

DOWNLAND VILLAGE SCHOOLS FEDERATION

INTERIM EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

**At a meeting of the IEB held on 28th November, 2023.
This meeting was held at Compton and Up Marden Primary School.**

Present: Mr C Hawker (CH), Mr P Little (PL), Mrs S Samson (SS) and Mrs N Waters (NW)(Chair).

In attendance: Mrs C Vigor (CV) (Clerk) and members of the shadow governing board – Mr D Bertwistle (DB)(Executive Headteacher), Mr L Alexander-Hill (LA-H), Reverend T Bancroft (TB), Mrs SJ Smith (SJS), Mrs L Thatcher (LT) and Mrs J Wilkinson (JW).

The meeting opened with prayer led by the Reverend Trish.

APOLOGIES

880. Apologies were received from Mrs R Cumming (RC) and were approved by the IEB.

881. Apologies were received from Mr M Van Wijk (MVW) and Rev. E Doyle (ED), members of the shadow board.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

882. There were no declarations of interest from those present.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

883. **Resolved** – that the minutes of the IEB meeting held on 10th October, 2023 be signed as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING

14 th June 2023			
Minute	Action	By Whom	Reported completed
611	Admissions discussion with Bohunt MAT	DB/SS	See 807

884. Items in the Action Logs were reviewed and, where appropriate, marked as complete.

11 th July 2023			
Minute	Action	By Whom	Reported completed
694	Provision of Pupil Premium reports at finance committee meeting	DB	Agenda 28/11/2023

12th September 2023			
Minute	Action	By Whom	Reported completed
744	Admissions discussion with The Petersfield School	DB	See 807
760	Return of completed DBS documents to DB	Shadow board members	One return outstanding
778	Reading of KCSiE 2023 Part I & II	ED/MVW/JW	See 810
780	Safeguarding Training	SS/PL/JW/ED/ LA-H/MVW/TB	See 811
	Provision of completion certificates to DB	All	

10th October 2023			
Minute	Action	By Whom	Reported completed
807	Ascertain when TPS would next review its admissions policy	DB	
810	Reading of KCSiE 2023 Part I & II	ED/MVW/JW	See 778
811	Safeguarding Training	PL/JW/ED/LA-H/MVW	See 780
	Provision of completion certificates to DB		
827	Provision of information on East Sussex models of federation if available	RC	28/11/2023
844	Discussion regarding data reporting and format	NW/RC/DB/LA-H	
846	SEND Meeting and report	RC/TB	Agenda 28/11/2023
847	Disadvantaged meeting and report	NW/ED	28/11/2023
865	Arrangement of pay committee meeting	NW/PL	28/11/2023

Admission Discussion with Bohunt MAT (previous minutes 611, 744 & 801/23)

885. DB reported that he had emailed the headteacher of The Petersfield School but had yet to receive a reply. He would pursue this.

Action: DB

Reading of KCSiE 2023 Part I & II (previous minutes 778 & 810/23)

886. Those who had not done so were reminded of the need to undertake safeguarding training and to return their completion certificate to DB. All were asked to complete this by the next IEB meeting.

Action: JW/ED/MVW

Safeguarding Training and provision of completion certificate (previous minutes 780 & 811/23)

887. Those who had not done so were reminded of the need to undertake safeguarding training and to return their completion certificate to DB. All were asked to complete this by the next IEB meeting.

Action: PL/JW/ED/LA-H/MVW

Data Reporting Discussion (previous minute 844/23)

888. This had yet to be completed. NW and SS would make recommendations for group to consider.

Action: NW/SS

CHAIR'S ACTION

889. The chair reported that she had conducted an exit interview with the SENDCo, who had resigned with effect from the end of the autumn term. Going forward, exit interviews would routinely be completed with all staff.

890. The Executive Headteacher's Interim Performance Management review had taken place.

891. The current PAN for Compton & Up Marden was 20 pupils, but it was explained that were any number over 15 to be reached, it could create a difficulty for future class organisation. A public consultation for comment was currently in progress to reduce the PAN to 15 pupils. NW would produce a letter to be sent to parents to alert them to this and explain why the reduction was being considered. LT offered to assist with the wording.

Action: NW/LT

REPORTS

a) Executive Headteacher's Report

892. Copies of the report had been circulated with a request for questions which had been submitted.

Pupil Movement

893. Governors were pleased to learn that an additional pupil had joined year 2 at Rake and that 3 children who it was intended would leave Rogate had remained.

