

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD HELD ON 15th JULY 2015

Present: Martyn Henson (Head Teacher), Richard Aggus (Chair) Hilary Rodgers, Kath Smith, Graham Blackburn, Nick Hoffman, Kojo Wood, Julia Marshall, Ellie Ward, Bobby Banks, Pippa Frost

Apologies: Nick Collins, Jill Borcherds, Sheenagh Parsons, Keith Hopkinson, Martin Powell, Phil Davidson

Absent: Craig Temple

(NB: Governor Challenge, Questions and Monitoring are highlighted in italics)

1.	To receive any apologies and decide whether to give consent for absence.	
	Apologies received and accepted from Sheenagh Parsons, Jill Borcherds, Nick Collins, Keith Hopkinson, Martin Powell, Phil Davidson.	
	Apologies had not been received from Craig Temple and consent was not given for absence.	
	The Chair would discuss attendance with Craig Temple and Martin Powell.	
	The Head Boy and Head Girl were introduced and welcomed; they were joining the governing body as Associate Members.	
2.	To receive notification of any other business.	
	- End of torm reports to perents	
	 End of term reports to parents Finance – overspend on cupboard work 	
	Changes to Barclays mandate	
3.	For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest	
	Nil	
4.	Governing Body Review - output	
	The Chair had circulated the output from the review, which had been carried out following the Herts external governance review template. The governing body discussed the key issues.	
	Governor Visits to School - they needed to review visits by governors to the school. Governors were signing a code of practice, which set out a level of commitment and expectation with regard to governor visits; governors should come to see the	

school in action, ideally as part of a link to a Faculty, and then should write a report on what they had seen. They needed to review the skills audit and training, and review the link roles. Governors should feel that they were making a contribution. A new induction policy had been put together to assist new governors. Focused and regular visits by governors were evidence of an outstanding school, and they needed to be able to articulate and evidence this. It was part of their commitment to the school and part of their role as a governor.

- Faculty review dates JM was just waiting for final confirmation. She would then send out a summary of faculty review dates. Once link roles had been agreed, governors should put a date in their diary during the faculty review week(s).
- Q Does the calendar specify when the work scrutiny will be?
 No, they had to first look at the timetables for all staff concerned.
 These were all agreed 2 weeks before the Review dates at a prebriefing meeting. Governors were welcome to attend at times
 other than the work scrutiny period. JM was happy to act as
 liaison for this.

In terms of the way forward, key actions from the review would be picked up during the year but a lot of them should be done by governors themselves. Governors had been asked to go through an evaluation of their own contribution and involvement during the year. Most of the actions were as a result of the governing body workshop held, and the Chair had also included examples of best practice from other schools.

Action 15/28
JM to send out
summary of
faculty review
dates

Action 15/29
Governors to set aside date in their diary for Faculty review week

5. Organisation of Governing Body

Succession Planning – the governing body needed to consider future succession planning, be proactive and not just be reactive to events. It was about looking at how key appointments would be filled and thinking about a logical progression. The Chair felt that they had taken key decisions regarding commitment and how governors were recruited to the school. Governors appointed to these positions needed to take on responsibility for some areas, such as managing meetings effectively.

The Chair asked for all governors to ensure they had completed the 360 degree survey for the Chair. He would then give feedback to the governing body.

Committee membership – suggested membership of committees had been circulated and was agreed. It was agreed to continue with 2 committees, meeting on the same evening. Governors were welcome to attend both committee meetings if they wished.

Asked, the Chair said that the Head Boy and Girl could attend committee meetings if they wished to do so. It would be good to have student perspective and representation at meetings. EW suggested that the Head Teacher's Ambassador for teaching and learning attended the L&D committee meeting, as this was specific to her role. This was agreed. The Head added that the Ambassador's role was a new student appointment this year.

Election of Chair - Richard Aggus was elected unanimously as Chair for 1 year.

Action 15/30 Governors to ensure they had completed survey for Chair; RA to give feedback **Election of Vice-Chairs** – Keith Hopkinson and Sheenagh Parsons had offered to stand again as Vice Chairs and were elected unanimously for 1 year.

Election of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs - RA would like to move to a position where the committee chairs and vice-chairs chaired alternate meetings, to give progression within the structure. He also wanted the committee chair and vice-chair to work with their SLT link on the agendas, to drive the agendas so that there were not so many substantial items on AOB and last minute discussions. The committee chairs and vice-chairs should work more as a partnership with a more proactive role. This would also happen with the governing body meetings, which would assist with succession planning. This was agreed by the governing body.

Resources Committee – Graham Blackburn was elected as Chair. Julia Brettell was elected as Vice-Chair.

Learning and Development Committee – Kath Smith was elected as Chair. Hilary Rodgers was elected as Vice-Chair.

Monitoring of SDP - the SDP actions should also be included in the agenda, with the committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs liaising with their SLT link about relevant items to be included and key focus points. The committees had to think about ways of bringing in SDP actions, such as impact of various initiatives. They needed to have a template for the year, and ensure they were picking up relevant items and monitoring them appropriately.

Governor Link Roles – links had been suggested and were agreed. Julia Brettell would be linked to Science, and Kath Smith to MFL. JM would add on the SLT links for the Faculties so governors knew who to contact.

RA would provide a mentor role for any governor who had not visited a Faculty before and would try to accompany them on their first visit.

A governor commented that it was difficult to find out previous information on Faculty reports etc. The Chair said that the school was moving to Office 365 which should be able to store governors' documentation. It would be rolled out to governors next term, and they would be able to share documents in the cloud. RA would talk to Simon about training/information for governors at an appropriate point.

Governors then signed Pecuniary Interest forms and Codes of Practice. It was noted that relevant governor business interests and relationships with staff would be published on the website. Governors should let RA know of any particular information they wanted to be published; otherwise he would take the information from the Pecuniary Interest form.

Pay and Performance Management Committee – it was agreed that it should continue as this year, with Vice Chair and Committee Chairs – membership was thus Keith Hopkinson, Kath Smith and Graham Blackburn. The terms of reference would stay the same.

Exclusions and complaints panels would continue with a pool of governors. The governing body had recently had exclusions training. The

Action 15/40
Committee Chairs
and Vice Chairs
to liaise with SLT
link prior to
meetings to agree
agendas and
inclusion of SDP
items

Action 15/41 RA to talk to Simon re training/ for Governors on Office 365

Action 15/42
Governors to let
RA know of any
particular
wording/informati
on for governors'
business
interests to be
published on the
website

Chair would continue to do the Appeals for Head's Performance Appraisal.

The terms of reference of the committees were to be reviewed at their first meeting of the year.

6. Head's Report - RELIC

The Head's Report had been circulated.

Q Why were the percentages for universities and Russell Group down on last year? It was a smaller sixth form – there had been a bigger sixth form the year before last, due to Heathcote closing. Last year had been a very bright cohort; there had been 10 applications for Oxbridge but no offers. The numbers for Art Foundation courses might also skew the data, as this was a large proportion and was not included in this year's data. This would bring the percentages more in line. Governors expressed surprise that no students from MFL or Psychology /ESS were going to Russell Group Universities; it was noted that the sixth form MFL groups were very small.

A governor suggested that the table was recirculated for the L&D committee with actual places allocated.

Governors asked if information on the destination of students could be published on the school website. This was useful information for prospective parents and was interesting data.

Q A governor asked whether "I am a Nobellian" was being promoted, querying the year 10 students who had not submitted any evidence. The Head said that they did not stop promoting it. Form tutors had been very proactive. It was about getting the students to provide the evidence and motivate them. The Head said that they knew it would be more difficult to get the Years 10 and 11 motivated. The students had been told they could backdate the scheme. The Years 7s and 8s had really embraced it and it would move through the school with them. One student in Year 8 had already achieved Gold.

Q Is it being promoted in terms of form competition? It was an individual achievement. The Head advertised and promoted it through newsletters regularly.

Asked, BB said that the scheme had not come to sixth form yet; the Head added that there would be a platinum award, which would be more community based. It would be a starting point for their UCAS application form. It would give a portfolio of information and aide-memoire to help complete the form. It gave a framework and selling point. Reading leaders could form part of the scheme.

Q Are reading leaders promoting the Nobellian concept, encouraging the students they were working with? It was mentioned in every assembly and they gave awards at assemblies. PF had taken her form into the computer room to upload information. Some were struggling as they did not have the information necessary to complete the steps. Some struggled as they did very little extra curricular activity.

Feedback from the student questionnaire had been circulated – over 600 students had completed it. The survey gave evidence that their students were going on trips, and holidays abroad. There was a small percentage

Action 15/32
MH to recirculate table on University destinations for L&D committee with actual places allocated

Action 15/33
MH to ensure information on destination of students was published on website

who did not have computer access at home, and they needed to drill down into this and ensure they had adequate access. JM said that she asked Year 7 pupils on home visits about access to IT, and it may be down to the wording; families now increasingly had tablets instead of PCs. It was noted that students could access PCs at school to do their homework and use school printers. This would sit neatly with the work NR was doing next year on redefining homework. As teaching moved towards posting things online, they wanted to ensure that all students had access.

As a starting point the survey did undermine some of the stereotypes regarding families in Stevenage.

Q Do you have any idea how this would compare with other towns?MH said that he had no comparison data on this at all.

Governors said that it would be interesting to have another survey done in a year's time, for comparison.

7. To discuss urgent matters arising from Committee Meetings

Finance, Personnel and Premises – a confidential matter was discussed.

Cupboard overspend – GB advised that the school wanted to replace cupboards in Maths, English and MFL Faculties. Governors had originally agreed to spend £12k at the last meeting out of capital expenditure; however the work would cost an additional £7k. It would cost £19k in total to replace cupboards in all relevant faculties. The fire officer who provide the school's certificate had requested that the cupboards were changed to meet fire regulations.

Q Had cupboards been installed which did not meet regulations? The Chair replied that it was down to interpretation of the regulations. It also made the cupboards more secure.

Q Was the increase due to changing more cupboards? Yes. GB and RA had agreed the work should be authorised but wanted to bring to the FGB. Governors agreed that they did not have much choice and agreed to the additional expenditure.

<u>L&D Committee</u> – minutes had been circulated.

A date had been set for a Pay and Personnel Committee meeting.

8. Policies.

Radicalisation briefing – a briefing had been circulated. Governors needed to ensure that the school was taking all the suggestions on board.

Q Governors asked the Head if the school was acting on the recommendations. MH confirmed that the school was acting upon the recommendations to minimise risk of radicalisation happening, but it was a work in progress. These included use of guest speakers, use of internet. They were taking it very seriously. Governors could check when they went into faculties. The Chair and Head had discussed how it would be incorporated into PSHE. They were also having to look at their safeguarding policy, to see what changes needed to be made. There would be a statement on the website within the curriculum statement on British Values, and as part of the safeguarding, it would form part of

Action 15/34 SM/SP to provide

briefing on PSHE delivery. JM said that it had been raised as part of transition, and they were taking any issues to the SLT. It became part of child protection safeguarding for and safeguarding. Staff had had training on how to spot signs of governors, radicalisation. This could be incorporated into the briefing from Steve incorporating radicalisation Morley and Sheenagh on safeguarding. **Governor Visits & Links/ Governor Monitoring** NH had completed the Governor induction training, which had been useful and interesting. RA and KJ had attended the sports presentation evening which had been fantastic. Governors wished to commend the PE Faculty on how it was organised and presented. The auditorium had been full. Staff had made the link between PE skills and how this transferred into achievement in other areas and application in real life. MH thought that the PE department had the balance right between excellence and keenness/commitment. They had introduced a new category of Unsung Hero. Governors noted that it was part of the governors' role to attend such events as it helped highlight all that happened at school and what went on behind the scenes.

HR and NH had attended the Arts Celebration at Gordon Craig, which had been excellent.

The Year 9 graduation ceremony had also been fantastic; the Gordon Craig theatre had been full. Tutors had talked about their tutor groups and all students had gone onto the stage.

Friday 7th August at 2pm was the end of summer school celebration – the Stevenage Mayor and Mayoress were attending. Governors were welcome to attend at any point. A governor said that her son had attended the summer transition event and it had been excellent.

10 To agree the minutes of the last meeting on 20th May 2015 and discuss any matters arising including actions from tracking sheet

- KH to get a date re renting facilities this would be done for the new term.
- NR was dealing with policy review and timeline.
- Child Protection Policy was being reviewed.
- Safeguarding training for new governors JB had done the training. JM would check the gaps in safeguarding. This could be done as in-house session.
- SP would advise re presentation by her and SM on safeguarding at a FGB meeting.
- Governors to provide photo and paragraph for governors board in staffroom. Photos would be taken at the next meeting.
- Ross and Holly to talk to Mr Swindell re proposed concept on Young Enterprise – PF would ask Mr Swindell and feed back.

Action 15/35 KH to set up meeting with Stevenage DBC

Action 15/36
JM to check gaps in training on safeguarding and organise course if necessary

Action 15/37
Governors to
provide photo
and pen portrait
for Governors'
Board; photos to

		be taken at next meeting Action 15/38 PF to talk to Mr Swindell re proposed concept on Young Enterprise
	 Q What is the rationale behind end of year reports this year as they are quite minimal? You did not get a good idea of how the child was progressing; there was no indication of current working grade and what had been achieved. Pupils had found it confusing – there was no feedback for each subject. The Head explained that there had been 3 other data drops through the year. This report was supposed to be a pastoral report and information from the tutor rather than an academic report. This was also the case with sixth form reports. MH would ask BB to come and explain at the next L&D meeting. He was in the process of writing to parents explaining how the assessment worked. Q Governors commented that this was perhaps a communication issue regarding how the report was explained to parents. Are we communicating the right thing to the parents? We need to ensure the school was communicating appropriately with parents. School's current account mandate – Mary Troake was leaving and a change needed to be agreed to the signatories. MH, BB, NR, CC and BC were authorised to operate the accounts. The governing body resolved that, in relation to the accounts specified in section 2, the persons authorised to operate those accounts and the signing rules should be changed to the persons and signing rules specified in section 3 of this form. 	Action 15/39 MH to ask BB to explain cycle of reporting at next L&D meeting
12	Dates of next meetings L&D (Progress) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 7 th October 2015 FGB – Tuesday 20 th October 2015 L&D (Teaching and Learning) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 25 th November 2015 FGB – Wednesday 9 th December 2015 L&D (Progress) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 20 th January 2016 FGB – 10 th February 2016 L&D (Teaching and Learning) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 9 th March 2015 FGB – 23 rd March 2016	

L&D (Progress) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 27 th April 2016	
FGB – Wednesday 11 th May 2016	
L&D (Teaching and Learning) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 15 th June 2016	
FGB – Wednesday 6 th July 2016	
(FGB meetings at 7pm; L&D to start at 6pm; FPP to start at 7.30pm)	