



## AUTUMN TERM 2017

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Governors of Holmer Green Senior School held at the School on 18 October 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Miss E. Baddeley (EB) Mrs A. Brodala (AB) (items 1-7.2) Mrs D. Deanus (DD) Mr A. Green (AG) Mr D. Greenwood (DG) (Chair) Mr A. Jones (AJ)	Mr M. Jones (MJ) (Headteacher) Miss J. Kirkpatrick (JK) Mr J. Leftwich (JL) Mr S. Pilgrim (SP) Miss K. Stratton (KS) Miss K. Willard (KW)
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Mr R. Batten (RB) Mrs A. Hearne (AH)(items 1-5) Mr P. Tang Ms E. Walker	School Improvement Partner Senior Leader, Creative Curriculum Deputy Headteacher Clerk
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Mrs L. Jackson Mr R. O'Connor (RO'C) Mrs L. Swain (LS) Mrs C. Whitehead (CW)	Business Manager Apologies received and accepted Apologies received and accepted Apologies received and accepted

NB. Governors' questions are highlighted in *italics* throughout these minutes.

DG welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mr Jim Leftwich was welcomed as a prospective governor.

### 1 GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS

#### 1.1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The clerk sought nominations from the governing body for the position of chair. Mr David Greenwood was nominated. There were no other nominations. Mr Greenwood withdrew from the meeting.

In accordance with the governing body's procedures, Mr Greenwood was appointed chair.

#### 1.2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

DG explained that he had accepted, with regret, the resignation of Prof Bryan Mogford as vice-chair and member of HGSS governing body.

### ACTION

**ACTION**

Professor Mogford had decided to concentrate his efforts on supporting the governing body of Sir William Ramsay School during the school's current stage of development. Governors wished to place on record their thanks to Professor Mogford for his governorship at HGSS.

The chair sought nominations from the governing body for the position of vice-chair. Mr Tony Green was nominated. There were no other nominations.

Governors thanked AG for his interest and agreed, in view of the absence of a number of governors at this meeting, to defer this decision until the next meeting.

**All governors  
Clerk – FGB  
agenda**

**2 GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS**

The Clerk updated about governor resignations. Professor Mogford, Ms Parnaby and Mrs Hollings had all resigned since the last meeting. Governors recorded their thanks to Mrs Hollings and Ms Parnaby for their work on behalf of the governing body.

DG asked Mr Leftwich if he would say a few words in support of his application to become a governor at HGSS. JL explained that, as a former managing director of EMI, he has a great interest in using his past and present experience to contribute to education. JL is currently involved in youth provision in Berkshire and nationally and also provides PSHE support at the Royal Grammar School. He is the newly-appointed chair of governors at Widmer End School. JL stated that he was interested in exploring the benefits of becoming part of a MAT and felt his skills and experience might be useful to the governing body.

Governors also noted that JL had been awarded an OBE recently in recognition of his contribution towards inspiring young people for more than 30 years in a voluntary capacity.

It was agreed to appoint Mr Leftwich as a Community Governor with immediate effect.

Governors introduced themselves for the benefit of JL.

**3 NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The chair reported that Mrs Hearne had been invited to the meeting to give an update about the ArtsMark Award Platinum. This item of Any Other Business would be taken before item 5 to allow AH to leave the meeting afterwards.

**4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared specifically in items on the agenda however, the following standing declarations of interest were made:

- Mrs Diane Deanus is a governor at Widmer End Community Combined School.
- Mr Tony Green is a Governor at Highworth Combined School.
- Mr Steve Pilgrim is a Governor at Manor Farm Community Infant School.
- Mrs Lisa Swain is a Governor at Manor Farm Community Infant School.

**14 ARTSMARK PLATINUM**

Mrs Hearne explained her delight that HGSS has gained the top award - Artsmark Platinum. She was not aware of any other school in Buckinghamshire nor the region that had gained this award. The bid was complex and had taken 11 hours to complete and had involved giving evidence to demonstrate the impact of creative studies across the whole school curriculum and within the HGSS community. The bid had been a huge team effort and should be seen as whole-school recognition. Work has already started towards gathering cross-curricular evidence to support reaccreditation in 2 year's time. The award is recognised nationally and Mrs Hearne has already been approached by another school wishing to seek support in putting a bid together for this award.

