



Downland Village Schools Federation

Minutes of a meeting of the full governing body held virtually on Wednesday 10th June 2020 at 3:30 pm

Present: Trish Bancroft, David Bertwistle, Paul Brown, Jeremy Cogman, Edward Doyle, Margaret Farwell, Steph Garwood, Rita Harrison-Roach, Chris Hawker, Susie McAuley, Kate O’Kelly, Sarah O’Malley, Hannah Pasfield, Neil Ryder

In attendance: Pippa Bass (clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies

The clerk welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new Downland Village Schools Federation full governing body. There were no apologies and no declarations of interest.

2. Foundation, LA, parent and staff governors

In addition to the ex-officio governors, namely, TB and ED as foundation governors and DB as executive headteacher, the clerk confirmed the following appointments to the governing body:

- MF has been approved by the diocese as the third foundation governor.
- KO is confirmed by WSCC as the LA governor.
- HP and JC are appointed as the two parent governors following the parent governor election across both schools.
- SM is appointed as the staff governor following the staff governor election across both schools.

3. Co-opted governors & associates

- a. Governors agreed the appointment of CH, RHR, SOM and NR as the four co-opted governors.
- b. Governors also agreed the appointment of SG and PB as associate members, with a 4 year term.

4. Election of chair and vice-chair(s)

- a. Governors agreed the new governing body structure should have 1xchair and 2xvice-chairs, which was the majority preference expressed by governors.
- b. Governors noted the two nominations for chair of SOM and NR and placed their votes. The results were NR - 9 votes, SOM - 3 votes. NR was duly appointed as the chair.
- c. Governors noted the three nominations for vice chair of SOM, TB and CH and placed their votes. The results were SOM – 9 votes, TB – 6 votes, CH – 9 votes. CH and SOM were duly appointed as co-vice-chairs.

Governors congratulated the new chair and vice-chairs. NR took the chair for the rest of the meeting.

5. Rake & Rogate FGB final reports

Governors accepted the final reports from the Rake and Rogate governing bodies.

6. HT update

- a. DB provided his verbal update – see Annex A – and governors raised the following questions:

Q How are children in the other year groups who are not in school getting on?

A This is really difficult and made more difficult because there are year groups who are in school. Government guidelines state that other year groups now won’t be returning unless the headteacher makes the decision. We don’t have the space or personnel to manage all other year groups returning. There may be an opportunity to bring one other year group back, but the risk will increase.

Q How many children are in a bubble?

A 15.

Q Is the risk to do with space only, in which case, is there an opportunity to use the village hall?

- A** We have considered it, but we don't have that option, I'm afraid.
- Q** Do the 13 children in at Rogate tend to fluctuate?
- A** They are not in every day, but they are key worker children.
- Q** Whilst I am not sure it is a good idea, is it worth thinking about part-time for some children?
- A** The government does not advocate the setting up of rotas.
- Q** How do you feel the parents are coping?
- A** We are monitoring the vulnerable children and are also in contact with their social workers. But there is no getting away from the value of face-to-face with parents.
- Q** Are you taking 'time out' for yourselves?
- A** We are not really getting much down time at the moment, but the staggered start and end times mean that the teachers can go home as soon as their class leaves the school.
- Q** Is the £1500 grant for each school to support communications fully allocated?
- A** Yes, this grant can only be used to setup individual accounts for children, but it will have long term benefits.

7. Governor code of conduct

Governors discussed the updated code of conduct, which now includes the requirement to use school email addresses rather than personal ones. Use of Whatsapp and other social media were noted to be insecure apps for discussing school business. NR explained that Microsoft Teams provides secure use within school control. TTG will still be used for the time being, alongside Teams. Governors agreed to update their profiles on TTG, which the clerk would follow-up. Governors approved the code of conduct and agreed to abide by it.

8. Committees

- a. Governors discussed the draft terms of reference for the local school committees (LSC) and proposed the following amendments:
- Add the process for electing the chair, plus the term (of 1 year) for the chair.
 - Amend that the LSCs will propose the entire membership to the DVSF GB for approval.
 - Add that no individual safeguarding cases will be discussed at LSC meetings.
- NR agreed to update the terms of reference. There may be further amendments required once both LSCs had begun operating and the governors agreed to review the LSCs and terms of reference each year.
- b. Governors also agreed that the initial membership of the LSCs should be as set out in the draft terms of reference. HP and JC agreed to approach the schools' friends associations to invite parents onto the LSCs. SOM agreed to speak to Nik Taylor and Mark Poeti about joining the Rake LSC.
- c. Governors confirmed that the statutory committees (exclusions, complaints, pay) would be convened with appropriate governors as and when required.
- d. Governors agreed that the HTPM panel should continue with TB as chair, but obviously without Nik Taylor. NR agreed to discuss with SOM and CH who else should be on the panel.

