

Hazeldown School Governing Body

Full Governing Body Committee Meeting – Part 1 Minutes					
Date/Time	22 May 2024				
Location	Hazeldown Primary School				
Chaired by	Dave Dawson				
Attendees		Role	Attendees	Init	Role
Dave Dawson	DD	LA Chair	Jasmine Garswood (was Banning)	JG	Staff
Ruth Walters	RW	Co-opted	Paul Hamilton (items 1-6, 8)	PH	Parent
Stuart Ludford	SL	Headteacher	Matt Hallett	MH	Parent
Kelly Harnett	KHtt	Co-opted	Tony Leney	TL	Parent
Ruth Doughty	RD	Co-opted	Cloudi Lewis	CL	Parent
Samantha Atkinson	SA	Co-opted			

Apologies	Initials	Role	Absent without apology	Initials	Role
Lee Goodenough	LG	Associate Member			
Kit Hardee	KHee	Associate Member			

In Attendance	Initials	Role
Tim Syngé	TS	Clerk
Kirsty Prentice	KP	Associate Member

Minutes to
Attendees
School website

	Agenda	Led by
1	Apologies	Clerk
2	Declarations of interest	Clerk
3	Agree minutes of last meeting: 27 March 2024	Clerk
4	Matters arising from previous meeting: 7 March 2024	Clerk
5	Review terms of office	Clerk
8	Portfolio Report: Finance	PH
6	Chair's Update	DD
7	Headteacher's Report	SL
9	Portfolio Report: Safeguarding	RD
10	Portfolio Report: Personnel	KHtt
11	Portfolio report: Premises and Health & Safety	DD/MH
12	Portfolio report: Community & Parent Links	DD
13	Portfolio Report: Vulnerable Pupils	RW
14	Portfolio Report: Curriculum Portfolio	SA/JG
15	Ofsted preparation	SL
16	Policies for review and approval	Various
17	School Improvement Plan 2023/24	DD
18	Governor Training	Various
19	Safeguarding Training	SL/All
20	Impact from this meeting	DD
21	Next meeting	Clerk
22	AOB	Clerk

Item	Details of discussion
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>There were apologies from Associate Members LG and KHee.</p> <p>DD welcomed TL and CL, recently appointed Parent Governors, to their first meeting of the Full Governing Body.</p>
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No Governor had any interests to declare in the business of the meeting.</p>
3	<p>Agree minutes of last meeting: 27 March 2024</p> <p>The minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 27 March 2024 were agreed as a fair record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>

4	Matters arising from previous minutes: 27 March 2024		
FGB 23/09	SL to draft suggested monitoring activity for the Equality Objectives for RD and DD to review.	These have been drafted and the review is in progress (carry forward)	
FGB 23/10	Clerk to identify and book suitable SEND training for RW.	Done.	
FGB 23/11	DD and SL to look at a Governor contribution on attendance for a Summer Term newsletter.	In progress (carry forward)	
FGB 23/12	Clerk to identify and book suitable induction training for MH and for TL.	In progress (carry forward)	
FGB 23/13	DD to submit 2023 annual return for Hazeldown School Award Fund.	DD completed this on 28 March.	
5	<p>Review terms of office</p> <p>The Full Governing Body is now at its full complement under the current constitution which provides for eleven members. There are no terms of office due to come to an end in calendar year 2024.</p> <p>DD informed Governors that this was KP's final meeting. She had served the School as a Parent Governor and subsequently had remained as an Associate Member and he thanked her for her sound and helpful contributions to the work of the Governing Body.</p>		
8	<p>Portfolio Report: Finance</p> <p>PH summarised his report, which consisted largely of a look back at the full 2023/24 financial year. It was frustrating that the DCC systems did not reflect all of the School's intended entries for 2023/24 and the Extended Schools and Pre-School recharges had not been reflected in the correct period. The outturn for the year was marginally better than expected but not significantly so.</p> <p>The current year would be very challenging. The School was well set up to identify and analyse potential variances, for example through the new approach devised to tracking spend against the supply budget.</p> <p>SL reported that the School had carried out some benchmarking. DCC resources and advice were being made use of. The School was in a stronger position than some, as a prudent approach had been taken in past years, however the budget was still insufficient for the School's needs. He observed that the forthcoming General Election (announced today) was unlikely to improve the funding situation, regardless of the outcome.</p> <p>DD thanked PH for his report.</p>		

