



Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Tuesday 7 February 2017 at 18.00 hours.

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

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

1. Welcome

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs M Gillard, Mrs Harvey, Mrs Scott and Mrs J Wibley.

3. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016 were AGREED and accepted as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising & Action Plan.

None

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

No declarations of interest were declared. However, Ms Daly reported that her employers would be involved in providing services at the Base in the new school. She would declare an interest in any future business as and when required.

6. Correspondence – The Chair reported a letter from Outdoor Education Service regarding Offsite Events and Adventure Activities but this had also been sent to the school and therefore did not require any action from Governors.

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.)

In the absence of Mrs Wibley, Mrs Smith reported that the DASP AGM had considered the Annual Accounts and the Annual Report which had been circulated to Governors at the last meeting. There were



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no further items raised and discussed at the AGM. Minutes will be circulated to governors by the Chair once received.

8. SEF Review – Section 3 - Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

(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 informed governors that for this meeting and for the future she would be adopting a different approach in reporting the SEF. She would adopt a layered approach which referenced 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. This should ensure that both the leadership team and governors would then access the SEF with a greater understanding of where judgements had been derived from and that all key stakeholders could now play a greater role in formulating self-evaluation judgements. Governors said that they had found this approach very useful and that it enabled a greater understanding of how well the school was doing and what it needed to focus on in terms of improvement measures.

Mrs Smith referred to the summary self-evaluation document which concluded that the school was continuing to strengthen and develop the effectiveness of leadership and management and that it judged itself to be good with many elements of outstanding practice. A detailed and rigorous annual self-evaluation cycle (SEC) is in place to monitor the quality of teaching and pupil progress across the school. The school is committed to providing opportunities for leadership development at all levels (eg. year leaders, subject leaders, project leaders, research team leaders, senior TA positions) through the overall leadership structure and through the development of Strategic Leadership Groups (SLGs) and as a result staff display a strong shared ambition for improvement. The Performance Management system provides clear roles, responsibilities and layers of accountability. The CPD Leader monitors provision for CPD across the school and maintains a record of activity, evaluation and impact. Financial management is strong, with a particular focus on ensuring that pupil premium and other specific funding streams such as the PE and School Sport (PESS) premium are used effectively and that impact is regularly monitored. There are positive relationships with parents and carers and from a recent survey 97% of our parents say they would recommend our school to other parents. All of our staff are proud to be a member of our school and feel that the school is well led and managed (100% - staff questionnaires May 16).

Governors are rigorous in ensuring statutory requirements are met: they monitor policies and see that the school meets equalities legislation, ensure child protection procedures are tight and that health and safety legislation is well implemented. Governors now play a part in monitoring the performance management of teachers, ensuring that senior leaders are rigorous in applying the Teachers' Standards and that pay awards were accurately matched to performance.



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However, governors' contribution to the overall leadership and management of the school remains an area of work that requires further development. There needs to be wider governor initiated and directed systematic challenge and rigour, and the regularity and consistency of monitoring activity requires further development. The latter issue is dealt with in more detail at Minute No.12 below. Mrs Smith drew governors' attention to the Ofsted criteria which state it is not sufficient for school leaders alone to develop and create a vision and culture for the school, this had to be a joint exercise with governors and they had to be able to describe their role in this. Mrs Smith acknowledged governors' support and engagement in this process but encouraged further consistent proactive involvement.

Governors accepted that there was a requirement for more formal recording of their activity within the school. Mrs Smith highlighted examples of robust challenge, particularly from the School Improvement Group and gave further examples of how this could be developed in other areas of governance. Governors felt that clear and detailed information was available to them both in terms of information given at meetings but also on the website and that sometimes the honesty contained within this meant that they sometimes struggled to find areas to challenge. Mrs Smith said that further proactive engagement with everyday practice in school would probably enable some governors to develop this area further, as everyday practice would ensure that the reality of information shared at meetings was accurate. A number of governors expressed that they felt well informed and therefore able to challenge where necessary.

The Chair reported that staff development within the school was clearly evident with staff at all levels visibly and actively displaying the culture, vision and ethos of the school.

9. Safeguarding Audit

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

Mrs Bearwish reported that the audit was an annual requirement and required a detailed review of all of the associated safeguarding procedures and policies. Governors were informed of the framework for the audit prior to the meeting and that this would be completed in conjunction with the Safeguarding Link Governor, Ms Bettenson.

