

**Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Great Chesterford (Church of England)
Primary Academy held on 6 June 2016**

Membership		Office	Term
Mr Mike Johnson	Parent Governor		25/03/2018
Ms Adele Peters	Parent Governor		23/05/2020
Reverend Jeremy Parsons	Incumbent		Ex-Officio
Mrs Natalie Starbuck	Co Opted Governor		21/09/2018
Mr Andrew Taylor	PCC [Great Chesterford]	Chair	30/09/2015
Mrs Jennifer Fullerty	PCC [Littlebury]		TBC
Mr Bob Rust	CDET** Governor		TBC
Mr Gary Benn	CDET** Governor		31/12/2016
Vacancy	CDET** Governor		
Ms Janet Menell	CDET** Governor		11/06/2017
Mr David Boatman	PCC [Little Chesterford]		TBC
Mrs Lisa Jeremy	Co Opted Governor		12/11/2017
Mrs Fiona Keys	Staff Governor	Link	16/03/2017
* Mrs Amy Sargeant	Staff Governor		22/03/2020
Mrs Sarah Mitchell	Principal	Headteacher	Ex-Officio
In Attendance			
Tom Bennett	Secretary	Clerk	
Susan Shakespeare	Department for Education		
* indicates absence	** Chelmsford Diocesan Education Trust		

AGENDA

The Headteacher opened the meeting with a prayer.

ACTION

- 30/16 Apologies for absence**
Apologies were received and accepted from Amy Sargeant.
- 31/16 Notification of urgent AoB**
Resignation of Mike Johnson.
- 32/16 Declaration of business interests**
No governor declared a potential conflict of interest in the business to be discussed at the meeting, receiving or giving gifts or hospitality that could or be perceived to compromise their impartiality when dealing with matters for the Academy.

MAIN BUSINESS

- 33/16 Multi Academy Trust [MAT]**
The Chair welcomed Susan Shakespeare who worked for the Department of Education [DoE] and had been invited to the meeting to provide information on proposed MAT with Debden Primary School and the process on forming a MAT.
- She explained the background and reasons for the proposal to form a MAT and sponsor Debden Primary School that had been in special measures for a period of time and had been issued with a directive order by the DoE to become an academy or close. The directive order also stipulated that the school was required to find a

sponsor academy to form a MAT. The Chelmsford Diocese had offered to sponsor the school but the school had declined the offer due to the geographical distance to the other Academies in the Diocese's MAT. They had approached and brokered an agreement to join the Saffron Walden MAT, which had been rejected by the Diocese because the schools within the MAT were not faith-based schools.

Having been served a directive order to become an academy, the governors at Debden Primary School had a legal responsibility to become a MAT, find another Academy to sponsor it and to work with the sponsor. Debden Primary School had a 5-6 month deadline to become an Academy.

Great Chesterford [CoE] Primary Academy had agreed in the past to become a MAT and had been granted sponsor status. However the MAT had not progressed due to a lack of suitable schools in the local area to sponsor.

The Chelmsford Diocese had thought it would be a good idea for the Academy to sponsor the school within a MAT as it had strengths in areas that would help Debden Primary School to improve and move out of Special Measures.

Susan Shakespeare set out the process for forming a MAT.

The FGB would need to agree to form a MAT and sponsor Debden Primary School and ask the Head Teachers Board to approve the sponsor match. There would then be a period of time to gather information and performance data and update Trustee details to ensure everything was in line.

The Academy would need to amend its Articles of Association by executing a Deed of Variation and the Education Funding Authority [EFA] would issue a new Funding Agreement covering the MAT.

Funding of up to £70k would be fast tracked to the Academy of which up to £25k was available for the legal and other costs in setting up the MAT. The remaining £45k was to be used for improving Debden Primary School. The process would take about five months process from the FGB's agreement to set up a MAT and sponsor Debden Primary School.

The MAT would have a single Board of Trustees who would be responsible and be accountable for the two separate schools. Great Chesterford [CoE] Primary Academy would be the lead school in the MAT and could set up the governance and management structures that it felt best served each school.

Some MATS had a governance structure with a single governing body reporting to the Board of Trustees for all schools within the MAT while others delegated some of the Trustees' responsibilities to a local Governing Boards for each school.

Again the management structure of the MAT could be set up as the Trustees felt best meets the needs of the schools in the Academy. There were different options available for the appointment of for the Head Teacher and senior leadership team for the MAT. Some MATs had an Executive Head who delegated the management of each school to Academy Principals.

Any staff currently being managed on capability issues would be dealt with by the existing school and if not resolved would not be transferred with the remaining

staff to the MAT under the TUPE provisions. The MAT would not be able to make any savings from restructuring the management, teaching and administration and staff until after the transfer, which would be subject to following the employment requirements on consultations and so on.

