



# Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



## Full Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Mr D Carruthers	Chairman	Mr D McMillan
Mr P Debenham		Dr H Marlow
Mrs C Driver		Mrs J Newman
Mr T Green		Mr R Stevenson
Mr C Grover		Miss J Upton
Mrs S Janson		

In attendance:

Miss S McBurney	Assistant Headteacher
Mr S Martin	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs L Ramsay	Assistant 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 Mrs J Brown, Dr D Egan, Rev M Lamb, Mr D Ralph, Rt. Revd. M Seeley and Dr W Thomas.

Dr Marlow arrived during Item 6.4.

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

#### Governors' Disciplinary Committee

Mr Carruthers made reference to two recent exclusions – one Fixed Term and one Permanent – relating to alleged substance misuse. As a consequence the Disciplinary Committee had sat twice. The Permanent Exclusion had been upheld but the parents had (belatedly) made an appeal to an Independent Review Panel (IRP). After consideration it had been decided to use the LA services for this. The IRP will need to sit before Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July. The parents have also asked for the services of a SEN expert. Mr McMillan asked for clarification of the options available to the IRP; they can uphold, recommend that the Governing Body reconsiders its decision, quash the decision and direct that the Governing Body considers the exclusion again. Ms Goodrich noted that the threshold for any challenge to the Governing Body decision was high.

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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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In relation to the Fixed Term Exclusion the student concerned had been allowed to attend revision sessions and to take GCSEs. Miss Upton had been approached by the press regarding this incident.

#### Meeting with Jane Sheet (Diocesan Director of Education)

This had been an exploratory meeting that had been prompted by the Ipswich Garden Suburb development that is to be sited in the region of Henley and Witnesham. This is to include three primary schools and a secondary school (possibly with a Sixth Form). Bishop Martin would like the Secondary to be a Church of England school - though it would not join the Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). There is a concern that this could impact on DHS in terms of catchment and discussions are to take place with the Bishop at the imminent Trust Meeting. Mr Carruthers asked for approval to engage in further discussions with the Diocese which was agreed.

#### Miss Upton's Performance Management Interim Review

Mr Carruthers, Ms Goodrich and Sean O'Neill (School Improvement Partner) had undertaken Miss Upton's interim review. Mr O'Neill is about to retire and Mr Carruthers acknowledged the excellent support that he had given to DHS. Mr McMillan agreed and asked that Mr Carruthers write to Mr O'Neill to thank him.

#### **Action Mr Carruthers**

### **4. Governing Body Membership**

- 4.1 There had been no changes in membership since the last meeting but Mr Carruthers said that Rev. Susan Bates would join the Governing Body (ex officio) after her licencing on 6<sup>th</sup> July. She will take over from Rev Mary Lamb.
- 4.2 The meeting schedule for 2017-18 was received and approved.

### **5. Minutes**

- 5.1 With the correction of one typographical error the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017 were accepted as a true record of that meeting.
- 5.2 Matters arising from the minutes.
  - 3 Mr Debenham felt that the Governing Body had not had chance fully to discuss the appointment of the new co-opted Governor. Mr Carruthers agreed that this opportunity should have been afforded to Governors but noted that he had e-mailed the Governors about this before the meeting.
  - 3 The student whose parents had made a complaint has been removed, by his parents, from the school.
  - 5.1 Mrs Newman will now be staying at DHS.
  - 5.5 Mr McMillan asked if the Governors should have voted on the implementation of changes in light of the Curriculum Review. Mr Carruthers felt that, as it was not a strategic decision, it was simply a case of Governors expressing their support for the move.
  - 9 Mr Carruthers asked for any outstanding returns for the revised Governor Matrix be forwarded to him as soon as possible. He will then collate. He will also update GO1 and GO2 in light of the recent changes in membership.

#### **Action Mr Carruthers**

## 6. Academic Improvement

### 6.1 Head Boy and Girl

Miss Upton introduced the new Head Boy and Girl together with their deputies.

