

Hazeldown School Governing Body

Full Governing Body Committee Meeting – Part 1 Minutes					
Date/Time	8 February 2023 at 6:30pm				
Location	Hazeldown Primary School				
Chaired by	Dave Dawson				
Attendees		Role	Attendees	Init	Role
Dave Dawson	RW	LA Chair	Kevin Gough	KG	Parent
Ruth Walters	RW	Co-opted Vice Chair	Paul Hamilton	PH	Parent
Stuart Ludford	SL	Headteacher	Kirsty Prentice	KP	Parent
Kelly Harnett	KHtt	Co-opted			
Samantha Atkinson	SA	Co-opted			

Apologies	Initials	Role	Absent without apology	Initials	Role
Jasmine Banning	JB	Staff	Laura Parfitt	LPar	Parent
Kit Hardee	KHee	Associate Member			

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

Minutes to
Attendees
School website

	Agenda	Led by
1	Apologies	Clerk
2	Declarations of interest	Clerk
3	Agree minutes of last meeting: 14 December 2022	Clerk
4	Matters arising from previous meeting: 14 December 2022	Clerk
5	Review terms of office	Clerk
6	Review of Governor Effectiveness	DD
7	Headteacher's Report	SL
8	Staffing and strategy	SL
9a	Portfolio Report: Finance	PH
9b	Report on Extended Schools	PH
9c	SFVS	SL
10	Portfolio Report: Personnel	KHtt
11	Portfolio Report: Safeguarding	-
12	Portfolio report: Premises and Health & Safety	KG
13	Policies for review and approval	Various
14	Governor Training	Various
15	Safeguarding Training	SL
16	Impact from this meeting	DD
17	Next Meeting(s)	Clerk
18	AOB	Clerk

Item	Details of discussion
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from JB and KHee. 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: 14 December 2022</p> <p>The minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 14 December 2022 were agreed as a fair record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>

4	Matters arising from previous minutes: 14 December 2022		
	FGB 22/13	Action: KHee to chase those Governors who have not yet completed the Autumn 2023 safeguarding training update.	All relevant training has now been completed
	FGB 22/15	Action: KHee to provide all Governors with link to access online Safer Recruitment training. Although this is not mandatory, Governors are encouraged to undertake the training.	Done - refer KHee's email dated 5 January 2023. This is not mandatory training for all, but is an important aspect of safeguarding training and any Governor expecting to be involved in interviewing should consider undertaking this course.
	FGB 22/16	Action: DD to circulate proposed date for subgroup to meet in January 2023, ideally at a twilight session in the School.	Done; meeting took place on 18 January 2023. See agenda item 6.
	FGB 22/17	Action: PH and Clerk to devise a suitable approach to greater sharing of financial reports among Governors (notwithstanding any structural changes that might be introduced).	Done. PH has distributed a suite of additional reports for this meeting and will continue to add these to future portfolio reports.
	FGB 22/18	Action: SBM to be asked to prepare some additional proposals for charging for Extended Schools including an option with a lower percentage increase.	Done – see below at agenda item 9b
	FGB 22/19	Action: Clerk to follow up status of LPar's review of the Assessment Policy.	This was approved at SIC on 25 January 2023
	FGB 22/20	Action: Clerk to move the timing of the Admissions Policy review in the Policy Review grid.	Done; this policy is now shown as due for review in December and not in February (NB last review was in December 2022)
5	Review terms of office		
	Governors noted that current membership and composition of FGB and noted that there was no urgency to fill the one existing vacancy.		

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Review of FGB effectiveness

DD summarised the recommendations from the subgroup meeting held on 18 January. He referred to the notes of that meeting which were available on OneDrive. He reminded Governors that it was not necessary to reach decisions tonight, particularly in relation to the format and pattern of meetings, as any proposals could be tabled at September's FGB Housekeeping meeting and implemented for 2023/24. There would be opportunity for further discussion and refinement over the rest of the current school year.

