



AUTUMN TERM (1) 2024 MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

Date Wednesday 9th October 2024
 Time 18.30
 Place Holmer Green Senior School

PRESENT: Tony Green (TG) – Chair Michelle Edwards (ME)
 Ed Hillyard (EH) – Headteacher Jeremy Hunt (JH)
 Claire Asare-Archer (CAA) Melissa Miller (MM)
 Kirsty de Groot (KDG) Steve Pilgrim (SP)
 Victoria Strutt (VS)

IN ATTENDANCE: Lynda Jackson (LJ) Director of Finance, HR and Resources
 Jenny Knight (JK) Governance Professional
 Sarah Lary (SL) Deputy Headteacher
 Sue Latham-Lewis (SLL) Prospective Governor
 Mia Barnes (MB) Student Governor
 Harvey Atkins (HA) Student Governor

APOLOGIES: Paula Myburgh, Beccy Roberts, Paul Davies, Roy Kamp

NOT PRESENT: Liliana Minton

Action Support Challenge

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

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
1	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JK welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the Student Governors and prospective new Governor SLL. Apologies were accepted from Melissa Miller, Beccy Roberts, Paul Davies and Roy Kamp. Liliana Minton was not present. 	
2	<p>Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of the FGB JK chaired this item.</p> <p>Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One nomination had been received for Chair of the FGB (Tony Green). All Governors present voted in favour of TG continuing as Chair for the 2024-25 academic year. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TG was duly elected for a period of one year. <p>Vice Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One nomination had been received for Vice Chair of the FGB (Paul Davies). • All Governors present voted in favour of PD continuing as Vice Chair for the 2024-25 academic year. • PD was duly elected for a period of one year. 	
3	<p>Notification of Any Other Business EH – SLT structure change - AOB VS – Open Evening (11.4)</p>	
4	<p>Declarations of Interest against this agenda There were no declarations of interest, either new or against items on this agenda.</p>	
5	<p>Minutes of the FGB Meeting held 10th July 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"> • Diversity & Inclusion: Student Inclusions Mentors have been trained up in years 9 and Sixth Form and this has been powerful. Together As One will come to the Governor Day in March to run a session. • A policy review is underway, with only statutory policies and those required by audit coming to Governors for approval (others will be available for information.) • Other actions complete. 	
6	<p>Student Governor Report TG welcome MB and HA and thanked them for their report, which had been circulated.</p> <p>MB and HA outlined their current studies and hopes for the future.</p> <p><i>Q – Have you noticed any issues/improvements with the increased numbers in the Sixth Form this year?</i> A – We have been here since Year 7, when the Sixth Form was quite small. Not there are lots more students and Year 12 is a lot bigger but we seem to be managing fine. School has helped a lot, with staff keeping study rooms quiet so that we can concentrate on deadlines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EH confirmed that UCAS deadlines are coming up, with students being encouraged to enter early as earlier applications seem to lead to better offers. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been two Oxbridge applications so far. There being no further questions for the Student Governors, they left the meeting at 6.42pm. 	
7	<p>Governor Membership</p> <p>New Governor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLL was welcomed as a prospective new Governor. Her application statement had been circulated. SLL was proposed as a Co-Opted Governor for a period of two months, with the intention of being appointed as a Community Governor by the Members at the AGM in December. All Governors voted in favour, none against. SLL was duly elected as Co-Opted Governor for two months. <p>Other Co-Opted Governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VS to be re-appointed as a Community Governor at the Members' AGM in December, for a new 4-year term. JK to contact LM about her continued Governor involvement and whether she would also consider being appointed as a Community Governor. <p>Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jim Leftwich has indicated that he wishes to retire from being a Member after the December AGM. Governors and EH to consider any other suitable candidates to take his place as a Member. 	<p>JK</p> <p>EH/Govs</p>
8	<p>Governor Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors had been allocated Ofsted Inspections training on NGA Learning Link. Two Governors had completed this. EH advised that Ofsted reports have changed over the summer, now with no overall graded judgement. There will continue to be five individual judgements. This is a temporary model while the new government considers the future of Ofsted inspections. The inspection framework has not changed. HGSS last had a Section 8 inspection. The window for the next one (which will likely be a full Section 5 inspection) is from November 2024 for a year. Progress 8 data will not be published for the next two years because students sitting GCSEs did not sit KS2 SATS during Covid. 	
9	STRATEGIC PLANNING	
9.1	<p>Report of Headteacher and SEF</p> <p>The report had been circulated. EH highlighted:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixth Form recruitment has gone very well. A Sixth Form of 200 represents a break-even; if numbers fall below this, KS3 and KS4 funding is being used for Sixth Form. • Year 7: 220 students (for PAN of 210) to account for changes over time (family/12+ moves etc). • EHCP numbers are well above the national average, partly due to the selective school environment in Bucks. There are five EHCP students in Sixth Form studying for A-Levels. • Maths & English had very good results this year, with 55% achieving 5+ in English & Maths and 78% achieving 4+. These figures are approximately 10% above the national average. • Individual English and Maths %s for an outstanding school would usually be 60% or higher for 5+ and 80% or higher for 4+. HGSS achieved 67% Maths 5+, 70% in English 5+, 83% Maths 4+ and 86% English 4+. These are really good scores. • Results highlights included disadvantaged students (including CLA, post-CLA, Forces and FSM students) outperforming their non-disadvantaged peers in their P8 scores for the first time. • EHCP students also achieved good P8 scores, significantly above the national average. • At A-Level the average grade was a B. • Microsoft Showcase School status has been achieved for a second year, thanks to the hard work of Sarah Lary. • A real behaviour focus is underway. Fixed term suspensions are at 11%, which is 8% below national. Repeat suspensions are a focus. The PEX rate is also lower (1 PEX last year). • A ladder system is being created for behaviour points, with clear sanctions when certain levels are reached. • Attendance was not good last year (90.4%). This is 0.5% below national average. It is somewhat skewed by the attendance of high numbers of EHCP students. • There has been good progress in Science, with no U grades at GCSE this year (all students doing Triple Science). • There are some key areas of focus for KS5 listed in the report, e.g. Chemistry. <p>Q – Did the parent working group on the rank order system happen? A – No.</p> <p>Q – Has there been an increase in behaviour points as a result of the change to the homework system? A – It is too early to tell yet. Homework not handed in is being tracked. Results to the next meeting. A new SIMS package has just been launched but we are waiting until teething problems have been resolved in it before using it. It will be operational by next September and is cloud-based,</p>	

