

**DEBDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY  
LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held at 17:30 hrs on 23 November 2023**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Term</b>
Vacancy	Foundation:	Incumbent	Ex officio
Tom Caster	Foundation	Chair	02/02/2026
Sarah Belchambers	General Member		27/03/2026
* Rachel Stoddart	General Member		17/05/2027
Sarah Mitchell	General Member	Executive Headteacher	Ex officio
Lin Stephenson	General Member		01/01/2025
* Henry Crosby	General Member		TBC
Isobel Tunnecliff	Parent	Vice-Chair	14/07/2025
Jo Hart	Parent		08/10/2027
Matt Hawley	Headteacher	Head of School	Ex officio
Holly Caparelli	Staff		20/09/2027
<b>In attendance</b>			
Tom Bennett		Clerk	
* <i>indicates absence</i>			

*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)*

**1/24 Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair reported that Henry Crosby had been appointed as new governor to the Board but had sent his apologies for his absence.

Apologies for absence were also received and accepted from Rachel Stoddart.

**2/24 Any Other Business**

None declared.

**3/24 Declaration of business interests**

No governor declared a potential conflict of interest with any items to be discussed at the meeting or that they had received or given any gifts or hospitality that could be perceived to compromise their impartiality when dealing with matters for the Academy.

**4/24 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 November 2023 were approved as an accurate and true record of the meeting.

**5/24 Matters arising**

No matters arising from the last meeting not included on the agenda were reported.

**6/24 Headteacher’s Report**

The Head of School [HoS] reported he had amended the format of his termly reports to provide governors and other readers more context, background and a better understanding on how the school operated, the actions and progress being made r the term.

The HoS highlighted the following points of his report.

**Action**

## **Pupil Numbers**

The number of pupils at the 15 March 2024 [145] was slightly lower than previously reported in the Autumn Term [148]. There had been a high level of mobility among children of service families joining the school and leaving due their families being reposted and relocated away from the local area.

Total applications for children joining the school in September 2024 was higher than in the last five years though the number of first preferences was slightly lower.

## **Quality of Education**

There has been a joint RE and maths monitoring visits with leaders from both Great Chesterford and Debden.

There has been a geography monitoring visit by MH and Isobel Tunnecliff who reported the visit had been very positive.

Racheal Stoddart carried out a monitoring visit on Early Year Foundation Stage [EYFS] subjects.

Julie Sarti, the school's diocese advisor, had carried out a termly visit and reported she was happy with the school's progression towards the upcoming Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) visit.

There have been collective book looks in Whole Class Reading and Computing.

Sarah Bailey has launched a new MfL curriculum which utilised the 'Classroom Secrets' resources in addition to materials for the teaching of French phonics.

The teaching staff had continued to build on the bank of pedagogical methods of teaching at the school.

Research approved strategies were being introduced to teaching staff as part of their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and then applied in the classroom and feedback provided in "class feedback journals" that allowed teaching staff to make written notes about the strengths, misconceptions, development areas, and next steps for children's learning within each class.

## **SEND**

The updated report now provides key information on the number of pupils with special education and disability needs and the different types of support provided to them.

The number of children at the with Education and Health Care Plans [EHCP] [3 (2%)] was lower than the national average.

## **Pupil Outcomes – End of KS2 and KS1 Statutory Tests**

The Headteacher's report included data collected and published by Ofsted in the Ofsted School Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) that parents and other interested parties could access.

The HoS reported the end of KS2 and KS1 Statutory Tests for the school were not significantly different to national averages.

It was noted KS1 targets for children of service families remained as set at the beginning of the academic and did not reflect the education levels of the new service pupils who had joined the school since the start of the academic year.

The Chair asked whether the HoS was concerned about the results for working at a greater depth for reading and the other KS1 subjects

The HoS reported that the results for achieving the expected standard for Maths was not far off the target set and more work was planned for reading at a greater depth including running Easter booster groups.

It was noted the class were already meeting or exceeding national averages in all subjects.

It was noted that the Phonic tests were good for those children who had joined the school at the start of the academic year and less so for those joining mid-year.

### **Attendance**

The school average attendance was 94.73% [95.45% excluding Reception] against a National Attendance average of 94%.

At the start of the spring term, letters were sent to families of all children whose attendance was below 90% (only four children who were aged five or over). The attendance of two had since improved, and two children had left the school.

Jo Hart asked if any trends on attendance had been identified.

The HoS reported children who received Free School Meals had lower attendance levels that other children and the leadership team were working with their families to improve attendance levels.

### **Behaviour**

There had been no exclusions during this academic year.

There had been 27 behaviour incidents warranting an incident form so far, this academic year. This is a rate of just over one incident per week, which is consistent with the previous two academic years.

It was noted the school had grown by 17% in the past two years so the number of serious behaviour incidents per child had decreased.

The Chair asked if there was trend of behavioural incidents within year groups.

The HoS reported very few behaviour incidents took place in class (less than a quarter). The majority of incidents occurred either on the school bus (over a third) or at breaktimes and lunchtimes (half). Breaktime and lunchtime incidents had reduced since the lunchtimes and break rules and approaches had been refined and discussed with children during assemblies. The school was considering employing its own bus nanny with service premium funding to solve issues on the bus.

### **Personal development – Church Matters/ SIAMS**

The school was expecting its SIAMs inspection during the next academic year. This would follow the new SIAMs framework, which gauged a school's performance in relation to seven inspection questions.

