



Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



Full Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 14th May 2019 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Mr R Barker		Mr T Green
Rev S Bates		Mr C Grover
Mrs C Bosley		Mrs S Janson
Mr D Carruthers	Chairman	Mr D McMillan
Mrs M Carter		Mrs J Newman
Mr P Debenham		Dr W Thomas
Mrs C Driver		Mr M Touman
Mrs S Edmond		Miss J Upton

In attendance:

Mr R Grimsey	Trustee
Mr S Martin	Deputy Headteacher
Miss S McBurney	Assistant Head
Mrs L Ramsay	Assistant Head
Mrs T Willmott	School Business Manager
Mr S Wright	Clerk to the Governors

The meeting was preceded by a prayer.

1. Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Bishop Martin, Dr D Egan, Ms S Goodrich,
- 1.2 Governors consented to their absence.

2. Pecuniary and Other Interests

- 2.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest. Mrs Willmott asked for outstanding declarations of financial interests to be passed to her.
- 2.2 There were no updates to the Register of Pecuniary Interests.

3. Chairman's Action

Mr Carruthers welcomed Mrs Bosley and Mrs Edmond to their first (official) meeting.

- 3.1 Trustee and Governor Membership

Mr Carruthers noted the following:

Gracechurch Street, Debenham, Suffolk IP14 6BL

Tel 01728 860213 Fax 01728 860998 Email office@debenhamhigh.co.uk Website www.debenhamhigh.co.uk

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

Debenham High School is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company No. 07467445

- Mr John Cox had been appointed as a Trustee.
- Mr Debenham has been reappointed as an LA Governor

A revised GO2 had been circulated and it was noted that Mrs Edmond did not undertake the Faculty Review as stated. It was decided, in future, simply to give the dates of the reviews without the names of Governors as these could change. GO2 was approved by Governors.

3.2 Revised Governor Handbook

Mr Carruthers asked Governors to read through this as there had been a significant number of changes.

3.3 Skills Audit

Mr Carruthers reviewed this and, whilst there were some red areas in the RAG rating, these were not thought to be significant. The audit is to help to focus Governor strengths in the right areas and provide a guide for training.

4. Minutes

4.1 It was noted that Mr Green had attended the meeting held on Tuesday 5th February 2019 and, after a minor amendment, the minutes were approved by Governors and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Matters arising from the minutes.

5.1 Under the section on activities, Miss Upton said that the biennial meeting for Year 7 and 8 Parents would include mental well-being, e-safety and learning strategies as well as device usage and social media.

5.3 Previous comparative figures had been included in the Year 11 data sheet.

5.6 Governor attendance at Prayer Space events would be facilitated by the fact that a diary of school events would be sent to Governors at the start of the academic year.

Action Mr Wright/Miss Upton

Mr Carruthers would ensure that agenda items involving teachers are dealt with as early as possible in the meeting.

9.1 Adjustments had been made to the Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy.

9.2 Adjustments had been made to the Supporting Staff Sickness Absence Policy.

10 All Governors were now registered with the NGA except Mrs Bosley.

5. Academic Improvement

5.1 Head's Report

Miss Upton reviewed her report highlighting the following areas:

Staffing

Miss Upton wished to record her thanks to the departing Nicola Coe and Jo Newman for their commitment, care for students, and effective teaching and leadership. Whilst Mrs Coe will leave at Easter, her replacement had been recruited for September. Mrs Coe's lessons will be covered internally for the remainder of the year. Mr Carruthers echoed Miss Upton's sentiments.

There had been some difficult situations regarding staff absence. DHS was supporting the individuals concerned.

Teaching School (TS) Update

The Primary Mathematics SSIF funded project had been completed.

It was noted that TS funding ends in 2020. TS Hubs will replace Teaching Schools, but it was felt that it would not be possible for DHS to lead one of these given their size and the commitment involved – though the school would like to be associated with one. Miss McBurney said that the detailed arrangements for the TS Hubs had been delayed but it was likely that there would only be two in Suffolk. Mr Green checked that TS funding ran from April to April.

