



Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Thursday 18 May 2017 at 18.00 hours.

Persons Present	CSA	Mrs. M. Moss (Chair of Governors)
	Appointed Parent	Mrs J. Wibley (Vice Chair)
		Mrs M. Cheeseman
		Mrs M Gillard
		Ms F. Daly
	Elected Parent	Ms R. Bettenson
	Co-opted	Mr T. Bracey
	Staff	Mrs Scott
		Mrs. C. Smith
		Mr. J. Quinton
	Headteacher	
	Clerk	

Also in attendance – Mrs Bearwish and Ms Nesbitt, Associate Governors.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Governors to the first FGB meeting in the new school.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs A. Harvey and Mr T. Putnam.

3. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2017 were AGREED and accepted as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising & Action Plan.

- A. Minute No. 7 – Headteacher's Report – Gender Gap. Mrs Smith reported that this was reported to the recent meeting of the Curriculum Committee.
- B. Minute No. 8 – SEF Review – Punctuality. Mrs Smith reported that an attendance review meeting had taken place the previous day and the number of parents bringing children to school late had reduced significantly since the new school opened. However, full report to be provided at the next FGB to allow for settling in.
- C. Minute No. 9 – Safeguarding Audit. Mrs Bearwish reported that the circulation of the link to online safer recruitment training still had to be done.

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

No declarations of interest were declared.

6. Correspondence

None



Full Governing Body Meeting

7. Chair's Report

(SDP link: Effectiveness of L and M objectives – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children Ensure that all Governor actions are tightly linked to the evaluation and monitoring of the SDP, the development of the new curriculum and the embedding of the new assessment system.)

The Chair started by thanking all staff for overseeing the transition to the new school. Whilst recognising there were still issues to be resolved the overall impression and feel within the school was very positive.

The Chair reminded Governors of the need to complete the Governors Log of Visits to school. This did not necessarily also result in a visit report having to be written but it was a reflection of Governor involvement in the day to day running of the school.

The Chair referred to the Governors' action plan. One area that required attention was the provision of outdoor space, the play area and the Forest Schools' initiative. This would probably have to continue into the next year. Mrs Smith reported that Junior Governors were working alongside children and teachers and had come up with some wonderful ideas which will now be explored and developed over the next term. There are still a number of construction elements to be completed outdoors which will impact on the further development of specific areas such as the Forest School area and the orchard as we await the installation of a permanent secure boundary.

The Chair referred to the review of the school's vision, aims and values and the introduction of a new logo and motto this time last year and suggested that now would be a good time to review the impact of this within the school. This together with Anti Bullying was currently being looked at by staff and required active governor involvement.

8. SEF Review – Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

(SDP link: Effectiveness of L and M objectives – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children Ensure that all Governor actions are tightly linked to the evaluation and monitoring of the SDP, the development of the new curriculum and the embedding of the new assessment system.)

Mrs Smith referred Governors to the documents that had been made available to them before the meeting and to the current approach in reporting the SEF. Firstly, there were the relevant sections of the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework and the Grade Descriptors relating to the focus area of the SEF from the Ofsted handbook, the detailed section of the SEF covering the Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment and very importantly the SEF Summary document detailing exactly where the school was at



Full Governing Body Meeting

this point in time and the key areas for development. Governors had been asked to read these documents prior to the meeting and to use the new Competency Framework to frame their questions.

