

HOWE DELL PRIMARY SCHOOL AND DAY CARE

FULL GOVERNING BOARD: FINANCE AND RESOURCES

MINUTES

for the meeting held on 22nd May 2025, 6.15pm

1	<p>Present: Rick Xu (Chair), Katie Fox, Nicola Winch, Mehula Chandaria, Jason Levy, Hollie Ritchie, Tracy Prickett, Amy Jeffries, Suzie Du, Kashifa Saley, Sam Brown (6.30pm)</p> <p>Apologies: Julia Ellis-Hall</p> <p>In Attendance: Alison Reck (Associate Member), Sharon Hill (Facilities Manager)</p> <p>11 governors present meeting the requirement of 6 to be quorate</p> <p>Sam Brown has resigned from the board effective from the next meeting. Katie Fox was reappointed for another term.</p>
2	<p>To declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting.</p> <p>None declared.</p>
3	<p>To receive notification of any other business agreed by the Chair</p> <p>TP – School Effectiveness Advisor AR – policy approval NW – email re HFL contracts.</p>
4	<p>To receive and approve the FGB minutes of the 13th February 2025 meeting and the Finance Committee Meeting of the 8th May 2025 and consider any matters arising from those sets of minutes</p> <p>Minutes were approved with the following progress on actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Behaviour report – to be available for the July Q of E meeting ACTION SW- Training records – are up to date. Governors to maintain their own training record. Non HFL training can be uploaded to Governor Hub manually. ACTION ALL- Instrument of Government – the draft changes to the instrument were agreed by the board to reduce the number of governors to 12: 3x parent governors, 1x LA governor, 1x staff governor, 1x Head teacher, 6 x co-opted governors. This to come into effect on September 1st 2025. ACTION GK to send to HCC for approval.- Babysitting agreement – in place as a policy with an agreement to be signed by parents and day care assistants. All Assistants are clear about how babysitting differs from their role at Howe Dell. AR to be informed. <p>All other actions were complete as listed in Appendix A.</p>
5	<p>Health & Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilities Manager report including overview of site works and Martyn’s law. <p>Building works would be coming to an end the following week with the installation of the EY canopy. Everyone had worked well together over the year and the builders had been very considerate. Groundwork started over Easter and would continue into the summer term.</p> <p>Martyn’s Law – the school is awaiting further guidance but lockdown procedures are in place and appear to be compliant. The school is buying grab bags.</p> <p>RX: How often is the lockdown drill? <i>Once a year. Including the day care. Older children show a good understanding of what they are doing and what it is for. Different scenarios are being considered.</i></p>

	<p>RX: Is any further premises work planned? <i>Painting over the summer. Some snagging.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Report (from H&S Walk) Site walk undertaken in March and progress has been made since then. Some challenges with the weather. • Updated Assessment Management Plan Two areas tarmacked – dead areas. One will be made into a buddy stop and the other has widened the area where KS2 came down from the playground. New toilets required for Y3 will be replaced over the summer. All works in the plan are ring fenced in the budget. It is the GB’s responsibility to look after the building and invest money in it. KS: Are there any problems now with gate and barrier? <i>No all replaced and working fine.</i> • Accident monitoring Spring Term 2025 RX: There appears to be an increase in climbing frame accidents. Do we need to worry? <i>No. The accidents are from bumping into each other etc rather than falling off or related to the equipment specifically.</i> NW: there are a number of head injuries? <i>similarly these are bumps. There have been no serious accidents. We have instituted a no running zone where we have put activity tables.</i> RX: are parents informed of accidents? <i>Yes. They are logged in system and parents are informed. Where the system is saying ‘none’ [no action] actually there is a bump note. It might be wise to make that clear. Action: monitoring sheet to be revised SH</i>
6	<p>Safeguarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Annual Schedule (updated) Includes Martyn’s Law • Termly safeguarding report to Governors (Part 2 confidential minutes) It is now possible to make a referral without consent. PHF took it to HCC where it was explained that it was a system error. • Staff safeguarding questionnaire Compiled with teachers at a staff meeting. • Pupil safeguarding questionnaire Children were well informed and felt safe. Parents did not respond to an invitation to hear about it but good feedback at parents evening through the Ofsted Questionnaire • Safeguarding audits No actions required. • SENSO Spring term report No concerns • Safeguarding Governor update Visit to be arranged in Summer 2 ACTION KS • Suspensions/Exclusion Report (to end of April 2025) None. ‘Curious not furious’. Staff are understanding behaviour, putting support in place and managing behaviour effectively • GDPR update RX has been in conversation with the IT manager. Any use outside school requires an 2FA authentication code. Staff are encouraged to use cloud service with 2FA for added security check and gradually reducing the use of premises services. The shredding of paper documents continues now that all documentation is backed up electronically.
7	<p>HR: School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School’s response to staff survey Discussed in smaller groups. Key issues being addressed by leaders. • Summer term Governor proposed staff survey Revamped survey to allow space to explain answers. Now includes: what works well, better if.., what has improved since last survey. Plus further comments. Can be shared with Ofsted. To be sent out on Wednesday after half term. ACTION NW • Staffing and recruitment update One resignation – maternity cover contract until end of autumn term. Will be infilling until permanent member of staff returns. Deadline for resignations however is May 31st.

