

**Local Governing Body Meeting of DCE  
Tuesday 21st May 2019 at 7.30pm**

*Draft Minutes*

**Present:**

Catriona Arundale	Foundation Governor
Andrew Ballantyne	Foundation Governor
Nick Bundock	Foundation Governor
Simon Ball	Head of School
Paul Good	Chair (MDBE)
Emma Hooson	Staff Governor
Matthew Lee	Parent Governor
Philip Robinson	Parent Governor
Mark Vermes	Foundation Governor
Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher

**Apologies**

Sylvia Bradley	Foundation Governor
Helen Stallard	Foundation Governor

**In attendance**

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
Ruth Whittaker	Science Co-ordinator

*Any text in red bold italics represents Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Governor and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.*

**1. Welcome, Introductions & Opening Prayer**

- Governors were welcomed to the meeting by Paul Good.
- Ruth Whittaker, Science Lead was welcomed to the meeting.
- The opening prayer was led by Nick Bundock.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

- Apologies were received and accepted from Helen Stallard and Sylvia Bradley.

**3. Subject presentation – Science**

- Ruth Whittaker shared some of the children's science books from different year groups and started the presentation emphasising science is a core subject on the timetable and is also taught across the curriculum. The SIP identifies science is a cross curricular subject and GD (greater depth) is assessed from the start. Teachers identify through the year the children who are GD in each unit.
- Support is given to teachers for planning and assessment; staff meetings share good practice and staff review the teaching and learning.

- The school engaged in a CSI day at Parrs Wood which was successful and will be built on.
- The next steps include developing science in EYFS “understanding the world” learning goals.
- Ruth Whittaker outlined the different goals attained and the skills and knowledge being developed by the children. The children enjoy research and experiments. The next steps include promoting science throughout the school. Yr3 have had a science assembly.
- Links have been made with the “Big Science Share” road shows. Each class will have a table in the hall to show their investigation. The children will share their investigation with other year groups. The school will continue to develop “wow” moments in science.

**Q: Do you foresee changes arising from the new inspection framework?**

Units of learning will remain; the knowledge is being taught and the teachers may need to make sure the skills are clear. There may be some tweaking.

**Q: What are the five types of scientific investigation?**

Observation over time; Pattern seeking; Identifying, classifying and grouping; Comparative and fair testing and Research using secondary sources.

**Q: What is covered generally in the curriculum, is it biology chemistry and physics?**

Yes, all these subjects are taught in blocks. The three sciences are covered but these names might not be used.

- The Head of school reported DCE has signed up for the STEM project and the resources will be provided. The school had a STEM ambassador during science week. There has been a drop in the applicants for STEM subjects at University. Governors discussed the decline in the take up of these subjects and companies are now recruiting for apprentices and opportunities are still available. Teachers do focus on developing the inquisitive nature in children. Science shows are aimed at KS1 and KS2. The Head of School noted this subject is not tested but this school still prioritises this subject.

**Q: Where are the science resources from?**

The school has purchased resources from Focus Education. Various companies provided resources when the new national curriculum focused mainly on literacy and numeracy.

**Q: Is the BBC bitesize useful?**

Yes, the school uses this for Yr6 and there are “live lessons” which is a continuing resource. The school uses radio and the BBC is also used for dance and PE.

**Governors formally thanked Ruth Whittaker for her interesting presentation.**

**4. Notification of AOB and Confidential Items**

- There were no items of any other business.

**5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 19.03.19 and Matters Arising**

**Governors formally approved the minutes of the meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

Action: Clerk to send “Keeping children safe in education” to the new Governors in the Trust.

This has been actioned.

Action: The phone message for reporting a child’s absence needs reviewing.

This refers to when the school is closed. There is a small amended sentence needed to ask callers to leave a message and this will be actioned when Microcare

are next in school.

## 6. Head of School Report

**Simon Ball was formally thanked for his detailed report and questions were invited.**

- The key points were highlighted. There are some children who have left the school since the last report, there were 239 children at the last census date. The school has many links with the church. Teacher observations show teaching and learning is excellent in this school. There are no issues about the new Ofsted framework. The Equalities Act is emphasised more in the new framework and the school is confident this is being met adequately.

### **Q: Regarding admissions, is most of the capacity in Yr6?**

The school tends to lose children in Yr6 to the independent sector and this time there are children returning to countries abroad; and one child is relocating in this country. This reflects the international make-up of the school.

### **Q: Governors asked for an update on Reception admissions?**

All offers have been accepted for reception and there is one pending acceptance for a nursery place and this is a family coming from abroad.

- There were potential issues at the admissions panel relating to DCE and WDCE as both schools were over-subscribed. The admissions panels might have to look at choices between the two schools so that the other school is an automatic second choice. The panel is mapping the residencies of the recent admissions. The international admissions tend to be in-year admissions.

