



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 March 2019 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Mr R Barker		Mr C Grover
Mr D Carruthers	Chairman	Mrs S Janson
Mrs M Carter		Mr D McMillan
Mr P Debenham		Dr W Thomas
Mrs C Driver		Mr Mo Touman
Mrs S Edmond		Miss J Upton

In attendance:

Mr R Boulter	Trustee
Mr R Grimsey	Trustee
Mr S Martin	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs T Willmott	School Business Manager
Mr S Wright	Clerk to the Governors

1. Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Bishop Martin, Rev Bates, Dr D Egan, Ms Goodrich, Mrs Newman, Miss McBurney and Mrs Ramsay.
- 1.2 Governors consented to their absence.

2. Pecuniary and Other Interests

- 2.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.
- 2.2 There were no updates to the Register of Pecuniary Interests.

3. Chairman's Action

- 3.1 Changes to Governing Body membership

Mr Carruthers noted the following changes:

Mrs Edmond and Mr Touman were confirmed as Parent Governors.

Ms Goodrich is now a Foundation Governor.

Dr Marlow and Mr Ralph are no longer Governors.

The teaching staff had agreed that Mrs Newman and Mr McMillan remain as teaching staff governors.

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Headteacher: Miss J Upton BSc

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

Chairman of the Academy Trust: Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Chairman of Governors: Mr David Carruthers

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4. Minutes

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 4th December 2018 were approved as a true record of the Meeting and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Matters arising from the minutes.

5.2 Miss Upton said that DHS will could approach the LA for advice in preparation for Ofsted and noted that an increasing number of outstanding schools are to be sampled. There was some discussion in relation to Ofsted and Miss Upton informed Governors that the draft proposals for 2019 are currently being reviewed. Mr Carruthers said that, were there to be an inspection, Governors will be invited to meet the inspectors if they wished to do so.

7 Mr Carruthers had forwarded guidance on Progress 8 and Attainment 8 measures to new governors.

8.4 Representation letters had been signed and dispatched.

5. Academic Improvement

5.1 Head's Report

[Prior to the Head's Report there was a presentation from students Beth, Josh and Sally.

Beth reviewed *'Debenham's Got Talent'* which had taken place on the last day of the Autumn Term. There had been extensive involvement, especially from Year 11. The competition had been won by singers from Year 11 and Year 7. Sully spoke about charitable activity, focusing on Charities Week where £1k was raised for the MIND Foundation and the Blossom Appeal; it was noted that these charities had been chosen by students. Josh talked about a visit to the Theatre Royal in Norwich to see a modern dress version of *Romeo and Juliet*.]

Miss Upton reviewed her report highlighting the following areas:

Staffing

The new DT technician had resigned as it was mutually agreed that her skill set did not match requirements; other candidates for the post are being looked at again. Philippa Samuels has been appointed Head of Year 7 to cover maternity leave – the teaching aspect of the role (History) is being covered by school staff in the first instance and an appointment will be made for September. Miss Upton also noted that the salaried route for teacher training is likely to end.

January Training Day

This had focused on boys' learning and closing the gap between boys' and girls' achievement.

Teaching School

Miss Upton reviewed the funding possibilities and Continuous Professional Development opportunities. DHS had been delighted with the interest in the Equality and Diversity Leadership Programme. It was noted that applications to the DfE Curriculum Fund are more suited to MATs.

National Leaders in Education (NLE)

There had been a number of requests for other schools to visit DHS following the publication of results.

Suffolk Peer Review

The four schools involved are creating strong links.

Church of England Links

Miss Upton thanked those involved in DHS achieving the RE Gold Quality Mark – particularly David Yaroslaw.

Slingerbos and Levant School, Holland

Miss Upton said that DBS stipulations regarding host families in foreign exchanges could end this type of visit.

Activities

Miss Upton noted that the CPR training for Year 7 had been really successful and commended the involvement of students in every aspect of the production of *The Little Shop of Horrors*.

In discussion following Miss Upton's comments, the following points were discussed:

Mr Touman asked what parents can do to encourage boys in their studies. Miss Upton felt it was important to set boundaries, to avoid gender stereotypes and to provide boys with positive role models (both male and female). She noted that the Year 7 and 8 Parents' Evenings had covered the issue of social media and device usage in the previous academic year and that she would consider doing this again for current Year 7 parents and carers.

Action Miss Upton

It was noted (in Appendix 2) that there was a new safeguarding category of Children of Parents in Prison or in the Legal System. DHS is currently looking for support for the three students who fall under this category.

Mrs Edmond sought clarity regarding the exclusion of Year 7 students; Mrs Upton said it involved three exclusions for two students. These students had been seen by Governors and were being cared for within the pastoral support programme. Miss Upton said that DHS would do its best to prevent inaccurate rumours being spread about these students.

Miss Upton confirmed that every endeavour had been made to encourage parents to keep children at the school where a desire to home school had been suggested.

5.2 Inspection dashboard

This covered validated data for 2018 GCSE results. Miss Upton said that DHS was very happy with these outcomes.

Areas to investigate

These were for the most part positive; the only area where DHS fell short being in the take up of the E-Bacc (45%). The target set for 2022 is 75%. Miss Upton repeated the point made on previous occasions that DHS, rather than being constrained by the stipulations of the E-Bacc, sought what was best for each individual student. The area where the school fell short was in language take up at KS4. DHS has focused on broadening and strengthening language provision at KS3 in order to secure the offer of Spanish at KS4. She noted that most schools had received a similar action point. Mrs Edmond and Mr Touman wondered if DHS should be offering lessons in Chinese.