	<p>Behaviour outreach worker has been appointed to a new role – school will recruit. DSPL 5 will fund £18k for EY and transition from Nursery to Reception. Due to increased SEND funding, the school is also looking for morning 1-1 TA for a child who needs that consistency moving into the upper years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing <p>Linked to staff survey. Emails staggered so not all arriving at 8am. PM meetings held during school day. Working party for behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence (including impact of AIPs) <p>RX: support staff absence numbers seem noticeably higher? <i>We have been implementing Attendance Improvement Plans with positive effect. It has enabled staff to understand the impact of their absence on others and that appointments should be scheduled outside of working hours as far as possible. The school has brought into referral schemes for both teaching and non-teaching staff to get the right support in place. The numbers were affected by the long-term absence of one TA. In general, there are very few non genuine reasons for absence but when there are, the policy is applied.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Report <p>One TA is undertaking Level 3 to complete in January and taking GCSEs alongside. The school invests in staff at all levels.</p>
7a	<p>HR: Day Care - AR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing and recruitment update and wellbeing report <p>RX commented he was glad to see focus on staffing and wellbeing. AR agreed that everyone had settled in their roles, including two new members of staff, to deliver the bespoke curriculum. In September CUSP Curriculum and Little Wandle programmes would be introduced and training was in progress. The curriculum would provide consistency through baby care into Nursery and YR. AIP plans had been in place for two members of staff for regular occurrence of absence. Issues were addressed and within four weeks the AIPs were signed off. The school was able to support and the process made a difference. It is not always possible to get cover and it is better for the children if there is continuity and consistency.</p> <p>Numbers are good and there is a waiting list. There is an advert out for a new EYP. There is an issue over income especially for babies and for children of staff who get a discount which needs to be looked at. Finances are positive but costs have gone up eg food cost and HCL catering, staffing on costs have all increased</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development report <p>Working with babies and toddlers. Valuable and comprehensive. HFL toolkit for transition. Safer sleeping – policy in place. Further training as required and as listed in the report.</p> <p>NW to deliver trauma and attachment training at September INSET</p>
8	<p>Finance: School and Behaviour Outreach Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFVS formal ratification and signing by chair <p>Signed and ratified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND funding update <p>Met with LA to discuss the funding situation. Section Fs of EHCPs were reviewed and LA have funded and backdated funding where there had been gaps. All children with EHCPs are at targeted plus or above which are the funded categories. Targeted is unfunded from April. The funding now allows the provision required and it was a productive conversation. EHCPs have grown in number from 7 to 15 and continue to increase so will attract further funding in the next year - £5k per EHCP (as long as the funding from HCC remains in place).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year End 2024-2025 <p>Seen and discussed by Finance Committee</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Premium spend 2024-2025 Sports premium cannot be used for general curriculum spend and therefore swimming could not be included. PP funding is used so everyone can access the swimming curriculum. • Pupil Premium spend 2024-2025 Spending is higher than the amount received. Reserves are put against it so no one is economically excluded. Changes include no partnership and community manager. This is a 3 year strategy which comes to an end at end of this academic year. The new strategy will still have reading and maths fluency as priorities. There will be no more recovery premium funding or tuition funding as this was from the COVID era. The strategy will still encompass teaching and wider strategies and targeted support. • Draft Reserves policy (ring fenced funds) NW explained that this is required in order to preserve the reserve, especially as school generates income, and avoid claw back. HCC cannot claw back independently generated income but it needs to be outlined in a reserves policy. It is a recommendation from SRMA. The policy shows commitments of funds over the next two academic years related to long term aims. There is no transfer of funds between direct funding and self-generated income. It will need to be updated and approved every year and will include Day Care. NW outlined the terms of the policy which should be read in conjunction with asset management plan and the committed balances document for HCC <p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree and ratify budget (as agreed by Finance committee) and submit to Local Authority by 31.05.2025 <p>Balanced budget for three years. Still needing to make savings within the next year. RX: I thought we had deficit? <i>There is an in-year deficit but not a deficit budget.</i></p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>Outreach budget – flat lined for 5 years as income is unknown. Balanced budget set</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>Schedule of Financial Delegation – changes with regards to procurement. New legislation in public sector from Feb 2025 had changed responsibilities and thresholds which schools have to follow. HCC changed contract regulations. So thresholds and terminology have been adjusted.</p> <p>Agreed</p>
8a	<p>Finance: Day Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year End 2024-2025 <p>Seen and discussed by Finance Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree and ratify budget (as agreed by Finance committee) and submit to Local Authority by 31.05.2025 <p>There will be changes in funding because parental income is likely to come down. RX: ICT 2 items of £1800. What are you using that the school is not? <i>Purchasing new whiteboards. Might have to purchase new devices (e.g. Windows 10 is soon no longer supported towards the end of this year) for all staff to work with the new updated system and ensure it can be used securely. A more up to date white board to be purchased for preschool and a white board for the toddler room. The interactive table can then be moved to the toddler room.</i> RX: How do you establish the percentage of shared resources? <i>the proportion is generally 17% but not fixed rigidly. AR is happy with this proportion especially while income is good but a conversation is always had with TP. It should be remembered that Daycare operates for 52 weeks a year (50 weeks for parents).</i></p> <p>Agreed</p>

