



Dulwich Hamlet Junior School

**Meeting of the Local Governing Body
on 17 October 2018 at 18:30
Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, Dulwich Village, SE21 7AL**

Present:	Karen Larcombe-Tee	Chair
	Sara Azzopardi	SA
	Tom Forster	TF
	Michelle Hobbs	MH
	Bridget Jackson	BJ
	Eleanor Parker	EP
	Claire Purcell (Head of School)	CP
	Simon Rowe	SR
	Victoria Thompson	VT
	Crispin Tuckley	CT
Clerk:	Kathleen Formosa	Clerk

MINUTES

1. Welcome, Apologies & Quorum

- 1.1 The Chair opened the business of the meeting at 18:32.
- 1.2 Apologies were **received** and **accepted** from the Chair, Karen Robinson (KR).
 - 1.2.1 It was **agreed** that Karen Larcombe-Tee would act as Chair for the meeting.
- 1.3 A quorum was **confirmed**, and the meeting proceeded to business accordingly.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no interests declared.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the LGB meeting held on 16 July 2018 (**Paper 1**) were **reviewed**.
 - 3.1.1 The following amendments were **agreed**:
 - Items 6.5.1 - 6.5.3 would be removed to a confidential annex; and
 - The wording of item 14.1.2 would be amended for accuracy.
 - 3.1.2 The minutes were **agreed**, subject to amendment.
- 3.2 SR joined the meeting at 18:38.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting (**Paper 2**) were **reviewed** and **discussed** as follows:

- Regarding item 4.2.2, CT reported that alternative forms of funding had been raised at the 11 October 2018 meeting of the DHET Board. He reported the Trustees' view that there was no resource to cover the matter for the Trust until a senior finance staff member is recruited. Therefore, the matter should continue to be dealt with at school level in the near term.
- Regarding item 9.1.1, CP reported that the school's website has been updated. Governors were asked to check their own information as it appears on the school's governor page.

ACTION: All governors to check their information as it appears on the school's governor page by end of month and report any further changes needed to CP.

- Regarding item 10.2.1, CT reported that the matter has been dealt with by the DHET Board. CT reports that there is training available through Southwark on Prevent and other matters of relevance to the LGB. There has been discussion among the DHET Board that resources should be used to ensure safeguarding training is up to date for all governors. It was **discussed** that for the LGB, it may be sufficient to have KR's materials circulated and for one or two governors take up Prevent training and report back.

ACTION: TF and BJ to undertake Prevent training and report back.

4.1.1 The following matters arising were **noted** as pending, and briefly **discussed** as follows:

- Regarding item 5.2.6, CP reported that she is rethinking the school's approach to communications with parents in response to issues raised through the parent/carer questionnaire.
- Regarding item 5.4.9, it was **agreed** that the meeting plan should be recirculated before the next meeting.

ACTION: Chair and CP to recirculate the meeting plan.

- Regarding item 10.2, it was **noted** that this was an action for KR, and could not be addressed in her absence.

4.2 Other matters arising from the minutes of the meeting were **discussed** as follows:

- With reference to item 6.5.5, CP reported that the school's photo board would be reinstated after half term. The school is currently waiting for the photographer to complete pupil and class photos so that he may take up-to-date photos of staff.
- With reference to item 7.2.1, it was **noted** that the Business Committee had delivered a verbal report at the last meeting. It was requested that a written report is circulated.

ACTION: BJ to circulate a written report from the Business Committee's July meeting.

- With reference to item 14.2, CT reported that the strategy session would be held on 16 November 2018 from 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Belham. Local governors, Trustees and school SLTs will be encouraged to attend.

4.3 It was **noted** that although the budget was reviewed and discussed at the last meeting, it also should have been recorded that the budget was formally signed-off.

4.3.1 It was **confirmed** that the budget had been **agreed** by the governing body.

5. Chair's Actions Since the Previous Meeting

5.1 It was **noted** that as KR was not present at the meeting, there was nothing to report. The Chair confirmed that any urgent matters would be notified by circulation.

