



Dulwich Hamlet Junior School

**Meeting of the Local Governing Body
on 3 April 2019 at 18:30
Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, Dulwich Village, SE21 7AL**

Present:	Karen Robinson	Chair / KR
	Sara Azzopardi	SA
	Catriona de Jongh	CdJ
	Tom Esselmont	TE
	Tom Forster	TF
	Bridget Jackson	BJ
	Karen Larcombe-Tee	KLT
	Eleanor Parker	EP
	Claire Purcell (Head of School)	CP
	Simon Rowe	SR
	Tom Salomonson	TS
	Crispin Tuckley	CT
Clerk:	Kathleen Formosa	Clerk

MINUTES

1. Welcome, Apologies & Quorum

- 1.1 The Chair opened the business of the meeting at 18:34.
 - 1.1.1 TE was welcomed to his first meeting of the LGB as a newly elected parent governor.
 - 1.1.2 The Chair reported that Michelle Hobbs had stepped down after three years as a parent governor for DHJS. Michelle was thanked for her service and contributions to the LGB.
- 1.2 It was **noted** that no apologies had been received for the meeting.
 - 1.2.1 TF's request to be excused from the meeting at 20:00 was **accepted**.
- 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 held on 17 December 2018

- 3.1 The minutes of the 17 December 2018 meeting of the local governing body (**Paper 1**) were **reviewed** and **approved for signature**, subject to minor correction at item 8.9.3.

4. Matters Arising

- 4.1 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting (**Paper 2**) were **reviewed**.
 - 4.1.1 The following matters arising were **discussed**:
 - Regarding item 4.8.2, the Chair reported that the meeting plan had been updated as agreed at the previous meeting, and updated again subsequently.
ACTION: Chair to circulate the most up-to-date version of the meeting plan.

4.1.2 It was **confirmed** that all other matters arising were complete or on the agenda for the meeting.

5. Chair's Report

5.1 The Chair reported the following actions undertaken since the previous meeting of the LGB:

- Met with CP to cover general updates, including safeguarding matters;
- Added a Chair of Governors message to the Hamlet Herald. It was **noted** that the Chair's message in the Hamlet Herald would be a feature each half term; and
- Attended the Southwark Governors Association ("SGA") meeting on 21 March 2019.

5.2 The Southwark Governors Association ("SGA") agenda (**Paper 3**) was **noted**.

5.2.1 The Chair reported that the SGA meeting included presentations on the new Ofsted framework, and from a charity called Colourful Minds, a mental health charity with a mission of helping schools eradicate stigma associated with mental health issues.

5.2.2 CP stated that mental health will be a significant part of the PSHE curriculum going forward. The school will need to designate a mental health champion by 2020.

5.2.3 **A governor asked whether there was opportunity to explore with Colourful Minds or similar organisations the development of staff training and/or curriculum on mental health as part of its community outreach.**

5.2.4 CP stated that the school has been discussing mental health issues already as part of its curriculum and doing some community outreach. These efforts are expected to continue.

5.2.5 **A governor asked about the key changes to the Ofsted framework and how these were expected to impact the school.**

5.2.6 CP stated that the new Ofsted framework is still in consultation. She stated that the framework is not expected to change substantially following consultation. However, teachers have pushed back on the proposal that Ofsted inspectors may notify the school of an inspection and be on site to start the inspection preparation on as little as two hours' notice.

5.2.7 It was **noted** that the Ofsted framework, both current and new, proposes that parent complaints, safeguarding concerns, or a significant dip in standards could trigger the inspection of a school falling outside the framework (i.e., an outstanding school). It was **noted** that as an outstanding school, DHJS has not been inspected for eleven years.

5.2.8 CP stated her confidence that the school would meet all the requirements under the new framework. However, consideration is currently being given to working with a consultant to ensure that the school remains Ofsted ready.

5.2.9 It was suggested and **agreed** that a governor training session is used to ensure governors' understanding of the new Ofsted inspection framework, and that such training is offered jointly with governors of The Belham ("BPS").

ACTION: CP and Chair to investigate training opportunities regarding the new Ofsted framework.

5.3 The schedule of governor terms of service (**Paper 4**) was **reviewed**.

5.3.1 It was **noted** that there was still some work to be done to ensure the accuracy of governor appointment and reappointment dates.

ACTION: All governors to notify the Clerk of any updates needed to their appointment and reappointment dates as shown on the schedule.

