



## SPRING TERM 2024 MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

### MINUTES

Date 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024  
 Time 18.30  
 Place Holmer Green Senior School

- PRESENT:**
- |                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Tony Green (TG) – Chair        | Jacqui Kirkpatrick (JRK) |
| Ed Hillyard (EH) – Headteacher | Melissa Miller (MM)      |
| Claire Asare-Archer (CAA)      | Paula Myburgh (PM)       |
| Paul Davies (PD)               | Steve Pilgrim (SP)       |
| Jeremy Hunt (JH)               | Beccy Roberts (BR)       |
- IN ATTENDANCE:**
- |                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Lynda Jackson (LJ) | Director of Finance, HR and Resources |
| Jenny Knight (JLK) | Clerk                                 |
| Sarah Towers (ST)  | Assistant Headteacher Curriculum      |
- APOLOGIES:**
- Roy Kamp (RK)  
 Victoria Strutt (VS)
- NOT PRESENT:**
- Liliana Minton (LM)

**Action Support Challenge**

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

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
1	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TG welcomed everyone to the meeting.</li> <li>Apologies were accepted from Roy Kamp and Victoria Strutt. Liliana Minton was not present.</li> </ul>	
2	<b>Notification of Any Other Business</b> TG – Policy reviews	
3	<b>Declarations of Interest against this agenda</b> There were no declarations of interest, either new or against items on this agenda.	
4	<b>Minutes of the 7 February 2024 Meeting and Matters Arising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governors approved the Minutes as an accurate record.</li> </ul>	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
	<p><b>Actions and Matters Arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EH to send amend RAG status of P8 figures in Headteachers Report as red rating is unrepresentative. Explanation to be included.</li> <li>• The Attachment Aware presentation will take place in July for Governors.</li> <li>• Comparative figures for Behaviour figures: 6.5% Fixed Term suspensions last year compares with 4.6% to current point in this academic year, so roughly on a par. National figure was 6.4% for the last half term. There has been a substantial rise nationally.</li> <li>• The Governor survey is to be postponed until after the Governance Review.</li> </ul>	<p><b>EH</b></p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Governor Membership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was JRK's last meeting as a Governor. TG thanked JRK for her eight years of service. Her input has been invaluable, especially her knowledge and experience of the workings of the school.</li> <li>• JLK reported that an OGM of the Members took place on 18 March 2024. TG was reappointed as a Governor for a further four-year term and Gareth Davies, who had resigned as Governor, was appointed an independent Member.</li> <li>• Two applications had been received from members of staff for the role of Co-opted Governor: Kirsty de Groot and Michelle Edwards. Their applications had been circulated with the papers. All Governors except themselves co-opted (LM, MM, JRK) voted in favour of co-opting both candidates. JLK to contact them and initiate the induction process.</li> </ul>	<p><b>JLK</b></p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Governor Training</b></p> <p>Managing Staff Workload and Wellbeing (Governance Role) training had been completed by five Governors.</p> <p><b>Q – Were exit interviews held for the recent staff leavers?</b></p> <p>A – They were offered to all. Questions were given to them before the meeting, which was held with EH and LJ or a Governor (or not held if the staff member did not want to participate). An anonymised report will be given at the October FGB meeting.</p> <p><b>Q – What is school doing to improve staff wellbeing?</b></p> <p>A – Results of the staff survey come to FGB in December. There is a staff forum which has been meeting for two years, including both teaching and support staff. They discuss issues such as decluttering emails, timetable improvements etc.</p>	

