

**Didsbury CofE Primary School
Local Governing Body Meeting
Tuesday 4th October 2022 7.30pm
Minutes**

Present:

Catriona Arundale	Foundation Governor
John Barrett	CEO
Kate Catling	Parent Governor
Paul Good	Chair (MDBE)
John Janulewski	Foundation Governor
Matthew Lee	Foundation Governor
Samantha Morgan	Staff Governor
Philip Robinson	Parent Governor
Helena Miller	Executive Headteacher

Apologies

Abbie East	Foundation Governor
Augustine Ihm	Foundation Governor
Joyce Thom	Foundation Governor

In attendance

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
Emma Chamberlain	Deputy Headteacher

Any text in red bold italics represents a Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Governor and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.

1. Welcome, Introductions & Opening Prayer

Governors were welcomed to the meeting by Paul Good. Paul Good led the opening prayer.

2. Introduction from John Barrett CEO

- John Barrett explained his role is different to the previous Executive Headteacher and explained the issues relating to the task of growing the MAT. He is working on building the structures and systems in place to enable growth. He has spent his first four weeks in schools, building relationships and this has been a very positive experience.
- DCE was commended for the willingness from the staff to embrace new ideas. Staff are preparing for and concerned about Ofsted.
- A special thank you was given to the school leadership for their work this week on a difficult safeguarding issue. It was agreed to not elaborate on the safeguarding issue

due to confidentiality and this remains a live issue. In time governors may need more information to reflect on this. There were many people involved in the processes.

- This school experiences much pressure from parents and this impacts on teaching and learning, consequently communication policies across the Trust will be reviewed. Many parents request fact to face meetings outside of scheduled parental meetings and this needs to be reviewed. An effective Communication Policy will be discussed at a senior level and then shared with governors. This might also impact on governors who may raise issues on behalf of parents. Governors welcomed attempts to have clear boundaries between parents and staff and noted in the past parents have been asked to contact staff via the office.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Abbie East, Augustine Ihm, and Joyce Thom.

4. Declaration on Non/ Pecuniary Interests

- Phillip Robinson, Kate Catling, Abbie East, and Matt Lee, all have children in the school. Paul Good has one grandchild in the school and John Janulewski has two grandchildren in the school.
- There are no other declarations other than those listed on the school website.

5. Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair of Governors until the first Governing Body meeting of the Autumn Term 2023

There was one nomination for chair for Paul Good

Paul Good was duly elected as Chair until the first Governing Body meeting of the next academic year (Autumn Term 2023)

This will be the last year Paul Good will stand for the chair of this LGB.

There was one nomination for chair for John Janulewski.

John Janulewski was duly elected as Vice Chair until the first Governing Body meeting of the next academic year (Autumn Term 2023)

6. Approval of Minutes from the meeting 28th June 2022 including & Matters Arising **The minutes of the meeting held 28th June 2022 were approved as an accurate record.**

There were no actions from this meeting.

7. Executive Head of School Report including

Admissions update and numbers of children in school

There are 29 places offered in reception and the admissions team in the LA are experiencing staffing issues, so the remaining place is expected to be allocated soon. All year groups are now full. There are new starters in every year group. The migration report indicates the mobility reasons.

Staffing Update

There are many part time members of staff in this school and some staff undertaking different roles so the new Executive Headteacher is familiarising herself. Interviews for an after-school play worker occurred, a member of staff from DCE is filling this role.

There are two agency LSAs (learning support assistant) and the overall number of LSAs might reduce in order to employ a full-time TA3. (A TA3 has left her post this term). Agency staff cost the same as a TA3 so this is being explored.

There is a vacancy for a site staff member, the hours and ratios are currently being reviewed.

Premises Update

No work has occurred this summer. There was a fire drill on the 14th September 2022 and this took eight minutes 30 seconds, the reasons were outlined including cars parked on the pavement and avoiding fouling on the pavements. The full evacuation of the building was two minutes 15 seconds, but there were delays getting to the Astro turf.

Q: Was this an announced evacuation or were staff not informed?

Staff were not informed. There will be repeat drills as this practice drill has thrown up some issues. The CEO reported the leadership are reviewing the use of the car park as classroom doors open onto this space. Staff leaving the premises during the day have been asked to not park in the car park as children are using this space. The gates remain locked during the school day and cars will remain static.

