed. These were Early-Career Teachers and SL welcomed the appointments. He anticipated also that supply staff at Foundation Stage would be replaced by the School's own permanent staff next year.</p> <p>DD thanked SL for a helpful and informative report.</p> <p>Questions recorded on the Headteacher's Report were as follows:</p> <p>SA: How effective is the use of the 5 a day strategy to support SEND students so far? Is this now a fully embedded part of the curriculum? SL: This is looking positive – staff are using the language in discussion and some have been clear about the impact of thinking in this way – some of the work has meant that those activities teachers have been doing are clearer in their minds as they are categorised with the professional language (particularly with scaffolding work). Positive response to the impact during recent internal interviews.</p> <p>SA: How have staff reacted to the changes in appraisal documentation for the mid year review? Has it had the desired impact? SL: This seems positive – some have been more proactive than others and those who tend to need explicit direction during CPD sessions to 'make a note of that...' have been less proactive. Definitely a move forwards with the perception of appraisal though.</p>
7	<p>Staffing and Strategy</p> <p>SL had included key developments in his Headteacher's Report and there was nothing to add here. The latest version of the budget (see item 8) included the financial impact of the decisions and assumptions reported.</p>
8	<p>Portfolio Report: Finance</p> <p>PH presented his Finance portfolio report. He summarised the many challenges to be dealt with in preparing a school budget at the present time. It was impossible to know how Government policy might change and there was no scope for certainty in the medium to long term. This made it difficult to apply sound assumptions over the required five-year budget period. He acknowledged all the work done by SL, the School Business Manager and Charles Woodland (the School's DCC financial liaison officer). The School's sound approach to financial planning and willingness to be responsive to imposed factors and changes meant that it remained in a relatively strong position. It was pleasing to see that the School was still able to make choices - within the context of financial constraints – which were demonstrably in the best interests of pupils.</p>

