**Full Governing Body**

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 6th October 2015 at 5.00 p.m.

Present: Mr R Barker Dr H Marlow

Mr D Carruthers Chairman Ms J Newman

Mr P Debenham Mr D Ralph

Mrs C Driver Mr R Stevenson

Mr T Green Miss J Upton Headteacher

Mr D McMillan Ms E Wnukoski

In attendance: Mr R Boulter Member of the Academy Trust

Mrs T Darby Business Manager

Mr S Martin Deputy Headteacher

Miss S McBurney Assistant Headteacher

Mrs L Ramsay Assistant Headteacher

Mr S Wright Clerk to the Governors

1. **Absence**
   1. Apologies for absence had been received from Mr R Boulter, Mrs J Brown, Revd P Cotton, Dr D Egan, Ms S Goodrich, Mr R Grimsey, Mr C Grover, Mrs F Hotston Moore, Mrs S Janson and Mr N Serjeant.
   2. Governors consented to their absence.
2. **Pecuniary and Other Interests**
   1. Mr McMillan pointed out that all teaching staff held a pecuniary interest in Item 13.4 regarding DHS implementation of the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document recommendations.
   2. Most of the declarations relating to Pecuniary Interests had been received. Mr Carruthers would contact those who were not in attendance at the meeting to remind them to register any interests with Mrs Darby.

**Action Mr Carruthers**

1. **Chairman’s Action**

Mr Carruthers gave an update on the claim made against DHS to the First Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) and thanked all those who had been involved in preparing the school’s defence. It was noted that the claimants are now taking legal advice and that this had caused the planned telephone conference to be postponed until 19th October. It was to be hoped that this conference would simplify the process. The Tribunal Date had not yet been set but it was understood that the hearing would last three days. Mr Carruthers had been ordered to respond to the Tribunal on behalf of the School to confirm that Governors had seen, and agreed to, the school’s response to the Tribunal. (This had been distributed prior to the meeting.) Mr Carruthers read out a statement to this effect which he signed after it had received approval from the Governors.

1. **Election of Chairman for 2015-16**

Mr Carruthers was proposed as Chairman by Mr Debenham and seconded by Mr Ralph. He was elected nem con.

1. **Election of Vice Chairman for 2015-16**

Mrs Goodrich was proposed as Vice Chairman by Mr Debenham and seconded by Mr Ralph. She was elected nem con.

1. **Governing Body Membership**
   1. There had been no changes in Governing Body membership since the last meeting.
   2. To review the revised GO1/GO2 documents.

GO1

The following amendments were made/suggested:

P2 Remove 4.6.

P6 Remove Target Setting Governor and add E-Safety Governor

P7 Add a quorum for Committees of the Governing Body. Mr Carruthers had looked at the Memorandum and Articles of Association which stated that, for the Full Governing Body, a quorum constituted a third of Governors (to the nearest whole number). It was assumed that this would also apply to Committees of the Governing Body.

Remove reference to Responsible Officer (RO).

P8 Remove reference to Record of Financial Responsibility.

Remove references to RO and replace with Internal Auditor.

P10 Under 4.5 add function of advising and warning students after a second Fixed Term Exclusion (FTE).

Remove 4.6 – School Development Working Party.

P13 Add E-Safety Governor.

GO2

The following points were noted:

* The terms of office for Mr Stevenson and Mrs Hotston Moore both expire in November 2015. Both were happy to continue as Governors and the meeting agreed to this.
* Mr Grover had joined the Appeals Committee.
* Mr Stevenson had left the F & GP Committee.
* Mr McMillan has joined the F & GP Committee.
* Mr Serjeant’s designation as RO to be changed.
* Reference to the School Development Working Party (4.1) to be removed.
* Add E-Safety Governor to Governors with Specific Responsibilities.
* Change date-reference under Item 5 (Governors with Specific Responsibilities).to Autumn 2016.
* Faculty Review dates to be updated for the December meeting.

Mrs Darby asked Governors to note that GO1 and GO2 were now to be found in the Governance section on the DHS website.

* 1. Skills Matrix

Mr Carruthers emphasised the importance of this to the effective functioning of the Governing Body and asked for updated returns to be sent to him in the next two weeks.

1. **Minutes**
   1. The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2015 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.
   2. Matters arising from the minutes.

