

FULL GOVERNORS BOARD MEETING 2022/2023

Meeting Minutes			
Date	Wednesday 30 November 2022	Time and Location	15.30 PPA Room
Attendees	Initials	Attendees	Initials
Di Hunt (Chair)	DH	Jim McMahon	JMc
Clare Brittain (Vice Chair)	CBr	John Godley	JG
Judith Ward	JW	Tom Freestone	TF
Anra Kennedy	AK	Clem Leneghan	CL
Colin Brace	CB	Sam Kashmiri	SK
Mark Wignall	MW	Jamie Chandler (for item 6)	JC
Sophia Hunnisett	SHu	Matt Ashdown (for item 7)	MA
Eva Field	EF	Jo Cobb (for item 7)	JCo
Sue Hatton	SHa	Chris Karley (Clerk)	CK

Apologies	Initials
None	

	Agenda	Led by
1	Welcome and Apologies for Absence	Chair
2	Declaration of Interest	Chair
3	Minutes of Last Meeting – 28 September 2022	Chair
4	Matters Arising	Chair
5	Urgent Matters	MW
6	GDPR update	JC
7	Pupil Premium Strategic Plan	MA
8	Safeguarding and Child Protection update • Ratification of Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy • WSCC audit report	Chair
9	Financial update	MW/Chair
10	Ofsted Inspection Feedback	MW
11	Headteachers' Report	MW/Chair
12	Chair's Update	Chair
13	Ratification only of: • Grievance Policy • ECF Policy • SEND Policy • Staff Disciplinary Policy	Chair
14	Election of new Co-opted Governors	Chair
15	Chairs of Committee Reports – Items arising from Committee minutes	Chair
16	Lead Governor, Governor Visits / Link Department Feedback, Training Link, DSA reports	Chair
17	AOB	Chair
18	Next meeting: Wednesday 25 January 2023 at 15.30	Chair

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Item no.	Discussion	Action	Due Date
1	Welcome and Apologies for Absence - No apologies for absence. - DH welcomed JC and MA who would present items 6 and 7 respectively.		
2	Declaration of Interest None		
3 & 4	Minutes of Last Meetings & Matters Arising – 28 September 2022 Items 3 & 4 - Minutes of Last Meetings & Matters Arising Q – Are the staff survey results available yet? - MW advised that the survey is now planned for the New Year. - MW would update Governors on the Safeguarding Audit later in the meeting. - The wellbeing of pupils and staff is now a regular item at POW and SLL sub-committee meetings. Item 11 – School Development Plan - MW has completed all the agreed changes. Item 12 – Federation Update - DH had advised Governors of the postponement of the presentation to Governors scheduled for 17 November. She would give an update on the Government White Paper under Item 12. Item 13 – Headteacher's Report Q – Had Bromcom raised any GDPR issues? - JC confirmed that it had not. The minutes of the last meeting held on 28 September 2022 were agreed to be a correct record and will be signed by the Chair.		
5	Urgent Matters None		
6	GDPR update JC spoke to a PowerPoint presentation. A copy has been filed with the minutes. Subject access requests (SAR) – four have been received since the last update a year ago. They can be onerous as all information on the pupil is required; they take a couple of months to do, but three months is allowed for larger requests. All have been completed within the timeframe with one ongoing. Breaches – there have been two since the last update, both of which were small and neither was serious. When they occur		

