

**DEBDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY
LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD**

Minutes of the meeting held at 17:30 hrs on 6 July 2023

Membership	Type	Office	Term
Rev. John Saxon	Foundation:	Incumbent/Vice-Chair	Ex officio
Tom Caster	Foundation		02/02/2026
* Sarah Belchambers	General Member		27/03/2026
* Marcus Hayakawa	General Member		04/11/2026
Sarah Mitchell	General Member	Executive Headteacher	Ex officio
Lin Stephenson	General Member	Chair	01/01/2025
Vacancy	General Member		
Isobel Tunnecliff	Parent		14/07/2025
Rachel Stoddart	Parent		17/05/2027
Matt Hawley	Headteacher	Head of School	Ex officio
Sarah Bailey	Staff		03/12/2023
In attendance			
Tom Bennett		Clerk	
		Observer	

* indicates absence

OUR VISION is to be a highly purposeful, caring Christian community, in which our children:

- *Progress exceptionally well academically, across a broad and knowledge-rich curriculum;*
- *Develop into confident, compassionate, well-rounded individuals;*
- *Become equipped with the learning skills needed to deal with future challenges;*
- *Create happy, positive memories of their childhood.*
- *“That they may have life in all its fullness.” (John 10: 10)*

John Saxon opened the meeting with a prayer

Date	Item	Action
19/23	<p>Apologies for absence [LS]</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Sarah Belchambers and Marcus Hayakawa.</p> <p>Isobel Tunnecliff and Tom Caster had sent prior notice of their late arrival.</p>	
20/23	<p>Notification of urgent AoB [LS]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of a tree • SLT 	
21/23	<p>Declaration of business interests [All]</p> <p>No governor declared any potential conflicts of interest with any items to be discussed at the meeting or that they had given or received any gifts or hospitality that could compromise their impartiality when dealing with the matters for the Academy.</p>	
22/23	<p>Membership [LS]</p> <p>a) Parent governor vacancy</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Rachel Stoddart whose appointment as a parent governor would be considered and ratified by the Trust’s Board of Directors at their next meeting to be held on 13th July 2023.</p> <p>b) LGB membership 2023-24</p> <p>All governors agreed to advise the Trust’s Board of Directors that all the current governors were willing to continue as governors for the 2023-24 Academic year.</p>	

23/23 Minutes of the previous meeting [LS]

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 March 2023 were approved as an accurate and true record of the meeting.

24/23 Matters arising [LS]

No matters arising from the previous minutes not otherwise covered on the agenda were reported.

25/23 Risk Management [MH]

The Headteacher [HT] highlighted the following changes to the Academy's risk register:

Strategic Risk – Admissions

The likelihood of this risk had been reduced following the decision to re-instate a formerly closed class to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers.

Financial Risk - Financial information accuracy

The likelihood of this risk had been reduced following the appointment of a new Trust Finance Manager.

Operational Risk – Security

The impact of this risk had been reduced following implementation of improved access security measures.

Operational Risk - Inappropriate internet content

The likelihood of this risk had been reduced following the appointment of a new ITC support company, Interm.

Operational Risk – Industrial Action

This risk was being closely monitored. The school took an impartial view to staff taking industrial action. Two teachers had participated in the earlier rounds of strikes, but no members of staff were striking in the current round of strikes.

26/23 The Head of School Report [MH]

The Headteacher introduced his summer term report and highlighted the following:

Staffing

Two support staff were leaving the school for new careers, one as a teacher and the other in the NHS, to work with young children who have been through physical and emotional trauma.

Three staff had been recruited, a new class teacher for the additional class and two Learning Support Assistants [LSAs]. All have extensive experience of working with children in different education settings.

Admissions

There were currently 139 children on roll, a net rise from 8 children since the Autumn term.

Some of the children joining were children from families relocating from Weathersfield to Carver Barracks.

Attendance

Attendance rates have improved since the autumn and spring terms. Across the year, attendance is over 95% for children aged 5 and over.

Achievement and Standards

Key Stage 2 SATs assessment results for reading, SPAG and mathematics had not been published but would be distributed to all governors soon after they had been.

Key Stage 2 SATs assessment results for Writing had been published and were significantly higher [85%] than the summer target [77%] and for those working at greater depth were on target [23%]

Of these, the expected and above results for “homegrown” pupils, those pupils who had been on roll for three years, was 100% with 38% achieving working at greater depth.

[Tom Caster joined the meeting]

Year 4 Multiplication Check

All 19 children in Year 4 completed the multiplication check. Children were required to answer 25 random multiplication questions, within 6 seconds per question. The average score for the school was 20.95, compared to the national average of 19.8 and an East of England average of 19.5.

