



DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Monday 28th January 2013 at 19.00 hours.

Persons Present	CSA	Mr. L. Phillips
	Community	Mrs. S. Hosford Mrs. D. Taylor (Vice-Chair of Governors)
	Elected Parent	Ms. R. Bettenson Mr. P. Rothman Mrs. J. Wibley Mr. P. Adams Mr. T. Barnes Mrs. P. Campbell
	Headteacher	Mr. P. Minns.
	Teacher	Mrs. S. Prendergast Mrs. G. O'Donnell
	Support	Mrs. S. Scott
	Clerk	Mr. D. Hall

Other Persons Present None were present.

1. **Welcome.** The Vice Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting especially Mrs. Joanne Wibley and Mr. Tim Barnes (Newly Elected Parent Governors) and Mrs. Georgina O'Donnell and Mrs. Sally Prendergast (Newly Elected Staff Governors). She explained for the benefit of new governors that the format of the meeting was unusual in that the main body of the meeting would be concerned with the appointment of a New Headteacher.
 - 1.1. Each Governor present gave a brief introduction of themselves, as new Governors were present.
 - 1.2. Mrs. Taylor was appointed as Mentor Governor to Mrs. O'Donnell and Mrs. Wibley. Mrs. Campbell was appointed as Mentor Governor to Mrs. Prendergast. Mr. Rothman was appointed as Mentor Governor to Mr. Barnes.
- 1.3. **Committee Appointments.**
 - 1.3.1. **Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Mr. Barnes and Mrs. Prendergast to the Environment Committee .**
 - 1.3.2. **Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Mrs. O'Donnell and Mrs. Wibley to the Curriculum Committee .**
2. **Apologies for Absence**
 - 2.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. M. Moss, Mr. T. Putnam and Mrs. R. Davis. No apologies had been received from Mrs. A. Caldwell and Mr. G. Rolfe.
3. **Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business & Declaration of Interest.**
 - 3.1. No Matters of Urgent Business were declared.
 - 3.2. No Declarations of Interest were made.
4. **Minutes.**
 - 4.1. **Mr. Phillips proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2012 were accepted as an accurate record. Ms. Bettenson seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.**
5. **Matters Arising & Action Plan.**
 - 5.1. **Action Plan. Item 1. Distribute a copy of the Department for Education Appraisal Policy and the School Report on Teacher Appraisal.** Mr. Minns confirmed that these documents had been e-mailed to Members of the Governing Body shortly after the previous meeting.
 - 5.2. **Action Plan. Item 2. Provide a summary of the RAISE Online Information for Governors to consider.** Governors were informed that the Chair had decided to defer consideration of this matter until the next

meeting due to time constraints at this meeting. Governors asked that this matter be retained on the Action Plan.

5.3. Action Plan. Item 3. Consider why several Action Plan items for the Curriculum Committee have been retained for a lengthy period. Mrs. Taylor reported that Members of the Committee had discussed these items at the last meeting. Committee Members had been of the opinion that whilst they would prefer that items were retained in order that they would not be forgotten a new form of wording was needed to indicate that an item might be ongoing for a considerable amount of time.

5.4. Governors agreed that all the other action items had been completed or appeared on the agenda for this meeting for discussion.

6. Correspondence.

6.1. Letter of Resignation from Mr. Phil Minns (Headteacher). Mrs. Taylor thanked Mr. Minns on behalf of the Governing Body for the significant contribution he had made to Damers First School and wished him good luck in his new appointment.

7. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

7.1. Report of Environment & Premises Committee.

7.1.1. The Clerk reported that the meeting had been cancelled due to the high number of apologies that had been received from Members.

7.2. Report of Curriculum Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 10/01/2013 Appendix 1)

Mrs. Taylor spoke briefly to the minutes.

7.2.1. Mrs. Taylor advised Governors that most of the meeting had been devoted to a presentation by Mrs. Ellie Goodridge on Assessment. Mrs. Taylor was of the opinion that the presentation included aspects of assessment that were at the heart of raising standards in the school and would be of interest to all Governors. Mrs. Goodridge had agreed to give the presentation to all Governors as some point in the future when a suitable opportunity arose.

