



DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Monday 26th November 2012 at 19.00 hours.

Persons Present	CSA	Mr. L. Phillips Mrs. M. Moss. Mrs. S. Hosford
	Community	Mr. T. Putnam Mrs. D. Taylor (Vice-Chair of Governors) Ms. R. Bettenson Mr. P. Rothman
	Elected Parent	Mrs. T. Gedye Mr. P. Adams
	Appointed Parent	Mrs. R. Davis (Chair of Governors).
	Headteacher	Mr. P. Minns.
	Teacher	Mrs. S. Limmer
	Clerk	Mr. D. Hall

Other Persons Present Bridgitte Gustafson (Exchange Teacher from Ohio, USA)

1. **Welcome.** The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting. She especially welcomed Bridgette Gustafson.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
 - 2.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Mr. G. Rolfe, Mrs. A. Caldwell, Mrs. S. Scott and Mrs. P. Campbell.
3. **Teacher Led Briefing on the Teacher Exchange with an American School.** Brigitte Gustafson explained that she taught kindergarten aged Pupils in the state of Ohio and had completed a direct exchange with Naomi Hudson from Damers First School. She advised Governors that she had been asked by the Chair of Governors to comment on the differences she had noticed between the English Education system and its American counterpart. She reminded Governors that her comments were a personal view. The following points were made in comparison with the American Education System;
 - 3.1. The Curriculum covered is much broader. The American system is introducing a National Curriculum, state by state but the number of items contained is smaller but it is taught in more depth. Teachers have the opportunity to visit areas several times to enable better retention by Pupils.
 - 3.2. Parents have much more influence on the School.
 - 3.3. Considerably more meetings are held for Staff.
 - 3.4. Considerably more assemblies. This gives the School more cohesion in some ways but Pupils in the American system have more time in the classroom.
 - 3.5. Role of the Headteacher is different. Seen as less of an authority figure in America.
 - 3.6. Foundation subjects are not taught by as many specialist Teachers. Teaching is much more cautious in PE and other subjects of a practical nature. Additionally in the American system districts of Schools organise activities after school and these are more extensive in provision. The community is invited to all School Events as those able to vote are able to provide additional funds through local taxation for the School. Unfortunately this leads to wide variations between affluent areas and poor areas.
 - 3.7. The floor area of classrooms is considerably smaller. Teachers in the American system are able to utilize the space to allow groups of Pupils to work away on a task whilst Teaching a small group. In Brigitte's opinion this allowed the group to concentrate more and not to be so easily distracted.
 - 3.8. The planning for Teachers is extreme and looks good on paper but she questioned its effectiveness. The American System had minimal planning and could be improved but Bridgette made the point that there must be a happy medium between the two extremes.

3.9. Differentiation within the planning of lessons is very extensive and caters for the different needs of Pupils. This provision is not as good in the American system.

Governors were invited to ask questions. There were answered by Brigitte Gustafson as follows;

3.10. Do you have any additional help in the classroom? No Teaching Assistants were employed in the American system but the class sizes were much smaller. She advised that with above 30 Pupils in some classes it was her opinion that you would need another Adult in the room just to cope with that number.

3.11. Does the Curriculum change often? The Curriculum was revised every 4 years and although this had been on a state by state basis, in the future it was likely that a national system would be adopted by most states.

The Chair thanked Brigitte Gustafson for her presentation and were pleased that her experience of Damers First School had been so positive. Mr. Minns advised Governors that Bridgette Gustafson had been an asset to the School and wished her well in her future career.

(Brigitte Gustafson left at 19.35 hours)

4. Election of Vice-Chair.

(Mrs. Taylor left the meeting briefly)

4.1. The Chair advised Governors that the Clerk had received a letter from Mrs. Penny Campbell withdrawing her self-nomination for consideration as Vice-Chair of Governors. Mrs. Davis read out the contents of the letter.

4.2. Nominations received for Vice-Chair; Mrs. Davina Taylor. Governors discussed the nomination.

4.2.1. Mrs. Davis proposed that Mrs. D. Taylor be appointed as the Vice-Chair of Governors for the academic year 2012/13. Mr. L. Phillips seconded. Governors unanimously approved.