Mr Grover asked about the reference to Fixed Term Exclusions for boys (in Bullet Point 4). Miss Upton said that this was a relatively small cohort, but that the situation was being monitored.

5.3 Year 11 Data

This included the outcomes of trial examinations that had taken place at the end of the Autumn Term and had been benchmarked against last year's results. Teachers had been asked not to be over optimistic.

The outlook was felt to be positive with only a limited number of students achieving a progress score less than zero.

In discussion the following points were raised:

- Mrs Driver asked about those subjects with negative scores. Miss Upton dealt with these in terms of individuals within the subject cohort where targeted support is being provided.
- Mr McMillan asked if there could be comparators to previous data included on the sheet. Miss Upton felt that this should be possible and said that she would look into it.

Action Miss Upton

- Mr Touman asked if figures could be graphically represented but Miss Upton felt that this might prove misleading.
- Mrs Carter sought clarification of any crossover between disadvantaged and SEND students.

5.4 DHS Self-Evaluation Form

This was reviewed and the following points were made:

- Mr Boulter asked that a figure be added for staff turnover.
- Mr Carruthers said that he and Mr Grover were shortly to examine the Single Central Register.
- Dr Thomas asked about the status of those items covered under *Further Developments*. Miss Upton said that these are covered more fully in the School Development Plan.

5.5 Leading Edge Visit

This was received and its positive content noted by Governors.

5.6 Prayer Space and the Farmington Scholarship

This item was taken by way of a presentation by Martin Cobbold – recently appointed Head of RE.

Prayer Space

This had taken place in the first week of the Spring Term for Years 7 & 8 and had involved various prayer stations and places to reflect set up in the Boulter Room. It had been run by The Forge Church. Mr Cobbold described a number of the activities and, in response to questions from Governors, explained how the various concepts had been introduced to the students. Mrs Driver ascertained from Mr Cobbold that this particular activity was in its third year; she also felt it would really have benefited Year 11 students. Reverend Bates had also been involved and Mr Carruthers said he would make sure that Governors were invited to attend next year.

Action Mr Carruthers

Farmington Scholarship

This is a scholarship offered by Harris-Manchester College at the University of Oxford which is intended to enable groups of teachers to take time out of school to undertake activities that will support RE teaching in schools. Martin's group is only the second to have won this prestigious award which is being used to aid resource development – particularly online – for coaching of RE teachers and in supporting the organisation of educational trips.

[After Martin had left Mr McMillan asked that, in the future, items involving members of staff should be as early as possible in the agenda to avoid them having to wait too long to join the meeting.]

Action Mr Carruthers/Mr Wright

6. Safeguarding

It was agreed that any safeguarding issues had been covered in the Head's Report. Safeguarding training is to be undertaken by new Governors. Mr Grover will complete the Safeguarding Audit shortly.

7. Budget and related items

7.1 Current budgetary position

Mrs Willmott took this item relating to the budgetary position to the end of December. She made the following points:

The forecast for the full year is for a deficit of £26k

Income

Some funding is not yet finalised (Pupil Premium/Activities)
Income is expected to be £65k above budget.

Expenditure

This is forecast to be £77k over budget (£37k of which relates to Teaching School expenditure).

Reserves

The forecast is for these to stand at £585k at the end of the year - £37k above budget.
Any in-year deficit relates to the timings of capital payment.

7.2 CIF Projects

- The extension project is now complete.
- The fencing project is underway.
- The catering pod will be begun in the February half term.

Mr Touman asked if there were any plans to develop the Learning Resource Centre. Miss Upton said that there were no such plans (or funds) at the moment.

Mr Carruthers noted the changes to the DfE Risk Protection Arrangements (RPA) and was assured that the policy with Zurich insurance had been adjusted to take account of this.

8. Committee and Working Parties

8.1 Admissions Committee

The Committee had checked that applications had been ranked according to the DHS admissions' criteria. This is done before choices are known.

8.2 School visit reports

These were received by Governors.

9 Policies

9.1 Supporting Students with Medical Needs

Most of the policy remained as was with updates to Appendix C. Mrs Edmond asked about the use of out-of-date EpiPens; Mr Martin said the school had sought GP advice and had been instructed not to use these. It was felt that references throughout to 'always' involving students should be adjusted to 'if applicable'.

Action Mrs Ramsay

Mr Touman asked if school staff administer medicines. This is only done in extreme circumstances – their role is mainly to support and encourage students in self-administration. Some staff have been trained in EpiPen use.

The policy was approved by Governors.

9.2 Staff Sickness Absence

Mr Green suggested that the word staff be inserted before Sickness Absence in the title. Other minor typographical errors were noted.

Action Miss Upton

9.3 Educational Visits

It was noted that there may be a need to revisit this policy after Brexit and that insurance costs may also go up.

10. Governor Training

10.1 Governor Skills Audit

In reviewing this Mr Carruthers noted that the weakest areas of gubernatorial understanding related to Government Policy and Human Resources.

Mr Touman asked if there was an impact of these areas of weakness on decision making. Mr Carruthers said that it helped him to decide on committee membership. Mr Martin noted that weaknesses in some areas were often matched by strengths elsewhere. Miss Upton observed that Ofsted would expect Governors to be self-critical and that it helped with forward planning. Mrs Driver concurred.

10. Any other business

- Mr Wright will chase NGA re updated membership details.

Action Mr Wright

- There was discussion about use of the DHS e-mail system and how the decision to move to this was taken. Mr Barker felt that Governors should have been consulted in more depth. Various details of the arrangements were looked at.

- It was not possible for Governors to access Wi-Fi in the Boulter Room.

9. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 14th May 2019 at 5.00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

Signed: Chairman Date: 14th May 2019

Unapproved