**Full Governing Body**

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 2nd February 2016 at 5.00 p.m.

Present: Mr R Barker Mr C Grover

Mr D Carruthers Chairman Mrs F Hotston Moore

Rev P Cotton Mrs S Janson

Mr P Debenham Dr H Marlow

Mrs C Driver Ms J Newman

Ms S Goodrich Mr R Stevenson

Mr T Green Ms E Wnukoski

In attendance: Mr R Boulter Member of the Academy Trust

Mrs J Brown Member of the Academy Trust

Mr R Grimsey Member of the Academy Trust

Mr S Martin Deputy Headteacher

Mr S Wright Clerk to the Governors

1. **Absence**
   1. Apologies for absence had been received from Miss S McBurney, Mrs T Darby, Dr D Egan, Mr D McMillan, Mr D Ralph, Mrs L Ramsay, Rt Revd M Seeley, Mr N Serjeant and Miss J Upton. Mrs Brown left the meeting at 6.06 pm., Revd Cotton at 6.29 pm. and Mrs Driver at 6.30 pm.
   2. Governors consented to their absence.
2. **Pecuniary and Other Interests**
   1. There were no pecuniary interests raised with respect to items on the agenda.
   2. There was nothing to update in the Register of Pecuniary Interests.
3. **Chairman’s Action**

The Chairman dealt with two items:

With respect to the ongoing tribunal, Mr Carruthers ran through developments that had taken place since the previous meeting. Failings on the part of the plaintiff to meet deadlines and to present a cogent case had led to the DHS solicitor asking that the case be struck out. At the same time the school made a compromise offer which involved a review of pertinent policies, a letter of regret and a review of training. This offer had been accepted just before the Judge did indeed strike out the case. Governors had a number of questions from which the following points emerged:

* Costs would be met by the insurance company
* There was unlikely to be an appeal as, in Ms Goodrich’s opinion, the Judge’s decision was correct in law
* Mr Green asked if there had been any lessons learned that make such a situation less likely to occur in the future. Mr Carruthers felt that the school was always mindful of being complacent and could look to improve but the nature of the complaint meant that it probably could not have been avoided. What had been clear was that the school’s record keeping was very good indeed and that the care offered to students was exemplary.
* It was noted how difficult it is for parents/children to access CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).
* Should the claimant chose to speak to the press the school would respond accordingly.
* Revd Cotton advocated the possibility of intervention by an honorary chaplain if one were to be appointed.

Miss Upton had attended the Suffolk Schools Forum, standing in for the Head of Farlingaye High School. This body plays an important part in apportioning funds to Suffolk Schools. Mr Carruthers asked if Governors were prepared to endorse Miss Upton’s candidacy for the forum on which academies are currently under-represented. Governors agreed to this.

1. **Minutes**
   1. The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8th December 2015 were accepted as a true record of the meeting with the exception of adjustments to Item 7 which should be titled ‘Budget Related Items’ rather than ‘DHS Admission Arrangements’.
   2. Matters arising from the minutes.

5.1 Mr Carruthers thanked Governors for submitting items for the Young Carers cookery book.

1. **Academy Improvement**

Presentation by Head Boy and Deputy Head Boy.

Philip and Will told the meeting of student visits to ‘An Inspector Calls’ (English), ‘Hitler on Trial’ (a workshop for History students) and a conference for Hispanists in London. Year 11 had held a charity week which had raised money for Alzheimer’s Research and for the work of the Red Cross in Syria. Teachers had narrowly won a basketball match against Year 11 students and there had been a teachers’ ‘Wheeley Chair Race’ as well as a cake stall. The boys commended the Heroes (Young Carers) cook book which had been endorsed by Jimmy (of Jimmy’s farm) and Dr Poulter, and which was currently being printed. Copies will be sent to other schools for the use of their young carers.

* 1. Headteacher’s Report

In Miss Upton’s absence, Mr Martin reviewed the report.

Introduction

With reference to the application for Teaching School status, SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) were shortly to come into school to offer training for staff and those from other schools in the statutory duty to deliver the Prevent strategy.

