



DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Monday 2nd July 2012 at 19.00 hours.

Persons Present	CSA	Mr. L. Phillips Mrs. A. Caldwell
	Community	Mrs. D. Taylor (Vice-Chair of Governors) Mr. T. Putnam Ms. R. Bettenson Mr. P. Rothman
	Parent	Mrs. T. Gedye Mrs. P. Campbell Mrs. R. Davis (Chair of Governors) Mr. P. Adams
	Acting Headteacher	Mrs. M. Bearwish.
	Teacher	Mrs. S. Limmer
	Support	Mrs. S. Scott
	Clerk	Mr. D. Hall

Other Persons Present Two Pupil representatives of the School Council.

1. Welcome. The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting and the Two Pupil Representatives from the School Council; Loti and William.

2. Apologies for Absence

2.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. M. Moss.

3. Junior Governor Presentation.

Mrs. Limmer introduced the Pupils to the Governors and Governors briefly explained their role on the Governing Body. The Junior Governors gave a brief presentation to Governors about their role as Junior Governors on the School Council and as part of the Pupil Voice in DASP. They also explained how they applied for the job of Junior Governor. They made the following points;

3.1. DASP Junior Voice.

3.1.1. Early in the Year 2 Members of the School Council visited the Thomas Hardy School to meet with Pupils from other DASP Schools.

3.2. What research have we been doing?

3.2.1. Junior Governors have been asking questions of other Pupils to find out how ICT was being used in the classrooms. Pupil Governors visited their link classes to find out more. William advised Governors of the results of the survey and found out that Pupils were accessing ICT at least on 3 occasions a week. They were using ICT for maths quizzes and Google for research.

3.2.2. Junior Governors also researched what Pupils used every day to help them with their learning and this information was reported back to Members of Staff at some of their meetings.

3.3. What have been our concerns this year?

3.3.1. Junior Governors have been concerned about the amount of rubbish around the playground. We found out that most of it was peel and apple cores. The reason for this was that Pupils did not like placing the rubbish in the compost because of the flies. After speaking with Mr. Davis (Caretaker) he agreed to place a bucket next to the compost and empty it himself. The problem has now been sorted.

3.3.2. Junior Governors have also been looking at how we can make sure that every Pupil feels safe in School. Whilst most of the time Pupils feel safe and secure we found there were some ways we could improve this. We used posters to remind Pupils to talk to Members of Staff if they were unhappy. Also Members of Staff check areas where Pupils have felt unhappy more regularly, e.g. the corridors and toilets.

3.3.3. Junior Governors then advised Governors of the points that had been raised to make lunch-times more enjoyable. This included the purchase of a set of playground goals and the ability for more girls to participate in football at play-time.

(Mrs. Gedye arrived at 19.16 hours)

3.4. The Chair thanked Junior Governors for their informative presentation. Governors expressed their gratitude to the Pupils for sharing the information with the Governing Body.

Following the presentation several questions was asked. The questions and responses by the Pupil Governors are summarised below:

3.4.1. Several Governors were very impressed that Junior Governor had met with Staff at several Meetings to discuss some of the points that the School Council had raised. Were the meetings with Staff a Junior Governor idea? Junior Governors affirmed that it was and said it had been very useful in sorting problems out.

3.4.2. What do you think was the best part of being a Junior Governor? Visiting the classes to talk to Pupils and meeting with outside visitors.

3.4.3. What does it mean to have a link class ? Junior Governors are linked with classes in order that each Junior Governor can explain to a small group the work of the School Council and also it is much easier for us to conduct research with a small group of Pupils.

3.4.4. How did you carry out the research to find out how ICT was being used in the School? Junior Governors visited their link classes and asked questions and then noted the results to the questions.

3.5. Ms. Bettenson suggested that the work of the Junior Governors had really benefitted the life of the School and the experience had benefitted them as individuals. She advised the Junior Governors to approach the Parents Association for funding towards the cost of a set of playground goals if the DSA did not respond to the request from the School Council. Mrs. Limmer added that the School was very proud of the Junior Governors.

3.6. The Chair thanked the Junior Governors for their confident and informative presentation and stated that the Governing Body always looked forward to the presentation by Junior Governors. The Chair asked that the Junior Governors pass on the thanks of the Governing Body to the Junior Governors who could not be present at this meeting.

(Junior Governors left at 19.25 hours.)

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

The Chair asked Governors to consider 1 item;

4.1. Issue arising regarding policies after receiving a letter of complaint.

4.2. **No Declarations of Interest were made.**

5. Minutes.

5.1. *Mr. Phillips proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th May 2012 were accepted as an accurate record. Mr. Phillips seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.*

6. Matters Arising.

6.1. Action Plan. Item 2. Consider possible candidates as a Parent Governor and pass on their names to the Chair or Clerk. The Clerk reported that he had been in contact with 2 prospective Parent Governor candidates and had directed them to read the Prospective Governor leaflet on the Dorset For You Website. 2 other names were suggested to the Clerk.

