

# Hazeldown School Governing Body

Full Governing Body Committee Meeting – Part 1 Minutes					
Date/Time	27 March 2024				
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	Matt Hallett	MH	Parent
Kelly Harnett	KHtt	Co-opted			
Ruth Doughty	RD	Co-opted			
Samantha Atkinson (for items 1 to 6)	SA	Co-opted			

Apologies	Initials	Role	Absent without apology	Initials	Role

In Attendance	Initials	Role
Tim Synge	TS	Clerk
Lee Goodenough	LG	Associate Member
Kit Hardee	KHee	Associate Member
Kirsty Prentice	KP	Associate Member
Tony Leney	TL	Governor Designate

Minutes to
Attendees
School website

	<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Led by</b>
1	Apologies	Clerk
2	Declarations of interest	Clerk
3a	Agree minutes of last meeting: 7 February 2024	Clerk
4	Matters arising from previous meeting: 7 February 2024	Clerk
5	Review terms of office	DD
6	Headteacher's Report	SL
7a	Portfolio Report: Finance	PH
7b	Draft budget 2024/25	SL/PH
8	Portfolio Report: Safeguarding	RD
9	Portfolio Report: Personnel	KHtt
10	Portfolio report: Premises and Health & Safety	DD
11	Portfolio report: Community & Parent Links	DD
12	Portfolio Report: Vulnerable Pupils	RW
13	Portfolio Report: Curriculum Portfolio	SA/JB
14	Governor Visits 2023/24	Various
15	Ofsted preparation	SL
16	Policies for review and approval	Various
17	Governor Training	Various
18	Safeguarding Training	-
19	Impact from this meeting	DD
20	Next meeting	Clerk
21	AOB	Clerk

Item	Details of discussion
1	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>There were no apologies. DD chaired the meeting.</p> <p>DD welcomed TL to the meeting. TL had applied for one of the parent governor vacancies and was here as an observer and Governor Designate.</p>
2	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>No Governor had any interests to declare in the business of the meeting.</p>
3	<p><b>Agree minutes of last meeting: 7 February 2024</b></p> <p>The minutes (including Part 2 minutes) of the previous FGB meeting held on 7 February 2024 were agreed as a fair record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>

4	<b>Matters arising from previous minutes: 7 February 2024</b>		
FGB 23/07	MH agreed to make contact with Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Safeguarding team and also their Education Officer to establish a link for the school for future reference.	MH has spoken to the Safeguarding Officer and the Education Co-ordinator. Resources are available for schools. There is also a fire setting referral service. MH will forward details to SL.	
FGB 23/08	SL to amend Lettings Policy to reflect the matters raised during Governor review.	Done.	
FGB 23/09	SL to draft suggested monitoring activity for the Equality Objectives for RD and DD to review.	Carried forward	
FGB 23/10	Clerk to identify and book suitable SEND training for RW.	Carried forward	
5	<p><b>Review terms of office</b></p> <p>A parent who had expressed an interest in becoming a parent governor in Autumn 2023 had withdrawn her interest as a result of other commitments. In the recent round of advertising, there were two applicants for the two vacancies. One of these was TL who was in attendance this evening. DD was planning to speak with the other applicant shortly.</p>		
6	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>DD thanked SL for an informative report. He commented on a couple of items in the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He noted that the School intended to respond to the recent Parent Survey. SL said that some parents had said that the School did not tell them what their child would be learning. A new start-of-term letter would set this out. Some parents had been unsure about how the school supported their child's personal development and a new page on personal development would be added to the website.</li> <li>• DD asked about changing parental attitudes SL replied that it appeared that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ it was seen as more acceptable to take holidays in term time;</li> <li>○ it was seen as less acceptable to send a child to school with a minor "sniffle";</li> <li>○ there was a general expectation that the school would do more than previously in terms of the broader upbringing of a child including basic life skills; and</li> <li>○ social and emotional catch up was still going on post-COVID.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><i>KHtt wondered whether a message to parents from Governors on the subject of attendance might be included in a forthcoming newsletter. This could cover not the educational aspects but social aspects.</i></b></p> <p><b>Action: DD and SL to look at a Governor contribution on attendance for a Summer Term newsletter.</b></p>		

