

Hazeldown School Governing Body

Full Governing Body Committee Meeting – Part 1 Minutes					
Date/Time	13 December 2023				
Location	Hazeldown Primary School				
Chaired by	Dave Dawson				
Attendees		Role	Attendees	Init	Role
Dave Dawson	DD	LA Chair	Jasmine Banning	JB	Staff
Ruth Walters	RW	Co-opted	Paul Hamilton	PH	Parent
Stuart Ludford	SL	Headteacher			
Ruth Doughty	RD	Co-opted			

Apologies	Initials	Role	Absent without apology	Initials	Role
Kelly Harnett	KHtt	Co-opted			
Samantha Atkinson	SA	Co-opted			
Kirsty Prentice	KP	Parent			
Kevin Gough	KG	Parent			

In Attendance	Initials	Role
Tim Syngé	TS	Clerk
Kit Hardee	KHee	Associate Member
Lee Goodenough	LG	Associate Member
Matt Hallett	MH	Prospective Parent Governor

Minutes to
Attendees
School website

	Agenda	Led by
1	Apologies	Clerk
2	Declarations of interest	Clerk
3	Agree minutes of last meeting: 18 October 2023	Clerk
4	Matters arising from previous meeting: 13 Oct 2023	Clerk
5	Review terms of office	Clerk
6	Headteacher's Report	SL
7	Portfolio Report: Finance	PH
8	Portfolio Report: Safeguarding	RD/SL
9	Portfolio Report: Personnel	DD
10	Portfolio report: Premises and Health & Safety	-
11	Portfolio report: Community & Parent Links	DD
12	Portfolio report: Vulnerable Pupils	RW
13	Portfolio report: Curriculum	JB
14	Oral report from the Pay Committee	DD
15	Governor Visits 2023/24	DD
16	Ofsted preparation	SL
17	Policies for review and approval	Various
18	Governor Training	Various
19	Safeguarding Training	-
20	School Improvement Plan 2023/24	DD
21	Impact from this meeting	DD
22	Next meeting	Clerk
23	AOB	Clerk

Item	Details of discussion
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>There were apologies from KHtt, SA, KP and KG.</p> <p>DD chaired the meeting.</p> <p>DD welcomed MH to the meeting and explained that he was a prospective Parent Governor who had been invited to attend as an observer.</p>
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
3	<p>Agree minutes of last meeting: 18 October 2023</p> <p>The minutes of the previous FGB meetings held on 18 October 2023 were agreed as a fair record of that meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>

4	Matters arising from previous minutes: 18 October 2023		
FGB 22/26	PH to work with SBM to prepare a reforecast for Extended Schools in September with a view to recommending a fee increase in January or April 2024.	Recommendations for fee increases are included in the paper on Extended Schools under the Finance portfolio report below.	
FGB 23/04	Terms of Reference for the Health & Safety portfolio: catering and nutrition areas. KG will make some suggestions and annotations on the existing document and forward these to SL for discussion, following which they will come back to FGB for approval.	KG and SL have agreed several deletions and recommend approval of the amended Terms of Reference. Decision: Approved in this meeting.	
FGB 23/05	Clerk to carry forward: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and Parent Links portfolio report • Ofsted preparation item • School Improvement Plan 2023/24 – Governance section 	Done – see below at items 11, 16 and 20.	
5	<p>Review terms of office</p> <p>Approval for DD’s reappointment as Local Authority Governor was received from Devon County Council on 2 October 2023. Governors approved the reappointment of DD as LA Governor with effect from 13 December 2023.</p> <p>KP is leaving Hazeldown at the end of this term to move to a new post in another school. Additionally, she is no longer a Hazeldown parent and she intends to step down from her role as a Parent Governor with effect from the end of today’s meeting. She has expressed an interest taking up a role as an Associate Member of FGB with a particular focus on SEND. Governors approved the appointment of KP as an Associate Member of FGB with effect from 13 December 2023. (See also item 23: AOB.)</p> <p>Regarding Associate Members, the Clerk reported that SL’s term of office had come to an end on 11 September. Governors expressed appreciation for SL’s past contributions to the work of FGB. DD will write to SL to express the thanks of FGB for her work.</p> <p>KHee’s term of office as an Associate Member expired on 11 September and LG’s term of office comes to an end on 13 January 2024. <i>KHee and LG left the meeting.</i> FGB approved the re-appointment of KHee with retrospective effect from 11 September 2023 and of LG with effect from 13 January 2024 as Associate Members of FGB. <i>KHee and LG returned to the meeting.</i></p>		

