



DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Monday 30th June 2014 at 19.00 hours.

Persons Present		
CSA		Mrs. M. Moss (Chair of Governors) Mrs. P. Campbell (Vice Chair)
Community		Ms. R. Bettenson Mr. P. Rothman Mr. T. Putnam
Parent		Mr P Adams Mr. T. Barnes Mrs. J. Wibley
Headteacher		Mrs. C. Smith
Teacher		Mrs. S. Prendergast
Support		Mrs S Scott
Associate Member		Mrs. M. Bearwish Miss Rachel Nesbitt Ms E Goodridge
Clerk		Mr. J Quinton

Other Persons Present Mrs Daly and Mrs Harvey, Parent Governors elect attended as observers

- Welcome.** The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting and the newly elected Parent Governors.
- Report from Junior Governors – End of Year Review**
(SDP Quality of Teaching Objective – To ensure that outstanding learning and teaching are in place across the school)

Governors received the end of the year report from 3 representatives of the Junior Governors. This was in the form of a powerpoint presentation detailing the work undertaken over the year to date.

The Junior Governors reported that they had conducted their work through questionnaires and a blog with the aim of improving the education experience at the school and to ensure that pupils had an enjoyable and safe environment. They had conducted a review of the Storytelling project which revealed that the project had given pupils more confidence, enthusiasm and improved expression and more exciting storytelling skills. During Anti- Bullying week, friendship pals had been arranged whereby pupils were encouraged to do something nice for their “pals” during the week with the aim of making pupils feel safer and happier at school. Two Twilight sessions were arranged to explore what pupils thought of the school and updating their involvement in ICT. A school mosaic was designed based on the schools aims and values and drawings were prepared and submitted to designers. A playground charter was prepared that was based around safety, responsibility, respect and the right to be heard. The motto of the charter was shared friendship that included everyone. A whole school questionnaire was circulated based on the curriculum which revealed that pupils enjoyed helping others, being experts and performing and shaping their learning.

A pupil questionnaire revealed that most pupils felt safe and happy within school, that behaviour was good most or all of the time, that teaching was good and that any problems were resolved.

The Chair and Governors thanked the Junior Governors for their fascinating and detailed report.

3. Apologies for Absence

3.1. Apologies for absence were given and approved for Mr Davidson.

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

4.1. No Matters of Urgent Business were declared.

4.2. No declarations of interest were made.

5. Minutes.

5.1. *Mrs Wibley proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th May 2014 be accepted as an accurate record. Mrs. P. Campbell seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.*

6. Matters Arising & Action Plan.

6.1. Action Plan. The Chair reported that the updated contact details for Governors would be placed on the secure Governors website, the letting agreement was on the agenda, log on details for the Governors Support website would be given to Governors when they had completed the ICT Security declaration (copy available at the meeting), the DASP budget figures had been reported to the Finance Committee, the Body Building exercise with Governors had been conducted and the final budget had been submitted on time.

7. Correspondence.

7.1. The Headteacher reported correspondence from the SEN team concerning the possibility of placing a Year 3 child with very specific needs within the school. Ultimately the child's parents decided to home tutor the child but the SEN team at Dorset County Council had been very positive about the School's response to the initial request for the placement in terms of how the school could address the pupil's needs.

7.2. The Headteacher reported a letter from Natterjacks Swimming Club which requested that following the recent relaxation of the conditions attached to the conviction of one of their organisers, that person could now enter the Damers Road premises. The Safeguarding team at DCC were very clear that this was a decision that only the Head teacher could make and on that basis she reported that she had no reason to prevent the person from operating at the school. Arrangements had been put in place for the two main swimming clubs to have separate and individual nights at the pool from September. In response to a question from a governor the Headteacher reported that Thomas Hardye had put in place similar arrangements for that person to use their pool.

(Mrs Scott left the meeting during the consideration of this item)

8. Headteacher's Report.

(SDP Link – End of Year Review of all aspects of the current SDP and key priorities for the new one)

Mrs Smith introduced her report which had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting which outlined progress in key priorities highlighted in the School Development Plan (SDP) as follows:-

Develop the use of ICT – this was one of the areas identified in the last inspection report. A significant amount of work had taken place and an updated ICT log was circulated to Governors.

Achievement – A Governor asked if reports to parents on pupil progress could be made earlier than the end of term. Mrs Smith replied that a key part of the new SDP would be about how to engage better with parents but the difficulty was finding the right level. It was suggested that parents could be informed of progress at the parents evening so that there was time to rectify issues before the end of term. Mrs Smith said that this would already take place as part of the parent/teacher discussion but additional information sharing was being explored for those parents who would like more.

Quality of Teaching – Mrs Smith reported that now that whole-school data is more secure it will now be easier to highlight outstanding teaching where it exists across the school. The triangulation of data until this point has meant that it was difficult to prove outstanding progress with unrealistic end of KS1 data. Although the majority of teaching is reported as at least consistently good the percentage of outstanding teaching will now increase. In response to questions from governors, Mrs Smith confirmed that there were some areas where teachers had not reached the required levels. However these teachers were receiving specific and additional support, the impact of this support is now evident and there were no capability issues. Mrs Smith replied to governors' questions that, in terms of continuing professional development, systems were now in place to track and monitor this but that further work needed to be done as a matter of urgency to ensure that we have systems in place to evaluate its impact.

