



Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



Full Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 28th November 2017 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Rev S Bates		Mr C Grover
Mrs J Brown		Mrs S Janson
Mr D Carruthers	Chairman	Mr D McMillan
Mr P Debenham		Dr H Marlow
Mrs C Driver		Mrs J Newman
Dr D Egan		Dr W Thomas
Mr T Green		Miss J Upton

In attendance:

Miss S McBurney	Assistant Headteacher
Mr S Martin	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs L Ramsay	Assistant Headteacher
Mrs T Willmott	School Business Manager
Miss S Smart	Acting Clerk to the Governors

1. Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Bishop Martin, Mr R Barker and Mr D Ralph.

Mr Martin arrived during Item 7.

1.2 Governors consented to their absence.

2. Pecuniary and Other Interests

2.1 No pecuniary interests were declared.

2.2 There was nothing to update in the Register of Pecuniary Interests.

3. Chairman's Action

Mr Carruthers reported on Miss Upton's recent appointment as Lay Cannon and congratulated her on this.

3.1 Meeting with Taylor Wimpey

Mr Carruthers reported on a meeting he had attended with Miss Upton on two proposed new housing developments in Debenham. Two consultants from the developer, Taylor Wimpey, discussed their proposals. They are looking at two parcels of land; Parcel A opposite the school site and Parcel B behind the school playing field. It was being proposed that 280 – 340 houses would be built on Parcel A and 360 on Parcel B.

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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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Mr Carruthers reported that he had asked the consultants how this fitted in with the Mid Suffolk Local Development Plan but their view was that this would take too long so they would proceed before it had been endorsed. The current timescale was to have outlying planning by Spring 2018 with the first houses being built mid-2020, then being built at a rate of 50 houses a year. The consultants were unable to say what type of housing was being proposed.

- Dr Egan felt that it was likely the proposal would be successful as Suffolk needs 15000 new houses and only 300 were built last year. He felt that the development would make the school very landlocked and the school should look at asking the developer for a couple of acres.
- Miss Upton felt that it would be important to future proof the school through gaining more space.

3.2 DFE MAT contact

Mr Carruthers reported that he had contacted Helena Renfrew Knights, Educational Advisor for Regional Schools Commission but had heard nothing back.

4. Governing Body Membership

There were no changes to the Governing Body Membership to report. There is still no Vice Chair and Mr Carruthers asked if anybody was interested in the role to contact him.

5. Minutes

5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd October 2017 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

5.2 Matters arising from the minutes.

5.2 Mr Carruthers noted that a number of Governors' term of office expires at the end of 2018 but he was looking at a plan.

8.1 Miss Upton reported that Mr Green had been correct about the figures for students with low prior attainment but that confidence intervals were likely to be wider with a smaller school cohort.

8.1 Miss Upton reported that the way in which trips were communicated had been reviewed.

8.1 Miss McBurney reported that the 45 students who had Science papers remarked had all gone up by a grade therefore the Science results had improved.

14.1 Miss Upton reported on proposals to change home-to-school transport arrangements. The LA propose to change free transport from catchment school to nearest school. This is going to full consultation. Miss Upton had received a Heat map for the school that showed the proposed areas. She is going to send it out to parents now that the consultation is live. There are 3 options being proposed:

1. Transport will be free to the nearest school.
2. Changes to transport will be staggered so it will continue to be free for current students but only to the nearest school for new students.
3. No change will be made but savings will be made elsewhere.

Miss Upton is going to send details of the consultation to parents and Governors and asks that they respond.

Action Miss Upton

6. Student Presentation

Deputy Head Boy and Girl

Miss Upton welcomed the Deputy Head Boy and Helena who was standing in for the Head Girl.

Tom (Deputy Head Boy) talked about Year 11 mock exams that had started and were covering all subject areas. He reported that they were being held under strict exam conditions and as well as helping prepare students for GCSEs they would identify any areas of weakness on which to focus. He discussed the revision sessions that had been running and had been well attended. He told Governors of a session that had been run by Maximise Potential which taught students about different methods of revision and confidence in exams.

Helena discussed the Year 8 charity week that had raised £792, through a range of activities, for Help for Heroes and Send a Cow.

7. Academic Improvement

7.1 SIAMS report.

Mr Carruthers reported that there had been a delay in receiving the report and thanked Miss Upton, staff and Governors who had taken part for the excellent result.

7.2 SIAMS SEF

Miss Upton reported that this had been put together prior to the SIAMS inspection. Mr Green asked for clarification on the grading.

7.2 Year 11 performance

Miss Mc Burney discussed the report and noted that until now the Progress 8 figures had been very much an estimate but were becoming more valuable as they were now based on the 2017 unvalidated results. The headline figures were looking positive. She commented that some subjects' figures were more reliable than others as English and Maths are the only subjects with experience of the new courses and hence 9 to 1 grading. She noted that SEN figures are not where they should be and this continues to be an area of focus; it should be noted, however, this involves a small number of students. Miss McBurney commented that subject leaders were being encouraged to use 4Matrix to investigate the figures further. Mr Carruthers asked if 4Matrix was working well. Miss McBurney felt it was still too new to know but from a SLT perspective it was much more efficient.

Mr Grover noted that the figures were low for SEN students in PE & Art and asked was this as students were not aware enough of the amount of academic work in these subjects. Miss McBurney said this may be the case but students were advised and guided on this; she noted, however, that it was one student affecting both figures.

7.2 Staff Wellbeing Survey.

Miss Upton reported that the survey had been held at the end of the summer term and the results had been fed back to staff before October half term.