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Headteacher's Report

DD thanked SL for an excellent and informative Headteacher's Report. In introducing the report, he drew attention to the renewed focus on performance data during Ofsted inspections. RD reported that she had spoken about this with an acquaintance who was a trained Ofsted inspector and who had confirmed that Ofsted were using externally published performance data, including KS outcomes, to inform the pre-visit planning discussion and to plan possible areas for undertaking deep dives during the inspection visit. There was no suggestion that they were interrogating a school's internal data.

SL introduced the staff survey which was referred to in his report. Response rates were a little lower than expected and this was thought to be for a combination of reasons: teaching staff were extremely busy and some had not participated, and the flag to set responses to anonymous had not been set, which may have deterred some staff from contributing. As a result, he intended to repeat the survey next term.

On safeguarding, **RD said that 310 might seem a large number of safeguarding concerns.** SL explained that every entry made, however low level, was recorded as a concern. On some occasions, the same event or observation might be reported by several individuals. One individual could not see the full picture, but an accumulation of low-level entries allowed informed review of the data. We are still tweaking the DCC model form for recording so may change the wording to 'Safeguarding Entries' for clarity.

On absences, **RD said that it might be useful to have a breakdown in the persistently absent pupils, eg SEND, PP etc.** SL said that we are looking at this in more depth at our attendance meetings so can look to include a breakdown of PA pupils into groups in the future.

SL advised Governors that there had been an incident flagged by the School's filtering and monitoring systems on the evening of the last Governors' meeting. The software reported that there were 20 pornographic websites attempted to be viewed in quick succession from a personal device. It was unclear whether the device was located in school or off the premises (but using the School's wifi connection). Changing the wifi password was not straightforward, however this appeared to be the next step to reduce risk in this area.

SL raised the subject of TA funding. Where TA funding was made available for 1:1 support for a child, the situation was relatively simple. When the funding ceased, for example because a child was leaving the School, the TA contract could be terminated. However, in instances where the TA might be allocated a wider role, the direct link between the funding and the TA was lost and so contractual issues became more complex. The School was awaiting guidance on this from Devon CC.

The School had received data updates. Progress scores had been published and showed a pleasing move overall. SL advised Governors that there would be no progress figures for the next couple of years as there had been no KS1 baseline testing during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, it was not clear what data would be available in respect of Year 6 in 2028, as this cohort had been the first to undergo the new school-wide baseline data testing in a new format.

6	<p>Headteacher’s Report (continued)</p> <p>The new equipment for the “Fit Trail” was being installed this week. School Council had taken an active role in choosing the new elements.</p> <p>SL advised FGB that no fire drill had taken place this term. There was a glitch in the interface between the InVentry visitor management system and the School’s core SIMS database. The School was waiting for the required software update.</p> <p>SL asked those Governors who had not yet completed their online safeguarding training and obtained the relevant certificate from provider The Key to complete this as soon as possible. This was requested by KHee in his email to Governors on 12 October 2023. Action: Governors who have not yet completed 2023/24 safeguarding training to do this and forward certificate to KHee.</p> <p>KHee gave an update on Initial Teacher Training (“ITT”). In addition to the one reported student who the School would host in the Spring Term, two further students were to be taken on. The School’s successful running of the Intensive Training and Practice (“ITAP”) conference earlier in the term made it a popular destination for trainees.</p> <p>DD thanked SL for an informative and comprehensive report.</p>
7	<p>Portfolio Report: Finance</p> <p>PH introduced his finance portfolio report, noting that this continued to be a tough year. The School was minimising expenditure where possible. The decision to provide cover “in house” following staff resignations was helpful financially and there was further commentary in his written report.</p> <p>DD reported that he had carried out some financial benchmarking using the DfE online database. He had benchmarked Hazeldown against a basket of 15 similar schools nationally. There were two flags generated from this exercise: the School’s decision to employ a caretaker rather than work with a facilities management provider had impacted on relevant ratios; and the School was in the lowest 20% of schools when looking at average teacher cost. This latter flag could raise questions over teachers’ grades and experience, however he was satisfied that the School’s work with Early Career Teachers (“ECTs”) explained the figures here. SL noted that categorisation choices made by individual schools could sometimes reduce the usefulness of benchmarking data for comparative purposes. DD agreed to circulate his benchmarking report when it was finalised.</p>