Governors asked specific questions and Mrs Smith responded as follows: -

- Within the assessment document there was reference to the quality of teaching being consistently good or better in all classes except in two current Year 4 classes whose progress has been impacted by staff long term absence this year. Governors questioned why if they were long term sickness absences, some action had not been taken to address this issue and why the standards were not the same. Mrs Smith replied that she had ensured that teaching was at the expected standard but that the two supply teachers could not be expected to be fully compliant with all school standards when cover had been requested for one week or for two at specific points making long term planning more difficult. Although children were still making progress and she was confident that cover had been consistent and of an expected standard, she could not be fully confident to classify the quality of teaching as consistently good or outstanding. Other teachers have been focusing on specific areas such as the effectiveness of marking and feedback for the last two years so we would not expect a supply teacher to reach the same expectations when covering for a short period of time as they have so many different areas to take on all at once. The management of long term sickness absence had been tricky as initially it was managed on a weekly basis and it was not clear how long the sickness period would last in one of the classes. Given all of this, Mrs Smith did make it clear that we are extremely lucky to have had two supply teachers who are familiar to the children and know the school well and who were both perfectly placed to ensure a smooth transition to the new school for the classes involved.
- In response to questions about spelling and what worked well, Mrs Smith said that the best examples of this were where teachers were consistently challenging spelling within marking and feedback. To challenge spelling and to help children understand it rather than providing repetitive spelling lists that didn't have a long term impact on spelling ability. This was evident from the book looks. In terms of spelling, grammar and joined up handwriting the school appeared to be below the national data standards at the end of KS1 in July 16 and this was initially thought to be because the standards were applied too strictly. However, on review it appeared that expectations had not been set high enough. In the current Year 2 cohort there has been a big push on this and it has become evident that more help is needed in the form of raised expectations in Year 1. The children have responded well to this and none of the craft of writing has been lost.
- Governors felt that from the books that they had seen at the Curriculum Committee they all looked very good but it would appear from a recent book look that this is not the case? Mrs Smith said that the purpose of bringing good examples along to the Curriculum Committee was to celebrate the good work that was being done with a focus on curriculum content, book looks focus on many areas, including content, but this particular book look had focused on the progress of our most vulnerable group, disadvantaged pupils with SEN. There were still many positives across the school but a focus on this most vulnerable group had highlighted any areas of weakness in specific year groups.



Full Governing Body Meeting

- Governors asked how phonic knowledge in KS2 would be followed up and what was next for those teachers who have already embedded the Learning Model within their practice. The Strategic Leadership Team have just discussed follow-up phonics training for TAs who attended the recent CPD session and this would be achieved by placing experienced TAs into Foundation classes to observe high quality phonics lessons. In terms of further embedding the Learning Model the current position was to identify where the model was not completely embedded and to bring everybody up to the same level by sharing good practice. Further progression could then be considered. If the model is embedded it will continue to enhance the children's learning.
- Mrs Smith was asked to explain the phrase "reliance on differentiation by outcome rather than by learning objective". Through the book looks it was clear that in Year 1 in particular, all children had very similar learning objectives and the differentiation could only be seen in the outcomes of their tasks. Children were still making good progress and the differentiation was clearly coming through support in class, however, for high attainers and disadvantaged pupils there needed to be a greater level of differentiation within the actual learning objectives and this needed to be made explicit, particularly where a less experienced teacher had joined the year group and the outcomes for this class were not as strong as they were in the classes with more experienced teachers.
- The amber grade descriptors within the 'Outstanding' criteria indicated that progress was being made towards achieving these and that there were elements of evidence in some classes but this was not consistent in all classes across the school.

Mrs Smith thanked governors for their thoughtful questions and for ensuring that they had read these documents thoroughly before the meeting.

9. SEP C Report

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

Mrs Smith informed Governors that the formal report had only been received that day. Therefore, in agreement with the Chair, as the content had been covered elsewhere at the meeting, the report would be circulated to Governors with the minutes and would be discussed at the next meeting of the FGB.

10. Budget 2017/18

(SDP link: Effectiveness of L and M objectives – Ensure that all Governor actions are tightly linked to the evaluation and monitoring of the SDP, the development of the new curriculum and the embedding of the new assessment system.)

Mrs Smith drew Governors' attention to the minutes of the Finance Committee meetings on 2 and 5 May where detailed consideration of the draft budget was set out. Mrs Smith then shared the assumptions behind the Budget as described within those minutes and asked Governors to consider the implications for the future.



Full Governing Body Meeting

Mrs Smith confirmed that the budget had now been submitted and accepted by DCC. The end of year underspend for 16/17 had now been confirmed as £228k. Although the school has submitted a deficit budget for 17/18 this has been approved taking into account the fact that the school has an underspend that will cover the predicted deficit. The surplus excess still has to be spent by the October half term 2017. The predicted deficit for 17/18 was £65k and as described in the Finance Minutes this was a figure that had been reached by ensuring that all budget headings within capitation had been reduced to the minimum possible and in many cases, there was not budget at all. In reality if we were not in a brand new school we would be looking at a deficit of approximately £100k. Staffing costs represented 84% of overall budget costs and this was over the recommended threshold of 80%. Although the budget for 17/18 has been approved, the predicted deficits for the following two years have not been and the school will need to take action now to address the projected overspend.

