



## **DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.**

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Tuesday 10th February 2015 at 17.00 hours.

<b>Persons Present</b>	CSA	Mrs. M. Moss (Chair of Governors)
		Mrs. P. Campbell (Vice Chair)
	Community	Ms. R. Bettenson
		Mr. P. Rothman
		Mr. T. Putnam
	Parent	Mr. T. Barnes
		Ms F. Daly
		Mrs A. Harvey
	Headteacher	Mrs. C. Smith
	Teacher	Ms S. Prendergast
	Clerk	Mr. J Quinton

### **1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting.

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Adams, Mrs Scott, Ms Goodridge and Mrs Wibley. It was also reported that Mr Rothman would be late in arriving.

### **3. Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business & Declaration of Interest**

No Matters of Urgent Business or Interest were declared were declared.

### **4. Minutes.**

**Mrs Moss proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 be accepted as an accurate record. Mr Barnes seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.**

### **5. Matters Arising & Action Plan.**

- (a) Action Plan – Future of Specialist Base Provision Mrs Smith reported that there had been a meeting that day to progress this matter. Unfortunately due to the absence of the lead officer at DCC this issue had not moved forward.
- (b) Action Plan - Induction Programme The vice chair reported that this work was ongoing although a draft plan was in place. The Clerk reported that the possibility of some joint safeguarding training with DMS was being pursued.
- (c) Action Plan -DBS Clearance of Governors The Clerk reported that this issue was being progressed within the Admin team at the school.
- (d) Action Plan – Reconstitution The Clerk reminded Governors of the need to return the skills audit as soon as possible and reported that the issue of reconstituting the FGB would be on the next agenda.

## 6. Correspondence.

The Chair reported that Mr W Davidson had resigned as a Governor within the school. Following consultation with the Head Teacher and the Clerk a decision was made not to seek an appointment to this vacancy in advance of the reconstitution of the Governing Body which would happen in July 2015.

## 7. Chair's Report

(SDP link: This summary provides an overview of progress relating to all areas of the current SDP this term)

The Chair reported that she had:-

- attended a meeting about the future of the Base provision
- assisted with the interview panel for a TA post – this revealed that the safeguarding training within the school was very successful as several applicants for the TA post were existing volunteers within the school all of whom had answered the safeguarding questions excellently
- met with Junior Governors and would do so again soon
- regular catch ups with the Head Teacher
- not been able to attend the DASP AGM meeting in January as she was supposed to be attending safeguarding training that was subsequently cancelled. However the vice chair had attended and would report further later on the agenda.

As part of her role of monitoring governor engagement the Chair reported on the following governor visits:-

- 6 governors had made 3 or more visits to the school
- 2 governors had not yet made a formal visit to the school during the school day
- 5 governors visited the school to meet with subject leaders, these were Literacy, ICT, PP, PE and safeguarding)
- 2 governors had attended a meeting with the Finance Officer on the Financial Control and Check List
- 2 governors attended several meetings regarding the Head Teacher's performance management
- 3 governors attended a christmas performance and 2 attended the Christmas fair
- Governors had also been into school to look at school meals provision and e-safety

The Chair emphasised that when governors visited the school on governor business they should sign the register and importantly complete the purpose of the visit. It was also important to point out that these figures did not include staff governors and it would be sensible to capture such specific visits in some way or another.

The Head Teacher emphasised the importance of all governors visiting the school during the day in order to provide an objective overview and understanding of progress against objectives within the SDP as well as establishing a realistic understanding of how the school works which will aid Governors in making informed decisions and supporting and challenging both effectively and appropriately.

## 8. Governor Training and Visits

(SDP link: L and M objective – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children)

The Chair referred to the examples of the governor visit form that was circulated prior to the meeting and emphasised that only a brief summary of the visit was required. She informed governors that they could use the same form for any visit they undertook – whether it was with subject leads or if it was just an informal visit.

In response to a question from a governor the Head Teacher reported that staff really appreciated the visits and the professional framework of the paperwork that showed clear links to the SDP.