9. Governor roles

Governors agreed to the approach of having a lead governor and one or more support governors, plus either the chair or a vice-chair, for each role. The following initial allocations were agreed:

Role	Lead	Support	Chair/Vice Chair
Strategy & governance	NR	KO	CH, SOM
Staffing	TB (chair HTPM)	SOM	NR and CH* (both on HTPM)
Safeguarding	RHR	MF*	SOM
Ethos	MF	ED, TB	CH*
Curriculum & learning	HP	ED	NR

Finance	NR	JC	CH, SOM
IT & assessment	CH	JC	NR

* Agreed as proposals at subsequent chair/vice-chairs meeting

It was agreed that the monitoring of subjects/year groups should be discussed at the next meeting.

10. Policies

- a. It was agreed that the policies for both schools, some of which are already approved as joint policies, should be reviewed to adapt those that should be joint policies, and review the remainder. NR and JC agreed to initiate the review. Clerk to prepare the policy list.

[HP, KO left the meeting]

- b. Governors approved the governor induction pack.

11. Marketing and comms

- a. Governors discussed the new DVSF logo. DB raised the point that some members of staff felt that the logo did not reflect the nature of both individual schools but governors agreed that this was for the individual school logos to do and they approved the DVSF logo.

[JC left the meeting]

- b. It was agreed that the school websites should be reviewed to reflect the federation, but the individual school websites should be retained to reflect their individual characteristics. DB, JC, and Debs Burles were volunteered as a working party to review the websites.
- c. Governors agreed that DB, NR, SOM and CH should meet to agree how to communicate to parents the formation of the DVSF and the new governing body.

12. Finance

Due to the formation of the federation, WSCC had agreed to a month's delay (ie to 30 June) in the submission of the school budgets and, as these would both be in deficit, a deficit recovery plan for each school. Governors agreed to delegate the work to the finance governors (see above). NR agreed to circulate the results to all governors.

13. Governor support services

- a. Governors agreed that The Key is a useful source of advice. It had offered to extend Rogate's membership to all DVSF governors until the renewal date in late November for c£25 (depending on the date the agreement was signed) and governors agreed to this.
- b. NR agreed to follow-up on the ongoing fees for TTG.
- c. It was agreed that discussion about WSCC SLA rates should be deferred to a later meeting.

14. Future meeting dates/times

Governors agreed the next meeting would be on 30th June 2020 at 3:30pm. Future meetings (days/dates/times) will be agreed at the next meeting.

NR thanked everyone for their commitment to the new DVSF GB, and for their votes. TB gave a blessing.

Approved by the full governing body and signed by A Neil Ryder

Date: 30 June 2020

15. ACTIONS

Reference	Who	Action	By when
10.06.2020-7	ALL/clerk	Update personal profiles on TTG.	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-8a	NR	Update terms of reference for the local school committees	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-8b	HP, JC	Invite relevant parents from friends associations onto local school committees	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-8b	SOM	Speak to Nik Taylor and Mark Poeti about joining the Rake LSC.	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-8c	NR	Discuss HTPM panel with SOM, CH	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-9	Clerk	Add allocation of monitoring subjects/yr groups to next meeting agenda	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-10	Clerk	Prepare policy list for review.	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-11b	DB, JC, Debs Burles	Review both schools' websites to reflect the federation.	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-11c	NR, DB, CH SOM, JC	Agree how to communicate the formation of the DVSF and the new governing body to parents.	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-12	NR, DB, CH, SOM	Prepare deficit recovery plan and finalise budget, and circulate proposed recovery plan to all governors.	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-13b	NR	Follow-up on the ongoing fees for TTG.	30.06.2020
10.06.2020-14	Clerk	Add agenda item to agree future meeting days/dates/timings	30.06.2020

Annex A:

Executive Headteacher's Report to Downland Village Schools Federation Governing Body - 10/06/2020

It is with mixed feelings that I write this report. Firstly, it is so exciting to be at the start of this new chapter of Rake and Rogate Schools, but there is also some sadness at the loss of some governors whom I will not be working with as closely as before. I want to take the opportunity to thank them for their guidance and support, particularly over the past couple of years.

