



Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



Minutes of the meeting of the Members of the Academy Trust

Wednesday 3rd July 2019 at 9.30am

Debenham High School

Present:	Rt Revd Martin Seeley	Chairman
	Mr R Boulter	
	Mr D Carruthers	Chairman of Governors
	Mr J Cox	
	Mr R Grimsey	
	Mr N Serjeant	
In attendance:	Miss J Upton	Headteacher
	Mrs S Wright	Clerk

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies

2. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 4th July 2018 and Tuesday 5th February 2019

The minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 4th July 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Report from Chairman of Governors to Members of the Trust

Mr Carruthers stressed the admirable performance of the school in 2018-19 – building on the success of previous years.

Governing Body membership

- At the last Trust meeting Mr Carruthers had highlighted issues of continuity of membership but these have now been addressed.
- The Governing Body is now fully staffed.
- There are three new Parent Governors.
- Mrs Newman will be resigning as Teaching Staff Governor at the end of July 2019.
- Mrs Bosley had been appointed as Support Staff Governor.
- Dr Marlow finished his term of service in December 2019. His place as a Foundation Governor has been taken by Ms Goodrich.

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

- Mr Green has finished his term of service but will remain on the Governing Body for a further year.
- Mr Cox has replaced Mrs Brown as a Trustee.

Mr Cox asked about the range of skills in the Governing Body. Mr Carruthers said that this was fairly comprehensive but perhaps lacking in the areas of infrastructure and building management. He also observed that it was quite difficult to manage appointments in this regard as there was direct control over only four appointments. The Bishop asked if it were possible for the Diocese to help in this regard with its appointees; it was agreed that it was. Mr Carruthers pointed out that the Governors' skills matrix was reviewed regularly – this enabled Governors' strengths to be used appropriately. Miss Upton felt that there possibly ought to be more representation from other educational sectors.

The Bishop asked about attendance and if there was a 'three strikes and out' rule; there is not.

Staffing

This item was taken by Miss Upton who made the following points:

- A Maths Instructor had been appointed at the start of the year but had only lasted for the term and had left in January. A qualified teacher has been appointed as replacement.
- The Head of Year 7 is on maternity leave. A replacement for her pastoral role has been arranged internally and, for her teaching, a temporary maternity cover appointment has been made.
- The DT technician left and was replaced. Unfortunately, the replacement then left and was herself replaced in March.
- Ms Newman is leaving at the end of the year after serving as Head of Art/DT for ten years. She has been replaced by Ms Carr as faculty lead (current Head of Art). A DT teacher has been appointed on a temporary basis for one year.
- Mrs Coe (Head of Maths) is leaving to be Director of the Norfolk/Suffolk Maths Hub run by the Maths Inspiration Trust. She left at Summer half term after finishing her Year 11 teaching. An appointment has been made – a teacher from Farlingaye chosen from a strong field.
- The position of Ms Goodwin (a temporary NQT English Teacher appointed last year) has been made permanent.
- Ms Scrivener has been appointed to take charge of Reprographics.
- A Teaching Assistant appointed mid-year to get DHS up to quota.
- Three Graduate Intern appointments have been made for September.
- Five trainee teachers have been taking on for September in a variety of subjects. Having trainees is helpful for future appointments.
- A member of staff lost a family member and had been given time off with a phased return to work. In response to a question Miss Upton said that the school uses a well-being provider to offer counselling etc. for staff. Rev Bates is also very useful in her pastoral support of staff.
- Mr Boulter asked if this pattern of departure and recruitment was usual. Miss Upton confirmed that it was. She pointed out that national statistics show the half of teachers leave the profession in the first five years. DHS, nevertheless, has a full complement of qualified staff.

Results

Mr Carruthers made the following points:

- 2018 Progress 8 measure for disadvantaged students was 0.71 as against 0.73 for the whole cohort. This closing of the gap between these two groups is pleasing. The overall Progress 8 measure places DHS in the top 13% nationally.

- The Assessment 8 of 58.4 compares favourably with a LA average of 45.5, and a national average of 46.5.
- The fact that 76% of students achieved above Grade 5 in English and Maths placed DHS third in East Anglia (including independent schools).
- DHS is in the top ten nationally for C of E schools without a Sixth Form.
- The English Baccalaureate (EB) score of 37% was low but this is because DHS does not constrain student choice in line with EB requirements. The fact that Spanish is now being offered in Years 7, 8 and 9 will probably lead to a greater take up of languages at GCSE – and hence a higher EB score. Miss Upton agreed with Mr Cox when he observed that there is a tension between the provisions of the EB and DHS values. It was noted that a high EB score is necessary for any application to be a Teaching School Hub.