6	<p><b>Headteacher's Report (continued)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DD noted that there were positive signs regarding attendance. Was this restricted to a small number of pupils? SL said that a recent outbreak of chickenpox had not helped the figures, however there were some improvements.</li> </ul> <p>SL provided some general updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching unions were canvassing on possible strike action. They were seeking enhancements to teachers' pay to compensate for the fact that teachers were unable to work from home at a time when this was increasingly an option in other types of job.</li> <li>• The site manager was off and this had an impact on the time and effort required from members of the Senior Leadership Team to cover aspects of the role.</li> <li>• The new charges from Devon Education Services were higher than budgeted for.</li> <li>• The Devon Maintenance Partnership contract (covering such matters as legionella checks and boiler servicing) would come to an end at the end of March and there was as yet no replacement.</li> </ul> <p>KHee described progress with SEND meetings this year. Parents of children with SEND now had extra time at parents' evenings to discuss their child's progress and to review Individual Education Plans ("IEPs"). Feedback about this initiative was generally positive, although there were inevitably some challenging discussions.</p> <p>SL reported that the network filtering and monitoring system was generally working well; children understood the reasons for this and their attitudes were good. SL regularly reviewed the reports of blocked sites. On occasions this did not identify the correct child and Praestantia were investigating the reasons for this.</p> <p>There was evidence of rats on the school site (but not inside school buildings). A pest controller had been engaged to address this.</p> <p>DD thanked SL for an informative report and added two further points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• two Governors had still not completed their 2023/24 safeguarding training and it was essential that this was rectified very quickly.</li> <li>• Governors should recognise their responsibility in respect of the well-being of the leadership team. There were measures in place for staff generally, however there was an additional challenge in encouraging members of the leadership team to ensure that their workload was not too great and he encouraged them to identify activities and responsibilities where they could reduce their inputs.</li> </ul>
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7a	<p><b>Portfolio Report: Finance</b></p> <p>PH introduced this section by saying that there was no separate finance report and that the final draft budget 2024/25 would be the sole item of business under finance at this meeting.</p>
7b	<p><b>Draft budget 2024/25</b></p> <p>SL introduced the draft budget 2024/25. This has three separate components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the main School budget (G120);</li> <li>• the Extended Schools budget (G121); and</li> <li>• the Little Acorns Pre-School and Nursery budget (G122).</li> </ul> <p>SL drew attention to the accompanying commentary on the School budget. Recent changes were highlighted in purple text and these reflected decisions made following the special meeting of FGB on 13 March. He drew attention to plans to reduce the Pupil Admissions Number (“PAN”). This had been discussed at County level during the Autumn Term finance meetings and should not be seen as an indication of an inability to recruit pupils, but rather as a reflection of changing demographics. The School continued to recruit pupils and to seek to be the school of choice in the area. The challenge was shifting and the focus was no longer solely on recruitment, but on how best to restructure the School’s activities and its cost base in order to meet the challenge of the demographic changes. As was made clear in the recent FGB meeting, many options had been considered. A reduction in the PAN from 60 to 45 would be inevitable within the next year or two. SL described some of the factors which would be taken into account in making a decision on the timing of this change.</p> <p>SL turned to the supply budget. At £65,000, this was a significant amount. Expenditure against the various elements of this budget would be tracked closely.</p> <p>SL noted that, following the promotion of the DH to a headteacher role in another school, it had been decided after careful consideration that the role of AHT would be dropped. This would result in a two-person Senior Leadership Team rather than three, however budget pressures did not permit a continuation of the existing structure. Some specific SLT roles and responsibilities would be moved elsewhere with commensurate changes where appropriate to individual job descriptions.</p> <p>The Workforce Reform Group was proposing a review of the identified tasks which teachers should or should not undertake. The School was seeking to create sufficient capacity for administrative staff to take on relevant tasks and would also advise teachers that they were not obliged to carry out these tasks if they did not wish to.</p> <p>SL reminded Governors of the continuing pressure arising from the DfE’s new guidance on managing attendance. LG described a typical cycle; this involved arranging and planning for a 30-minute meeting with each of perhaps a dozen parents, holding the meeting, creating an action plan and, four weeks later, reviewing the action plan. This represented a significant additional burden on the Senior Leadership Team.</p>

**Draft budget 2024/25 (continued)**

DD thanked SL for all the work which had been done on the School budget, particularly by SL and by the SBM. Did governors have any further questions?