Apart from the initial start-up funding of £70k, MATs only received the same level of funding as other schools, the General Academy Grant [GAG], which is calculated on a per pupil basis for all schools in the MAT. Pupil Premium and SEND funding had to be spent on those pupils qualifying for the funding at each school. The MAT would be able to “top-slice” the GAG to fund central services provided to both schools, such as providing overall management, finance, administration and building maintenance services.

The Accounting Officer, who is responsible for public money, would be appointed by the Lead School who receive and is responsible for the MAT’s funding.

Susan Shakespeare stated that the deficit on the Local Government Pension Scheme [LGPS] for the staff at Debden Primary School could not be funded and made up prior to the transfer but would be transferred and included on the MAT’s balance sheet. It was noted that deficits on the LGPS would be underwritten by the Government in the event of a school or Academy closing down. Further consideration on this issues was needed.

Susan Shakespeare set out the benefits of forming a MAT which included:

- Making the lead school stronger; with other schools forming MATs, there would be an increasing challenge for Academies to remain as single academies.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils in both schools through economies of skills.
- There would be more financial resources to create teaching and other posts to cover both schools and reduce the need to employ part-time staff.
- Improving the ability to recruit and retain staff by offering a larger school setting and better career opportunities.
- Supporting the school led policy whereby schools supported other schools.
- Matching the good of skills and experience that Great Chesterford had to offer Debden Primary School.

The potential dangers of forming a MAT included:

- Sharing the senior management team and teaching staff with Debden, reducing the resources being available to the children at Great Chesterford.
- Using the Academy’s reserves to fund and subsidise the Debden Primary School.

There was no set time in which to make improvements. Debden Primary School, under a new Headteacher was already beginning the make improvements. Improvement in attainment would be expected before the next Ofsted inspection.

The meeting noted that some academies under the pressure to raise standards were becoming more selective in the pupils they admitted and in one national case, a MAT had transferred pupils with extra educational needs to a separate school within the MAT. The Headteacher confirmed the Academy was committed to being an inclusive school and would never carry out that type of practice.

It was important that the Academy undertook more detailed due diligence on Debden School to understand why it was in special measures and what improvements were needed.

The Academy also needed to draw up a plan setting out the vision, governance and management arrangements for the MAT, the teaching and administration structure and how it would be funded, the education standards and professional development paths. It was important to get the structure right should the Academy wish to grow and attract other schools to sponsor.

The Headteacher had already studied the Ofsted Report and identified the areas that needed improvement and felt the Academy would be able to use bring about quick improvements from its strengths in writing and safeguarding to address these areas identified as needing improvement.

The Headteacher reported she had already consulted the staff over the proposed the MAT and reported the majority were very positive with the proposal and could see opportunities for career development. Some teaching staff were already working with other schools, sharing experience and skills including moderating other schools marking. The staff felt the location of Debden Primary School was right and that the Academy had the right skills and experience to offer it.

At its last meeting, the FGB had agreed in principle to form a MAT and sponsor Debden Primary School.

Gary Benn left the meeting to take Susan Shakespeare to the railway station.

Following a proposal from Bob Rust, seconded by David Boatman, it was **agreed** by the majority of governors present, with one governor abstaining, that a sub group of governors including the Chair, Headteacher, David Boatman, Bob Rust and the two Committee Chairs, Natalie Starbuck and Lisa Jeremy should :

- a) Undertake more detailed due diligence on Debden Primary School to fully understand why it is in special measures and what improvements are required.
- b) Develop a vision, ethos and objectives for the MAT on collaboration and approach to raising standards and professional development.
- c) Develop a plan for presentation to a meeting of the FGB meeting before the end of term, setting out clear governance and management structure and the responsibilities for improvement across both schools and the MAT.

Gary Benn rejoined the meeting

34/16 The Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher introduced her previously circulated report and highlighted the following points:

Admissions and roll

The parents for Reception Class September 2016 had received their formal offers of a place and there were currently 26 confirmed pupils and 2 enquiries. Home visits will take place in June to help each child make a positive start to their education at the Academy.

Three pupils had left the school since the end of the last term due to their families moving away from the area.

Attendance

The overall school attendance average was 97.12%, which was very good.

Pupil Premium

The report included a full analysis of the support being provided to pupils eligible for Pupil Premium providing a breakdown of each activity, its objective and expected impact. A summary of the previous year's expenditure on Pupil Premium pupils was also provided.

Achievement and Standards

The Year 2 SATs and Year 6 Writing and Science had been teacher assessed and had been selected for external moderation to allow teachers to verify their judgments and marking.

