



Unity Education Trust

## **NEWSLETTER**

### **No.12 January 2020**

This is the fourth Trust Newsletter of 2019-20 for the attention of Chairs, Clerks and members of School Oversight Committees. A copy has been added to GovernorHub UET Shared Resources, Newsletters.

#### **Happy New Year**

The Trustees wish all governors a Happy New Year and thank everyone for their continuing work on behalf of their school and the Trust as a whole.

#### **UET: Engage merger**

Unity Education Trust and the Engage Trust formally merged with effect from 1 January 2020. The enlarged **Unity Education Trust** now provides education for 3-19-year olds in both mainstream settings and alternative provision/specialist academies and services. Our schools are:

Northgate High School and Dereham Sixth Form College  
The Federation of Grove House Nursery and Infant School and Kings Park Infant School  
Beeston Primary School  
Garvestone Primary School.

The Short Stay School for Norfolk:

- *The Douglas Bader School*
- *The Locksley School*
- *Hooper Lane School*
- *The Rosebery School*
- *The Brooklands School*

The Compass Bases

- *Lingwood*
- *Pott Row*
- *Belton*
- *Earthsea*

Alternative Provision School

- *The Pinetree School*

The letter to parents reporting the merger is on school websites A similar letter has been sent to all staff.

The Members of the enlarged Trust are now:

- Mr Richard Barr
- Mr Graham Hacon
- Mr Alan Jones (also Trustee)
- Mr Roger Margand
- Mr Mike Salt
- Mrs Helen Smith
- Mr Roger Stephenson

and the Trustees are:

- Mr Ed Colman
- Mrs Maureen Eade
- Mr Dennis Freeman
- Mr Glyn Hambling (CEO)
- Mr Alan Jones
- Mr Robert Phillips
- Ms Alison Randall
- Mr Gavin Redwood
- Mr Michael Rose
- Mr Colin Taylor
- Mr Mark Winson-Pearce.

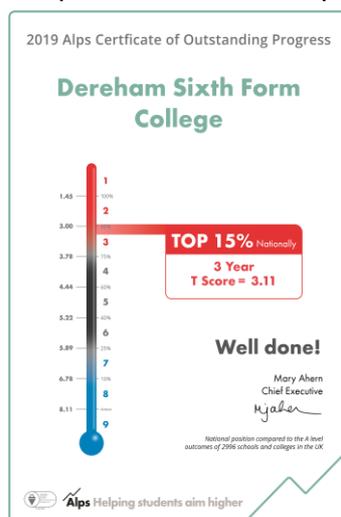
## **Ofsted**

Ofsted have decided to favour us with their attention this month with section 8 inspections at Garvestone (15 January), Beeston (21 January) and Kings Park (21 January). The outcomes will be shared with all members of the Trust when they are released by Ofsted. In the meantime, the Trustees would like to record their thanks to all governors, school and Trust staff who met the Inspectors or provided support to the Heads and others during the inspection process.

**The end of last term and the beginning of this have been busy times for all our schools with many events to celebrate including the following.**

- **Dereham Sixth Form College.**

The ALPS certificate below records DSFC student progress (value added) based on 2019 examination results. This is third consecutive year that DSFC has been in the 'Red Zone' (top 25% and above nationally) and the 2019 score places the College in the top c450 out of 2,996 sixth forms nationally. This success is due to the tireless work of subject staff delivering high quality teaching and support for independent learning and comprehensive wrap-around care from pastoral and support staff.



The former Year 13 students were able to celebrate their achievements and post-college destinations at the Presentation evening to award A-level and BTEch certificates held on 9th January.

Congratulations also to two of our DESA students – Ethan Warne and Charlie Dickerson – who have been selected for England Schools FA team.