7.3. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 09/01/2013 Appendix 2)

7.3.1. Revised Spending Plan for 2012/13 (Appendix 3). Governors had been circulated with a copy of the Revised Spending Plan previously and this had been discussed fully at the Finance & Staffing Committee. The Vice-Chair asked the Headteacher to comment briefly about the plan and answer any further questions from Governors.

7.3.1.1. Mr. Minns briefly reviewed the proposed spending plans which would spend approximately £178,000 of the projected surplus. He reminded Governors that although it was sensible to have a contingency fund, 5% of total Budget would be seen as ample. He also reminded Governors that there was an expectation that delegated funds would be spent on the Pupils attending the School at the present time.

7.3.1.2. Several Governors asked for clarification about the projected excess surplus. The Headteacher confirmed that £171,000 was the potential surplus over 5% retained.

7.3.1.3. Governors discussed with the Headteacher how this amount of surplus had arisen. Mr. Minns suggested that there had been a problem with overestimating the required funds for several of the major budget headings when the budget was set last year as well as miscalculations concerning his salary when he was seconded to OfSTED. These miscalculations had been compounded over time and led to the present situation. Ms. Bettenson asked if any lessons had been learnt from this? Mr. Minns advised that lessons had been learnt in terms of administration. He also suggested that there were lessons to be learnt in terms of Governance. He suggested that when the Benchmarking exercise indicated that a very high percentage (90%) was being spent on salaries then this might have indicated that the figures were not accurate. He advised Governors to consider carefully data being presented to them and its validity.

8. School Evaluation Statement.

Governors had been e-mailed directly with the statement (Appendix 4). Governors together with the Headteacher reviewed the statement. Mr. Minns stated that this document was the summary that would be sent to OfSTED if an inspection was imminent. The contents were a summary of reports that had already been given or circulated to Governors previously. The key points included;

8.1. Pupil Achievement.

8.1.1. Pupils enter the school below average. At Year 2 they are above the national average and at Year 4 they exceed the Dorset Average which is significantly higher than the national average. Progress is now more consistent over the different years.

8.1.2. What has the school done to further achievement?

- 8.1.2.1.** Introduced floor targets to ensure all Pupils reach a minimum standard by the end of the year. These targets now stand alongside the progress targets that expect all pupils to make good progress each year.
- 8.1.2.2.** An improved focus on a comprehensive induction package to ensure all new Staff can teach consistently good lessons as quickly as possible. Governors were informed that this would be an on-going focus of attention.

8.2. Quality of Teaching.

- 8.2.1.** The Quality of Teaching has been judged as good and not outstanding as in a recent set of observations sufficient evidence was not found to support consistently outstanding teaching, although a lot of outstanding teaching was taking place. Governors were advised that this was slightly odd in that achievement and behaviour in Pupils was rated as outstanding. Logically it would follow that Teaching is likely to be outstanding to produce this result.
- 8.2.2.** Why is the standard of Teaching not outstanding? Mr. Minns suggested that the possible reason for this were that a third of Staff were new to the School and that this fact had impacted on the consistency of Teaching.
- 8.2.3.** To increase the amount of outstanding teaching, support is focusing on;
 - 8.2.3.1.** Ensuring that Pupils are given clear guidance about how they can improve their work further.
 - 8.2.3.2.** Making sure that independent activities contain sufficient challenge to ensure all Pupils make good progress in every lesson.
- 8.2.4.** Mrs. Campbell suggested that Governors track the progress of this initiative by including this as an agenda item. Governors agreed that this was a good idea and asked the Clerk to include this as 2 minute agenda item on a regular basis until completed.

8.3. Behaviour and Safety

- 8.3.1.** Mr. Minns reported that in the latest observations there was no doubt that this area was outstanding and that he was personally impressed by what he observed.

