



SPRING TERM 2025 MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

Date Wednesday 5th February 2025
 Time 18.30
 Place Holmer Green Senior School

- PRESENT:** Tony Green (TG) – Chair Sue Latham-Lewis (SLL)
 Paul Davies (PD) – Vice Chair Melissa Miller (MM)
 Ed Hillyard (EH) – Headteacher Steve Pilgrim (SP)
 Kirsty de Groot (KDG) to 7.30pm Victoria Strutt (VS)
 Jeremy Hunt (JH)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Sian Beswick (SB) Director of Finance & Resources
 Lynda Jackson (LJ) Director of Compliance & HR
 Jenny Knight (JK) Governance Professional
 Sarah Lary (SL) Senior Deputy Headteacher
 Sarah Towers (ST) Deputy Headteacher
 Alan Wooller Deputy Headteacher
 Student Leaders (to 6.40pm)
- APOLOGIES** Claire Asare-Archer, Michelle Edwards, Roy Kamp, Paula Myburgh, Beccy Roberts
- NOT PRESENT:** None

Action Support Challenge

Governors’ questions are highlighted in *italics* throughout these minutes.

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
1	Welcome and apologies for absence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TG welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Claire Asare-Archer, Michelle Edwards, Roy Kamp, Paula Myburgh and Beccy Roberts. 	
2	Notification of Any Other Business None	
3	Declarations of Interest against this agenda There were no declarations of interest, either new or against items on this agenda.	

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4	<p>Minutes of the FGB Meeting held 11 December 2024 and Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors approved the Minutes as an accurate record. <p>Actions and Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing Allegations Training has been distributed to those who expressed an interest. SB to check the link works as some had trouble accessing. All other actions complete. 	SB
5	<p>Appointments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors accepted the resignation of Lynda Jackson from the role of Company Secretary. Governors appointed Sian Beswick (incoming Director of Finance & Operations) as the new Company Secretary. SB to update Companies House. 	SB
6	<p>Governor Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very few Governors had accessed the training course allocated on NGA Learning Link. Some had trouble locating it. It was decided that The Key would be used in future for training, as it is easily accessible via GovernorHub and training certificates automatically pull through into each Governor's training profile. Training courses have been chosen previously to link in with Governor Days. EH to send the training year plan to JK, who will find equivalent courses on The Key and distribute to Governors both with the minutes of the last meeting and the agenda for the next meeting, to allow more time for completion. 	EH/JK
7	STRATEGIC PLANNING	
7.1	<p>Report of Student Management Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A report had been circulated. Student leaders Mia and Harvey reported that the Prom plans were progressing well, with Kings Chapel in Amersham having been booked as the venue for the evening and tickets priced at £50 each Students updated Governors on their personal plans for the future, with applications, interviews and offers well underway. TG thanked the students for their report and wished them luck. They left the meeting at 6.40pm 	
7.2	<p>Presentation on Together as One</p> <p>It had been decided that this presentation would be given to Governors at the Governor Day on 4th March.</p>	
7.3	<p>Report of Headteacher and SEF</p> <p>EH had circulated his report and highlighted:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a new SEN teacher 3 days a week working especially with those who have recently received a diagnosis and are working out next steps. This is already having a positive impact. • There are a number of new students who have joined the school via in-year transfer or Fair Access panel. Some have been permanently excluded, at an alternative provision or have been unable to be placed elsewhere. There is an increased number with EAL including two Lebanese students who have no English at all, so School is looking again at the EAL provision to support this. • There was an increase in fixed term suspensions in Autumn 2 including some longer ones. There have been a number of panels and two permanent exclusions issued, with one yet to be completed. • Attendance is above national but still not where School wants it to be. • SEND parents are becoming more demanding in wanting flexible arrangements for their children. • Support from an attendance officer is starting to have an impact. • £30k was in the budget for Alternative Provision for the year. This has already been spent by Christmas, with various student issues. Therefore, a request for an increase to £100k has been made, which will come to the FPH&S Committee in March. School has never had this level of spend before, but will try to reduce it over time. However, there are no places available in special schools and a 'perfect storm' in terms of lack of provision for some. • The Bridge and The Base provisions are expensive, with a high pupil to teacher ratio. <p>Q – Are other schools experiencing similar problems with costs?</p> <p>A – Some have had these problems for a while. Everyone is experiencing it to some degree. Access to higher needs block funding has been stopped and special schools are full, so it is not just HGSS.</p> <p>Q – Is this a blip? If it goes on, is this level of spend sustainable?</p> <p>A – In the short term yes, but if it continues for 5/6 years there will be financial problems. Years 9 and 11 are particularly difficult. By the time a child gets into Year 11 there is no hope that they will get a special school place. More work on attendance and SEND earlier on in the HGSS school journey should have a positive impact.</p> <p>EH continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection Data Summary Report (ISDR) was shared. This is still not the final version but it is very positive, showing that HGSS is significantly above national in 13 out of the 14 areas. Science is still an area of focus. P8 Disadvantage figures are particularly pleasing. 	