Emily (Head Girl) reviewed the Year 7 Charity Week to raise funds for Water Aid. This had involved a loose change collection, a 'Star Wars' event, a cake sale, a CD/DVD/book sale, a basketball match and a non-uniform day, raising over £900. Bradley (Head Boy) talked about the upcoming performance of 'The Tempest' and noted that the main character of Prospero was to be played by a Year 8 girl. Helena (Deputy Head Girl) referred to the recent Sports' Day which had seen four records broken or equalled and with overall individual participation being acknowledged by the award of the Simon Croft trophy. Nelson were overall victors. Tom (Deputy Head Boy) looked back to the mock GCSE examinations that had taken place in March. He felt that the experience of examination conditions had been helpful both diagnostically and in refining technique.

Mrs Janson commented positively on the Charity Week and Mr Grover congratulated the team on their appointment and wished them luck for the coming year.

### 6.2 School Development Plan 2015-17

Miss Upton reminded the meeting that this was the last year of a three year plan and that activities for 2016-17 had been added. A RAG rating of outcomes had been undertaken and 'next steps' (in blue) had been created for 2017, which themselves would be included in the 2017-19 plan. Group foci had also been established (including more specific items related to Looked After Children (LAC), SEND and Disadvantaged students). The whole document is underpinned by Departmental Development Plans.

Mr Carruthers asked about those milestones that were labelled 'not yet met'. Miss Upton said that, in these cases, after review, another route to achieving the same outcomes had been found. Mr Carruthers advised that this process should be recorded in the plan in some way.

### 6.3 Year 10 Performance Data

This item was dealt with by Miss McBurney who pointed out that this was a much briefer document than had been presented to Governors previously (a new data-analysis tool had been used) but that it covered all the information necessary for Governors to discharge their responsibilities effectively. Mr Carruthers sought, and was given, clarification regarding the DHS dashboard. Miss McBurney said that the key figures were those in blue and that the Progress 8 target for DHS was +0.5 (currently +0.13) – though it was reminded that all P8 calculations are potentially spurious as they can only be calculated when the actual results data set are in for the whole country. The numerical grading changes this year make that figure particularly volatile. Mr Green asked if the gradings related to expected GCSE outcomes; Miss McBurney confirmed that they did. Mrs Driver observed that, at present, targets were not being met; Miss McBurney agreed but said that the situation will change over the coming year, particularly when there is genuine data with which to compare performance.

### 6.4 Summer 2017 Results (Ofqual Letter)

This letter presented a fairly bleak picture of expected GCSE outcomes nationally and Miss Upton, who is Chair of the ASCL (Association of School and College Leaders) Qualifications and Testing Committee, expanded on this by way of a presentation. She made the following points:

- Under the new grading system (9-1) there would be the capacity for greater differentiation in the top and middle ranges.
- Examination papers would be made more demanding by way of an increased number of questions, the style of questioning and the accessibility of questions.

- The overall grades will not be criterion-referenced but adjusted in relation to comparable outcomes to offset the 'saw-tooth effect' – a dip in grades generally occasioned by the introduction of new qualifications.
- Results would not be norm-referenced (related to the average ability of the cohort) but would be referenced to prior attainment.
- Such predictions will be based on KS2 and a National Reference Test (taken by a Year 11 sample) to ensure accuracy. DHS had been invited to take part in this test but had declined due to lack of space to administer. The tests will be taken each year until 2019-20.
- Examination boards can make a case to Ofqual for variation of gradings but this will probably only happen in minority subjects.
- As IGCSE is no longer a permitted qualification all students are undertaking the new GCSES.
- English Literature is being taken by an increasing number of students nationally to allow for the double counting of English Language in Attainment 8. At DHS ALL students take both.
- In the 9-1 grading system, grades 4 and 5 now equate to a pass grade with 4 being a 'standard pass' and 5 being a 'strong pass'. Grade 9 would be made up of approximately 20% of those achieving Grade 7+. The grade boundaries at 7 and 4 should be equivalent to those at A and C – though there is likely to be a different proportion of students gaining 5+.
- The indications are that there will be a clustering of marks in the middle grades meaning that grade boundaries are likely to be close together.
- There is not as much use of tiers in the new GCSEs but there are foundation and higher tiers in Maths.
- As there will still be legacy GCSEs a points equivalent has been established which will remain for three years: A\*- 8.5; C – 4.
- Attainment 8 levels are expected to fall with the biggest variation for C/B students.
- The review system has changed with students/schools able to access scripts before asking for a review of marking.
- Ofqual will endeavour to make sure employers are fully aware of the nature of changes.
- Progress 8 measures will not be available until the end of September 2017.