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	those people affected are contacted, the situation is explained and the incident is recorded. • Q – How does the school find out about them? • They tend to be self-reported by staff. • Freedom of Information requests (Fol) – there has been only one since the last report, regarding the school's handling of antisemitic incidents. They tend to be specific and less onerous. • GDPR Audit – The outcome was quite positive, concluding that GDPR processes and breaches management were in place and working. Recommendations included the consolidation of policies and guidelines; improving processing involving external companies; updating the retention schedule; updating SAR models; updating the Fol document on the website; and continuing training. • Q – Would the condensed training provided to Governors be helpful for staff too? • The auditor had provided some condensed training materials specifically for staff. • Q – Has there been any comeback from SARs? • Only if the information they hoped to find was not there, but no huge difficulties had arisen. • Q – Is there a relationship between SARs and complaints? • Yes. Following a recent complaint the GDPR Policy will be reviewed at the next POW committee. • Q – Is software available to help with searches / redacting? • Yes, the school has a licence for one but it is not all-encompassing. They are looking at the cost of an upgrade. • Q – Are emails between Governors within the scope of SARs? • Yes, but the recommendation is to use initials rather than full names in emails as they are not then included. This is in line with GDPR advice. • Q – Does that apply to Fol requests too? • No. JC left the meeting at 3.45 p.m.	JW	08.02.23
7	Pupil Premium Strategic Plan MA spoke to a Word presentation. A copy has been filed with the minutes. • It is an annual requirement that the school reviews how it spends Pupil Premium (PP) funding. Governors have input into the discussions through the Link Governor. • Downlands' PP cohort is 9% of all pupils compared to a national average of 25%. There is a 40% crossover between PP and SEND pupils. • The exam grades gap between PP and other pupils has widened nationally since the pandemic. In Year 11 the school did fairly well in comparison to similar schools, but with total pupils' grades improving the gap remains. • Attendance remains an issue.		

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	• Several types of intervention are running to close the gap but funding has reduced post-pandemic. • The overall aim is to narrow the achievement gap; build confidence/self-esteem; develop independent learning strategies; address negative behaviours as 30% occur in the PP cohort; accelerate literacy/numeracy; improve attendance; and promote positive wellbeing. The recent wellbeing survey produced a mixed picture. • The high level strategy is to ensure high quality teaching; provide targeted academic support; and promote extra-curricular activities. JCo continued the presentation. • PP children are on the back foot after the pandemic and the aim is to help them to catch up. They need a team around them to supplement individual interventions and this is currently being rolled out. Solutions need to be bespoke for each pupil. • Attendance and involvement in activities after school are real challenges. This is made harder by the cost of living crisis, with PP pupils sometimes hungry at school, and school trips becoming unaffordable. TAs are now keeping alert to identify these issues. • Q – How does the school build relationships with families? • Regular phone calls, especially to provide positive feedback. • Q – Can funds be set aside to pay for trips? • Yes, for educational visits, but there is not enough to cover all PP pupils. Some deals have been done, e.g. with travel companies to fund individual recreational trips, e.g. the ski trip. • Q – Can the extra funding received for PP and SEND pupils be combined? • No, the school has to report how each budget is spent separately. • Q – What is the PP budget spent on? • Learning Mentors, the Restorative Learning Centre, pastoral support and many other areas. Funding is allocated according to pupils' relative needs. • CL noted the value that the school has been able to extract from a limited budget. Funding priorities were based on clear external guidance. • Q – could a feasibility study be done on the establishment of a breakfast club? • Discussions have begun on numbers, costs etc. • Q – What is done for those pupils just above the PP threshold? • The school is increasingly aware of these pupils as many parents have applied for PP funding but have not been eligible as thresholds have not been changed. A breakfast club could help those pupils too. • Q – Have pupils dropped out of trips such as the ski trip due to cost of living pressures?		
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	• This is happening, and the PP team is working with the Trips team on individual cases. • Q – Can the Parish Council be kept informed as they have some funding for these types of initiative? • Yes, this can be done. • Q – has the recent bus re-routing from Hurst had an impact on PP pupils' ability to get to school? • The school will look into it as the costs of bus journeys from Hurst (£10 per week) was already becoming an issue before the re-routing. • Q – Could the school consider a specific funding request to all parents? • A preferred approach would be to talk to local community businesses, who have a meeting at the school shortly. • Q – Can the local foodbank be approached for help? • The team will discuss this option further. MA and JCo left the meeting at 4.30 p.m.		
8	Safeguarding & Child Protection update • SHa had not yet had the opportunity to touch base with Graham Odlin (GO) so had nothing further to report. • MW highlighted the main challenges as the Designated Safeguarding Lead's capacity post-pandemic and increasing burdens on administration. He plans to reorganise SLT (not yet announced) by separating Behaviour and Safeguarding and to provide more admin support for Tracey Goodman (TG). • Changes are also planned following WSCC's audit and training, and recent software changes. These include more staff and volunteer KCSIE training; a more systemic pupil voice programme; and joining a WSCC project targeting sexual harassment. • Q – How many DSLs are there? • GO is the DSL with two deputies, TG and MA. A few other staff are trained. • Q – At a meeting with Colin Smith the question was raised whether more staff awareness was needed. • There are no dedicated teams; this issue will be addressed. WSCC training materials are available which are not too expensive. • DH proposed ratification of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. It will be revisited in the New Year as the current version was prepared hurriedly during the Ofsted visit. However, it does reflect all necessary KCSIE changes and is based on the WSCC model policy. • Q – Will the updated version come back to Governors to be ratified? • Yes, even if changes are minimal.		