*A governor asked how this achievement had been notified to parents.*

The school has tweeted about this and a message has been circulated via parent mail. A press release has been written for the Bucks Free Press. Parents and other members of the HGSS community have already been congratulating the school on this achievement.

MJ reported that attainment in the creative subjects at HGSS had been exceptional and as a result many students were opting to stay at HGSS to access sixth form provision in creative subjects rather than transfer elsewhere - including grammar schools. The drama department is small at present but is being invested in to extend this offer.

AH explained that creative arts subjects will be offered in the sixth form to Sir William Ramsay students from 2018 as well so more students can benefit from the specialism at HGSS. Staff at HGSS also offer outreach training and support for local primary

## **ACTION**

schools which is improving provision within the community. In addition, a GCSE moderator is visiting HGSS to see how we 'teach to the top'.

The Chair congratulated the staff and students involved in putting the successful bid together as well as those involved in providing the high-quality learning opportunities and arts and cultural experiences for HGSS students.

AH left the meeting at 19.33.

## **5 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

### **5.1 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2017, having been circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record and handed to the Headteacher for inspection in the School.

**Headteacher**

### **5.2 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

## **6 ANNUAL REVIEWS**

### **6.1 STANDING ORDERS**

The Clerk reported that she had updated and revised the Standing Orders and would circulate them in advance of the next FGB meeting for approval.

**Clerk – next agenda**

The Governors' Allowances Scheme had already been approved at the recent meeting of the Finance, Premises, Health and Safety Committee.

### **6.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE**

It was noted that the Terms of Reference for the Finance, Premises, Health and Safety Committee and Pay and Personnel Committee had been reviewed and confirmed by the committee subject to amendments. These were approved by the FGB.

The Terms of Reference for the Learning and Curriculum Committee were being redrafted and would be presented for confirmation by the FGB at the next meeting.

**Clerk – next agenda**

### **6.3 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES/GOVERNOR ROLES**

MJ suggested that governors be circulated with details of the committees and individual governor roles available. Governors could then indicate their preferences which would be collated and confirmed at the next FGB meeting.

**Clerk**

**FGB agenda**

### **6.4 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Clerk reported that she had updated and revised the Governors' Code of Conduct in the light of the latest version from the National Governance Association. She would circulate in advance of the next FGB meeting for approval.

**Clerk**

## **7 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**

### **7.1 REPORT OF HEADTEACHER**

MJ reported that he would be presenting his headteacher's report at the next FGB meeting and he would ensure that he included information about extra-curricular activities.

MJ invited Mr Batten to address the meeting as part of the School's SEF update.

### **7.2 SEF**

RB stated that his role was to challenge HGSS about its data and ensure improvements are being secured. He explained that he had worked previously for Ofsted.

RB reported that a new (interim) inspection handbook had been published and a major review of ofsted was anticipated next year. The language used has already begun to shift away from looking at the data and making judgements such as 'good' and 'outstanding' to analysing the progress of people, students and organisations from a starting point and ascertaining whether progress is being sustained. Improvements made need to be able to survive and be embedded in the culture and ethos of the school so that they are not dependent on an individual. The Artsmark Platinum is a good example of this as HGSS has been able to evidence the significant influence of the cultural curriculum in other parts of the school. RB stated that he had tried to use the new language when analysing the SEF.

RB said that the headline in terms of progress 8 data is that progress at HGSS is at least indicative of 'strong' progress. Some progress is 'substantial', and some progress can be regarded as 'sustained' - indicating high performance. For example, progress in Art and Maths has sustained over time and is likely to remain so.

Some improvements are 'strong' but have not yet endured over time. This is the case with the Sixth Form. In some other subjects progress is 'weaker' relatively and in a small number of subjects some aspects of progress is 'significantly weaker'.