Mrs. Taylor returned to the meeting and Governors congratulated her on her appointment.

5. Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business & Declaration of Interest.

The Chair asked that 1 matter be considered

5.1. Headteacher's Performance Management.

(Mr. Minns left the meeting at 19.40 hours)

Mrs Taylor informed the Governing Body that a review of the Headteacher's Performance Management had been completed and that Performance Governors were satisfied that the Headteacher had met his performance targets over a 2 year period. In addition new targets had been set in consultation with the SEP (Mr. Mark Loveys). Mrs Taylor advised Governors that Performance Management Governors were recommending that the ISR range be moved by 1 point from 17-23 to 18-24 within the permitted 11-24 range for a Group 3 School and that the Headteacher's salary be increased by 1 point. Governors had a wide ranging discussion on these proposals and then voted.

5.1.1. Mrs Taylor proposed that the ISR range for the Headteacher's salary be moved from the range 17-23 to 18-24. Mrs. Davis seconded. Governors voted on the proposal. The results were;

5.1.2. For 8 Against 3 Abstentions 0

5.1.3. The proposal was passed.

5.1.4. Mrs Taylor proposed that the Headteacher's salary be increased by 1 point on the Leadership scale back dated to 1st September 2012. Mrs. Davis seconded. Governors voted on the proposal. The results were;

5.1.5. For 8 Against 3 Abstentions 0

5.1.6. The proposal was passed.

5.1.7. (Mr. Minns returned to the meeting at 19.50 hours)

5.1.8. The Chair informed the Headteacher of the decision made by the Governing Body.

The Clerk asked that 1 matter be considered;

5.2. Parent & Staff Elections.

5.3. No Declarations of Interest were made.

6. Minutes.

6.1. Correction in the attendance list. Correct Ruth Davies to read Appointed Parent.

6.2. Mrs. Davis proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2012, together with the correction in 6.1 above, were accepted as an accurate record. Mrs. Moss seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.

7. Matters Arising.

- 7.1. Matters Arising. Item 1. Lettings & Charges.** Charges would not be raised for the use of the Swimming Pool but the expectation from hirers would. Mr. Minns confirmed that Pool changes were at a standard rate for hirers and set at a level that would encourage groups to make use of the facility.
- 7.2. Matters Arising. Item 2. Curriculum Terms of Reference.** The Clerk advised Governors that SEN / Inclusion was reported directly to the Governing Body and that a Teacher led Briefing on SEN / Inclusion would be included shortly.
- 7.3.** Governors agreed that all the other action items had been completed or appeared on the agenda for this meeting for discussion.
- 8. Correspondence.**
- 8.1.** No significant correspondence had been received.
- 9. Chair's Report. (Appendix 1).**
The Chair spoke briefly to her report. The following points was raised.
- 9.1.** That the School needed to continue to ensure that it was working at an outstanding level as well as the work of the Governing Body in supporting and challenging.
- 9.2.** That Mark Loveys would be reviewing the work of the Governing Body in order to produce an Action Plan for future development. The possibility of organising a Governing Body Day was being considered in order to facilitate the production of an Action Plan. Several Governors noted that it would be difficult for Working Governors to attend.
- 10. Appraisal Report.** Governors were informed that this matter was changing at the moment because of changes to the Appraisal procedures and because of changes to the OfSTED Inspection process. Reports will be produced in the future, respecting the anonymity of individual Staff, but allowing the Governing Body to consider performance in relation to pay and also the deployment of Staff with regard to the Staffing Structure.
- 10.1.** The Headteacher agreed to distribute copies of the Department of Education Teacher Appraisal Policy and the School Report on Teacher Appraisal before the next meeting.
- 11. School Evaluation Partner Report. (Appendix 2).**
Governors were circulated with a copy of the SEP A Visit Report. He apologised to Governors as he had understood that it had been distributed before the meeting. he suggested that if Governors had any additional questions, once they had read the full report, that these were dealt with at the next meeting of the Full Governing Body. Mr. Minns explained that the data in the Report had been populated by himself & Moira Bearwish. The purpose of considering the Report was in order that Governors could consider the latest information concerning attainment & progress of Pupils and the standards of Teaching & Learning.
- 11.1.** Mr. Minns highlighted several items from the Report.
- 11.1.1.** The School's Current Position.
- 11.1.1.1.** Attainment and Progress at the main stages in 2011/12. This was the school's commentary on the current standards.
- 11.1.1.1.1.** End of Early years Foundation Stage.
- 11.1.1.1.1.1.** Those Pupils attaining 78+ (91%) exceeded both the Dorset Average (67%) and the National Average. The gap between the median and the lowest 20% was very low.
- 11.1.1.1.2.** Year 1 Phonics attainment.
- 11.1.1.1.2.1.** Governors were informed about the structure of the phonic test as there had been some adverse press coverage. 82% of Pupils passed compared to the Dorset Average of 59%. Governors noted that this was a significantly higher pass rate.
- 11.1.1.1.3.** End of Year 2.
- 11.1.1.1.3.1.** Percentage of Pupils at L2C+ exceeded Dorset and National Averages in all areas. At L3 apart from writing Dorset averages were matched or exceeded.
- 11.1.1.1.4.** End of Year 4.
- 11.1.1.1.4.1.** Percentage of Pupils at L3C+ exceeded Dorset and National Averages in all areas. At L4 the results were similar.
- 11.1.1.1.5.** Progress of Pupils from Year 2 to Year 4. This shows good progress.
- 11.1.1.2.** Affirmation of School's SEF Grades. Achievement SEF Grade 1.
- 11.1.1.2.1.1.** The SEP agreed that the grade for overall achievement should remain outstanding. The reasons for this were;

