

DEBDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY

Minutes of the meeting held at 17:15 hrs on 4 July 2024

Membership	Type	Office	Term
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		24/01/2028
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
In attendance			
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)*

		Action
19/24	Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Henry Crosby and Sarah Belchambers.	
20/24	Notification of urgent AoB None.	
21/24	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.	
22/24	Membership Lin Stephenson confirmed that after eight years as a governor at DPA, she would be stepping down as a General Member governor at the end of the Academic Year. All other governors present confirmed that they were willing to continue as governors for the 2024-25 Academic year and to be re-appointed by the MAT’s Board of Trustees, as necessary. The meeting discussed the process for filling the General Member governor vacancy for the new academic year and agreed to the LGB should seek a governor to strengthen its teaching and learning skill set.	
23/24	Minutes of the previous meeting The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 March 2024 were approved as an accurate and true record of the meeting.	

24/24 Matters arising

No matters arising from the previous minutes, unless covered on the agenda, were reported.

25/24 Risk Management

The meeting received the updated Academy's risk register and noted the following changes.

- Financial Risk - Rising SEND roll affecting finances had been added onto the register due the increasing number of children with high complex SEND needs requiring one-to-one support with limited/ delayed availability of additional funding.
- Strategic Risk - Rising SEND affecting outcomes had been added to reflect the potential impact of meeting the needs of children with complex SEND on the learning support that could be offered to other children in the school, potentially affecting progress and attainment negatively.
- Operational – Church School - Decreased links with the church, quality of RE and/or worship falls leading to SIAMs downgrading and reputational harm. The risk has been upgraded due to the incumbent vacancy. It was noted a new incumbent had recently been appointed.

26/24 The Head of School Report

The Head of School introduced his summer term report, and the following points were discussed:

Staffing

The school was currently recruiting for a new teacher for Years 2-3 to start in the new Academic Year.

An interim teaching team of two part-time teachers with the support of the Head of School had been put in place should it be difficult to fill the vacancy by the start of the Autumn term. One of the part-time teachers was a former teacher at the school who was very experienced at teaching this age group.

Recruitment for a part-time Year 1 teacher had already begun following the departure of a part-time teacher who had moved abroad.

All pupils would be moving up to the next class in the new academic year apart from two children who had made exceptional progress and will be going up two classes from Frogs to Kingfishers.

This will result in Dragonflies being a single Year 2 class next year, and Kingfishers being a mixed Year 5-6 class.

The school had been successful in recruiting a new Learning Support Assistant [LSA] to replace a LSA leaving at the end of the summer term.

Pupil Numbers

At present, the school was expecting twenty new Reception children in September 2024.

Whilst the number coming into the school has remained consistent for the last two academic years, more children of military service families have left due to the service families being reposted during this academic year.

Work to help the new children transition from their pre-school settings to joining the school was well underway. There were a number of children currently at nurseries who would require additional support to help them with their transition to an education setting.

The Chair asked whether the governors should be concerned with the lower number of parents making the school their first choice than in previous years.

It was noted that the new cohort of children joining the school in September reflected a very low birthrate and that following year birthrates were higher.

The school was planning for an increase in families from Saffron Walden looking for school spaces due the increasing number of residential developments and lack of capacity at schools within the town and a small drop of children living locally.

Quality of Education

Subject leaders from Great Chesterford and Debden have held subject leader meetings to share best practice and discuss approaches to curriculum intent, implementation and impact.

Monitoring scheduled for the summer term will be carried over to the new academic year due to teachers being busier with trips and events than usual.

Sarah Bailey led a successful 'science week' in summer term, culminating in the science fair, in which children talked through their enquiries and displays to parents.

Holly Caparelli led sports week, which was also very well-received. It culminated in the first time that the sports days had been split into KS1 and KS2.

The Friends of Debden school [FODs] have raised funding for a new professionally produced national and local history and art timeline to be installed along the KS2 corridor wall.

The focus of teacher meetings has been 'Walkthrus', looking at all areas of questioning and feedback.