ACTION: All governors to check that their information posted to the DHJS website is accurate and up to date, notifying CP of any updates required.

5.3.2 The Chair reported that the LGB is currently recruiting for a co-opted governor through Inspiring Governance. Five individuals have responded to the advert with expressions of interest, and four have been contacted. The Chair reported that she and CP have

- interviewed one candidate. Additional interviews will take place after the Easter break.
- 5.3.3 It was **noted** that the DHET Board of Trustees is also using Inspiring Governance to search for new trustees. It was **agreed** that CT and the Chair would share the names of those candidates being considered to avoid the Trustees and LGB working at cross purposes or duplicating efforts.
- 5.3.4 **A governor asked whether diversity had been a consideration in recruitment efforts for a new co-opted governor.**
- 5.3.5 The Chair stated that diversity on the LGB has been a consideration. The primary emphasis in recruitment has been finding candidates with the right skill sets for the LGB. The skills gaps as identified in the most recent skills audit were **noted**.

6. MAT Update

- 6.1 The approved minutes of the 6 December 2018 meeting of the DHET Board of Trustees (**Paper 5**) were **taken as read**.
- 6.2 The updated governance plan (**Paper 6**) was **reviewed**.
- 6.2.1 CT reported that co-opted governor information and conflicts of interest information had been updated in line with recent guidance from the ESFA.
- 6.2.2 It was suggested and **agreed** that the governance plan should be added to the governor induction pack.
ACTION: KLT to add the governance plan to the governor induction pack.
- 6.3 The Chair reported that a second strategic away day for Trustees, local governors and the senior leadership is currently in discussion. It was **noted** that the first away day had been successful in bringing people together across the Trust to share ideas and contribute to strategic planning.
- 6.3.1 CT reported that further details on the next strategic away day, including a draft strategy paper, would be circulated closer to the date.
- 6.3.2 It was **noted** that a provisional date for the away day had been scheduled for Thursday, 6 June 2019, 16:30 to 19:30 at DHJS.
ACTION: All governors to hold the provisional date for the away day in their diaries.

7. Head of School's Report

- 7.1 The Head of School's Report (**Paper 7**) was **taken as read**.
- 7.1.1 The Chair thanked CP on behalf of the governors for her comprehensive report.
- 7.2 CP reported that the school's admissions are on track and going to plan for the year. She stated her confidence that the school's and the local authority's procedures are working together and as they should.
- 7.2.1 CP reported that the school does not seem to have been affected by falling enrolments in schools across the borough.
- 7.2.2 It was **noted** that parents would be informed of admissions decisions over the Easter break.
- 7.2.3 **A governor asked whether the school or Southwark would make the announcement of admissions decisions to parents.**
- 7.2.4 CP stated that Southwark would make the initial admissions offer to parents. Once parents have accepted their place, the school sends a welcome letter to families.
- 7.3 CP reported that four staff vacancies have opened in the school. All are teaching or teaching support staff.

- 7.3.1 CP reported that interviews are now taking place to fill current vacancies. She stated that there was a strong pool of candidates for all roles, and expressed the view that interviewing before the Easter break has been an advantage in this regard.
- 7.4 A governor asked about the assessment update included in the Head of School's Report, and particularly about the number of pupils exceeding expectations in Year 5, which seems to have fallen.
- 7.4.1 CP stated that the number is likely to be cohort specific. She stated that she would need to look back at the Year 5 data for the Year 6 group to determine what has happened.
ACTION: CP to investigate Year 5 data for the current Year 6 group for the purposes of comparison with current Year 5 data and report back.
- 7.4.2 A governor asked about inclusion, and whether there was an explanation for the Head of School's claim that the school may not be able to fully fund pupils on EHCPs.
- 7.4.3 CP stated that the school knows there will be three children coming into the school with EHCPs next year, and that two of these children are funded. She stated that the £6K of funding the school receives from the local authority to support SEND pupils must cover all pupils on EHCPs as well as those having other SEND needs. CP stated that she is working with Sharon Baxendale on a letter of appeal to be sent to the local authority to make them aware of the school's situation.
- 7.4.4 It was **noted** that the school's number of pupils having EHCPs is above the Southwark average, but that the school is not receiving proportionate funding.
- 7.4.5 A governor asked whether the scale of underfunding has increased from previous years.
- 7.4.6 CP stated that underfunding has been an issue over many years.
- 7.5 CP presented the results and key findings of the recent staff questionnaire.
- 7.5.1 CP reported that response to the survey was very strong with all teaching staff and most support staff returning a completed survey. Survey responses were anonymous, although respondents identified whether they were teaching staff, teaching support staff or administrative staff.
- 7.5.2 CP reported that the staff survey is based on the Ofsted survey, but had been lightly tailored to fit issues specific to the school. Across most areas surveyed, the quantitative responses indicated agreement or strong agreement, mostly above 90%.
- 7.5.3 CP reported that the qualitative feedback received was also very positive. The school's vision, and joined-up thinking in the school were noted as key strengths, as were the curricular and extra-curricular learning experiences.
- 7.5.4 It was **discussed** that the workload question showed that teachers feel there is a fair workload, but that this was not the case with all support staff.
- 7.5.5 CP reported that one or two members of staff across a staff of 60 had given unfavourable responses, and that these were consistent across the survey. CP stated that in her discussions with staff she has emphasised her open-door policy, and that if any staff are feeling that anything is not right in the school they should come to speak to her.
- 7.5.6 A governor asked whether the staff who responded negatively to the survey were teachers or support staff.
- 7.5.7 CP stated that the staff responding negatively were members of the support staff. It was **noted** that the survey was conducted after support staff performance reviews were completed, and that this may have had some bearing on the survey responses.
- 7.5.8 A governor asked whether, if the same survey is run next year, there were some specific questions that should be asked of support staff.
- 7.5.9 CP stated that a key SDP focus next year would be on support staff, including taking their views on how to improve their workload.