Personnel Changes

The appointments in English and Maths would free time for other teachers in September 2016 who were currently teaching these lessons. There may be a need for a further Maths appointment for September 2016.

January Training Day

This had related to disadvantaged pupils and those with poor attendance. Mr Martin felt that the examples given showed that DHS was taking a correct approach to individual student needs, and how well teachers knew students in their care. The resilience newsletter had been well received.

Meeting with Rob Walden

Mr Walden was exploring the possibility of student/teacher links with schools in Holland.

Admissions

Since the report was written there had been a managed move to DHS for a Year 10 student on a six week trial basis. So far this had been successful with improved attendance in evidence.

Safeguarding

The Chairman had carried out the annual audit.

Discussion

* Mrs Wnukoski asked about the decision to be taken on the DHS application to become a Teaching School (decision due in February). There was some discussion as to whether an EGM would be necessary to make a final decision on this as Governors had only agreed to the application in principle. Mrs Hotston Moore felt that this would depend on the nature of the offer – contentious or otherwise. Mr Martin pointed out that the offer would simply be a confirmation that DHS had successfully applied for Teaching School (TS) status and that it would be up to the school how this was carried forward – and the associated funding was likely to be used to free up teacher time to enable then to carry out Teaching School activities. Any such proposals would, of course, be placed before Governors. Mr Barker felt that, in this case, Miss Upton and Mr Carruthers should be able to accept the offer; Ms Goodrich agreed. Ms Newman said that teaching staff were concerned about the potential for extra work and the possibility of a poorer service being offered to DHS’ own students, as a consequence; it was, therefore, essential to build in time for TS activities and to ensure the recruitment of quality replacement teaching. She felt that this was particularly the case given the roll out of the new GCSE courses. She also said that teachers would like the opportunity for feedback on the decision. Mr Martin said that he would be happy to talk to staff who had any concerns though he felt that the situation would not vary much from that already advised. Mr Carruthers will contact Governors once the decision is received.
* Referring to the list of trips Mrs Driver asked why there were no Year 8 trips included. Mr Martin said that these took place at other times in the year.
  1. Current Academic Performance

Governors received a pack of performance data and various points were made:

In terms of Raise Online data, DHS achievement for 2015 had been graded as a B – the highest for any school within a 75 mile radius. Current performance by Year 11 students suggested 75% of GCSEs grades at A\*- C (including English and Maths). If achieved this would also bring a B grade rating.

The Progress 8 measure for 2015 had been 0.62. Next year’s projections suggest a measure of 0.4 – a decrease but still a very good outcome. This represented better than expected progress nationally – especially in English and Maths.

Percentage figures for disadvantaged students could vary enormously as the numbers of students involved was small. An INSET day had been spent on this subject and it was clear that teachers know the needs of their students very well.

Attendance currently stands at 96.6% though that for students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (ECHP) was poorer (though higher than nationally).

There were a number of students Educated Other than at School (EOTAS) who were supported by Jackie Bennett – the flexibility and help that she provided was much appreciated by parents.

* 1. Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

Mr Martin pointed out that Ofsted no longer require a SEF but it remains useful as an analytical tool, and as preparation for inspection. Mr Green asked if there was any objective independent evaluation as part of the SEF. Mr Martin said that there were elements of this through the work of the School Improvement Partner, Sean O’Neill, who had undertaken shared lesson observations. The Local Authority advisor would be asked to undertake these as well.

The question was asked why internal isolations (p 9) had risen in 2014-15. Mr Martin felt there was no obvious reason for this other than some problems with a particular year group - though there was no discernible pattern. Ms Goodrich asked if the criteria for internal isolation were the same as for Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE). Mr Martin thought not but said he would check.

**Action Mr Martin**

1. **Budget and related items**
   1. Current budgetary position

In the absence of Mrs Darby, Mrs Hotston Moore reported that all was very much on line for this stage of the year but with staff costs being slightly higher than budget.

* 1. Update on boiler and roof projects

There had been a few teething problems with the boiler which had generally been resolved. The roofing contractors had been excellent and should be finished by the end of February.

* 1. Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) Applications

These had been submitted with decisions expected in March.

