



SPRING TERM 2020

MINUTES of the People and Personnel Committee meeting of the Governors of Holmer Green Senior School held at the School on Wednesday 4 March 2020 at 18.00

- PRESENT:** Mr S. Barrett (SB) Mrs S. Khan (SK) (Vice-Chair)
Mrs E. Ginger (nee Baddeley) (EG) Mrs L. Swain (LS) (Chair)
Mr E. Hillyard (EH) (Headteacher) Mrs A. Thomas (AT)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs C. Hawkins (CH) Assistant Headteacher/DSL/SLT Lead for this committee
Mrs L. Jackson (LJ) Director of Finance, HR and Resources
Ms E. Walker (EW) Clerk
Mr A. Wooller Assistant Headteacher
- ABSENT:** Mr J. Leftwich Apologies received

NB. Governors' questions are highlighted in *italics* throughout these minutes. It was agreed to take agenda items out of sequence to enable staff to leave the meeting after their presentations. Minute numbering does not, therefore, follow the agenda.

	ACTION
<p>1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies for absence are as recorded above.</p>	
<p>2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no interests declared specifically in items on the agenda.</p>	
<p>3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</p>	
<p>3.1 MINUTES The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2019 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.</p>	
<p>3.2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</p>	
<p>3.2.1 APPRAISALS – NON-TEACHING STAFF (Minute No. 4.3) The report on this process will be deferred to the next meeting.</p>	Agenda item
<p>3.2.2 PAY POLICY AND APPENDICES (Minute No. 9.1) LJ confirmed that the Pay Policy had been amended in the light of the comments made at the last meeting.</p>	

4 STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

EH highlighted the information contained in the Autumn 2 Behaviour Review report, in particular:

- a Spring report is in the process of being compiled which will be circulated once finalised.
- INSET days provide a valuable opportunity to reinforce to staff the purpose of routines.
- Internal isolations are used, where appropriate, as a means of avoiding fixed term exclusion.
- Data regarding student behaviour is now more accurate and tracked better in school than was the case in the past.
- Mr Tang is trialling prep time with a group of Year 9 students. An evaluation of this trial will come back to this meeting.

Do you track the isolations in order to identify those pupils who might be misbehaving in order to avoid being in a particular lesson?

It was explained that the Pastoral team have the knowledge of these pupils and track and highlight this information. Mr Hillyard looks at the patterns and meets with the students and involves parents as necessary. All reception call outs are logged.

Detentions

Shouldn't we expect to see a pattern whereby Green detentions for lack of homework decrease as the students go through the school? If not, then we should query whether this sanction is effective or not?

EH explained that the detention data is looked at on a weekly basis by the Pastoral Manager and Heads of Year who look at patterns and trends in the data and talk through strategies for individuals.

Despite the fact that behavioural sanctions are very clear to students some continue to not complete their homework.

ACTION: EH to investigate further and report back to the next meeting.

Can a student avoid a green detention and move straight to an amber one?

EH explained that if a student misses a green detention for not completing homework, this will be escalated to amber. Teachers have different approaches in terms of whether homework should be completed during a detention or whether or not this is not an appropriate sanction for not completing the homework in the first place. Same day detentions are being looked at as it is hoped these will have more impact.

Surely the approach to what students do in the detentions should be

ACTION

EH
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consistent amongst all teachers and subjects? Surely it is in the child's best interest to get the homework completed in order to aid their learning?

It was explained that if a detention is given for a behavioural matter then it is not appropriate to complete homework in the detention. Some teachers believe that the detention should be seen to be a punishment rather than an opportunity to catch up on the homework that they have not done. There are other opportunities for students to ensure their homework is completed by making use of the Learning Resource Centre. The school is looking to centralise the green detentions so that they are run to a standard – just like red detentions are.

Are the behavioural sanctions being consistently applied as there have been instances when staff have been giving students opportunities before progressing through the traffic light system?

EH explained that all staff, especially new staff, should be very clear about the way the behavioural system works and the sanctions to be applied as this is regularly reinforced.

- It is pleasing that the number of positive behavioural points has increased – especially in Year 11.
- Attendance and exclusion data is being monitored constantly to ensure that vulnerable children (SEND and disadvantaged) are not disproportionately represented.

5 STAFF CPD

AW explained that 4 of the INSET days to date have been linked to pedagogy now. The issues raised by staff as part of the previous evaluation have now been taken on board and staff benefitted from more collaborative planning time at the last session as a result. All materials and presentations from the INSET sessions is available for staff to access.

EH explained that, as part of Challenge Partners, 4 leaders from HGSS have observed practice in other schools and 5 national leaders visited and conducted a review here.

Do you select what areas they look at?

