



SUMMER TERM 2020

MINUTES of the Learning and Curriculum Committee meeting of the Governors of Holmer Green Senior School held remotely via Zoom on Tuesday 2 June 2020 at 18.00

PRESENT:	Mr S. Barrett (SB)	Miss J. Kirkpatrick (JK)
	Mr G. Davies (GD)	Mrs E. Starling (ES) (Chair)
	Mr E. Hillyard (EH)	Mrs L. Swain (LS)
	Mrs H. Jones (HJ)	
IN ATTENDANCE	Miss K. Joynson (KJ)	Assistant Head/Curriculum and Assessment
	Mr P. Tang (PT)	Deputy Headteacher
	Ms E. Walker (EW)	Clerk
ABSENT	Mrs A. Lee (AL)	
	Ms M. Selby-Boothroyd (MSB)	

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

Quality of Education

- 1.1 All students make outstanding progress – no gaps between groups of learners, in particular disadvantaged and boys.
- 1.2 To develop a highly effective curriculum that address specific lines of enquiry/gaps in each subject area, such as, effective questioning and dealing with misconceptions and develops the cultural capital of all.
- 1.3 Students are given demanding work and feel challenged in class, in particular HPA

Personal Development

- 3.1 Coherently planned Enrichment programme that is well attended, particularly by those who are disadvantaged, & that supports the development of character
- 3.2 HGSS promotes equality and diversity so that students respect differences

Sixth Form

- 5.1 Increase the number of Oxbridge, Russell Group and Higher Apprenticeship applications
- 5.2 Reduce the residual/variation in outcomes between subjects
- 5.3 Ensure that Disadvantaged (ex PP and Bursary) students make progress at least in line with their Non-Disadvantaged peers
- 5.4 Curriculum coherently planned and sequenced for future learning and employment (year 7-13)

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| 1 | WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Mrs Starling welcomed everyone to the meeting. |
| 2 | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
There were no interests declared specifically in items on the agenda although governors noted the standing declaration that Mrs Starling is a governor at Highworth School. |
| 3 | NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS
There were no items raised to be discussed as AOB. |

ACTION

4 YEAR 11 AND 13 GRADES

Miss Joynson explained the rationale and process undertaken at HGSS for allocating centre-assessed grades and rank orders for students in Years 11 and 13 for whom public examinations have been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The whole process has been very thorough (taking 12 weeks in total) and every effort has been made to make it fair and reasonable for the students.

Miss Joynson highlighted the following:

- Ofqual requires teachers to submit centre assessed grades which reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade a student would have achieved if they had sat their exams this summer and completed any non-exam assessment. In addition, it is expected that centre assessed grades will be in line with the subject distribution from last year and for students to achieve a grade according to their KS2 SATs scores.
- To help staff with this, the data was analysed for each department and an approximate distribution for this year was given. The analysis included a distribution analysis (2018/19 results, comparison to mocks and a yearly average distribution) and a transition matrix showing prior attainment (KS2 SATs) and predicted grades.
- Each head of department met with an assistant headteacher to go through the process. They then went through the data, amending it where necessary, and justifying the grade if a student is above their predicted grade according to their KS2 SATs. This justification included adding mock and in-class assessment data to show a student's current attainment.
- The centre assessed grades were uploaded to the FFT (Fisher Family Trust). They analysed the grades and sent each subject a comparison document. Each head of department met with an assistant headteacher to go through their FFT data and talk through any changes which needed to be made.
- In terms of allocating rank orders, Heads of department completed this task using agreed internal assessment data. Teachers were not asked to rank their class thus removing any subconscious bias from the process. Heads of department presented the final rank order to their staff to ensure they were aware of the ranking and could ask any questions they had.
- Grades were uploaded to the FFT again to give further external validation on the centre assessed grades produced.

- The process is now complete, and every student has been allocated a grade and rank order which will be submitted to the exam boards.

For the last couple of years the school has had very good results. Does that mean that the results should reflect the same pattern this year?

Miss Joynson explained that this is the case as there is very little opportunity to manoeuvre the grades.

Was the process the same for Year 13?

Miss Joynson explained that the allocation of grades was done in the same way as for Year 11 but that the distribution was a little harder for Year 13.

The allocation of grades from FFT were lower than the grades given by the school. What was the impact of this?

It was explained that some of the grades had been lowered as a result but some had also increased.