1. **Committees and Working Parties**
   1. Curriculum Working Party

Governors reviewed the notes from the meeting held on 12th January – there were no questions arising from those who had been unable to attend. Mr Carruthers commended Miss McBurney’s presentation on the Raise Dashboard.

Mr Barker asked about the E-Bacc. This has now been revived by the government and, as before, at present DHS will not force students into taking E-Bacc qualifying subjects – especially those who might find these subjects more challenging.

* 1. Admissions

Mr Carruthers confirmed that the Admissions Committee had checked the list of applications against DHS’ admissions criteria. There were over 140 applications for a planned Year 7 figure of 135.

* 1. Health and Safety Committee

Governors received the minutes of the meeting held on 21st January and the following points were noted:

* Costs in relation to The Anglian Water inspection (Item 7) had fallen to £1.8k from 3.5 k.
* Mr Carruthers asked about staff training in the use of Fire Extinguishers (item 5) and why this did not take place. It was pointed out that the main thrust of the Emergency Plan was to evacuate the building and that, if fire extinguishers were to be used, it was only to be in the case of small fires. Fire extinguishers are now only CO2 and powder. Though fire extinguishers are covered in H & S training, this does not involve practical use.
* It was unclear who would pay for the UK Power Networks work on the electrical intake, or for the subsequent written report.
  1. Governor visits

Mr Debenham had taken part in the review of the Drama department and reported that the new Drama teacher had settled in well.

1. **Policies**
   1. DHS Admissions’ Policies for 2016-17 and 2017-18

Though these had already been approved by Governors there had been the changes in the light of concerns expressed by the LA. Specifically these related to the definition of ‘ordinarily resident’ and the wording had been adjusted to reflect the potential for second homes in the catchment area. Policies had also been adjusted to include provision for crown servants returning from overseas. Appendix 1 had been amended to Appendix A in line with policy nomenclature.

Mrs Wnukoski pointed out that the Admissions Policy (AP) link on the website linked to the 2014 policy. This will be checked.

**Action Mr Martin**

Mr Green asked if primary schools were made aware that admissions could be made for children out of their normal age group. Mr Carruthers said that he would check on this with Miss Upton.

**Action Mr Carruthers**

Mr Barker wondered if there might be complaints if the Year 7 admissions were limited to 135 after the increased number in 2015.

Mrs Driver said that the AP stated that changes took place after consultation with parents and asked if this had taken place. Mr Carruthers though that this only applied if there were significant changes in the Planned Admissions Number (PAN) but that he would check.

**Action Mr Carruthers**

* 1. Complaints Procedure

Governors’ received the DHS Complaints Procedure (CP). Various points were in need of clarification:

* On P2 in the second set of Bullet Points (BP3) Mrs Hotston Moore asked when the 15 days started from (and pointed about the apparent contradiction of this in BP4). It was noted that there were other areas of the procedure where the timescale was unclear.
* Mr Green pointed out that the CP was not under the policies tab on the website; Mr Martin confirmed that the CP was only sent out on request. MS Goodrich felt that it should be on the website or that there should be some reference to it being available on request.

Mr Carruthers will discuss both these points with Miss Upton.

**Action Mr Carruthers**

Mr Barker checked that a log of complaints was kept. This was confirmed.

Pending the above adjustments the CP was approved by Governors.

1. **DfE Information**

The DfE had decided that a Home School Agreement is no longer required but DHS feels that it has some value and will retain it. No changes to it are anticipated.

1. **Governor Training**
   1. Governors received details of training opportunities.
   2. The record of Governor Training is no longer sent automatically and has to be chased.
2. **Any other business**

* Mr Barker asked about the outcome of the HMI visit to look at provision for disadvantaged students. Mr Martin said that the case study of DHS will be included in the general report and that the school would receive a copy once it was published.
* Mr Carruthers noted that it was Revd. Cotton’s last meeting as he would be retiring shortly. He thanked him, in absentia, for all he had contributed as a Governor. There will be further thanks given at a school assembly attended by the Bishop.

1. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 3rd May 2016 at 5.00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.45 pm.

Signed: …………………………………………………….. Chairman Date: 3rd May 2016