Dr Thomas noted that the numeric data showed that approximately 10-15 staff had marked disagree and asked if any details were known about these staff. Miss Upton said that the survey had been anonymous. Dr Egan commented that the school's greatest strength was the senior leadership team but the survey seemed to show that 25% had disagreed with the question about open communication. Miss Upton said that the SLT continually thought about how they communicated and different methods used

and all of the SLT had an open-door policy. Mrs Driver asked if the survey was done again could a box be added so staff could elaborate more. Miss Upton reported that there had been this option but that she did not feel it was appropriate to share those comments. Mr Carruthers asked if a generic survey had been used and were there plans to do one annually. Miss Upton reported that the survey that had been used was adapted from utilised by another school. This had originally created by a wellbeing review service but had been modified. She agreed that it should be done again but felt that annually was possibly too often. Rev Bates noted that one person had felt that there had been bullying and harassment and asked if this had been picked up elsewhere and were procedures robust enough to enable staff to report such incidents. Miss Newman commented that as a member of staff she would very confidently and happily see a member of SLT to report such an incident. The general view of the group was that there would be value in another survey at some point.

8. Budget and related items

8.1 Annual Reports and Financial Statement for 2016-2017.

Mrs Wilmott explained that the report had been scrutinised by the Finance and General Purposes committee and, following the correction of some typographical errors, she was now in receipt of the final version. Dr Thomas noted an error on the Governors' attendance at meetings but Miss Wilmott explained that this had been changed in the final version. The report was approved.

8.2 Audit Update

Mr Carruthers reported that he had attended the Audit Finalisation meeting on Friday 17th November and the report had been good.

8.2 Audit Findings Report

Mrs Wilmott commented that only minor points had been found and these had been dealt with. Mr Carruthers thanked Mrs Wilmott for her work with the audit. The report was approved.

8.4 Representation Letters

It was approved that the Representation Letters be signed.

9. Capital Projects.

9.1 Update on Extension

Mrs Wilmott reported that the extension was due for completion before Christmas and that it was all going very smoothly. Students will move into the extension on 4th January.

9.2 2017 Application to the CIF and Healthy Pupils Capital Programme

Mrs Wilmott explained that major work such as the boiler and roof have all been done so the chances of securing more funding has been reduced as funding is tight with very strict conditions. Bids were being put together by Archers for submission in mid-December. The bids were a safeguarding bid for work to the reception area and fencing at the back of the school and one to the Healthy Pupils Capital Programme to try to establish a second catering pod.

10. Committees and Working Parties

10.1 Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting 20th October 2017

These were received by Governors and their contents noted.

10.1 Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting 24th November 2017

The minutes were not yet available and would be presented at the next meeting.

10.3 Governor Visits Pro Forma

Miss Upton explained that in order to formalise Governor Visits to school she asked that a visit form be completed. No changes to the form were suggested.

Action Governors

10.4 Governor Visits

Three reports were received. Mrs Jansen briefed the meeting on a LA training course she had attended on gang culture and asked were governors still able to attend these courses. Mr Carruthers said they were and a list of available courses would be circulated.

Action Mr Wright

11. Policies

11.1 Management of Sex and Education Policy

Mrs Ramsay explained she had met with a group of parents to review the policy. Mrs Ramsay highlighted the following about the document:

- Relationship and Sex education would be statutory in all schools from 2019
- Changes to the school's delivery of PSHE
- Page 3 of the policy contained a new paragraph relating more to the modern world
- E safety and the consequences of actions in the real world and online

Dr Egan noted that Female Genital Mutilation was not mentioned. Mrs Ramsay commented that this was covered in Year 10 under Human Rights but would cross reference it in the policy. Mr Thomas noted that in 5.3 it said that a teacher could not give individual contraceptive advice so suggested the policy included where this could be obtained. He also noted that the wording of 5.6 suggested that adoption was contentious. It was agreed that adoption and abortion be put in different paragraphs. Mr Green commented that the 'E' in PSHE was economics not education. Mrs Ramsay would clarify. The policy was approved.

11.2 Anti Bullying Policy

Mrs Ramsey explained she had reviewed the policy with 13 Peer Mentors. Mrs Driver suggested section 6 be split into two sections and that the header be changed to Issue 6. The policy was approved.

11.3 Worship Policy

Miss Upton explained that the policy had been updated in line with recommendations from the SIAMS report and instead of just being about the logistics of worship was more about the schools' ethos and purpose as a Christian school. Miss Upton explained that the first section was new but the rest of the policy was mostly unchanged. Mrs Driver asked about the section mentioning governor prayer. Governors agreed to add a prayer to Governor meetings. The policy was approved.

11.4 Scheme of Delegation

Mrs Driver asked if the prospectus was on the school website as she had not been able to find it when she had done a search. Miss Upton said it was but would check.

Action Miss Upton

Mr Carruthers felt another column should be added to the document to show when members make a decision.

Mrs Driver asked who signed all journals over £10,000. Miss Upton said she did, and in fact signed all journals. Mrs Driver questioned if only one person had to sign BACS payments. Mrs Wilmot said it was two people and would amend the document.

Mr Grover asked about the decision process for staff pay decisions. Miss Upton clarified that there were two decisions one for pay progress based on the appraisal process and one for national annual pay awards. It was decided these should be split on the policy.

Mr Green asked if a separate Best Value Statement had been found. Mrs Wilmott said she would look into it.

Action Mrs Wilmott

12. Governor Training

The governors had not yet used the NGA training.

13. Any other business

Miss Upton reminded governors that the next meeting would be the Curriculum working party on 9th January at 4.15pm and asked if they could meet to rank the 2018-19 admissions immediately after that meeting and then have a look around the new build.

Miss Upton reported that, to date, there had been 150 first choice applications for year 7 in September 2018.

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 6th February 2018 at 4.30 pm preceded by the AGM of the Trust..

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.55 pm.

Signed: Chairman Date: 6th February 2018