Mr Carruthers felt it would be useful if the East Anglia Daily Times published a guide to the new qualifications. Mr Green asked if the choice of examination board was important. – this is unclear but it should not be. Mr McMillan asked what would occur if results were not as good as previous years. Miss Upton said that comparison with national measures, and other schools, should show DHS in the correct light. Mr Grover/Miss Upton to contact East Anglian Daily Times regarding press coverage of the changes.

#### **Action Mr Grover/Miss Upton**

#### 6.5 ICT Security

This item was taken by reference to a paper written by Mr Hawkins. He summarised this and then took questions. Mr Grover asked if there was a danger of the network being compromised by a student with advanced IT skills – Mr Hawkins said that protecting the network was consistently a case of fire-fighting. He also noted that the LA filtering system was good. Mr Carruthers thanked Mr Hawkins for his presentation.

#### 6.6 Record of Staff Training 2016-17

This item was taken by way of a summary tabled by Mr Martin. He said that, rather than list the training undertaken, he had summarised it and highlighted the following points:

- Over 500 sessions had been undertaken.
- Legal requirements had been met.
- The new GCSEs and the examination structure had featured heavily in training.
- The Suffolk 'Festival of Learning' had been a success.
- Featured groups included Middle Leaders and NQTs.
- Support staff had also undertaken training.

Mrs Driver asked if any evaluation of training was undertaken; Mr Martin said that it was, but not in all cases. Mr Green asked if training provision is benchmarked against other schools. Mr Martin said that it is not and would be difficult as all schools' training needs are different. He did note, however, that the DHS budget for training is generous.

#### 6.7 Letter from Deputy Regional Schools' Commissioner

This was received and noted by Governors, as was the positive outcome following an intensive visit.

### 7. Budget and related items

#### 7.1 Budget Estimated Outturn 2016-17

Mrs Willmott reported on the 2016-17 report to the Educational Funding Agency (EFA) and made the following points:

- The figures had already been discussed in full by the Governors' FGP Committee.
- Income was £88k above budget, due mainly to Teaching School (TS) monies, increased Higher Tariff Needs (HTN) funding, and money for the minibus.
- The £12k extra expenditure is offset by related income.
- Capital project costs have increased by £100k - largely to fund the Food Technology refurbishment once the bid had failed.

#### 7.2 & Budget 2017-18 and Medium Term Plan

7.3

This item was taken by reference to the paper of the same name that had been circulated with the agenda.

#### 2017-18

With respect to 2017-18 Mrs Willmott made the following points:

##### Income

Income remains flat – slightly down on this year.  
Change in the profile of DHS in terms of deprivation had increased funding slightly.  
Education Services Grant funding had been reduced.  
Age-Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) is slightly up.  
Figures include TS income.

##### Expenditure

Staffing numbers remain at the same level  
Overall staff costs remain much the same as in 2017-18 (including 1% pay increase and increments).  
Capitation, ICT and maintenance budgets have been maintained at current levels.

Overall a small surplus is anticipated.

#### Medium Term Plan

Mrs Willmott made the point that any anticipated contribution to capital projects had not been accounted for in the figures.

In 2018-19 the previous year's small surplus becomes a slight deficit. The deficit rises sharply in 2019-20 as the sharp rises in employers' contribution to Teachers' Pensions and to the Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) take effect. Careful financial management over the next two years will enable

DHS to prepare for these increases. This situation may be exacerbated if the Government decides to remove the public sector pay cap.