Behaviour and Attitudes

Pupil Anxiety

894. The executive headteacher had reported that across the three schools there were a growing number of children experiencing increased anxiety, particularly first thing in the morning. This was also a concern within the Rother Valley and nationally.

Q. How was feedback from a recent Rother Valley meeting regarding this shared?

895. The SLT had attended a conference and had fed back to staff.

Q. Do we have any members of staff trained in supporting mental health needs?

896. It was reported that a member of staff at Compton & Up Marden had completed a National College course. The executive headteacher undertook to look into DfE funding provided to train a senior mental health lead (SMHL) for each school. It was agreed that it would be ideal to identify one member of staff for each school, however one for the federation would also help.

Action: DB

897. LA-H commented that he had received training in introducing and teaching mindfulness to primary children and would be happy to cascade to staff if useful.

Action: DB/LA-H

898. Governors were informed that only one pupil in Early Years at Rogate remained on a part-time timetable. All other children are now attending full time.

Personal Development

School Council

Q. Would it be helpful to have a governor linked to the school council and is it federation wide?

899. It was agreed that this was a welcome suggestion and SJS volunteered for the role. All schools in the federation had a school council and it was felt sufficient that one visit be made per term to one school with all 3 schools visited across the year.

Q. How do you feedback to the student council on their requests?

900. DB outlined various requests that had been recently received and how feedback had been given.

Pupil Voice

901. School collected pupil voice would be provided by DB regarding curriculum and progress. It was agreed that more specific information relating to pupil voice linked to the curriculum was needed and DB would ensure that staff provided this.

Action: DB

902. NW reminded the meeting that the annual plan contained an action regarding governor gathered stakeholder voice from parents, staff and pupils, for later in the academic year.

Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Q. Typically, how many pupils are enrolled on each club?

903. Governors were informed that it varied depending on the club and the day it was offered. All were run by external providers, with payment made by parents directly to the provider themselves. The number of clubs run by staff had decreased

dramatically and the executive headteacher felt that this was indicative of teacher workload. DB explained that there was no requirement for staff to provide after school clubs, but there was often pressure from parents for them to do so. NW reminded governors that, in small schools, staff had a large number of areas to lead on in addition to their teaching responsibilities.

904. Currently external club providers were not charged a lettings fee, but this was being introduced in the new year. This would be the norm in other schools in the county. Transitional arrangements would be put in place.

Leadership and Management

Q. What are the current CPD priorities across the federation? Are we engaging with and benefitting from everything that is on offer across the Rother Valley group of schools?

905. A large amount of locality training was available, mainly based on the needs of the children. DB gave examples of training that had been undertaken. The federation also had representatives on various Rother Valley forums, including the headteachers' group, a chair and headteacher forum, the Futures Group and the SENDCo forum. In addition, there had been locality Inset regarding attendance, an enrichment programme for pupils and participation in the Durrington Research programme. Available courses for Teaching Assistants were also being considered and accessed. NW urged that the federation ensure it was aware of all CPD on offer to staff.

Q. I believe there was a session on wellbeing at the recent inset day, what is happening next?

906. DB informed the board that at a subsequent teaching staff meeting wellbeing had been discussed. A staff questionnaire would include wellbeing questions.

907. DB commented that a forthcoming federation Inset day might provide an opportunity for discussion workshops regarding wellbeing and workload.

Community engagement

908. A list of events was circulated to governors to which they were warmly invited.

909 – 916. Confidential Part 2 minutes.

(Mrs SJ Smith returned to the meeting)

Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR)

917. The IDSR is a web-based page for Ofsted inspectors to use when preparing for and during an inspection. It is intended as a tool for inspectors, which summarises and analyses available data about that school to support the inspection. NW introduced the IDSR to governors and board members and reminded them of the significance of small numbers of pupils in small schools. The IDSR for Rake was used as an example and the meeting discussed the data depicted.

b) Governors' Report: SEND

918. TB and RC had made a monitoring visit for SEND and this had been shared prior to the meeting. The key message was that the SENDCo would be leaving at the end

of the term and that it would be important to have regard for the workload of the new post holder. An additional day had been added to the post which would provide a third more time to cover the role, which had been added to recognise the complex need across the federation.