6.1.1. The Clerk agreed to contact the 2 new prospective Parent Governors and provide them with the same information as the original Parents and then as there was 1 vacancy for Parent Governor arrange an election at the beginning of the Autumn Term.

6.2. Action Plan. Item 4. Consider establishing a written Staff Leave of Absence Policy. The Chair informed the Governing Body that this matter had been scheduled to be discussed at the last Agenda Setting Meeting but that unfortunately due to circumstances the Chair, Clerk and Headteacher had been unable to meet. Governors asked that this matter be retained on the Action Plan and discussed at the next Agenda Setting Meeting in September 2012.

6.3. Action Plan. Item 6. Complete and hand in to the Clerk the Committee Questionnaire. The Clerk reminded those Governors that had not completed the Committee Questionnaire to do so as soon as possible in order that he could collate the results.

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

7. Correspondence.

7.1. Letter requesting a day's unpaid leave of absence on Friday 26th October to prepare for a wedding on the next day. Governors discussed this request.

7.1.1. Governors unanimously agreed to this request and granted an unpaid day's leave of absence as the classroom impact would be minimal and there would be no impact on the Budget.

8. Consistent Financial Report (CFR) & Outturn Statement. Governors were circulated with a Financial Pack (Appendix 1) that contained a brief financial report from the Finance Officer, the Continuous Financial Report (CFR), DES and Premier Finance Reports and the Outturn Statement.

8.1. CFR. Governors noted that there was a difference of £39.00 between the B02 uncommitted revenue balance on the CFR and the DES / Premier Finance Reports. This was due to an error in the cluster fund that was a below line heading. School Administration Support at Dorset LA had advised to submit the CFR with the difference and the Local Management in Schools team would correct the error. Governors noted that the actual end of year balance was £171,397.52. The Chair explained that as this breached the 8% carry forward rule as part of the Dorset LA Efficiency Policy it had been necessary for the Headteacher to write a letter detailing how the funds had been committed giving a detailed breakdown of the costs. The Clerk advised Governors that it was no longer a requirement of the Schools Financial Value Standard to complete a Statement of Internal Control. The Clerk also made Governors aware that as part of the SFVS it was still necessary to complete a Financial Risk and Control Checklist and that there had been changes made to this.

8.1.1. The Clerk agreed to place consideration of the Financial Risk & Control Checklist on the next Committee Agenda.

8.1.2. A copy of the CFR had been e-mailed to Dorset LA on 22nd June 2012.

8.2. Outturn Report. Governors considered the Outturn Statement. The Clerk explained that the Outturn Statement indicated the projected end of year balance if spending patterns remained the same and no other factors changed between now and the end of the financial year. The Outturn Statement predicted an unallocated sum of £6,960 at the end of year.

8.2.1. Mrs. Gedye asked about future spending patterns with regard to Staff costs as she had noted from the minutes of the Finance Committee that overall Staffing Costs were higher than average. Mrs. Bearwish explained that the very successful intervention within the school increased the Staffing costs. These were currently 92% of the overall Budget compared to a national average of 80%. However although data proved that the interventions were very successful in terms of performance and attainment the situation with regard to Staff costs would have to be monitored.

The Chair thanked the Clerk and Headteacher for their comments and Mrs. Coker, in her absence, for her Report. No further questions were asked.

9. Head's Report. (Appendix 2).

The Head spoke to her report. The following points were highlighted;

9.1. Mainstream Pupil Numbers. At the present time there were 383 Pupils on roll. This was predicted to be 403 Pupils in September 2012. 90 Pupils were being admitted into Reception with an additional 2 Reception age Pupils in the Speech & Language Base. Mrs. Bearwish highlighted that if the additional numbers continue to progress through the school at 90+ there would be consequences to this action. Accommodation would be a serious problem because the Mobile Classrooms were in such a bad state of repair. The Building Surveyor for DMIS was currently advising Jon Davis (Site Manager) about this.

9.2. Speech & Language Base Numbers. At the present time there were 9 Pupils on roll. This was predicted to be 12 in September 2012. Mrs. Bearwish advised that panels were meeting at the present time and that it was likely that 4 more Pupils would be referred to the Speech and Language Base. Governors noted that on present trends the School could feasibly approach 468 Pupils on roll. Several Governors informed the Governing Body that the other First Schools in Dorchester were not full. Mrs. Bearwish advised that there were a significant number of Pupils on the waiting list for places.

