



DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Tuesday 7th May 2013 at 19.00 hours.

Persons Present	CSA	Mr. L. Phillips. Mrs. M. Moss Mrs. S. Hosford
	Community	Mrs. D. Taylor (Vice- Chair of Governors) Ms. R. Bettenson Mr. P. Rothman Mr. T. Putnam
	Parent	Mrs. R. Davis (Chair of Governors) Mrs. P. Campbell Mr. P. Adams Mr. T. Barnes
	Acting Headteacher Teacher	Mrs. M. Bearwish. Mrs. S. Prendergast Mrs. G. O'Donnell
	Support Staff Clerk	Mrs. S. Scott Mr. D. Hall

Other Persons Present Mrs. Diane Coker (Finance Officer).
Mrs. E. Goodridge.

1. **Welcome.** The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
 - 2.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. J. Wibley. Apologies were given on behalf of Mrs. S. Scott who expected to be late for the meeting. No apologies had been received from Mr. G. Rolfe.
3. **Item 4. Budget 2013/14. (Appendix 1)**

Governors agreed to consider this item at this point in the meeting as the Finance Officer was present to answer any questions or provide further background information. Governors were circulated with the final budget papers and the assumptions behind the budget sheets and given several minutes to scrutinise them. Governors briefly scrutinised each of the headings giving a total planned revenue spend of £1,631,103. Mrs. Coker explained that the Draft Budget had been reviewed by the Finance & Staffing Committee at their last Committee Meeting. Very slight adjustments had been made between the Budget seen then and the Final Budget 2013/14 being presented to the Full Governing Body. Governors were advised that Mr. Minns had been instrumental in formulating the Draft Budget 2013/14 before he left for his new post.

 - 3.1. **Carry Forward.** Governors noted that the carry forward figures projected for the next 3 years were 2013/14, £120,000, 2014/2015, £120,000 and 2015/2016, £129,578. This was within the permitted 8% of total Budget. The final carry forward figure for the end of the financial year 2012/13 would not be known until completion of month 13 at the end of May 2013. This figure would be reported to the Governing Body as soon as it was known.
 - 3.2. **Staffing Costs.** The Finance Officer highlighted section 4 in the Assumptions behind the Budget Sheet which indicated that the percentage of year funding spent on Staffing would be 79%. This was compared to a national average of 80%.
 - 3.3. **School Development Priorities (SDP).** Governors considered if the Draft Budget matched the priorities in the current School Development Plan. Mrs. Bearwish reported that the current SDP priorities would remain the same until it was possible to discuss any prospective new priorities and the progress towards implementation of the current priorities with the newly appointed Headteacher. Mrs. Catherine Smith (Headteacher), would be visiting the School on several occasions in the summer term to become

acquainted with the Staff and School. Mrs. Bearwish would be outlining for Governors some of the new priorities, that in her opinion would be key to progressing the School further, but that these would have to be finally agreed between the Governing Body and the new Headteacher. The cost to the Budget of most of the identified priorities would largely be covered by supply cover or built in PPA time as Staff would lead most of the training themselves. Governors were satisfied that sufficient funds were available to progress the current SDP priorities into the next educational year and also that the funding in the unallocated heading would be sufficient to match any funding requirements needed for the New School Development Plan (SDP).

3.4. Total Planned Spending. £1,631,103. Governors noted that this total balanced the income streams and included a carry forward figure of £120,000. This being less than the permitted 8% as previously stated.

3.5. Assumptions behind the Budget Sheet. Governors together with the Acting Headteacher scrutinised each of the assumptions made behind the budget and were satisfied with the explanations given.

3.6. Following the review of the Final Budget 2013/14 and the Assumptions Behind the Budget Form several questions were asked. The questions and responses by the Mrs. Diane Coker and Mrs. Bearwish are summarised below:

3.6.1. The projected Teaching Staffing costs increase significantly between 2013/14 and 2014/15 from £855,417 to £920,935. What assumptions are being made to explain this increase? Mrs. Coker advised Governors that Mrs. Lisa Keys, a Leading Skills Teacher had been seconded to work in other schools. During this period she had taken maternity leave. The position of Leading Skills Teacher was being phased out and the salaries of Members of Staff were being protected for 2 years. This increase included part of the protection. Additionally the increase was required to cover projected increases in salaries for relatively new Members of the Teaching profession who were likely to have increases in that period.

3.6.2. Has all funding been delegated to Schools to cover the Service Level Agreements (SLAs)? Mrs. Coker advised Governors that funding had been delegated to cover the SLAs. There were a few new SLAs in the next financial year, The Disaster Recovery Plan being one of them. It was expected that other services being provided at the present time by Dorset LA through retained funds would become part of the Service Level Agreement programme in the future that Schools could choose to purchase. The situation would be carefully monitored and any further changes reported to the Governing Body.