The most insecure progress is made by higher attaining boys and conversely the higher attaining girls show the strongest improvements. The school is investigating the causes of this anomaly and what can be done to address it.

RB stated that the headline data is very strong but this is hiding a more turbulent picture. RB reiterated that there is no reason why HGSS cannot achieve its ambition of an outstanding ofsted judgement. In order to achieve this, there needs to be more evidence of sustained progress over a broader range of subjects. There needs to be evidence that the weaker subjects are learning from and applying the improvements from the stronger subjects. No aspect of the school is inadequate, any weakness is relative to the strengths shown elsewhere. RB could not see evidence of low performance. Elements of the school have improved to a very high level. Leadership and Management is at a sustained high level and has improved to the point where the culture is embedded. The evidence for this is that the school survived and flourished during the time that MJ was executive Headteacher at SWR and absent from HGSS.

In summary, RB stated that the school should be thrilled with the data but not complacent. These improvements need to be built on and sustained.

*A governor asked if the weakness could be addressed in time for this year's results.*

MJ explained that action plans are in place. The biggest weakness is in relation to the highest performing boys. A project has commenced with Dr Challoners Boys school looking into this ways of addressing this.

*A governor asked if the difference between the progress of boys and girls was a reflection of subject choices.*

MJ stated that this might be part of the story. Last year some boys chose some subjects which were not strong but there is now more confidence in performance in these subjects because of the quality of teaching improvements.

**Action - The Learning and Curriculum Committee need to ensure that the SLT is challenged about boys' progress.**

RB stated that tracking of pupils isn't currently identifying early enough those pupils that are not on track. The earlier they are identified, the easier it is to address.

Progress in English, Maths and Science is strong and this comprises 70% of Progress 8. Maths and Art attained well above the year group but the same is not true of English and Science.

*A governor asked why the results are not always good if the teaching is deemed to be good?*

Part of the answer is due to boys not seeing the connection between their current attainment and their future ambitions.

MJ reported that JK is leading on PLC helping staff come up with strategies for improvement. RB reminded of the importance of not focusing on the end of Key Stage 5 but looking across the whole school including the transition between Key Stages 2 and 3. Part of the problems is that some children come to secondary level with slightly inflated attainment grades at Key Stage 2 which are not sustained at the start of Key Stage 3.

AB left the meeting at 20.15.

*A governor asked if it was a school issue or more cultural.*

MJ stated that the secondary modern mentality was no longer present in the staff room and amongst students and parents. The perception of the community is changing. Progress in Maths is not a problem for high attaining boys. Boys need to believe that they are capable of doing well – they need to be challenged and they need to be encouraged to persevere. There are students in the sixth form currently who have aspirations to go to Oxbridge which is very encouraging.

MJ reported that last year there were more boys in the Year 11 cohort than girls but this year there are more girls than boys. In addition, attendance by girls is not as good as for boys. These contextual factors needed to be considered by governors.

One governor commented that they felt the school needed to do more to support boys in their university applications. This would be investigated.

**MJ**

The chair thanked RB for his informative presentation.

### 7.3 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP) –2017/18

Governors discussed the SDP which had been sent to them in advance of the meeting. MJ encouraged feedback and questions from governors.

One governor commented that some of the milestones were not measurable and that it should comment on life beyond school. It was felt that it would be very useful to invite alumni into school to talk about their journey since leaving school. It was also commented that the school needs to take more opportunities to market achievements and thereby raise the profile of the school.

**Action: It was agreed that governors would feed any further comments back to MJ or to the clerk. They would be discussed with the SLT and a revised draft SDP recirculated for approval.**

All governor  
MJ/ Clerk

### 7.4 MAT UPDATE

It was noted that there was nothing new to report – the next meeting being on 1 November.

## 8 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS

### 8.1 FINANCE, PREMISES, HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Finance, Premises, Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 11 October 2017, having been circulated were noted.