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	<p data-bbox="363 235 1366 309">Governors commented on the really impressive school performance in the ISDR table, especially in comparison with Bucks selective schools.</p> <p data-bbox="363 353 552 387">EH continued:</p> <ul data-bbox="411 394 1366 741" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="411 394 1366 622">• The leadership team structure has now changed and consequently (because of better resourcing) there is greater confidence in the data presented in such areas as bullying, racism & homophobic language etc, shown in the behaviour report. A more nuanced consideration of this has been undertaken by SL, with bullying figures separated out from friendship issues. <li data-bbox="411 629 1366 741">• CAMHS figures looked low, so some data digging took place and it was realized that SEND figures should be included in this; hence a big increase but a much more realistic figure. <p data-bbox="363 786 1366 860">Q – On page 10 the behaviour figures reached half the previous year’s by December, with only a third of the year gone. Is this a correct reflection?</p> <p data-bbox="363 866 1366 1055">A – Autumn 1 figures show bullying and friendship issues all together, whereas Autumn 2 has them separated out. Hopefully going forward the Autumn 1 figures will be analysed in the same way so that apples can be compared with apples next year. The DfE definition of bullying is that it is sustained over a period of time. This has been applied here.</p> <p data-bbox="363 1099 1366 1173">Q – On page 9 there is one PEX listed for Autumn 2 but on page 10 is says there were two. Which is correct?</p> <p data-bbox="363 1180 1366 1328">A – The figures from page 9 are from SIMS, which is where DfE take their data from. The numbers on page 10 are from CPOMS, which is the in-house system. There have been two PEXs but they are not yet complete. They will be logged once the statutory time period for appeals has passed.</p> <p data-bbox="363 1373 1366 1480">Q – On page 10, 2.2. – parents are blocking sanctions where there are behaviour issues. What can be done to help engage parents and improve this situation?</p> <p data-bbox="363 1487 1366 1715">A – We can’t tell parents how to parent but it helps if they don’t undermine School by supporting their children against us. Parents sometimes take their child’s word as gospel, despite not having been there when an incident happened. There would be better behaviour all round if we were supported with the same message from home. Some parents contact multiple members of staff and then governors to object to sanctions.</p> <p data-bbox="363 1722 1366 1830">Tracking of detentions has improved with work ST is doing. We are seeing an increased number in detention, which means sanctions are actually happening. We are hopeful of long-term change here.</p> <p data-bbox="363 1874 1366 1910">Q – What can you do to address the challenges of the SIMS app for parents?</p> <p data-bbox="363 1917 1366 1991">A – The new version of SIMS should be an improvement. This will be piloted in the summer term. The data part that staff see is working fine; the problems</p>	

