

Dove House School Board of Trustees
Minutes of Meeting Tuesday 19th of October 2021

Present:	Category:
Juliet Annesley-Gamester (JAG)	Parent Trustee
Kevin Barwick (KB)	Community Trustee
Sian Butler (SB)	Community Trustee
Murray Campbell (MC)	Community Trustee
Ollie Killinger (OK)	Community Trustee
Emma Layzell (EL)	Co-opted Trustee
Lisa Goodall (LG) (Chair)	Parent Trustee
Olly Parker (OP)	Headteacher
Apologies:	
Andrea Francis (AF)	Community Trustee
Ben Service	Co-opted Trustee
In Attendance:	
Jenny Burns (JB) Items 1-7	Finance & Resources Director
Jayne Humphrey (JH)	Governance Lead

1. Welcome & Apologies.

The Governance Lead welcomed trustees to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Andrea Francis and Ben Service.

Murray Campbell was welcomed as a new trustee.

The meeting was quorate. It was noted that the agenda and papers had been provided in advance of the meeting.

2. Pecuniary Interests

No interests were declared in the agenda item. Trustees confirmed that they did not have any new declarations to make.

3. Approval of Minutes

Trustees **agreed** that the minutes of the meeting of the 28th of September 2021 were a true and accurate record and these will be signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

No	Action	Update
Action 6 Item 4 20/7/21	Schedule a separate meeting in late Autumn or early Spring for trustees to discuss strategy for the school.	The Governance Lead advised that dates have been sent to trustees and she is awaiting some responses before this is complete. Carried forward
Action 7 Item 4 20/7/21	Organisation of a bespoke data training session so that trustees better understand how to monitor pupil progress	The Governance Lead provided a quote from HIAS of £367.50 + VAT and advised trustees that she was awaiting a quote from Matthew Rixson. Governance Lead to provide information by email.
Action 8 Item 4 20/7/21	Organisation of an informal training session covering Academy finance, to be led by Kevin Barwick.	KB has sent email to colleagues and briefly updated trustees as to the possible content. Awaiting the confirmation of the date as being progressed. No further action.
Action 1 Item 7 28/9/21	New Trustees: The Governance Lead will notify the new trustees and begin their induction. JH	New trustees notified and induction instigated. No further action.
Action 2 Item 7 28/9/21	Constitution: The Governance Lead will adjust the constitution as agreed and initiate a parent/carers election. JH	Because of the timescale required for responses from parents this action is scheduled for after half term. The Governance Lead anticipates this will be completed by the end of term and will update trustees about the process. No further action.
Action 3 Item 11b 28/9/21	Trustees Monitoring & Visits Review: The Governance Lead will amend the document as requested. JH	Completed. No further action.
Action 4 Item 13 28/9/21	Data Protection Audit Action Plan: The Headteacher and Data Protection Lead will consider how the Data Protection Audit Action Plan can be implemented. JH	The Headteacher advised trustees that a meeting needs to be arranged. Carried forward.

A trustee followed up a discussion from the 28/9/21 Board meeting which reported brief details of a serious safeguarding incident. The trustee asked for assurance from the Headteacher that the matter has been concluded.

The Headteacher advised that:

- The matter is an ongoing issue.
- Measures have been put in place to avoid any repetition.
- An emergency review is due to take place to discuss whether Dove House meets the student's needs.
- Site security needs to be improved and he will propose changes to trustees in due course.
- He is meeting Maria Miller (MP) regarding the incident as the student's parent had written to her and the Local Authority SEND team.
- All documentary evidence relating to the incident is held in CPOMs.

5. Review and Approval of the Business Continuity Plan (BCP)

A trustee thanked the F&RD for the document and the work involved in producing it.

Trustees were invited to ask questions:

Q: It is noted that a test will be undertaken with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), was that successful?

A: (F&RD) A formal test hasn't been undertaken but I reviewed the BCP with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. It was tested in October 2020 via a SLT desktop conversation, so it would be helpful to do a test by imaging a scenario and discussing how we would respond. I would like to update the threats within the BCP based on information from the Department for Education when more time is available.