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	<p><b>Q – The national picture is that many teachers will not be in the profession in five years’ time due to mounting pressures. Are you concerned about this at HGSS and what is being done?</b></p> <p>A - Pressures continue to rise. Other professions can work from home but this is not so possible in teaching. Some flexible working can be offered, e.g. if a teacher is not timetable in P5 they could go home, but this can feel unfair on others. We have an employee assistance programme and our policy on compassionate leave is generous. We do our best to support staff.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention is a big issue. School is currently going through a behaviour re-set and behaviour has a big impact on staff. The national picture on behaviour is also not good.</p> <p><b>Q – Do you use the appraisal process to ‘check in’ on staff?</b></p> <p>A – Yes, but staff also know that they can come and talk to LJ at any time if they need to, and many do.</p> <p>HoDs are always checking in with their staff. Friday meetings are a less formal environment for staff to share their needs. SLT are around and visible/available on the radio at every break. These things are more important than staff gimmicks...though they did all get an Easter egg.</p> <p>School is also looking at reducing down from two parents evenings for Years 7 and 8 to one and from three assessment points per year to two, to help cut down workload.</p> <p><b>New Governor Induction</b></p> <p>JLK reported that both new Governors had received their induction and tour and were working their way through the new programme, which also includes ‘check-ins’ with Chair/Vice Chair.</p> <p>PD was grateful for the programme and suggested an annual touchpoint with each Governor. The logistics of this will be agreed once the External Governance Review results have been shared.</p> <p>JLK encouraged <b>Governors to log their training</b> (including any NGA Learning Link courses, webinars etc) in their training profile in GovernorHub. This will be done automatically for GovernorHub Knowledge courses as they are linked, but is a quick manual process for anything else.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	
<b>7.1</b>	<p><b>Report of Student Management Team Representatives</b></p> <p>The student report had been circulated, covering developments in enrichment activities, prom etc.</p> <p>EH reported on student destinations, with a number of good degree apprenticeships having been confirmed.</p>	

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	<p>TG asked for thanks to be passed to students for submitting the report despite current exam pressures.</p>	
<p><b>7.2</b></p>	<p><b>Report of Headteacher and SEF Focus</b></p> <p>The Headteacher report had been circulated. EH highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Admissions:</b> School is full for September 2024 with 178 first choice entrants, 219 in total (210 PAN for Y7).</li> <li>• Exams are now the primary focus.</li> <li>• <b>Attendance</b> is an ongoing concern, especially for those students with SEND. HGSS figures are currently just above national.</li> <li>• <b>Challenge Partners:</b> A triad partnership has been created with a school in Hornchurch and a school in Rugby. They are coming in on Friday.</li> <li>• <b>Rank order:</b> comparisons with other schools have been done. The United Learning Trust and other flagship schools use rank order. Where a child sits in the year group would give parents and students a better idea of how they are doing. Students can be compliant with learning, but not actively engaged; this aims to improve motivation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There would be two assessment points per year.</li> <li>○ Mock results from December were used to mock up what this would look like (ranked 1 to 210 in each year group, per subject). The implementation plan was circulated in the appendix to the Headteacher's report.</li> <li>○ Current grading is hard to translate into GCSE grading in terms of a 'flight path' and is meaningless to Y7/8. Students/parents often don't understand grades. Where a child sits academically within the class and the movement in this position is a better indicator.</li> <li>○ Wellbeing is important, especially SEN students. Results will be communicated with the student and parents but not published openly.</li> <li>○ % scores will be given instead of grading.</li> <li>○ The system will be adopted for Years 7-10, not 11.</li> <li>○ Modelling with Y7 and Y11 results has been done. Y7 showed some volatility in movement. Those with high ATL go up the ranks.</li> <li>○ Where there is a drop in rank order, students can be easily identified for intervention.</li> <li>○ Students can be colour coded e.g. those not meeting can be turned gold (need gold standard support) then silver, then bronze.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Q – How will students with SEN/EHCP be dealt with in terms of ranking?</b></p>	