The CEO is meeting consultants on the 17th October 2022 about the CIF (condition improvement fund) bids and given car park issues are linked to safeguarding Governors were asked if they would like him to explore remodelling the car park space. The meeting is to explore a CIF bid for the windows.

C: Are there any access needs for staff who might need to park in the car park?

Yes there are some spaces. The issue is the doors from the classrooms going into the space and how to maximise the space for the children. Parking in the locality is a real issue exacerbated by the tram stop.

Q: Are the gates used as an entrance in the morning?

Yes the reception children can be dropped off at the gates and as attachment issues decrease this will change. Nursery children use the main playground to avoid cars. Governors were aware in the past there was a car park facility off site. Many staff already have to park on the street.

Wellbeing

Kate Catling the link governor has met with Emilie Smith and the reports were uploaded onto Governor Hub. The programme (Hamish & Milo) used was reviewed and this has free training for staff. A wellbeing walk will occur in a few weeks' time, this will be monitoring wellbeing for children and staff, the recommendation is for this to occur termly. A half termly wellbeing newsletter like SWCE may be devised.

Workforce absence update

The EH (executive headteacher) reported on days lost in the last academic year. 935 days were lost last year and December is the highest month for absence, January 2022 was covid heavy. Actions include training for staff on the Attendance Management Policy and the EH has introduced procedures for leave of absence.

Q: What is the situation with covid and absences?

The school would advise (but cannot insist) a person testing positively to isolate for five days, but given tests are no longer free, not everyone uses a test. Some staff still test if they have symptoms.

Q: Is there guidance for parents?

Absence or testing cannot be enforced with children.

Q: What is the average days off outside Covid?

There were 106 covid absences out of 935 giving 829 days lost.

Governors noted anxiety and stress absence accounted for 21 days lost.

Action: EH to give the percentage of days lost as a proportion of total days and percentages for each reason for the absence.

The EH informed Governors this school has a disproportionate number of staff for a small school. This school has 54 staff. 47 are in non-teaching roles and this includes the

wrap around care staff. A large staff brings operational challenges such as line management and the EEF (Education Endowment Fund) does not support investment in support teachers. The leadership will be ensuring these adults have proven impact. Governors felt the high outcomes of children, especially SEND children, may reflect the high numbers of adult staffing. Benchmarking does highlight this difference. The new leadership are talking to school leaders about the impact of the additional staffing in the classroom.

Q: Does this high staffing ratio include Kids Club staff?

Yes, and this is an area where it is difficult to recruit. The ratio of staffing to children is correct and this is a provision that is well managed. Ensuring high quality play work when covering absences is a challenge. The number of roles has increased, and this provision is popular, the sessions are full, and this makes a good return to support the school and Trust.

This is the first real year to assess the financial impact of running this after-school provision, it was an independent business prior to Covid.

It was suggested the Kids Club provision might need to be a separate business enterprise to sustain other Trust activities. This is a valuable resource and is popular. Governors stated the provision represents good value and the amendments implemented last year have been successful.

Safeguarding

All staff have received their updated safeguarding training.

SEND Update

Q: Is the SEND lead now full-time again?

The SEND lead works three days at DCE.

C: There are a lot of children with those needs in school, needs which may have become more acute because of the effects of the pandemic. Parents often tell governors that they feel their child needs to be assessed. Does the school need a full-time role?

This is a one form entry school and three days is more than sufficient. Given other pressures this is a rich resource. Children might thrive better from quality first teaching. Expectations and communication with parents may need addressing in this area.

C: Governors welcomed last week's school newsletter information about the SEND policy and the idea of a Parent Champion. Is the school doing enough, quickly enough, to get children assessed and referred for help? Governors were aware of one child whose parent has been asking for that help and has now paid themselves for an independent assessment at quite some considerable cost because they felt it wasn't happening, despite speaking to the class teacher.

Conversations with the class teacher occurred and the professional judgement of the class teacher must be respected. A child with a full EHCP only brings a fraction of the costs of an adult. Some parents request one to one support and that might not be in the best interests of the child. The school EP (educational psychology) package meets the need of the priority children. It was acknowledged parents who are raising a fresh concerns might feel like this is a long wait. The package purchased is more than what a one form entry school would normally purchase. This also has been increased in recent years.

Parent governors were sensitive to parents concerns and were aware parents often do not understand the difference with a child who needs an EHCP. The CEO explained the

need to be realistic and to be fair with the children who have needs. Some parents are asserting which member of staff they want to work with their child. The governors confirmed these decisions are made by professionals. DCE parents have paid for private assessments and then expect one to one tuition to follow, and this is not possible. All teachers in DCE are trained to work with children with dyslexia. A parent champion will support the school, this ideally will be a parent with SEND experience.