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	The Governors unanimously agreed to ratify the current Policy.		
9	Financial update • MW reported that Bromcom implementation remains challenging. • Pay increases for support staff in November and teachers in December, both backdated, will have a big impact as 2% had been budgeted against the 5% actual pay award. The annual impact on teaching costs is £120k with a £70k hit this year, plus £60k from the support staff award. Reserves of £130k will cover the cost this year. • Q – Have any particular staff absences contributed to the high cover costs this year? • There is still some impact from Covid absences, and more recently several viruses have been circulating. To reduce the cost of cover, four or five combined classes have met for 'Masterclasses' in the Hall this week. These classes have been well received, remain in line with the curriculum and will continue as needed. They are preferable to a return to remote learning. • Q – Is pandemic recovery funding continuing at all? • No, £100k was received last year but nothing this year. • Q – As primary schools will have fallen behind on reading levels through the pandemic, is there a longer term impact for Downlands? • Yes, but the reading project being introduced following Ofsted's visit should help. • Q – will there be a positive impact from the Government's recent announcement of extra schools funding? • Yes, but only £2,700. It will not materially lessen the impact of energy price increases. It is not known whether further funding will follow and if so whether this will be 'new money'. Thanks to reserves the school will be OK this year but staffing and energy costs will continue to present huge challenges. • Q – was the £60k capital expenditure all for the Reception refurbishment? • No, there was also some expenditure on the sport hall, and an insurance claim following a leak partly funded the work in Reception. The Governors asked that thanks be passed on to Sue Jones for being able to pull the financial reports together.		
10/11	Ofsted Inspection Feedback & Headteacher's Report A copy of the Headteacher's report was circulated prior to the meeting and is filed with the minutes. • DH noted that overall the Ofsted report reads very positively.		

