



Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



Annual General Meeting of the Academy

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 2nd February 2016 at 4.30 p.m.

Present:

Mr R Barker		Mr C Grover
Mr D Carruthers	Chairman	Mrs F Hotston Moore
Revd P Cotton		Mrs S Janson
Mr P Debenham		Dr H Marlow
Mrs C Driver		Mrs J Newman
Ms S Goodrich		Mr R Stevenson
Mr T Green		Mrs E Wnukoski

In attendance:

Mr R Boulter	Member of the Academy Trust
Mrs J Brown	Member of the Academy Trust
Mr R Grimsey	Member of the Academy Trust
Mr S Martin	Deputy Headteacher
Mr S Wright	Clerk to the Governors

Members agreed that Mr Carruthers should chair the meeting in the absence of the Chair of the Academy Trust.

1. Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs T Darby, Dr D Egan, Mr D McMillan, Miss S McBurney, Mr D Ralph, Mrs L Ramsay, Rt Revd M Seeley, Mr N Serjeant and Miss J Upton.

2. Pecuniary and Other Interests

No pecuniary interest was declared with regard to items on the agenda.

3. Chairman's Report

Mr Carruthers reported on the last 12 months by way of a presentation. This covered:

- A review of the membership of the Governing Body and its constitution.
- An overview of the school's organisation (it was noted that Graduate Interns were included in the Teaching Assistant category).
- Community links – in which there had been little change.
- Student numbers: these stood at 668 in October 2015 (recently increased to 670) as compared to 646 in October 2014.
- GCSE results - 68% 5 A*-C (including English & Maths) with a Value Added measure of 1032.8 – the best in the last five years.
- Attendance – the upward trend had continued with 95.5% attendance in 2014-15. The current year figure stood at 96.6%.
- Exclusions – these were down in 2014-15 though there had been an increase in internal isolations (used for minor offences). There had been 1 permanent exclusion (2 in the last three years).

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Headteacher: Miss J Upton

Senior Leadership Team: Mr S Martin, Miss S McBurney, Mrs L Ramsay, Mrs T Darby

Chairman of the Academy Trust: Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Chairman of Governors: Mr R Boulter

- School Improvement Plan (SIP) – there were six areas of focus relating to Teaching and Learning.
- Partnerships – there had been on-going discussion with respect to DHS’ relationship with pyramid primary schools. An application for Teaching School status had been submitted.
- The school remained solvent and the cumulative surplus stood at £641,002 with potential commitments against these reserves (in relation to capital bids submitted) of £250k. It was noted that such levels of reserves could be important in the future given impending financial pressures.
- Revenue costs – cost of teaching staff represented 59% of total income; that of support staff accounted for 22% of total income.
- KPIs remained generous in terms of the targets in relation to staff-pupil ratio.
- Balance sheet summary – it was noted that a pension fund liability of £582k was underwritten by Government. This liability is subject to actuarial review every three years and was likely to rise.
- Current main financial risks are:
 - Reduction in student numbers
 - Unchanged funding arrangements after current consultation
 - Funding reduced due to National Insurance, Pension or Salary increases

Governors raised the following points:

- Mrs Brown asked about the increasing teacher-student ratio with 670 students now in the school and how this was being monitored. Mr Martin observed that the increase in numbers had been a conscious decision and this needed to be balanced against the desire for small set sizes. He noted that GCSE sets now needed to be 14/15 in number to be viable and that, in the future, this might affect the breadth of GCSE curriculum available at DHS.
- Mr Barker asked about the possibility of sets becoming too large. Mr Martin responded that, as subjects usually appeared in more than one option block this was unlikely to happen. If a set went over 30 in number it was split into two.
- Mr Green asked if English and Maths set sizes remained smaller. Mr Martin said that they did and, though it was difficult to compare, it was believed that DHS had smaller set sizes than most local secondary schools.

4. Minutes

- 4.1 These were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd February 2015.
- 4.2 There were no matters arising.

5. Audited Accounts

A copy of these had already been reviewed by Governors.

6. Any Other Business

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 4.58 p.m.

Signature

Date: 6th July 2016