



Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



Full Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 3rd July 2018 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Mr R Barker		Mr C Grover
Rev S Bates		Mrs S Janson
Mr D Carruthers	Chairman	Dr H Marlow
Mr P Debenham		Mrs J Newman
Mrs C Driver		Dr W Thomas
Ms S Goodrich		Mr R Stevenson
Mr T Green		Miss J Upton

In attendance:

Mr S Martin	Deputy Headteacher
Miss S McBurney	Assistant 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 Bishop Martin, Mr R Boulter, Mrs J Brown, Dr D Egan, Mr D MacMillan, Dr H Marlow and Mr D Ralph.
- 1.2 Governors consented to their absence.

2. Pecuniary and Other Interests

- 2.1 No pecuniary interests were declared. It was noted that all Governors had completed the required returns relating to financial interests.
- 2.2 There were no updates to the register of pecuniary interests.

3. Chairman's Action

Mr Carruthers, in conjunction with the School Improvement Partner, Sue Hargadon, had conducted successful interim Performance Management Review for Miss Upton.

Mr Carruthers, Mr Grover and Miss Janson had attended a Local Authority Ofsted briefing which had been useful. Reference had been made to the length of times between inspections for some schools. Miss Upton noted that there were likely to be significant changes to the framework in September – including a shift to three rather than four grades. There would be some work for DHS to do for the school to understand these changes.

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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

4. Governing Body Membership

4.1 There had been no changes to Governing Body Membership.

4.2 The meeting schedule for 2018-19 was received by Governors.

5. Minutes

5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8th May were corrected as follows:

5.1 Headteacher's Report. Under Workload (BP 4) it should read 'appreciation of those *teaching staff*' (rather than support staff).

Once corrected these minutes were approved by the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising from the minutes.

2.3 Mrs Willmott had contacted Governors regarding their business interests.

4.2 Mr Wright had written a letter to thank the contractors for their work on the recent building project.

9.1 Mrs Willmott said that the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) compliance plan would be forwarded to Governors before the end of term.

Action Mrs Willmott

9.1 In relation to GDPR there was some discussion as to whether Governors should have a DHS e-mail address. It was felt that this was unnecessary.

9.2 Mrs Willmott will check if GDPR matters need to be the province of the Full Governing Body rather than the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Action Mrs Willmott

9.3 The final draft of the GDPR Policy had been sent to Governors.

6. Academic Improvement

6.1 Head Boy and Head Girl together with their Deputies

Miss Upton introduced the new Head Boy and Girl and their Deputies. Josh talked about a Geography Trip to the United States which would visit some impressive sites including the Hoover Dam and the Grand Canyon. Sully covered events at a, very warm, Sports Day including the new Super 8 relay. Da Vinci were the overall winners. Bethany spoke of a montage commemorating the First World War and an exciting History trip to Berlin and Munich. Elise described a taxing but enjoyable D of E Expedition as well as looking at other aspects of the award.

6.2 Delivery of PSHE

This item was taken by way of a presentation from Mrs Jude (Head of Year 7) and Mr Trevorrow (Head of Year 11) and looked at the impact and efficacy of the recent changes to the delivery of PSHE in the light of the recent review. This had involved managing the rolling time-table - in Year 8-10 tutors rotated for each model though Year 7 have a model with the tutor delivering all the modules (which works well for this year group) – for the five-week units whilst ensuring equity of time allocation for teaching staff. Where teachers felt less comfortable with the subjects being covered in the units, a series of floating tutors would take over. The resources that had been provided had been good and INSET had emphasised the importance of PSHE. All the Year 7 tutor team had been positive about the changes. For the future it was hoped to adjust unit lengths in Year 7 to bring time-equivalence – this

would enable rotation in the future were it to be thought desirable – though not at the expense of tutor-student relationships.

Mrs Jude and Mr Trevorrow then went on to look at their Head of Year roles. They did so under a series of headings:

Changes since appointed

- Much greater emphasis on mental health of students.
- Increased liaison with Primary Schools (including a mental health workshop).
- More use of data and case studies.
- Efficacy of the student support office.
- More celebration – including achievement assemblies.

Greatest challenges

(It was noted that these tend to be different each year.)

- Higher parental expectations (especially in Year 7 – and particularly in the creation of form groups for new students).
- Balance of time and the need to be proactive rather than reactive.
- The impact of social media on behaviour.
- Creation of Education, Care and Health Plans (ECHPs).

Greatest rewards

- Making a difference
- Supporting what happens at home
- Being a supportive adult
- Relationships over time.

