



Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



**Minutes of the meeting of the members of the
Academy Trust**

Wednesday 4 July 2012 at 9:30 at Debenham High School

Present: Rt Rev Nigel Stock, Mr Richard Boulter, Mr Robert Grimsey, Mr Neil Serjeant, Mrs Janet Brown

In attendance: Miss Julia Upton (Headteacher and clerk)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2012

The minutes, circulated with the agenda, were confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

Mr Boulter commented that following the encouraging meeting with Lord Hill and EFA Eastern Region Director Martin Lamb with regard to Sixth Form Funding, there had been a follow up meeting with Mr Lamb and others from the EFA which was far less positive. Funding will continue to be sought but current funding streams seem limited.

3. Report from the Chairman of Governors to Members of the Trust (Verbal)

Mr Boulter reported that:

- The retirement of Mr Crawshaw had meant a number of celebrations; thanks were noted to Bishop Nigel for his attendance at the celebrations.
- The arrival of Miss Upton had obviously been the most significant change for the school since the last meeting and governors had been pleased with the impact that she had had since her arrival.
- The current Year 11 cohort of students looked on track to achieve impressive GCSE results. The latest predictions from teachers presented at the governors meeting showed an expectation of 94% 5A*-C and 85% 5A*-C including English and Maths. These would be impressive figures and put the school once again amongst the top of the county.
- The 2011-12 building project which included extension to the dining room and two new classrooms had been completed on time and to budget.
- There was still no clear resolution on the land that had been proposed to add to the school site at the bottom of the playing field. There had been objections to the transfer of use to the school and a desire to instate a footpath across the land by local residents. This was still being pursued by the school and was currently with MSDC planning. We are in contact with the planning officer in charge of the application and hope to be able to resolve this favourably. If we did gain Sixth Form status then we would be looking to develop the school site further.

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Headteacher Miss J Upton BSc

Senior Leadership Team: Mr S Martin, Miss S McBurney, Mrs L Ramsay, Mrs T Darby

Chairman of the Academy Trust Rt Rev Nigel Stock, Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Chairman of Governors Mr R Boulter

- New policies in Literacy, Health and Safety and Finance had been approved at the last governors meeting. The Literacy policy would ensure consistent marking of all written work across the whole school; the Health and Safety policy was in response to the fire safety report; and the Finance policy was to ensure that we keep appropriate reserves in line with expectations for academies.
- The school attendance rate looks healthy at 93.7%. There have been 8 students on fixed term exclusions, for a total of 20 days. There has been 1 permanent exclusion.
- Governors continue to act as an external eye to the school and have been involved in a number of faculty and departmental reviews. The chair of governors was present at a meeting with Kevin Haddock (the school improvement partner) where the School Development Plan was discussed and a lesson reviewed in the light of the more rigorous OFSTED framework.

4. Changes in Governors/Directors

Mr Boulter reported that:

- Mrs Esme Sibley had stepped down as a co-opted governor.
- Mrs Kate Blount had resigned as a parent governor.
- Dr Hilary Marlow would move to chair the Hearings and Discipline Committee.
- Mrs Sheila Janson was to be invited to replace Mrs Sibley
- Elections for a new parent governor would be held in September.

5. Staffing issues

Miss Upton reported that the school was fully staffed with the exception of one Teaching Assistant post.

The following staff had resigned in the last term and been replaced as noted:

- Miss Nicola Wedekind (Maths) – replaced by Mr Christian Hadwen
- Miss Lucy Brewster (Design) – replaced by Mr James Garrett
- Mrs Nicola Buckley (Science) – groupings adjusted to accommodate
- Mrs Anna Rowe, Mr Tom Sperling, Mr Ben Clarke, Mr Oliver Rogers (TA) – two fixed term contract replacements had been made: Mrs Elizabeth Tinson, Miss Jasmine Murphy.

The school is to continue to offer an MA module through the school. Nine staff completed a module in the last year and ten more have signed up for this coming year. The new module taken will be linked to the school development plan and hence will have a positive impact across the whole school, as well as for those staff taking the module.

6. Finance

The school budget had been approved by governors and looks healthy for 2012-13. Funding cuts are being predicted and whilst there is a “minimum funding guarantee” that no school will have a drop of more than 1.5% as funding mechanisms change, there are some exempt areas of the budget. These include SEN funding and small school protection. Miss Upton proposed that a review of the curriculum and how we manage teaching time and groupings would be advisable in the future.

7. Admissions

For September 2012 only Year 7 and 8 are below PAN and these have had additions in the last few months. These two year groups had significantly fewer than usual in the local catchment, a trend which changes for September 2013. The school successfully defended an appeal for an admission into September 2012 Year 9 (currently 131 students) in June.

8. Head’s Report to governors

Miss Upton had produced a written report for the full governors meeting but made the following points and additions:

- The first day of the summer term was a training day for teaching staff. ALL staff attended a talk by the new Headteacher and it was felt that this sense of having the whole school community together at key points was helpful. This will generally take place in September to have a collective sense of where we are heading.
- We continue to strengthen links with our feeder primary schools. As there is increasing uncertainty in the west of the county as school organisation review takes place we are seeing an increase in students wishing to transfer to the two tier system, in Year 7 or Year 9. Mrs Nicola Coe has completed a transition project with Year 6 maths students. Staff from the High School taught alongside primary colleagues to create a sense of consistency with the module. Students will continue the work in the first weeks at Debenham High School. For the first time teaching assistants visited and worked alongside students in Year 6 for a day in order to create a smooth transition, particularly for the most vulnerable learners.
- The School Development Plan has been finalised and all subject and year teams will be asked to complete their own version of this along with detailed results analysis in September.
- We were successful in obtaining £370,000 grant to complete core health and safety maintenance work. This includes essential fire compliant changes to doors; alarm panel and electrical work in the kitchen; replacement windows to all those with wooden frames around the school. It is hoped that through this work we can improve some general aesthetics around the school.
- The school calendar for next year includes for the first time meetings for subject and year teams after school. These will be focused on sharing good practice, developing expertise and identifying which students are not on track to achieve as expected.
- Current staff predictions for GCSE results this year are indeed very healthy. With module results already obtained for many in Science and Maths we hope to achieve the predictions stated by staff in April.

9. AOB

The members took the opportunity to view the completed building work around the school.

10. Date of next meeting

AGM – 4:30pm on 14 February 2013 at Debenham High School.