4.4 The Health & Safety Meeting had been rescheduled to January.

7.2 It was noted that the expected reduction (by one) in the numbers of Graduate Interns (GIs) had not taken place. This was because there was one fewer Teaching Assistants (TAs) meaning that overall the team had been reduced in number.

7.2 *Aspire* was close to being fully funded through advertising revenue.

1. **Academy Improvement**
   1. Head’s Report.

Before going through her report Mrs Upton introduced Poppy, the Head Girl. She talked enthusiastically about the Work Experience she had undertaken at Mendlesham Health Centre, the Geography Field Trip to Iceland, and the Year 11 Pathways Evening which had provided guidance on Post-16 choices and arrangements.

[In the light of this Miss Upton informed the meeting that there had been a change in home-school transport arrangements for post-16 students in that any travel pass had to be for the nearest provider to the home address. This was causing problems as the nearest provider might not be the current school that the student was attending – of great significance if this school had a Sixth Form. Nor was free transport course-dependent. Governors agreed that such a policy was rather difficult to understand.]

Miss Upton then went through her report and made the following additional points.

New Staff

* Miss Upton had held an exit interview with Sarah Ralph (TA) which had confirmed that she had left for positive reasons and not through any dissatisfaction with DHS.
* Francisa Sunderland had moved from the GI post to that of TA as it involved fewer hours.
* James Vyse (new History Teacher) had previously been a GI at DHS.
* Mrs Upton paid tribute to the work of Head of Music, Jane Da Costa; interviews for her replacement will be held on 13th October. There are three candidates.

Bishop Martin Seeley

Bishop Martin had visited DHS this term in his capacity as a Year 10 parent.

Results

The interviews with Subject Leaders were discussed in general terms and it was noted that generally these had been positive. It was asked if there was any analysis of the relationship of GCSE outcomes to predicted grades. Miss McBurney said that this was undertaken by the SLT and informed discussions with Subject Leaders – it was felt that such detail was not useful to Governors who were expected to view results on a broader basis.

Mrs Driver asked about the negative moderation of D & T coursework. Miss Upton confirmed that this had affected some overall grades and that the school had concerns about the moderator. On balance, however, it had been decided not to lodge an appeal.

Mrs Driver also asked about the marks being challenged in English and this gave rise to a wider discussion of remarks. About 40 papers from DHS had been sent for remarking at a cost of between £22 and £42 per paper. So far c10 had been changed. If a mark is changed, no charge is made by the board. Marks can go down as well as up.

An SEN results review meeting had taken place and the outcomes had been sent to Mrs Janson. These are filtered to departments and will be shared with Governors at the next meeting.

**Action Miss Upton/Mr Wright**

Mr Barker observed that comments in the review meetings suggest that the current Year 11 seem to be doing well. Miss Upton agreed.

Ian Wigston

HMI Mary Rayner had suggested during her recent visit that psychometric testing for staff and students may be helpful to further school development at DHS. After meeting with Mr Wigston it had been decided that these tests were not suitable for DHS and that Boxall testing might be more appropriate.

Capital Improvement Fund

Miss Upton thanked Mrs Darby for her hard work on the capital works which took place over the summer.

PE Uniform

Given the success of the current PE uniform suppliers and the failings of Marks and Spencer as main uniform suppliers other options were being researched – including Price & Buckland. Parents’ views on this will be sought.

Gil Larkin

Gil Larkin was no longer in post and it was not yet known who would be the LA Single Point of Contact. Meetings are supposed to take place once a term.

Establishing external links

It was clear that collaboration was expected of an outstanding school such as DHS. Some connections had been made with a Multi-Academy Trust in Surrey and local partnerships were being considered. The Diocese was being consulted and the possibility of developing income sources to support links was being explored. Approaches had been made to Stradbroke High School and it was proposed that a small group of Governors be set up to look at all possibilities. Mr Ralph asked if this would better be undertaken by the F & GP Committee rather than create another meeting. Mr Debenham commented on successful partnerships in the past when DHS had been a Beacon School.

School Improvement Partner

Sean O’Neill will be visiting on 12th October.

Appendix: Attendance

Miss Upton drew Governors’ attention to the fact that the authorised absence record for SEND students was comparatively high. There are forty students in this category but there were two pupils (one with medical needs) responsible for a most of the absences. Without these students the figure would fall to 6.1%.

Appendix: Trips and Visits

The up-to-date list of visits was approved by Governors.