Portfolio Report: Finance (continued)

PH turned to the separate paper on Little Acorns/Pre-School. The report proposed that a recharge of £10,000 be made this year to School Budget Share (“SBS”) to recognise the Pre-School’s use of school premises, heat and light etc. In considering options available, he described the pros and cons of recharging parents for snacks and/or for use of the Tapestry online journal app. He also reminded Governors of the financial consequences of accepting two-year olds into Nursery, including the higher required staff:pupil ratios and the benefits of attracting younger children to Hazeldown. (This had been discussed by Governors at some length at their FGB Finance session two weeks previously.) He also noted that the Pre-School Leader’s contract currently included a half day per week for administrative and leadership responsibilities.

SL added that he had spoken with Fran Butler, Devon CC’s Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency Lead. There were opportunities for Hazeldown to expand its provision; it already offered a 7:30am to 6:00pm day in term time and could potentially increase numbers, however this would depend on adding physical space and on finance being made available for additional staff.

Following discussion, Governors agreed the following:

- **Pre-School will not make a separate charge for snacks.**
- **Pre-School will not make a charge for use of the Tapestry app.**
- **The Pre-School Leader’s contract will continue to include half a day per week for administrative and leadership responsibilities.**
- **The Pre-School age profile should continue to include provision for two-year olds.**
- **There will be a recharge by SBS to Pre-School of £10,000 in 2023/24.**

PH turned to the separate paper on Extended Schools. The paper contained recommendations for a fee increase. It also contained a discussion and recommendations for a recharge for rental/ overheads by SBS.

Following discussion, which included consideration of increased costs, expected further increases in staff pay and the timing of price rises, Governors agreed the following:

- **There would be a 5% price increase for Extended Schools with effect from April 2024.**
- **There will be a recharge by SBS to Extended Schools of £15,000 in 2023/24.**

DD thanked PH for his report.

8	<p>Portfolio Report: Safeguarding portfolio</p> <p>No portfolio report was due at this meeting.</p> <p>SL shared with Governors an ongoing situation whereby a child had not attended school for one week and two days; it transpired that the child and the child's mother had left the family home and were being housed in hotel accommodation in a nearby town. The School had been informed of this by the mother; attempts by the School to corroborate the information with Social Services and with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Team ("MASH") had proved unsuccessful for over a week. LG and KHee provided an update and said this, only hours before the meeting, they had been able to obtain confirmation that the child and the child's mother were on the relevant social care system; however the resources being provided were inadequate and so LG and the School's Early Help Leader were stepping in and making provisions etc available pending social services taking proper control of the situation. Governors acknowledged the good work being done by LG and the Early Help Leader which went above and beyond what might reasonably be expected from any school.</p>
9	<p>Portfolio Report: Personnel portfolio</p> <p>DD drew attention to the Personnel portfolio report prepared by KHtt and Governors noted its contents.</p>
10	<p>Portfolio Report: Premises and Health & Safety</p> <p>This report will be prepared and tabled for FGB1 in the Spring Term. There were no urgent matters arising.</p>
11	<p>Portfolio Report: Community & Parent Links</p> <p>DD drew attention to the Community and Parent Links portfolio report prepared by KP and Governors noted its contents.</p>
12	<p>Portfolio report: Vulnerable Pupils</p> <p>RW introduced her report on the Vulnerable Pupils portfolio. She would carry out her scheduled Governor Visit to see staff in the Spring Term. The School was looking at a hub approach to meeting SEND needs. This required transparency regarding the use of funding allocated to a specific child. She would be meeting with KHee and the School Business Manager to see how this would be handled.</p> <p>Governors noted the contents of the Vulnerable Pupils portfolio report.</p>
13	<p>Portfolio Report: Curriculum</p> <p>JB introduced the Curriculum portfolio report which had been prepared by SA with some input from JB. DD noted the pleasing improvements in relation to computing and art.</p> <p>Governors noted the contents of the Curriculum portfolio report.</p>