8	<p>Finance report (continued)</p> <p>PH reported that the carry-forward balance at the end of the current year would be around £250k. This balance included approx. £100k which had been earmarked for the kitchen project. Charles at DCC had advised that there was no real risk of the surplus being clawed back by DCC.</p> <p>In view of the projected surplus, PH recommended that the School should make no recharge in respect of rental and overheads to Pre-School and Extended Schools this year. Funds should be retained in the two separate entities for now. (He clarified that there were recharges in respect of specific staff time/costs; this recommendation related to the overhead element.)</p> <p>Decision: Governors agreed that there should be no recharge in respect of rent/overheads to Pre-School in 2022/23.</p> <p>Decision: Governors agreed that there should be no recharge in respect of rent/overheads to Extended Schools in 2022/23.</p> <p>PH turned to the budgets for 2023/24 and later years. The main school budget was identified as G120.</p> <p>SL noted that there were still many decisions to be made in respect of the kitchen project, for example around fitting out and around specific type and capacity of kitchen equipment. SL recommended that the School continue with planning for this project and that the amount earmarked in the draft budget should continue to be allocated to the project. The alternative was to release this sum into the general budget and to see it being utilised to offset normal school operating costs over the next year or so. The sum involved would not prevent the School from going into deficit by the end of year 2 or 3 of the budget; the School would need to deal with a budget deficit in due course anyway and this was a good opportunity to create a facility which would have a lasting benefit for pupils.</p> <p>Decision: FGB agreed that the sum of £100k included in the current budget surplus should continue to be earmarked for the kitchen project and approved the continuation of planning for the kitchen project in Summer 2023.</p> <p>SL explained that the School had prepared two versions of the budget for consideration by FGB and he described these. Budget v5 reflected the School's "ideal" staffing and included an in-year deficit of £177k in Year 1 and £187k in Year 2. Budget v8 included cuts in staffing and would impact on the School's ability to deliver against the School Improvement Plan; this included a deficit of £171k in Year 1 and £131k in Year 2. As previously reported by PH, the School, in common with other schools, faced a lack of certainty about future funding and about future demands on costs and there was an inability to plan properly. In his view, the School should do its best for current and future pupils.</p>
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8	<p>Portfolio report: Finance (continued)</p> <p>DD invited other members of FGB to express their views and there was a consensus in favour of Budget v5.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the main School budget G120 v5 for submission.</p> <p>PH turned to the Little Acorns budget (reference G122). This Governor-led operation was now well established. Following some discussion about its operation, it was agreed that the present level of leadership time included in the Pre-School should be retained.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Pre-School budget G122 for submission.</p> <p>PH introduced the Extended Schools budget (ref G121). There were no particular decisions to be made about the budget. It was noted that the introduction of the staggered school day may have had a small adverse impact on the take-up of breakfast club, but this was difficult to assess as there were other factors involved.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Extended Schools budget G121 for submission.</p> <p>Questions recorded on the portfolio report were as follows (responses given by the School Business Manager (“SBM”)):</p> <p><i>DD: On line 408 – Educational Visits income, the FRS notes explain that the change is to include “expected income & accruals”. As this is quite a big number impacting positively on the budget how confident are we of the amount?</i> The SBM responded: The funds are for the Year 4 & 6 residentials – monies collected in 2022/23 but trips taking place in 2023/24.</p> <p><i>PH: Line 108 Fundraising shows future expenditure of £543; what is this for?</i> SBM: It is money raised at the KS2 carol concert for charity. The cheque we sent them has not yet cleared.</p> <p><i>PH: The pre-school monitor shows a recharge of £3,000 to the main budget and the notes relate to Forest School and the pre-school leader’s PPA time, can you explain this a little further please? And also where has the £3,000 been allocated back in to G120 budget?</i> SBM: Two members of our Forest School Team have Little Acorns every Monday Afternoon, which allows our Administrator to have PPA time. The two are paid through the G120 budget, so we have made the decision to charge Little Acorns for this time. It does look like we have forgotten to put it in as income in G120.</p> <p>SA commented: It is encouraging to see Hazeldown in a sound financial position given all the challenges to the budget this year. A thank you to all the staff involved that have made this happen.</p>
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9	<p>Personnel Report</p> <p>The timing for preparation of the report which was due at this meeting has been re-arranged. The next report is due to be tabled at FGB1 on 24 May 2023.</p> <p>KHtt stated that there were no urgent issues requiring Governor attention. However, she asked FGB to acknowledge all the work done by JB to cover shortages in Foundation Stage and the work done by LG (supporting Year 5) and KHee (supporting Year 6) over recent weeks.</p> <p>KHee welcomed FGB's understanding that the involvement of members of SLT and senior staff in day-to-day cover continued to have an impact on their ability to deliver against the School Improvement plan. Progress was slower than they would like in some areas. SA noted that these measures were necessary to ensure that the impact of responding to the various challenges was positive for pupils.</p> <p>LG noted further that the Senior Administrator had gone above and beyond with the work done in the School Office, especially in relation to managing cover arrangements.</p>
10	<p>Portfolio Report: Safeguarding</p> <p>No report was due at this meeting. The next report is due to be tabled on 24 May 2023.</p> <p>SL advised Governors that one family had decided to move to Elective Home Education. This was an established option for families and DCC had provided advice. Although there were no safeguarding concerns for the School, a query had been raised by the family and this was being followed up by Devon CC, who had responsibility for safeguarding in this situation.</p> <p>SA stated that there were no urgent issues requiring Governor attention.</p>
11	<p>Portfolio Report: Premises and Health & Safety</p> <p>In KG's absence, DD drew attention to his report and to the questions raised on it. SL commented that the feedback from KG's visit was very useful and it was helpful to obtain this different perspective on compliance and on processes. As noted in his earlier Headteacher's Report, there were one or two issues for SLT to follow up.</p> <p>DD thanked KG for his report.</p>

11	<p>Portfolio Report: Premises and Health & Safety (continued)</p> <p>Questions recorded on the portfolio report were as follows (responses given by KG/SL):</p> <p><i>KHtt: Following recent highlights in the news regarding schools in England regarding the building materials used during a certain time period mid 1950-1980s and the safety of the buildings. Is Hazeldown one of the few schools that has had a report completed on the possible use of Reinforced Autoclaved Activated Cement, or are we one that hasn't been inspected?</i> KG: It is my understanding that Devon County Council undertook a study several years ago to identify the presence of RAAC in their buildings. It was concluded that none were found to have construction materials containing RAAC. That said, unless HT can confirm, it may be worth asking the question of DCC for an official response. SL: We're not affected by this.</p> <p><i>SA: How far has working with the MTAs got to support them with the language use and recognising the training/induction they have received?</i> SL: This will be in the summer term.</p> <p><i>SA: Should MTAs be given any brief informal training as part of their induction to use their medical pouches regardless of formally trained staff being available so that there is a consistent application etc?</i> SL: They are instructed on that for low-level cuts and scrapes type incidents.</p>
12	<p>Ofsted preparation</p> <p>SL explained that this was a new agenda item which would be the first of a series focusing on FGB readiness for the next Ofsted inspection. He delivered a slide presentation which described typical Governor involvement in an inspection and which provided a refresher on the current inspection framework. This covered, inter alia, the School Inspection Handbook, consideration of recent media coverage of Ofsted following the tragic death of headteacher Ruth Perry and possible changes to the process in the future.</p> <p>He emphasised that SLT sought to make the days when the inspection team was on site as normal as possible with minimal last-minute preparation. He described the key inspection judgements, the grading scale and the process followed by the inspection team.</p> <p>He recommended that the focus of FGB should be on being able to demonstrate that Governors "know" the School. Useful ways to ensure this included familiarisation with the Inspection Data Summary Report ("IDSR"), recent data drops and the way the School responded to these, the School's Vision and the recommendations and actions from the previous inspection. Inspections at present were asking schools about safeguarding, testing staff knowledge of procedures and school compliance with these, and about the impact of COVID-19 and steps to recover from this.</p> <p>SL confirmed that the slides from his presentation would be added to the Inspection folder (C3) on OneDrive.</p>