Can parents/carers lodge a legal challenge?

It was explained that parents/carers can appeal the grades to the Exam Boards who will examine the process undertaken. Students will also have the opportunity to sit the exam, most likely in the Autumn term.

Mr Hillyard explained that he had been sending weekly updates to parents to keep them informed of the process being followed. Schools have been advised not to respond to any Freedom of Information requests as the results are embargoed until August. There is a potential for parents/carers to lodge a legal challenge and so minutes and records of all meetings have been kept as evidence of the integrity of the process undertaken. If the Exam Board changes a grade away from that allocated by the school then the appeal would be against the Exam Board's reasoning. In circumstances where the Exam Board does not make a grade change, it will be for HGSS to justify the process undertaken. In order to protect staff and afford a high level of security, the access to grades has been restricted within school.

Have we given our students the benefit of the doubt when allocating grades?

It was explained that the process followed is as fair as it could be and has been influenced by the school's own checks and balances in place before lockdown. The process has been robustly applied

and students should not have been disadvantaged. They will still have the opportunity to sit the exam.

Going forward, is there a better way to undertake this process?

Mr Hillyard explained that this would probably not have been the process used had there been more time for planning. Some schools have been disadvantaged by not having mock exam data.

Governors noted that if a similar process is needed for 2021, scaled scores will be used so there will be no comparable Key Stage 2 data. The timing of mocks may well be revisited next year as will the strategies for assessments and moderation.

Governors thanked staff for the time and effort invested in a process which is as fair to students as possible but also complies with Ofqual restrictions.

5 REMOTE LEARNING

It was explained that an important part of the remote learning process has been to touch base with students as well as to progress their learning. Some subject areas have rolled out online teaching whilst others have taken a different approach. Inevitably, students will have engaged to a greater or lesser extent depending on their diligence, home circumstances and wellbeing.

Governors on this committee who are parents shared their various different experiences of remote learning.

EH agreed to look at the following, based on comments made:

- Inconsistencies of approach between subjects/teachers and the impact of this on students and parents/carers.
- Rationalisation of the home learning programme – including the use of ShowMyHomework.
- Pastoral support for those who are not in school currently.

Is the work being marked of the same quality as it would have been prior to lockdown?

It was recognised that there are different experiences and this depends very much on the individuals. The majority are completing the work but some of the KS4 quality in depth answers are missing.

6 PLAN TO CLOSE GAPS WHEN STUDENTS RETURN

There will be various gaps which staff will start to fill as the students return to school. The majority of the work to look at filling

gaps will happen from September. This will be for all year groups as well as years 10 and 12 as all students will have lost learning and interaction with their peers.

A range of different books have been ordered for Pupil Premium students all of whom have been contacted by their Head of Year and Kerri Stone, Assistant Headteacher. There will be revision sessions held for English and Maths.

A governor asked about the statement in the report that there may be scope for year 9/10, having one less option going forward to address the gaps.

Mr Hillyard explained that he had a responsibility to look at future provision as well as the current situation. There are a range of options which are being considered but which will need further consideration as it now seems unlikely that everyone will be back at school fulltime in September. If an option is dropped, students will still study 8 GCSEs which meets university entry requirements. Dropping one GCSE will enable everyone to have more time with students. Other options being considered are - to bring the Year 11 mocks forward before Christmas in case there is another spike in the virus and to add an extra hour to the teaching time for Year 12 students going into Year 13. There will be staffing considerations for these options.

When Year 10 return to school from 15 June, the sessions will initially focus on finding out for each child what they have and have not completed from their home learning, the quality of the work and what recovery plans are necessary to ensure they get back on track. There will also be sessions on supporting Year 10s to return and discussing any relevant issues they have as a result of the Coronavirus as we are aware anxiety will have been heightened. The aim is to provide subject specialist support after the first two visits a child makes, so that by the end of this Summer half-term all Year 10 students will have seen a subject specialist for each one of the GCSEs that they are taking. There will be a short break on the day a child visits, which will be socially distanced, but will allow for face-to-face interaction between peers. In Year 12, students will attend for one day, per subject they are taking for A Level or BTEC. Each student will have a three hour lesson on this subject, once a week until the end of the Summer half-term. If conditions allow, the length of this session may be increased to 5 hours on one day over-time. Students will receive pastoral visits during this time and they will also have support with UCAS, etc.