919. It was important to note that the number of SEND pupils was less than the national average and the number on registers no higher than in other comparable schools. However, the contextual data was important with, for example, 2 pupils with severe learning difficulties in one class. More details regarding the complexity of SEND in the 3 schools was given. There would be a need to ensure that the new SENDCo was supported regarding workload. A further monitoring visit would be made during the Spring term.

c) Disadvantaged Pupils

920. NW and ED had made a monitoring visit focusing on priority 5 of the Federation Improvement Plan. Given the time within the school year, the focus had been more on strategy rather than impact. Discussion had taken place with DB, staff and pupils to get a feel for how the strategy was working. Progress and attainment had not been strong in the last few years and the visit was used to ensure that the funding was being used to gain the most impact possible for those eligible. It was important to ensure that disadvantaged pupils were being effectively targeted and supported.

Q. What is being done for those pupils who are eligible for pupil premium but do not have SEN?

921. A targeted programme was provided for each pupil.

d) Governors' Report: Compton AfI Monitoring

922. NW, RC and SS had made a whole day monitoring visit to Compton & Up Marden and a report had been circulated. The focus had been to understand the position of the school in anticipation of an Ofsted visit. The staff had been very welcoming and some great practice had been seen which SS expanded on. Some areas for further development were also observed and these were reported verbally to DB.

e) Governors' Report: Safeguarding

923. CH had visited to monitor safeguarding. He followed up on 2 areas requested by the Chair of the IEB relating to a recent complaint. CH also reviewed the SCR at Rogate and Compton and all had been in order. He had met with the EHT to discuss the paper system used for staff to log concerns regarding pupils. Once finances allowed CPOMS would be used. The EHT was investigating the possibility of a special price for all three schools although it was not guaranteed. There had also been discussion regarding how children were taught about keeping safe online.

924. The need to follow up where a pupil leaves the school and moves to another one was emphasised to ensure that they were not 'missing'.

925. Comment was made regarding the time needed for a DBS check to be returned. DB would follow up on one specific issue regarding clearance for a governor.

Action: DB

f) Website Audit

926. LT had carried out a website audit and reported that it was compliant. She remarked that the functionality was not good for visitors to the site, especially when crossing from a federation page to a specific school page.

927. NW thanked everyone who had provided a report.

PUPIL PREMIUM STRATEGY & REPORT

928. NW introduced this item for which a paper had been circulated prior to the meeting. PP funding for each school (£14.5k Compton & Up Marden, £6k Rake, £10k Rogate) was noted as being used in broadly the same way by considering the needs of each individual child.

929. As emotional literacy provided one of the biggest barriers to learning, Teaching Assistants and Emotional Literacy Support Assistants accounted for the bulk of the spend. In addition, trips were funded, together with the cost of clubs, and assistance with uniform where needed. DB expanded on the ratios of use across the federation. Regarding trips, this was limited to £20 per child per term, as well as help with the year 5/6 residential trip. Consideration was being given to reducing the length of the annual visit to Fairthorne Manor, which would provide a saving. Club fees and the panto visit accounted for approximately £60 per term.

930. Assistance with costs for those not in receipt of PP could be provided by the George Street Trust for pupils in Rake and Rogate. The Trust was able to help those in need who were not eligible for PP. TB undertook to investigate the extent to which the Trust was able to assist and in what circumstances. In addition, the PTA provided half of travel costs.

Action: TB

931. NW reminded the meeting that there was a requirement for the board to consider the impact of the PP spend on eligible pupils and to ensure that wider development and opportunities were provided.

932. DB explained how new parents were informed of the process to apply for PP entitlement. Consideration was being given to including this information during home visits and in new parent packs.

(Mr L Alexander-Hill left the meeting at this point)

933. The PP strategy had not been circulated, as the Deputy Executive Headteacher (PB) was responsible for this and it was currently being compiled for publishing on the website by the end of December.

Action: PB

UPDATE ON ACADEMISATION POSITION

934. SS provided an overview of the current position concerning the Rother Valley locality's investigation regarding forming a multi academy trust (MAT). A bid had been made to the DfE for funding to assist with the exploration and £48k had been allocated. As Compton & Up Marden had been ordered by the DfE to become an academy, the federation was part of the group exploring the possibility of

academisation. The meeting was reminded that Rake and Rogate did not have to become academies, but there was a wish to keep the federation together.

935. The final decision regarding academisation would fall to the whole governing body of the federation, as it would for all schools in the locality.