6. Head of School's Report

6.1 The Head of School's Report was **taken as read**.

6.1.1 Although the report had circulated on email ahead of the meeting, hard copies were made available at the table.

6.2 **A governor asked why the information on Year 6 leavers was included in the report and if it could be explained what governors were expected to draw from this information.**

6.2.1 CP stated that the information is of general interest to governors and parents/carers. It can also indicate growth of schools in the area, preferences for single-sex versus co-educational secondary education, and admission to comprehensive, grammar or independent schools. It is also the case that some pupils need to be tracked – e.g., children with SEND needs, or where there are safeguarding issues.

6.2.2 It was **noted** that there has been a decline in the number of children going into independent education at secondary level, and that this may be an indication that local maintained and academy schools have improved.

6.2.3 CP reported that the school continues to maintain excellent working relationships with Alleyn's and Dulwich College, as well as with local maintained and academy schools.

6.3 CP reported an update on admissions this year.

6.3.1 CP reported that the school now has a named officer at the local authority whom the school has met, and who has visited the school along with her manager. CP stated that the local authority has acknowledged fault at their end regarding last year's admissions.

6.3.2 **A governor asks what it means in practice that the school would have a named contact at the local authority.**

6.3.3 CP stated that having a named contact means that there is one person that the school can deal with from the earliest stages of the admissions process who will provide assurances and respond to queries. This year, it meant that prior to parents seeing an email on national offer day, the school had had assurances that the information had been checked.

6.3.4 CP reported that because of changes at the local authority, CP could assure parents that last year's issues were taken seriously and addressed as fully as possible.

6.3.5 **A governor asked what would happen if the named contact is away or ill.**

6.3.6 CP stated that she would be able to go directly to the contact's manager, who has also visited the school.

6.4 CP reported that progress statistics are now in hand.

6.4.1 CP reported that pupils have shown very good results in reading and maths, exceeding expectations. Writing scores were lower than expected, but still positive. Possible reasons for the lower than expected writing scores were **reviewed** and **discussed**.

6.5 CPD opportunities for teacher staff were **reviewed**.

6.5.1 **A governor asked whether teachers are obliged to undertake a certain amount of CPD throughout the year.**

6.5.2 CP reported that CPD is not compulsory for teaching staff. However, individual members of staff are targeted for specific programmes, but uptake is voluntary. The school believes that opportunities should be provided, as this promotes staff retention.

6.5.3 VT stated that the CPD opportunities offered by the school exceed what is offered elsewhere, and this is appreciated by staff. VT stated her view that the training she has undertaken, and the quality of the CPD offered, has helped her to add value to the school.

- 6.5.4 CP reported that CPD is primarily offered in-house by experienced teachers. External CPD is bought in where in-house training is not available. She stated that expenditure on CPD is considered a sound investment, but the school is mindful that it must work within the limited resources it has.
- 6.6 CP reported that efforts have been made to stagger school journeys throughout the year. To this end, the Year 5 journey has been postponed.
- 6.6.1 CP reported that the Year 6 children and parents have been consulted on the type of journey and activities they would like to experience this year. CP stated that the feedback received focused on creating memories and having a shared experience.
- 6.6.2 CP stated that for all school journeys, inclusivity is important. This has a bearing on how much can be spent on any school trip.
- 6.6.3 It was proposed that after SATs, the Year 6 pupils are taken for a two-night residential trip to a campsite in Kent. The emphasis will be on having fun and creating memories. Specific activities were **reviewed** and **discussed**.
- 6.6.4 CP explained that because the proposal is for a journey to take place over more than one night, the school would need approval from the governing body.
- 6.6.5 The governors unanimously **approved** the Year 6 journey, as discussed.
- 6.7 The parent/carer questionnaire was **discussed**. It was **noted** that this was the first time the school had undertaken such a survey, but intends to make the survey an annual practice.
- 6.7.1 CP reported that the questionnaire was circulated at the end of the last academic year, and mirrored the Ofsted parent survey. There was a 28% rate of return on the questionnaire.
- 6.7.2 CP reported that the survey response was overall positive for the school, but not glowing in all areas. Homework and communications around pupil progress were issues where responses indicated that the school needs to think carefully about its practices.
- 6.7.3 In response to parent/carer feedback, CP has suggested that a second pupil progress meeting is held during the year. CP reported that this year will be a transitional year, with only Year 3 having a “meet the teacher” meeting. All other year groups will have pupil progress meetings only. By next year, a complete suite of meetings will be structured into the plan for the year.
- 6.7.4 **A governor asked if it was known why parents have responded as they have on the issue of homework.**
- 6.7.5 CP stated that there are some parents who feel that their child is not being prepared for the 11+, although preparations for this exam are not within the school’s remit. CP stated that the school has changed its approach to maths homework in order to manage expectations.
- 6.7.6 It was stated that parents sometimes wish to have things given as homework (e.g., weekly spellings) that are not necessarily effective in the school’s view. It was acknowledged that homework is important for secondary readiness, but the school maintains that homework should only be given if it is meaningful and complementary to learning that is happening in the classroom.
- 6.7.7 CP reported that home-learning suggestions are sent home at the start of the year for each year group that are meant to help parents select activities that are right for their child. She stated that the school has acknowledged that it needs to do more with home learning. The school has an advantage in that most parents are engaged and interested in their children’s learning, but the right balance is still to be struck.
- 6.7.8 It was suggested that information on the school’s approach to home learning could be highlighted in the Hamlet Herald. It was **agreed** that this should be explored.
- 6.7.9 **A governor asked about the responses received to the question about bullying.**