RW reflected that it was good that the need for a material restructuring of staff had been avoided. She felt that the approach taken in the budget was a good one and the School had presented a convincing set of solutions. The care for the wellbeing of loyal members of staff was apparent.

Several questions had been raised by governors on the written report and these had been responded to (see end of this section of the minutes\*).

**RD asked whether the impact of reducing the PAN had been recognised in the figures.** SL confirmed that changes to teaching costs were reflected from 2026/27 onwards.

**DD asked about the status of the dialogue with County.** SL explained that the School had received a letter asking for a formal financial recovery plan. However County's interpretation of the School's financial position had been based on November 2023 forecasts and on incomplete figures which at that time suggested that the School would incur a deficit in each of the next three years. The School had replied and explained that there would be a small deficit (circa £15,000) in year three only. County replied to say that they would look at this when the budget was submitted. It would be possible to eliminate the year three deficit by tweaking some of the figures, however this would be an artificial process. Governors confirmed that they were happy for the budget to include this small deficit.

**In summing up, DD noted that slippage against the budget was always a risk. In previous years, the brought forward surplus was maintained at a level which could offset any adverse variances, however this would not be the case in the future.** SL agreed and said that a clear message was being given to staff to say that cash was not available for any extras.

**Finally, DD noted that the draft budget was based on January 2024 figures and that there was scope for some change to these in the last two months of the current year.** SL confirmed that the SBM was tracking actual results closely and that there was no indication of substantial adverse variances against these figures.

PH observed that the information provided in these papers was clear, it was well explained and the rationale for decisions had been clearly set out. The School had made every attempt to offset negative factors. He expressed thanks to SL and to the SBM. It was evident that the impact on children of budgets decisions had been carefully considered. He recommended the budget for approval,