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	<p>integrating homework, seating plans etc. Operating Satchel and SIMS together wasn't working, so homework is currently being set on Teams. This is harder for parents to view but should build students' independence (and they are supported in form time).</p> <p>Parent survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey showed parents felt there had been an increase in the range of trips and clubs available, since the request in the last survey. • Number of respondents increased (though still not huge; response rate decreases as student moves higher up in the school.) • SEND comms work (parent meetings and use of MS forms) has gone down well. • Communications about what to expect in assessments/what to revise have gone down well. • 5 areas of improvement have been identified and next steps to ensure there is an improvement shown in next year's survey. <p>Governor Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be held on 6th November and will focus on Geography as well as recruitment/retention/staff voice. <p>Exit Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All departing staff were offered a meeting. 3 out of 7 support staff and 9 out of 17 teaching staff took this up. • The exit interview involves a standard series of questions. <p>Q – Was this a particularly high number of leavers? Why? How quickly are vacancies filled?</p> <p>A – The numbers vary but it's usually circumstantial; we don't know the national turnover rate for comparison. Some moved for promotion, some left to go back home overseas. Support staff have a 4-week notice period, so it's sometimes difficult to replace them before they leave. Teachers have set timescales for giving notice, e.g. 31st October for January departure; 28 Feb to leave at Easter. TES is the main recruitment source but recruitment is very difficult nationally at the moment. However, so far this year we are fully staffed (in fact, slightly over-staffed in Maths, English and Science) and things seem stable, though lots of work is required to get us to this position. We are also proactive with training opportunities. Recruitment is quite dynamic, with more overseas staff recently.</p> <p>Q – What about flexible working opportunities? One school locally offers a 3-day weekend.</p>	

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	<p>A – This can only be done with back-to-back teaching days and PPA time taken at home. For us, teachers are somewhat at the mercy of timetabling and there has to be parity with other staff, as well as support staff.</p> <p>Appraisals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline just reached for appraisals. EH will review over half term then targets will be set. • Unions have now accepted the 5.5% pay offer for teaching staff. This will be fully funded by Government and is covered in the budget. Governors were happy to approve this. <p>Mobile phone policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently have a gate-to-gate policy where phones must be switched off and in bags from entering to exiting the gates. • However, there are too many incidents involving phones and EH would like to ban them entirely...but banning is difficult to enforce without bag/body searches, confrontation etc. So, it is proposed to tighten up on the gate-to-gate policy. Smartwatches are including in this. • School is trying to support students with not constantly thinking about what is happening on their phone/distraction. <p>Q – This is not much of a change from what you are currently doing. Have you thought about magnetic pouches to lock them away?</p> <p>A – We have thought about other solutions like lockers and Yondr pouches, but how do we know that the right phone is locked away and how do you check that phones have been put in pouches? Students sometimes bring in two handsets to get around handing one in. We will make the policy much more visible and help parents to understand what ‘off’ means (actually off).</p> <p>Q – What would students do if they need a bus pass on their phone?</p> <p>A – They can be printed out or a cash card used.</p> <p>The amended policy will be brought to FGB in December for approval.</p>	
9.2	<p>School Improvement Planning</p> <p>The SIP targets had been circulated. EH highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P8 figure is thought to be around +0.33 (not yet validated), which means each student is improving by a third of a grade on their projected position when they started at HGSS (National = 0). We would like this to be higher. • KS5 L3VA score is about -0.3 so this needs work. Particular subjects skew this result and subject area meetings are being held to unpick this. 	