- 11.1.1.2.1.1.1. that taking into account the different starting points, the proportion of Pupils making and exceeding expected progress was high compared with national data.
- 11.1.1.2.1.1.2. that Pupils made rapid and sustained progress throughout year groups across many subjects, including English and Maths, and learn exceptionally well.
- 11.1.1.2.1.1.3. that the standards of attainment of almost all groups of Pupils were likely to be at least in line with national averages with many Pupils attaining above this.

11.2. Governors discussed the results. Mrs. Moss asked if the Raise Online information would be made available to Governors.

11.2.1. Mr. Minns agreed to provide a summary of this information at the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.

12. Safeguarding.

12.1. **Receive any recommendations from the Safeguarding Audit.** Governors were informed that the School had achieved a Level 1 (Outstanding). No significant outstanding recommendations remained.

12.2. **Safeguarding Officers and Named Governor with a watching Brief.**

12.2.1. Mr. Minns was the Safeguarding Officer with Mrs. Bearwish the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

12.2.2. Ms. Ruth Bettenson was the named Governor with a watching brief for Safeguarding.

12.3. **Additional Safeguarding Guidance and Advice.**

12.3.1. *Governors agreed to adopt the Behaviour & Discipline (Appendix 3), Screening, Searching and Confiscation(Appendix 4) and the Use of Reasonable Force guidance and advice (Appendix 5).*

13. DASP Report.

Governors were informed that at the latest DASP Meeting, the Headteacher of Thomas Hardy School gave feedback from a review of the organisation that he had undertaken. He had outlined to those present an organisation that could deliver high quality provision from 3-19 years. A conference in the Spring was being organised to discuss the strategic direction of the organisation. The Headteacher advised that Schools in Dorset originally placed their buildings funds into a group account which then acted like an insurance policy for emergency repairs or replacements. DMIS (Dorchester Buildings Insurance Scheme) had originally been set up in a similar way for schools in the Dorchester Area. However with 4 of the schools in the DASP Partnership converting to Academies, problems had arisen concerning the pooling of funds. Also Academies are subject to paying VAT in a different way. In order to retain the present DMIS Scheme it is necessary for Governing Bodies to approve in principle that DASP becomes liable to VAT and that DMIS will be organised from within the DASP structure. Governors were advised that the School would still not be liable to pay VAT but that DASP would be claiming the VAT back in a different way. Governors briefly discussed these proposals.