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	<p>are with the parent app. The Head of Communications is now manually checking that notifications have been sent every day.</p> <p>Q – What is the main reason for students not attending detention? Is it issues with travel/transport? There is some parent discussion in Y10 about parents not knowing when their child has been given a detention.</p> <p>A – Travel is not the main reason for missing detention. We know which students have safeguarding or travel issues and can make arrangements for them.</p> <p>EH outlined the plan for Governor Day on 4 March, which includes a presentation from the charity Together As One about Inclusion & Diversity, Student Voice on Mentor Training and PSHCE lesson observations.</p> <p>Q – There are currently three new DfE consultations that have been released (Use of Reasonable Force, Ofsted Inspection Process and School Accountability Reform). Should Governors respond to any of these?</p> <p>A – EH to consider accountability reform consultation and report back to TG</p>	EH
7.4	<p>Site Update</p> <p>LJ had circulated a Premises Report and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 CIF bids were submitted in December and the result will be known around Easter. • The solar project is nearly complete and changeover will take place during half term week. Despite a small overrun the fixed price was maintained and the installers worked through very difficult (freezing) conditions up on the roof. 	
7.5	<p>Management Accounts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The accounts for December had been circulated. • A new forecast will be available at the FPH&S meeting in March. • Governors accepted the December accounts. 	
8	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
8.1	<p>HR Panels, Complaints Panels, Student Discipline Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following panels had been held (or are underway) since the last meeting: 2x PEX, 2x Governor Warning, 2x Fixed Term Suspension reviews, 1x Complaint. • One F/T Suspension Review had to be adjourned as staff and information from the alternative provision were not available. • The Complaint Panel upheld the complaint in part and actions have been requested by Governors in order to make improvements to systems, training and policies. The action plan was circulated with papers and actions will be monitored at FGB meetings via this agenda item going forward. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors asked whether Governor Warning Panels were effective at avoiding permanent exclusions and whether outcomes for those pupils could be shared with those Governors involved. This is tricky because a successful outcome for a GWP is completion of a student's education without a PEX and this may happen some time later. It was confirmed that two students who went through GWPs last year have now been given a PEX, but for others the process has so far been successful. The behaviour report will give an overview of which GWPs went to PEX. Governors asked if a checklist was being used when producing PEX packs. EH responded that a contents page is used and items removed from it if not applicable in the specific case. TG thanked all those involved in panels for the significant amount of time and energy put into these; not to be underestimated. 	
9	GOVERNOR REPORTS	
9.1	Chair TG has one meeting with a parent organised; otherwise nothing to report.	
9.2	Development JK – training via GovernorHub/The Key already discussed in item 6.	
9.3	Safeguarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MM visited School in December, met Kerri Stone and checked the Single Central Record (SCR). Visit report to come. MM highlighted: The team was very stretched and the pastoral team was struggling but it is hoped that the new structure and system coming in will improve things. MM to come in again next week to meet with SL and report back to the next FGB. EH to update the safeguarding section in the Headteacher's report (page 12) as the Safeguarding Governor has visited in the last six months (December 2024). 	<p>MM</p> <p>MM</p> <p>EH</p>
9.4	SEND PD had circulated his report and invited questions, but there were none.	
9.5	Disadvantage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BR was not present but had reported at the last meeting. 	
9.6	Careers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BR was not present but had reported at the last meeting. 	
10	POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS	
10.1	Behaviour and Anti-bullying	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated, with a revised draft sent following some of the panel meetings. A further draft may be circulated after the remaining panel meetings, if anything requires further review. There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
10.2	<p>Mobile Phones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. JH made a number of comments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to changes planned (use of pouches) this policy should be annual instead of a two-year review period. 'Device' to be used as a consistent term rather than listing all types of device. Page 3 'Satchel' is referenced, which is no longer used. Timeframe for sanctions to be included on page 3. Legislation references to be included for medical conditions at school and the Online Safety Act 2023. Footer review date to be amended. These were accepted and the policy was approved subject to LJ making these amendments. This policy to be brought back to the FGB in April, with changes based on the new pouch system. Thereafter on an annual schedule in April. 	LJ
10.3	<p>Charging & Remissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. Typo page 4 point 5 to be amended. The policy was approved subject to this change. 	LJ
10.4	<p>Work Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. Review date to be amended. The policy was approved subject to this change. 	LJ
11	OTHER MATTERS	
12	<p>Dates and Times of Meetings</p> <p>Next meeting: Weds 30 April 2025, 6.30pm (6pm informal catchup with refreshments)</p> <p>Governor Day: Tuesday 4 March 2025, 9.15am-12.45pm. Governors to let JK know if they are able to attend.</p>	Govs
13	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>School Development Plan meetings are scheduled for 7 and 21 May 2025. Governors to let JK know if they would like to be involved (preferably for both meetings).</p> <p>TG thanked everyone for their time.</p>	Govs

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14	Evaluation of Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors agreed that the meeting had been conducted appropriately and effectively in terms of SIP priorities and student outcomes. 	

The meeting closed at 8pm

Minutes approved by the Governing Board:

Signed
Mr T Green – Chairman of the Board

Date