



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

DBE (20)M1

DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Diocesan Board of Education held on Wednesday 12 February 2020 at the St Nicholas Centre at 1.30 pm.

Prayers: The Rt Revd Dr Mike Harrison led the opening prayers.

Present:

Mrs Jane Addis
Mrs Elaine Burdiss
Mr John Dixon
Mrs Jane Eccleston
Mr Tim Fairbairn

The Ven Jeanette Gosney
The Rt Revd Dr Mike Harrison (Chair)
Mr Nicholas Jardine

Mrs Mary Lewis
Mr Guy McGregor
Mr Pete Mumford
Mr Hugo Parker
The Revd Sharon Potter
Mr Paul Ryle
The Revd Toby Tate

Apologies:

The Revd Dr Stephen Brian
The Revd Penny Brinkley
Mr Tom Brooke
The Revd Christopher Griffiths

The Revd Carl Melville
Mrs Gillian Mitchell
Mrs Frances Parr
Mr Drew Quayle

In Attendance:

Mrs Karen Harman	Deputy Diocesan Director of Education (DDDE)
Mr Daniel Jones	Diocesan Buildings Officer
Miss Gemma Kingston	Diocesan Schools' Adviser
Mr Philip Knowles	Diocesan School Effectiveness Officer (SEO)
Mrs Jane Sheat	Diocesan Director of Education (DDE)
Miss Jacqui Studd	Administrator (Education)

WELCOME

The Chair introduced himself and welcomed the Ven Jeanette Gosney and introductions were made.

20.01 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2019 were approved and signed.

20.02 MATTERS ARISING

None.

20.03 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

20.04 DIOCESAN DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION'S REPORT

The DDE referred to Paper A, which provided an update to DBE members on issues arising since the last meeting. The DDE noted the resignation of the Deputy Diocesan Director of Education with effect from 31 August 2020 and thanked the DDDE for her service over the last three years. The DDE advised that interviews for the DDDE role will take place on 23 March 2020 and that she, Revd Sharon Potter and Jane Eccleston will form the interview panel. Part of the process will also involve asking candidates to make a presentation. DBE members were invited to attend the morning presentations and members interested in attending should contact the DDE. Further information would be available in due course, once shortlisting had taken place.

The DDE further noted:

- census data as at October 2019;
- the next Small Schools Forum taking place on 9 March. DBE members were invited to attend to hear Roisin Wiseman, Head at Wilby talk about her recent Ofsted inspection;
- four church school Headteachers are leaving this summer and the DDE, DDDE and SEO are all involved in supporting governors at shortlisting and interviews, alongside the local authority; and
- the results of a survey undertaken at the last annual conference in November 2019 checking on the levels of knowledge of the support provided by the education team.

The Ven Jeanette Gosney asked what constitutes a small school. The DDE advised that there are varying definitions: the Department for Education considers a school with 210 or fewer pupils as small, the Church of England considers very small schools with 110 pupils or fewer, while we have some very small schools below 50 pupils. The main issue for small schools is sustainability.

The Chair asked whether numbers attending the last annual conference were comparable with previous years. The DDE advised that the last annual conference had coincided with School Learning and Improvement Network peer review meetings so numbers had been down on previous years.

20.05 ST JAMES SITE, BURY ST EDMUNDS

Please see attached confidential minute.

20.06 IPSWICH GARDEN SUBURB

The DDE referred to Paper C, an overview of the three possible routes to opening a new school in the Ipswich Garden Suburb. The DDE invited discussion on this and asked for authority to begin work on exploring the costs, level of demand and feasibility of a bid.

Guy McGregor asked about the age range of the school. The DDE advised that this would be 11-16 only. Pete Mumford advised that the site would be close to a secondary school which has recently given up its sixth form. The new school would initially offer 750 places but once viable, could grow to 900. The DDE highlighted that Debenham High School is 11-16 and was recently listed 11th in the country in terms of attainment at state schools.

Tim Fairbairn asked whether this school would join the Diocesan MAT. The DDE advised that the school would need to open as a Voluntary Aided (VA) school

although there could be a possibility that the school joins with Debenham High School or the DMAT in the future.

The Revd Sharon Potter asked whether the housing developments had received planning permission.

Peter Mumford advised that 3,000 homes would be developed. The first phase, Henley Gate has obtained planning permission, the second phase Fonnereau and the final phase, Red House where the secondary school would be located, are awaiting planning permission, which is expected around 2025.

Tim Fairbairn asked if the Diocese had experience and resources to open a new school. The DDE advised that the team, although small, does have experience of opening a school but that there will need to be additional resources brought in. However, the DDE was keen to start planning at this early stage.

John Dixon confirmed that he was in favour of the DDE exploring the feasibility of opening a new school.

The DBE authorised the DDE to begin exploring the feasibility of opening a new school in the Ipswich Garden Suburb.

Hugo Parker asked when the DBE could expect an update on this. The DDE advised that she would report back later this year.