- 7.5.10 A governor asked about support staff turnover and whether this was higher or lower than teaching staff turnover.
- 7.5.11 CP stated that there is less turnover in the school's support staff than there is in its teaching staff. She stated that turnover among teaching staff is primarily the result of life changes or promotion, and not because they are unhappy in the school. CP stated that the school's staffing overall is very stable.
- 7.5.12 A governor asked about the qualitative responses received to questions touching on communication with parents, and whether these responses reflected that communications with parents had been positive.
- 7.5.13 CP stated that the qualitative feedback received in response to questions around pupil behaviour indicated that increased opportunities for relaxed communication between parents and staff could be beneficial. It was noted that when children demonstrate challenging behaviour, there can be difficult conversations required and these must be carefully managed.
- 7.6 CP reported that the pupil survey had been distributed recently. Pupils have been asked to identify their year group and class level, but responses would be otherwise anonymous.
- 7.6.1 CP reported that an assembly has been held with pupils to let them know what the pupil survey is about and that they should provide honest feedback.
- 7.6.2 It was **noted** that the pupil survey was based on the Ofsted questionnaire, and tailored specifically for primary school pupils. Opportunities for qualitative feedback were minimised for pupils, as it was felt it would be too time consuming to ask pupils to provide such feedback.
- ACTION: CP to report on the outcomes and key findings of the pupil survey at the next meeting.**
- 7.7 The Chair thanked CP on behalf of the governors for her comprehensive report on the staff survey results.
- 7.7.1 It was **noted** that the responses to the staff and pupil surveys would be used to inform the school development plan ("SDP").
- 7.8 The school's continuing professional development ("CPD") and community outreach efforts were **discussed**.
- 7.8.1 It was **noted** that the maths and science teachers and teacher research groups were clearly working with the wider community and developing as leaders in their respective fields. Appreciation was expressed for this, and CP commended for enabling the professional development and engagement of staff.
- 7.8.2 TS stated his view that enabling teachers' work with the community and the school's other outreach efforts have helped the school to raise its profile, which in turn has helped to strengthen the applications the school is receiving in response to advertised staff vacancies.
- 7.8.3 A governor asked about the school's outreach to community religious leaders and whether those invited to lead assemblies in the school were given a specific brief, or allowed to preach their beliefs.
- 7.8.4 CP stated that the invitations made to local religious leaders to lead assemblies was part of the school's religious education ("RE") curriculum. Their presentations to pupils may include bringing in artefacts or demonstrating certain rites, but do not involve preaching. Religious leaders invited into the school are asked to give a factual report to explain their religion's foundational beliefs.
- 7.9 A governor asked how the School Council is appointed.