Catriona Arundle volunteered to undertake this role as part of her SEND link governor role and governors agreed this.

2021/22 progress data

The EH report provided detailed data broken down into the vulnerable pupils.

DCE School attained a green flag award for its eco-work.

8. Behaviour and Safety update

The CEO is currently reviewing the system used to audit safeguarding across the Trust. DCE 175 audit is being reviewed by Emma Chamberlain including the 175 vulnerabilities supplement.

9. Governing Body Matters including:

Declarations

Three governors are yet to complete their declarations on Governor Hub. Governors were reminded of the audit requirement to complete confirmation they have read and understood KCSiE (Keeping Children Safe in Education); the agree with the Code of Conduct; and complete the non/ pecuniary interest declarations Those governors who have completed their declarations were thanked.

Skills audit

Action: Clerk to share skills audit from The Key with all Governors.

Any training undertaken

Governors were informed they now have to complete safeguarding training. Free online training links will be shared on Governor Hub.

10. Link Governor roles 2022/23

Governors formally approved the following link governor roles

<i>Area of responsibility</i>	<i>Link Governor</i>	<i>Staff contact</i>
<i>Safeguarding</i>	<i>Paul Good</i>	<i>Helena Miller</i>
<i>SEND / Parent champion</i>	<i>Cat Arundale</i>	<i>Emilie Smith</i>
<i>Recovery Curriculum Pupil Premium / CLA</i>	<i>Kate Catling</i>	<i>Helena Miller</i>
<i>Sports and PE Premium</i>	<i>Matthew Lee</i>	<i>Kate Evans</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>Abbie East</i>	<i>Emma Chamberlain / Liz Gandee</i>
<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>Philip Robinson</i>	<i>Elizabeth Lugsden</i>
<i>Balanced Curriculum</i>	<i>John Janulewski</i>	<i>Emma Chamberlain</i>
<i>EYFS</i>	<i>Abbie East</i>	<i>Liz Gandee</i>
<i>Health & Safety / Premises</i>	<i>Paul Good</i>	<i>David Robinson</i>
<i>Ethos & RE</i>	<i>Joyce Thom</i>	<i>Kathryn Thompson</i>

<i>Wellbeing</i>	<i>Kate Catling</i>	<i>Emile Smith</i>
<i>Sustainability</i>	<i>Associate gov tbc</i>	<i>Alex Aston</i>

There is a potential new associate governor who may join the LGB and Paul Good will explore if she would take on the link governor role for sustainability. This is an area which the children are passionate about.

Governors agreed to undertake their link governor monitoring on a set week in the spring term. Some governor monitoring will be occurring more often.

11. Policy approval

Safeguarding & Child Protection – KCSiE (keeping children safe in education)

This is a model policy from The Key. The CEO is currently reviewing the procedures across the Trust.

Governors formally approved the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Pupil Premium Policy

This has been updated by Emma Chamberlain

Governors formally approved the Pupil Premium Policy.

Safer Recruitment Policy

This has been updated.

Governors formally approved the Safer recruitment Policy

Uniform Policy

Governors formally approved the Uniform Policy

SEND 2022-23

Emilie Smith has updated this policy.

Governors formally approved the SEND Policy

12. AOB

- The CEO informed the GB there are changes to financial reporting being developed.
- The EH informed Governors staff in DCE are reacting well to the changing culture.
- Governors were informed the re-advert for a Head of School for DCE was planned for this term and Governors were asked if this could be deferred until at least the spring term.

Governors agreed to defer the advertisement for a new HoS for DCE and advise the Trust Board.

13. Dates for 2022/23 meetings

Tuesday 15th November 2022 at 7.30pm - remote

Tuesday 17th January 2023 at 7.30pm - remote

Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 7.30pm – in school

Tuesday 2nd May 2023 at 7.30pm - in school

Tuesday 27th June 2023 at 3.30 (meet the children)

14. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was led by Paul Good.

Signed..... Date.....

Paul Good (Chair)

Meeting closed at 21:30

Summary of actions

- Action: EH to give the percentage of days lost as a proportion of total days and percentages for each reason for the absence.
- Action: Clerk to share skills audit from The Key with all Governors. This has been actioned.