20.07 DIOCESAN SCHOOLS' ADVISER REPORT

The Schools' Adviser introduced Paper D. The Schools' Adviser noted:

- emerging themes of RE curriculum and deep dives, Knowledge Organisers, Higher Level Teaching Assistants and balanced RE;
- ongoing work on the Emmanuel Project 2020 and the production of a teachers' handbook, clergy handbook and the Emmanuel Project at home; and
- plans to develop a leadership programme for collective worship for pupils in schools.

Tim Fairbairn asked if any Ofsted inspections in church schools have involved a RE deep dive. The Schools' Adviser responded that none have taken place so far.

The Chair thanked the Schools' Adviser for all the work represented in her report.

20.08 RE MODEL POLICY FOR CHURCH SCHOOLS

The Schools' Adviser referred to Paper E, a RE model policy used by the Diocesan MAT schools. The plan is to have one model policy for all schools in the Diocese. The Schools' Adviser asked for comments.

Tim Fairbairn suggested that guidance should be provided on RE rather than a policy. The Schools' Adviser highlighted that SIAMS inspectors always ask to see the RE policy and that RE has a specific place within the curriculum especially with the withdrawal clause so a policy is needed. Paul Ryle advised that Mellis CofE Primary School has a policy for each subject taught and that this is particularly important for subjects such as RE and Collective Worship as this can help parents.

Jane Eccleston suggested that schools should adopt the policy and that wording should encourage this, by replacing "all schools" with "our school".

The DBE endorsed the RE model policy, subject to the changes mentioned.

The Chair thanked the Schools' Adviser for her work.

20.09 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP MODEL POLICY FOR CHURCH SCHOOLS

The Schools' Adviser referred to Paper F and asked for comments.

Jane Addis felt that the policy pointers section was useful and suggested that this should be added to the RE model policy. The Revd Sharon Potter and Jane Eccleston also commented positively on the model policy.

The Chair suggested that the opening statement should be reworded to "As a church school, we hold to a vision that worship is an affirmation and celebration of God..." The Ven Jeanette Gosney wondered if schools could change this wording to any world faith. Jane Eccleston suggested using the wording "As a Church of England school".

The DBE endorsed the Collective Worship model policy, subject to the changes mentioned.

The Chair thanked the Schools' Adviser for her work.

20.10 RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)

The Schools' Adviser referred to Paper G, the draft model policy for church schools on the teaching, planning and resourcing of RSE which becomes statutory for primary schools in September 2020. The Schools' Adviser noted that the Church of England has published a Charter and guidance on RSE since the last meeting.

The DDE thanked the Schools' Adviser for her work and noted that a spectrum of schools do already have a RSE policy, that the local authority is bringing out a model policy and that some schools want a policy so this model would be helpful. Once the policy has been approved by the DBE, it will be circulated to schools.

Elaine Burdiss advised that her school has not yet held a consultation with parents on the RSE policy because of changing criteria. However, she felt it would be good to have some advice on this.

Paul Ryle commended the report and advised that his school had consulted with parents.

The Revd Toby Tate suggested changing the gender stereotypes to 'their'. The Chair suggested that the sixth point under Principles (page 2) and the emphasis on children having autonomy should be reworded.

The DDE advised that changes would be made to the draft model policy and the policy would be circulated electronically for approval so that the policy can be circulated to schools.

The Chair thanked the Schools' Adviser for her work.

20.11 SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: OFSTED / STATUTORY INSPECTION OF ANGLICAN AND METHODIST SCHOOLS (SIAMS) RESULTS

The SEO introduced Paper H, providing an analysis of attainment and progress data for KS4 from 2019, and Ofsted and SIAMS outcomes for church schools published since the previous meeting.

The SEO advised that the analysis of attainment data had been provided by Fischer Family Trust (FFT) for the two church secondary schools. The SEO noted that Debenham High School was the best performing school in Suffolk and as the DDE had already mentioned, was rated 11th nationally.

At the last DBE meeting it had been noted that KS1 and KS2 data indicated that progress was lower in church schools in the Diocese when compared to all Suffolk primary schools in 2019 and the SEO had been asked to look at this for the next meeting. The SEO advised that he had looked at data and noted that:

- the percentage of vulnerable pupils in our church primaries is higher than those in Suffolk primary schools as a whole; and
- a much higher proportion of our schools have fewer than 100 pupils on roll when compared to Suffolk LA as a whole.

While this data was interesting, it was not conclusive so the SEO had focused on a cross section of individual church schools. The SEO reported that our schools do excellent work with vulnerable pupils, prioritising and placing great emphasis on individual care and emotional wellbeing, which is not necessarily reflected in published data.

The SEO then reported on the current breakdown of Ofsted and SIAMS results and noted that higher rigour in both Ofsted and SIAMS inspections are beginning to show in results.

Mary Lewis highlighted the importance of church schools being inclusive and not obsessed with headline data.

Tim Fairbairn asked whether information on SEN provision within schools was accessible to parents to help when making decisions about where to send their children. The SEO replied that this information needs to be generalised.

