



# Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



## Full Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Mr R Barker		Mr R Grimsey
Rev S Bates		Mrs S Janson
Mr R Boulter		Mr D McMillan
Mrs J Brown		Dr H Marlow
Mr D Carruthers	Chairman	Mr D Ralph
Mr P Debenham		Dr W Thomas
Mr T Green		Miss J Upton
Mr C Grover		

In attendance:

Miss S McBurney	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 Bishop Martin, Mrs C Driver, Dr D Egan, Ms S Goodrich, Mr S Martin, Mrs J Newman, Mrs L Ramsay and Mr R Stevenson.
- 1.2 Governors consented to their absence.

### 2. Pecuniary and Other Interests

- 2.1 Mr Ralph noted that his wife was employed by DHS.
- 2.2 There was nothing to update in the Register of Pecuniary Interests.

### 3. Chairman's Action

#### Vice Chairman

Mr Grover had offered his services and was subsequently elected nem con. Mr Ralph asked if Mr Grover became Chair of the FGP 'ex officio'. Mr Carruthers said that this practice had changed some time ago.

The Chairman noted that there had been no changes to the Governance Handbook and Competency Framework (January 2017) or to the Academies Financial Handbook (July 2017).

### 4. Minutes

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday November 17<sup>th</sup> 2017 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.
- 4.2 Matters arising from the minutes.

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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

Mr Barker asked if minutes should be distributed to Governors once drafted rather than with the papers for the next Full Governors' meeting. Mr Carruthers said that he would consider this.

#### **Action Mr Carruthers**

3.1 Mr Ralph asked about the proposed development site in Debenham opposite DHS. It was confirmed that an outline planning application had been submitted by Taylor Wimpey and that this was likely to be successful. The application is for 285 houses (of, as yet, unspecified type). The increase in the potential number of students close to the school would mean that students out of catchment would be less likely to be offered a place. Mr Ralph further suggested that the school write to the local council to ascertain if there would be any Section 106 monies available to the school or any other potential support for educational provision. Miss Upton said that she would raise the matter with Peter Mumford – the LA School Planning Officer - and it was suggested that Mr Ralph might approach Suffolk County Council member, Matthew Hicks.

#### **Action Miss Upton/Mr Ralph**

- 5.2 Miss Upton confirmed that details of the consultation on home-to-school transport arrangements had been sent to parents and Governors.
- 10.3 Governor visit forms are now being used. Miss Upton will continue to remind Governors to complete these forms.
- 10.4 The list of LA Governor courses had been circulated. Governors were asked to let both Mrs Willmott and Mr Wright know if they had booked themselves on a course.

#### **Action Governors**

- 11.4 It was confirmed that the school prospectus is available on the DHS website.
- 11.4 Mrs Willmott said that the school was not required to have a Best Value Statement.

### **5. Academic Improvement**

#### **5.1 Head's Report**

This item was taken by reference to Miss Upton's written report. She made the following additional points:

#### Staffing Update

- Susan Wilson had left her Graduate Intern role because she wished to be a primary, rather than a secondary, teacher. Hers was a supported move.
- Of the two ITT resignations one had been struggling but the other had shown promise.
- The member of staff on long-term absence is making a phased return.

#### January Training Day

The focus had been on marking and the effective use of teacher's time to make the greatest impact on student progress whilst being mindful of teacher well-being.

#### Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) application

This had been successful which represented a substantial achievement - there had been 75 successful applications nationally and DHS was one of only 6 that were successful in Suffolk. The money would be used to fund 6 Mathematics coaches across the Teaching School Alliance (TSA).

### Staff well-being

The school had engaged the services of the Education Support Partnership (ESP) to provide support for staff (including counselling). The cost to the school is £15 per head.

### Strategic Development meetings

The various meetings outlined in the Head's Report were aimed at gaining greater understanding of the current local and national educational agenda.

The Meeting with Helen Renfrew had confirmed that there was no time-pressure to move towards a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) though this issue was still on the horizon. There would be no more standalone academies.

The second meeting had discussed the implication of the creation of the Ipswich Garden Suburb (IGS). Northgate HS, being over-subscribed, did not see a new secondary school as competition other than at Sixth Form level. It was noted that, with Sixth Form funding per student being reduced close to that of KS3 students, class sizes were growing at post-16 - it therefore needs a large school to support a viable Sixth Form. The Diocese is keen to see greater diversity in Ipswich secondary schools and wishes for any new secondary to be a Church school. The attendees at the meeting agreed that they should keep in touch and Miss Upton asked for Governors' approval to maintain contact with interested parties with respect to the IGS development – Mr Carruthers thought that it would be vital to be aware of other bodies' intentions.

Dr Thomas asked if new schools in the IGS would be part of a MAT; Miss Upton confirmed that they would. He then asked if DHS could be involved in this MAT. Miss Upton explained that the nature of educational provision in the IGS would be decided by a form of LA 'competition'. It was possible (though unlikely) that there could be a Free School application and there was also a possibility that the Diocese be given first preference (though again this is unlikely). There could be a role for DHS were the Dioceses to look to DHS as a potential partner in any bid. Larger MATs may put in an application. It was noted that Northgate is not an academy. In response to Governor questions, Mr Carruthers agreed that there was no need for any action as yet and currently there was simply a need for a watching brief. Miss Upton said that she would discuss the IGS with Peter Mumford when she met him. Mr Ralph offered further assistance in this regard should it prove necessary.

### **Action Miss Upton/Mr Carruthers**

Governors agreed that current contacts and discussions should continue.

### Church School

Members of the School Council will address the next meeting.

### Building Project

Mr Debenham commented positively on the completed extension project where only snagging remained. He thanked Mrs Willmott for her hard work in this regard and advocated that a letter be sent to the contractors to compliment them for the quality of their work.