The following policies, which had been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Committee, were approved:

- Anti-Bribery and Corruption
- Capitalisation
- Charging for External Exams
- Contingency and Business Contingency
- Fraud
- Governors' Allowances
- Investment
- Pay Policy.

MJ recommended that the decision in relation to the annual salary increment for teachers, as recommended by the Finance, Premises, Health and Safety and Personnel and Pay Committees should be deferred in the absence of LJ.

**Action: LJ to email governors.**

LJ

## **8.2 PEOPLE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the People and Personnel Committee meeting held on 12 September 2017, having been circulated were noted.

The following policies, which had been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Committee, were approved:

- Leave of Absence
- Safeguarding
- Pay Policy (see 8.1 also)

## **8.3 LEARNING AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Learning and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 3 October 2017, having been circulated were noted.

It was noted that Mr Golding had completed the Annual Safeguarding Report and this would be presented to the next meeting.

**Action: Presentation of Annual Safeguarding Report at next FGB meeting.**

**NG**

The following policy, which had been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Committee, was approved:

- SEN

## **8.4 HR, COMPLAINTS AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES**

AG reported that a meeting of the Complaints Panel had been held recently. The complaint had been in three parts – one part had been upheld and two parts had been dismissed. This matter had now concluded.

## **9 REPORTS**

### **9.1 REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

The Chair had not taken any action under emergency or delegated powers and had no other report to give.

### **9.2 REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT GOVERNOR**

There was no report.

### **9.3 REPORT OF SEND GOVERNOR**

There was no report.

### **9.4 REPORT OF SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR**

See Minute No. 8.3 above.

9.5	<p><b>REPORT OF PP GOVERNOR</b></p> <p>DD reported that she would be visiting to undertake a visit in relation to her role as Pupil Premium governor.</p>	DD
10	<p><b>REFERRALS FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY TO ALL SCHOOLS</b></p>	
10.1	<p><b>ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2019</b></p> <p>There were no comments from governors in relation to general admission matters.</p> <p>It was agreed to defer consideration of the proposed change in the HGSS Admissions Criteria to the next meeting when LJ would be present.</p> <p><b>Action: Consideration of Revision to Admissions Criteria at the next meeting.</b></p>	LJ Next Agenda
10.2	<p><b>REVISED HR POLICY – WHISTLEBLOWING</b></p> <p>It was noted that this Policy had already been considered and recommended for adoption by the Pay and Personnel Committee.</p> <p>It was agreed to adopt the Whistleblowing policy.</p>	
10.3	<p><b>REVISED CHILD PROTECTION POLICY (APPENDIX 3)</b></p> <p>It was noted that a new Framework Child Protection Policy had been produced to take account of the most recent guidance.</p> <p><b>Action: It was agreed that a comparison would be made with the school’s existing policy to ensure that the changes highlighted are accurately reflected.</b></p> <p>See Minute No 8.3 above re the Annual Safeguarding Report.</p>	LJ NG
10.4	<p><b>DATA PROTECTION – IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS</b></p> <p>It was noted that the General Data Protection Regulation would replace the current Data Protection Act 1998 in May 2018 and there would be implications for schools as a result. There would be further reports on the implications as necessary.</p>	LJ
11	<p><b>POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS</b></p> <p>These had been covered earlier in the meeting.</p>	
12	<p><b>STATUTORY INFORMATION ON WEBSITE</b></p> <p>It was noted that PT was in the process of reviewing the website for statutory compliance. The Year 7 catch up has been outstanding and will be included.</p>	

**13 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Dates of meetings would be as per the published schedule of meetings. The Clerk agreed to send JL a copy of the meetings schedule.

**Clerk**

**14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business other than to remind governors of the Christmas meal at the Red Lion in KingsHill, details of which had already been circulated.

**15 CONDUCT OF MEETING**

Governors confirmed that the meeting was conducted in an open manner and that all governors were invited to participate and contribute to discussions. It was confirmed that all members of the Governing Body would have access to these minutes.

The meeting closed at **20.41 p.m.**

Signed ..... Date .....

CHAIRMAN