

THE GOVERNING BODY OF DENBY DALE FIRST AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at 7.00pm at the School on Monday, 4 July 2016.

PRESENT

Mr P J Belsey, Mrs J Cody, Mrs A Elliott, Ms G Hood, Ms K Howgill, Mrs R Liu, Mrs E Moore, Mrs P Stringer, Mrs L Taylor, Miss J Wood, Mrs D Watkins, Mr M Eaton, Mrs S Mr A Severn

In Attendance

Mr K Rothwell (Minute Clerk)

The Chair welcomed Alex Severn to his first meeting of the governing body.

517 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs S Fairbrother (consent) and Mrs C Wright (consent).

There were no declarations of interest.

518 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following items were notified to be brought under Any Other Business:

- Information
- Facebook for governors.
- Denby Dale Library
- Badges

519 REPRESENTATION

The following matters of representation were noted:

Appointment

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Mr Alex Severn	Staff	31.05.2016
Mrs Siobhan Fairbrother	Designate (Co-opted) (Pending DBS)	11.05.2016

520 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 MAY 2016

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

521 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

522 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Curriculum and Standards Committee

Copies of the minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2106 had been circulated.

Other matters raised included:

Some data for the past year had now been received - Reception results showed an upward trend for the past three years.

Phonics – an upward trend after two years of a downward trend.

KS1 - Local schools, including us, showed a fall in results this was due to the changes in the system.

523 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVERNORS QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher spoke to her report, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Topics included:

SEN

Two pupils need considerable support but assessment for one has been turned down for a second time.

Staffing

A new Y4 teacher is being sought to replace Mrs Vlahovic.

Assessment Headlines

These had been fully discussed by the Curriculum committee.

Curriculum

Details of assessments and school trips were provided.

Sports Premium

Details of events plus submission of evidence to gain the Sainsbury's Silver Award.

Community Hub

Ongoing discussions with the Head Teacher of St Aidan's to explore the setting up of a Community Hub.

Staff Training

Details were given of training and courses attended.

524 SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION

Details had been given in the report of the Curriculum committee.

525 SAFEGUARDINGGrounds

Several dead trees in the grounds and Wild Wood needed to be removed. A quote of £800 had been received, based on the logs being used in the grounds and Wild Wood. Governors supplied names of other tree surgeons who could quote for the work.

Fort

This was in a poor state and needed to be demolished and removed. The PTA will be asked if they are interested in funding a replacement fort. It was suggested that the volunteers who had worked on the pond might be interested in demolishing the fort.

Pond

There was still work to be done.

526 LOOKING FORWARD

The Head Teacher outlined her concerns over the uncertain and unstable conditions in education at present. The quality of applicants for teaching posts was poor and many schools were unable to fill vacancies. It now takes longer to become a qualified teacher and there is more training "on the job". Teacher training numbers had been reduced. She explained the work of Teaching School Alliances.

Teachers are leaving the profession because of stress and the high workload. It was becoming harder for the school to recruit teachers. Succession planning was more difficult in smaller schools who were not in a MAT, although the uncertainty does affect all schools and teachers.

Q. What is the role of the LA to be?

A. Initiative is now with the Head Teacher, not the LA. The Community Hub will help, with other agencies and Social workers involved. This will mean extra work for Head Teachers, with meetings related to welfare concerns, and means more work for other senior leaders in school.

There will also be problems for schools with Nurseries when the increase to 30 hours provision starts.

We have a deficit budget and there are several other schools with the same problem.

There are some exciting challenges ahead but the uncertainty can be stressful.

Copies of the summary of the Department of Education Strategy Overview 2015-20 were circulated and the 12 DfE delivery priorities discussed.

Priority 12 "Build character and resilience" this had long been emphasised in our school.

Q. Is there any way governors can help the appeal for the SEN child needing support?

A. We are appealing for the second time in respect of this child. It is difficult to see what more can be done.

The Chair stressed that governors have a strategic role and are concerned with Outcomes not Methods. Ways should be explored in which governors with specific subject responsibilities could support subject leaders in school. We need to be a Critical Friend – but Friend is the first priority.

Q. Are we in the right role, or on the right committee on the governing body?

Governors were asked to consider this over the Summer, in preparation for the Annual meeting in September.

Copies of the Governing board skills audit and twenty questions (Key questions every governing body should ask itself) were circulated. Governors were asked to consider these over the summer and return the Skills audit to the Chair.

Other questions that could be considered were:

- 1) Personal school email addresses –shared calendar
- 2) How many governors were needed on the governing body, with what skills?
- 3) Need to understand roles and responsibilities of a governor.
- 4) Good Chairmanship of governing body and committees.
- 5) Good Minute clerking.
- 6) Good relationships based on mutual trust
- 7) Steering group of Chair and committee chairs to meet with school senior leadership.
- 8) Know the school. – Data, staff, school community
- 9) Ask challenging questions in the right way.
- 10) Have the courage to have open conversations.

Q. As we are really stretched as regards money and staff, does this mean we need to join with other schools?

A. As we have a budget deficit we cannot join a Multi Academy Trust. The local schools pyramid still works well and is now more focussed on joint needs and concerns. We hope that the Community Hub will further improve working relationships.

We can see how the local MATs form and get on. We can then choose which one(s) to approach, ask them questions to see if they will suit us. There is less pressure to join a MAT now.

Q. What are the local MATs?

- A.**
1. The 2 Middle schools plus Birdsedge and Shelley First school.
 2. The local Church schools – at present these must be led by one of the Church schools.
 3. Shelley College – mainly has non-local schools in it's MAT.

There would be less uncertainty if we had a 3 – 5 year plan, based on an increase in pupil numbers. In 2 years time we could be in a position to consider looking at the advisability of joining a MAT.

It was agreed to look at the committee structure and membership.

Policies

It was agreed to draw up a timetable for review of policies and appoint a governor with overall responsibility.

ACTION: At the Annual meeting in September, appoint a governor with responsibility for Policy review.

527 GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

Mrs Moore had visited school and carried out a Health and Safety audit.

The Chair and Vice-Chair would use the Governor Skills Audits to produce an analysis of Training needs.

528 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Information.

Governors noted the receipt of details of information that must be published by maintained schools

(b) Facebook for School Governors

Governors noted the Facebook group for Kirklees School Governors.

(c) Denby Dale Library

Mr Belsey explained that the delay in opening the new library had been due to disputes with the builder. These had now been resolved. Gas, Electricity and Water services should be connected in the next 6 weeks and the Library should open in the Autumn.

(d) ID badges

It was suggested that it would look better if governors wore individual badges on lanyards when visiting school, instead of the sticky labels provide by the school entry system. Most governors agreed to pay the £3.50 charge for these badges.

529 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the next meetings of the Governing Body be held at 7.00 pm at the School on:

Monday, 19 September 2016.

530 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.