A teacher governor suggested that she would welcome a Health and Safety perspective from a governor on the Forest School proposal and it was agreed that this was an excellent good example of where governors could add real value.

On governor training the vice –chair reported that there were several course due to be held shortly where there was low take up and the proposed safeguarding training was mentioned again.

### **9. SEF – Quality of Teaching**

(SDP link: B and S objective - To review the effectiveness of the current Behaviour Policy and adapt and amend in the light of renewed expectations and the changing nature of the Base

L and M objective – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children)

The Head Teacher referred to the paper circulated with the agenda and reported that 92% of current teaching was judged to be good or outstanding. This was based on a triangulation of evidence, not just lesson observations. The progress and achievement of all pupils was taken into account together with the marking and feedback in children’s books, evidence of progress and children’s views. This process was now much more robust than previous assessments where there was insufficient evidence to back up the assessment of the quality of teaching.

There was no teaching assessed as inadequate although there was a small percentage that was assessed as requiring improvement. Reasons for this can be varied and could simply be as a result of teachers moving into a phase that they haven’t taught before and require additional support in order to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Measures have been put in place to address this performance including detailed action plans involving CPD through observation, mentoring etc. Experienced teachers are used to support the implementation of these action plans depending on the area of teaching which requires support.

In response to questions from governors the Head Teacher confirmed:-

- That the 11% of teaching requiring improvement comprised not whole teaching posts but a combination of different parts of teaching posts in different subject areas;
- That where there were barriers to learning for specific cohorts, teaching could still be evidenced as outstanding;
- How she conducted the most recent lesson observations and how the outcomes are communicated to the teacher. This model will be used by all middle leaders and SLT during the next round of observations linked with appraisal mid-year reviews.

### **10.Pupil Premium – Impact report**

(SDP - Leadership and Management Objective –To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children

Ofsted Judgement - Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources. This leads to the effective deployment of staff and resources)

The Head Teacher reported that although the impact of interventions summary has been collated for the autumn term it needed additional guidance to make it more understandable to all governors in the light of now working without levels. It would be reported when more time was available at the next Curriculum Committee.

### **11.SEND Policy**

(SDP Q of T objective - To narrow the achievement gap between vulnerable and non-vulnerable groups (including SEN, more able and disadvantaged pupils) through outstanding teaching and learning

The Head Teacher introduced the SEND policy as circulated with the agenda. This reflected recent legislative changes. She highlighted two particular areas of the policy document: firstly relating to governors training for their responsibilities regarding supporting children at school with medical conditions (see Minute No. 12 below) and secondly regarding training for staff and governors concerning off-site activities for children.

The Head Teacher confirmed that all off site trips should be available to all pupils and should not exclude specific pupils or groups of pupils. This brought with it certain challenges for SEND pupils and governors needed to be aware of this and the risk assessments undertaken to address those challenges. These two areas would be reported in greater detail to the SEN group and may be to both the Curriculum and Environment Committees at a later date. After that work had been undertaken the two clauses would be re-inserted into the policy.

**Mrs Campbell proposed and Mr Putnam seconded, and it was agreed that the SEND policy should be approved as presented subject to the deletion of the two paragraphs highlighted under the Training and Resources section of the document.**

### **12. Medical Needs Policy**

(SDP Q of T objective - To narrow the achievement gap between vulnerable and non-vulnerable groups (including SEN, more able and disadvantaged pupils) through outstanding teaching and learning)

Governors considered the policy document circulated with the agenda which reflected the most recent government advice, SEND reforms and the guidance provided by DCC. The policy clearly set out the respective responsibilities of the Governing Body, the parents and the Head Teacher.