13	<p>Policies for approval</p> <p>Governors considered the policies which were due for approval at this meeting. All had been made available on OneDrive for the previous two weeks.</p> <p>The SEND Policy had been approved at FGB in December 2022.</p> <p>KHtt had reviewed the Whistleblowing Policy and recommended this for approval.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Whistleblowing Policy (approval date: 29 March 2023).</p> <p>KHtt had reviewed the Recruitment and Selection Policy and recommended this for approval.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Recruitment and Selection Policy (approval date: 29 March 2023).</p>
13	<p>Policies for approval (continued)</p> <p>Regarding the Equality Policy (and Equality Objectives), SL reported that this had now been reviewed in school and amendments made to update it. In RW's absence, DD undertook to review it before the end of term and to advise Governors if he identified any areas for query or change.</p> <p>Decision: Subject to DD's final review [no amendments were recommended from this], Governors approved the revised Equality Policy (and Equality Objectives) (approval date: 29 March 2023).</p> <p>KP had reviewed the ICT Acceptable Use Policy (Staff). SL noted that the implications of the use of the word "reasonable" had been considered and that SLT were content with this.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the ICT Acceptable Use Policy (Staff) (approval date: 29 March 2023).</p> <p>SL had added the Little Acorns: Admissions, Oversubscription and Charging Policy for consideration. DD recommended this for approval.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Little Acorns: Admissions, Oversubscription and Charging Policy (approval date: 29 March 2023).</p>
14	<p>Governor Training</p> <p>Governors noted the recent and forthcoming training courses attended by members of FGB.</p>
15	<p>Safeguarding Training</p> <p>No session due at F&GP2.</p>

16	<p>Impact from this meeting</p> <p>DD highlighted the strength of FGB at present which was based on the skills, experience and commitment of individual Governors. Portfolio reports were of a high quality and there was evidence of insightful questioning by Governors.</p> <p>The impact should be an increasing confidence in each other and in the School's preparedness for the next Ofsted inspection.</p>
17	<p>Next Meeting(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SIC Wednesday 10 May 2023 (including consideration of the March data drop) ● FGB Wednesday 24 May 2023 <p>SL agreed to circulate details and dates for SATS week so that Governors could contribute to the observation of security, administrative and related arrangements for this (subsequently done by email to FGB on 31 March 2023: the Key Stage Two SATS are on 9-12 May 2023). He would also share dates for the subject leader presentations; Governor attendance at these was always welcome and helpful (this was also advised by email and the dates are 15-16 June 2023).</p>
18	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p>
	<p>The meeting ended at 8:35pm.</p>

Summary of decisions and proposed actions		
Actions	None (other than minor follow-ups by email which are recorded as completed in square brackets above)	
8	Decision: Governors agreed that there should be no recharge in respect of rent/overheads to Pre-School in 2022/23.	
8	Decision: Governors agreed that there should be no recharge in respect of rent/overheads to Extended Schools in 2022/23.	
8	Decision: FGB agreed that the sum of £100k included in the current budget surplus should continue to be earmarked for the kitchen project and approved the continuation of planning for the kitchen project in Summer 2023.	
8	Decision: Governors approved the main School budget G120 v5 for submission.	
8	Decision: Governors approved the Pre-School budget G122 for submission.	
8	Decision: Governors approved the Extended Schools budget G121 for submission.	
13	Decision: Governors approved the Whistleblowing Policy (approval date: 29 March 2023).	
13	Decision: Governors approved the Recruitment and Selection Policy (approval date: 29 March 2023).	
13	Decision: Subject to DD's final review [no amendments were recommended from this], Governors approved the revised Equality Policy (and Equality Objectives) (approval date: 29 March 2023).	
13	Decision: Governors approved the ICT Acceptable Use (Staff) Policy (approval date: 29 March 2023).	
13	Decision: Governors approved the Little Acorns: Admissions, Oversubscription and Charging Policy (approval date: 29 March 2023).	

These minutes are agreed by those present as being a true record.

Signed (Chair of Committee)	Date
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