- **Christmas events.**

The weeks before the Christmas saw a number of fantastic events in schools across the Trust including Christmas performances and Christmas Fairs at Kings Park and Grove House; 'Alice in Wonderland' at Kings Park and Bring a Cake non-uniform day at Grove House; a concert in the church and Christmas performance in the Village Hall at Garvestone (with a range of stalls and activities raising more than £500); a Christingle service in the parish church at Beeston; the Christmas Showcase at Northgate featuring students from the high school and sixth form college; and at Douglas Bader the Christmas Bazaar raised £550 and Santa made an appearance courtesy of Wroxham Lions. Finally, Locksley pupils and staff collected a trolley full of donated food for the Norwich Food Bank which they were able to deliver prior to the Christmas holidays.

- **And a few other activities**

At Locksley students took part in a workshop run by the military charity for limbless veterans; at Lingwood children have been busy gardening and planting fruit trees in the playground; the Earthsea art gallery event was a huge success enabling pupils to showcase their work to parents, governors and other stakeholders; at the end of last term Hooper Lane's Nurture group made chocolate cakes as a treat for the primary classes at the end of the day; Northgate's School Council Social Team helped raise £685 for Norfolk and Waveney MIND during their fundraising and awareness week last term; Northgate has initiated "Bottle free Friday" to encourage students to bring reusable bottles to school; there have been many extra-curricular events for students across the Trust including visits to theatres and participation in sporting events; and Garvestone has been awarded a Gold Kitemark 2019 for participation of all students in the WNDSSP.

- **More recent and some still to come**

Launch of Brilliant Club for Northgate Year 9 at Emmanuel College Cambridge; for Northgate Year 7, an opportunity to present to their parents their 'Ultimate Goal' as part of the Kansappskolan project (the Kansappskolan link includes coaching events at Northgate and DSFC and goes from strength-to-strength with the launch of a Primary network in February); primary pupils at Douglas Bader enjoyed a Pizza Express workshop earlier this month learning how to design and make their own pizza; interactive STEM event at Northgate open to all year groups; and rehearsals have begun for Northgate/DSFC production of 'Hairspray the Musical'

- **Apologies for any events that we have failed to note – there has been so much going on in all schools.**

## **Information from Trust Board meetings**

The Board has approved a new procedure for the appointment of SOC Chairs and Vice-Chairs which is attached below and has been added to the Clerks' folder on UET Shared site on GovernorHub.

The following new employment/staff-related policies have been added to the Policies folder on GovernorHub:

- Allegations of Abuse against staff
- Bullying and Harassment policy
- Code of Conduct
- Cyberbullying
- Disciplinary model procedure

- Internet, social networking and email use policy
- Purchasing card policy
- Recruitment and Selection checklist

The list of UET policies is now quite long and the Trust will continue to review and add to them as necessary. They are all on the GovernorHub shared resources site to which Heads have access and from which they can upload policies to internal school shared sites and/or provide relevant policies to persons who need them. For its part the Trust has a statutory duty to publish some policies on its website (e.g. whistleblowing) but has also added to the website a full list of policies for reference purposes.

Annual Reports and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2019 have been published on the UET and Engage websites.

All academy trusts operate within the framework of their Articles of Association, their funding agreements with the DfE and other regulations, especially those set out in the Academies Financial Handbook. The regulatory framework becomes more extensive each year and one addition for 2019-20 is for Trusts to report to the Education Skills and Funding Agency on their arrangements for internal scrutiny and the findings therefrom. For this year the Board has agreed an internal audit programme which will address the following three areas: payroll and HR, Management Information and reports, and governance including safeguarding.

The Board meeting scheduled for 21 January 2020 was postponed due to the Ofsted Inspections noted above. The meeting will be held on a new date within a week or two. Subject to the Board's approval at that meeting an amended Scheme of Delegation reflecting the merger with Engage will be published on the UET website and further policy updates will be added to the Governor Hub Shared site.

