



## DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Monday 28th November 2011 at 19.00 hours.

<b>Persons Present</b>	CSA	Mr. L. Phillips Mrs. A. Caldwell Mrs. C. Brotherwood. Mrs. S. Hosford
	Community	Mr. T. Putnam Mrs. D. Taylor (Vice-Chair of Governors) Ms. R. Bettenson
	Elected Parent	Mrs. T. Gedye
	Appointed Parent	Mrs. R. Davis (Chair of Governors).
	Acting Headteacher	Mrs. M. Bearwish.
	Teacher	Mrs. S. Limmer Mr. P. Rothman
	Staff	Mrs. S. Scott
	Clerk	Mr. D. Hall

**Other Persons Present** There were none present.

1. **Welcome.** The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting. She explained that Governors would welcome Mr. Paul Adams (Newly Appointed Parent Governor) at the next meeting.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
  - 2.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Mr. P. Adams and Mrs. P. Campbell.
3. **Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business & Declaration of Interest.**
  - 3.1. No Urgent Business was declared.
  - 3.2. No Declarations of Interest were made.
4. **Minutes.**
  - 4.1. *Mr. Phillips proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2011 were accepted as an accurate record. Mrs. Davis seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.*
5. **Matters Arising.**
  - 5.1. Action Plan. Item 1. Include welcome section, appointment to Committee and appointment of a Mentor Governor for Mr. Paul Adams at the next meeting. Governors agreed to retain this item on the Action Plan until it had been completed.
  - 5.2. Action Plan. Item 2. Arrange an election for 2 Parent Governors. The Clerk advised Governors that after holding an election 1 candidate stood for election as a Parent Governor. As the election was uncontested, Mr. Gareth Rolfe was duly elected as a Parent Governor. The Clerk stated that he would begin the induction process immediately after the Christmas Holidays. The Chair reminded Governors that there would be a vacancy for both a Parent Governor and Community Governor and asked them to consider possible candidates and pass any names to the Chair or Clerk.  
(Mrs. S. Scott arrived at 19.09 hours)
  - 5.3. Action Plan. Item 3. E-mail Governors with any further information regarding the exchange of a Teacher with another in the USA. Mrs Davis reported that she had written a letter in support of the application made by the Member of Staff for this exchange and that the School now awaited a decision. Mrs. Bearwish explained that the exchange was fully funded by the British Council. Ms. Bettenson was informed that the exchange would be budget neutral to the School.
  - 5.4. Action Plan. Item 4. Report back on the situation with regard to Senior Staff deputising for the Acting Headteacher and any Action Plan produced to manage Mrs. Bearwish's workload. Governors were informed that this matter would be discussed under the Staffing Structure.

5.5. 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. A Letter from a Teaching Assistant requesting leave of absence for 1 day in September on a Teacher Training Day to attend a family wedding. The exact details were unknown as the original letter had been mislaid. This matter would be discussed at the next meeting of the Full Governing Body when the exact details were available.

## 7. Head's Report. (Appendix 1).

The Head spoke briefly to her report. She highlighted the following;

7.1. Mainstream Pupil Numbers. Numbers of Pupils on roll continues to be healthy. There are some issues concerning the future but these matters will be raised as part of the DASP Report.

7.2. Annual Attendance Report. Governors considered the data indicating the school trends with National and Dorset averages. Governors noted that;

7.2.1. there had been a steady rise in overall attendance since 2007.

7.2.2. that since 2009 the school had exceeded national averages.

7.2.3. that in 2010 school attendance rates were well above the national averages.

7.2.4. that when considering the Raise Online contextualised data that this indicated that;

7.2.4.1. the figures for both persistent and overall absence were lower than for all schools nationally.

7.2.4.2. the persistent absentee figure was lower than for schools in similar circumstances.

7.2.4.3. the overall absence figures were lower than those in other schools in similar circumstances.

7.3. Staffing.

7.3.1. Lisa Keys will be taking maternity leave from 21st October 2011.

7.3.2. Nicky Simmons commenced her new TLR role to lead creative learning in the School.

7.3.3. Rachel Nesbitt commenced her new role as Assistant Headteacher.

7.4. School Development Update. Governors were informed that;

7.4.1. the Priority Overview Plans and Development Action Plans had been completed for the 4 main priorities.

7.4.2. the SDP actions plans were in progress.

7.4.3. the Curriculum and Olympic Project planning teams had been established.

7.4.4. the research team had been established.