The Head Teacher in response to questions from governors confirmed:-

- The overview of paperwork relating to children's medical needs would be retained within the school office
- That a letter would be sent to all parents reminding them of the medication requirements of the policy
- Specific school staff are responsible for giving medicine to pupils and specific staff have received additional guidance relating to the intimate care policy where children require additional support
- Responsibility for monitoring health care plans would be considered by the SEN group – this currently sits within the Inclusion Leader's responsibility but specific areas are now being delegated to the new office assistant

**Ms Daly proposed and Mrs Campbell seconded, and it was agreed that the Medical Needs policy should be approved as presented.**

### **13. DASP Update**

(SDP link: L and M objective – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children)

The Vice Chair attended the DASP AGM and reported that overall there was a very positive atmosphere at the meeting and a feeling that as an organisation DASP was now in a great position to move forward with a clear purpose and strategic direction. This was:-

“to unlock the potential of every young person by providing outstanding opportunities for learning”

Key objectives were:-

“To promote equality, continuity and ease of transition 3-19 (one learning community)  
 To ensure continuous improvement in learning  
 To provide school to school support – to each others and others  
 Safeguarding  
 Equal Opportunities”

The key achievements identified for the year 2013/14 were:

- DASP mission, purpose, beliefs and strategic direction established
- Re-structuring and re-organisation of staffing completed according to plan
- New model of leadership and governance successfully implemented

- Balanced budget achieved and future predicted deficits wiped out (DASP now has a comprehensive set of accounts. These show a large surplus and there was quite a lot of discussion about how it should be managed. This discussion was going to be moved forward at upcoming heads meeting on 03/02/15)
- Sustained and improved examination performance at GCSE and A Level
- DASP Improvement Plan in place 2014/2015 with defined priorities (these are literacy, Numeracy, Pupil Premium and Assessment)

The Vice Chair also reported that the Chair of the DASP Chairs Group had resigned, and a new Chair was not forthcoming. The reason DASP didn't know how big its carry forward was going to be was due to the accounts not being available until a few days before the meeting. New accountants have been appointed, accountants used and recommended by the Thomas Hardy School. The prospect of continuous tracking from 3-19, was very exciting and can be used to provide role models to younger students. She thought that it was possible for Damers to expand this idea to create an alumni as a means of inspiration. In terms of membership - Dorchester Learning Centre had joined but Sunninghill's new head had indicated that they no longer have plans to formally join DASP, the studio school have decided not to join for the moment.

The Head Teacher expanded on some of these points. In terms of the use of the budget surplus the Executive group within DASP were exploring the implementation of a high quality CPD programme. Also funding could be allocated to develop and improve the DASP website.

Following questions from Governors about spending on the DASP Improvement Plan in previous years the Headteacher confirmed that £100k had been allocated to improvements this year which is significantly higher than in previous years reflecting the shift in focus. The Head also confirmed that many Heads had been nervous about spending from the DASP budget last year until redundancy costs and future projections were clear.

Other improvements planned include the timing of the development plan this year to enable integrating the DASP improvement plan into the school's development plan and a proposal to incorporate the School Pupil Tracker into all DASP first and middle schools.

#### **14. Active Travel Policy – Review of Policy**

(SDP link: L and M objective – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children)

The Head Teacher reported that the previous cycle and scooter policy had been superseded by the Active Travel Policy the purpose of which was to encourage pupils and parents to travel to school by cycling, scooting and walking wherever possible.

***The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the Active Travel Policy be approved as presented.***

#### **15. Current Issues of Committees and Groups**

(SDP link: L and M objective – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children)

The following minutes were circulated to Governors.

- a. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 19/01/2015)
  - (i) Virements – Minute No. 6

***That the following virements be approved:-***

<i>Capitation Sports Funding to Supply</i>	<i>= £3,145</i>
<i>Other Income Supply SCITT</i>	<i>= £676</i>

**b. Report of Environment and Premises Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 15/01/2015)**

(i) Membership The Clerk reported that there appeared to be an imbalance in numbers between the number of members of this committee and the Curriculum Committee. Also in the category of governor that served on the committees in that there were a number of governors on the former that were staff governors. It was agreed that no alterations would be made to the memberships at that moment but this would be reviewed in the light of the move to the new school and the likely increase in workloads for that committee. In the meantime if there were specific items due for consideration at the Environment Committee that would be of specific interest to members of the other committees then the Clerk and the Chair would invite those governors to the meeting.