Mr Carruthers agreed that financial caution would be necessary over the next two years but a lot would depend on the impact of the new National Funding Formula (NFF). The planned 2017-18 budget had been reviewed by the FGP and Mr Carruthers asked Governors to approve this. The 2017-18 budget was approved. Mr Carruthers also thanked Mrs Willmott for the timely DHS submission to the EFA despite her short time in office.

#### 7.4 Extension Project

Work on the new classroom block was underway and foundations had been laid to ground level. Progress is on line for an 8<sup>th</sup> December completion and Mrs Willmott said she was very pleased with the contractor Beardwells.

Work on the refurbishment of the Food Technology room will begin on 12<sup>th</sup> July.

### 8. Committees and Working Parties

#### 8.1 The minutes of the Health and Safety Committee Meeting of Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2017 were received and noted.

The minutes of the Financial and General Purposes Meeting of Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 were received and noted. Mr Grover asked about the point made in Item 5 relating to students joining Year 7 with high level needs. Miss Upton said this involved a small number of students with precise needs that would require extensive support.

#### 8.2 The report on mid-term admissions for 2016-17 was received and noted. The place offered to a Year 9 student on 6<sup>th</sup> June had now been accepted.

#### 8.3 Governor visits

Mrs Janson had taken part in the SEND review and reported a very pleasing outcome. She read extracts from parental responses which illustrated how happy they were with SEND provision and she felt that the dedication of the SEND team was reflected in the progress made by SEND students. She welcomed the use of Teaching Assistants (TAs) as key workers and thought the creation of a revision booklet was a welcome development.

Mr Debenham had taken part in the review of the English and Drama departments and had been impressed.

### 9. Policies

#### 9.1 SEND Information Report

Mrs Ramsay outlined the changes that had taken place including the use of TAs as key workers for SEND students, to act as student advocates and as their first point of contact. There will be a regular meeting for each student with their dedicated TA and he/she will be involved in the review of the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Those TAs involved had welcomed this new role. Mrs Janson asked that the new policy be better aligned with the Accessibility Plan – Mrs Ramsay said she would look at this.

#### **Action Mrs Ramsay**

The policy was approved by Governors.

#### 9.2 DHS E-Safety Policy

Mr Martin said that the only major change in this related to the regular monitoring of the internet filtering system (p12). Mr Carruthers pointed out that Mr Barker was now the E-Safety Governor (p3).

The policy was approved by Governors.

### 9.3 DHS Capability Procedure

This had been reviewed by Educational Personnel Management (EPM) and extensively rewritten – particularly with reference to the robustness of the Performance Management process. Mr Carruthers and Mr Green pointed some errors in cross-referencing after which the policy was approved by Governors.

### 9.4 DHS Disciplinary Procedures

Similarly, this had been extensively rewritten by EPM to distinguish between the informal and formal disciplinary procedure. Dr Marlow asked the title be amended to Staff Disciplinary Procedure to avoid any confusion.

## 10. Any Other Business

Dr Marlow had attended a course relating to student Disciplinary Procedure and made several points:

- Guidance from the DFE is to be amended in September.
- Any independent Review Panel (IRP) will base its judgement on whether procedures have been followed.
- The criteria for exclusion are quite precise and the phrase ‘and damage to others’ had been included.
- The Chairman of Governors should not sit on the Disciplinary Committee as he/she is likely to have discussed any incident with the Head Teacher.
- There should be more Governors on the school’s Disciplinary Committee.
- It is best to use the LA if an IRP is required.
- It is best to use an independent clerk from Schools’ Choice as they have legal training.
- Meeting records have to be signed.
- The LA representative and a disciplinary hearing can be invited either by the school or the parents.
- Great care has to be taken with vulnerable students
- IRP can ask school to explain any revisions to a school’s disciplinary policy.

Mr Carruthers said that DHS disciplinary processes will be reviewed in the light of recent disciplinary cases at DHS.

### Action Mr Carruthers

Mrs Janson had attended a SEND update that had been given subsequent to a recent OFSTED inspection of Suffolk SEND services.

## 11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 at 5.00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.22 pm.