7.5. Performance Management reviews and target setting had been completed for Teaching, Non-Teaching and Admin Staff. Headteacher's Performance Management Meeting had taken place on 20th October 2011.

7.6. SEF Update. Mrs. Bearwish reported that the meeting with Mark Loveys (SEP) had been very useful and that the interim report had been very positive. The final Report would be circulated to Governors at the next meeting. Governors noted that the development of subject leadership had been a key development target. Subject Action Plans were now in place and work was progressing. Mrs. Bearwish stated that she had now received a copy of the Dorset SEF. She explained that this was divided into 7 main sections and that whilst the content was largely the same, the detail was more succinct and factual. This document was likely to be more manageable and would be used by the School to self assess.

7.7. Governors discussed some of the activities that were itemised in the Report.

7.8. Exclusions. Governors were informed that a Pupil had been excluded for a fixed term of 1 day.

7.9. No further discussion points were raised.

7.10. The Chair thanked the Acting Headteacher for her Report.

8. **Staffing Structure.** Together with the Chair and Assistant Headteacher, Governors reviewed the present Staffing Structure and considered future strategy. The Chair advised Governors that Performance Management Targets had been set for the Acting Headteacher and these targets would be monitored by the Chair and Performance Management Governors. Mrs. Bearwish would be overseeing the day to day management of the Staffing Structure.

The Chair stated that there had been some concerns raised by Members of the Governing Body in regard to deputising for the Acting Headteacher. Previously there had been occasions when both the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher had been out of school at the same time. In this case a Senior Teacher had been deputised to carry out the role of the Headteacher. This arrangement would be continued if the Acting Headteacher and both Assistant Headteachers were not present in the School. Both the Chair and Acting Headteacher stated that they were happy with this arrangement.

Mrs. Taylor stated that there had also been some concerns raised with regard to the workload of the

Acting Headteacher. Mrs. Bearwish confirmed that Senior Staff were taking different roles but that this had needed a settling in period when the arrangements started in September and that the workload was being successfully managed.

The Staffing Structure at the present time consisted of ;

- 8.1. 3 Members of the Senior Leadership Team. These include 3 Staff with Teaching & Learning Responsibilities (TLRs).
- 8.2. Strand Leaders.
- 8.3. Year Leaders
- 8.4. Subject Responsibility Leaders.

## 9. Damers Maintenance Plan.

Governors considered the progress of the new reporting system. They had been previously circulated with a copy of the Report used for the Parent Partnership (Appendix 2) written by Mrs. Sandra Scott. This report had been submitted to the Environment Committee at their last meeting and was being considered by the Full Governing Body as a good example of the progress that had been made. Governors looked in detail at the layout of the report and how it addressed the KPIs that had previously been identified by Governors. The Clerk advised Governors that there might be some written Reports that whilst scrutiny and discussion at Committee level was desirable, that the content needed to be shared with all Governors. The Parent Partnership Report was one such example. Governors agreed that as Reports were received, consideration would be given as to whether the information should be shared with all Governors.

## 10. Committee Meetings.

The Chair reminded Members that it had been decided by the Governing Body to ask Committees to discuss how to formalise attendance at additional Committee Meetings and the level of expectation on each Governor to attend. This had come about because a Finance Meeting had not been quorate and it had been necessary to bring in additional members at the next meeting to ensure that this was not the situation in the future. The Clerk reported that after discussion in Committee, the general consensus was to recommend that initially Governors sign up to 1 additional meeting per year and that a form would be passed around at meetings allowing Governors to give advance notice of the meeting they wished to attend in order that the Clerk could send any additional papers as necessary. Governors briefly discussed the suggestions and decided to accept the recommendation and then review the effectiveness of this arrangement in 1 years time.

## 11. Link Governors.

Governors reviewed the current named Link Governors (Appendix 3) and appointed Mrs. R. Davis to a watching brief over the Main School Project; The Olympics. No further alterations were made.

The Chair asked Governors to consider setting up a Working Party to consider reviewing the Governor Visit Policy in order that Governor Visits had a clear purpose and also so that Governors and Staff alike were comfortable with the arrangements.

**11.1. Governors unanimously agreed to set up a Governor Visit Working Party. The Terms of Reference to be that the Working Party Review the Current Governor Visit Policy in order that the purpose of such visits is clear to all and that Governors and Staff are comfortable with the arrangements. To report back to the Governing Body on their findings and then to disband.**

11.2. Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Limmer and Mrs. Davis volunteered to be part of this Working Party.