Focus for 2018-19

- Behaviour for learning and a focus on the basics
- Developing student leadership and the concept of giving to others.
- Skills development.

There followed a general discussion relating to the presentations.

Ms Goodrich asked about increased parental contact making particular reference to that with Year 6 parents prior to entry to the school. The Heads of Year agreed that this was greater than previously (across all years) and Miss Upton felt that this was linked to higher parental expectations. Mrs Jude noted that she was often asked to sort out issues that had arisen outside school (frequently relating to social media).

Mr Carruthers noted that there had been a workshop for Year 7 and 8 parents which had been attended by 80 – 90 people. This had covered mental health, building memory and e-safety and had been well-received. It was intended to repeat this biennially.

Dr Thomas asked about PSHE and this gave rise to a discussion of teachers' view of the new structure – in particular their confidence in delivering the PSHE curriculum. It was recognised that there had been initial scepticism of the rolling timetable (especially the loss of subject teaching time) and that teachers had worried that they would deliver the programme badly. Mrs Ramsay felt that this had been partially offset by relevant external training and the fact that students had full confidence in their teachers – but that senior staff will continue to listen (and respond) to the concerns of teachers. She also noted that RSE (Relationship and Sex Education – formerly SRE) will be a statutory requirement next year. Miss

Upton noted that the teaching of PSHE was over a thirty-week block and that, whilst never a perfect fit, was generally felt to be better than the previous system – particularly as it gave flexibility in the teaching of sensitive issues. Resources available were generally agreed to be very good. Dr Marlow checked that mobile devices and social media were part of the PSHE curriculum. He was reassured that these issues were included discretely – as was gambling.

6.3 Year 10 Performance Data

This item was led by Miss Mc Burney by reference to the Year 10 Data Check that had been received by Governors. She noted that outcomes were slightly down on last year's cohort at this stage – by 4% in English and Maths (4+) and 10% in English and Maths (5+). The indication is that the lower end of the Year Group is weaker academically than in the current Year 11. Miss Upton noted that only circa 200 students nationally are expected to gain a full set of grades at Level 9.

6.4 Safeguarding Mind Mats

This item was taken by reference to three documents covering all aspects of Safeguarding – Statutory Requirements (including Safer Recruitment), Pastoral Support (capturing 'the golden thread of safeguarding'), and Curriculum (endorsed by recent SIAMS inspection). This will be revised in September when the *Keeping Children Safe in Education* is due to be updated. Mr Carruthers pointed out that the DHS Whistleblowing Procedure is available both on the staff noticeboard and on line. Mr Grover is due to audit the Single Central Register shortly.

6.5 Record of staff training 2017-18

Mr Martin referred to the paper already circulated and made the following points:

- Some new GCSE training but less than last year.
- Fewer external providers had been used.
- The Suffolk Festival of Learning had been valuable but perhaps not quite as good as last year.
- Four staff had attended the Wellington Festival of Education.
- Statutory Safeguarding training had been undertaken.
- Significant development opportunities had been made available for middle and senior staff.

7. Budget and related items

7.1 Budget estimated outturn 2017-18

Mrs Willmott made the following points:

- Income and expenditure had exceeded budget – in both cases this was due to Teaching School funding.
- Transfers from capital funds to project costs had been less than expected to the amount of £66k.
- Disregarding capital costs there had been a £48k surplus for the year.

7.2/3 Budget 2018-19 and Medium-Term Plan

This item was taken by reference to a slide presentation – additional points and highlights are recorded here.

Slide 1

- There had been an increase in GAG of £94 per pupil after a £26k cap by the LA (for the first year only).
- Transitional protection following the cessation of the ESG (Educational Services Grant) will be removed next year.

- Pensions are set to rise: Teachers in September 2019 (no figures but assumptions made for budgeting purposes) and LGPS by 1% pa until 2019-20.
- A 1% pay rise has been assumed (no indication from STRB at this point).

Slide 2

- Student numbers stood at 677 in the October 2017 census.
- There will be a significant fall in numbers in 2019-20.

Slide 3

In the five year summary, the negative gap between income and expenditure is still set to increase reaching a projected figure of £282k in 2023. This increase in deficit, whilst slower than it was formerly, is unsustainable in the longer term. It was noted that the Reserves Policy states that DHS should maintain funds to cover one month's salary (£250k).

Slide 4/5

- Staff costs as a percentage of GAG income in 2018-19 will be relatively high (95%) but is better when considered in terms of total income (80%).
- FTE teachers remains consistent.
- Percentage staff costs relative to income remains one of the highest in Norfolk/Suffolk.