Attendance

DHS attendance (May) was 95.9%. This is improved from the previous year and is above the national average.

Admissions

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for DHS stands at 125 but an admission number of 140 has been agreed for September 2019. There were 14 appeals of which one was successful. Miss Upton opined that it may be that, in the future, DHS needs to look at six forms of entry, rather than five – but only if sustainable.

The Bishop asked about the demographic. Miss Upton said that for the September 2019 entry there was a larger number of in-catchment applicants (and more in the faith category also). The number of siblings was high too - a situation that seemed likely to be repeated next year. The impact of local house-building plans remains unclear.

Infrastructure

Safeguarding needs meant that a new fence has been built around the site. Though there were some issues with the builders this was completed successfully.

A new catering hub has been created. It is to be hoped that this will ease congestion in the dining room, though it has required the employment of an extra member of the catering staff.

Teaching School (TS) Activity

The Primary School Maths project funded by Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) has been completed and efforts are being made to build on the work done.

Miss Upton continues to work with NLE (National Leaders of Education) through the aegis of the TS – currently with Stowupland HS And Wetheringsett PS.

DHS ran a course funded by the DFE Diversity and Equality Fund for women returning to school post-maternity. This was heavily over-subscribed and received very positive feedback. Current headteachers are being used to coach individuals in a range of schools (secondary, primary and special).

Two DHS staff won a Farmington Scholarship providing support for RE teachers. One related to supporting RE trips and the other to the building and delivery of the RE curriculum. Though there was a new Head of RE (Mr Cobbold), Mr Yaroslaw had led a successful application for the RE Quality Mark.

TS funding has been reduced to £40,000 per annum at end of cycle and will end entirely shortly. TS are being replaced by TS Hubs (a much bigger entity and not appropriate for DHS as it would require dedicated personnel). It is to be hoped that DHS will be connected to a future East Anglian Hub.

School Development Plan

- Work continues on the review of the curriculum and the development of a five-year programme (with an emphasis on breadth and impact). DHS is 'ahead of the OFSTED curve' in this regard.
- PSHE provision continues to embed with further development of a five year programme of study aimed at providing coherence.

5. Changes to the Governing Body

Covered in Item 4 above

6. Finance

The budget had been approved by Governors and envisages a surplus of £37k for 2019-20. The various unknowns (including the level of government funding for the Teachers' Pay Award and Pensions) make accurate forecasting difficult. The DFE now requires a 3-year budget plan without providing the information needed to make it a useful exercise. Current forecasts suggest that in five years DHS will have used reserves to the extent that they will fall below the minimum required level. It was noted that DHS looks two years ahead when undertaking financial planning and that, currently, the situation is manageable. It will be important for DHS to monitor future funding very carefully – ASCL is lobbying strongly. The following observations were made:

- DFE commitment to funding pension increases now seems to be more definite.
- A potential decrease in Higher Tariff Needs funding brings cause for concern (though DHS had been successful in its application this year).
- School has been forensic in its use of Pupil Premium (PP) funding.
- The National Funding Formula is still to be implemented fully – this should benefit DHS.
- The budgeting process had been undertaken with caution

7. Any other business

- Mr Cox asked about the new SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection framework, which gives a greater emphasis on 'Christian Ethos'. He asked how DHS was embedding this as some schools have dropped from outstanding in recent inspections. DHS was last inspected two years ago, and Miss Upton said that Carol Harman would be visiting to talk about the changes – hopefully current strengths will enable DHS to adjust accordingly. Mr Cox also noted the framework stresses the need for 'courageous advocacy'.
- Mr Boulter asked whether Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) are still being encouraged. Miss Upton said that they were but required at least five schools and 3000 students. The Bishop said that there could be potential links with North Ipswich (though developments here appear to be stalled at the moment), together with feeder primaries.

8. Date of next Meeting

Tuesday 4th February 2020 at 4.30pm – AGM

Signed: _____ **Chairman** **Date:** _____

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 10.48 am