EH explained that this was not the case – their review focuses on the quality of education and is informed by the strengths and weaknesses identified by the Headteacher in the pre-meeting. It had been pleasing to be accredited with excellence in terms of Sixth Form Management and this now enables HGSS to support other schools to improve their sixth forms. External reviews of other aspects of the school has also been very useful.

AW explained that he has been tasked with providing governors with the evidence they need to make an informed decision about whether to continue with the additional INSET days beyond 2020/21.

AW was thanked for his presentation and he left the meeting at 18.40.

6 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

CH talked through the Action Plan, highlighting that the majority of the actions have already been completed and are green. Practice is continually being reviewed.

Training will always be on-going and so is marked as amber.

ACTION: Following discussion, it was agreed to reword this action to demonstrate that safeguarding training is up-to-date and is planned to respond to need as necessary.

CH

A governor informed CH about various online concerns aired by parents on Facebook that she would share in more detail. This seemed to indicate that further guidance might be useful for parents.

Thames Valley police are coming into school to run a session for parents at HGSS and elsewhere on county lines on Wednesday 11 March.

CH was thanked for her presentation and she left the meeting at 19.00.

7 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

EH talked governors through the associated report and highlighted that attendance is currently at 95.7%.

What is the reason for the anomalies in Year 9 data?

EH reported that in this year group there are some children with particularly complex issues and school anxieties. 29 children in this year group have special needs – a number of which are for anxiety and school refusers. A CAMHs Officer is visiting the school to look at strategies to support these students further. Every effort is made to retain students within school but the reality is that some of these students are not suited to mainstream education. The school has a number of anonymous case studies to support the attendance figures which Mr Hillyard said he would be happy to talk through with governors.

EH

EH explained that another 16 students have been allocated to HGSS with EHCPs for September 2020. The national average as well as for

Buckinghamshire schools is 1.7%. The impact on non-selective schools in Buckinghamshire is disproportionate because of the selective system. HGSS currently has 4.2% of children with EHCPs which will rise to 5.2% if all those that have been allocated materialise in September 2020.

What work was done with Pakistani students to increase their attendance?

EH explained that Mrs Douglas has been relentless in speaking to the parents of these pupils and stressing the impact of their absence on their academic attainment. It is a very time consuming process. As the school grows, the intention is for the monitoring of student attendance to be separated out from the medical role.

8 STUDENT VOICE

EH explained the processes by which qualitative feedback is received primarily from the students – through Year Councils, the Sixth Form Management Team, Whole School Council, meetings with certain students to reward exceptional progress and the PASS survey.

Do these measures replace the student survey?

EH explained that the student survey is now undertaken in the form of the PASS survey (results can be compared year on year) and feedback from the forums listed above give the school more contextual information.

ACTION: This committee to be sent summary notes going forward from the Year Councils as well as the summary sheet from the PASS survey (which is an item for discussion by the L&C at their meeting on 10.03.20).

EH/PT

What was the feedback in relation to the comment about line ups when students are late?

EH explained that now attendance data is improved, the focus has been shifted towards punctuality to school and to lessons. All students know that they must be on the tennis courts at 08.55 for registration. If they are not, then they are recorded as late. The side gate shuts at 08.50.

Governor Day Evaluation

EH talked governors through the summary evaluation from the Governors' Day held on 22 January 2020.

Reading groups are going well– may be will be done in tutors groups going forward. Trying to increase the love of reading rather than reading skills.

It is great to hear that reading groups are working well. What about those students who struggle to read?

EH explained that the groups aim to increase the love of reading rather than necessarily developing reading skills. Depending on student, if they are SEND for example, they may get additional support or if not then they can be directed to the accelerated reader programme.

Careers

Governors commented that Careers Week has been a great success this year with more support available for staff and students.

FGB agenda

Can we develop more links between the subjects taught and the careers these subjects are likely to lead to?

It was explained that there is work being undertaken currently to develop this area including whether the curriculum on offer will support students sufficiently to obtain desired career outcomes.

Is there any careers event for Year 8 before they select their GCSE options?

EH explained that there is not at present but Mrs Stone is looking at developing this for the particular transitions points within school.

ACTION:

- EH to publicise the need for staff to continually reference the sorts of careers that subjects can lead to.
- The Governing Board's link with careers to be raised at the next FGB meeting – this might be a link governor role or a continuing focus for a Governor Day.

9 STAFF VOICE

EH drew governors' attention to the results from the two recent surveys – as circulated. The reports have been divided into strengths and areas to improve. Broadly speaking, areas to improve link to support for dealing with poor student behaviour and communications (including timeliness) and staff well-being. EH explained that he had asked the Staff Governors to take a lead on this and to meet with interested staff to suggest strategies to address these areas.

EG reported that the first meeting of this working group had met on the recent INSET day and it had been pleasing to see a range of different staff involved. It had been a positive meeting and a report would be forthcoming to the Headteacher before the Easter holidays.