Mrs Bearwish reported that the school had previously judged itself as outstanding but there were always elements of the audit that required further work. Mrs Bearwish took Governors through the audit process highlighting particular areas where action was required. One such area was training which was constantly evolving and requiring renewal. Mrs Bearwish highlighted the need to ensure that governors were able to share a clear record of recent training showing that they had fulfilled their statutory duties with regard to safeguarding. Another area of concern was the Single Central Record (SCR) and although this was fully compliant with requirements, the cross referencing of data to individual personnel files showed some inconsistencies for long term members of staff. All staff appointed from Sep 13 have compliant personnel records and checks. The school has previously received advice from DCC with regard to gaps in personnel folders for longer term members of staff who do not have two references in their files, or a formal application but this advice would now appear to be contradictory. Recent local



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Ofsted inspections would suggest that the school should carry out further activity in order to address these gaps. Mrs Smith and Mrs Bearwish have now set up an overview of all staff in order to address any gaps within personnel folders, to record activity relating to these historical gaps and to assess the level of risk associated with each member of staff.

Governors asked about the system of recording allegations against staff and how 'My Concern' was used to record safeguarding activity. Mrs Bearwish reported that this system was available to all staff and allowed them to record any concerns about any child. The three DSLs then had access to an overview of each child's chronology, staff only see the actual report that they are submitting. In response to questions from Governors Mrs Bearwish reported that the system was able to link siblings and was reviewed on a monthly basis by herself, Mrs Smith and Ms Nesbitt, the SENCO during their Vulnerable Children supervision meetings.

Mrs Bearwish confirmed that the school met six of the eight criteria for outstanding and that for the remaining criteria, actions plans would be prepared and as requested by Governors, would be reported to the FGB for consideration.

10. SEP A 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.)

Following the verbal feedback from the SEP A visit on 1 December 2016 given by the Headteacher at the last meeting of the FGB, Governors were provided with the final report. Governors had no further questions and commented that it was a fair and positive report.

11. Policy Review

(Statutory Safeguarding Responsibilities alongside **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.)

A. **Volunteer Policy and Procedures** – Mrs Bearwish reported that these policies and procedures had been adapted to comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education -part 3 - September 2016.

It was AGREED that the revised Volunteer Policy and Procedures be adopted.

B. **Accessibility Plan** – Mrs Smith reported that the current plan required review and had provided governors with the advice received and new model policy prior to the meeting. However in view of the imminent move to the new school, it would be more appropriate to review the plan when the move had been completed. Governors were reminded that the Accessibility Plan was a requirement of the Equality Act 2010 and as in previous years, the Local Authority had issued an updated model



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Accessibility Plan for schools to use, if they wished.

Governors AGREED that this issue should be considered by the Finance Committee at its next meeting.

- C. **Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Managing Conditions** – Governors were informed that this policy had been reviewed by Ms Nesbitt, the SENCO, and Mrs Gillard, the SEND Link Governor. This was a model policy provided by DCC.

It was AGREED that the revised Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Managing Conditions be adopted.

12. 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** – Governors were asked to review and to agree a robust schedule of termly monitoring activity and learning walks. Governors recognised the importance of this issue to the overall leadership and management of the school.

Ms Nesbitt reported on a system adopted in a local school whereby governors undertook to complete certain activities on a termly and annual basis and completed a Governors' log that recorded governor activity.

Mrs Smith presented governors with an example of a template that could be used to record this activity and showed how through the recording that governors would be able to demonstrate a clearer link with the monitoring of key aspects related to the School Development Plan. Mrs Smith used the example of Mr Putnam's attendance at whole school celebration assemblies and how this would be recorded to show the link in monitoring the focus on further developing the school's vision, aims and ethos through elements such as the Butterfly Award.

Governors welcomed this initiative and recognised that this would formalise some of the informal visits and activity that was currently underway but which may have gone unrecorded. Mrs Smith agreed set up a system in the office with a log for each governor and to circulate dates for Learning Walks and suggested activities to Governors.

Governors reviewed the current Link Governor roles and AGREED to appoint Mrs Gillard as the PP Link Governor in place of Mrs Moss, and that Mrs Cheeseman would take one of Ms Daly's Link Governor Roles, either Numeracy or Outdoor Education and PESS. JQ will speak to Ms Daly about which one she would prefer.



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Governors also AGREED that the Governors on the SIG would each take lead responsibility for a Year Group. Year group links will be determined at the next SIG meeting.

Governors also appointed Mr Bracey to the Finance Committee.