8.4. Leadership and Management.

- 8.4.1.** Mr. Minns reminded Governors that although this was judged as outstanding, the role the Governors played was becoming increasingly rigorous.

8.5. Summary.

- 8.5.1.** The Vice- Chair thanked Mr. Minns for the Self-Evaluation Summary and his additional comments. The information in the Report would be used by the Interview Panel when considering the Headteacher Job Specification.

9. First School provision in Dorchester.

Mr. Minns reported that the latest information regarding a new school was that a new school was likely to be built as a 4 form entry on the site originally proposed if agreed by the Dorset LA. It would have community facilities but would not have a swimming pool and would be built for the provision of 600 Pupils.

Governors noted that if the decision to build a new school was taken it would have significant implications on the job specification for a new Headteacher. Unfortunately the advert would need to be placed before the outcome of any decision was known. A lengthy discussion ensued.

(Mr. Minns left at 20.00 hours)

10. Recruitment of New Headteacher. Mrs. Taylor advised Governors that the Chair of Governors had expected to be present for this meeting to go through the main procedures for appointing a Headteacher. Unfortunately as she had not been able to be present Mrs. Davis had prepared an information pack to assist Governors with the process.

10.1. Vision. Governors reviewed the vision statements and considered the strategic way forward.

Governors discussed this matter and were asked to e-mail the Chair with any contributions or suggestions (ruthdavis560@btinternet.com). These contributions would be used to formulate a bullet point type document with the vision on one side and the how it might be achieved on the other. The Interview Panel once selected would be asked to complete this.

10.2. Job Specification / Person Specification. Governors were advised that the Chair had decided on behalf of the Governing Body to engage the services of the Times Educational Supplement to run the recruitment drive. This would include the design and placement of the advert nationally. Additionally a brochure and recruitment pack would be produced. If the initial recruitment drive was not successful it could be used again within a year at no additional cost. Governors were of the opinion that the School

needed to recruit widely to obtain the best possible candidate. Governors considered the wording on the draft advert and made suggestions to the Vice-Chair. Several Governors were of the opinion that creativity should feature prominently in the advert and a suggestion was made that the possibility of DASP and/or the School becoming an academy might be considered.

10.3. Appointment of Interview Panel. Governors had a lengthy discussion about the Members of the Interview Panel. Due regard was taken of those with experience of interviewing, those who would be able to offer the considerable amount of time involved in the whole process and also any legal requirements. Several Governors expressed views which were given due consideration by the Governing Body.

10.3.1. Governors unanimously agreed that the Interview Panel should comprise of Mrs. Davis (Chair of Governors), Mrs Taylor (Vice-Chair of Governors), Mrs. Moss, Mr. Rothman and Mr. Adams.

10.3.2. Governors suggested that if a representative from DASP would like to be included in the extended Interview Panel then the place should be justified by explaining exactly what that person would bring to the interview process.

10.4. Salary Range. Governors discussed the possible salary ranges. Governors compared the salaries being offered in comparative schools. A lengthy discussion ensued.

10.4.1. Governors recommended that the Interview Panel explore the possible maximum salary that could be offered and consider this together with the present range of 18-24 and make a decision as to what the initial salary would be to make it an attractive package.

10.5. Timetable. Governors discussed the possible timetable and the format for the interviews. Governors made the following points.

10.5.1. Members of the Governing Body would appreciate being involved in the process as much as was possible.

10.5.2. Members of the Governing Body would like to be kept up to date with decisions made by the Interview Panel even if this was by e-mail.

10.6. Mrs. Taylor thanked Governors for their comments and suggestions. She explained that this information would be passed on to the Interview Panel for further consideration

11. Any Other Urgent Business.

11.1. No matters of Urgent Business were discussed.

The meeting concluded at 20.45 hours.

Date of next meeting. **Monday 25th March 2013** at 19.00 hours in school.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date

D.A.Hall.

Clerk / Manager to Governors.

29th January 2013.