It has been an interesting few months at both schools. After a number of weeks of providing school for a small number of vulnerable children, the children of key workers and those with an EHCP the government guidance changed. From 1st June we have been open for the above groups and for children from Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

I have detailed the numbers of children attending below:

	Rake	Rogate
23rd March – 3rd April	3 children 1 EHCP 2 vulnerable children	5 children 5 vulnerable children
6th April – 17th April	Schools closed for Easter	
20th April – 22nd May	3 children 1 EHCP 2 vulnerable children	5 children 5 vulnerable children
25th May – 29th May	Schools closed for half term	
1st June -	Numbers have grown, but on average Reception – 9 children (60%) Year 1 – 13 children (86%) Year 6 – 9 children (65%) Others – 6 children Total = 37 children Number of eligible children = 51 73% attendance	Numbers have grown, but on average Reception – 4 children (80%) Year 1 – 2 children (25%) Year 6 – 6 children (86%) Others – 13 children Total = 25 children Number of eligible children = 28 89% attendance

- These figures are significantly higher than the national average. According to the BBC website: *'only 52% of primary schools were open for extra pupils and 11% of primary pupils were in school - about a quarter of those who could have gone back'*.

It is worth pointing out that the teaching staff (often supported by their support staff) have compiled packs of work which have been sent to parents to support home learning. Most of the staff happily came into work, on a rota basis, to support the small groups of children we had between the end of March and the beginning of June.

The uptake of the work packs, judged by the number returned for marking, was around 40%, many families have been accessing on going work via Purple Mash, White Rose Maths and the BBC Bitesize website.

During the period from the end of March to the end of May, Paul and Jackie Brown were in Rake most days supporting me and carrying out essential maintenance work on the building. Steph, despite being in isolation

has also been a great support, if only by reading the inevitable huge amount of paperwork generated by this extraordinary situation.

The staff have been understandably anxious since their return to work. A risk assessment, which took a fortnight to compile, was sent out to all staff and they were able to comment on the measures put in place to minimise the possibility of infection for staff, children, parents and any visitors to the school.

The one way systems, the arrangement of classrooms, the groupings of children so that there are no more than 15 in a class, the measures to encourage parents to queue at the gates whilst keeping 2 metres apart and the constant cleaning of surfaces and equipment have all been effective. I must highlight the extraordinary work carried out daily by Rachel West, the caretaker at Rogate – her work is exemplary, and I am very grateful for her continued support.

There are a small minority of parents who have been pushing for virtual lessons to be taught for the year groups who have not been allowed back to school – they are forgetting that every teacher is now teaching a class or a group of children every day, they are planning for those children and for the children still at home. Susie and Emma have both been releasing teaching staff to allow them to contact those families who we are concerned about, we have had no contact with, or are considered vulnerable. Parents who have been contacted have been appreciative of the calls. A trial has been set up to allow initially Steph and then Hannah to provide face to face teaching with a child with an EHCP who is having to shield and cannot come back to school. If this is successful then we may be able to repeat this with other children if the opportunity allows.

During the lockdown period, teaching staff wrote the annual reports to parents. These were then sent to support staff, who proof-read them and then sent them to me for my comments.

I am delighted to have the majority of our Year 6 children back in school and both Trish and Edward have agreed to work with me to plan a fitting, if unusual, leaver's service in both schools. This will enable us to say a proper goodbye to our children as they move to their secondary schools.

Neil, Sarah and I have been in constant touch over this period and yesterday we were invited to join Governors of Bury, Coldwaltham and Amberley schools who are about to begin their own partnership which will lead, I am sure, to federation.

I have had two letters of resignation in the past couple of weeks: Lindsay Russell, who teaches in Class 2 at Rake one day a week has taken on another job; Rob Todd, Rake's IT technician is going to retire. I am hoping one of the support staff will pick up his role.

I am currently working on the staffing structure of both schools, ensuring that the children are continued to be offered the best opportunities we can give them.

Rogate is expanding to four classes in September and Katarina Jarrett has been appointed to teach the Year 1 and Year 2 class. Katarina is known to both schools as she is currently working as a TA in Rake. She completed a 'Return to Teaching' course through Chichester University this month.

At Rake, Vikki Deane's contract will come to an end and Holly Hayward has been appointed to cover Year 2 and 3. Holly completed her final school experience at Rake last term. Both Holly and Katarina finished their courses with an outstanding judgement.

Despite the lockdown I am pleased that we were able to appoint these two well qualified teachers, although at the present time their appointments have to be on a temporary basis as we may have to re-advertise their posts once lockdown is over.

It is difficult to lose sight of the very positive aspects of the past few months. I have two schools with a high uptake of places. The children are very happy, there is a lovely atmosphere in each class and staff have been making excellent use of the outside spaces we have. Staff have, I believe, pulled out all the stops to ensure all the children have had exciting and engaging work to do, despite many of them not being in school. I have had, over the past couple of weeks, more emails from parents than I have had before, the vast majority saying thank you and how happy their children are to be back.

It's a great start to our new era!