9	<p>Governance matters / Additional Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website (School and Day Care) <p>At the website review the school was told it would need to be renewed and transferred to Juniper which has cost the school to have it rebuilt. Everything should have been transferred now and needs to be checked before it goes live. The school will have more control over content and slightly better functionality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree term dates 2026-2027 <p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items to be included in the FGB Working Party <p>Preparing for Ofsted – new handbook SWOT Self-evaluation and skills audit Preparing for 25/26 Staff surveys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor vacancies and recruitment <p>2 vacancies (for compliment of 12) 2 prospective new governors Day care parent (child moving into Nursery) and Mary Murphy, an experienced governor. Action KF and TP to meet with prospective governors before the planning meeting in June.</p>
10	<p>Policies (Day Care and School)</p> <p>Parent Conduct Policy</p> <p>NW pointed out that a child should not be excluded from school due to the conduct of the parent as this would be prejudicial to child’s welfare and education and could be considered unlawful Draft policy to be rethought in this regard to take steps against the parent rather than the child.</p> <p>KS: Could the policy include behaviour on site rather than just behaviour towards staff. More like a code of conduct? ACTION – TP and AR to redraft and place on GHub for approval.</p> <p>The following policies were approved:</p> <p>Charging and Remissions 2025 Lettings 2025 Valued Behaviour Policy 2025 Day Care Attendance 2025 Day Care: food and drink 2025 Day Care Intimate care policy 2025</p> <p>The Day Care terms of reference were no longer required as the separate committee no longer exists.</p>
11	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>TP – School Effectiveness Advisor: - Currently Helen Jones who is external. The school has been offered Jeremy Loukes as an SEA by HFL. He is an Ofsted Inspector and known to be excellent and will help move the school forward. Therefore contract with HJ would be terminated at the end of this academic year.</p> <p>AR – policy approval – see item 10</p>

	NW – email re HFL contracts – KF and TP should exercise votes on core contracts. TP on working party to address the disadvantage gap and refocus the core contract in that direction. Also to ensure training is available and not too expensive. Money is delegated to HFL to provide the core contract. ACTION TP and KF to respond to consultation and vote.
12	To agree/confirm date(s) of future meeting(s): FGB Business Meeting (forward planning working party) on site – Thursday 26 th June FGB Quality of Education (End of Year/data on site – Thursday 10 th July

Meeting closed 21.40

Appendix A

FGB Rolling Log

Date	Item	Action	By whom	By when	Update
May 2025 (FGB Finance and Resources)					
22/05/2025	4	Governors to maintain training records on Governor Hub	ALL	ongoing	
22/05/2025	4	Agreed Instrument of Governance to be submitted to HCC	GK	01/09/2025	
22/05/2025	4	Behaviour report for 2024-2025 to be written and uploaded to GHub for July QofE	SW	01/07/2025	
22/05/2025	5	Update accident monitoring to reflect actual process	SH	01/06/2025	
22/05/2025	6	To conduct safeguarding visit	KS	30/06/2025	
22/05/2025	7	To send out Governor survey to staff	NW	04/06/2025	
22/05/2025	9	To meet with prospective new governors	KF & TP	26/06/2025	
22/05/25	10	To redraft the Parent Conduct Policy in light of governor discussion and place on GHub for approval	AR & TP	26/06/2025	
22/05/2025	11	To respond to the HFL consultation on the core contract and vote	KF & TP	10/07/2025	