Q: Do we need to have Hampshire contact details in the section 5b (external stakeholders) for key people in terms of safeguarding e.g. the Local Authority Designated Officer?

A: The Local Authority Designated Officer and other safeguarding contact details are all included in the Child Protection policy which we would have to hand, but they could be included.

Q: How would the BCP be located by those that need it e.g. the Site Manager and does the school retain paper copies in case the IT system cannot be used?

A: The BCP is held electronically and there is a paper copy in the FRD and HT offices and possibly the Site Manager's office.

Trustees held a brief discussion outlining the following points for consideration by the Headteacher and F&RD, seeking guidance where appropriate:

- Whether the plan should include the use of remote contact via Zoom or Teams to meet outside of the school premises or hotels if these were unavailable e.g. in a lockdown situation.
- Use of personal mobile and landlines numbers which may cause GDPR issues by publishing the personal numbers and use of personal equipment for school business.
- GDPR implications of the storage and access of the BCP.
- That desktop exercises can be helpful for the SLT to talk through how they might respond to incidents.

The Business Continuity Plan was unanimously **approved** as presented, and the Headteacher and F&RD were asked to review the points raised and respond.

Action 1: The Headteacher and F&RD were asked to review the points raised from the discussion and questions asked and respond.

6. Risk

a) Review and Approval of the Risk Register

Alongside the draft Risk Register, the Governance Lead had provided trustees with a document outlining the expectations from the Academy Trust Handbook together with a document outlining the common pitfalls in reviewing the Risk Register.

The Chair noted that some trustees had taken part in an informal meeting with the F&RD and Governance Lead during the summer holiday to discuss risk and how it is managed in the school. She advised trustees that comments from the meeting had been incorporated into the Risk Register.

Q: It was useful to have the Risk Register and pitfalls document together and I would like to explore with the F&RD and Headteacher what their view is about how the Risk Register is owned in the school and whether this approach overcomes the pitfalls?

A: (JB) Operationally, the Risk Register is reviewed by me and the Governance Lead with oversight from the Headteacher. I also have conversations with those that are affected by it such as the Finance Manager. The SLT talk about risks e.g. most recently the Post 16 student intake, but do not specifically review and discuss the Risk Register.

The Governance Lead and I think there are so many risks that it would be helpful at the termly review for the school to provide the FRA committee with a high-level document that:

- Provides an update for the risks categorised as 'high'.

- Advises any newly identified risks.
- Flags any significant changes in the risk scores.

Q: Are you sure as a leadership team you are happy with the Risk Register and can own it?

A: (JB) It is incredibly unwieldy and although we have reduced duplication we could perhaps streamline it further and also reduce the level of detail for the risks. (OP) The document is important but there is a lot in it and it is not a 'go to' document because of the size.

The Chair of the FRA committee noted that the Risk Register had been reduced in size and explained that in his experience the granular detail is necessary. He expressed a wish to have a document at FRA as described by the F&RD which he believed would help the committee focus on the most important risks.

A trustee noted that some high risks such as 3.6, 5.3, 5.5 and 5.6 where the controls are developing and therefore partially adequate, do not have timescales for completion. The trustee noted that these items have been outstanding for some time and by not having agreed timescales it is difficult for trustees to hold the school to account. The Chair agreed that this would be beneficial and asked that the F&RD undertakes this.

The Chair of the FRA committee noted that an Estate Management plan that has been costed needs to be in place before the next budget is set. He advised that the Risk Register is monitored termly and discussions are recorded in the minutes.

The trustees discussed the risks and scores that the school had applied to them, noting that more energy and resources are likely to be devoted to the high-risk scores. The F&RD reflected that the scores are calculated using the Risk Management Policy matrix and outlined the examples and reasoning specifically for risk 1.5.

The Governance Lead advised the Board that scores could be amended if trustees felt they didn't reflect the perceived probability or impact.