### **Action Mr Wright**

### Appendix 1 – Exclusions

Mr Grover asked if there had not been a significant increase in the number of exclusions since the last meeting. Miss Upton said that one incident accounted for most of these and it was expected that this would prove to be a one-off.

## 5.2 Data dashboard

These figures remain unvalidated. Miss Upton drew Governors' attention to the capacity to analyse Progress 8 performance over various cohorts.

## 5.3 Year 11 Data

Miss McBurney apologised for the delay in passing these figures to Governors but this had been so they could receive the most up-to-date information. She felt a Progress 8 measure of +0.46 was very positive at this stage as staff were understandably cautious – particularly when it came to predicting Grade 9s. It was important for DHS to aim for (and to achieve) a Progress 8 measure in excess of +0.5. Governors asked about the comparatively low Progress 8 measures in English and Science but were assured that these issues were being addressed and that figures were similar at the same stage last year. There are no figures for RE as this is a short course.

## 5.4 Leading Edge Visit Report

This had been conducted by Sue Haragdon and had been a positive experience. DHS had judged itself to be in the top two grades (Transforming/Embedding) in all categories and this had been confirmed by the visit.

## 6. Budget and related items

### 6.1 Report on current budgetary position

This item was taken in conjunction with a written commentary provided by Mrs Willmott which Governors felt to be very useful. She said that all was in line with expectations but made the following additional points:

- The current shortfall between actual and budgeted income should be made up with other funding. Other shortfalls in budget headings are largely related to timing issues.
- Overall expenditure has been reduced by savings made in teaching and support staff costs.
- The uncertainties of the National Funding Formula (NFF) and pension and NI increases are still live issues.
- The reduced funds in the closing figure for Revenue Reserves (£489k) related to the transfer of £260k to capital projects (of which £170k has already been paid). This has to be spent as a condition of the grant.

Mr Carruthers asked about the reduction in catering income in the light of increased staffing. Mrs Willmott said that after 4 years of increased sales these had levelled off. Costs were, however, being covered.

## 7. Committees and Working Parties

### 7.1 Finance and General Purposes Committee

The minutes of the meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> November were received by the Governors. It was noted that the FGP Committee had not yet had chance to review these. Mrs Janson wished to know if Mrs Scott was going to be kept on part time. Miss Upton confirmed that she was but that extra staff would be needed to take on her English teaching requirements.

### 7.2 Health and Safety Committee

The minutes of the meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> January were received. It was noted that the H&S Committee had not yet had chance to review these. Mr Carruthers asked if a fire drill had been undertaken since the extension had been brought into use. This was yet to take place but it had been confirmed that the fire

bells in the new build were operational (as opposed to the lesson change over bells which were not). There was some discussion relating to concerns over the East Anglian Ambulance Service.

### 7.3 Admissions Committee

The minutes of the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> January were received. Mr Boulter asked about numbers in feeder schools. Currently there are 142 students in Year 5 and 131 in Year 4. Miss Upton felt that numbers for 2018-19 Year 7 should be close to the 135 PAN as some students would have other schools as first choice. Mr Boulter asked that these figures should be included in any further information passed to Governors regarding admissions.

#### **Action Miss Upton**

### 7.4 Governor Visit Reports

Three Governor Visit Reports had been received from Mr Carruthers, Dr Marlow and the Reverend Bates.

## 8. Transport

The proposed changes to home-to-school transport arrangements would affect DHS to the extent that 65 in-catchment students in next year's cohort would not be offered free transport if the policy were to be approved (though it was recognised that other schools would be affected more severely). It was felt that the relatively minimal savings that would be made (£200k) did not warrant such a disruptive change and that other LA budgets could be more easily trimmed. It was not clear whether those 65 students would still attend DHS though research by another school suggested that most would – at least in the short term. The key area for DHS is Creting as Stowupland HS is nearer. If these students were to be lost, however, numbers might be made up from housing developments within Debenham itself. It was also noted that the building of the IGS would also be likely to affect the dynamics of local recruitment. Information disseminated by the LA appeared not to be balanced and press coverage about the changes had been fairly negative. Mr Boulter noted that Sixth Form transport was free only to the closest school; Mr Grimsey also asked if school buses were full – this varies. It was agreed that Miss Upton would continue to oppose the changes and that Governors would respond appropriately to any consultation requests that they might receive. Miss Upton will raise the issue with Matthew Hicks (County Councillor).

## 9. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Miss Upton said that DHS is currently developing its Data Protection Policy and Mrs Willmott will present an Action Plan to the May Full Governors' Meeting. The deadline for compliance is 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Mr Carruthers noted the need to appoint a Data Protection Officer.

#### **Action Mrs Willmott**

## 10. Governor Training

Details of LA training had been provided for Governors.

## 11. Any other business

### 11.1 Urgent business

- Miss Upton tabled a revised definition of the term 'ordinarily resident' to replace that currently in the Admissions Policy. This was because DHS had been asked to adjust this by the LA to include provision for those students who spend equal time at two or more addresses. Dr Thomas questioned the omission in the revised version of the sentence relating to an impending relocation. Mr Grover pointed out the need to make similar changes in Section 2.2 of the admissions' policy.

Mr Boulter asked that commanding officers should be added to those who could confirm the address of armed service personnel. With these changes in place Governors approved the revised paragraphs in the Admissions Policy.

- Mr Boulter asked if there is a need to extend the playing field before land to the rear of the school is built on. Miss Upton felt that there had been no real loss of playing field space.

**12. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May `2018 at 5.00 pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.46 pm.

Signed: ..... Chairman      Date: 8<sup>th</sup> May 2018