Refresher sessions have been delivered to LSAs on 'Effective Learning Support – Promoting Independence' and an introduction to 'Cold Calling.'

Pupil Outcomes – End of KS2 statutory tests and KS1 non-statutory tests

Data on KS2 SATs were due within a week following the meeting and would be **circulated** to all governors once they have been validated.

The summer KS1 assessments were taken in May, the week after the departure of the pupil's class teacher. The results were disappointing but reflect informal observations of the children's learning up to this point.

KS1 pupil have been working on their core skills in reading and maths over the past couple of months and will sit past SATs assessments in July to track their progress. Whilst the class may not reach their target grades, it was expected there would be a substantial improvement.

The Chair asked whether the lower-than-expected performance could have been highlighted earlier.

The HoS reported that with the re-deployment of teaching and support staff to Year 2 next year and with the HoS taking over PPA, monitoring of Year 2 pupils would improve.

19 out of 22 Year 1 pupils (86%) passed their phonics check and the one child re-sitting the phonics check in year 2 also passed.

The final data for Reception pupils achieving Good Level of Development [GLD] showed that 23 out of 27 children (85%) achieved GLD against an adjusted target of 22 out of 27 children (81%).

The school average score for the Multiplication Check was 21.16 against a National Average [2023] of 20.2.

MH

Attendance

Pupil attendance had remained relatively consistent with the level in the last academic year and were above the National Average.

Summary of Behaviour Incidents

There has been one suspension so far during this academic year. This was for an incident of unprovoked physical assault on another pupil by a child with complex SEND needs.

In total, there have been 34 behaviour incidents warranting an incident form so far, this academic year. This rate of just over one incident per week, which is consistent with the previous two academic years.

The meeting received and noted the outcomes of a staff survey of pupil behaviour at the school.

Staff perceptions of behaviour have remained consistently high over the past three years and are more positive in every area since the last survey.

The most positive responses were on school sanctions, respect for senior leaders and reinforcement and celebration of positive behaviour.

Areas for further development include pupils' respect for all adults in school and showing respect for one and another.

During the summer term, the school has been visited by the teaching and learning advisor, the diocese advisor, and the CCC Headteacher group. All had remarked on the calm atmosphere in the classrooms and the happy and polite children that they had met.

Trips and Visits

Throughout the summer term there have been many school trips, visits and curriculum enhancement opportunities that has kept many staff very busy.

Kingfishers class would be going on their residential in July.

Sports and Music

During sports week, the school received strong feedback from parents and children for both sports days; KS1 sports day was held on the field and the KS2 event at the Carver Barracks athletics track for the first time.

The profile of girls' football has continued to grow at the school with many girls attending the football club on Thursday mornings.

Community/ Courageous Advocacy

The FODs led a very successful Debfest in June. All at the school were extremely grateful for their efforts in raising money for the school.

Church Matters/ SIAMS

The HoS and Julie Sarti have been working on the schools SIAMS Self Evaluation Form and preparing a folder to substantiate each of the statements in response to the 'Inspection Questions.'

The school has also signed up for the 'Get Creative for Climate Justice' exhibition in the Autumn term, with children's environmental messages being displayed in Westminster.

Sports Premium Funding

All schools would be required to following a new template issued by the government by the end of this academic year, a revised Sports Premium Funding report would be drawn up and **circulated** to all governors following the meeting.

Safeguarding

The Chair of Governors (and Safeguarding link governor) carried out a second safeguarding monitoring visit alongside the Head of School in June.

27/24 Pupil Premium

(Refer to the Heads' report).

28/24 Academy Development Plan/ Self Evaluation

a) Academy Development Plan for 2023-24

The HoS provided an update on the progress being made to meet each of the five priorities and highlighted the activities that had been undertaken during the term under each priority.

The meeting noted that each priority had been RAG [Red, Amber or Green] rated to reflect the progress made with Green showing those priorities that had been fully met.