End of Key Stage 1 – Year 2 SATs Results

It was difficult to gauge the results against targets set at the beginning of the year and any trends due to high mobility of children leaving and joining the school during the year.

The Year 2 SATs results for Reading were significantly higher [86%] than the summer target [71%].

Of these, the expected and above results for “homegrown” pupils was 100%.

The results for pupils working at greater depth for Reading, Maths and Combined were lower than the targets set.

The Chair asked what had contributed to the lower than expected results for pupils reaching expected standard for Writing.

Sarah Mitchell reported that pupils at many schools were still catching up following the impact of two years of home learning due to Covid and it would be interesting to compare the school’s results against the National averages when they are published to get a better perspective.

The HT reported Writing would be a school development priority in 2023-24.

Year 1 Phonics Check:

All 17 of the children (100%) originally included in the beginning of year target passed the phonics check.

Reception

Of the 15 pupils out of the 20 children in Reception (75%) targeted to make the Good Level of Development [GLD] only 13 achieved GLD (65%). Three children did not make the GLD due to only a couple of specific areas of need – interventions would be put in place in the Autumn term to boost their progress and enable them to close these gaps.

[Isobel Tunnecliff joined the meeting]

Ofsted Inspection

The HT and Sarah Mitchell provided an overview of the recent Ofsted Inspection.

Ofsted had provided a draft report for comment from the school to be published in the near future.

The inspectors had spent time getting to know the school well, had provided good feedback to staff and the leadership team.

The school had been provisionally graded as:

- Quality of Education: Good
- Behaviour and Attitudes: Good

- Personal Development: Outstanding
- Leadership and Management: Good
- EYFS: Good
- Overall Effectiveness: Good

The Chair congratulated the HT and all staff for the improved assessment.

27/23 Pupil Premium [MH]

The HT reported he would provide an annual report on the use of the Pupil Premium Grant and the impact on the disadvantaged pupils who were eligible for the support.

28/23 Academy Development Plan/ Self Evaluation [MH]

a) Academy's Development Plan 2022-23

The meeting noted the updated Academy's Development Plan for 2022-23 and the actions carried out in the summer term to progress the achievement of the key priorities agreed at the start of the academic year.

b) Self-Evaluation Form for 2022-23

[Refer to the section on the Ofsted Inspection in the HT's Report]

c) School development/ improvement plan for 2023-24

The HT summarised the SDP Priorities for 2023-24 that were aligned with the outstanding sections of the Ofsted framework and the SIAMs inspection due in 2024 [Priority 4]

1. **Quality of Education** - To ensure that all areas of the curriculum are coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills, with particular development in PE, MfL, RE and Music.
2. **Quality of Education** - To further develop consistency of pedagogy and expectations, to ensure that pupils' work across the curriculum is consistently of a high quality.
3. **Behaviour and Attitudes** - To further develop metacognitive approaches and wider behaviour for learning strategies, to ensure that pupils demonstrate high levels of self-control and consistently positive attitudes to their education.
4. **Personal Development** - To reinforce and further develop the school's Christian vision, to continue to promote the extensive personal development of pupils.
5. **Leadership and Management** - To use professional development and rigorous monitoring to further teachers' subject and pedagogical knowledge, translating into improvements in the teaching of the curriculum.

29/23 Class Structure and PAN [MH]

a) Class Structure

The meeting noted that prior to the school becoming an academy and joining the MAT, pupil numbers had fallen to 89 that had required the school to reduce the number of classes from six to five.

Following the arrival of the new Head of School, the restructuring of the leadership, teaching and support staff and the improvements in the standards of teaching and learning, pupil numbers have steadily increased and were now at a level to re-instate the number of classes to six.

A new teacher and LSA had been recruited to start in September 2023 for the new class.

b) Published Admission Number [PAN]

It was noted the Academy's PAN was 23 and school's maximum pupil capacity was 161. This compared to other schools with a PAN of 30 and maximum capacity of 210. It was

felt that should further families wish to send their children to the school and the number of pupils on roll reached capacity, the adequacy of the current PAN would be reviewed.

It was noted a meeting had been arranged with Essex CC to discuss the future development of the academy.

30/23 Finance [JS]

a) Management accounts

The meeting received and noted the Management accounts for the 9 months to 30 May 2023 and that the now expected year end forecast would be £9,094 compared to the previously reported forecast surplus £11,144 [April Management Accounts] and the approved budgeted surplus of £6,050.

The meeting noted the new MAT Finance Manager had visited the school and had offered to attend all future Finance and Premises Committee meeting to discuss the Academy's financial position with the committee.

The Chair highlighted the funds raised by the Friends of Debden and donated to the school had provided a lot of funding for important projects.

It was **agreed** to convey the governors' thanks and appreciation of all the fundraising and volunteering work that the current group of FODs had provided over the past years.