* 1. Staff Handbook

This was received by Governors; two typographical errors were corrected.

* 1. Results review meeting

These had largely been dealt with under item 8.1. Mr Carruthers drew Governors’ attention to the fact that the possibility of GCSE Drama examination performances taking place in Framlingham College’s drama facilities was being explored.

* 1. Review of use of the Pupil Premium (PP) 2014-15

Each item had been RAG rated by the school and outcomes were generally very positive. One or two suggestions for different wording were made and an error in the overall funding figure at the outset was corrected. The review will be anonymised and put on the DHS website.

It was noted that DHS spent well over the money accruing via the Pupil Premium and Mr Carruthers felt that this was worth emphasising in the document. Mrs Ramsay pointed out that the PP was not used only for direct intervention. The significantly increased cost of the Numeracy Coordinator related to additional responsibilities taken on by the postholder.

* 1. Pupil Premium statement 2015-16

One or two minor corrections were made and it was suggested that the ‘Matthew Effect’ be explained – perhaps by means of a link. With these amendments the statement was approved.

* 1. Equality Action Plan for 2014-15

The goals contained within the plan had been met very well and had been commended by Mary Rayner (visiting HMI). Work would continue on improving the performance of students with weak literary skills and to encourage support from home for these students. It was noted that the performance of upper ability boys had improved significantly.

* 1. Equality Action Plan for 2015-16

The main foci would be:

* Reading and spelling at home and school.
* Support for PP students- targeting those vulnerable to underachievement.
* Mentoring work.
* Work scrutiny.
* Tactics for parents – especially in relation to revision.
* Establishment of a KS4 homework club

Mr Carruthers thanked Mrs Ramsay for her hard and successful work on the Equality Action Plan.

1. **Budget and related items**
   1. Finance Handbook and letter from the Chief Executive of the Education Funding Agency

Governors had received the link to these and Mrs Darby emphasised that it contained much that was related to governance rather than merely to financial matters. Governors noted the letter from Peter Lauener but were unsure why it made reference to the PREVENT strategy.

* 1. To receive a verbal report on progress of the boiler project.

Mrs Darby said that the boiler house was complete and the biomass boiler had been delivered – the contractors had made up time after earlier delays. The boiler would be commissioned and tested during the half term holiday. Cofely would remain on site until December for finishing off, tidying and snagging. A small team of staff would be trained in boiler usage in November.

* 1. To receive a verbal report on progress of the roofing project.

The roofers would shortly submit their initial HSE assessment. Work would start in the October half term and would progress from the back of the school to the front. It was believed that the hall roof could be completed during term time.

1. **DHS Admissions Arrangements**
   1. DHS admissions arrangements for 2016-17

Though Governors had approved these at a previous meeting this needed to be done again as there had been changes to the admissions code relating to Looked After Children (LAC) and in-year admissions. Mrs Driver asked if the Planned Admission Number (PAN) had changed; it had not, it was just that DHS admitted above PAN. Mr McMillan asked if parents were aware that DHS admits above PAN. Miss Upton said that they were not but she did not feel that such knowledge would affect the number of applications. Ms Wnukoski asked what percentage of successful applicants were out of catchment. The figure stood at 35% though some of these might have attended feeder primary schools whilst living out of catchment. It was noted that arrangements for in-year applications did not apply until the end of the first term in Year 7. It was agreed that the term Christian Name in the Supplementary Application Form (SIF) should be replaced by Forename.

The admissions arrangements for 2016-17 were approved by Governors.

1. **Committees and Working Parties**
   1. Minutes of Curriculum Working Party (including power point presentation)

Mr Green asked about residuals in relation to headline figures and about the number of students who got a D rather than C in English Language (9). This gave rise to a discussion about whether GCSE choices should be restricted for some students to allow them to concentrate on Maths and English. It was felt that this was not a good idea as these students generally needed contact time rather than spare time though some are given extra support if the combination of subjects that they study allows it. The timetable would need Maths and English staff to be scheduled at other times to make this feasible. Mr Barker asked if those moving on to apprenticeships post-16 are still required to retake English and Maths. They are but only if possible within this context of their employment.

* 1. Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee Meeting held on 22nd September 2015

These were received without comment.

* 1. School visits from Governors

There were no visit reports at this point of term.

1. **Educational Visits**

Planned visits had been approved under Item 8.1 of the agenda.

1. **Policies**
   1. Policy for Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions.