NLE

Miss Upton noted the support she was providing for other schools.

Staff CPD

Miss Upton referred to an excellent twilight session run by Matt Levett regarding the world in which our children live today. Mr Touman asked if Governors could access materials from this session but there were no documents available.

Appendices – Elected Home Education

Miss Upton made the point that, where parents elected to home-school their children, this was never with the support of the school and that best efforts were made to dissuade them.

Appendices – Alternative Provision/Managed Move

Mr Green asked how many managed moves there were. Miss Upton said that there were one or two a year into DHS but never when the Year Group was full. Careful support was given to the student involved and it was noted that, even when the move failed, parents were very appreciative of the DHS approach. There had only been one managed move out of DHS.

Appendices – attendance

Mrs Janson noted that attendance figures were very good.

5.2 Year 11 final predicted data

This was reviewed. Miss McBurney said that previous data was now included (see above) and that this information is not available for parents. Staff are inevitably cautious at this stage and the Progress 8 measure can only be an estimate at this stage. It was noted that there was probably an error on the Progress 8 measure for History. Mr Green asked about the fall in predicted outcomes for disadvantaged children but Miss McBurney said that it is difficult to compare Years and the fact that one student would leave DHS with no qualifications had skewed outcomes.

5.3 EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) guidance on being an evidence-informed school governor.

These guidelines are relatively new and had been referenced in TS activities and in Miss Upton's work with the NLE. Miss Upton said that a recent internal audit had focused on Governance and auditors had asked about Governor monitoring of school activities. Mr Carruthers noted that the EEF is part-funded by the Government.

Mr Touman asked about the monitoring of effective teaching and whether we should have more detail than the statistics received. Miss Upton made reference to governor attendance at departmental

reviews and their perusal of post-GCSE meeting records as well as Pupil Premium data to show that Governors were robust in this. Mr Carruthers also pointed out that few Governors were educationalists and should therefore be somewhat wary of making definitive judgements in this regard.

5.4 Governor Key Question Document

This was reviewed (something similar was last used four years ago) and its revival stemmed from the Curriculum Committee Meeting where a similar approach had been adopted with success. It was suggested that, at future Governor Meetings, sections would be taken from the document for Governors to discuss as a rolling programme. Mr Green asked as to the source of the questions; they originate from Ofsted/NGA/EEF. He also felt that certain areas could be delegated to Governor Committees or individuals. Mr Carruthers felt that this was a possibility. Mr Carruthers asked Governors to let him know which area(s) they would like to cover at the next meeting.

Action All Governors

6. Safeguarding

Governors reviewed the Safeguarding Audit. It was agreed that, generally, any safeguarding issues had been covered in the Head's Report. It was noted that the audit contained a choice of four statements under each heading which then had to be supported by evidence. Areas where some improvement is needed are:

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – online training to be undertaken.
- Safer Recruitment – some training needs to be updated.
- Single Central Register (SCR) – it had been decided that Mr Carruthers and Mr Grover should join Mrs Ramsay and Mrs Willmott when reviewing this. Mrs Willmott is undertaking SCR update training.

It was noted that the PSHE curriculum and SIAMS designation supports Safeguarding. Mrs Ramsay thanked Mr Grover for his work on the audit and he said that it had been positive in terms of outcomes but that there was no complacency.

Mrs Carter asked about a particular case relating to gender identity. Mrs Ramsay said that sex and sexuality were dealt with in the PSHE programme at the appropriate age. Mrs Carter said that the incident referred to had caused concern and confusion to other students. Mrs Ramsay thanked Mrs Carter for raising this issue and said that in future the school will look to have more support/information available for the wider community, whilst still respecting the individual's wishes. It was noted that separate facilities (e.g. changing) are offered to those children who wish to change gender. It was recognised that parents might need more information and support also.

New Governors will need Safeguarding Training – Mrs Ramsay will check and organise. She would also look to provide an update on Prevent Training.