6	<p>Chair's Update</p> <p>DD provided an update of various matters which he had dealt with through the role of Chair.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL and he had undertaken the Clerk's appraisal. He was pleased to note the improvements in the Governor induction process since the previous appraisal. The Clerk's agreed objectives for the next period were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To improve the visibility of Governor challenge and to evidence this. ○ To assist the Chair in ensuring that all Governors have the opportunity to be involved in and contribute to any discussions. ○ To take on an administrative role in relation to the Hazeldown Award Fund. • He had attended the interview for the recruitment of a new Deputy Head. This had provided a good opportunity to review the role following the announcement of LG's move to a role in another school and KHee had proved himself a strong candidate for the role. • He had attended the interviews for the recruitment of a new SENCo, starting in September. The candidates had been good and the preferred candidate had performed exceptionally well during the teaching observation. • He had attended the latest DAG Chairs' Forum. This was on the topic of managing the impact of financial pressure and falling pupil rolls. It was an interesting session, but offered few answers. The overriding message was that the current pressures were in no way caused by poor financial management, but rather arose directly from inadequate levels of funding. One suggestion had been that schools should consider bringing services in house to reduce costs. He noted that Hazeldown had already done this, for example in relation to the grounds management contract and in relation to the new kitchen. It was essential for the School to maintain a good reputation, particularly as a period of greater competition between schools for admissions was in prospect. • The next Chairs' Forum will be on the topic of the Safety Valve. <p>RW added that RD and she had undertaken the recent appraisal of the Headteacher. The appraisal had recognised that there was a lot of evidence of good achievements by the Headteacher. The current challenging environment had also been acknowledged.</p> <p><i>PH left the meeting after this item</i></p>
7	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p>DD thanked SL for an informative report. He commented on a couple of items in the report. The commissioning of the new kitchen had gone well and had been well received. The feedback from staff was positive. He had met with the new librarian who appeared to be positive and keen.</p>

Headteacher's Report (continued)

SL drew further attention to some of the items in his written report.

- Three teacher appointments for September had been successfully made; these included changes from fixed term to permanent contracts as the budget permitted. The new SENCo had accepted the School's offer. He also described other staffing changes.
- The new kitchen was now in operation and was having a positive impact, not only on meal provision, but also on many aspects of the school day.
- The recent Government pronouncements on PSHE and sex education had caused a media stir, but most schools were delivering the subject in line with the newly stated position anyway. DfE guidance was due to be published by September and was not expected to impact greatly on the School.
- The new procedures on attendance were still having a significant impact on capacity and resources. The School was checking any proposed tweaks to procedures with the Devon Attendance Improvement Officer. The creation of the new D Grade post in the School Office would add some resource to help address the workload; this appointment would be made shortly. **KP asked why the figures quoted in the Headteacher's Report for persistently absent children (below 90% attendance) showed reductions and increases through the year.** SL explained that this was on account of the figures being based on the September pupil roll; the data provided by DCC was not as useful as it might be. **RW observed that former Prime Minister Gordon Brown had spoken recently about child poverty and that there appeared to be some interest in reintroducing Sure Start.** SL agreed. He summarised progress by saying that the work on attendance was having a positive impact on some of the more persistent cases, but that the required approach was undoubtedly leading to additional friction with many families, for example in relation to holidays taken in term time.
- SL reported on a complaint received about slamming of car doors in the School car park. A notification about this had been received from Teignbridge DC. The School had investigated and was not aware of any unusual circumstances at the time the issue was alleged to have arisen. The complainant had been asked for further information by Teignbridge DC. It was difficult to know what to make of this, as the individual in question had a history of making many complaints about the School, most of which appeared to have little substance when investigated. This continued to be a drain on senior staff time and resources.
- **DD asked whether the School had identified a Sustainability Lead as required by recent guidance.** SL confirmed that the School was aware of this, also that the role of a lead on Educational Finance (teaching a level of personal financial management to children) was being looked at.