- The portfolio reporting system works well for Hazeldown and it is recommended that this be retained.
- The pattern of six FGB meetings per annum should also be retained.
- The business currently conducted by School Improvement Committee ("SIC") could be re-arranged so that a single termly meeting (first half of term) covers both the previous term's data drop and current activity in relation to the School Improvement Plan. This would free up the three remaining SIC (second half of each term) slots for other purposes including a proposed strategy meeting once a year.
- DD could hand over chairmanship of the School Improvement Committee and this could then be chaired on a revolving basis so that different members of the Board could share the role and obtain experience of chairing a Governors' meeting.
- A move towards taking portfolio reports "as read" in meetings may help to reduce duplication (although duplication is not considered a particular issue at present). It would be for portfolio holders to judge when an item should be brought to the table for discussion or consideration. There is no intention to diminish the value of the work done by portfolio holders. PH noted that portfolio holders have shown themselves capable of picking out salient points for meetings. It is important that they are able to bring up points if they wish to.
- RW explained the proposal that a "Comments" field be added at the foot of each portfolio report. While Governors reading a report may not have questions, they sometimes have observations or comments ("I observed this practice in action when I visited ... "or "this observation matches with my findings from the perspective of my portfolio ... ") which it would be informative to capture.

There was further discussion of these matters and general agreement among members of FGB that these proposals could usefully be implemented.

Action: DD to summarise proposals on review of FGB effectiveness and bring back to FGB before the end of this school year.

KHtt suggested that "comments" could be implemented straightaway if Governors wished and this was agreed to be a good idea.

SL reminded Governors that these proposals were designed to enhance Governor effectiveness and that the review had not identified major issues that required urgent attention.