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	<p>A – It is all about the movement. Actually, SEN students are not necessarily the ones making downward progress, e.g. HPA Boys dropped position in Y7.</p> <p>40 schools in the United Learning Trust use the rank order system. Extreme changes of order are rare. More vulnerable students tend to get more out of it. Rank order is not published straight away; it is analysed and any extremes considered beforehand.</p> <p><b>Q – How will the grading work?</b></p> <p>A – A ‘consistent cap’ is used, e.g. max grade 4 in Y7, max grade 5 in Y8 etc. This needs to spiral from GCSE grades. It is important not to lose this.</p> <p><b>Q – What is the rationale for doing an overall rank order across all subjects? Individual subject rank makes sense.</b></p> <p>A – This can bolster those who aren’t good in some subjects. This has the most impact at KS3.</p> <p><b>Q – Can you survey parents on this presentation format, or use a parent forum to agree how this will be communicated?</b></p> <p>A – There will be a content guide for what the student needs for their assessment. It won’t be a surprise assessment; students will be well prepared.</p> <p>Yes, a parent forum can be organised to look at the explanation to parents.</p> <p><b>Q – What monitoring will be in place to see the impact?</b></p> <p>A – There will be a student and parent survey which will include wellbeing consideration. Behavioural impact will be monitored when ‘setting’.</p> <p><b>Q – Could incentives be indicated, e.g. show set boundaries so that students know how many places they would have to move to go up a set?</b></p> <p>A – Possibly.</p> <p><b>Q – If there are significant movements, will there be an opportunity for students to express how they feel about that/if they are inspired etc?</b></p> <p>A – Friday reflection in form time is a good opportunity to find out how students feel about the system.</p> <p><b>Q – If some students go up, it means some will go down. Some may improve but still go down the rank if others are improving more. How will this be communicated?</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EH</p>

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	<p>A – We will also publish % improvement, so even a rank has gone down they can still see how much progress they have made. Careful assessment design is also needed here (some are harder than others).</p> <p><b>Q – English interventions work really well, but are other subject interventions as robust?</b></p> <p>A – We have got to get to a state where they are consistently robust.</p> <p><b>Staffing</b></p> <p><b>Q – There were four vacancies this time last year; now there are 10. Is there an underlying reason for this?</b></p> <p>A – We have done exit interviews. All staff have individual reasons for going, e.g. state to independent, moving abroad etc. Speaking with other Headteachers, this number of vacancies is not an unusual situation in the current climate. With overseas teachers, we are finding that staying after one year is financially less worthwhile for them due to tax breaks ceasing after that time. There are also family pressures.</p> <p><b>Q – Is it prudent to take on overseas staff if they are unlikely to stay?</b></p> <p>A – We don't want to be without trained staff. The market is crazy at the moment; we have to turn around applications very quickly as demand is so high that candidates will be offered a job elsewhere between application and interview here.</p> <p>EH to include the number of staff who chose not to have an exit interview into the report in October.</p> <p><b>Q – Was the Easter revision school a success?</b></p> <p>A – Yes. There were 225 students attending over 4 days. Disadvantaged students were prioritised. Feedback questionnaires showed 86% would do it again next year and it helped improve self confidence prior to exams.</p> <p>The course was about skills, not content. There were targeted days with a specific focus e.g. improving from a grade 6 to a grade 7/8/9. Behaviour was also really good over the four days.</p> <p><b>Q – On page 5 of the Headteachers Report, are PP students who are not disadvantaged Service children?</b></p> <p>A – Yes, this is the only difference.</p> <p>EH agreed to make the following adjustments to the Headteachers report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page 7 – include actions completed against actions identified</li> <li>• Suspensions list – Keep time periods consistent e.g. termly, rather than comparing e.g. 2 month with 3 month period.</li> </ul>	<p>EH</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEN – Use same categorisations as in the SEN report (EHCP = E. SEN Support = K. Those no longer on the register = N). Alignment of numbers depends on when the reports are run.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q – There has been a significant increase between January and March in sexual harassment and bullying reports. Why is this?</b></p> <p>A – Last year substantiated bullying was reported. The report in this figure includes both substantiated and unsubstantiated bullying, i.e. anyone who has made an allegation.</p> <p><b>Q – As Governors we need to understand if the school has a significant problem with bullying. It is hard to tell from this.</b></p> <p>A – We do have bullying, but from the surveys we have run we don't think we have a significant problem. Resources will continue to be thrown at behaviour in general, as trends generally are not good in this area. If permanent exclusion is necessary, it will be used.</p>	EH
7.3	<p><b>Annual Governors Report</b></p> <p>The report was circulated as a work in progress. Deadline for completion is 5<sup>th</sup> June.</p>	
7.4	<p><b>Estates Update</b></p> <p>LJ had circulated a report and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reception is taking shape and should be completed in 3 weeks. It will provide a much more professional entrance and useful safeguarding separation which will make a real difference.</li> <li>• Thanks to Governors for approving funding for this project.</li> </ul> <p>TG thanked LJ for overseeing this project.</p>	
7.5	<p><b>Management Accounts</b></p> <p>LJ had circulated the accounts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff costs are a big issue, but the situation is improving. Staffing seen as 91% of GAG but if considered as % of total income would be 82% which is much more reasonable.</li> <li>• FPH&amp;S meeting in June will look more closely at this.</li> <li>• SRMSAT figures with DfE show HGSS metrics mostly in line.</li> </ul>	
7.6	<p><b>Risk Register Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyber security risk has been increased following two local schools being caught out with attacks.</li> <li>• Lots of staff training is happening on this.</li> </ul>	