At this stage, all staff left apart from Mrs Smith and Governors considered the position regarding future budgets. In terms of timescale the school would have to be in a stable budget position by April 2018. The key area that needed to be addressed was the current staffing structure as this was where the majority of costs were situated.

Governors had a detailed confidential discussion of the options available to them and **AGREED** that Mrs Smith should arrange a meeting at which DCC HR could brief Governors on the process to be followed as a matter of urgency. Mrs Smith will inform governors once a date has been confirmed.

11. Sports Funding Update

(SDP link: Effectiveness of L and M objectives – Ensure that all Governor actions are tightly linked to the evaluation and monitoring of the SDP, the development of the new curriculum and the embedding of the new assessment system. **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment objective** – To revisit non-negotiable elements of outstanding teaching and learning using revised Ofsted criteria and the Teaching Standards.)

Ms Daly, the PE Link Governor, reminded Governors that the details of the sports funding budget, how it was being spent and the outcomes were available on the Damers website. Ms Daly said that the current level of PE activity was overwhelming with so many different clubs and activities available pre, post and during school. She had recently observed two sessions for gifted and talented pupils and had interviewed Year 4 pupils. The breadth and diversity of activities was incredible and there was something available for everyone. Ms Daly highlighted the planning and evaluation that goes into organising events such as Healthy Week to ensure that our PE provision is as inclusive, inspiring and fit for purpose as it can be.

12. Annual Report on Bullying and Prejudice Related Incidents

(SDP Link Effectiveness of L and M objective – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children. **Personal development, behaviour and welfare objective** - To monitor and evaluate the implementation of the revised Behaviour Policy.)



Full Governing Body Meeting

Mrs Bearwish reported that there had been one incident of actual bullying that year. To be classified as an incident of bullying it is not just a one off incident but has to be persistent. In this incident, it was dealt with immediately by teachers and parents and support measures put in place. As reported at the last meeting there was also one racist incident. Mrs Bearwish took governors through the processes involved in dealing with accusations of bullying and alleged incidents and how these are addressed in school.

The Chair emphasised that Governors needed to know that measures were in place to monitor these incidents and to ensure that the thresholds for reporting to Governors were set at the right levels.

13. Policy Review

(**Statutory Safeguarding Responsibilities** alongside **SDP link: Effectiveness of L and M Objectives** To establish a clearly defined role for all governors in securing accountability across the school.)

- A. **Appraisal** – Mrs Smith reported on the updated DCC Appraisal Policy. This policy was reviewed annually but the annual review due in November 2016 was deferred as the revised policy had not been received. The updated policy is now due to be published this term but for now Mrs Smith asked that governors approve our current updated policy. This will be reviewed once the new DCC policy is published.

Governors **AGREED** to adopt the updated Appraisal Policy.

- B. **Complaints Procedure** – Mrs Smith reported that there were no changes to the existing Complaints Policy and therefore it was **AGREED** to continue with the existing model Complaints Policy.
- C. **Safer Recruitment** – Mrs Smith reported that this was part of the DCC Recruitment Policy and Procedures toolkit and therefore it was a template policy. Governors **AGREED** to adopt the Safer Recruitment Policy.
- D. **Criminal Records Checking** - Governors were reminded that all schools must keep a single central record (SCR) to demonstrate that they have carried out mandatory pre-appointment checks on staff. This record needs to be maintained and checked at regular intervals. The SCR provides important evidence that the school has done all it can in terms of checking to ensure that people working in Damers First School are safe to do so. It is an integral part of the school's recruitment and selection procedures. This policy outlines the school's processes and procedures.

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Criminal Records Checking policy.

- E. **PSHE/SRE** – This has been updated in time for the curriculum focus in the summer term. Governors **AGREED** the PSHE/SRE Policy.



Full Governing Body Meeting

14. DASP Update

(SDP link: Effectiveness of L and M objectives – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children. Ensure that all Governor actions are tightly linked to the evaluation and monitoring of the SDP, the development of the new curriculum and the embedding of the new assessment system.)

Mrs Smith reported that DASP had three key areas for development within their development plan – Literacy, Maths and Assessment. It was felt that one key area was missing and that was a focus on transition and in particular transition for disadvantaged pupils. She was now leading a group that would draft some common steps that all disadvantaged pupils in DASP would follow at the point of transition. This work would be shared at the forthcoming DASP Heads Conference.

15. Governor Visits/Training

(SDP Link Effectiveness of L and M objectives – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children. To establish a clearly defined role for all governors in securing accountability across the school.)