Slide 6

Highlights of the 2018-19 budget are:

- A £3k surplus is forecast.
- Reserves stand at £545k.
- Departmental capitation maintained at current levels.
- TS income has grown.
- Small increase in number of teaching staff.
- NQT appointments have helped budget.
- IT expenditure maintained in line with plan.
- Realistic and attainable budget set.

Slide 7

Risks and challenges in the 2018-19 budget are:

- Workings of the new National Funding Formula.
- Keeping up to speed with other sources of funding.
- The potential creation of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) involving DHS.
- Increased costs – pensions, removal of public sector pay cap.
- Need to manage cost base to ensure sustainability of reserves.

Slide 8

Simplified strategic plan:

- Maintain efficiency and breadth of KS4 curriculum (reduction in number of subject options).
- Monitor potential future changes to the pattern of admissions – if numbers are reduced due to external factors the school will need to respond – especially as costs have already been pared to the bone.
- Progress towards a MAT in a considered and staged way – this may help with funding.

Medium Term Plan

Mrs Willmott made the following points by reference to the Budget 2018-19 working copy:

- There will be a small surplus in 2018-19 but thereafter a deficit peaking at £89k in 2022-23
- The year of increased intake would leave at the end of 2019-20.
- The variable figures for non-staff costs relate to changes in the plans for IT provision.
- For the first time this year the ESFA has required a projected budget for three years (but has failed to provide the figures for projected income). Other figures (pay award, pensions) are similarly unknown.
- DfE Capital Income in 2018/19 includes the final payments under the new CIF projects amounting to £15k, other capital (Devolved Formula Capital) is projected at £15k per annum.

Discussion followed the presentation:

- Mr Carruthers thanked Mrs Willmott and Miss Upton for their work in reducing costs. This was endorsed by Mr Debenham.
- Ms Goodrich noted the fall in student numbers in two years' time and asked whether we would need to increase the intake again – especially as Teaching School funding cannot be assumed. Miss Upton agreed that this could be done but pointed out the other variables which might affect student numbers – home-to-school transport issues, house building in Debenham and the creation of the Ipswich Garden Suburb. Both she and Mr Carruthers felt, however, that DHS is in a good position to respond over the next two years.
- Dr Thomas asked if there was any guidance about the level of funds being carried forward. There is not at present. Reserves are healthy, however, and Mrs Willmott pointed out that the 5 year forecast is a live model that will serve to keep Governors aware of any developing financial pressures.

Governors approved the budget plan for the next academic year (2018-19)

- The teachers' pay settlement was discussed. Though the STRB decision was not yet available – despite being due the previous week – it was believed that there could be a recommendation for a 3% pay rise (though only 1% would be government funded). A further 1% on teachers' salary would cost DHS £23k so it may be that the budget would have to be adjusted once the STRB decision is known. It was thought that some schools would not be able to fund such an increase. Further discussion with Governors may be necessary.
- In relation to this Mr Green asked if holding the Full Governors' meeting before FGP meeting in the Autumn Term was the correct order of things. Mr Carruthers said he would look at this.

Action Mr Carruthers

- Dr Marlow asked if it were permissible to ask parents for contributions, but this is not allowed.

8. Committees and Working Parties

8.1 Minutes of Health and Safety Committee and of Financial & General Purposes Committee

These were both received by Governors without comment.

8.2 Mid-term admissions

These were reviewed by the Governors. Miss Upton explained why, at present, there were 136 students due to join Year 7.

8.3 Governor Visit Reports

Reports were received from Mrs Janson (x2) and Dr Marlow. Mr Carruthers thanked Governors for their efforts in this regard.

9. Policies

9.1 SEND Information Report

There were no major issues in the report. The availability of an inclusion room was noted.

9.2 E-Safety Policy

Changes included reference to the filter system. Some typographical errors and issues with consistency of terminology were also noted. The accuracy of the flow chart (Appendix 1) was also discussed.

The policy was approved by Governors.

9.3 Complaints Procedure

There had been no changes. Mrs Driver asked that there be greater clarity as to what constitutes an 'Academy Day'. It was asked if complaints are routinely reported to Governors. Miss Upton said that they are shared with Mr Carruthers. She also observed that very few complaints involve a formal procedural approach (possibly two in the last two years).

10. Any other business

Mr Barker asked that policies be presented in the 'track changes' mode better to aid review. Mr Carruthers said that he would look at this.

Action Mr Carruthers

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 2nd October 2018 at 5.00 pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.36 pm.

Signed: Chairman Date: 2nd October 2018