9.3. Attendance Report. Governors scrutinised the latest attendance data compared with Dorset and national averages. Mrs. Bearwish advised Governors of the following;

9.3.1. Table of National & School Trends 2006-11.

9.3.1.1. That there has been a steady rise in overall attendance figures since 2006.

9.3.1.2. that since 2009 the school's figures had exceeded national averages.

9.3.1.3. that in 2010 the School attendance rates were well above the national average.

9.3.1.4. that the present rate of attendance was 95.5%

9.3.2. Table of Detailed absence breakdown since 2009.

9.3.2.1. That the attendance for the academic year 11/12 was better than national averages.

9.3.2.2. That authorised absence has steadily decreased.

9.3.2.3. That unauthorised absence has increased as the result of holidays taken during term time.

9.4. Staffing.

9.4.1. Mrs. Bearwish detailed the changes to Staffing for September 2012 and the allocation of Staff to classes. She explained that due to the significant change in staffing and the loss of experienced Members of Staff it was likely that the induction programme for new Staff would form a significant part of any New School Development Plan. Mrs. Bearwish advised Governors that a high level of support could be used to quickly get Staff up to speed. She explained that the School had an extremely high expectation on Staff and they were expected to be outstanding almost immediately. Research suggested that it took approximately 5 years for a newly qualified teacher to become outstanding. Mrs. Bearwish advised Governors that in allocating Staff full time Teaching Assistants had been placed in classes where it was known that Pupils would be challenging and / or where the Member of Staff was relatively inexperienced.

9.4.2. Governors briefly discussed the fact that there would be a vacancy for a Staff Governor. The Clerk agreed to send the election materials for Staff to Mrs. Bearwish.

9.5. School Development Plan. Governors were informed that normally the Governing Body would be considering the main priorities for inclusion in the SDP at this time of year , but due to the fact that the Headteacher had been on secondment it would be necessary to delay this matter so that he had time to consider this when he was fully aware of the needs of the school in the intervening year.

9.6. Performance Management. Governors were advised that there would be significant changes to the Performance Management of Staff in the future.

9.7. Staff Development. Governors considered the Staff Development that had taken place during weekly Staff Meetings. They were made aware that records of individual Staff training was kept but that it was too detailed to share with the Governing Body.

9.8. Parent Partnership. Mrs. Bearwish reported that the Parent Questionnaire had been completed and that a summary of the findings would be shared with Members of the Environment Committee next term. Mrs. Scott reported that the PTA had an excellent relationship with the School but that several more experienced members were likely to be leaving at the end of the next year and therefore suitable replacements needed to be found. Additionally the present PTA were producing a brief manual of how they organised certain events in order that new members could quickly get up to speed.

9.9. Attainment & Progress - Initial Feedback from Year 2 SATs .

Mrs. Bearwish reported that the 2012 Year 2 SAT results were very positive and that the school was just beginning to analyze the data.

9.9.1. Year 4 SAT data 2012..

9.9.1.1. At Level 3+ reading and writing has increased but writing has dropped 6%. This needs investigating.

9.9.1.2. Reading remains above the Dorset Average, significantly above in Maths and has dropped just below in writing.

9.9.1.3. At Level 4 there is a slight rise in reading and maths but a significant rise in writing of 6%.

9.9.2. Year 4 Teacher Assessment. 2012.

9.9.2.1. This data compared with the Year 4 SAT Data 2012 gives a similar picture.

9.9.3. Overall Picture.

9.9.3.1. Overall this is an impressive set of data. Nearly half of the Pupils are reaching levels expected nationally at the end of Year 6.

9.9.4. End of Key Stage 1 Attainment.

9.9.4.1. Reading has increased significantly at level 2c+ & at Level 3.

9.9.4.2. Writing has risen by 12% at level 2.

9.9.4.3. Excellent Maths results from last year have been maintained.

9.9.4.4. Pupils remain significantly above the national average at L2+ in all areas. At L3+ Pupils are significantly above in Reading and Maths and 3% above in writing.

9.9.4.5. Dorset achieves higher than national results and the Pupils have exceeded last year's Dorset average in all areas at L2+ and in Maths at L3+

9.9.5. Foundation Stage

9.9.5.1. This cohort of Pupils arrived with an average score of 1.9 on entry. They leave on average with a score of 7, thus making 5.1 points progress. This is a significant increase on last year where Pupils on average made 4.4 points progress.

9.9.5.2. The biggest achievement is the number of Pupils achieving 78+ points. This is the figure for the national benchmark. This has increased by 17%.

9.9.5.3. This overall picture is very good and the Pupils have made extraordinary progress

9.9.6. Phonic Check. Mrs. Bearwish explained that this was new for the end of Year 1. The results had to be reported to Dorset LA. At the moment there was no national pass mark but in the pilots last year it had been set at 31.8%. Out of 76 Pupils 82% passed and 18% failed.

9.9.7. Governors together with the Headteacher scrutinised a break down of the data. Governors congratulated Mrs. Bearwish and the Staff for the outstanding results and asked that the thanks of the Governing Body be conveyed to Staff. Governors discussed the possibility of providing a cake to celebrate with Staff this achievement.

9.10. Racial Incidents. Governors were informed that there had been no racial incidents.

The Chair thanked the Acting Headteacher for her Report. No further questions were asked.

10. School Development Plan. (SDP). This matter had been previously discussed in item 9.5.

11. Four Year Governing Body Planner. (Appendix 3)

11.1. Mrs. Davis proposed that the Four Year Governing Body Planner. Year 3 2012/13 be approved for use. Mr. Phillips seconded. Governors unanimously approved.

11.2. The Clerk agreed to e-mail a copy of the 4 Year Planner to Mrs. Limmer so that a copy could be made available to Members of Staff.

12. DASP. Mrs. Davis reported on the latest developments in the Partnership. She explained that because the last meeting had been called at such short notice Mrs. Campbell had attended on her behalf. Governors discussed the following points;

12.1. Budget. Representatives of Thomas Hardy Academy were clear that unless all the schools in the Partnership became academies to achieve better buying power, the School would be unable to continue with the present level of funding. Governors had a brief discussion concerning the position of First Schools within the Partnership. Governors agreed that the Governing Body would need to wait and see how matters developed.

13. Governor Visit Policy. Governors agreed to defer consideration of this matter until the next meeting.

14. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

14.1. Report of Environment & Premises Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 12/06/2012 Appendix 4)

Mr. Phillips spoke briefly to the minutes.

14.1.1. No further matters were discussed.

14.2. Report of Curriculum Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 14/06/2012 Appendix 5)

Mrs. Taylor spoke briefly to the minutes.

14.2.1. No further matters were discussed.

14.3. Report of Finance & People Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 11/06/2012 Appendix 6)

Mrs. Davis spoke briefly to the minutes.

14.3.1. No further matters were discussed.

14.4. Pay Committee. Governors were informed that the Pay Committee meeting had been cancelled as no Members of Staff were seeking criteria judged enhancements to pay.

15. Clerk's Report (Appendix 7).

15.1. Standing Orders. Governors were advised by the Clerk that there were no further suggested amendments to the standing orders. **Mr. Phillips proposed that the standing orders were approved until July 2013. Mrs. Davis seconded. Governors unanimously approved.**

15.2. Membership of the Governing Body.

15.2.1. Parent Governors. This matter had been discussed previously in Section 6.1

15.3. Membership of Committees and Named & Link Governors. Governors considered the deployment of Governors across the Committees and updated the Named and Link Governors. An updated copy to be circulated to Governors and to be placed in the correct section of the Governors' Handbook.

15.4. Annual Timetable and Management of Meetings. Governors agreed to the timetable as set out in Appendix 8.

16. Governor Visits & Training.

16.1. Feedback from Governor Training. No feedback was given.

16.2. Feedback from Governor Visits. No feedback was given.

17. Any Other Urgent Business.

17.1. Issue arising regarding policies after receiving a letter of complaint. The Chair reported that whilst dealing with a complaint it had come to the attention of the School that the Behaviour Policy whilst being approved by Governors in March 2009 did not indicate this fact on the front cover and appeared to indicate no approval. Governors discussed the process involved in updating Policies with the Clerk and Headteacher.

17.1.1. The Clerk and Headteacher agreed to liaise over the procedures and if possible have a named Member of Staff for the Clerk to contact in order that updated Policies were kept up to date and that the copies of Policies in School mirrored those kept by the Clerk on behalf of the Governing Body.

17.2. Director of Education (Dorset). The Chair informed Governors that no future Director Of Education had been appointed and in the interim Jackie Last had been appointed as Acting Director of Education. She stated that she would be inviting the Acting Director to a meeting at the School to discuss with her the present situation that Damers First School was in with regard to increasing numbers, inadequate buildings and little prospect of a new building. Governors suggested that Mr. Oliver Letwin MP be invited and Mr. Simon Coneybear.

17.3. The Chair of Governors thanked all Governors and Members of Staff for their input into the running of the Governing Body over the past year and wished everyone an enjoyable summer holiday.

The meeting concluded at 21.03 hours.

Date of next meeting. **Monday 1st October 2012** at 19.00 hours in the Main School Hall.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date

D.A.Hall.

Clerk / Manager to Governors.

3rd July 2012.