### **Q: How many nursery places are there?**

There are 26 places and the nursery is now full.

### **Q: How many children from nursery stay for reception?**

Usually about 20 children (80%) move through and some will transfer to WDCE.

### **Q: Does the school need to review the nursery places available?**

The Directors and WDCE Governors have discussed nursery provision at WDCE but at this moment this proposal does not meet the funding criteria. If the school had 20% pupil premium children this would attract funding for children. The other factor is the wrap around care which is more attractive for working parents and the school sector cannot always provide the hours parents need.

### Staffing issues

- There is a new member of staff employed to support a child with an EHC plan. There is a second new member of staff appointed to start after half-term for another child with an EHC plan. This school has five children with EHC plans and thanks were given to the SENDCO Emilie Smith for her work in securing this support for the children.

### School Improvement Plan

- The school has made good progress towards actions and the new Ofsted framework will be included in the new SIP.
- The SIP and SEF will be shared in the autumn term with the new framework

### Spring term progress review

- The data is promising. At KS2 there are nine children at GD and this is 33% which is excellent. This would have been 11 children had two children not left the school. Assessment data is excellent at DCE.

- Workload issues for staff are addressed in the new Ofsted framework and this means assessments are only going to be requested three times a year. Assessments are ongoing but the collation of assessment data will be termly.

#### Pupil attendance update

- The current attendance is 97.53% attendance which is excellent. There are seven children who have attendance which is less than 90%. Six children have low attendance due to unauthorised holidays. Only one child is being monitored and its attendance is improving.

#### Update on premises

- The climbing frames were inspected by Play Quest. Wood pieces that had started to deteriorate have been replaced with recycled plastic equipment.

#### GDPR update

**Action: SB to share report of the GDPR audit undertaken today when available.**

### **7. Behaviour and safety of pupils**

- There are some ongoing issues identified in the Head of School report. There is one CIN and two Early Help cases.

### **8. Executive Headteacher report**

#### Benchmarking

- The Haines Watt report was shared and the DCE benchmarking was RAG rated and shared with Governors. Attention was drawn to the red RAG rated areas. This comparison is relating to 2018 data. This comparison includes schools in London who are funded more generously. The red RAG rated issues includes expenditure on supplies and the school is aware this benefits the children. Catering costs is a potential issue. Manchester Fayre is relatively expensive and other providers are currently being explored.

#### **Q: Who else provides school meals?**

There are many providers in the local area.

- Average teaching salary costs are higher reflecting experienced staff and less NQTs than other schools. This school has a stable staffing which is more costly. The LG pension scheme large surplus reflects this school employing more support staff.
- There is a higher number of pupils to a teacher at DCE compared to other schools. The pupil to staff ratio is slightly lower.

#### **Q: Governors noted the average teaching staff salary costs is higher, yet the average staff salary costs are lower.**

- This school has more support staff so this reduces the average staff salary. This is expected to change this year as staff changes have occurred since this data was produced.

#### Finance update

- The original projected budget identified a £50,451 deficit, and this is now approximately £19,172 which is pleasing. It is expected by year-end there will be an approximate £30,000 deficit. The non-staff costs show a substantial spend and this includes spending on the new server. There is an intention to tarmac the playground and a large ICT spend is forecast next month.
- Longer term savings will need to be made. One potential saving is the sharing of the

Executive Headteachers salary across more schools. The Head of School noted the Executive Headteachers salary will be split differently going forward as this will become pro-rata based on the size of the school reducing the DCE contribution.

***C: The budget shows a deficit which varies, is forecasting useful?***

There is a greater negative due to EHC plans and more 1-1 staff needing to be employed and this is offset partly with the additional SEND funding. The first forecast in undertaken in May/June, the second forecast in December and January. It was noted it was difficult to predict on expenditure for example if unplanned spending is needed for example on building maintenance and this is where adjustments are made. Projected deficits can end up in surplus due to a reduction in spending.

***Q: Is Emilie Smiths SENDCO role pro-rata across the two schools?***

- Yes, this is shared between DCE and WDCE and this might cost more from the WDCE budget as this school grows.
- There is a government spending review due to be undertaken. Many schools are expecting larger cuts than this Trust.

Update on Trust issues

- The Directors have agreed to proceed with St. Elisabeths joining this Trust subject to two caveats. The Trust has undertaken due diligence and St. Elisabeths does need support. The Trust has secured extra sponsorship money which will cover costs to SJE and legal fees.