It was noted that the net costs of providing school meals was higher than other schools and was being subsidised from the DFE's General Annual Grant. It was **agreed** to review the income and costs and agree the level of funding to subsidise the provision of school meals.

b) Play Tower

The meeting considered and **agreed** to approve a proposal to purchase a Play Tower as part of the EYFS Garden Plans for £3,350.

The next stage was for the contractors to visit the site in September to draw up detailed installation plan.

31/23 Budget 2023-24 [JS]

The meeting received and noted the draft Budget 2023-24.

The draft budget showed a surplus of £15,230 compared to a now expected year end forecast would be £9,094 and a previously reported forecast surplus £11,144 [April Management Accounts].

The following assumptions had been incorporated within the budget.

- CPI increase of 4% applied to contracts and prior year spending.
- Pupil Increase of 8.4% in 2023-24 and a further increase of 15.3% to 151 in 24-25
- Teaching staff increase – 2023-24 estimated average pay award 4.5%. [w.e.f. 1 September 2023]
- Support staff salary increase – 2023-24 estimated average pay award 4.5% [w.e.f. 1 April 2023] 2024-25 average pay award 3% [w.e.f. 1 April 2024]

Staff costs also included the additional staff teaching and LSA costs for the increase in the number of classes from five to six.

The draft budget had been reviewed by the Chair of the Finance and Premises Committee.

The deficit on the draft Catering Budget 2023-24 [£2,967] was lower than the forecast deficit for the current year (£6,736) and included 4% increase on price of school meal from £2.50 to £2.60 to cover higher food and staff costs.

It was **agreed** to recommend the draft Budget 2023-24 to the Board of Directors for approval.

32/23 Safeguarding children [LS]

The meeting received and noted the annual Safeguarding report from the Safeguarding governor.

The Academy's safeguarding policies and procedures had been reviewed by the Ofsted Inspectors at their recent visit who had reported that Safeguarding was well managed at the school.

33/23 SEND [JS]

It was **agreed** to:

- a) Forward the template used by GCPA for the annual report.
- b) Completed and circulate the annual SEND report to all governors following the meeting.

**SM
JS/MH**

34/23 Chair's action [LS]

None.

35/23 Correspondence [LS]

None

36/23 Minutes/reports of committees

a) **Finance and Premises Committee [JS]**

John Saxon, the Chair of the F&P Committee, reported the minutes of the last meeting of the F&P Committee had been circulated.

b) **Teaching and Learning Committee [LS]**

The meeting received and noted the minutes of the T&L Committee meeting held on 18 May 2023.

There were no questions.

37/23 Church Matters [JS]

John Saxon provided a report on joint school and church activities since the last meeting.

Ducking class had visited the Church and joined Church Mice pre-school.

John had carried out school worship during the Ofsted inspection.

38/23 Governor visits [LS]

Sarah Belchambers had visited the school to monitor Health and Safety.

Marcus Hayakawa, Tom Caster and John Saxon had visited the school to monitor behaviour.

Tom Caster had visited the school to monitor PE and Sports.

39/23 Governor training [SM]

It was **agreed** to review governor training in September following the allocation of governor responsibilities and identification of any training needs to allow governors to carry out their roles.

40/23 Any other business [LS]

- **Removal of a tree**

The meeting received a proposal to remove a tree overlooking the new EYFS Garden area. The tree was subject to a Tree Preservation Order [TPO] and it was **agreed** to contact the UDC Tree Officer to discuss removing the TPO and tree.

[Sarah Bailey left the meeting.]

- **SLT**

Sarah Mitchell reported she had met the HT, Matt, to discuss the current staff structure at the school and the need to change it to increase the leadership, teaching, and support capacity and to provide improved career progression for the leadership team and to help retain key staff.

The Trust had supported the school financially over the past two year in setting up the current leadership team to support the HT who now felt the school needed a Deputy Headteacher to increase the leadership capacity to cover the increasing number of pupils. It would also allow the HT to continue teaching classes part time, provide career opportunities across the trust and provide additional resources to further develop the MAT.

The Board of Directors had approved the proposed restructuring of the SLT but had agreed to defer the appointment of a deputy in the future once the Board was confident that school numbers and growth were sustained over a period of time.

The Board did approve the establishment of a TLR post (Teaching and Learning Responsibility) position to offer to a teacher who wished to take on the additional responsibilities provided by an acting Deputy Headteacher. The cost of the TLR post had been included in the draft budget for 2023-24, considered earlier under finance.

It was **agreed** to advertise the new TLR post internally.

41/23 Date/time of future meetings [LS]

The meeting received and noted the draft meeting dates for 2023-24

It was **agreed** that future LGB meetings for the new academic year should start at 19:15 hrs

Approved by the LGB on 21 May 2023