



Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



Full Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 5th July 2016 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Mr R Barker		Rev M Lamb
Mr D Carruthers	Chairman	Mr D McMillan
Mr P Debenham		Dr H Marlow
Mrs C Driver		Miss J Newman
Mr T Green		Mr R Stevenson
Mr C Grover		Miss J Upton
Mrs S Janson		Ms E Wnukoski

In attendance:

Mr S Martin	Deputy Headteacher
Miss S McBurney	Assistant Headteacher
Mrs L Ramsay	Assistant Headteacher
Mr S Wright	Clerk to the Governors

1. Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Mr R Boulter, Mrs J Brown, Mrs T Darby, Dr D Egan, Ms S Goodrich, Mr R Grimsey, Mrs F Hotston Moore, Mr D Ralph, Rt Revd M Seeley and Mr N Serjeant.

Ms Wnukoski arrived during Item 3 and left during Item 9.1. Mr Martin left during Item 6.4 and returned for Item 9.3

1.2 Governors consented to their absence.

2. Pecuniary and Other Interests

2.1 There were no pecuniary interests raised with respect to items on the agenda.

2.2 There was nothing to update in the Register of Pecuniary Interests.

3. Chairman's Action

- Mr Carruthers and Miss Upton had attended a meeting relating to the Diocesan position on the creation of Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). Many schools in attendance were new to the concept of Academy/Trust development and the meeting tended to focus on the needs of these schools. Mr Green asked if the Diocese had a position on non-C of E schools being included in a MAT led by a C of E School – this was felt not to be an issue; it would equally be possible for a C of E School to be part of a MAT led by a Community School – though the Diocese was not as keen on this.

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Headteacher Miss J Upton BSc

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 D Carruthers

- Mr Carruthers informed the meeting that he will shortly be writing to the complainant in the recent tribunal involving DHS to confirm that the agreed policy reviews have taken place.

4. Governing Body Membership

- 4.1 Rev Lamb's appointment was noted as was the need for her inclusion in the relevant governor paperwork.
- 4.2 Mr Green and Mrs Driver had offered their services as part of the Teaching School Steering Group (TSSG). Miss Upton that the group would also need a member from a feeder primary school. Mr Carruthers said that he saw the TSSG essentially as a working group.
- 4.3 MAT Advisory Group. It was felt to be vitally important that a small group of Governors should be involved in the development of rules, guidelines and best practice for the potential MAT. Mrs Driver and Mr Barker had already volunteered for this and Mr Carruthers asked for other volunteers to contact him. Mr Carruthers would shortly write to Chairs of Governors of local schools to outline the current position of DHS regarding the creation of a MAT and pointing out that the school's current priority was its work as a Teaching School - work on the MAT will follow thereafter.
- 4.4 The meeting schedule for 2016-17 was agreed with the exception that the start time of the Curriculum Working Group was adjusted to 4.15 p.m.

5. Minutes

- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd May 2016 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.
- 5.2 Matters arising from the minutes.
 - 5.2 The missing RE data had been sent to Governors.

6. Academic Improvement

- 6.1 Emily, Ellie, Nathan and Matt addressed the meeting. Emily commented positively on the experience of taking early GCSEs. Ellie described the events of Sports Day which included a quiz and where ten new records were set - Nelson were victorious with Curie as runners-up. Nathan recounted experiences on various school trips and felt that these really helped students to engage with their subjects. Matt noted the positive reception given to the DHS production of A Midsummer Night's Dream where, for the first time, incidental music was provided by school ensembles.
- 6.2 School Development Plan. This had been RAG rated with further review once GCSE results had been received.
- 6.3 Year 10 Performance Data

Various points were made/noted:

- The difference between Progress 8 and Attainment 8 was noted.
- The red figures in English and Maths under the Fisher Family Trust data were discussed. These outcomes are due to teacher caution in relation to the new courses which are seen as more demanding and such caution is likely to persist. Mrs Driver asked if the Heads of English and Maths were still feeling daunted – Miss Upton felt that they (and the students) were becoming more confident. The meeting was reminded that, under the new measures, English and Maths are double-weighted.
- Under the new grading system, 4 will be the equivalent of a C, and 7 of an A.