- 6.7.10 It was **discussed** that the question might have been asked in a different way. It was **acknowledged** that if a child is not being bullied, a parent might not know what the school does in response to bullying. Thus, the range of responses should exclude “don’t know” in favour of “not applicable.” Alternatively, a two-tier question might be offered – i.e., 1) has your child been bullied; and if so, 2) does the school deal with this effectively.
- 6.7.11 It was **discussed** that the ordering of questions may also have influenced the way in which some questions were answered. It was suggested and **agreed** that the survey should be reviewed to ensure that the ordering of questions is not suggesting a response.
- 6.7.12 It was suggested that responses should be collated so that information could be drawn from clusters of data – i.e., to determine whether respondents who answered a specific question in one way also answered other questions in the same way. It was **agreed** that this approach would be explored in future surveys.
- 6.7.13 CP was commended on the survey. Governors **agreed** that the survey provides a good baseline for the school to measure its effectiveness and improvement over time.
- 6.7.14 CP stated that the responses to the questionnaire confirm much the school already knew, but also turned up a significant amount of information that has been revealing. Actions have already been taken to communicate to parents what the school is doing to address areas where it is clear more could be done.
- 6.8 **A governor asked about any feedback received on the Hamlet Herald now that it has become a weekly online publication.**
- 6.8.1 The parent governors expressed the view that the Hamlet Herald gives parents something different to think about each week. Parents have appreciated regular feedback about what is going on in classrooms. Changes to the format to make it easier for parents to know where to look for key bits of information have also been appreciated.
- 6.8.2 It was **discussed** that a FAQ on the school website might also be valued if this deals with specific issues – e.g., where to go with questions about a teacher; what to do if your child is being bullied; etc.
- 6.8.3 It was also suggested that the school should regularly circulate a refresher communication to parents at the beginning of the year to remind them of where to look for specific information and of how the school will communicate with them.
- 6.9 CP reported that a total of £20,335.21 was raised by the PTA last year, and another £23,178.09 was donated. CP and the governors expressed thanks to the PTA for their hard work and commitment to the school.
- 6.10 Attendance matters as set out in the report were **noted**. CP stated these would be dealt with by the Education Committee.
- 6.11 **A governor asked whether the school maintains a SEF.**
- 6.11.1 CP stated that the school is not required to maintain a SEF. However, one is currently being assembled, following the four areas in the Ofsted framework. It was noted that the SEF is about how the school would grade itself in an inspection, and what it thinks it needs to do to improve.
- 6.11.2 CT reported that the Belham have learned through recent experience of Ofsted inspection that having a SEF is valuable, even if one is not required.
- 6.12 The school’s budget management was **discussed**.
- 6.12.1 CP reported that expenditure continues to be tightly managed, with maintaining the “glittering curriculum” a priority. She stated that the teaching staff are resourceful, and as expenditure has reduced, her view is that the school’s vision has not been compromised.

6.13 CP was thanked for her report.

7. Safeguarding

7.1 It was **noted** that the Safeguarding Policy had circulated ahead of the meeting. Hard copies were circulated at the table.