## 12. DASP Report.

Governors were informed that latest DASP Meeting had been cancelled. The Chair discussed with Governors a meeting that had taken place with representatives of Dorset LA. She explained that the discussions had centred around admissions to Schools in Dorchester. Dorset LA was no longer able to fund the transportation of Pupils from Dorchester to the surrounding village schools. This had put additional pressure on places in the town. Dorset LA would encourage the school to increase the standard number from 75 Pupils to 84. The Chair explained that legally on appeal the number of admissions could reach 90 and that it was likely that the restrictions on class sizes of 30 in Key Stage 1 would be relaxed in the future. She further explained that she had indicated to the representative of Dorset LA that the mobile classrooms could not physically take any more Pupils. Additionally any additional Pupils would not have funding at the present time. The representative stated that he would ask the Schools Forum if any additional funding could be made available if additional Pupils were located at Damers First School, although he was not very hopeful. The Chair explained that she had advised Dorset LA that it would be difficult for Governors to commit to additional numbers if there was no guaranteed future funding and/or light at the end of the tunnel with regard to the building of a new school. Mrs. Bearwish advised that her concern was that if the School agreed to take the additional Pupils, increasing numbers would be housed in a school that was not fit for purpose. The Chair stated that in her opinion the Dorset LA seemed to lack any coherent and strategic policy with this matter especially

when you considered that the small schools in the surrounding area desperately needed more Pupils. She suggested to Governors that if Governors agreed to additional numbers they would require that additional funding was in place for Teaching Assistant support, that the school was part of any discussions regarding the suitability of the placement of a Pupil on appeal and that the School would want to retain some control over the situation. However the Chair made it clear to Governors that the situation was that Dorset LA could dictate the terms as the School was a Community School. Governors had a lengthy discussion concerning the matter and agreed with the sentiments of the Chair. The Chair stated that together with the Acting Headteacher the Governing Body would be kept fully informed of any future developments.

### 13. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

#### 13.1. Report of Environment & Premises Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 08/11/2011 Appendix 4)

13.1.1. No further questions were asked.

#### 13.2. Report of Curriculum Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 10/11/2011 Appendix 5)

13.2.1. No further questions were asked.

#### 13.3. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 07/11/2011 Appendix 6)

Mrs. Davis spoke briefly to the minutes.

##### 13.3.1. Statement of Internal Control

13.3.1.1. **Mr. Phillips proposed that on the recommendation of the Committee the representatives of the Governing Body sign the Statement of Internal Control for the previous financial year. Mrs. Hosford seconded. Governors unanimously approved.**

##### 13.3.2. Virements; Governors discussed the following virements.

13.3.2.1. **Mrs. Davis proposed that the virements as outlined in sections 13.3.2.1.1 to 13.3.2.1.2 be approved by the Governing Body. Mrs. Caldwell seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.**

13.3.2.1.1. **£6,292.00 from 610 to Support Staff.** (DMS Payment for services of Rowan Seymour)

13.3.2.1.2. **£6,671.94 from 610 to Teaching.** (Reimbursement from OfSTED for Headteacher's secondment)

#### 14. Business Interests & Code of Conduct. Governors completed the record of Business Interests and signed the Governors' Code of Conduct.

#### 15. Governor Visits & Training.

15.1. **Feedback from Governor Training.** Governors completed the training log.

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

#### 16. Any Other Urgent Business.

##### 16.1. Letter of thanks to Mrs. Anita Harries.

Mr. Phillips asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Mrs. Anita Harries for the work she had completed on behalf of the School. The Chair agreed to write a letter of thanks on behalf of the Governing Body.

##### 16.2. Plaque to commemorate the Gift to the School from the Dorchester Swimming Bath Trustees.

Mrs. Bearwish informed the Governing Body that a plaque would be presented at the final school assembly of the term to commemorate the Funding given to the school towards the upkeep of the swimming pool. Mr. Phillips stated that an additional sum of money would be give to buy a trophy for the school. Mrs. Bearwish thanked the Dorchester Swimming Bath Trustees for their generous donation and for their support for the Swimming Pool over many years.

The meeting concluded at 20.46 hours.

Date of next meeting, **Monday 30th January 2012** at 19.00 hours in school.

Certified as a true record.

Chair ..... Date .....

D.A.Hall.

Clerk / Manager to Governors.

2nd December 2011.