- B. **Governor Visits** – None had been recorded for this meeting.
- C. **New Governance Handbook and Competency Framework** – Governors’ attention was drawn to the recently issued Handbook and the associated Competency Framework. Governors recognised that these documents were very detailed and required further consideration. Governors agreed that this would be Governor led and that sections should be explored within each sub committee. This will be included in each sub committee’s next agenda.
- D. **Training** – The Clerk drew governors’ attention to the DCC Nexus website - www.dorsetnexus.org.uk/Training for booking courses.

13. 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 meeting 17 January 2017
 - (i) Governors received further details on the proposed virements and the DES monthly monitoring figures.

That the following virements be AGREED:-

<i>From Account</i>	<i>To account</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Narrative</i>
<i>Other Income</i>	<i>Education Support Staff</i>	<i>761.00</i>	<i>Staff Absence Insurance - TA Absence Insurance claimed</i>
<i>Other Income</i>	<i>Teaching</i>	<i>875.00</i>	<i>Staff Absence Insurance - Teacher Absence Insurance claimed</i>
<i>Other Income</i>	<i>Education Support Staff</i>	<i>260.00</i>	<i>Staff Absence Insurance - TA Absence Insurance claimed</i>



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<i>Other Income</i>	<i>Capitation (Tri/Events)</i>	<i>500.00</i>	<i>THS Science Day - Grant for Science day</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Repairs & Maintenance</i>	<i>4000.00</i>	<i>To clear overspend- New school expenses skip hire/scaffolding to clear loft/confidential waste</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Capitation (Ass)</i>	<i>850.00</i>	<i>To clear overspend - Assessment Papers</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Capitation (STA)</i>	<i>4000.00</i>	<i>To clear overspend/New school expenses inc logo/reading record journals</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Capitation (ITM)</i>	<i>3000.00</i>	<i>To clear overspend BETT travel/ ICT SLA linked with move</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Capitation (ITP)</i>	<i>30000.00</i>	<i>To clear overspend/New school ICT Chromebooks</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Capitation (Sports)</i>	<i>70.00</i>	<i>To clear overspend - No budget was set</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Capitation (CCE)</i>	<i>3000.00</i>	<i>Moving celebrations Dance workshops/celebrations - fireworks / open day</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Capitation</i>	<i>5000.00</i>	<i>Transition- contingency budget</i>
<i>Unallocated</i>	<i>Capitation (SEN)</i>	<i>500.00</i>	<i>Breakfast/Toast Club Resources</i>

(ii) Staff Absence Insurance – Governors received details of the cost and benefits of the Staff Absence Insurance over the last three years as requested, together with quotes for the renewal of the policy which was due on 1 March 2017. Mrs Smith informed Governors that there were some advantages of remaining with the current supplier, Best, including that existing long term sickness for two teaching staff would be covered. She also highlighted to governors that this was a time of high risk for the school with an imminent move adding to both physical and mental workloads for all staff and that it was not a time to take further risks in terms of insurance cover. She had undertaken a risk analysis of the cover alongside Mrs Coker and excluded some staff groups in order to reduce the premium to approximately £26k. Governors needed to be aware that there was still a risk involved in the maternity moratorium of 7 months but that this could not be avoided in order to keep the premium at an affordable level.



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It was AGREED to renew the Staff Insurance Premium with Best with effect from 1 March 2017 in the sum of £26k(approximately).

(iii) Budget Surplus – Mrs Smith updated Governors following the meeting of the Finance Committee on 17 January 2017 (Minute No. 4.2). The final decision on the clawback of budget excess surpluses would be made by the Schools Forum on 10 February and she had drafted a letter to DCC, which she shared with Governors, drawing attention to the DfE Schemes for Financing Schools document and the DCC Financial Efficiency in Schools Policy and highlighting the areas of those two documents which were not consistent with the proposal to clawback excess surplus balances. The letter recognised the difficulties experienced by DCC in their attempt to balance the Higher Needs Funding budget, but it was felt that this should be undertaken in a fairer and better planned way, as would be expected of a school if the school had demonstrated such poor budget planning. Governors expressed concern that any clawback would not take into account what the school has already committed in terms of financial planning with the new build. Mrs Smith said that an email from Sarah Tough had suggested that each school's case would be explored individually if the decision was taken to recoup these funds and that governors would then need to put a strong case forward to show how this money had been used, or was planned to be used (taking account of building delay timelines)

Governors AGREED the content of the letter.

