

## **THE GOVERNING BODY OF DENBY DALE FIRST AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing body held at 7.00 pm at Denby Dale First and Nursery School on Wednesday, 24 May 2017.

### PRESENT

Mr M Eaton, Mr P J Belsey, Mrs J Cody, Mrs S Fairbrother, Ms G Hood, Ms K Howgill, Mrs R Liu, Mr A Severn, Mrs L Taylor, Miss J Wood

### In Attendance

Mrs P Hales (Minute Clerk)

### 593. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs A Elliott (consent) and Dr N Denby (consent).

There were no declarations of interest.

### 594. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following items were notified to be brought up under any other business.

- Kirkwood Hospice
- Scarecrows
- Training – Finance Training. Having problems booking. Concern that system won't allow governor in.
- Replacement to Raise on Line – Email been received.

### 595. REPRESENTATION

It was noted that the governing body was short of three co-opted and one parent governors. For the past meetings, the governing body had accepted this situation and the Chair questioned whether this could continue. It was agreed that it could continue in the short term but it may be necessary to think seriously about changing the constitution. He asked Governors to give this some thought.

### 596. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 MARCH 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2017 be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

The meeting was held at the school, not Denby Dale Library.

### 597. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

598. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS

The Headteacher circulated her report and apologised that it had not been sent out earlier.

(a) Staffing

The following points were highlighted:

- Prevent Training – Some teachers would be receiving Prevent Training for 1.5 hours 10-11.30 am on the Inset Day after the half term holiday. Governors were welcome to attend this useful course.
- Staff Issues – Congratulations to Mr Severn on his appointment as Assistant Headteacher. Both candidates did themselves proud.
- Interviews were held for a new class teacher. 22 applications were received and five were shortlisted. Following lesson observations and tours of the school two candidates were selected for interview. The two NQTs both did very well in their lessons, with different styles, and Zainab Ahmed was appointed.

**Q. Is she going into Y4?**

A. No. She will go into Y2 and Kirsty Henderson will move to Y4. Parents will be notified after half term.

The Caretaker was off sick and this was increasing the workload on SLT who were required to lock up. The Headteacher was aware of the budget constraints but would like governors to consider whether Scissett Academy could be approached to supply cover for opening and locking up, plus emptying the bins.

**Q. Is her absence covered by the insurance?**

A. No. We did not buy into it because we are saving money. In the past, we have not got value for money from the policy.

RESOLVED: That Governors approved the proposal to contact Scissett Academy for support.

(b) Quality of Teaching and learning

Year 3 was moderated. It was useful for teachers to get together to discuss their pupils. It was a positive and enjoyable day. There were photographs in the hall to see what the children were doing. It was interesting to see the different approaches taken by children and teachers.

**Q. What is the output for creative writing? What were the results?**

A. It was a bit too bold. Some were scared by it. Some struggled to get the language because some of the children did not know what castles were and did not understand about building sandcastles on the beach. The next step would be to look at the same sort of project but on a smaller scale. It had highlighted that the children found it difficult to let their imaginations go.

**Q. Is it because this is such a transition to what they normally do?**

A. Yes. It was a good benchmarking exercise. We are further back than we thought we were. They cannot write stories but it highlighted a lot of things to build upon.

(c) Behaviour and Safety

An ongoing issue with behaviour in Year 4 was discussed. Governors raised several questions to which they received comprehensive answers. The Headteacher had a plan of action to resolve the situation.

RESOLVED: That the Governors are fully in support of the Headteacher's action plan. The Chair will be a signatory on the letter to parents.

(d) Community Hub

The hub was going forward. There had been an organiser's meeting and the Headteacher now had lots of information and contacts. Schools were a stable part of the LA and, as such, the authority wanted them to lead multiagency meetings. Shelley College and Scissett Middle were already on board, and it was expected that there would be a total of 17 schools in the hub.

**Q. Where is the hub going to be?**

A. At the three schools. The lead is ourselves. £70,000 will be allocated to support schools and hubs.

**Q. Is that to buy services in?**

A. It will be. Certain money will be allocated for Family Support Workers. We are looking at suggestions to put Thrive training in schools. That is another project to support children who are struggling. We could look at educating parents at preschool groups. The rural setting of the school might present difficulties for parents wanting to access services. It may be necessary to invest in a mini bus. A meeting was held at Joseph Norton Academy to discuss a launch event to promote the hub.

**Q. Does the hub need a home?**

A. A lot of groups are looking for homes. There has been interest from one group who want to use our building for a summer school for children with autism.

(e) SATS

KS1 SATs had been held without children being put under stress. The NFER had been sent off. Governors would see the results in due course.

(f) Terrorist Threat

West Yorkshire Police had issued advice relating to the recent increase in the terrorist threat.

599. SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION – SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Governors confirmed that they had received the minutes of the Standards and Effectiveness Committee.

(a) Data

A report had been compiled following 3 visits into school where raw data and collated data had been reviewed. The results from last year had been compared with the mid-term assessment in February. There had been some questions about assessment from Year 3 and Year 4. Alex had explained the framework and why it was difficult to assess. It was hard to break down

stepping stones in Year 3 and Year 4. Governors had also discussed the difficulties presented by their being no levels. It had been concluded that the data scrutiny had been useful and it would be good to repeat it next year.