- Those students who have taken GCSE Maths in Year 10 this year will take the new GCSE in Year 11 rather than Further Maths GCSE as currently. The new GCSE is probably the harder of the two and is felt to be better preparation now for the new AS courses.
- For ten students in the cohort there is no prior data.
- The Progress 8 measure is deliberately cautious.
- The transition to the new GCSEs for the majority of courses will take place next year.

6.4 Staffing Update

- Advertisements had been placed for an SEN administrator and Graduate Interns/Teaching Assistants.
- A replacement Graphics Teacher had not been appointed and the subject will be covered for the coming year by other teachers including Ian Towler, the Senior Cover Supervisor.

6.5 The record of staff training was received and noted.

7. Budget and related items

7.1 Governors' received the Budget Estimated Outcome. The estimated carry forward of £11,015 deficit was in contrast to the budget figure of a deficit of £50,000. This improvement had been achieved through in-year prudence.

7.2 Governors received the Budget Mid-Year Plan

7.3 Budget Plan 2016-17. This was received by the Governors and the pertaining issues were covered in a presentation from Miss Upton:

Income

There had been a 2% (KS3) and 1.8% (KS4) increase in per pupil funding.

The Educational Support Grant (ESG) had dropped by £10 to £77 per pupil.

The Minimum Funding Guarantee had dropped from £56,806 to zero.

'Exceptional Circumstances' funding (relating to the relationship with the Leisure Centre) had increased from £27,191 to £35,596.

The TS grant would be £60k.

Expenditure

Teachers' Pension employers' contributions are expected to rise from 16.9% to 19% by 2020.

LGPS Pension contributions are expected to rise by 1% though an actuarial review is pending.

Teachers' pay award is anticipated as 1% and is expected to be the same in future years.

Support staff increase will be 1% (with variations) and there are implications for the graduated increase in the National Living Wage. (The potential impact on differentials had not been taken into account.)

Projected Pupil Numbers

These currently stand at 667 rising to 678 (October 16/17) and 680 (October 18/19). The entry is stable at 135.

2015-16 Outlook

This covered the position at this stage last year when the effect of increased expenditure on reserves was significant.

2016 -19 Outlook

Initially the 2016-17 position is better but then there is divergence from 2017-18 when the ESG will be gone. A new National Funding Forward is expected in 2018-19 and this may ease the situation – it is expected that any improvement will, however, be phased.

KPIs

Salary costs as a percentage of total expenditure stand in the low eighties. It would be better if this figure was lower but it should be noted that DHS employs its own cleaners and caterers whereas other schools use contractors. Average teaching costs higher than other schools due to experience of DHS staff.

Benchmarking

Benchmarking by M & A Partners uses figures from other academies. DHS appears around the average.

Summary of main points

Capitation for departments has remained the same.
The Head's reserve has been increased to fund potential costs relating to GCSE changes.
Staff complement has been maintained.
Planning Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time maintained.
Club payments maintained.
Budget set is realistic and attainable.

Year 10 Options

Only two Year 10 students are going to Otley next year (though there is a danger that the course may not run).
Class sizes have been maintained at a fair level.
Breadth of provision at GCSE has been broadly maintained.

Risks/Challenges

Lacking of certainty with regards to funding – new NFF.
LA control over education diminishing.
Loss of ESG – though as a TS, DHS could access this fund which is being delegated for School Support work.
Formation of a Multi Academy Trust.
Increasing costs.

Simplified Strategic Plan

Curriculum profile reflects KS4 changes (no need for a full curriculum review).
Staged MAT formation.
Review of funding.
Increasing costs partially offset by increased efficiency.

Summary Document with headline figures

2016-17 – projected surplus of £1,320.
Increase in funds largely down to pupil numbers.
Detail of Funds 1/2/3 provided.
Difference in CF/BF figures explained by the former being based on original budget not on Mrs Darby's estimates.

On the conclusion of the presentation various questions were asked:

- Mr Barker asked if it was worth extending the model to the point where reserves became less than £250k. Miss Upton felt that the introduction of the new NFF would mean that this would serve no real purpose at this point in time.
- It was confirmed that the large figure in the Transfer to Capital category related to the Salix Loan.