**Decision: Governors approved the School draft budget 2024/25 (G120).**

7b	<p><b>Draft budget 2024/25 (continued)</b></p> <p>Regarding the Extended Schools budget, PH noted that numbers were up to 50 which was in line with pre-COVID figures. He recommended this budget for approval.</p> <p><b>Decision: Governors approved the Extended Schools draft budget 2024/25 (G121).</b></p> <p>Turning to the Little Acorns budget, SL remarked that the School had expressed a willingness to take on additional numbers. However, this was dependent on the receipt of capital funding to extend the building and create additional space. No response had yet been received. The budget had been drawn up on the basis of existing patterns of use. PH recommended this for approval.</p> <p><b>Decision: Governors approved the Little Acorns draft budget 2024/25 (G122).</b></p> <p><i>* The following written questions were raised by Governors in advance.</i></p> <p><b><i>DD: G120 income and expenditure report shows income of £3,900 from Maths Mastery. Is this impacted by SD going back to class full time?</i></b></p> <p>At the moment, the starting point plan is to use the income to cover supply to release SD for these activities. Previously, she's had two days of release, so the income has just gone towards the staffing for this. Once we've decided on the format of the SENDCo role, we may be able to create a leadership role for curriculum lead which would have one or two days release attached to it; SD may want/be appointed to this so the Maths Mastery outreach work could be part of this time and the funding go to the salaries again rather than buying supply. If it were someone else, or we made the SENDCo role 5 days a week, we would follow the initial plan.</p> <p><b><i>DD: G120 income and expenditure report shows school meals income including a significant contribution from 'Predicted income from increased sales', especially in Y2 onwards. What is the confidence level that this increase in uptake is sound?</i></b></p> <p>This is based on Educatering predictions for our meal numbers and their previous track records with other schools' numbers increasing when they have taken over kitchens from other suppliers. It is conservative rather than over-aspirational.</p> <p><b><i>DD: Am I correct in thinking that 'Free School Meal Ever 6' income needs to be added to 'Total Income from Catering' to get the real total income from providing school meals?</i></b></p> <p>No - Ever 6 children get pupil premium funding not free school meal funding. Free School Meal funding for disadvantaged families (outside of UIFSM) is part of Pupil Premium funding and would need to be looked at to get 'real' income for school meals.</p> <p><b><i>DD: "Admin Hours have been increased slightly and one role increased to a D grade." Despite this statement, the forecast for Admin Staff costs in 2024/25 is less than the overrun for 2023/24 forecast on the last budget monitor. Why is this?</i></b></p>
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7b	<p><b>Draft budget 2024/25 (continued)</b></p> <p>This is an error. Unfortunately, two admin contracts were put under the CFR Code for TA's. New Total for Admin is £130,834. New Total for TA's are £353,190. This doesn't impact the final figures for the budget.</p> <p><b><i>DD: Spend with IT support Praestantia is significant. Have we explored alternatives or considered ways to reduce?</i></b></p> <p>We are reducing the number of IT visits from September which is reflected in the budget. They also supply many other services for us – Smart Licence, MDM Licencing, Email monitoring and Phishing protection etc. We also signed a three-year contract which is not up for renewal yet. Previous experience is 'you get what you pay for' and Praestantia are far better than other IT support we have had previously.</p> <p><b><i>RD: If the SENDCo is contracted for 5 days a week and provides release for curriculum leaders for 2 days per week, is this not an expensive way of providing the release?</i></b></p> <p>They would be appointed as a teacher, with a TLR for the SENDCo responsibility. By sharing a class with the individual who had the release, they have the additional opportunity to be actively teaching children with SEND and implementing our processes and strategies as a model for others.</p>
8	<p><b>Portfolio Report: Safeguarding portfolio</b></p> <p>No Report was due at this meeting and there were no urgent matters requiring Governor attention. RD had carried out a Governor visit to review Attendance processes (see item 14).</p>
9	<p><b>Portfolio Report: Personnel portfolio</b></p> <p>Report to be carried over to Summer Term FGB1.</p>
10	<p><b>Portfolio Report: Premises and Health &amp; Safety</b></p> <p>Report to be carried over to Summer Term FGB1.</p>
11	<p><b>Portfolio Report: Community &amp; Parent Links</b></p> <p>DD's portfolio report had been uploaded to OneDrive before the meeting and there were no specific matters which he wished to highlight. He did, however, ask Governors to recognise the work being done by the PTA in support of the School. The issue to each child in Year 6 of a Chromebook, which helped them to prepare for the transition to secondary school, was only possible with the support of the PTA.</p> <p>DD advised Governors that there would be Governor GDPR training to be carried out in the Summer Term.</p>
12	<p><b>Portfolio Report: Vulnerable Pupils</b></p> <p>DD thanked RW for an excellent report.</p> <p>Looking at the School's SEND provision, RW acknowledged the legacy left by KP and the way in which KHee had been able to pick this up without any loss in provision. This was a testament to the professionalism of both.</p>



13	<p><b>Portfolio Report: Curriculum</b></p> <p>DD thanked SA for an excellent report. He noted that the Cornerstones curriculum suite appeared to be a very strong resource. RW added that it was pleasing to read about the work being done in subject areas which often received less attention, including Computing, Design Tech, RE and Music.</p>
14	<p><b>Governor Visits</b></p> <p>RD had reported on her visit to review Attendance. She had attended an Attendance meeting.</p> <p>SA had reported on her visit to look at the intended curriculum against the actual curriculum.</p> <p>The SEND visit report took the form of a record of a visit by James Crompton, SEND Advisory Teacher, and this had also been included in the papers for this meeting.</p>
15	<p><b>Ofsted preparation</b></p> <p>SL briefed Governors. In the past, Ofsted inspectors had treated safeguarding very much like an individual topic; there would typically be a meeting at the outset during which the Lead Inspector would evaluate a School's safeguarding attitudes, training and procedures. Now, the inspection of safeguarding was woven into the overall inspection to a much greater extent and safeguarding policies and procedures were likely to be reviewed throughout the visit.</p> <p>There was a close link between attendance and safeguarding. Changes to the DfE guidance on attendance were due to be published in August 2024 for the Autumn Term.</p> <p><b><i>RW, noting that attendance issues were sometimes outside the School's control, asked how the School dealt with the challenge of identifying any associated safeguarding concerns.</i></b> SL acknowledged that there may be a safeguarding issue behind an attendance issue. Ultimately, the parent had to want to engage with Early Help (and the School's "Earlier Help). SL was satisfied that the School was doing all it reasonably could in this regard. The cessation of "Sure Start" Local Programmes was a loss.</p> <p><b><i>RW asked for SL's view on the School's position in attendance tables.</i></b> The School was "mid table" among Devon schools. SL felt that the School was holding its own, however there was a desire to improve on this position.</p> <p>SL advised Governors that there was requirement to check the Single Central Register ("SCR") twice a term. It was agreed that SL would carry out a check half termly and that RD would do the same.</p> <p>This session concluded with a Governor activity. Governors were asked to identify evidence of the School's safeguarding culture being "open and positive". Governors offered a range of suggestions and observations and KHee made a written note of the discussion.</p>