- 7.9.1 TS stated that appointments to the School Council are handled by election. A question is asked of all pupils who they would trust in a difficult position on the playground, and pupils considered most trustworthy or helpful are invited to join the School Council.
- 7.10 The School Admissions Policy (**Paper 8**) was **reviewed**.
- 7.10.1 CP reported that updates have been made to the policy regarding dates and staff, but that no material changes had been made.
- 7.10.2 It was **noted** that the policy as presented had been reviewed and endorsed at the recent meeting of the Education Committee.
- 7.10.3 **A governor asked about the policy's deferred entry provisions.**
- 7.10.4 CP stated that the school is under no obligation to accept pupils wishing to defer their entry, and has therefore stated that it will admit pupils only at Year 3.
- 7.10.5 The School Admissions Policy was **approved**.
- 7.11 The budget monitoring report and summary (**Papers 9 and 9a**) were **reviewed**.
- 7.11.1 CP reported that the school's prudent management of its finances and sensible spending continue. She stated that some savings had been achieved by not replacing a member of support staff who resigned earlier in the year. No decision has been taken yet whether a replacement in this role would be sought for September.
- 7.11.2 CP reported that the school has received small amounts of grant funding from Cleaner Greener to support the purchase of new playground equipment and the development of the sensory garden. These works are planned to be undertaken over the summer term.
- 7.11.3 CP reported that a three-year budget plan would be worked on in the early part of next term. Next year's budget would be discussed at the next meeting.

8. Committee Reports

- 8.1 The report of the Education Committee (**Paper 10**) was **circulated at the table**.
- 8.1.1 SR reported that the committee received a presentation from Rachel Evans on pupil data and how this relates to teacher accountability. He stated that the school's systematic approach to gathering and analysing data and putting this into practice has helped it to achieve excellent results not only for pupils working at the highest levels, but also for those working in the middle and lower ranges of ability.
- 8.1.2 SR reported that the committee focused at its last meeting on pupils receiving pupil premium grant ("PPG") funding, and the school's work to close the gap in performance between PPG and non-PPG pupils.
- 8.1.3 SR reported that the committee discussed and supported the school's efforts to monitor pupil progress on a termly basis, to provide extra help to PPG pupils in settling in at DHJS, to check that PPG pupils are not missing out on non-curricular activities (e.g., sport, music), and to review the distribution of PPG pupils across classes in different year groups.
- 8.1.4 SR reported that all PPG pupils in Year 6 receive individual reading tuition, and are involved in reading groups in Years 5 and 6.
- 8.1.5 SR reported that the committee discussed the recent maths curriculum health check, noting a significant improvement in results since changes to the maths curriculum three years ago. Such changes included a focus on securing basic maths foundations in the early stage of the curriculum before pupils move on to more advanced instruction.
- 8.1.6 SR reported that the SDP was reviewed with an eye toward ensuring the effective tracking of progress.
- 8.2 The report of the Business Committee (**Paper 11**) was **taken as read**.

- 8.2.1 EP reported that the committee has taken assurances that the school's facilities are in good condition. Removal of the wall continues to be discussed. It was **noted** that the wall is expected to be taken down in due course, but that there is ongoing consideration of issues relating to the tree roots that would be affected.
- 8.2.2 EP reported that her role on the DHET Audit Committee was discussed along with the outcome of the recent external and internal audits, and the auditors' recommendations.
- 8.2.3 EP reported that the committee discussed the risk register and considered that the risk register may need more definition regarding its purpose before the school can contribute to it meaningfully.
- 8.2.4 EP reported that the committee received reports on the continuing fundraising efforts of the PTA and on CP's continuing focus on grant applications. It was **noted** that CdJ attends PTA meetings as a parent and would report back to governors any feedback from the PTA and vice versa.

8.3 The school's contributions to the risk register were **discussed**.

- 8.3.1 CT stated that the school's contributions to and monitoring of risks on the risk register should not be onerous. He explained that unless risks are discussed and mitigated by the school's management with oversight at LGB level, then the risk register ceases to be a relevant document.
- 8.3.2 It was **discussed** that risk management must take place at management level, but that governors have a responsibility to take assurances that risks are being effectively managed and mitigated. It was **discussed** and **agreed** that the risk register would become the responsibility of the school's core leadership team, with risk owners identified for each risk.
- 8.3.3 It was suggested and **agreed** that a focus on timeframe should be introduced as a part of mitigating actions for each risk.

ACTION: Chair to suggest amendments to the risk register grid and feed this back to EP to deal with at the next Education Committee meeting and at the next DHET Audit Committee meeting.

- 8.3.3 It was **noted** that the systems of management at BPS and DHJS are different, and that reports on any risks arising and/or changes in the approach to mitigating risk would be received by the DHET Board of Trustees from both LGBs.

