



AUTUMN TERM (2) 2020

MINUTES of the Learning and Curriculum Committee meeting of the Governors of Holmer Green Senior School held remotely via Zoom on Wednesday 25 November 2020 at 18.00

PRESENT: Mr S. Barrett (SB) Mrs A. Lee (AL)
 Mr G. Davies (GD) Mrs E. Starling (ES) (Chair)
 Mr A. Down (AD) Mrs L. Swain (LS)
 Miss J. Kirkpatrick (JK)

IN ATTENDANCE Ms K. Joynson (KJ) Deputy Headteacher
 Ms J. Knight (JK) New Clerk, Observer
 Ms S. Lary (SL) Deputy Headteacher
 Mrs A. Thomas (AT) Non-Committee Governor
 Ms E. Walker (EW) Interim Clerk

ABSENT Mrs C. Hawkins (CH)(DSL) Apologies received

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

<p>Quality of Education 1.1 All students make outstanding progress – no gaps between groups of learners, in particular <95% attendance, APKN, disadvantaged, HPA and boys 1.2 To develop a highly effective, coherent curriculum that ensures students have the skills they need at the right times; addresses gaps in each subject area and supports the development of character 1.3 All students are given demanding work and feel challenged in class irrespective of barriers to learning</p>
<p>Personal Development 3.1 Coherently planned Enrichment programme</p>
<p>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</p>

	ACTION
<p>1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Mrs Starling welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Jenny Knight who would be taking over as Clerk to Governors from 16 December 2020.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	
<p>3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 20 were confirmed as a correct record. There were no matters arising other than that Mrs Starling agreed to circulate the agenda schedule.</p>	ES

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SEND REPORT

Governors noted

- the information in the SEND update report.
- the role of SEND governor is currently a vacant following the resignation of Ms Selby-Boothroyd.

ACTION: an appointment to the link role for SEND to be included on the agenda for the next FGB meeting.

Clerk

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AP1 DATA HEADLINES**YEAR 11**

Governors noted that the data is contextual and the data from the mocks will give a better gauge of where the students are. According to current data, EBACC continues to look healthy and boys are still under-achieving. After the mocks, SL will conduct Raising Standards meetings with Heads of Departments with a focus on closing gaps.

In terms of resources, what provision do we make for disadvantaged students?

KJ explained that staff will be meeting with disadvantaged students after the micks to find out which resources will be of most benefit to them – flashcards, revision books, laptops, pens and pencils. All students have access to online resources such as Hegarty Maths.

Why is the Maths predicted data lower than for other subjects?

SL explained that she had discussed this with the Head of Maths. The discrepancy is due to the Maths Assessment having been across the whole subject area – rather than just for particular modules as with other subjects. The trend, where Maths does not perform so well at Year 11 AP1, has been seen previously and, after interventions, the results improve. This department also has a tendency to be cautious in its predictions.

Do we have a new Head of Maths?

The role has been split between the Key Stages with one person covering KS 3 and 4 and another covering KS 5. Capacity has been built into this department to help with interventions.

In terms of those students whose attendance is below 95%, what proportion of them are also disadvantaged?

KJ explained that the attendance rate for PP students is 92.9% (whole school attendance is 96%). Any student who falls below

attendance expectations has interventions and parents/carers are also contacted.

In view of the fact that these students have been disproportionately affected by COVID, has the school's approach changed?

KJ explained that the school's approach has not changed and expectations of students remain high. The attendance rate nationally for PP students is 86%, and HGSS PP students compare well. The school gave PP students laptops during the lockdown and spent time with these students when they came back to school after lockdown and after any period when they have had to isolate.

Are there any early concerns that the data is showing up that the committee should be aware of?

SL explained that SLT will be in a better place to bring a more detailed and robust analysis back to this committee after the data from the mocks has been analysed.

How have the students responded to the mocks this year?

SL and KJ explained that staff have been very pleased with the attitude of the students especially considering these students did not get the benefit of Year 10 exams. Additional support has been put in place to support resilience and help manage any anxieties and stress.

Has the school placed additional pressure on the students by emphasising the importance of the mocks?

KJ explained that the students are well-aware of the importance of these assessments and there has been a notable increase in the numbers being affected by stress. This year the mocks have been moved earlier to show where the gaps are and to put interventions in place.

Will this be a permanent move?

SL explained that the benefits of this will be considered alongside feedback from staff, students and parents/carers as well as implications in respect of curriculum planning.