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	<p>Q – Is progress affected for those with reduced attendance? A – Yes. There are EHCP students with real anxiety about coming to school. The Bridge is used at times as a quieter area, but some can't manage that either so they are at home. This is easier to manage nowadays with more parents working from home. We need to track these students better too. We were using Fischer Family Trust figures, which were misleading. When we moved to the DfE tracking figures we realised we were below where we should be.</p> <p>Q – Are these students home schooling? A – They are on roll at HGSS and they are at home, but they may not be home schooling. There is an ongoing discussion with the LA about whose responsibility they should be. Some of these students want to attend courses at non-Ofsted-registered provisions, but I cannot be responsible for this when they are still on roll here. County/Parents don't want to take responsibility either. Academy 21 is an online learning provision that can be used but it is expensive. Ideally we want them in school, but there are no special school places available and there is no additional budget to support them. Some parents are desperate for help.</p> <p>Q – Could you exclude these students from attendance figures for reporting as they are skewing the data? A – We could provide two sets of figures to Governors, which we would do in an external inspection, but we do have to report the overall figure.</p>	
10	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
10.1	<p>FPH&S Committee The meeting had been rescheduled to the previous evening so minutes had not yet been circulated. SP reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last year's accounts were considered. School finished the year with reserves of £1.16m including the reception works. • Forecast for this year is a technical deficit, but this should be pulled back to a surplus with additional funding to be confirmed from government for teachers' pay, pension savings and lagged sixth form funding. • A CIF bid will be submitted in December for boilers and pipework in the tower block (£100k of works). • An agreement has been signed for the installation of solar panels to reduce costs and carbon footprint. This is fully funded, with no up-front costs. Planning is now in place, though this delayed a summer installation so it will now take place in the spring. <p>Q – Does this involve a share scheme? A – The loan is paid back out of savings made. Once the loan is paid off, the solar panels belong to the school.</p>	

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	<p>Q – Is this a scheme only for schools?</p> <p>A – It also applies to hospitals and other public buildings. The funder is HSBC through their green portfolio.</p>	
10.2	<p>HR Panels, Complaints Panels, Student Discipline Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two Governor Warning Panels had been held in September. Thanks to Governors who gave their time for these. One further GWP is being planned for November. Request for Governor involvement to follow by email. 	JK
11	GOVERNOR REPORTS	
11.1	<p>Chair</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
11.2	<p>Development</p> <p>JK reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Governor induction (SLL) to take place on Friday. Any suggestions on group training needed for Governors, to be sent to JK. Any training Governors undertake (webinars, Learning Link etc) to be logged in GovernorHub training profile. Any done within GovernorHub Knowledge will auto-populate the training profile. 	Govs
11.3	<p>SEND</p> <p>PD had circulated a report. In PD's absence, ED highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 196 students on SEN support. HGSS is the only school in the county with an ARP, which is for speech & language as a primary need. A speech & language therapist is employed for the ARP. Outcomes have been strong this year for SEND students: P8 +0.19 for EHCP students and +0.33 for SEN Support. This is well above the national average. Fixed term suspensions for this group are high (52 SEN last year) Areas for improvement are: Attendance issues and fixed term suspensions. EH to check the figures for Y7 in the ARP as these were blank. 	EH
11.4	<p>Governor Visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EH thanked Mike Salem (Member) and VS for attending the Open Evening. VS thanked School for the excellent event and commented that there had been lots of positive feedback; better than attending an open morning, when classes are quiet and it's harder to ask questions for fear of disturbance. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better signposting and more prefects would have been useful to avoid getting lost. • A survey has gone out to get feedback on the event and will be shared with Governors. 1050 tickets for the evening went very fast and there were some comments from those who weren't able to get a ticket. • For School it was a big change to run an evening event and took a lot of preparation, but it was positive on the night and students did a great job of showing around. <p>Q – How easy is it for students to get a place if they are out of catchment area? A – This is up to County to check, but they do run checks on addresses.</p> <p>Q – Are open mornings still run for families that couldn't attend the open evening? A – Only for specific students such as CLA, EHCPs.</p>	
11.5	<p>Disadvantage, CLA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BR was not present. 	
11.6	<p>Careers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BR was not present. 	
12	ANNUAL REVIEWS	
12.1	<p>Standing Orders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Standing Orders were circulated for 2024-25. • These were approved. 	
12.2	<p>Code of Conduct for Governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Code of Conduct was circulated for 2024-25. • This was formally approved and has also been confirmed individually on GovernorHub. 	
12.3	<p>Terms of Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Terms of Reference for the FGB and FPH&S Committee were circulated for 2024-25. • These were approved. 	
12.4	<p>Membership of Committees/Working Groups and Governor Roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of current Link Governors and Committee membership was circulated. • MM to join SP in the Safeguarding Governor role. • A new 5-year development plan is needed this year, so a working party will meet on 7 and 21 May 2025. New Governors were 	