3.6.3. No further questions were asked.

(Mr. Paul Adams arrived at (19.13 hours)

3.7. Mrs. Davis proposed that the Governing Body approve the 2013/14 Budget as itemised in Appendix 1 and ask the Chair of Governors to sign it on their behalf. Mr. P. Rothman seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.

(Mrs. D. Coker left at 19.15 hours)

4. Item 3 Teacher Led Briefing to Governors on Literacy.

Governors agreed to consider the Teacher Led Briefing on Literacy at this point in the meeting. Mrs. Goodridge highlighted some of the key developments and areas covered since the last presentation to the Governing Body. They were;

4.1. Developments this year.

4.1.1. Completed the all school American Project in the Autumn Term.

4.1.2. The Reading Research Project had been successfully launched. The key focus of this project was to discover what makes a life-long reader. Different year groups were looking at different aspects of the focus question. Special Book corners had been created to enhance the engagement of Pupils with books. Staff had indicated that there had been real enthusiasm by Pupils with regard to the Book corners and Pupils who were not normally engaged with reading were visiting on a regular basis.

(Mrs. Sandra Scott arrived at 19.17)

4.1.3. Additional reading resources for the library and the classrooms had been purchased.

4.1.4. Investigations were being made into the provision of 'Bug Club'. This was a subscription online reading resource that made e-books available to Pupils at home and in school.

4.2. Progress.

4.2.1. The School endeavours to make 4 point progress in literacy per year. At this point in the year the averages for the School are; 2.4 points in writing and 2.6 points in reading. This indicates that we are presently on track to meet our overall target.

4.2.2. Regular audits are made by Individual Staff and Senior Staff on the progress of Pupils. We look at vulnerable groups of Pupils and compare their progress with other groups. Interventions are used where they will support the Pupil further.

4.3. The Future.

4.3.1. The phonic test will be taking place in the Summer Term. Early indications are that the present cohort of Pupils are very strong in this area.

4.3.2. Exciting developments are taking place with the purchase of a class set of iPads. Mrs. Goodridge described to Governors some of the work produced with iPads by very young Pupils.

4.3.3. As part of the Reading Project, several year group book launches will take place over several evenings. Governors were invited to attend.

4.4. Following the presentation several questions were asked. The questions and responses by the Mrs. Ellie Goodridge are summarised below:

4.4.1. Do all Pupils have access to Computers at home in order to make use of the proposed 'Bug Club'?
The majority of Pupils do have access at home to computers but in addition, access will be provided through a computer club held after school.

4.4.2. What is the gap between the performance of Free School meals Pupils and the mainstream in Literacy? Mrs. Bearwish explained that understanding the difference in the performance of the Pupils and the underlying reasons for this was part of the overall Continuous Professional Development and Reading Project. Mrs. Moss suggested that it would be useful to present this comparison at future briefings where this information was available.

4.4.3. Governors discussed with Mrs. Goodridge the presentation and no further questions were asked.

4.5. The Chair thanked Mrs. Goodridge for her informative presentation.

(Mrs. Ellie Goodridge left at 19.30 hours.)

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

5.1. No Urgent Business was Declared.

5.2. No Declarations of Interest were made.

6. Minutes.

6.1. Mrs. R. Davis proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2013 were accepted as an accurate record. Mrs. P. Campbell seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.

6.2. Mrs. R. Davis proposed that the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 25th April 2013 were accepted as an accurate record. Mrs. M. Moss seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.

7. Matters Arising & Action Plan.

7.1. Minutes of the 25th March 2013.

7.1.1. Action Plan. Item 1. Complete the Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery Plan and place this Action on to the Finance & Staffing Committee Action Plan. The Clerk stated that this matter had been actioned by the Finance & Staffing Committee. The Service Level Agreement supporting the future production of this Plan had been purchased as further information about the SLA had made the School consider this as best value until the Plan had been established. Governors would monitor the situation in the future to consider if it was best value and review the situation at that time.

7.1.2. Action Plan. Item 2. Contact new Governors to begin the mentoring process. Mentor Governors reported their progress towards meeting and mentoring new Governors. The Chair asked that any outstanding commitments to mentoring could be completed as soon as possible.

7.1.3. Action Plan. Item 3. Consider including the Assessment Briefing given by Mrs. Ellie Goodridge on a future agenda of the Full Governing Body. The Chair reported that due to Governor commitments with the appointment of a new Headteacher the agendas had been full recently. The Chair suggested that this matter be considered at the first meeting of the Full Governing Body in September as the Next meeting would include a presentation by the Junior Governors as part of Pupil Voice. Governors asked that this matter be retained on the Action Plan until completed.