Action Mrs Ramsay.

Mr Carruthers will undertake Safer Recruitment Training – Mr Green will forward details of an online course.

7. Budget and related items

7.1 Current budgetary position

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

Income

- No significant change
- Income in line with budget.
- Teachers Pay Award Grant had been extended to August.
- Timings with TS funding had skewed some figures.
- Higher Tariff Needs funding had been delayed but DHS had received most of what had been claimed.

Expenditure

- This is as budgeted in the core areas.
- There were slight overspends in Teachers' Additional Expenditure and Premises.
- £45k overspend relates to timings of TS funding.

Overall

- There was now a projected £24k deficit rather than a £3k surplus – Though HTN funding will offset this.
- March submission to the DfE had been made.
- Governors will see the February balance sheet as is now required.

Reserves

The forecast is for these to stand at £586k at the end of the year - £38k above budget.

7.2 CIF Projects

- The fencing is now complete and the final account is being prepared (changes are still to be made to the location of the bolts). Rev Bates noted that the fencing had not been completed properly at the far end of the school field behind the hedge. This will be looked into.

Action Miss Upton

- The catering pod is in place and a canopy has been situated where the students will queue.

7.3 Potential development of Sports Facilities

Mrs Upton felt that this had been a neglected area in recent years and she is looking to work with the Leisure Centre to identify potential sources of funding to improve these.

8. Committee and Working Parties

8.1 FGP Minutes of Friday 15th March 2019

These were received by Governors without comment

8.2 Curriculum Working Party Tuesday 19th March 2019

These were received by Governors without Comment. Mr Carruthers noted the rather sparse attendance at the meeting.

8.3 Governor Visit Reports

Two reports were received.

9 Policies

9.1 Attendance Policy

Various changes had been made:

- Clarity as to the fact that parents cannot authorise absence.
- A medical professional (rather than GP) to authorise return to school.
- Family holidays in term time down to 5 from 10 days maximum.
- Reference is now made to the Virtual School and the Alternative Tuition Service in EOTAS. The Assistant Head will approve any alternative provision and it will be reviewed regularly.

There were other minor changes

Mr Carruthers asked about requests for holidays in term time. There are quite a few of these and some are permitted as this helps to promote parental honesty. DHS does not fine parents.

Mr Green asked about the official definition of 'regular attendance' – this needs to be >96% to satisfy Ofsted. At DHS a student's attendance is highlighted when it falls to 95% and chased more directly when it falls to 90%. Mr Green also asked about Performance Licences and it was confirmed that there were a fair number of these.

9.2 Drugs Education Policy

Those changes that had been made to this were to make sure it matched the Positive Management of Behaviour Policy. The following points were made:

- Mr Green asked if the stipulation that a student 'will' be permanently excluded if found dealing drugs in school needed to quite so black and white. Mr Martin felt that this was necessary. Students are aware of this.
- Mr Carruthers asked about the requirement to discuss drugs issues with the Chair of Governors. Mr Martin felt that this was necessary as the Head has to discuss any potential permanent exclusion with the Chair.
- Mr Grover noted that differences between Sections 7 & 8 related to whether the individual was involved in carrying/using drugs or supplying.
- Mr Green said that the latest DfE Policy says that, whilst there has to be a re-integration meeting after an exclusion for drugs offences, there can be no conditions attached to a student's return. Mr Martin said that he will check this.

Action Mr Martin

9.3 Mission Statement

Mr Carruthers said that it was no longer a requirement for a school to have a Mission Statement and that he felt that, as DHS' values and vision are in the prospectus and on the website such a document is no longer necessary. Governors agreed.

10. Any other business

- Mrs Edmond asked for new governors to be issued with a Governor badge. Miss Willmott will arrange.

Action Miss Willmott

- E-mails – the situation is developing.
- Year 7 entry for September 2019 is full (140) with 21 appeals.

9. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 2nd July 2019 at 5.00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.56pm.

Signed: Chairman Date: 2nd July 2019

Unapproved