The Board **approved** the Risk Register as presented, noting that the FRA committee will review it each term.

Action 2: The F&RD will update the Risk Register with completion dates for the risk which have controls that are partial or developing.

b) Review and Approval of the Risk Management Policy

The Chair invited questions:

Q: How do we evidence that the policy influences our decision making, how do we live and breathe it and how do we know we're making progress?

A: (OP) I don't think we currently use the risk management objectives that well at the moment. The F&RD and I are having conversations about risk, and also with the SLT members but I think we could discuss this more in SLT meetings. (JB) An option would be triangulating in terms of risk to be part of the school's priorities. (OP) It could feed into the school improvement plan and self-evaluation form.

A brief discussion included:

- That the data protection risk that is held within the Risk Register is also a school improvement priority, which shows that there is a will to engage and prioritise.
- Extending the Risk Register to others to ensure there is accountability.
- That electronic systems are available, but the school would need to consider any cost involved in utilising such a system against the benefits.
- The Governance Lead's role in compliance and risk.
- The FRA committee responsibilities for monitoring risk and holding the school to account, which will be recorded in the minutes and can therefore provide assurance to other trustees.

The Risk Management Policy was unanimously **approved**.

7. Policy Reviews

a) Staff Pay Policy

The F&RD advised that she had used a Hampshire Local Authority model policy and was seeking approval

A discussion took place encompassing:

- That there were points within the policy which outline responsibilities of the Board, but are performed by the school.
- The deadlines for performance management within the policy (31st October for teachers and 31st December for the Headteacher) are not currently met by the school. The deadlines are set within the School Teachers Pay and Conditions document.
- That powers are delegated to the Personnel and Pay Committee on behalf of the Board via the terms of reference.
- What areas the Personnel & Pay Committee are responsible for.
- That the Personnel & Pay committee provide a report to the Trust Board.
- How the school could provide equality and diversity information for staff pay in 2021/22 to ensure fairness across the process, without making the process very onerous.

- That the Pay policy links with the Performance Management policy and the whole process must be aligned.

The policy was approved **unanimously**.

b) Admissions Policy

The Governance Lead advised that the policy has been updated with information from the Local Education Authority SEN team and a brief paragraph has been included to outline the in-year admission process.

Q: Our policy doesn't cover the appeals process, should it be included?

A: Although we are an academy, the Local Education Authority SEN team determines all admissions to Dove House, so the school would not run any appeal. If a place is declined by the Local Education Authority SEN then they will advise the parent/carer how to appeal and will run the process. The wording was provided by the Local Education Authority SEN team.

The policy was approved **unanimously**.

Jenny Burns left the meeting at 6.25 pm

8. Headteacher Interim report

The Interim Report was reviewed and the Headteacher invited questions:

Remote Learning

Q: The report talks about blended learning rather than remote learning which will be offered in school as well as just at home. If the country went into lockdown tomorrow would the school have a remote learning offering in place for students, that can immediately be instigated.

A: The school currently has the same remote learning offering that was used in the previous academic year. I have inherited a report and action plan from the Interim Head of School, which suggests that blended learning would be better, as it can be used in school too. The new students have received log-ins to enable them to access. The idea of blended learning is sound as it means teachers will be using the IT aspect in the classroom alongside traditional teaching, so everybody becomes more familiar with it. The action plan can't be put in place as roles that were assumed to be in place, have disappeared. I'm considering how to move this forward and will come back to you regarding staffing

Q: How many students are currently using remote learning?

A: We have a couple of students using it and we also have students that prefer the paper version. We have a student that will be away from school for a number of weeks and intend to use remote learning, as it will maintain links with the tutor team.