***Q: Who will fund these extra support costs?***

- This comes from the ESFA. SJE Trust has sent a business case requesting an increase from the allocated £70,000 to £110,000.
- The second issue is liability for pensions for support staff as Stockport MBC does not allow staff to remain in the pool (whereas Manchester LA does). The TUPE process provides for various options and one is the Trust liability is fully funded, one is the LA fully funds any liabilities and one option is to share these liabilities. The Trust has asked for an actuarial valuation to ascertain what is financially fair and works for all. This could mean the school would not proceed in joining SJE Trust depending on the willingness of Stockport MBC to compromise on this issue.
- Governors were pleased the balance of risk is being explored in detail. Governors acknowledged the different political situation in the different LAs. It was noted the different LAs have different attitudes to academies.

***Q: Does St. Elisabeths have to academise?***

- Yes, as a result of an Ofsted inspection.

***Q: Are there any other Trusts who can support St. Elisabeths?***

- The Diocese is keen to keep the school within the Diocesan family. St. Simon & Jude Trust has schools in Gorton. There was a school who expressed interest in sponsorship but this school would have to academise.

Working across the Trust

- The Heads meet at the parish centre monthly and have been focusing on the new Ofsted framework and the curriculum menu for each school. This will be shared on each school website. This is benefiting all schools in the Trust. Staff are also meeting in their curriculum areas. The promotion of sharing of good practice is working well and the relationships are now more equitable as each school has achieved a strong Ofsted report and SIAMS inspection.

## 9. Governor issues

### Training attended

- Philip Robinson has attended safeguarding training
- Simon Ball and Paul Good attended the Diocese Heads and Chairs briefing
- Paul Good is attending a One Education chairs briefing on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019

### Link Governor reports

- Cat Arundale shared the link governor visit reviewing the SEND work in the school.

### Governor invitation

- The Mental health working group is next meeting at 3.30 on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019 and there is an open invitation to Governors. This will be led by Emilie Smith, and will include representatives from all three schools.

## 10. Policy Review

The clerk suggested many of the policies do not need to be reviewed annually and will send the leadership some guidance on policy review.

### Administration of Medicines Policy

This has not been changed since last approved.

**Q: *Should this include sun cream as EYFS children spend much time in the sun.***

This will be reviewed in conjunction with the other Heads of Schools as it was acknowledged this is not a medicine.

**Governors formally approved the Administration of Medicines Policy**

**Action: MW to look at a standardised procedure across the Trust for applying sun cream**

### Equalities Policy

This area of equalities has an increased focus. The primary heads briefing has indicated the work needed on SRE; LGBT focus; and this school policy clearly identifies the protected characteristics.

**Governors formally approved the Equalities Policy**

### DDA and Access Policy

The plan was shared with Governors, and addresses (1) Access to physical environment, (2) Access to the curriculum and (3) Access to information.

The school is fully compliant.

**Governors formally approved the DDA and Access Policy**

### Critical Incident Policy DCE

**C: *When there have been serious incidents in this school, pastoral support has been needed, and Governors questioned why this has not been mentioned in this policy.***

The church has in the past undertaken assemblies and support is given. Governors agreed to add "in conjunction with the local parish depending on the incident". (This can be added in page 1 – school community and church working together).

**Governors formally approved the Critical Incident Policy – DCE subject to the above amendment**

**Action: MW to amend the other school versions of the Critical Incident Policy to include reference to church support**

### DCE Communication Policy

This was brought previously to Governors and was revised by the LGB.

Governors were informed the meeting with parents about the following year was at the end of April with patchy attendance of parents. This has now been changed to the September of the new academic year where the parents meeting will focus on the curriculum issues.

**Governors formally approved the DCE Communication Policy**

### Equality Action Plan

This overlaps with the Accessibility Plan. This school has good provision for SEND children and is able to adapt to meet individual needs. The school has been asked if they provide Halal food and the answer is 'no' as less than 10% of children have Halal needs but there is always a vegetarian option and Monday is meat free for all children.

**Governors formally approved the Equality Action Plan**

### **11. Proposed dates for 2019/20 DCE LGB meetings**

- Tuesday 24th September 2019 @ 7.30pm - review this date
- Tuesday 19th November 2019 @ 7.30pm
- Tuesday 28th January 2020 @ 7.30pm
- Tuesday 17th March 2020 @ 7.30pm
- Tuesday 19th May 2020 @ 7.30pm
- Tuesday 30th June 2020 @ 3.30pm

**3.**

### **12. Any Other Business**

- There were no items of any other business.

### **13. Date & Time of Next Meetings:**

- Tuesday 2nd July 2019 @ 3.30pm (meet the children)
- 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 end of term Trust event at Didsbury Sports Club

### **14. Closing Prayer**

The closing prayer was led by Nick Bundock.

Signed..... Date.....

**Mr Paul Good (Chair)**

*Meeting closed at 21.20 pm*

### **Summary of actions**

- Action: SB to share report of the GDPR audit undertaken today when available.
- Action: MW to look at a standardised procedure across the Trust for applying sun cream
- Action: MW to amend the other school versions of the Critical Incident Policy to include reference to church support