13.1. *Mrs. R. Davis proposed that in principle DASP becomes liable to VAT and that DMIS will be organised from within the DASP structure. Mr. Rothman seconded. Governors unanimously approved.*

14. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

14.1. Report of Environment & Premises Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 06/11/2012 Appendix 6)

14.1.1. **Swimming Pool Chemicals.** Mrs. Gedye asked for clarification with regard to the use of the swimming pool chemicals. Mr. Minns explained that Mr. Jon Davis had now received training in the management of the swimming pool and as part of this the chemicals used to maintain the swimming pool were being reviewed to ensure that they were the best to use.

14.2. Report of Curriculum Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 08/11/2012 Appendix 7)

14.2.1. *Mrs. Taylor recommended the ratification of Mr. Putnam as the Vice-Chair of the Curriculum Committee for the Academic Year 2012/13. Ms. Bettenson seconded. Governors unanimously approved.*

14.2.2. **Items on the Action Plan.** Mr. Moss advised Governors that several items on the Action Plan for this Committee had been retained for a lengthy period. Mrs. Taylor agreed to deal with this matter at the next meeting of the Curriculum Committee.

14.3. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 05/11/2012 Appendix 8)

Mrs. Davis spoke briefly to the minutes.

14.3.1. **Virements; Governors** discussed the following virements.

14.3.1.1. Mrs. Davis proposed that the virements as outlined in sections 14.3.1.1.1 to 14.3.1.1.6 be approved by the Governing Body. Mrs. Moss seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.

14.3.1.1.1. £3,231.00 from 610 to Account 111. (SCITT Payments.)

14.3.1.1.2. £6,676.00 from Other Contributions to Teaching (Ac/110). (Reimbursement from OfSTED for Headteacher's secondment)

14.3.1.1.3. £312.00 from Other Contributions to Training Expenses (A/c 118). (Funds recovered for training expenses incurred by Staff not in full time employment at Damers First School.)

14.3.1.1.4. £673.00 from Other Contributions to Capitation £90 TRI, £583 C/P. (Funds received in respect of looked after children.)

14.3.1.1.5. £642.00 from Other Contributions to Admin Staff (A/c 113). (Funds received for work covered by Mrs. Coker for Kaleidoscope Kid's Club.)

14.3.1.1.6. £1,626.00 from Other Contributions to Support Staff.(A/c 112) (Contribution towards the cost of Year 4 Mentor DASP Schools.)

14.3.2. Possible Carry Forward. Mr. Minns alerted Governors to the possibility that due to several miscalculations on Staffing the school was likely to have in excess of £100,000 to carry forward unless some of the funds were spent before the end of the year. He explained that he was working on an Action Plan to spend the majority of the Budget in order that present Pupils would benefit. He suggested that this might include;

14.3.2.1. the purchase of tablet computers,

14.3.2.2. the covering of the outside area in foundation and year 1 and a general tidy up over the areas to make them more suitable for outside play.

14.3.2.3. the placing of new benching and the movement of some picnic tables to create an outside dining area.

14.3.2.4. the possibility of installing more large playground equipment if funding allowed.

Governors discussed with the Headteacher the possibility of employing additional Staff. Mr. Minns suggested that it might be possible to create an additional class when the new Budget was being considered but reminded Governors that changes to Staffing often had long term financial implications.

15. Governor Visits & Training.

15.1. Feedback from Governor Training. Governors completed the training log and updated Governors on the courses attended..

15.2. Feedback from Governor Visits. No reports were received concerning Governor Visits.

16. Any Other Urgent Business.

16.1. Parent and Staff Governor Elections. The Clerk informed Governors that the following Governors had been elected;

16.2. Parent Elections; Joanne Quarmby and Tim Barnes.

16.3. Staff Elections: Sally Prendergast and Georgie O'Donnell.

17. Date of next meeting. **Monday 28th January 2013** at 19.00 hours in school.

17.1. Review scheduled Committee dates for next term. Proposed Revision;

17.1.1. Finance Committee. Wednesday 9th January 17.00 hours-18.00 hours

17.1.2. Curriculum Committee. Thursday 10th January 16.00 hours-17.00 hours

17.1.3. Environment Committee. Thursday 10th January 17.00 hours-18.00 hours. Governors agreed to the proposed changes.

The meeting concluded at 20.51 hours.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date

D.A.Hall.

Clerk / Manager to Governors.

27th November 2012.