6	<p>Review of FGB effectiveness (continued)</p> <p>RW reminded Governors of the need to make progress on the matter of parental engagement (in other words, Governor engagement with the parent body). DD and KP had attended a recent course on parent engagement generally and they agreed that there had been some useful pointers there.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Finally, there was some discussion of the suggestion that breakout groups could be used in some meetings. There were some doubts about the logistics and efficiency of doing this, but Governors expressed an open mind about trialling it at a suitable time.</p>
7	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p>SL referred to the written report which was available on OneDrive and provided several oral updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixty parents had specified Hazeldown as their first-choice school in their applications for Autumn Term 2023 places. This was very pleasing, especially in view of demographic changes and given that some schools locally were acknowledging that they were struggling with falling pupil rolls. SA added that she had heard anecdotal evidence suggesting that Hazeldown was clearly preferred to its local competitors by many families. • The School had received a new asbestos monitoring report, which had been commissioned as part of the kitchen project. This had confirmed that the area earmarked for the proposed kitchen development was clear of asbestos. Remedial work was now planned by DCC for the remaining issues identified in the 2019 Condition Survey. Those fans which were accessible would be replaced and the radiators in the bungalow would be removed and replaced. Some asbestos waste in enclosed roof spaces would remain but was suitably marked and included in the register. • There had been a couple of requests from staff to take leave during termtime and SL thanked those Governors who had been involved in panel consideration and decision making on these. In summary, one or two individuals had held unrealistic expectations about the likelihood of requests being granted in termtime. Some small amendments to the Staff Leave Policy had been made to clarify certain issues. • In response to RW's enquiry about staff wellbeing, SL confirmed that staff appeared to be reacting well to the actions outlined at the recent meeting of the School Improvement Committee to reduce workload and in particular to reduce the amount of planning needed for effective delivery of the curriculum using Cornerstones. • LG explained that it was helpful for staff to be able to view the full coverage of a topic on Cornerstones as this gave them a good overview of the journey and helped them to reduce duplication. Some elements of Cornerstones encouraged multiple coverage of specific areas and staff were now better able to judge whether or not this was in fact necessary.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL reported that staff had been invited to bring positives and “hot tips” around the use and development of Cornerstones to the next staff meeting after half term. • KG asked whether individual units had identifiable endpoints and discussion ensued on how much clarity there was on end-of-curriculum endpoints. LG noted that there was still some work to do on linking this to Cornerstones. <p>DD drew the attention of Governors to the planned Ofsted preparation day with Helen Eversett on 26 April. There was a feedback session planned for 4:00pm and Governors were invited to this.</p> <p>Action: Governors to consider whether they can attend this useful feedback session on 26 April.</p> <p>SL reported that the School had received notice from the catering company, TCS, to say that its prices would be going up for the first time in three years. This meant that the School would have to increase charges to parents in order to cover the increase.</p> <p>Decision: Governors agreed to match the 25 pence increase in the cost of lunches charged by TCS to the School with an equal increase in the price charged to parents.</p> <p>DD thanked SL for a helpful and informative report.</p>
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8	<p>Staffing and Strategy</p> <p>SL reported that it was still extremely difficult to make plans for 2023/24 as the School, like others, was still waiting for some important detail on the budget for next year. The HCSS financial budgeting suite had still not been released to schools. Until there was greater clarity, it was not possible to plan the September 2023 budget with any degree of confidence as, until the funding was confirmed, it was not possible to conclude whether the School could fund its aspirations.</p> <p>He reported that members of SLT were keen to retain the current level of staff “release”, which meant that staff were given time for development activities and for non-timetabled support. Creation of an additional TA role for emotional and behavioural support would be an advantage. A fourth Team Leader had been provisionally added to the staffing budget. Two members of staff were due to return from maternity leave and discussions with both were taking place to establish their preferences and agree arrangements. In respect of any flexible working requests, the School would consider these and accommodate where there was no adverse business case. This included asking staff to work a minimum of a three-day week to ensure reasonable continuity for pupils and to enable two three-day members of staff to have some overlap/handover time in the middle of the week and to have hours available to cover each other’s PPA time. Such arrangements were set up as “class share” arrangements and not as “job shares”, as the latter brought additional requirements on the staff involved and were more complex to manage.</p>
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9a	<p>Portfolio Report: Finance</p> <p>PH presented his Finance portfolio report. He summarised some of the pressures on expenditure including higher utility costs and national pay awards and reported that an overspend of around £60,000 was now forecast for 2022/23 school year. However, the School had started the year with a six-figure carryforward balance. Once the £100,000 earmarked for the new kitchen development was added to the picture, he anticipated a carryforward at the end of the current year in the region of £200,000.</p> <p>In respect of Pre-School and Extended Schools, there was scope to vary the recharge made by the main School in respect of consumables, overheads and administrative support and he felt that a charge of £5,000 to Pre-School might be appropriate. If the mooted £10,000 recharge to Extended Schools was not made, this would leave the latter with a small surplus at year end.</p> <p>The School had received the £18,000 energy efficiency grant which was described in the report. There was some, but not much, scope to allocate some of this to works already completed and paid for, however SL had some plans for utilisation of the grant. This included upgrading of LED lighting and replacement of an old boiler.</p> <p>Decision: Governors noted the content of the finance portfolio report.</p>
9b	<p>Extended Schools</p> <p>DD reminded Governors that they had requested some additional modelling and analysis at the previous meeting. The SBM had provided this. It was evident that an increase in charges to parents was necessary.</p> <p>Discussion ensued on the merits of introducing this with effect from April or waiting until the end of the school year. There was also some discussion on the amount of any proposed rise bearing in mind affordability issues as well as the need to balance the Extended School's books.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved an increase of 10% in Extended School charges to be implemented with effect from April 2023.</p> <p>Governors noted that this decision did not preclude the possibility of a further increase later in the year if circumstances made this necessary. DD asked SL to thank the SBM for her work on these papers and proposals.</p>
9c	<p>SFVS</p> <p>DD drew attention to the SFVS monitoring form which had been available for review on OneDrive. This was a standard annual return to DCC providing confirmations from the School and FGB on aspects of the School's financial systems and controls. DD and PH had worked on this with SL and the SBM. It was not clear what scrutiny the completed return received. There were no significant changes from the previous year's return. DD recommended that Governors approve the SFVS return 2023 for submission.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the 2023 SFVS return and authorised SL to submit it.</p>

10	<p>Personnel Report</p> <p>No report was due at this meeting. KHtt stated that there were no urgent issues requiring Governor attention.</p>
11	<p>Portfolio Report: Safeguarding</p> <p>SA presented her termly Safeguarding Portfolio Report. She thanked SL for his assistance in the course of preparation of the report. She had held a useful and informative meeting with the PSHE subject leader to review the extent to which safeguarding practices were embedded into normal school life and had identified lots of examples which were clearly evidenced, for example in letters home to parents. They had also looked at the PSHE curriculum.</p> <p>SA welcomed the use of the SCARF approach and judged this to be an important element of the School's safeguarding environment.</p> <p>Governors noted the contents of the Safeguarding Report.</p> <p>DD thanked SA for her work in this area.</p>
12	<p>Portfolio Report: Premises and Health & Safety</p> <p>No report was due at this meeting. KG stated that there were no urgent issues requiring Governor attention.</p> <p>KG and KHtt reported orally on minor incidents that they had each witnessed around pickup time and SL agreed to follow these up.</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>KHtt had reviewed the Staff Disciplinary Policy and had suggested a couple of changes which had been incorporated. She recommended this for approval.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Staff Disciplinary Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).</p> <p>PH had reviewed the Governor Allowances and Expenses Policy and the Lettings Policy. He recommended both of these for approval.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Governor Allowances and Expenses Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Lettings Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).</p>

13	<p>Policies for approval (continued)</p> <p>Regarding the Equality Policy (and Equality Objectives), SL reported that this was undergoing a revision to reflect various factors requiring change generally. He would work on this with KP.</p> <p>Action: SL to table the revised Equality Policy (and Equality Objectives) for Governor review when the update is ready.</p> <p>KHtt had reviewed the Staff Leave and Absence Policy and, following minor amendments referred to earlier, was happy to recommend this for approval#.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Staff Leave and Absence Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).</p> <p>The Social Media Policy had been reviewed by JB, who was unable to attend this meeting. The clerk read out an email from JB in which she recommended approval of the policy.</p> <p>Decision: Governors approved the Social Media Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).</p> <p>LG reported that SLT had approved a range of subject policies in line with the delegation arrangements in place and Governors noted this.</p>
14	<p>Governor Training</p> <p>DD and KP had attended a seminar on Parent Engagement which they had found useful (refer agenda item 5).</p> <p>KG had attended a course on Governor readiness for Ofsted and commended this to all Governors who did not work in an educational setting. There had been emphasis on the importance of Governors understanding the expectations of inspectors and the specifics of the language used before and during inspection. It was essential that Governors had a common and shared understanding.</p> <p>Action: All Governors not working in an educational setting to consider whether they can attend another iteration of this course.</p> <p>Action: SL to liaise with Chair and Clerk over adding an Ofsted-specific agenda item to future FGB meeting agendas.</p> <p>SL confirmed that the SEF would be available to Governors who should look at this to identify areas of interest for discussion with inspectors should the opportunity arise.</p> <p>KHtt reported on her course on school visits. This had been useful. There had been a focus on triangulation. The use of Q-cards was also recommended.</p>

15	<p>Safeguarding Training</p> <p>SL led a session of safeguarding training for Governors. This included an introduction to Operation Encompass (see operationencompass.org) and the system of notifications which a subscribing school would receive, the processes in place in school to review, filter and disseminate this information and the impact on the welfare of any affected children. In response to Governor questions, he outlined some of the practical challenges and responses in applying the system, which was ultimately aimed at supporting and protecting children concerned.</p>
16	<p>Impact from this meeting</p> <p>DD summarised the key outcomes of the meeting. These included an insight into some aspects of safeguarding and the challenges involved. Important decisions had been made in relation to Extended Schools finances and due monitoring of whole-School finance had also continued. Well-researched portfolio reports on Finance and Safeguarding had been received and considered. Policy review and approval had taken place in line with plans.</p>
20	<p>Next Meeting(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SIC Wednesday 15 March 2023 (including consideration of the School Improvement Plan) ● FGB Wednesday 29 March 2023
21	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p>
	<p>The meeting ended at 8.35pm.</p>

Summary of decisions and proposed actions		
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
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
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.	All
FGB 22/24	Action: SL to table the revised Equality Policy (and Equality Objectives) for Governor review when the update is ready.	SL
FGB 22/25	Action: All Governors not working in an educational setting to consider whether they can attend another iteration of this course.	All
FGB 22/26	Action: SL to liaise with Chair and Clerk over adding an Ofsted-specific agenda item to future FGB meeting agendas.	SL
6	Decision: Governors agreed to match the 25 pence increase in the cost of lunches charged by TCS to the School with an equal increase in the price charged to parents.	
9b	Decision: Governors approved an increase of 10% in Extended School charges to be implemented with effect from April 2023.	
9c	Decision: Governors approved the 2023 SFVS return and authorised SL to submit it.	
13	Decision: Governors approved the Staff Disciplinary Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).	
13	Decision: Governors approved the Governor Allowances and Expenses Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).	
13	Decision: Governors approved the Lettings Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).	
13	Decision: Governors approved the Staff Leave and Absence Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).	
13	Decision: Governors approved the Social Media Policy (approval date: 8 February 2023).	

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

Signed (Chair of Committee)	Date
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