(iv) Redundancy – Governors agreed that this item should be confidential and form part of section 2 of the minutes.

- B. Report of Curriculum and Policies Committee – Minutes of meeting 26 January 2017
- C. SIG – Notes of meeting held on 1 February 2017 – Governors' attention was drawn to the SIG minutes and in particular the change of dates for the March meeting of the Group.

14. 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.)

- A. **New School Site** Governors received a confidential copy of the minutes of the design meeting held on 1 February 2017. In particular, there was a definite closure date of 31 March 2017 for the Damers Road site. An official handover of the new site was planned for 6 March allowing approximately a four week transition period. From 6 March Mrs Smith would be responsible for the new building including securing the building and any call-out procedures. Targeted groups amongst the most vulnerable children, would visit the site as part of this transition.
- B. **School Closure dates** – Mrs Smith reported that governors now need to request permission to temporarily close the school due to exceptional circumstances during the week beginning 3 April. Using the two INSET days of 6 and 7 April 2017 it was proposed to close the school on 3, 4 and



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5 April to facilitate the proposed move to the new school.

Governors questioned whether additional days would be provided later in the school year and what the response from parents had been. Mrs Smith reported that it was not possible to provide extra days as notice would need to be given to staff and there was insufficient time. The school will be preparing learning activity packs for all children during the 3 day closure, should parents request this. These packs will include both online and paper activities and parents will be asked to request them at least a week prior to the closure. In terms of parents' response, all but one response had been very supportive. A parent governor highlighted that every possible opportunity had been taken to explain to parents that the proposed closure was a direct result of DCC's decision and that the proposed date had remained the same throughout this school year, which must be rare with a building project.

Governors AGREED to approve the temporary closure of the school on the 3,4 and 5 April 2017 given the exceptional circumstances. Mrs Smith and Mrs Moss to submit the proforma requesting the closure to DCC.

- C. Half Term Activity** – Mrs Smith reported that there would be a lot of activity on the Damers road site during half term. The bike shelters would be removed and transferred to the new site. There would be contamination tests undertaken by DCH and inventories prepared by a team from DCC along with the redistribution of some sheds to the Grove playgroup.

- D. Extension of Lease to Damers Road site** – Mrs Smith reminded Governors that she had requested by email dated 21 January 2017 for permission for the Vice Chair (in the Chair's absence) to sign an Option Agreement Extension of Time document. This document was very similar to the document that had been signed by governors the previous year, linked with the lease to the Damers Rd site. This document had now been amended in the light of a request for an extension of time and now had the addition of specific date/ time frames and penalties to cover all eventualities over the next few months.

Governors had all given their approval to the signing of the extension and this had been duly signed by Mrs Wibley in Mrs Smith's presence. Governors were now asked to confirm this decision formally.

Governors AGREED to ratify their earlier decision to approve the signing of the Extension to the Lease.

15. Day of Future meetings of the FGB

Governors were asked to consider changing the day of future meetings of the FGB.



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Governors AGREED to retain the date of the next meeting of the FGB as Tuesday 21 March, but to change the following two FGB dates to Thursday 18 May and Thursday 6 July 2017 all starting at 6.00pm.

16. Headteacher's Performance Management Objectives CONFIDENTIAL -

(**SDP link: Effectiveness of L and M Objective** -To further develop the Performance Management process to ensure that all reviewers provide an effective balance of challenge and support
 -Establish a clearly defined role for all governors in securing accountability across the school
 -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 staff governors left the room for the consideration of this matter.)

17. Any Other Urgent Business

None

Mrs Cheeseman arrived at 6.10pm.
 Ms Daly left the meeting at 7.05pm
 Mr Bracey and Mrs Smith left the meeting at 8.15pm
 The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date
 John Quinton, Clerk / Manager to Governors, 8 February 2017

DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Action Plan following the Full Governing Body meeting held on 7 February 2017

Action to be Taken	Minute No.	Members Involved	Suggested Completion Date
1. Report actions plans for safeguarding to	9	MB	ASAP



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the FGB			
2. Report Accessibility Plan to next meeting of the Finance Committee.	11B	Clerk	7.03.17
3. Circulate dates to Governors for Learning Walks and set up activity logs.	12A	Headteacher	ASAP
4. Take necessary action in relation to the review of Link Governor roles.	12A	Clerk	ASAP
5. Reconsider Governors' Handbook and Competency Framework	12C	Chair and Clerk	ASAP
6. Circulated revised dates for meetings of the FGB.	15	Clerk	ASAP