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	• MW commented that the success of the pupils is what really matters, and they are great with exam results comparing well to similar schools. • It is still difficult to attract support staff although some recruitment has been achieved. Agencies have been used to fill essential roles, e.g. Attendance Officer. If the recession hits the jobs market recruitment could become easier. • Staff wellbeing remains a priority and they are working through four pillars including better structures for support staff. There have been positive experiences from the healthcare package. • They are trying to get more support for the Ukrainians in school. CL noted that during a recent visit worksheets in both English and Ukrainian were available. • Following representations from the school Ofsted had changed some of the text of its report but not its judgements. MW will write to the Regional Director regarding bad experiences during the visit and the need for conclusions to be evidence based. Seven parents attended the meeting on the report and their feedback was positive. • It was disappointing that the inspectors could not be convinced that any area was outstanding, especially behaviours & attitudes. • The areas for improvement will be built into the next School Self-Evaluation Form and a long term development plan established to prepare for the next Ofsted inspection. Vision and values will be unchanged. The SEF will be brought to Governors in the Spring term. • There is much important work to do, e.g. reading for those with difficulties across years 7-10 and training teachers in associated skills, e.g. phonics, across all subjects. Ofsted's finding in this area was fair. • Record keeping is not seen as a significant problem although more safeguarding admin capacity is still needed. • Ofsted's SEND findings were influenced by parents frustrated that wider provision for their children was not available. While Ofsted's evidence was anecdotal SEND provision is not perfect and there could be more to do. • Q – How are SEND pupils identified? • There are many ways, including ILPs from primary schools and identification by teachers. SK noted that the accelerated reading programme had seen some tangible successes. • Q – How strong are links with primary schools in this area? • SK commented that they had partnered with Windmills School on Key Stage 2 endpoint to link curricula, so many pupils come well equipped. There is a similar process at the end of Year 11 to prepare for 6th form. • Learning walks and appraisals, including support staff, are being re-established post-pandemic. • As the Government Education White Paper had been paused, the Federation meeting scheduled for 17 November to discuss Academisation had been indefinitely postponed.		
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	- The open evening had been very busy. They hope that all catchment area pupils will get in next year but when the intake reverts to 240 from 270 some pupils in outlying areas might not. The new school at Brookleigh is still in the planning stage. Q – Had there been any response to the school's letter regarding 2024 admissions? - Just an acknowledgement stating that it would be passed on to the relevant people. Q – Would it be worth writing to Mr Wagstaff and Kirsty Lord? - Yes, DH will do. - The School Council held a lively meeting today. New laptops were a result of the Council's discussions. Sensible issues are raised by the pupils. - Character development is going very well although engagement from Pupil Premium is quite low. - Student stalls at the Christmas Market raised £1,600, and the whole event raised £9,000. - The tender for the new modular classroom block had gone out that day. Two new Humanities rooms will be provided. Section 106 money is also being used for new toilets, and there might still be some left. Q – when should the new block be completed? - By mid-August 2023. EF and SHa left the meeting at 5.35 p.m. - On diversity, the Downlands Forum is to survey all groups for their views next week. Q – is Diversity still the right word to use? - It probably won't be used in the Forum as equity and inclusion are preferable. Q – Could student groups meet the Full Governing Board occasionally rather than only the POW Committee? - Agreed that this would be a good idea, DH will consider this for a future meeting. MW was thanked for his report.	DH	asap
12	Chair's Update - DH confirmed the postponement of the Federation meeting and that feedback from the Open Evening had been very positive. - MW's performance management had taken place and concluded that he had met all objectives. New objectives were set for the current year. - A Complaints Panel had met last week and will reach a decision by the end of next week. - Governors who had not completed online Safeguarding training should do so and advise JG when this had been done. DH also reminded all Governors (excluding staff) that they should attend	All Governors	asap

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	As five Co-opted Governors are due for re-election in June 2023 the unsuccessful candidates' names will be kept on file, and the process for election started in Feb/Mar 2023.		Feb 2023
15	Chairs of Committee reports - The F&B Committee had been cancelled. - There was nothing to report beyond the minutes already seen by Governors for the SLL and POW Committee meetings.		
16	Lead Governor, Governor visits / Link Department feedback, Training Link, DSA Reports - There are still a couple of Exam Meetings to take place this term. - CL had visited the English Department and had benefitted from seeing the school in action during school hours. In the lessons he observed the pupils were orderly, disciplined and engaged. All were also able to speak to him about feeling safe in school. - CBR was due to visit the SEND before the end of term. - AK had submitted reports of her Curriculum and Character visits, and had also completed Curriculum training. - JG asked that Governors continue to advise him when they have booked and completed training.		
17	Any Other Business DH noted that this was JMc's final meeting before he retires as Governor on 4 December. She expressed deep thanks for his service to the school over the past 12 years.		
18	Date of next meeting Wednesday 25 January 2023 at 15.30 in the PPA Room. The meeting closed at 6.10 p.m.		