EH explained that he planned to meet with the Staff Governors to develop an Action Plan to feedback to the INSET day after the Easter

ACTION

holidays.

Do you use Headspace in school?

EH explained that details of the app had been circulated to staff by Mr Tang but he was unsure whether staff were making use of it.

LS commented that she was aware that the committee had not revisited the outcomes from the previous staff survey but would do so for this and future surveys.

ACTION: Survey Action Plan outcomes to be shared at the next meeting.

EH
Next agenda

10 APPRAISALS

Governors received the cycle of appraisal dates and noted that more information about the reviews (teachers) and target setting (support staff) would be available for the next meeting.

LJ
Next agenda

11 STAFFING UPDATE AND EXIT DATA

LJ circulated details of staffing leavers and starters and governors noted that 31 May 2020 is the last date for teacher resignations for the current year. EH updated as follows:

- The advert for Head of Performing Arts closes next week. There is cover currently in place for the vacant Drama position and long term sick leave.
- The closing date for the Deputy Headteacher position is next week. There has been a lot of interest. There are plans in place to cover the Deputy's small Maths teaching load.
- A new Science teacher has started and another is due to commence after Easter. The Headteacher admitted that he is keen to recruit more experience into the Science department to balance those with less experience. It is difficult recruiting to shortage subject areas when teachers are able to name their price.
- Recruitment for the expansion is complete.
- 2teachers are on maternity leave and one member of the support staff.

Is the turnover of staff about right?

It was noted that it used to be much higher. However, it is very positive for the school and individuals that the CPD on offer at HGSS enables staff to gain promotion.

Do you recruit many part timers?

It was explained that there are a variety of flexible arrangements in place for both teachers and support staff. However, this has it's

challenges as it is difficult to run English A Level as not all days of the week are covered which puts undue pressure on the other days. It is a challenge to strike the right balance.

Is there any exit data to receive this time?

It was confirmed that there is no data to consider at this meeting.

12 GOVERNOR CPD AND INDUCTION

LS reported that she would be giving the new Staff Governor – Anna Lee – her induction and paperwork on 9 March 20.

Why did you cancel the scheduled Governor Training?

EH apologised as he had thought he was postponing the Governance Review follow up session and he had forgotten that safeguarding training had been booked for the same night. Both sessions have now been rescheduled – Governance Review Update – 1 April 2020 and Safeguarding training for governors – 1 July 2020.

13 GOVERNANCE SELF-EVALUATION

LS suggested that governors focus on No. 3 of the Framework for an Evaluation of Governance as previously agreed by the FGB.

3. How well governors support and strengthen school leadership including developing their own skills

Governors felt that the characteristics identified in the Framework reflected their own practice. They noted that

- Some governors are better at undertaking training on a regular basis than others.
- Governors reiterated that they found the prompts to undertake governor training useful.
- Mr Leftwich has now undertaken Pupil Exclusion training and others would be encouraged to do the same.
- It would be beneficial to share experience from previous exclusions – particularly the one which resulted in an Independent Review Panel.
- The exclusions checklist should be shared with all governors.

Clerk

Clerk/LS

EH/SS

Clerk

How well do we support the schools?

EH stated that it was helpful for governors to challenge and question practice by asking questions about the impact of strategies at governor meetings. Having different viewpoints is helpful. Also he felt that when presenting data to governors it made staff think about it more.

14 POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS

14.1 ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved.

14.2 COMPLAINTS

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved.

14.3 BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING AND BULLYING

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved.

ACTION: The School to remember to amend names changes of Designated Safeguarding leads as appropriate.

EH

14.4 DRUG EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved.

14.5 GOVERNOR VISITS

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved.

14.6 GRIEVANCE

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved.

14.7 SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved subject to the inclusion of the availability in school, and use, of a defibrillator.

14.8 USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved.

It was noted that Mrs Hawkins would be attending training on restraint and de-escalation techniques.

14.9 RECRUITMENT

Having been reviewed, this policy was approved.

15 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings will be held in accordance with the agreed schedule of meetings, the next one being 20 May 2020.

16 EVALUATION 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.

In terms of impact at this meeting, governors

ACTION

- received and challenged the impact of strategies to address student behaviour and attendance.
- received reports of student voice and the staff questionnaires and Staff CPD feedback and agreed a process to follow up on any action identified.
- received a report of external scrutiny of the quality of education by Challenge Partners.
- noted the progress in meeting the action identified in the Safeguarding Action Plan.
- received and questioned the school about new staff and leavers, noting that exit data will follow in due course.
- reviewed the impact of the committee in the light of the Framework for the Evaluation of Governance.
- approved policies to ensure compliance.

The meeting closed at 20.35

Signed Date

CHAIRMAN