Behaviour and Safety – Mrs Smith highlighted the work with the DCC Behaviour Support team to audit the school's current behaviour strategies as a result of staff and pupil questionnaires that indicated there were some inconsistencies. A detailed review and subsequent renewal of the whole-school behaviour policy will begin in the autumn as part of the new SDP.

Leadership and Management – Mrs Smith highlighted that this was an exciting time in terms of the developing role of the middle leadership team. TLR holders are now strategically placed to lead each year team to ensure good communications and consistency of school improvement messages across all year groups. Middle leaders will now play a more strategic role in school improvement and although involved in Performance Management this year this will now be extended so that they are working more closely and more regularly with the SLT.

Office report – Mrs Smith emphasised the hard work and rigour that went into improving the attendance statistics to 96.5% for 2014.

9. Pupil Premium – End of Year Review

(SDP – Achievement Objective – To narrow the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils)

As part of the previous item Mrs Smith updated governors on the data capture for Pupil Premium funding (PPF) for 2012/13 and the key developments that had been put in place for 2013/14. The data for 12/13 indicated that the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium children was widening and that the average points score in all areas at the end of KS1 and Year 4 was below Dorset and national levels. Children had been leaving our school approximately 3 pts behind their non-PP peers in reading, writing and maths (this equates to approximately a year behind) Accordingly the focus for 13/14 was to narrow that gap through strong leadership and urgent intervention work. The data showed that for 13/14 the gap had indeed narrowed across the board with APS at KS1 higher than national levels and much better progress in KS2. The gap has narrowed in writing between the end of KS1 and Year 4, remained the same in maths and widened slightly in reading. Mrs Smith said that it was important to note that in the context of a significant widening for this group at the end of Year 3 this was really pleasing data and a much healthier picture than last year. It had been a challenge to narrow the gap in reading due to one individual case that had had an impact on overall data but a case study had been put together to explain the story behind this case.

The Chair emphasised that this was due to the huge amount of hard work by the Headteacher and the staff.

A governor asked how this data could be challenged and the Headteacher responded by informing all governors that all of this data could be checked at any time through the pupil tracker data and the triangulation of progress within books and lesson observations. Mrs Smith suggested further Governor involvement in this area as talking to individual children to triangulate data and evidence of intervention was a very valuable process.

The Chair also referred to the RAISE on line report which was due in October/November as this should collaborate the same picture. A Governor session will be provided to explain the new RAISE online data.

10. Sports Funding Update

(SDP Leadership and Management Objective – To improve sports provision through effective targeted use of sports funding)

Mrs Smith reported that the impact and outcome of the use of sports funding was currently being analysed. When this was completed the report would be circulated to governors together with a request for a new governor to lead in this area of the school's work. (Post meeting note – Frankie Daly will now act as link governor for this area)

The Chair suggested that this was something junior governors might wish to look at in 2014/15.

11. Academy Update

(SDP Leadership and Management Objective – To enhance and further develop partnership working)

The Chair updated governors on recent meetings with the DfE regarding academy status. She was of the view that this was government policy and one that wasn't going to disappear soon. The governors needed to think about the local picture and what would benefit the school and its children most. The Chair described the various models of academies and multi-academy trusts (MATs). She felt that a vertical MAT option involving Dorchester Middle School (DMS) and Thomas Hardye (TH) offered more for the school and its children.

Mrs Smith reported on some work that a group of governors and her had done on the school's strengths and weaknesses in relation to partnerships. She felt that all that the school was committed to could be achieved in a number of ways and that teaching school alliances as well as MATs should be explored. The timescale within which THS wished to progress this matter meant that Damers were not in position to be involved and that therefore they should monitor progress.

Mrs Smith confirmed that there was a further meeting the following week with the 3 schools involved and a provisional date for all the governors to meet on 14 July. **(Post meeting note – both of these meetings have now been postponed as all 3 Governing Bodies felt that they needed further time to explore possibilities. The THS governors will meet early in September and next steps will be planned from there)**

The Chair asked that this be reported further to the next Governing Body meeting.

12. School Lettings Update

(SDP Leadership and Management Objective – Development of Governor understanding of statutory duties)

Mrs Smith reported that Mrs Campbell had undertaken the work on this and it would be based on the DCC model.

13. Financial Statement for Parents

(SDP Leadership and Management Objective - Development of Governor understanding of statutory duties)

Mrs Smith confirmed that this was being prepared in the form of a pie chart which showed school income and expenditure on the different areas. This would be placed on the school website and a copy sent to all parents before the end of term.

14. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

(SDP Leadership and Management Objective – To ensure that the work of all Governor Committees is securely linked to the development, monitoring and evaluation of the SDP)

14.1. Report of Curriculum and Policies Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 12/06/2014)

In relation to Item No. 2 Mr Rothwell confirmed that his apologies should have been presented for that meeting

14.2. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 09/06/2014)

In relation to Items Nos.9 and 10 Mrs Smith confirmed that she had begun the purchase of additional ICT and Music equipment.

In relation to Item No. 15 Governors were informed that an additional meeting of the Finance Committee would be held on 17 July 2014 at 5.00pm.

14.3. Report of SIG (Minutes of Meeting 11/06/2014)

15. Body Building Programme – Development Plan

(SDP Leadership and Management Objective – To ensure that Governors hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school’s performance)

Mrs Smith reported that the key actions arising from the exercise would be drawn together in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair and reported to the Governors and this would be the focus of work from September. All Governors commented that this had been a very clear and valuable process to ensure that their work was focused on key priorities.

16. Clerk’s Report

(SDP Leadership and Management Objective - Development of Governor understanding of statutory duties)

The Clerk reported on recent changes to the membership of the Governing Body and the new School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 which required the reconstitution of all governing bodies by 1 September 2015.

In summary these regulations required that the total membership of a maintained school governing body must be no fewer than seven governors but with no upper limit.

All governing bodies must include:

- At least 2 parent governors
- The headteacher
- One (and only one) staff governor
- One (and only one) local authority governor

The governing body may in addition appoint such number of co-opted governors as considered necessary provided that the requirements in respect of governing bodies of foundation and voluntary schools are met. The total number of co-opted governors who are also eligible to be elected as staff governors, when counted with the staff governor and headteacher, must not exceed one third of the total membership of the governing body. There is no upper limit but governing bodies should have regard to the statutory guidance when deciding their size.

The reconstitution of the governing body could result in a position where there are more governors than needed. This restructure should be conducted on the basis of which governors are best placed to contribute to effective governance and success of the school. If necessary, the governing body should put in place a fair and transparent process to define the skills it requires and conduct a skills audit of its members.

Following this, the governing body should vote on who is best placed to continue to hold office. A separate vote should be taken for each category.

For governors continuing to serve under the same category they will just carry on with their current term of office. Any governors needing to change category will start a new term of office, usually for four years.

The decision on the new constitution needs to be decided upon by the full governing body. At the latest this will need to be agreed at the June/July meeting in 2015. Once this has been done a new Instrument of Government will be needed.

Governors will be kept up to date with progress on this matter.

In addition the report informed governors that under the School Governance (Roles Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 the Governing Body were required to determine the term of office of the chair and vice chair prior to the election taking place.

That the term of office of the Chair and Vice Chair shall continue to be one year with elections taking place annually in September each year.

17. Dates of Meetings 2014/15

Mr Quinton reported that a schedule of dates for meetings in 2014/15 had been prepared and Governors agreed that these would be circulated by email.

18. Governor Visits & Training.

(SDP Leadership and Management Objective - Development of Governor understanding of statutory duties)

Governors received a detailed list of training undertaken. Mrs Campbell reported on a number of forthcoming training events and emphasised the importance of new governors attending the New Governors sessions. Also safeguarding training was compulsory although there were dispensations for those Governors who already had safeguarding accreditation. Critical friend training was also very important.

Mr Quinton reported that DCC Governor Support Services were investigating the possibility of purchasing an on line training package and this would cost between £50-£150 per school depending on the take up. Governors agreed that whilst this was a good idea they preferred the opportunity to network with other Governors and the dynamic that this produced.

Mrs Smith emphasised how important the engagement of Governors in training was to the school as Governor involvement was a very important aspect of any Ofsted inspection. Likewise Governors need to record their visits to the school so that evidence can be provided of their engagement within the school. With this mind Governors requested that a Governors Log book should be maintained so that Governors could, as they presently do, sign into the school and give the reason for the visit. This could in turn be used as evidence of Governor engagement.

19. New School Update

(SDP Quality of teaching objective – To enhance learning through the effective use of school grounds)

The Headteacher updated Governors on the outcome of the consultation process on the new school. The majority of responses were in favour of the new school with those against the school citing parking and drop off issues. The swimming pool remained an issue also and there was a possibility that space could be reserved for future replacement if fund raising could raise sufficient money. The Headteacher emphasised however that the pool would remain a drain on the school's resources and that this was not sustainable in the long term. Also there appeared to be some public concern about the linkage and association with the adjacent church although there did not appear to be much basis for these concerns.

20. Any Other Urgent Business. None

The meeting concluded at 21.35 hours.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date

John Quinton, Clerk / Manager to Governors, 1st July 2014

DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.**Action Plan following the Full Governing Body meeting held on 30th June 2014**

Action to be Taken	Agenda Item	Members Involved	Suggested Completion Date
1.Sports funding - refer to junior governors	10	Headteacher	September 2014
2. Academy Update – item for next meeting	11	Headteacher	September 2014
3. Dates of meetings – finalise and circulate to governors	17	Headteacher and clerk	Early July
4. Establish Governors Log book	18	Headteacher	September 2014