The school was performing well against most of these inspection questions. Two areas for development have been identified relating to spirituality and to courageous advocacy that were being addressed.

### **Leadership and Management/ Safeguarding – CDP**

The Head of School would be meeting with subject leaders during PE slots, to ensure continued development in each of the curriculum areas.

### **Pupil and Service Premium Funding**

The meeting noted the review of the school's pupil and service premium expenditure and plan for this academic year was completed in the Autumn term and had been forwarded to all governors. A further breakdown of expenditure in each of

the key areas has also been reviewed by the F&P Committee at their last meeting. -A summary of some of the key spending areas/ improvements was detailed in the report.

### **Sports Premium Funding**

A summary of the key spending areas/ improvements was detailed in the Headteacher's report and the sports premium review document for 2023-24.

The review followed a new template that would be mandatory for all schools by the end of the current academic year.

It was noted new rules were being introduced by the Department for Education that would restrict the activities that the funding could be spent on.

### **Safeguarding**

Two referrals have been made to the children and young people's care and support services during academic year to date. These related to the same family. On both occasions, the services found 'significant strengths' in the family unit and the case was closed.

The Chair of Governors (and Safeguarding link governor) had carried out a safeguarding monitoring with the HoS in February.

## **7/24 Risk Register**

The Chair reported the F&P Committee had not had sufficient time to carry out a comprehensive review of the register at its last meeting but had discussed the major risk currently facing the school, namely the financial risk 7 and the increased risk of a funding gap. This had arisen following the partly unfunded Government led backdated staff salary increases.

There had been some movement in staffing that has provided some long-term staff costs savings. A review of utility contract had also identified significant savings

The year end forecast was that the school would still break even that was a good result in a year with the cost of increasing the number of classes at the school by one to six.

It was noted the school would receive higher General Academy Grant [GAG] income in 2024-25 due to the increase in pupil numbers in 2022-23.

It had been agreed to prepare an early budget for 2024-25 to build in the increased GAG income and staffing costs to identify any long-term financial trends and whether the school would need to use its reserves to fund a temporary shortfall.

It was noted the risk owner column on the risk register needed to be updated to reflect changes in staff and governors.

The HoS reported the threat of staff striking over pay had re-appeared.

## **8/24 School Development Plan/ SEF**

The meeting received the updated school development [SDP] plan for 2023-2024 and noted the actions taken since the last meeting and the progress being made to achieve the key priorities.

The progress for each key priority had been RAG [Red, Amber, Green] coloured rated to help identify areas where more detailed plans and work was needed.

The HoS reported that the progress on **Priority 2. Quality of Education – Pedagogy and High Expectations** had not changed, and more work was needed on the curriculum area to improve it from Good to Outstanding.

**Priority 4. Personal Development – Religious Character** was on track for Outstanding and would be reviewed in the summer term to ensure the progress made had been embedded prior to the SIAMs inspection in 2024-25.

**Priority 5 Leadership and Management – Monitoring and Developing** had progressed and was now RAG rates as green [Outstanding].

The temporary change in leadership and the appointment of a new Deputy Headteacher had been successful and had provided more time to the HoS for leadership, staff and school development as well as leadership cover.

It was **agreed** to review the process and draw up a proposal on making the new appointment permanent for the Board of Directors to consider.

It was **agreed** to provide a one-page Self-Assessment Form [SEF] on the current and forecast assessment and for each priority to distribute to the governors and other stakeholders.

MH/SM

MH

#### 9/24 Policies

The meeting received, noted and **agreed** to adopt the following policies:

- First aid
- Severe weather

It was **agreed** to set up a Working Party to review the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and health education policy.

MH

MH/TC/  
LS/IT

#### 10/24 Minutes/reports of committees

##### a) Finance and Premises Committee

The meeting received and noted the minutes of the F&P Committee meeting held on 21 March 2024.

No further questions were raised.

The meeting received and noted the financial report for the 6 months to 29 February 2024.

##### b) Teaching and Learning Committee

The meeting received and noted the minutes of the T&L Committee held on 25 January 2024.

No questions were raised.

#### 11/24 Chair's action

No action on behalf of the governors had been taken by the Chair or Vide-Chair since the last meeting.

#### 12/24 Correspondence

No correspondence relevant to the Governing Body was reported.

#### 13/24 Safeguarding children

Included within the Headteachers' report.

#### 14/24 Church Matters

No report on joint school/ church activities was made.

#### 15/24 Governor visits

- Isobel Tunnecliff had carried out a monitoring visit on geography.

- Racheal Stoddart had visited the school to monitor Early Year Foundation Stage [EYFS] subjects.
- Tom Caster had visited the school to monitor safeguarding and had met the Director for overseeing safeguarding across the Trust, Wazz Mughal.

It was **agreed** Jo Hart would take on the responsibility for monitoring Religious Education.

**JH**

It was **agreed** to re-circulate the list of governor responsibilities.

**TC**

**16/24 Governor training**

It was **agreed** to review whether governors could access “The Key,” online quality-assured resources covering all aspects of school leadership.

**SM**

Governors were reminded to forward any certificates of training completed to SM; the governor responsible for governor training.

**All**

**17/24 Any other business**

None.

**18/24 Date/time of future meetings**

- Thursday 04/07/2024

**Approved by the Local Governing Body on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024**