7	<p>Headteacher's Report (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TL asked about the proposed visit from the National Education Union and why this had been postponed. SL explained that the representative had not checked that the proposed time was suitable for the School and had been overly presumptuous about NEU being permitted to attend at any time. The School had asked them to reschedule for after half term. • KHtt asked SL to explain the reasons for the redeployment of two TAs. SL did so. <p>In the paperwork for the meeting, the following additional questions had also been raised by Governors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DD asked, in relation to the Maintained Schools Heads' Group: "Given that we have once again found that input from DCC is less than accurate (recharge from extended schools and Little Acorns not happening), is there any discussion amongst heads and /or representation made to DCC about the level of accuracy within the support being given to schools?" SL responded as follows: "Yes, this has been passed on to both Ceri Morgan as Head of Education and Donna Manson as Chief Executive. Funding, SEND resourcing and the general process around EHCPs etc have also been raised. Additionally, the effectiveness of the School Effectiveness team has also been questioned. There do seem to be some slow, but positive changes taking place." • PH had commented "It's pleasing to hear that the kitchen/catering solution has already had a positive impact on various other parts of the school, rather than just the lunches." (No response required.) • PH had asked: "Should the cumulative total of Pupil Numbers in May amount to 410 as opposed to 405?" SL had clarified: "405 is the correct overall figure. The year one figure was incorrect and has been amended to 49." <p>DD thanked SL for an informative report.</p>
9	<p>Portfolio Report: Safeguarding portfolio</p> <p>RD introduced her report, noting that she had utilised some informal feedback from a recent inspection at another school to enhance the testing that she had carried out on the Single Central Register ("SCR"). The results of her sample testing had been discussed with relevant members of staff. RD recommended that another individual should carry out interim checks between her visits. SL agreed to implement this and said that it was extremely valuable to have Governor involvement in this process as it served to heighten the focus on an important area of the School's safeguarding procedures.</p> <p>SA provided all Governors with a reminder about her previous recommendation that all Governor reports, regardless of focus, should include a note on any safeguarding procedures observed. The Clerk circulated SA's original email on this subject.</p>

10	<p>Portfolio Report: Personnel portfolio</p> <p>No report was due at this meeting and there were no urgent matters for attention.</p> <p>KHtt thanked RW and RD for undertaking the Headteacher's Appraisal.</p>
11	<p>Portfolio Report: Premises and Health & Safety</p> <p>DD explained that he had held a mentoring session for MH. MH presented his first report as the new portfolio holder. He summarised by stating that his findings were reassuring. He drew attention to two areas: there were some site-related matters which were being well managed and he was satisfied that there was a process for supporting staff in relation to wellbeing.</p> <p>RD asked whether the School should consider a further external H&S report if the last one was June 2022? Was there a cycle for this? SL confirmed that there was and that the next one was due in Spring 2025.</p> <p>TL asked about risks relating to vehicle movements on site when pupils were present. SL explained that there was an up-to-date risk assessment for such activities. Movements were designed to be kept to a minimum but were occasionally necessary and these were carefully controlled.</p> <p>MH raised a question about parents and carers stopping their cars in the bus stop and on the zigzags outside the School. These were patently dangerous practices. SL explained that the School had no authority to interfere with activities on the public highway. A member of the Senior Leadership Team was stationed outside the School at the School gate at drop off and at pick up time each day and behaviour would improve temporarily, but would soon revert. The site manager would also monitor the bus stop area in the mornings. It was frustrating that a minority of parents and carers demonstrated negative reactions both to being challenged and by choosing to park in locations which should not be used for parking, especially when these reactions were voiced in front of children.</p>
12	<p>Portfolio Report: Community & Parent Links</p> <p>No report was due and no urgent matters were raised.</p>
13	<p>Portfolio Report: Vulnerable Pupils</p> <p>No report was due and no urgent matters were raised.</p>
14	<p>Portfolio Report: Curriculum</p> <p>No report was due and no urgent matters were raised.</p>
15	<p>Ofsted briefing</p> <p>SL provided a briefing on Ofsted matters, including early impressions of the new Chief Inspector, expected changes in the style questioning and the withdrawal of "deep dives" from one-day (but not from full) inspections.</p> <p>He briefed Governors on how the School would best benefit from their attendance at the Subject Leader Conversations. Useful lines of questioning</p>