**c Report of Curriculum and Policies Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 22/01/2015)**

(i) Marking and Feedback – Minute No. 3

The Head Teacher reported that this was dealt with in some detail but if governors would like further detail in terms of viewing actual examples that were shared with this committee, this would be presented at the end of the meeting.

(ii) Membership

See Minute No.15(b)(i) above.

(iii) Date for Next Meeting

The Clerk reported that the Chair was unable to make the date of the next scheduled meeting on 12 March 2015 and he would consult governors on a new date.

**d. Report of SIG (Minutes of Meeting 2/12/2014)**

(i) Early Years and Foundation Stage Guidance

The Head Teacher drew attention to the Guidance related to developing Governor understanding of EYFS data that was circulated with the SIG minutes.

**16. Headteacher's Performance Management Objectives**

(SDP link: Q of T objective - To narrow the achievement gap between vulnerable and non-vulnerable groups (including SEN, more able and disadvantaged pupils) through outstanding teaching and learning  
L and M objective – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children)

Governors agreed that this item should be confidential and form part of section 2 of the minutes.

(NB The Head teacher and all governors who were either staff governors or members of staff left the room for the consideration of this matter.)

**17. New School Update**

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

The Head Teacher reported that she had recently met the Design team and the project was moving on nicely. An additional planning application had been submitted in respect of the change of the end gable wall of school as this was now a permanent structure. There were meetings on legal issues relating to the lease for the new site and the current site. Further meetings on this issue were proposed and she hoped to involve governors in that meeting. Also a meeting on ICT issues was due to be held within the next couple of weeks.

The Vice Chair suggested that Tim Oram should be asked to visit another recent new build school to investigate the practical challenges involving ICT.

**18. Any Other Urgent Business.**

A. Partner School, Chogoria, Kenya

A governor expressed some surprise that they had not been informed of the visit. The Headteacher apologised that this had happened and that it was an oversight simply down to human error. The trip and its purpose are outlined in our curriculum information on the website which has been shared with

Governors. In response to questions the Headteacher reported that the trip had been funded through a grant from the British Council's 'Connecting Classrooms' project and that cover for the teacher was being provided by the school. She emphasised that this has been planned as a long term and sustainable project with good links between the schools being established. There will be a focus on for example farming and agricultural methods and how these contrast with our own and the use of our school garden this year.

The teacher was asked to feedback in a year's time the outcomes and learning from the visit.

**B. Free School Milk**

The Head Teacher reported that a new statutory responsibility came into force on 1 January 2015 and that was to provide free school milk to all pupils of any age who were entitled to free school meals. There was no funding provided for this new responsibility and it did have logistical challenges. Parents have been advised that we now provide milk for FSM pupils and are asked to notify the school if they wish their child to take this up.

**C. Code of Conduct and Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Staff**

The Head Teacher reported that the Code and Guidelines had been updated to reflect the new model documents issued by DCC

***Mrs Campbell proposed and it was agreed that the new Code and Guidelines be approved as presented.***

**D. Whistleblowing Policy**

The Head Teacher reported that the Policy had been updated to reflect the new model documents issued by DCC.

***Mrs Campbell proposed and it was agreed that the new Code and Guidelines be approved as presented.***

Mr Rothman arrived at 6.20pm.  
The meeting closed at 7.25pm.

Certified as a true record.

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

John Quinton, Clerk / Manager to Governors, 11 February 2015

**DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.****Action Plan following the Full Governing Body meeting held on 10th February 2015**

Action to be Taken	Minute No.	Members Involved	Suggested Completion Date
1. Report on reconstituting the FGB	5d	The Clerk	24 March 2105
2. Report to Curriculum Committee on PP Impact	10	Head Teacher	March 2015
3. Report on Training and Resources section of the SEND policy to the SEN group	11	Head Teacher	ASAP
4. Letter to all parents reminding them of the requirements of the medical needs policy	12	Head Teacher	asap
5. Email governors regarding change of date for the next Curriculum Committee	15(c)(iii)	The Clerk	asap