(b) Literacy

Governors had looked at literacy and the School Development Plan. Children were self-evaluating their writing and setting their own success criteria. This was broken down into stages. Year 1 were given success criteria and by Year 5 children were expected to set their own.

(c) Policies

Mrs Elliott was preparing a plan to identify policy review dates. It was noted that some policies had already been reviewed but had not been placed on file. They would be put on a shared drive in school.

## 600. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

The following points were highlighted:-

- Governors had discussed the appointment of a new Assistant Headteacher.
- The bungalow was no longer fit for use and governors had recommended that it be handed back to the LA for them to deal with.
- Health and Safety – part of the Trim Trail was broken and it was out of bounds.
- The budget had been circulated to governors. The Headteacher had met with Amelia in Finance. All cuts that she could identify had been made but a deficit budget would still be set.

Deficit last year £71,000

Deficit this year £43,000

Total deficit £114,000

Small schools in particular were struggling with their budgets. Amelia expected that once the budget was submitted then David Gearing would probably visit to see if further cuts could be identified. One possibility related to the school meals service for the 30 hour provision. There would be an issue about breakfasts and teas.

**Q. Will staff need to do a hygiene course?**

A. Yes. It is a fairly basic course. We will have to reach the end of the contract first.

**Q. What would we save?**

A. I have not costed it out but it will be a significant saving.

## 601. APPROVE THE BUDGET

RESOLVED: That the Full Governing Body approved the budget.

**Q. What about learning resources (not ICT)? How does it go from £44,000 to £10,000?**

A. In last year's budget Debbie included £27,000 for ICT. All of that has been taken out. If the PTA gives us any money you will be able to decide how to spend it.

**Q. Are we legally allowed to set a deficit budget at this level? Will we be removed as a governing body and the school put into Special Measures? Did Amelia say anything about the deficit from last year?**

A. I have spoken to David Gearing and he knows all about this budget. He told us to set the budget and then he will come to talk to us.

Concern was expressed that governors needed to improve their monitoring of the budget.

**Q. Do we know why we have spent another £7,000 on the budget?**

A. One of the problems we have is that we have no control over a large part of our budget. We also set the budget in April but do not know our income until September. 80% of the budget is for salaries. Other factors are the apprentice levy of £6,000, salary increments and the need to meet the Living Wage for lunchtime staff.

Governors expressed concern about the high level of responsibility put on governors and SLT.

On a positive note the LA was to become a commissioning body so that schools could get better value for money on contracts.

Governors were also concerned that parents were unaware of the lack of basic resources in the classroom, and that teachers were purchasing these at their own expense.

This was an increasingly worrying situation, and governors felt it would be very reassuring to have some advice from David Gearing as to what risks the Governors were taking. It was felt that parents needed to exert political pressure but governors were reminded that they could not make political statements during the period of purdah prior to the general election.

**Q. Will the 30 hours' provision make things worse?**

A. No. They have dropped the funding for 3 year olds and increased it for 2 year olds. Numbers might increase because parents are looking for full days.

It was suggested that there could be a charge for after school clubs. Profits from these could be diverted to classroom resources.

RESOLVED: (i) That Governors would take the idea forward to the Resources Committee.  
(ii) That Governors approved the budget. Debbie to be asked to provide a half term or monthly report (whichever was most easily done). Consideration to be given to inviting David Gearing to a future meeting.

**ACTION: All governors were reminded that they were welcome to attend the Resources Committee as observers. The dates would be put on the group calendar.**

## 602. DEALING WITH CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOLS – A PRACTICAL TOOLKIT FOR HEADTEACHERS AND GOVERNORS

The Chair had looked at the document and found it to be common sense and pragmatic. The governors were reminded that they did not get involved in first line complaints. The response should be to advise people to talk to the Headteacher.

RESOLVED: That Governors agreed to adopt the Practical Toolkit.

603. SAFEGUARDING

The Headteacher reported the following safeguarding matters:-

- Damage to trim trail
- Broken gate
- 1 child Protection – conference
- 1 child under Child Protection Order

604. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

The Chair reminded governors that there was a self-booking system for training, although there had been some concern that one governor was having major problems with the system and the staff who support it.

Governors were reminded to record the purpose of their visit when coming into school.

605. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Scarecrows

It was suggested that governors could work with their classes to make scarecrows for the festival. Two governors were already working on scarecrows. These would be at the summer fair so people from the village would have to come to school to find the answers.

Q. What will you do on the Sunday?

A. They be left outside.

Request received for all staff to receive emails and texts that would be sent to parents.

**ACTION: Headteacher**

(b) Holiday Club

**Q. Is the holiday club running at Christmas?**

A. The term does not start until 8 January and this is likely to be an issue for working parents.

**ACTION: Headteacher**

(c) Kirkwood Hospice

Kirkwood Hospice leaflets were handed out. The hospice would be 30 years old this year and it would be holding an exhibition at Huddersfield University from 6-11 June 2017. Governors were asked to encourage people to attend.

(d) Raise on line

A new system was being brought in. Training would be provided.

606. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Governing Body be held at 7.00 pm at the School on Wednesday, 5 July 2017.

607. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS - SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That no part of these minutes, agenda or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the School, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.