14	<p>Oral report from Pay Committee</p> <p>PH reported. The meeting had been chaired by SA. SL’s recommendations to the Committee had been clear and well-reasoned with good supporting information (suitably anonymised). This provided a sound basis for the decisions made by the Pay Committee.</p> <p>Generally, staff were meeting their appraisal objectives and pay progression was justified; however this was not an automatic process and SL gave an example of one member of staff who had not met appraisal objectives in the previous year and who had therefore not progressed.</p>
15	<p>Governor Visits 2023/24</p> <p>DD drew attention to the schedule of Governor Visits 2023/24 which was included on the FGB agenda.</p> <p>KHtt’s report from earlier in the term was included in the papers for this meeting. RW would, as noted earlier, carry out her SEND visit next term. There were also two scheduled Spring Term visits; these would be undertaken by SA and RD.</p> <p>Governors noted the contents of KHtt’s observation visit to see Little Acorns.</p>
16	<p>Ofsted preparation</p> <p>SL briefed Governors on recent developments. Sir Martyn Oliver had been announced as the next Ofsted Chief Inspector following the departure of Amanda Spielman, who had held the post for seven years. The report from the Coroner’s enquiry into the death of Headteacher Ruth Perry following an Ofsted visit to her school made for disturbing reading and there was much concern among head teachers. More heads and staff were speaking out with concerns about the pressure they were under before and during an inspection. There appeared to be much randomness depending on the identity and approach of the inspection team on the day.</p> <p>One issue that was gaining attention was the practice adopted by which an inspection team would leave and have no further contact with the school. In many western countries, inspectors would work with a school on any action plan recommended and this was generally recognised as a constructive approach. Other matters attracting attention were the use of one-word gradings and the lack of a balanced “report card”.</p> <p>Governors should be aware of these issues.</p> <p>SL reminded Governors that a focus of the inspection visit in relation to governance would be the “How do you know?” question, designed to establish how Governors verified what an SLT might report to them. This was done through a combination of portfolio reports, governor visits, interactions with a range of staff members and many cross-checking observations. It was important that Governors kept this in mind as they carried out their work.</p>

16	<p>Ofsted preparation (continued)</p> <p>SL drew attention to the Ofsted blogs and You Tube channel and recommended that Governors look at these. He recommended the following in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Update on Attendance with Ofsted and the DfE: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QryV8U7-mKY • How Ofsted inspects safeguarding in schools: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTJYYNP9AEc&t=167s <p>Governors thanks SL for this briefing and noted its contents</p>
17	<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>PH reported that SL and he had reviewed the Finance Policy. They had made some minor amendments and removed some financial delegations which did not appear to be relevant.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the Finance Policy (approval date: 13 December 2023).</p> <p>SL reported that he had reviewed the Data Protection Policy with the School Business Manager. This was a template policy from the School's policy consultant SchoolPro and only minor tweaks had been made to reflect the School's practice.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the Data Protection Policy (approval date: 13 December 2023).</p> <p>SL reported that the Health & Safety Policy was a standard template policy from Devon CC and that it was fit for purpose.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the Health & Safety Policy (approval date: 13 December 2023).</p> <p>DD had reviewed the Emergency Management Plan and Business Continuity Plan. He recommended it for approval.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the Emergency Management Plan and Business Continuity Plan (approval date: 13 December 2023).</p>