Tim Fairbairn asked if SIAMS reports include a report on SEN provision. The DDE advised that this forms part of the overall quality of judgment.

Tim Fairbairn thanked the SEO for the information provided in his report, as did the Chair.

20.12 SUFFOLK LEARNING IMPROVEMENT NETWORK (SLIN)

The DDDE referred to Paper I providing information and findings from the first year of the SLIN together with a tabled paper from Gill Mitchell, Head at East Bergholt CEVCP School on the school's experience of SLIN.

The Chair asked about the model used for the peer review. The DDDE advised that a project manager had been appointed who had achieved success with implementing the model system in Hounslow. The Chair added that Dioceses also have a peer review system and suggested there could be cross fertilisation of ideas.

Jane Addis advised of a similar system which had been introduced 5-6 years ago but had faded due to people dropping out. However, this system seemed more positive.

The DDDE advised that more rigour within the system was required. John Dixon advised that Westgate Community Primary School is involved in SLIN and has found it invaluable.

Tim Fairbairn asked about the involvement of governors in the network. The DDDE advised that this is a Headteacher owned process and the assumption is that heads report back to governors. Tim Fairbairn suggested a reminder to heads to report back and share information with governing bodies which the DDDE agreed to.

Action: The DDDE to contact Gavin Stone about the Diocesan peer review model documentation.

20.13 DIOCESAN MAT UPDATE

The DDE introduced Paper J which provided an update to DBE members on developments in the Diocesan MAT. The DDE noted:

- the annual accounts for 2018-19 had been approved on 18 December and are now available on the MAT website;
- Karen Williams joined the MAT Board as a director in December 2019;
- the success of Conditional Improvement Funding (CIF) and Trust Capacity Funding (TCaF); and
- the appointment of a senior business and finance officer.

The Chair asked about the successful bids and the DDE advised that this had been a team effort.

20.14 CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT TO PROPOSED CHANGE OF STATUS TO ACADEMY WITHIN DIOCESAN MAT – Bedfield CEVCP

The DDE referred to Paper K, which provided information on Bedfield CEVCP School's proposal to become an academy within the Diocesan MAT. The DDE advised that the MAT was currently undertaking due diligence on the school.

The Chair asked what the criteria was for schools joining the MAT. The DDE advised that the due diligence exercise is a checklist looking at a range of information involving pupil numbers, attainment, finance etc.

Tim Fairbairn asked about the geographical position of the school within the MAT. The DDE advised that the school lies within the Debenham pyramid. Mary Lewis asked about the relationship with the church. The Ven Jeanette Gosney advised that she had recently visited the parish and that there would be more connection between the school and parish in due course.

John Dixon asked whether consultations had been undertaken with staff and parents. The DDE advised that these had not yet taken place as the MAT was still undertaking due diligence. John Dixon felt that the DBE should know the local views on the school academising before making a decision.

Tim Fairbairn asked whether the school could join one of the local MATs. The DDE advised that the All Saints Schools Trust had schools nearby and could be an option.

Tim Fairbairn asked whether the DMAT promotes other local MATs who may offer geographical benefits to schools. The DDE advised that the DBE Academy Strategy provides for both the DMAT and other church-school led MATs to support small schools.

Mary Lewis asked if local MATs had been approached. The DDE advised that there were a number of options available to the school, including federation.

The Chair concluded that the MAT would continue with due diligence before the DBE made a decision on the school. The DDE to keep DBE members updated.

20.15 LOCAL AUTHORITY UPDATE

Pete Mumford referred to Paper L, which provided an update on local authority issues arising since the last meeting.

Guy McGregor commented on the post-16 travel policy and the lack of provision for young people to travel to schools from rural areas. Pete Mumford advised that the

local authority are currently consulting on the Post-16 travel policy for the 2020-21 school year and recommended members respond.

Tim Fairbairn asked about recent changes in nursery funding and whether this is being given due consideration. Pete Mumford advised that this was not his area but that he could pass on this concern to one of his colleagues at the local authority.

The Chair thanked Pete Mumford for the local authority update.

20.16 CONFIRMATION OF FOUNDATION GOVERNORS

The Revd Toby Tate asked about the shadow governors appointed at Sir Robert Hitcham CEVAP School, Debenham. The DDE advised that there is currently an Interim Executive Board at the school which will be replaced by a governing body at Easter. A shadow governing body is appointed initially with a view to taking full responsibility once the IEB comes to an end.

The DBE ratified the appointment of Foundation Governors listed in Paper M.

20.17 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Growing Faith/Growing Younger

DBE Review – the Chair and DDE to discuss and bring back any issues to the DBE

DBE Strategy Action Plan

Ten Marks of a High Performing Diocesan Board of Education

20.18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

20.19 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board noted that future meetings would take place on:

Tuesday 5 May 2020 at 5.30pm for 6pm

Wednesday 16 September 2020 at 5.30pm for 6pm

Tuesday 24 November 2020 at 1pm for 1.30pm

The Chair thanked members for their contribution to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.05pm with the Grace.

Signed: _____

[Chairman]

Date: _____