16	<p><b>Policies for approval</b></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>RW had reviewed the SEND Policy and the SEND Information Report. She raised a couple of suggestions for minor changes which SL and KHee agreed to make.</p> <p><b>Decision: FGB approved the SEND Policy (approval date: 27 March 2024).</b></p> <p><b>Decision: FGB approved the SEND Information Report (approval date: 27 March 2024).</b></p> <p>KHtt had reviewed the Whistleblowing Policy and the Recruitment and Selection Policy. In respect of the latter, she noted that a couple of dates needed to be changed.</p> <p><b>Decision: FGB approved the Recruitment and Selection policy (approval date: 27 March 2024).</b></p> <p><b>Decision: FGB approved the Whistleblowing Policy (approval date: 27 March 2024).</b></p>
17	<p><b>Governor Training</b></p> <p>None to report.</p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to identify and book suitable induction training for MH and for TL.</b></p>
18	<p><b>Safeguarding Training</b></p> <p>Not due at this meeting.</p>
19	<p><b>Impact from this meeting</b></p> <p>DD summarised by saying that Governors had approved the draft budget 2024/25 including a number of key assumptions and planned actions on which this was based. This would set the School in the strongest possible position in the light of external financial pressures and would equip it as well as possible for the next budget cycle.</p> <p>DD reminded Governors of the importance of challenge and asked all to consider adding written questions or observations to written reports ahead of future meetings.</p>

20	<p><b>Next Meeting(s)</b></p> <p><i>Summer Term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SIC: 8 May 2024</li> <li>● FGB1: 22 May 2024</li> <li>● FGB (non-routine - tbc): 3 July 2024</li> <li>● FGB2: 17 July 2024</li> </ul>
20	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>RD reported that she had reviewed the Charity Commission website and noticed that the annual return (year ended 31 March 2023) for the Hazeldown School Award Fund was overdue by 56 days. The fund has a single trustee: “Hazeldown Governing Body” and DD holds the online access on behalf of FGB. DD said that, unlike in previous years, he had received no reminder from the Charity Commission.</p> <p><b>Action: DD to submit 2023 annual return for Hazeldown School Award Fund. [DD completed this on 28 March.]</b></p>
	The meeting ended at 8:30pm.

Summary of decisions and proposed actions		
Actions		
FGB 23/09	SL to draft suggested monitoring activity for the Equality Objectives for RD and DD to review.	SL and RD/DD
FGB 23/10	Clerk to identify and book suitable SEND training for RW.	Clerk
FGB 23/11	DD and SL to look at a Governor contribution on attendance for a Summer Term newsletter.	DD/SL
FGB 23/12	Clerk to identify and book suitable induction training for MH and for TL.	Clerk
FGB 23/13	DD to submit 2023 annual return for Hazeldown School Award Fund. [DD completed this on 28 March.]	DD

<b>Summary of decisions and proposed actions (continued)</b>		
<i>Decisions</i>		
7b	Governors approved the School draft budget 2024/25 (G120).	
7b	Governors approved the Extended Schools draft budget 2024/25 (G121).	
7b	Governors approved the Little Acorns draft budget 2024/25 (G122).	
16	FGB approved the SEND Policy (approval date: 27 March 2024).	
16	FGB approved the SEND Information Report (approval date: 27 March 2024).	
16	FGB approved the Recruitment and Selection policy (approval date: 27 March 2024).	
16	FGB approved the Whistleblowing Policy (approval date: 27 March 2024).	

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