

Governor Lines

First of all I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. Since the last Governor Lines, there have been two Governors Meetings.

The main issues considered included:

1. Regional Schools Commissioner's decision to grant permission for The Dorcan Academy to work towards joining the Excalibur Trust

This decision had been held back for twelve months whilst Excalibur began working with us. The Commissioner is now convinced that Excalibur is the right Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) for Dorcan to join to enable our students to have the best possible support in the coming years. Positives from the relationship have already been noted.

There are still many details to be resolved and it is unlikely that anything will be signed until June 2018 at the earliest.

When we have more definite details, the Head and Governors will arrange a meeting for Parents/Carers to hear what is involved and how our students will benefit from this relationship.

2. Annual Accounts

Following a rigorous audit, the Governors were happy to sign them off. Financially the academy has done a little better than anticipated but along with nearly every school in the country, the Governors recognise that there are tough times ahead. The Governors along with the Head are committed to taking every possible step to protect the interests of our students.

3. Capital Spending

Our Chief Financial Officer is currently preparing bids for major capital works at the Academy. Already we have been successful in obtaining a grant of £800,000 to replace all the boilers. This work is due to be completed in the late Spring.

4. Attendance

The Governors are monitoring closely the Student Attendance figures. Currently they are a little below the National Target and as a result the Governors have agreed to the Head increasing the hours of those involved in following up absence work, in order to more effectively ensure students are present each day.

5. Safeguarding

This is a very high priority for the Governors. They were pleased to receive a very successful audit of Safeguarding at the Academy. It acknowledges the vast amount of work put in by staff to ensure that our students are extremely well protected. It involves a great deal of time dealing with Partner Agencies.

The Governors were pleased to hear that issues such as Sexting, Exploitation and Online Safety are being dealt with in the Academy. The Governors have asked the Head to consider whether it would be helpful to hold an information evening for Parents /Carers on these issues.

6. Presentation Evening

The Governors were pleased to note the success of the Presentation Evening. It was great to have a former student, Luke Graham MP, as the main speaker. He gave a really inspirational talk on his career thus far.

7. Retirement

The Governors paid tribute to Fiona Hardcastle on her retirement from the Academy and hence from her role as a Staff Governor. Fiona has worked at Dorcan for over thirty years and has brought so much to the students that she has supported. She had a key role in developing the Swindon Festival of Literature, which over the ten years of its existence, has inspired thousands of students.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Governors are pleased with the progress the Academy is making in many areas. Both Staff and Students report how the new Behaviour Policy has enhanced the learning environment around the academy. The Governors also recognise the enormous amount of hard work that the Head and Staff put into seeking to give each student the best possible opportunity to achieve their potential and beyond.

Again the Governors recognise the key part Parents/Carers can play in supporting their children in these vital years for their development.

If there are any areas of concern, please do contact the Academy. If you have followed through the Academy Complaints Policy and are still not satisfied, please do contact me via the Academy. (governors@dorcan.co.uk).

I look forward to meeting you at one of the school events coming up in the near future.

Phil Baker
Chair of Governors
January 2018