All other subjects in Years 1 to 6 had been assessed using the school based MME assessment. Outcomes will be shared with parents in the end of year reports distributed at the July parents' evening. External data and thresholds for KS2 provided by the Department of Education may not be available until August, which would prevent the school sharing pupils' outcomes before they leave for secondary school.

PE and Sports Grant

The report provided a full analysis of the Sports Premium Expenditure for 2015-16 setting out the objective and expected impact for each activity.

Leadership and Management

It was noted, that as part of her development plan as the newly appointed Deputy Headteacher, Amy Sargeant would be attending meetings with the Headteacher and Anne Fisher, the Academy's independent Education Adviser, to work on leadership and monitoring activities. A further two days were booked to focus on data and development of the SDP and SEF.

One member of staff was on long term sick leave and was being covered by two staff of which one was a part-time member of the teaching staff who was happy to increase the number of days she worked.

Performance Management of Staff

All teaching staff have had their interim Performance Management Meetings to review their ongoing progress against their set targets to allow the early identification of any potential issues. Final performance management review meetings will take place at the end of the term when a full set of data will be available.

Safeguarding, behaviour and safety

One referral had been made by Headteacher to the designated Safeguarding Officer. There had been no permanent or fixed term exclusions.

Quotes were currently being sought for gate where the flint wall has been opened between the Junior Playground and car park area.

Parent Questionnaire

The Academy had received 62 (45%) replies from the recent parent questionnaire. Positive comments received included for the following:

- A caring, supportive ethos
- Headteacher and teaching staff
- Year 6 transition support
- After-school clubs
- Communication
- Sport

Areas for review and development included:

- School dinners (food)
- Homework – particularly Learning Logs
- Communication with school orchestra
- Continuity of Breakfast Club
- More sport

The Finance and Premises Committee were currently reviewing the costs of continuing the Breakfast Club.

The teaching staff would be reviewing the amount of homework set. Half of the parents who raised a concern felt there was too much while the other half felt more should be set. The review would include the use of learning logs.

14 of the 62 parents who responded said their children did not like school dinners. It was felt that parents should be encouraged to come along and help at lunchtimes so they can see the type of lunch being served. The Headteacher planned to raise the issue of school lunch using Pupil Voice.

It was noted the Personnel and Admission Committee would be reviewing the specific outcomes of the questionnaire in more detail.

It was **agreed** the Academy needed to be open and transparent and feedback the results of the questionnaire to parents, advising them of what actions were being taken to address the issues raised and to celebrate the positive views expressed.

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The Headteacher advised that the results of the questionnaire would be published on the Academy's website together with the areas that the Academy would focus on.

35/16 Academy Development Plan/ Self Evaluation

a) An update on the progress being made to implement the Academy's Development Plan for 2015-16

The Headteacher reported she planned to make the Academy Development Plan [ADP] a more working document to allow staff to identify where progress was being made.

Lisa Jeremy asked if had been any delays in implementing any part of the plan. The Headteacher reported that everything was on track.

b) To note the main areas for the Academy development/ improvement plan for 2016-17

The Headteacher had been working with Anne Fisher, the Academy's external

education advisor, on the Academy Development Plan for 2016-17. The areas that will be focused on will be:

- Review of the use of the Sports Premium
- Continuation of the Writing Project into its second year and including spelling and improving cohesion across the Academy
- Improving the playgrounds
- Reviewing and improving the quality of the buildings and teaching space
- Continue implementation of new Assessment measures including marking and providing feedback
- Reviewing the implementation of the new curriculum to ensure it is fit for purpose, improve subject coordination, raise its profile and standards in all subjects, look to maintain breadth of subjects
- MAT

36/16 Teaching and Learning

The Headteacher tabled a paper providing an overview of the new curriculum and the the key changes to the old curriculum.

The Academy was well on track on the introduction of the new assessment system following the Government's decision to abolish levels to assess performance and progress. The next stage on introducing the new assessment system included producing curriculum maps for KS1 and KS2 years.

It was **agreed** the Curriculum Committee should review the paper in full at its next meeting.

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37/16 Risk Management

The meeting received and discussed the previously circulated risk register setting out the major risks facing the school and noted the actions in place or planned to mitigate their likelihood and impact.

The committees had reviewed those risks relating to their areas of responsibility and Bob Rust and reviewed and updated the building continuity plan.

The previous strategic risk facing the Academy last year, the effect to the Academy's ability to operate and maintain its education standards and reputation due to the Academy being oversubscribed, had not crystallised as the number of children applying to join the Academy in 2016 was currently below 30.

The Finance and Premises Committee were currently reviewing security at the school and the risk of children going offsite unsupervised or an unauthorised person entering the premises.

The Chair reported that the risk arising from the retirement of previous Headteacher and the appointment of Sarah as the new Headteacher had not risen and the transition had gone smoothly due to the advance planning and work undertaken.