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

7.2. Minutes of the 25th April 2013.

7.2.1. No matters arising were discussed. No Action Plan was produced for these minutes.

8. Correspondence.

8.1. Letter from a Member of Staff requesting two separate day's leave of absence to attend sons' graduations. Two separate children. Governors discussed this request.

8.1.1. Governors unanimously agreed to this request and granted 2 paid day's leave of absence on condition that suitable arrangements could be made if one of the days was on the first day of the September Term.

8.2. Letter from a Member of Staff requesting a 2 day's leave of absence to attend a graduation ceremony. Governors were informed of certain family circumstances that needed an additional day. Governors discussed this request.

8.2.1. Governors unanimously agreed to this request and granted 1 paid day's leave of absence and 1 unpaid.

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

The Chair circulated her Report. Governors were given a moment to read the Report. The following points were highlighted;

9.1. Headteacher Appointment. The Chair thanked Staff and Governors for their efforts in the appointment of a New Headteacher. Mrs. Catherine Smith would be visiting the School on several occasions this term to become better acquainted with Staff, Governors and Pupils. The school looked forward to an exciting future.

9.2. Federation. Governors asked the Chair what advantages there would be to the School if it federated. The Chair was of the opinion that at the moment she could see no advantages to being federated with other schools. However Mrs. Bearwish and herself were attending a DASP Conference on Friday morning where an invited speaker would be outlining some of the strong advantages to federating. Governors were directed to the Staffordshire LA website which had some very useful information about schools federating in that county. Several Governors asked if the Conference was being hosted by DASP because there was a hidden agenda? The Chair suggested that the reason DASP was hosting the Conference was because the small schools in DASP had not been keen on becoming academies and that possible federation was seen as a way of protecting the small schools in the DASP Partnership.

9.2.1. The Chair agreed to update the Governing Body on any further information concerning the Conference at the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.

10. Strategic Development Plan

10.1. Consider the progress made on the priorities identified in this educational year. Mrs. Bearwish circulated the School Priority Review (Appendix 3). She advised Governors that the evaluations had not been completed in terms of Teaching and Pupil attainment as the priorities still had a term to complete. This Report was an interim Report. Governors considered the following together with the notes;

10.1.1. Teaching & Learning.

10.1.1.1. Induction. A high priority this year with a significant number of new Staff.

10.1.1.2. NQT Programme. 2 Staff on this programme which involves time outside the classroom. This ensures that new Staff are fully supported. These Staff are not part of the Performance Management Programme until they have completed their NQT training.

10.1.1.3. CPD & Staff Development. This is a vast programme of work essential to the professional development of Staff.

10.1.1.4. Peer Observation. Finance & Committee Members had already listen to a detailed presentation on the CPD programmes which included a large section on Peer Observation and the profound benefits it was having on Teaching and Learning. It was also very important in promoting a high level of trust.

10.1.1.5. Moderation. This is key to making successful and accurate judgements about Pupils.

10.1.1.6. TLR Development. The Members of Staff with TLRs were new post holders. They were responsible for delivering the Creative Learning Project for which they are held accountable. To be in receipt of a TLR means that the Member of Staff concerned is accountable for making a significant impact on the School.

10.1.1.7. Middle Leader Course.

10.1.1.8. Foundation Outside Space.

10.1.2. Reading Project.

10.1.2.1. Engagement / Motivation. This is profoundly important as the levels of engagement and motivation are a good indication of a child's well-being.

10.1.2.2. Environment. Reading areas completely revamped in order to engage more fully with Pupils. This had been a great success with the development of special reading areas mimicking areas from literature e.g. the wardrobe entrance in Narnia.

10.1.2.3. Resources. More use will be made of ICT to promote reading as described earlier in the meeting in the Teacher Led Briefing on Literacy.

10.1.2.4. Choice

10.1.2.5. Pupil Voice. Junior Governors have just started to evaluate with Pupils the engagement and motivation in reading. The result will be reported back to Governors in the Pupil Voice presentation by Junior Governors at the next meeting of the Governing Body.

10.1.2.6. Guided Reading. Quality of practice is improving across all year groups.

10.1.3. Narrow the Gap.

10.1.3.1. Pupil Premium. The attainment gap between Pupils in receipt of free school meals and those not in receipt is smaller than nationally. Mrs. Bearwish reminded Governors that increasing accountability for the way Pupil Premium Funding was deployed and its impact would mean that reports on these groups would need to be completed more regularly than as at present on an annual basis. The Clerk advised Governors that these reports had already been included on the 4 year GB Planner for the next academic year and were termly.