936. If there was insufficient interest across the RV to make a MAT viable, then those schools interested would explore wider for membership.

937. NW and DB had discussed providing an update for staff and parents but this would need to be at the right time.

Q. As Compton is RI, is the federation being pushed to make a decision?

938. The meeting was assured that nothing more had been heard from the DfE regarding this since May and no time limit had been set. If at a subsequent Ofsted inspection Compton & Up Marden were to be graded as 'good' then the federation would apply for the academy order to be rescinded, although discussions to explore academisation would still continue as this was about protecting the future of schools in the Rother Valley.

FINANCIAL UPDATE & RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

939. PL reported that the finance committee had held a lengthy meeting for which minutes would be circulated. He gave an overview of the main points of discussion and the updates received, which had included a Pay Policy annual update and the establishment of a Lettings Policy across all 3 schools.

940. PL reported on the current 3-year financial forecast for each school:

Compton & Up Marden

941. The deficit was likely to be smaller than had been agreed with West Sussex and over the 2-3 year cycle the school would move into the black.

Rake

942. The financial stability of the school would continue, but the balance would reduce, in particular due to building improvements. In 3 years, the school would still remain in the black.

Rogate

943. At the end of the current financial year there would be a smaller deficit than agreed, which would continue to reduce. However, the school would not be out of deficit in the next 2 years.

Q. Will the federation be in trouble for remaining in deficit at Rogate?

944. Provided that progress was being made to reduce the deficit and that the NOR continued to rise there would be no issue.

Q. When will we know about numbers for September 2024?

945. Provisional numbers would be known early in the new year.

946. **Resolved** – that the 3-year financial forecasts be approved for submission to the Local Authority.

Q. If parents are hiring the hall will there be insurance liabilities for the schools?

947. Parents would be able to take their own insurance for a letting.

SHADOW BOARD UPDATE

a) Training & Induction

948. The following training had been attended:
WSCC Link Training Governor – Mrs L Thatcher
WSCC New Governors - Getting Started - Mrs L Thatcher
2 x National College courses

949. LT reported that the WSCC courses had been very valuable as part of her induction.

950. NW reminded members of the shadow board that photos and biographies were required for the website. NW to liaise with the clerk of shadow board to collate the missing information.

Action: NW

b) Recruitment of Co-Opted Governors

951. LT reported that one application had been received and a further one was expected. Inspiring Governance and Governors for Schools websites were being used to attract potential candidates. CH and NW would assist with the selection of co-opted governors for the shadow board and would make a recommendation to the next relevant IEB meeting for appointment.

952. NW informed the meeting that, unfortunately, Mr M Van Wijk's availability to attend meetings had decreased and therefore it was proposed that he become an Associate Member of the Finance Committee. NW explained the role of an AM.

953. **Resolved** – that Mr M Van Wijk be appointed as an Associate Member of the Finance committee for the length of the shadow board's term. No voting rights were conferred.

POLICIES

Capability Policy

954. Copies of all policies for consideration had been circulated prior to the meeting. A 3-year review cycle was suggested for all policies presented. It was noted that an earlier review may need to be instigated were there to be a new structure in place but this would be dealt with as needed.

955. **Resolved** - that the IEB approve the Capability policy.

Low Level concerns Policy

956. It was explained that this was a new policy that linked to the discipline policy. It was a model policy recommended by KCSiE.

957. **Resolved** – that the IEB approve the Low Level Concerns policy.

Grievance Policy

958. **Resolved** – that the IEB approve the Grievance policy.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

959. The next meeting of the IEB would take place on 30th January 2024 at 2.30pm.

960. There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.30pm

CHAIR.....DATE.....

ACTION LOGS

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844	Discussion regarding data reporting and format	NW/RC/DB/LA-H	

28th November 2023

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887	Safeguarding Training Provision of completion certificates to DB	PL/JW/ED/LA-H/MVW All above	See 811
888	Provision of recommendations regarding data reporting for group to consider	NW/SS	See 844
891	Letter to parents regarding PAN reduction at Compton & Up Marden	NW/LT	
896	Investigate available DfE funding provided to train a senior mental health lead (SMHL) for each school	DB	
897	Discussion re mindfulness information	DB/LA-H	
925	Follow up DBS check for governor	DB	
930	Investigate extent of George Street Trust assistance	TB	
933	Publication of PP Strategy on website	PB	
950	Liaise with shadow board clerk re info for website	NW	