### **Spring 1 SOC meetings.**

The Board's suggestions for inclusion on the agendas for the next round of SOC meetings are as follows:

- Receive and discuss latest report from School Improvement Partner and link that to SEF and SIDP updates– what has been achieved and where do challenges remain.
- Term 1 Data drop – review learners' progress, attendance data and trajectories
- Consider reports from Governors who have completed monitoring visits and agree areas for next round of monitoring. If not already in hand ask a governor to review the implementation of UET's Health and Safety policy within the school, report back to next SOC and also submit any comments on the policy (review due Spring 2020)
- Headteacher's written report – updates on staffing, class sizes, pupil recruitment
- Agenda items from Head, Governors or arising from previous meetings
- Report from Link Trustee
- Governor training – any training that governors would wish the Trust to seek to arrange?
- This Newsletter for the information of all governors.

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## **PROCEDURE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF SCHOOL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEES**

**“The establishment, constitution, terms of reference, membership and proceedings of School Oversight Committees will be determined by the Board of Trustees”. Articles of Association 101.**

### **Appendix 10 - Scheme of Delegation 2019**

#### **Appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair of the School Oversight Committee**

- The Chair and Vice Chair of the School Oversight Committee shall be appointed at the start of each academic year by simple election of those members of the School Oversight Committee with voting rights.
- An employee of the Trust may not be Chair or Vice-Chair of the School Oversight Committee.
- Where the Trust consider that there is not a suitable Chair or Vice Chair from among the pool of Governors a member of the Trust Board or nominee shall fulfil the role until such a time as a suitable governor can be appointed.
- Where the Chair is absent from any meeting of the School Oversight Committee, the Vice-Chair shall act as the Chair for the purposes of the meeting
- If both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent from any meeting of the School Oversight Committee a member of the Trust Board or nominee shall chair the meeting.

#### **Procedure for the Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of School Oversight Committees**

##### **To be conducted by the clerk (or nominee of the Trust)**

Whilst this is an annual requirement, it is not considered advisable to change the Chair every year. To enable effective co-working with the senior staff in school and the senior leaders in the Trust, continuity is recommended.

In good time prior to the meeting at which the election is to take place the Clerk, or a Trust representative, will ascertain if the current Chair and Vice-Chair are willing to continue in post. The other members of the SOC will then be advised of the responses from the Chair and Vice-Chair and asked whether they wish to stand for election to either post, or to nominate another governor. Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated with the agreement of the candidate.

Nominees will be invited to meet with Trust representatives and the Headteacher/Heads of School to discuss the job description, roles and responsibilities of the Chair and/or Vice-chair together with the skill set. Following these discussions, the candidates will confirm whether they wish their names to go forward and the Trust will advise them if it is able to support their candidature. The process to this point will remain confidential.

The Trust will advise the Clerk of the SOC (for publication on the agenda) of the pool of nominated Governors it considers suitable for the role of Chair or Vice-Chair. If there are no nominations or the Trust considers that there are no suitable nominees from those who have been put forward/volunteered, it will appoint a Member of the Trust Board or nominee who will fulfil the role for the time being

The Clerk of the SOC will conduct the elections at the SOC meeting, completing the procedure for the election of the Chair before that for the Vice-Chair.

Prior to each election the candidate(s) will withdraw from the meeting to allow members of the SOC to ask any questions or comments. If there is only one candidate, the SOC will complete the vote before the candidate is invited to return to the meeting. If there are two or more candidates, they will be invited to return to the meeting which will then proceed immediately to a vote by a secret written ballot with each member of the SOC placing one name on the ballot paper.

All members of the SOC are entitled to vote including the Headteacher/Head of School. However, where a school has leadership model in excess of one Head, they will only have a single vote. Link Trustees will not have a vote at this point in the process.

A successful candidate must receive a simple majority of those present and voting.

In the event of there being an equal division of votes the Link Trustee, acting on behalf of the Trust Board, will have the casting vote.

Votes will be counted, by the Clerk, who will announce the result and put forward the recommendation of the SOC for confirmation by the Trust Board

Nomination form

-----School Oversight Committee

Nomination for Chair: .....

Signature of person so nominated.....

Date:

Nomination for Vice-Chair.....

Signature of person so nominated.....

Date: