



DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Monday 3rd October 2011 at 19.00 hours.

Persons Present	CSA	Mr. L. Phillips, Mrs. C. Brotherwood.
	Community	Mrs. D. Taylor, (Vice-Chair of Governors). Ms. R. Bettenson,
	Elected Parent	Mrs. P. Campbell,
	Appointed Parent	Mrs. R. Davis (Chair of Governors).
	Acting Headteacher	Mrs. M. Bearwish.
	Teacher	Mrs. S. Limmer, Mr. P. Rothman.
	Support Staff	Mrs. S. Scott
	Clerk	Mr. D. Hall

Other Persons Present None were present.

1. **Welcome.** The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting and especially Mrs. Moira Bearwish in her capacity as Acting Headteacher. The Clerk informed Governors that although he had been expecting to welcome Mr. Paul Adams, the newly appointed Parent Governor to the meeting, Mr. Adams had been unable to be present on this occasion. His induction had been scheduled for Monday 10th October 2011 and the Clerk would be inviting Mr. Adams to attend a couple of the Committee meetings in November.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
 - 2.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. A. Caldwell, Mrs. S. Hosford, Mrs. T. Gedye, Mrs. A. Harries, Mr. T. Putnam and Mr. Paul Adams. Apologies were offered on behalf of Mrs. Scott who expected to be late for the meeting.
3. **Election of Chair and Vice – Chair.**

(Mrs. Davis left the meeting briefly)

 - 3.1. The Clerk advised Governors that although Mrs Davis' term of office would be complete in December it was possible to appoint her Chair of Governors until that time. Governors decided to discuss the possibility of appointing Mrs. Davis as an appointed Parent Governor or a Community Governor at this point in the meeting, even though the details formed part of the Clerk's Report. The Clerk advised Governors that it was possible to appoint Mrs Davis as an appointed Parent Governor as in the recent Parent elections there had be no candidates. Governors were of the opinion that it would be beneficial for diversity within the Governing Body to keep the possibility of appointing a person strongly linked with the community into the position of Community Governor.
 - 3.1.1. Ms. Bettenson proposed that Mrs. Ruth Davis be appointed a Parent Governor for a further term of office. Mrs. S. Limmer seconded.
 - 3.2. Nomination received for Chair; Mrs. Ruth Davis. Governors discussed the nomination.
 - 3.2.1. Mr. Phillips proposed that Mrs. R. Davis be appointed as the Chair of Governors for the academic year 2011/12. Mrs. P. Campbell seconded. Governors unanimously approved.
Mrs. Davis returned to the meeting and Governors congratulated her on her appointment.
(Mrs. Taylor briefly left the meeting)
 - 3.3. Nominations received for Vice-Chair; Mrs. Davina Taylor. Governors discussed the nomination.
 - 3.3.1. Mr. Phillips proposed that Mrs. D. Taylor be appointed as the Vice-Chair of Governors for the academic year 2011/12. Mr. P. Rothman seconded. Governors unanimously approved.
Mrs. Taylor returned to the meeting and Governors congratulated her on her appointment.
4. **Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business & Declaration of Interest.**
 - 4.1. **No matters were declared.**

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4.2. No Declarations of Interest were made.

5. Minutes.

5.1. Mrs. R. Davis proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th June 2011 were accepted as an accurate record. Mr. L. Phillips seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.

6. Matters Arising.

6.1. Action Plan. Item 1. Update Governors on the situation with regard to the possible secondment of the Headteacher to OfSTED for a period of 1 year. The Chair stated that this had now been put into action and Moira Bearwish was the Acting Headteacher until Phil Minn's return.

6.2. Action Plan. Item 2. Organise a further Parent Governor election at the beginning of the Autumn Term to include the names of those prospective Parents who have already indicated an interest. The Clerk reported that he had delayed the Parent Election until Governors had made a decision regarding the possible appointment of Ruth Davis as a Community Governor or an Appointed Parent Governor. Now that this decision had been made, the election could state that there were 2 vacancies for Parent Governors. The Chair stated that a Parents' Assembly had been arranged on Wednesday 5th October 2011 at 19.00 hours and she asked for volunteers to attend this meeting to be available to answer any questions about the Governing Body to prospective new Governors. Mrs. Taylor agreed to attend. Mrs. Davis advised that she would be there later after the meeting had started.

6.3. 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. Request for Authorised Absence. The Chair advised Governors that this had been requested for 2 Pupils to attend a wedding, one in Foundation and the other in Year 3. The younger Pupil was not of statutory age and therefore permission was not needed. In the case of the Year 3 pupil authorised absence was not granted in line with the current policy.

7.2. Letter requesting secondment and exchange from a Teacher. Governors were informed that a request had been made to exchange with another Teacher from the United States. The Chair stated that she would be meeting with the Teacher concerned together with Mrs. Bearwish to discuss the possibility. The Chair stated that she would e-mail Governors with information regarding any further developments.

7.3. National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH). Mrs. Bearwish reported to Governors that she had successfully completed a programme to start on her NPQH qualification. Mr. Minns had agreed to oversee this as her line-manager. However during this time Mr. Minns had successfully obtained a secondment to work with OfSTED for a year. On taking further advice it had been suggested that the Chair of Governors oversee this as she was in a position to know the school well, rather than have another Headteacher who did not. Mrs. Davis had kindly agreed to do this for Mrs. Bearwish. Mrs. Bearwish then advised Governors that several developmental targets would be agreed with an outside 'coach'. Additionally Mrs. Bearwish would be seeking a placement in another school for possibly 5 days. Several Governors were concerned that Mrs. Bearwish had adequate support for her role as Acting Headteacher and that enough of her present work had been delegated to other Members of Staff. Mrs. Campbell wanted to ensure that Mrs. Bearwish felt that the Governing Body was approachable with regard to requests for additional support if that was needed now or in the future. Mrs. Bearwish thanked the Governors for their support and explained that although some systems had been put in place before Mr. Minns left other areas would need to be looked at as the year progressed. Mrs. Davis informed Governors that at the Agenda Setting Meeting, the Clerk had advised that it was his understanding that another Member of Staff should always have the deputising for the Headteacher written into their contract in order that the school was fully covered. Mrs. Davis had taken advice from Human Resources at Dorset LA on the matter and it had been suggested that an appointed system showing who was deputising on particular days might be sufficient. However they were going to check that this information was correct. Governors discussed the fact that whilst the 2 Assistant Headteachers had volunteered to deputise for Mrs. Bearwish, there was no requirement in their contract for them to do so. Several Governors stated that it had been their understanding that Members of Staff would be elevated temporarily to cover all the aspects of the senior posts. Mrs. Davis stated that it was her understanding that this would be the case eventually but that certain aspects needed further clarification. She suggested that once she had received clarification and met with Senior Staff and drawn up a detailed plan that this would be shared with Members of the Governing Body and should address the concerns with regard to deputising for the Headteacher and Mrs. Bearwish's workload.

8. Chair's Report. (Appendix 1).

The Chair spoke briefly to her report. The following points were raised.

- 8.1. That the updated sheet concerning the link Governors had been circulated but that it needed further discussion to complete it. Governors agreed to defer further consideration of this matter until more Members of the Governing Body were present at the next meeting.
 - 8.1.1. The Clerk agreed to include discussion about link Governors as a separate agenda item for the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.
(Mrs. Scott arrived at 19.42 hours)
- 8.2. The Chair reminded Governors that they were welcome to attend any of the Committee meetings. Ms. Bettenson and Mrs. Taylor had been attending the Finance & Staffing Committee meetings on a temporary basis due to the low numbers. They had both found this a very beneficial experience. She suggested that she would like to have a discussion about formalising this for the benefit of all Governors. Several Governors thought that it would be a very good idea and several suggestions were made. After further discussion it was decided to ask the Clerk to include as a separate agenda item for each of the committees a further discussion on this matter to include how to formalise it and also exactly what the expectation would be for each individual in terms of attendance.

9. School Development Plan

9.1. School Aims.

Governors were reminded that Members had recently reviewed the latest School Maintenance Plan and aims within the Committee structure. Governors agreed that it made sense to continue to adopt these aims as they had been generated as part of the consultation process with Staff, Parents and Governors. The aims are listed below;

- 9.1.1. **We are a caring community where safety is given a high priority and is embedded in our everyday practice.**
- 9.1.2. **We have a healthy & confident community free from bullying and discrimination.**
- 9.1.3. **Our distinctive curriculum, innovative teaching and creative learning enables all children to succeed.**
- 9.1.4. **Our children are positive about themselves, their future and their contribution to the community.**
- 9.1.5. **Children make good choices and are able to directly impact on the work of the School.**
- 9.1.6. **We are happy organisation where individuals and resources are valued and are well cared for.**
- 9.1.7. **Mrs. Davis proposed that the Governing Body continue to adopt the aims in the School Maintenance Plan as the aims for the School as itemised in sections 9.1.1 to 9.1.6. Mr. Phillips seconded. Governors agreed unanimously. Governors would use the school aims as a focus reminder at the beginning of each new school year.**