9. Link Governor Visit Reports

- 9.1 It was **noted** that SR had updated the LGB on his science/maths link governor visit as part of the Education Committee report.

ACTION: Chair to send the governor visit template form for SR to complete.

- 9.2 The Chair, in her capacity as the link governor for safeguarding, presented her:
 - Online safety visit report (**Paper 12**) and materials from her recent online safety training (**Papers 12a-c**); and
 - Safeguarding visit report (**Paper 13**).

These papers were **taken as read**.

- 9.2.1 TS reported that he has worked with colleagues to bring together behaviour, safeguarding and online safety policy and curricular work following his discussions with the Chair.

9.3 An updated list of suggested link governor appointments was **circulated at the table**.

- 9.3.1 The expectations for link governor roles were **discussed**, as follows:
 - To come into school at least once per year to meet with the relevant subject leader or staff contact;
 - To get to know and understand the area of scrutiny;

- To offer supportive challenge to the subject leader or staff contact for the area of scrutiny; and
 - To attend school events relating to the link governor's area of scrutiny.
- 9.3.2 All governors were asked to familiarise themselves with the Trust's link governor visit policy, available on the school's website.

ACTION: Governors to contact the Chair with any suggested changes to their link governor assignments.

10. Governor Training

10.1 A governor information sheet from Southwark Council on Prevent training (**Paper 14**) was **noted**, as was the school's self-assessment form (**Paper 14a**).

10.1.1 It was **noted** most governors had attended the recent Prevent training.

10.1.2 It was **noted** that a follow-up from the recent staff Prevent training was included in the Head of School's report.

10.2 The Chair asked for governors to report any training undertaken since the previous LGB meeting.

10.2.1 CdJ reported that she had undertaken her new governor induction training at Southwark Council.

10.3 It was **noted** that membership of the NGA for the LGB was still outstanding as an action.

ACTION: CP to follow up securing NGA membership for the LGB with the school business manager, and to circulate log-in information to all governors as soon as this is available.

11. Safeguarding

11.1 It was reported that a school safeguarding audit would take place next term. It was **agreed** that the Chair would attend in her capacity as the link governor for safeguarding.

12. Health & Safety

12.1 It was **noted** that BJ would undertake a health and safety walk in May and report back at next meeting.

ACTION: BJ to report the outcome of her health and safety walk at the next meeting.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 As TF had been excused from the meeting, it was **agreed** that he would deliver his link governor report at next meeting.

ACTION: TF to deliver his link governor report at the next meeting.

13.2 CP reported that parents' voluntary contribution is proposed to increase to £30 per term (£90 per year). She asked that the LGB accepts the proposal that parents' voluntary contribution is increased. CT reported that the proposal had been approved in principle at the last meeting of the DHET Board of Trustees.

13.2.1 **A governor asked what proportion of parents pay the voluntary contribution.**

13.2.2 CP stated that most parents pay the voluntary contribution, and that there are some parents who pay generously above the suggested voluntary contribution.

13.2.3 It was **noted** that the voluntary contribution covers the cost of school trips and means that the school does not need to ask ahead of each school trip for payment to support the cost of transport, tickets, or other incidental costs.

- 13.2.4 A governor asked whether it would be an advantage to stagger requests for payment, so that the request for the voluntary contribution is not made at the same time as payment for music lessons, uniforms, and other extra costs.
- 13.2.5 CP stated that this could be considered. She stated that some parents do request staggered payments and that these are generally granted.
- 13.2.6 The increase in parents' voluntary contribution as proposed was **approved**.
- 13.3 A governor asked about the LGB skills audit and whether this should be done again now that there are two new governors on the governing body.
- 13.3.1 It was **discussed** and **agreed** that a skills audit should be completed again in the summer term to include the two recently appointed governors and the new co-opted governor to be appointed in the near term.
- 13.4 CdJ reported that she attended the Year 4 lunch as a parent, which was very enjoyable and well attended.
- 13.4.1 CP stated that the school will host a Year 5 lunch next term. It was noted that there are three school lunches each term, rotating among Years 3, 4 and 5. CP stated that the school lunches are an important event to encourage parental engagement.
- 13.5 The Chair reported that she, TE and CdJ recently had a school tour and attended an assembly together. Appreciation was expressed to CP for extending the invitation.

The business of the meeting closed at 20:34.

Date of the next meeting – Monday, 8 July 2019 at 18:30.

Signed _____
Chair

Date _____

KF/kf 12/04/2019