It was noted that Priority 1 - Quality of Education – The Wider Curriculum: 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 - had been partially met and progress made but would be carried forward and included in the Academy Development Plan for 2024-25

b) Academy Development plan for 2024-25

The provisional SDP priorities for the next academic year are

- 1) Quality of Education – The Wider Curriculum: 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: Improving the quality of children's oracy and their extended written compositions.
- 3) Behaviour and Attitudes: Children make highly tangible contributions to life in the school/ wider community and further developing approaches to metacognition.
- 4) Personal Development: More precisely map extra-curricular/ curriculum enhancement opportunities. Track the extent to which all children are being developed holistically. Broader participation in student council.
- 5) Leadership and Management: Development of the role of classroom assistants. Development of the school's premises through capital auditing and development projects (e.g. kitchen, decorating, H+S).

29/24 Class Structure

The meeting noted that currently there was no need to increase the number of classes due to the increase in the number of pupils and **agreed** to keep the current class structure and Published Annual Number for admissions under review.

30/24 Finance

The meeting received and noted the management accounts for the 9 months to 30 May 2024.

Isobel Tunnecliff, the F&P Committee Chair reported May's surplus was in line with the forecast prediction that showed a predicted surplus of £10k for the year.

The F&P Committee had discussed the use of reserves and the need to retain part of the reserves for unexpected events such covering the unfunded costs arising from an increase in the number of children requiring additional complex education and disability needs.

MH/TC

31/24 Budget 2024-25

The meeting received and noted the draft Budget 2024-25 that had been reviewed by the F&P Committee

The Chair reported a deficit of £14k had been set for 2024-25 year. The budget had been prepared a prudent basis and had excluded a few unknowns that should they be confirmed, would result in a better year end result.

Sarah Mitchel reported an academy trust with adequate reserves could make a strategic decision to set a deficit budget for one or two years to respond to specific needs. For instance, if there was an unexpected increase in SEND costs or the need to strengthen an identified weakness in a particular area of the curriculum, then it would be rational to invest additional resources until performance returned to a sustainable basis.

It was **agreed** to recommend the draft Budget 2024-25 to the Board of Directors for approval and to fund the deficit from the Academy's reserves.

32/24 Safeguarding children

The Chair, the governor responsible for Safeguarding reported the annual safeguarding report had been drafted and was currently being reviewed by the HoS.

The only issue raised was in relation to the After School Club and the need to address two areas of safeguarding that the HoS was currently addressing.

It was **agreed** to circulate the final report after the meeting.

TC/MH

33/24 SEND

Isobel Tunnecliff, the SEND governor reported she had met Sarah Bailey to review the template report. It was **agreed** to circulate the final report after the meeting.

IT/SB

34/24 Chair's action

No urgent action had been taken by the Chair or Vice-Chair since the previous meeting.

35/24 Correspondence

None.

36/24 Minutes/reports of committees

a) Finance and Premises Committee

The meeting received and noted the minutes of the F&P Committee meeting held on 20 June 2024.

No questions were raised.

b) Teaching and Learning Committee

The meeting received and noted the minutes of the T&L Committee meeting held on 16 May 2024.

No questions were raised.

37/24 Church Matters

It was noted that the Rev Linda Sebbage has been appointed as Team Vicar with the Saffron Walden team, with special responsibility for the parishes of Debden and Wimbish.

Linda had been in contact with the school and planned to attend the KS2 production.

38/24 Governor visits

Jo Hart reported she had carried out a visit to monitor Religious Education and it was **agreed** to circulate the report to all governors after the meeting.

JH

39/24	Date/time of future meetings	It was agreed to review the draft meeting dates for 2024-25 and update them in line with the draft dates for the Trust’s Board of Directors meetings.	TC/MH
40/24	Governor training	In addition to the training for the SIAMs inspection there will be a whole staff/ governor training for safeguarding/ child protection with Pam Langmead in October.	All
41/24	Any other business	The Chair expressed his thanks on behalf of all the governors to the HoS, the teaching and support staff for good positive work that had continued since the Ofsted inspection and the continued progress being made. He also thanked Lin Stephenson who, as a governor and Chair had helped steer the school through some difficult times and had, through the recruitment of senior staff, turned the school into a very successful and popular school.	

Approved by the LGB on 19 September 2024