10.2. Consideration of the priorities for the New Strategic Development Plan. Mrs. Bearwish circulated the School Priority Overview Plan (Appendix 4). She advised Governors that these suggestions for the priorities in the next SDP would need to be agreed with the new Headteacher early in the September Term. Mrs. Moss commented that it would be important that these were agreed and the funding allocated otherwise not only would there be a late start in working towards the priorities but also the School might face a similar one to that experienced this year with funding not being spent early in the year and leading to a large potential carry forward. Governors agreed that the agreement of the SDP and costing would need to be a priority.

10.2.1. Mrs. Bearwish agreed to formulate a more detailed overview of the priorities with approximate costings in terms of Staffing and resources and present it to the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.

10.2.2. The Clerk agreed to include consideration of the SDP priorities and costings together with the Budget Allocations as a separate agenda item for the next meeting.

10.3. Governors had previously whilst considering the Budget, ensured that the recommendations from the SEP matched possible priorities in the SDP. The Chair confirmed that included in the Budget was a sum of £23,000 that could be allocated to the SDP priorities once they had been agreed.

11. DASP / First School Provision in Dorchester.

11.1. The Chair advised Governors that a paper being presented to Dorset LA Cabinet concerning the first School Provision in Dorset was removed from the agenda due to the elections taking place in the County. As soon as any further information was known this would be communicated to the Governing Body.

12. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

12.1. Report of Environment & Premises Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 23/04/2013 Appendix 5)

Mr. Phillips spoke briefly to the minutes.

12.1.1. Mr. Phillips reported that Members of the Committee had toured the refurbished swimming pool and were delighted with the transformation. He asked that the thanks of the Governing Body to the volunteer parents who gave up much of their time to assist with the refurbishment, be recorded.

12.2. Report of Curriculum Committee.

12.2.1. The Clerk reported that the scheduled meeting had been cancelled due to a clash with the interview for a new Headteacher.

12.3. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 22/04/2013 Appendix 6)

12.3.1. Emergency Chair's Action regarding ICT. Governors discussed the emergency action taken by the Chair. This action had been detailed in the notes of the Finance & Staffing Committee but in summary included the authorisation of emergency work to the School Server and the update of the internal School Network in order that all the terminals were functioning so that the Teaching and learning in the School was not seriously compromised.

12.3.1.1. Governors unanimously ratified the Chair's Emergency Action

12.3.2. Headteacher's Spending Limits and Virement Controls.

12.3.2.1. Governors briefly discussed the accountability of any spending undertaken by a Headteacher up to the agreed limits. Mr. Rothman suggested that the Governing Body should be made aware of any spending undertaken up to this limit. The Chair stated that the Finance & Staffing Committee regularly scrutinised the spending every half-term and that

discussions were reported to all Governors through the Committee Minutes. After further discussion Governors agreed to trial a report on the Headteacher's spending on larger items of between £2,000 -£5,000. Mrs. Bearwish agreed to contact Mrs. Coker (Finance Officer) to consider if this information could be quickly provided by the ICT administration systems.

12.3.2.2. Mrs. Davis proposed that the Governing Body approve the following Headteacher's Spending limits and Virement Controls. Mrs. Taylor seconded. Governors unanimously approved;

12.3.2.2.1. The Governing Body to delegate the day to day management of the Budget to the Headteacher.

12.3.2.2.2. To have recourse to a limit of £5000 without reference to the Governing Body.

12.3.2.2.3. For major capital works between £5001 & £10,000 prior approval is needed from the Governing Body using best value principles and in line with the procedures outlined in the Financial Management Policy.

12.3.2.2.4. All virements to be minuted and accepted at the meetings of the Full Governing Body.

13. Governor Visits & Training.

13.1. Feedback from Governor Training. Governors together with the Clerk reviewed the effectiveness of the present arrangements for training. Governors were satisfied that notification of forthcoming courses was effective through the committee structure and via the e-magazine 'Dorset Governor'. Several Governors were of the opinion that there were less courses available than previously.

13.2. Feedback from Governor Visits. The majority of Governors had been visiting School in the recent Headteacher appointment process.

13.3. New Governor Induction. Governors reviewed the present arrangements for the Induction of New Governors. Several Governors commented that they found the present induction arrangements useful. The Clerk reminded Governors to advise him of any useful changes to the induction process that would enable new Governors to become established more quickly.

14. Any Other Urgent Business.

14.1. No Urgent Business was discussed.

The meeting concluded at 20.50 hours.

Date of next meeting, **Monday 1st July 2013** at 19.00 hours in school. To include a presentation by Junior Governors.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date

D. A. Hall.

Clerk / Manager to Governors.

11th May 2013.