- A. **Governor Monitoring/Activity** – Mrs Smith suggested a Governor Learning Walk to witness how the new Learning Model was being embedded within the school. It was agreed that the walk would take place on 9 June at 9.30am. All governors are welcome and encouraged to attend to see a key area of the SDP in practice.
- B. **Governor Visits** – Governors noted the details of recent visits undertaken by Mrs Moss relating to Health and Safety and Literacy and by Ms Daly relating to two specialist PE activities. The Chair emphasised how important it was for these visits to take place and reminded parent governors that if they attended school meetings as a parent they could also record these from the perspective of a governor visit.
- C. **Training Update and Skills Audit** – The Clerk referred Governors to the recent circulation by email on 4 May 2017 of the most recent training update from DCC. He also referred to the Safer Recruitment Training to be organised by DCC on 12 July, the role of the link governor to be held at Damers on 29 June and the Health and Safety for Governors to be held at Radipole Primary School. Ms Bettenson, Ms Daly and Mrs Gillard all expressed an interest in attending the Safer Recruitment training. Copies of the NGA Skills Audit had been placed in the Governors' pack for the meeting and Governors were asked to complete this and return to the Clerk.
- D. **DCC Governor Newsletter** - The Clerk referred to the recent circulation of the DCC Governors



Full Governing Body Meeting

16. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

SDP link: Effectiveness of L and M objectives – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children. Ensure that all Governor actions are tightly linked to the evaluation and monitoring of the SDP, the development of the new curriculum and the embedding of the new assessment system. **Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Objective** -Further develop the role of governors in ensuring that the school maintains a sustainable and enhanced focus on arts-based provision.)

- A. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee – Minutes of meetings 2 and 5 May 2017
- B. Report of Curriculum and Policies Committee – Minutes of meeting 4 May 2017
- C. SIG – Notes of meeting held on 10 May 2017
- D. Pay Committee – The Chair reported on the outcome of the recent meeting of the Pay Committee at which a threshold application had been considered and agreed.

17. New School 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.)

Mrs Smith updated Governors on the following key issues: -

- The fire door that led straight out onto Liscombe Street was supposed to have been fixed by 3 May. This work has just been completed. The door had been fenced off which had led to an objection by the Fire Service and a subsequent visit by DCC and the Fire Service to undertake a fire risk assessment. These visits had been extremely useful and Mrs Smith felt that she had a much clearer understanding. The Fire Service and DCC had been in disagreement about the timing of the fire risk assessment and Mrs Smith was glad that it had taken place earlier than she had originally been advised by DCC (6 months after occupancy)
- The main entrance door had been faulty and the associated lights that were supposed to work in connection with the locking and unlocking of the door had not been working correctly. This matter has now been addressed.
- The temporary boundary fence on Gallows Down Lane was still in place. CG Fry were supposed to have completed this work by 24 April but they have only submitted the required drawings within the last few days and Mrs Smith has now been told that the work will take a further 6 weeks. Mrs Smith felt that this was not good enough and has spoken to all relevant people at DCC (including Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Education) to emphasise the risks associated with this issue and after significant discussions DCC have now instructed BAM to install further temporary fencing which would be more secure and appropriate for the school site.
- There was still no progress on landscaping.
- There were still issues with telephones and although the school now has a broadband connection, this is incredibly slow due to Openreach installing an ADSL line rather than a



Full Governing Body Meeting

fibre broadband line. Mrs Smith has been told that this will be addressed within the next few weeks. This has had a significant impact on classroom and working practice over the last half term.

- There is still no working AV equipment in the main hall and this is due to be addressed over half term.

17. Date of Next Meeting of the FGB

Governors noted that the date of the next meeting is Thursday 6 July 2017 at 6.00pm.

18. Any Other Urgent Business

None

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date
John Quinton, Clerk / Manager to Governors, 18 May 2017

DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Action Plan following the Full Governing Body meeting held on 18 May 2017

Action to be Taken	Minute No.	Members Involved	Suggested Completion Date
1. Circulate link to online safer recruitment training.	4c	MB	asap
2. SEP C report next time	9	JQ	6/07/17
3. Arrange meeting with HR	10	CS	After half term
4. Book governors on Safer Recruitment training	15c	JQ	ASAP
5. Undertake Skills Audit		All	ASAP



Full Governing Body Meeting