Year 12

RG explained the data in her report including the fact that it is not unexpected for the numbers of students to be working on or above target to be lower than last year as these students have not been in class since March. However, 100% of these students are expected to get A-E grades, indicating that they have all been placed on appropriate courses.

Who are the bursary students?

RG explained that the current year's bursary students had not been decided when her report had been produced. Students who quality are able to apply for bursary support (mans tested) and ex-PP students are also included in this group.

Year 13

The L3VA A Level score is pleasing – being +0.46 compared to +0.36 at the same point last year. To ensure the data is robust RG explained that has met with all Heads of Faculties in Raising Standards meetings and looked at each student and whether they are on target. Heads of Faculties share the interventions that they will be introducing to support any student who is not on target.

Year 13 mocks are next week as are Year 12 exams.

Governors thanked RG for her update.

6 SIP TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE AND IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Governors noted the observations from Ed Vainker from Reach Academy Trust. His focus had been determined by two working hypotheses: Is there enough consistency of experience for students? and Are we making students work hard and think hard?

Ed Vainker has since been into school again and SLT have been looking at developing the school's vision – where we want the school to be in 5 years' time?

It is interesting that lower sets are referred to. I thought all classes were mixed ability now.

SL reported that Year 11 classes are still set. Some departments have adapted better to the need to mix classes – it is a mixed picture. The evidence from the data is that we are still not seeing HPA students achieving to the extent that we want them to.

How do we ensure consistency across the departments in terms of commitment to mixing ability or settings?

SL explained that SLT needs to decide whether there is a commitment to continue mixing lessons as the evidence varies in terms of impact.

What is the timescale for review?

Ed Vainker will be returning in January 2021 and there will be a report back to the is committee with clarity over the way forward. In the past the setting arrangements appears to benefit HPA

students but often to the detriment of others. For example, the lowest sets often had a boy-heavy, PP student heavy load and efforts were made to improve this by developing streams based on student groups (gender, disadvantage etc).

What will staff be consulted about?

It was explained that it will be important to consult and involve staff in developing a shared vision for the school.

In terms of the two working hypotheses, were these areas that leadership had already identified or was it the fresh pair of eyes that helped identify this?

KJ explained that it was both. Learning walks had already highlighted these areas but Ed Vainker's observations have helped us to move forward on this.

7 ENRICHMENT UPDATE

It was explained that enrichment was not offered at the start of term in line with Government Guidance and the focus was on ensuring the school was COVID secure. Guidance has now changed and enrichment is able to commence again as long as appropriate risk assessments have been undertaken to ensure that activities are COVID secure. Staff are in the process of undertaking these assessments. Wednesday afternoon enrichment

Is it possible to organise trips yet?

There is a possibility that World Challenge will go ahead and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme continues. Virtual trips have been undertaken in tutor time and other activities have been highlighted by the Careers Advisor. Year 12 are undertaking certified courses.

8 HPA UPDATE

This item had been covered in Minute No. 5 above.

9 OFSTED TRAINING

KJ talked governors through the developments since OFSTED 2016 – her presentation to be circulated with these minutes. In terms of key areas for improvements since the last OFSTED:

- exam outcomes have increased compared to local schools and nationally and the EBACC outcomes are above the national average. 99% of students at HGSS remain in Education post Year 11.
- The Sixth Form is now in the top 20% of schools nationally and is recognized as a Challenge Partner Area of Excellence.

- The Progress 8 figure for disadvantaged students was above that of schools nationally last year and disadvantaged students outperform their non-disadvantaged counterparts in the Sixth Form.
- The performance of HPA students remains a gap and this is the focus of work with Ed Vainker.

In terms of the results, what does locally mean?

It was explained that this refers to Buckinghamshire schools, including Grammar Schools.

Does disadvantage include those with learning disabilities?

No disadvantage in this context refers to socio-economically disadvantaged (means tested) and Forces children.

10 POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS

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

- Access Arrangements Policy (Exams)
- Word Processor Policy (Exams)
- Disability Policy (Exams)

In terms of the Word Processor Policy (Exams), governors discussed whether it reflected adequately the New Device Strategy and agreed that it did. A governor highlighted one area in green on Page 6 – designated rooms – which would need to be removed from the published policy.

11 DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 10 March 2021. All other dates will be as the circulated schedule of meetings.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

13 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. Governors had questioned the AP1 data, the school’s reaction to the matters raised by the School Improvement Advisor and the update on OFSTED inspection outcomes from 2016. It was confirmed that all members of the Governing Body would have access to these minutes.

The meeting closed at 19.10

Signed Date

CHAIR