	might include the way in which subject leaders monitored actual vs plan and how assessment was used to determine future support.
15	<p>Ofsted preparation (continued)</p> <p><i>DD reminded Governors that a key question for Governors to ask was “How do we know (that what you say is in fact the case)?”</i></p>
16	<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 Grievance Policy. SL agreed to check the contact details included in the Policy. Subject to this, KHtt recommended the Policy for approval.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the Staff Grievance Policy (approval date: 22 May 2024).</p> <p>The Pre-School Admissions Policy had been approved earlier in the year. RD noted that some change tracking was visible on the copy on the website and SL agreed to amend this.</p> <p>DD and MH had reviewed the Outdoor Education and Offsite Activities Policy. They had also reviewed the three Standard Operating Procedure (“SOP”) documents. Some matters had been raised with SL and dealt with.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the Outdoor Education and Offsite Activities Policy (approval date: 22 May 2024).</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved the SOP Day Visits using Transport, the SOP Day Visits Walking and the SOP Residential Visits (approval date: 22 May 2024).</p> <p>DD had reviewed the Drugs Education and Incident Management Policy and had raised some questions which SL had responded to. He recommended this Policy for approval.</p> <p>Decision: FGB approved Drugs Education and Incident Management Policy (approval date: 22 May 2024).</p>
17	<p>School Improvement Plan 2023/24</p> <p>Governors approved the revised and updated Governance section of the Plan.</p>
18	<p>Governor Training</p> <p>RW had attended a course on Governance of SEND. This had been delivered as part of the DCC range of courses and had been thorough and useful and had confirmed that the School’s approach was up to date and fit for purpose. She would forward slides when these were available.</p>

19	<p>Safeguarding Training</p> <p>SL reminded Governors of the key staff roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. The spread of roles across departments gave good coverage across the School. The team met regularly to co-ordinate their work and to enable effective sharing of information, provision of updates and review of cases. <i>RD had attended one of these meetings as a Governor/observer.</i></p> <p>SL gave anonymised examples of some recent concerns dealt with by the School.</p> <p>The training session ended with consideration and discussion of a training scenario.</p>
20	<p>Impact from this meeting</p> <p>DD summarised by saying that FGB had been briefed on a successful round of staff recruitment for September and that this should position the School well for the forthcoming school year. FGB and School staff were aware of funding inadequacies and the related budget constraints and, having continued to manage finances carefully, were focused on doing the best they could for pupils. The new kitchen would continue to have a positive impact on School life.</p>
21	<p>Next Meeting(s)</p> <p>The next meeting of FGB will be on 17 July 2024. There is a date reserved for a one-off meeting on 3 July, however this is currently unlikely to be required. Governors should seek to keep the date available in case circumstances change.</p>
22	<p>AOB</p> <p>RD asked what the School's plans were in relation to the recent requirement to publish a Music Development Plan. This was required to be published on the website in 2024/25.</p> <p>Action: SL to follow up the requirement for the School to publish a Music Development Plan.</p> <p>RD canvassed opinions on whether Governors found the present templates for portfolio reports and for records of Governor visits to be user friendly. There was a general view that these were frequently cumbersome and included too many fields that were by and large no relevant.</p> <p>Action: RD to lead a review of the formats for portfolio reports and for records of Governor visits.</p>
	<p>The meeting ended at 8:35pm.</p>

Summary of decisions and proposed actions		
<i>Actions</i>		
FGB 23/09	SL to draft suggested monitoring activity for the Equality Objectives for RD and DD to review. (In progress; carry forward)	SL and RD/DD
FGB 23/11	DD and SL to look at a Governor contribution on attendance for a Summer Term newsletter. (In progress; carry forward)	DD/SL
FGB 23/12	Clerk to identify and book suitable induction training for MH and for TL. (In progress; carry forward)	Clerk
FGB 23/14	SL to follow up the requirement for the School to publish a Music Development Plan.	SL
FGB 23/15	RD to lead a review of the formats for portfolio reports and for records of Governor visits.	RD

Summary of decisions and proposed actions (continued)		
<i>Decisions</i>		
16	FGB approved the Staff Grievance Policy (approval date: 22 May 2024).	
16	FGB approved the Outdoor Education and Offsite Activities Policy (approval date: 22 May 2024).	
16	FGB approved the SOP Day Visits using Transport, the SOP Day Visits Walking and the SOP Residential Visits (approval date: 22 May 2024).	
16	FGB approved Drugs Education and Incident Management Policy (approval date: 22 May 2024).	
17	Governors approved the revised and updated 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