What is the latest regarding the laptops from the DfE and LA?

Mr Hillyard explained that Kerri Stone is co-ordinating the receipt and circulation of laptops. The school has already provided laptops to some but will need them to be returned when the Year 10 students come back. Other laptops will be returned by Year 11 students. The school is aware of a very small number of students who don't have access to laptops and are provided hard copies of work. Other families have issues with having to share laptops between children and home working parents.

Miss Joynson explained that vulnerable children are able to come into school and be supported. This provision will continue to be the case even when in-school provision extends to Years 10 and 12.

Mr Hillyard explained that the one-off DfE programme to support disadvantaged learners with laptops is only part of the issue. The need for students to have the skills for independent learning is more of an issue and something the school will be reflecting on.

Have you considered purchasing devices for students in order to be prepared for the future?

It was explained that this has been considered but there is a funding issue. Many of the software packages favour middle and higher level students and this need to be borne in mind so as not to exacerbate the gaps. Similarly, being given a laptop will not necessarily energise students. Mr Hillyard stated that he would relook at purchasing devices if this was what governors considered to be a priority.

It was noted that there are already laptop trolleys around school which teachers can book for the class to use in school.

ACTION: Mr Hillyard to investigate the pros and cons of issuing all students devices to be used in/out of school including the cost implications.

EH

6 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

It was agreed to defer this item in view of more urgent business.

L&C Agenda

7 POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS

Following review, it was agreed to approve the following policies:

Looked After Children

Marianne Selby Boothroyd is the governor for disadvantage (including LAC)

ACTION**Curriculum and Teaching Policy**
(staff comments to be deleted)**Admissions Policy 2021-22**

In response to a query regarding the stated admission number of 150 for 2021, Mr Hillyard clarified that the school is unable to state the higher admission of 210 until the planning permission for the school expansion has been granted. Admission into 2020 has been agreed at 210.

A governor queried the use of the term 'Gifted and Talented' in the policy.

ACTION: Mr Hillyard to clarify whether the use of this term Gifted and Talented' is still in use in Education law.

EHPost Meeting Note:

In terms of the Admissions Policy, Gifted and Talented is still referred to in the School's Admission Code, page 25, para 2. and as such, the term needs to stand in the policy.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School Admission Code 2014 - 19 Dec.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School_Admission_Code_2014_-_19_Dec.pdf)

8 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020 having been circulated, were confirmed and would be signed by the Chair as a correct record in due course and made available for inspection in school.

**ES
Clerk****8.1 YEARS 12 AND 13 UPDATE** (Minute No. 4)

It was agreed that Mrs Golding would feedback to the next meeting about History in Years 12 and 13.

**RG
Next agenda****8.2 CENTURY TECH** (Minute No. 7)

Mr Hillyard explained that following feedback from the Governors' Day and an analysis that Century Tech was not being utilised enough to warrant its cost, it would be discontinued in favour of Seneca.

8.3 SEND REVIEW (Minute No. 9)

It was agreed to defer this matter to the next meeting.

Next agenda**8.4 MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES** (Minute No. 10)

It was agreed that a discussion of the current and longer term plans for MFL would be deferred to the next meeting.

Next agenda

ACTION

8.5 GENDER NEUTRAL PE CURRICULUM (Minute No. 12)
A governor reported that he had checked the PE curriculum details on the website as agreed following the last meeting. It confirmed that a different PE curriculum is showing for the boys and girls. He was concerned that all sports are not available for all and as such the school is reinforcing stereotypes.

Mr Tang stated that he had explained at the last meeting why it is not always possible to run the same sports for all and there are many examples where both genders are mixing. There is lots of evidence nationally and locally to suggest that the uptake of sports by girls drops off with age. This is why it is sometimes appropriate to offer different sports to try to engage the sexes equally.

It was agreed by a majority of the Committee to close this item.

8.6 OFSTED TRAINING (Minute No. 13)
It was agreed to defer the discussion of OFSTED to the next meeting. A report would be circulated in advance of the meeting for governors to consider.

Next agenda

9 DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS
The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 23 September 2020.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS
There was no other business.

11 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, the focus of which had been the impact on the school community of COVID-19. It was confirmed that all members of the Governing Body would have access to these minutes.

The Chair thanked Mr Tang for his contribution to HGSS and this committee and wished him well in his new position.

The meeting closed at 19.55

Signed Date

CHAIRMAN