9.2. Service Development Plan

Mrs. Bearwish outlined the main provisions in the Service Development Plan for the next year although she commented that the priorities would probably take between 2 and 3 years to achieve as they were very ambitious. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) would be working on the detailed action plans for each of the priorities and that these would be shared with Governors at a later stage. These action plans would state what would aim to be achieved in a year. The key priorities were as follows;

- 9.2.1. **Overall Aim; To further develops the quality of Teaching in the School.**
 - 9.2.1.1. Priority 1. Differentiation
 - 9.2.1.1.1. Outcome 1. Learning activities match pupil ability and offer appropriate challenge.
 - 9.2.1.1.2. Outcome 2. All Pupils make good progress.
 - 9.2.1.2. Priority 2. Peer & Self Assessment.
 - 9.2.1.2.1. Outcome 1. Pupils have critical skills when reflecting on their own work and that of their peers.
 - 9.2.1.2.2. Outcome 2. Pupils are aware of their own targets for improvement.
 - 9.2.1.3. Priority 3. Subject leadership.
 - 9.2.1.3.1. Outcome 1. A common approach to subject leadership exists within the School.
 - 9.2.1.3.2. Outcome 2. Subject Leaders are able to identify the strengths and areas for development in their subject and show the impact of their leadership.
 - 9.2.1.4. Priority 4. Communication.
 - 9.2.1.4.1. Outcome 1. The views of Parents are sought to identify and improve communication.

9.2.1.4.2. Outcome 2. Specific Guidance is available to parents showing the level of support they can expect and what to do if things go wrong.

9.2.2. Mrs. Bearwish advised Governors that before Mr. Minns left he had suggested that the fourth priority be dropped. Governors discussed the importance of the fourth priority. Mrs. Limmer and Mrs. Scott reported that in recent Parental Questionnaires, Parents had suggested that some forms of communication were only adequate. Mrs. Limmer stated that keeping the School Website up to date was an important part of this and that the Job Description for the ICT Technician would need to include this. The majority of Governors agreed that the 4th priority was a very important one and that they would like to see it retained. Mrs. Bearwish advised that whilst the priority could be retained it was necessary to have Staff to manage this in order to drive the initiative forward. She reminded Governors that the Service Development Plan was considered to be 20% of the overall plan and was concerned with initiatives that would have a special emphasis in the coming year whilst the Damer's Maintenance Plan monitored the delivery of the remainder (80%). Several items in the Maintenance Plan were about maintaining good Parent-School Communication. Mrs. Bearwish suggested that she have a discussion with the SLT, to see if there were sufficient Staff Resources to enable the School to work on the 4th priority and if so an Action Plan would be produced. Governors would then have an opportunity on the advice of the SLT to be able to decide whether to include the 4th priority on communication or not.

9.3. Damers Maintenance Plan. (Appendix 2). Governors were reminded that the monitoring of the Damers Maintenance Plan had now been distributed across the Committees and the presentation of reports had been integrated into the 4 Year Governing Body Planner. Mrs. Bearwish circulated an example of the Pro-Formas for reporting on the Key Performance Indicators. (KPIs). Governors agreed that these reports were not onerous and would form a useful tool to check on the performance of the school against the KPIs.

9.4. Review & Set Attendance Targets.

Mrs. Bearwish reported that the latest attendance data indicated that attendance was currently 95.5%. This was significantly above the Dorset average for attendance and the national average of 94.7%. Governors discussed the present upward trend. Mrs. Bearwish advised Governors that with rigorous procedures in place it was going to get increasingly difficult to increase attendance significantly above the present rates and that Governors needed to consider this when setting the new targets. After further discussion Governors still considered that the school should set an aspirational rate of 95.7% for the coming year, 0.2% above the present target.

9.4.1. *Mrs. Davis proposed that the Governing Body set an aspirational attendance rate of 95.7% as a target for this academic year. Mrs. Taylor seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.*

10. Performance Management of the Headteacher.

Governors were informed that Mrs. Taylor would be meeting with the SEP to discuss the Acting Headteacher's Performance Management Targets. Mrs. Taylor indicated that these had already been discussed with Mr. Minns as at the time Mr. Minns was the line manager. This meeting was due to take place on the 20th October 2011.

11. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

11.1. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 12/09/2011 Appendix 3)

Mrs. Davis spoke briefly to the minutes.

11.1.1. Ratification of Chair of Finance & Staffing Committee.

11.1.1.1. *Mr. Philips proposed that the Governing Body ratify the appointment of Mrs. Davis as Chair of the Finance & Staffing Committee for the next academic year. Mrs. Campbell seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.*

11.1.2. Ratification of Vice-Chair of Finance & Staffing Committee.

11.1.2.1. *Ms. Bettenson proposed that the Governing Body ratify the appointment of Mrs. Campbell as Vice-Chair of the Finance & Staffing Committee for the next academic year. Mr. Phillips seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.*

11.1.3. Governor Allowance Policy

11.1.3.1. *Mrs. Brotherwood proposed that on the recommendation of the Committee the Governors' Allowance Policy was approved. Mrs. Campbell seconded. Governors unanimously approved.*

- 11.1.4. Virements.** *Ms. Bettenson proposed that on the recommendation of the Finance Committee the virements listed in sections 11.1.4.1 to 11.1.4.4 be approved. Mrs. Campbell seconded. Governors unanimously approved.*
- 11.1.4.1. £250 from A/C 610 to CCE.** This amount has to be sent back to the Royal Opera House as they mistakenly sent 2 grants of £250 instead of 1.
- 11.1.4.2. £6,000 from A/C 610 to CCE.** This was funding for the Film Project and was a virement from an income code to a spending code. This funding has already been spent and is the final payment.
- 11.1.4.3. £5096 from A/C 610 to Support Staff.** This is the amount charged to Dorchester Middle School for the services of Rowan Seymour as Transition Mentor. In the future the School will be charging for Ms. Seymour's travelling expenses.
- 11.1.4.4. £224 from A/C 610 to Support Staff.** This is the amount charged to Cerne Abbas School for the services of Rowan Seymour as Transition Mentor. In the future the School will be charging for Ms. Seymour's travelling expenses.
- 11.2. Report of Environment Committee.** (Minutes of Meeting 13/09/2011 Appendix 4)
Ms. Bettenson spoke briefly to the minutes.
- 11.2.1. Ratification of Chair of Environment Committee.**
- 11.2.1.1. *Mrs. Davis proposed that the Governing Body ratify the appointment of Mr. Phillips as Chair of the Environment Committee for the next academic year. Mrs. Taylor seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.***
- 11.2.2. Ratification of Vice-Chair of Environment Committee.**
- 11.2.2.1. *Ms. Bettenson proposed that the Governing Body ratify the appointment of Mrs. Scott as Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee for the next academic year. Mrs. Taylor seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.***
- 11.3. Report of Curriculum Committee.** (Minutes of Meeting 15/09/2011 Appendix 5)
Mrs. Taylor spoke briefly to the minutes.
- 11.3.1. Ratification of Chair of Curriculum Committee.**
- 11.3.1.1. *Mr. Philips proposed that the Governing Body ratify the appointment of Mrs. Taylor as Chair of the Curriculum Committee for the next academic year. Mr. Rothman seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.***
- 11.3.2. Ratification of Vice-Chair of Curriculum Committee.**
- 11.3.2.1. *Mrs. Taylor proposed that the Governing Body ratify the appointment of Mr. Putnam as Vice-Chair of the Curriculum Committee for the next academic year. Ms. Bettenson seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.***
- 11.3.3. Reviewing Curriculum Policies.** Governors agreed to ask the Clerk to include a separate agenda item at the next meeting of the Full Governing Body to consider how the process could be made more effective.
- 12. Terms of Reference for Committees and Groups.** Governors had previously discussed the Terms of Reference in Committee.
- 12.1. *Mrs. Taylor proposed that the Terms of Reference for Committees and Groups were approved. Mr. Phillips seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.***
- 13. Register of Business Interests & Code of Conduct.** Governors agreed to defer consideration of this matter until the next meeting as several Governors were not present.
- 14. Clerk's Report. (Appendix 6).**
- 14.1. Membership of the Governing Body.** Governors had discussed the contents of this item at the same time as considering the election of Chair of Governors in section 3.1.
- 15. Any Other Urgent Business.**
- 15.1. None was declared.**

The meeting concluded at 20.25 hours.

Date of next meeting. **Monday 28th November 2011** at 19.00 hours in school.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date

D.A.Hall.

Clerk / Manager to Governors.

12th October 2011.