7.1.1 It was **noted** that the Safeguarding Policy had been adapted from Southwark and tailored to the school.

7.1.2 The Safeguarding Policy as adapted was **accepted**.

7.2 The new KCSIE guidance was **discussed**.

7.2.1 CP reported that every member of the school's staff has been required to read Part 1 of the new guidance, and that read receipts are being kept in the school's records. She asked that governors also confirm they have read Part 1 of the guidance, and to return a read receipt within two weeks.

ACTION: CP to circulate a link to Part 1 of the KCSIE guidance.

ACTION: All governors to read Part 1 of the guidance and return a read receipt.

7.2.2 CT stated that he would forward the link to the guidance to all DHET Trustees, suggesting that they also read, and confirm having read, the guidance.

7.2.3 New areas of the guidance were **noted** and briefly **discussed**.

7.3 CP reported that there were currently two live safeguarding cases in the school. Both cases involve multi-agency teams.

7.3.1 **A governor asked whether the school had adequate resources to deal with these cases.**

7.3.2 CP stated that capacity is adequate, but that the school is looking to increase its safeguarding staff by one. She stated that access to designated safeguarding lead training is not available until the spring term, and this will be taken up by an additional member of staff at this time.

8. LGB Membership & Training

8.1 It was **noted** that the record of LGB attendance for the previous year had been submitted to the Trust, but had not been seen by the LGB.

ACTION: Clerk to bring governor attendance data to the next meeting.

8.2 Current vacancies on the LGB were **discussed**.

8.2.1 CP reported that an announcement of the parent governor vacancy had been put in the Hamlet Herald. Two parents have expressed interest.

8.2.2 It was **noted** that a parent governor election would be arranged after half term.

8.2.3 **A governor asked whether information from the governor skills audit would be used in recruiting a new co-opted governor.**

8.2.4 The Chair stated that a profile for a new co-opted governor would be determined based on the information in the skills audit and assessment of current needs on the LGB.

8.3 Draft governor induction guidelines were circulated at the table and **reviewed**.

8.3.1 Governors were asked to send their comments on the draft to the Chair so that a finalised document could be prepared for review and agreement at the next LGB meeting.

ACTION: Governors to send comments on the governor induction guidelines to the Chair.

8.4 It was **noted** that a Governor Visits Policy had been reviewed by the DHET Board. Details of the policy would be dealt with by the school's Education Committee, and particularly the suggested curriculum health check.

- 8.4.1 CP stated that curriculum health checks had been used previously in the school, and the mechanics of how these worked in practice were briefly **discussed**.
- 8.4.2 It was **noted** that the use of health checks was stopped in favour of a cluster approach. CP stated that now that there is a staff coordinator for every subject area, a consensus view has emerged that the health check approach should be revived.
- 8.4.3 It was requested and **agreed** that the Education Committee should include as an agenda item at its next meeting the development of a schedule for subject review. It was **noted** that the Ofsted framework is expected to change to shift focus onto curriculum. It was **noted** that regular subject reviews could support the school in ensuring that its curriculum is broad and varied, as expected by Ofsted.
- ACTION: SR to place schedule for subject reviews on the Education Committee agenda.**
- 8.4.4 It was **noted** that the revival of curriculum health checks would have some effect on link governor roles. Proposals for how link governor roles might be reorganised will be taken from the Education Committee. It was **agreed** that new link governor roles should be in place by January.
- 8.5 BJ reported that she visited the school in her capacity as the link governor for health and safety, and that this involved a premises walk with the school's Premises Manager.
- 8.6 MH reported that her visit to the school in her capacity as the SEND link governor has been postponed as there is a new SEND lead who needs time to settle into the role.
- 9. Health & Safety**
- 9.1 CP reported that the school had held a successful fire drill at the start of term.
- 9.2 It was **confirmed** there were no other health and safety issues to report.
- 10. Any Other Business**
- 10.1 BJ reported that the PTA Christmas fair is currently being planned for 24 November 2018. Governors were asked for their support. Governors who can donate their time were asked to notify BJ who would notify the PTA.
- 10.2 Governors were asked to complete a declaration of interests form before leaving the meeting. Forms were completed and returned at the table.
- 10.3 It was **noted** that the governor code of conduct would be brought to the December meeting, and that all governors would be asked to sign it.

The business of the meeting closed at 20:20.

Date of the next meeting – Monday, 17 December 2018 at 18:30.

Signed _____ Date _____
Chair

KF/kf 25/10/2018