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	sought for this and the following stepped up: SP, KDG, SLL, SL (in addition to TG and BR). JK to confirm dates by email.	JK
12.5	Annual Review of business, pecuniary and personal interests LJ distributed and collected pecuniary interest forms from Governors.	
12.6	Governor Biographies Current biographies had been circulated. Governors were asked to provide any changes to JK for the website.	Govs
OTHER MATTERS		
13	Admissions Arrangements No changes.	
14	Safeguarding	
14.1	Revised KCSIE Guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Governors have read and signed KCSIE via GovernorHub. SL ran through changes to KCSIE for this year, including changes to Early Help, gender questioning students and radicalisation. 	
14.2	Annual Safeguarding Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annual Safeguarding Report had been circulated. JK to look into training on Managing Allegations and circulate. 	JK
14.3	Report from Safeguarding Governor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors have been sent the Safeguarding for Governance course on GovernorHub Knowledge. Governors to complete this if not already done so. Certificates will auto-populate in their GovernorHub training profile. 	Govs
15	Premises Update LJ had circulated an update and highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Astro has been laid over the muddy area of grass, much improved as a result. Internal refurbishments have taken place, including a medical office upgrade. The old reception area now has a safeguarding office, which is working well. The reintegration room has been moved down a quiet corridor away from students, which is working much better. There is now an exam storage office for increased numbers of papers and storage regulations for these. Improvements are due to be made to the Arts and Humanities blocks, which are very hot in summer. Improved quotes are being 	

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	sought as initial costs were too high. Some budget has been ringfenced from last year for this.	
16	Tender for Auditor LJ reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditors have been taken over by a larger company and costs have gone up significantly. • A tender document for new auditors was discussed at the FPH&S Committee and a new company will be voted in by Members at the AGM in December. 	
17	Policy Reviews and Approvals	
17.1	Admissions Policy (Statutory for Approval) The policy had been circulated and was approved with no changes.	
17.2	Staff Alcohol and Drugs Policy (Information) The policy had been circulated. There were no comments.	
17.3	Maternity, Adoption and Parental Leave – Teachers (Approval for Audit) The policy had been circulated and was approved with no changes.	
17.4	Maternity, Adoption and Parental Leave – Support Staff (Approval for Audit) The policy had been circulated and was approved with no changes.	
17.5	Recruitment of Ex-Offenders (Model policy; Statutory for Approval) The policy had been circulated and was approved with no changes.	
17.6	CEIAG/Career Provider Access (Statutory for Approval) The policy had been circulated and was approved with no changes.	
17.7	Governor Allowances (Model policy; Statutory for Approval) The policy had been circulated and was approved with no changes.	
17.8	Lone Working (Information) The policy had been circulated. There were no comments.	
17.9	Word Processor for Exams (Information) The policy had been circulated. There were no comments.	
17.10	Access Arrangements for Exams (Information) The policy had been circulated. There were no comments.	
18	Dates and Times of Meetings Next meeting: Wednesday 11 th December 2024 at 6.30pm	

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	The meeting will be preceded by the Members' AGM at 6pm, which Governors are welcome to join. Refreshments will be provided from 6pm for Governors in an adjacent room.	
19	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>SLT Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EH reported that one AHT has handed in their notice as moving overseas. An advert for a DHT role has been placed to replace this, as there is a requirement for someone with significant Behaviour AHT experience already to step into this role. • It is proposed that the current DHT will be moved into a Senior DHT role for a clearer line management structure. • This was discussed at FPH&S. • Governors approved the change. 	
20	<p>Evaluation of Meeting</p> <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 8.40pm

Minutes approved by the Governing Board:

Signed
Mr T Green – Chairman of the Board

Date