A brief discussion encompassed:

- That a staffing structure for 2021/22 had been approved without provision for the remote learning TLR as the Interim Headteacher wished to leave the decision as to how to embed remote learning with the new Headteacher.
- That the expectation for remote learning is for it to become embedded into day-to-day teaching, so is unlikely to be a permanent role.
- That the Headteacher is considering how to replace the Head of Faculty for the Learning Secure Base as well as the vacancy for a 0.8 Head of Faculty for the English position, both of which are from January 2021.
- That the Headteacher finds it difficult to staff the school flexibly and creatively, because the staffing structure is approved annually and changes from then are Rigid and only 'like for like'.
- That the school offers the staffing structure that it wants to have, to the Personnel & Pay committee, for them to review before recommending it the Board. The Chair of the Personnel & Pay advised the Board that the committee have supported the school's requested staffing structure and that they would consider any proposals for new or amended proposals.
- The Chair of the Personnel & Pay committee noted that there are historical reasons which led to a more structured approach to staffing e.g. incorrect contracts issued, roles not being advertised and increased use of UQTs.
- Providing more autonomy for the Headteacher with regard to staffing, whilst having measures in place to ensure the quality of educational experience remains high, without the budget being exceeded.
- That the school is awaiting a report from the School Resources Management Advisor which will provide information about the school's staffing resources which is likely to assist the Headteacher in his decision-making.

Action 3: The Headteacher will investigate how the staffing structure is approved at other academy trusts and will revert to the Board with a proposal at the next Board meeting.

Exam Results

The Chair noted how strong the English and Maths results were again this year.

The trustees commended the staff for the very positive results overall, and also noted the extra efforts that were made to support a student who was entered for GCSE Chemistry. The student successfully achieved a level 5 pass.

The Headteacher was asked to pass on trustee thanks to all staff for the hard work undertaken in difficult circumstances that enabled students to achieve such good results.

The Headteacher noted that data has been and continues to be difficult to compare year on year and from one cohort to another. The Headteacher reported that moving forward the school will need to look at how progress is being recorded, as P Levels and NC Levels are no longer operating.

Rapid Action Plan

The Headteacher advised that he was aware that the Interim Headteacher had suggested that areas of the HIAS teaching and learning report be converted to a rapid action plan rather than included in the school improvement plan.

He shared his view that it is important to do things in the right way, rather than being reactive to reports and advised trustees that progress has already been made through staff development sessions and the school improvement plan.

Other Projects/Conversations/Concerns

Q: I noticed you had reported about the difficulties of recruiting Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) and assume that brings a risk to teaching and learning. Is there anything that the school can do to mitigate the effects?

A: A couple of staff have been poached which is difficult to mitigate against. We are receiving applications for LSA vacancies, but they aren't always strong so we are keeping the advert live. It is important to employ the right person and it is a demanding role that isn't well-paid.

We also need to speak with Hampshire who would like the school to take more students. Part of the support for us doing that, would be accepting students requiring 1-1 LSAs and although that attracts more funding we need to be able to fill the roles.

The Chair advised trustees that she had attended the LSA training at Dove House at the beginning of term and had the opportunity to speak with staff. She shared that a member of staff had said that being an LSA was 'the worst paid job she's ever had, but with the best job satisfaction' which had been wonderful to hear.

9. Review & Approval of the Trustee Visit Schedule

The Trustee Visit schedule for 2021-22 was reviewed, discussed and unanimously **approved**.

The meeting closed at 7.03pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....

The next meeting date will be at 5 pm on December the 14th 2021.

Summary of Actions from:

Meeting of Tuesday 19th of October 2021

No	Action	Owner
Action 4 Item 13 28/9/21	Data Protection Audit Action Plan: The Headteacher and Data Protection Lead will consider how the Data Protection Audit Action Plan can be implemented.	JH
Action 1 Item 5 19/10/21	BCP: The Headteacher and F&RD were asked to review the points raised from the discussion and the questions asked and respond.	JB/OP
Action 2 Item 6 19/10/21	Risk Register: The F&RD will update the Risk Register with completion dates for the risk which have controls that are partial or developing.	JB
Action 3 Item 8 19/10/21	Headteacher's Report: The Headteacher will investigate how the staffing structure is approved at other academy trusts and will revert to the Board with a proposal.	OP