17	<p>Policies for approval (continued)</p> <p>SL had reviewed the following documents and recommended them for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy Notice: Pupils and Parents • Privacy Notice: Workforce • Freedom of Information Policy (also having regard to the ICO Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and the ICO Freedom of Information Act 2000 Definition Document) <p>Decision: FGB approved the following (approval date: 13 December 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy Notice: Pupils and Parents • Privacy Notice: Workforce • Freedom of Information Policy (also having regard to the ICO Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and the ICO Freedom of Information Act 2000 Definition Document) <p>SL advised that there was no longer a separate IT Policy and that this was now covered by various versions of the IT Acceptable Use Policy.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the IT Acceptable Use Policy (Staff) (approval date: 13 December 2023):</p> <p>JB confirmed that she had reviewed the Assessment Policy.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the Assessment Policy (approval date: 13 December 2023)</p>
18	<p>Governor Training</p> <p>None to report.</p>
19	<p>Safeguarding Training</p> <p>In view of the fact that Governors had this term undertaken specific online training provided by The Key, no training session was held.</p>
20	<p>School Improvement Plan 2023/24</p> <p>Following earlier review and consultation with RW, DD recommended that all elements of the Governance section of the School Improvement Plan, with the exception of the external review of FGB effectiveness, be carried forward from the SIP 2022/23.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Governance section of the School Improvement Plan 2023/24.</p>

21	<p>Impact from this meeting</p> <p>DD summarised by saying that there was clear motivation to continue to improve governance and to continue to develop the School, notwithstanding financial constraints in particular. There were workable action plans and the School was actively tackling financial challenges.</p> <p>Informative and insightful portfolio reports had been received in relation to many areas of governor activity and some useful policy updates had been agreed.</p>
22	<p>Next Meeting(s)</p> <p><i>Spring Term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SIC: 24 January 2024 ● FGB: 7 February 2024 ● FGB finance/budget meeting (tbc): 13 March 2024 ● FGB: 27 March 2024
23	<p>AOB</p> <p>Governors expressed their appreciation to KP for her contribution to Hazeldown, both as a member of staff and as a Governor, and look forward to continuing to work with her in her new role as an Associate Member. They wish her success in her new role in January.</p> <p>RW reported that she wished to brief Governors on matters arising from a recent meeting of the complaints committee. However, in view of the apologies received from several Governors, she would do this at FGB1 in the Spring Term.</p>
	<p>The meeting ended at 8:30pm.</p>

Summary of decisions and proposed actions		
<i>Actions</i>		
FGB 23/06	Governors who have not yet completed 2023/24 safeguarding training to do this and forward certificate to KHee.	

Summary of decisions and proposed actions (continued)		
<i>Decisions</i>		
4	FGB approved the amended Terms of Reference 2023/24 for the Premises and Health & Safety Committee (approval date: 13 December 2023).	
5	Governors approved the reappointment of DD as LA Governor with effect from 13 December 2023.	
5	Governors approved the appointment of KP as an Associate Member of FGB with effect from 13 December 2023.	
5	FGB approved the re-appointment of KHee with retrospective effect from 11 September 2023 and of LG with effect from 13 January 2024 as Associate Members of FGB.	
7	<p>Pre-School Governors agreed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-School will not make a separate charge for snacks. • Pre-School will not make a charge for use of the Tapestry app. • The Pre-School Leader's contract will continue to include half a day per week for administrative and leadership responsibilities. • The Pre-School age profile should continue to include provision for two-year olds. • There will be a recharge by SBS to Pre-School of £10,000 in 2023/24. 	
7	<p>Extended Schools Governors agreed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be a 5% price increase for Extended Schools with effect from April 2024. • There will be a recharge by SBS to Extended Schools of £15,000 in 2023/24. 	

Summary of decisions and proposed actions (continued)		
<i>Decisions</i>		
17	FGB approved the Finance Policy (approval date: 13 December 2023).	
17	FGB approved the Data Protection Policy (approval date: 13 December 2023).	
17	FGB approved the Health & Safety Policy (approval date: 13 December 2023).	
17	FGB approved the Emergency Management Plan and Business Continuity Plan (approval date: 13 December 2023).	
17	FGB approved the following (approval date: 13 December 2023): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy Notice: Pupils and Parents • Privacy Notice: Workforce • Freedom of Information Policy (also having regard to the ICO Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and the ICO Freedom of Information Act 2000 Definition Document) 	
17	FGB approved the IT Acceptable Use Policy (Staff) (approval date: 13 December 2023):	
17	FGB approved the Assessment Policy (approval date: 13 December 2023)	
20	Governors approved the Governance section of the School Improvement Plan 2023/24.	

These minutes are agreed by those present as being a true record.	
Signed (Chair of Committee)	Date