38/16 Pupil Premium

The report on the Pupil Premium had been included in the Headteacher's report.

39/16 Safeguarding children

The meeting noted the previously circulated Annual Safeguarding Report prepared

by Jan, the Governor responsibility for Safeguarding.

It was noted that the only outstanding Safeguarding issues was security and the side gate which was currently being addressed by members of the Finance and Premises Committee.

40/16 SEND

The Headteacher tabled the annual SEND report and highlighted the main points. The Headteacher had provided a breakdown of pupils with special education and disability needs. The number of children on the SEND register had not changed much over the year.

The 2014 SEND Code of Practice on identifying pupils with special education and disability needs had changed. Children with SEND were now assessed individually and an individual Education Health Plan [EHP] is prepared. Parents had more say on how funding was spent to meet their child's EHP, though it was difficult to get external help to meet health needs.

The ethos and support for special needs was very good at the school.

41/16 Academy Policy Review

The Curriculum Committee had reviewed the updated the SEND policy and were recommending it should be adopted.

The Personnel and Admission Committee had reviewed the policy on Volunteers working at the Academy and were recommending it should be adopted.

It was **agreed** to adopt the two policies and to publish the Volunteers' policy on the website.

SM

ROUTINE BUSINESS

42/16 Membership

There was currently a CDET Governor vacancy on the FGB. The meeting considered what skills and expertise were needed and it was **agreed** the Academy should look for a person with a legal background or with experience of Multi Academy Trusts.

43/16 Chairman's action

No urgent action had been taken by the Chair since the last meeting.

44/16 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 March 2016 were approved subject to the following amendments:

- Amy Sargeant should be recorded as present
- Minute 29/16 Any Other Business – Paragraph 2 should read “Mike Johnson was opposed to the policy in principle ~~as the pressure to raise standards is so high.~~

45/16 Matters arising

Bob Rust reported a firm of architects and a chartered surveyor had been appointed to carry out a feasibility study on the building layout and use of space and to provide costed options on making changes. Another firm from Royston had

been asked to carry out a conditions survey on the mechanical and electrical plant and equipment at the Academy.

The feasibility studies and survey would be presented and considered at the next Finance and Premises Committee who would also review and agree the professional fees chargeable.

46/16 Correspondence

No correspondence had been received for the Governing Body to consider.

47/16 NON-PUPIL DAYS

The following non-pupil days were **agreed**:

SM

2016-2017

02/09/2016

05/01/2017

31/03/2017

18/04/2017

24/07/2017

2017-2018

04/09/2017

20/10/2017

02/01/2018

16/04/2018

23/07/2018

48/16 Minutes/reports of committees

a) Finance and Premises Committee

The Finance and Premises Committee had not met and would meet after the FGB meeting.

b) Curriculum Committee

Nicola Starbuck highlighted the main points of the previously circulated minutes of the Curriculum Committee meeting. There were no questions.

c) Personnel and Admissions Committee

Lisa Jeremy, the Chair, provided an oral report of the Committee's meeting held immediately prior to the FGB meeting.

The Committee had reviewed and agreed to recommend the Policy for Volunteers for approval.

The current admission numbers for Reception was 26 to 28 and would be kept open for further enquiries.

The Academy was not looking to make any changes to KS2 teaching staff in September.

The Committee had reviewed the risks on the risk register relating to their remit and had agreed to invite a safeguarding expert to advise the committee on the Academy's safeguarding responsibilities.

49/16 Governor visits

- Janet Menell had visited and observed pupils taking their SATS.
- Lisa Jeremy had been in and observed two PE lessons.
- Bob Rust had attended the school with the Architect and to review the risks relating to the buildings.
- The Chair had regular meeting with the Headteacher.

- David Boatman had also visited for a meeting with the Headteacher.

50/16 Governor training

- Fiona Keys, the Link Governor, had emailed all Governors on upcoming governor training courses and advised that online courses [GEL] were available for all Governors to take.
- Janet Menell reported she had completed the Safeguarding course and tabled a paper on cyber safety at schools.

51/16 Any other business

Mike Johnson reported he would be standing down as a governor at the end of the Academic Year as he and his family were moving to Nottingham.

The Chair, on behalf of the all the governors and academy, expressed his thanks to Mike for his contributions at the FGB and Curriculum Committee and the support given to the Headteacher and staff.

52/16 Date/time of future meetings

It was **agreed** to hold an extraordinary meeting on 11 July 2016 at 19:45 to consider a single item of business, a draft plan to set up a MAT and to sponsor Debden Primary School.

It was **agreed** the Clerk would circulate provisional meeting dates for 2016-17 following the meeting.

All

Signed by Andrew Taylor [Chair] on 12th September 2016