Mrs Ramsay said that there had been few changes to this policy but that it needed to be reviewed annually. Governors asked questions about which staff could administer medicines – it was noted that the only person contracted to do so was Mrs Rose and that other staff could do so voluntarily but could not be compelled so to do. In response to a question from Ms Wnukoski it was confirmed that the term medical conditions could be taken to mean both physical and mental conditions throughout the document. It was felt that the term ‘controlled drug’ should be replaced by a more anodyne term. Mr Barker asked about the checking of expiry dates on medication administered by the school – this was done regularly by Mrs Rose. It was pointed out that a reference to permissions in 7 (g) implied that a permission slip was included in the Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) which it was not. It was, however, felt that, in signing the IHP, parents were giving the necessary permissions. The school is looking into the purchase of a cool bag for medications that need to be stored overnight on residential visits. It was confirmed that the letter to parents (Appendix 3) was sent up regularly to remind parents to update DHS of any changes in their child’s medical conditions. Ms Wnukoski felt that the way in which students with medical needs were looked after on residential visits was impressive.

Various inconsistencies in formatting and terminology were noted and it was agreed that the document should be tidied up before being reissued to Governors for their final approval

**Action Mr Wright/Mrs Ramsay**

* 1. Literacy Policy for 2015-16

This was approved.

* 1. Literacy Action Plan (LAP) for 2014-15 and the LAP for 2015-16

In the existing plan the ‘culture for reading’ target was one that had not been achieved and this was to be carried forward to the 2015-16 plan. Other main points made in relation to the plan for the coming year were:

* Students developing a wider range of vocabulary
* Log books in relation to ‘reading for pleasure’
* Cross-reference made to the Equality Plan
* Teaching staff believe it is important and has real impact on student performance

[Ms Newman agreed with this last conclusion and commended the work done by Mrs Ramsay in this regard.]

* 1. To receive and discuss the Pay Policy proposal document.

This document reviewed the current situation and outlined the proposal for the coming year – these largely being in line with the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) recommendations.

Ms Newman asked why those teachers on MP6 should get a discretionary 2% uplift but reasons for this recommendation were not clear other than to recompense those who may not wish to progress to the Upper Pay Spine (UPS). Mr Barker pointed out that the F & GP Committee had agreed only to a 1% increase for teaching staff but it was felt that the impact on GAG spending of an additional 1% for those teachers on MP6 would be minimal. Mr McMillan advocated the implementation in full of the STPCD recommendations to avoid damaging relationships with the teaching staff.

The three recommendations made were approved by the Governing Body – to be backdated to September.

Mr Green questioned the accuracy of the Headteacher Grouping for DHS, believing that the range for Group 5 should be Level 18 – Level 31 (not Level 32 as indicated). Mr Carruthers said he would look into this.

**Action Mr Carruthers**

* 1. Teachers’ Salaries Policy.

Changes here related mainly to the STPCD recommendations – the policy is reviewed annually by the F&GP Committee and approved by the Full Governing Body (this probably needs to be done earlier in the year). The question was asked as to why the School Business Manager was included in the Teacher’s Salary Policy – this is because she is a member of the SLT. It was noted that this might have implications on the performance review process for the School Business Manager.

The policy was approved by Governors.

* 1. To receive and approve the Support Staff Salaries Policy.

There were no significant changes to this and it was approved by Governors.

1. **Governor Training**
   1. Training needs

These to be determined after the completion of the skills analysis (see above Item 6.3).

* 1. Governor Training

The Chairman had received the record of Governor Training.

* 1. Governor Handbook update

This had not yet been received.

1. **Any Other Business**

* Mr Carruthers said that the increased number of students taking school lunch was creating pressures in the catering department. To counter this it had been decided to appoint a Head of Kitchen to allow Sarah Pink to take on a more strategic managerial role. There would be an initial cost of £9k associated with this change and there may be a need to create a further serving outlet at some other location in the school in the future – this to reduce pressure on the Dining Hall tills.
* Mr Carruthers reminded Governors that the Open Evening would take place on October 8th and encouraged them to attend.
* Governors agreed to support Mrs Driver’s application to join the Suffolk Governors’ Forum.

1. **Date of next meeting**

A revised meeting schedule for 2015-16 had been distributed to Governors

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 8th December 2015 at 5.00 pm.

Signed ……………………………………………………………….. Chairman 8th December 2016