- Mr Green asked about the accounting process for the Teaching School grant. Miss Upton confirmed that this would be done carefully in line with DfE accounting criteria. Miss Upton also confirmed that there was no carry forward for the TS Grant and that it was possible to spend more on TS activities if DHS so wished.

Mrs Driver proffered the Governors' thanks to Mrs Darby and Miss Knock for their diligence in reducing the potential end of year deficit and for their care in preparing financial information for Governors.

The Governors approved the 2016-17 budget.

8. Committees and Working Parties

8.1 The minutes of the Health and Safety Committee Meeting of 17th May 2016 were received by the Governors as were those of the Financial and General Purposes meeting of 17th June 2016. It was confirmed in the latter that new minibus would be an additional vehicle rather than a replacement.

8.2 Governor Visits.

Mrs Janson had enjoyed a successful visit to the SEN Department reviewing the progress of Year 9 and 10 students. PPIs had shown a positive view from the students and the work scrutiny had shown real progress. Mrs Janson had also observed a Year 8 PSHE lesson where students had made good presentations had had been respectful and constructive in their attitudes to each other. Parental surveys had shown strong support for the work of the department. In the future the department is looking to maximise TA support and to increase parental engagement.

Mr Barker had visited the IT Department and had taken part in PPIs (very positive) and a lesson observation. He noted evident improvement from last year and commented on the debate over homework in this subject and the move away from ICT to Computing. Generally, he felt that the review had been excellent. Miss Upton observed that It was a subject where it was quite difficult to set homework and agreed that the demise of ICT in favour of Computing was a good thing in the light of GCSE subject changes.

9. Policies

9.1 Mrs Ramsay reviewed the SEND Information Report which Governors approved with minor amendments. It was noted that all Year 11 students leave DHS with future provision carefully planned and that the report had been reviewed by the School Improvement Partner.

9.2 The DHS Safeguarding Policy was reviewed by Mrs Ramsay. She highlighted several adjustments in anticipation of changes indicated in the draft government policy that had been produced following the recent consultation. These covered areas such as terminology, roles, time limits for training, the prevent agenda, procedures, the duty to report to Governors and various current issues. Mrs Driver asked about the managing of allegations against Governors – this would initially be Miss Upton's responsibility. She also asked to whom the annual questionnaire was directed. Mrs Ramsay said that this was intended for children. Minor matters of formatting and consistency were also noted.

9.3 The only major change to the E-Safety Policy related to filtering. Some terminology had also been changed. As the E-Safety Policy had not been included in the Governors' meeting pack Mr Martin would e-mail this for any Governors to look at further.

9.4 Equalities Policy. Aside from the need to tighten up terminology and some typos in what was a radically different policy, Governors noted that the Action Plan had already been reviewed and suggested that Language Leaders be included amongst the potential role models. It was also agreed that the word 'hopes' should be removed from the last sentence in section 5.3. With these changes inserted this policy was approved by Governors.

9.5 DHS Policy for Supporting Students with Medical Needs. This had been substantially rewritten in the light of its review by the School Improvement Partner. It requires annual review. Governors felt that

Section 4.8 on unacceptable practices needed to be more individualised and there needed to be greater clarification in Section 4.3 on the staff right to refuse to administer medication. Other minor changes were recommended.

10. Any Other Business

- Miss Upton tabled a short paper relating to a proposed visit to Namibia in 2018 for students currently in Year 9. Mr Grover asked whether this might impact on the viability of other trips; it was felt not as the importance of individual and group fund raising was key to the whole enterprise. After clarification regarding insurance, and an assurance that there would be post-visit feedback to Governors, the trip was approved.
- A question was raised regarding the imminent trip to Berlin in the light of current security issues. Miss Upton assured Governors that DHS followed Foreign Office advice.
- Miss Upton informed the meeting that the Government was creating a national database of Governors – inclusion is, apparently, to be compulsory.
- Mrs Driver thanked Mrs Wnukoski for her work in reprographics and in support of Governors’ meetings.
- Mr Carruthers reminded Governors of the Trust Meeting the following day and of the Awards Evening and the Art & Design exhibition.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 4th October 2016 at 5.00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.27 pm.

Signed: Chairman Date: 4th October 2016