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<b>8</b>	<b>COMMITTEE REPORTS</b>	
<b>8.1</b>	<p><b>HR Panels, Complaints Panels, Student Discipline Committees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Permanent Exclusion panel was held on 20 March 2024 with an adjournment to 28 March 2024 due to additional paperwork being required. The PEX was upheld.</li> <li>• Three Governor Warning panels are due to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024.</li> <li>• A further PEX panel has been arranged for 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024.</li> <li>• A 'lessons learned' meeting will take place on 30<sup>th</sup> April to consider what should be included in PEX packs.</li> <li>• Training in exclusions will be organised in the summer for all Governors.</li> <li>• <b>JLK to circulate NGA training on exclusions to all governors.</b></li> <li>• Thanks were extended to Governors who are giving their time for these processes.</li> </ul>	<b>JLK</b>
<b>8.2</b>	<p><b>FPH&amp;S Committee</b></p> <p>Minutes of the meetings held on 6 March 2024 and 26 March 2024 had been circulated. SP highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An emergency meeting was held on 26 March to deal with the issue of a power cut in the new building as a result of an underground cabling problem.</li> <li>• A letter was written to the Council to make it clear that school could not reopen after Easter without the problem having been fixed as generators were costly and a health &amp; safety risk.</li> <li>• The cost has been £20k up front for hiring a generator plus five weeks' supply of fuel and the cost of electrical contractors.</li> <li>• The issue was fixed and Bucks Council will reimburse the school.</li> <li>• <b>TG thanked LJ for her speedy action on this.</b></li> <li>• The Bucks Pay award for non-teaching staff was agreed in this additional meeting and actioned in April.</li> </ul>	
<b>9</b>	<b>GOVERNOR REPORTS</b>	
<b>9.1</b>	<p><b>Chair</b></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
<b>9.2</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SP met with school on 9<sup>th</sup> February.</li> <li>• It was not possible to see the SCR on this occasion as a member of staff was not on site.</li> <li>• 2 pupils on CP plans over Easter.</li> </ul>	



Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
9.3	<p><b>SEND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PD conducted his termly visit with Laura Harris last week and submitted his report the same day, which was circulated with the papers.</li> <li>• Laura is leaving in September, moving to a specialist school. She will be greatly missed but it is a good move for her and the team is strong so will continue the good work. Recruitment is out for a replacement.</li> <li>• PD attended the Challenge Partners summary and was encouraged as it showed HGSS was not alone. Educational experts were able to give positive feedback and commented on well trained LSAs, teachers really knowing students and their needs and a clear commitment by the school to find solutions.</li> <li>• PD wished to record thanks for all the effort HGSS puts into supporting SEND students.</li> <li>• Y10 Mock interviews event attended by some governors was also very encouraging; many of the students were amazing.</li> </ul>	
9.4	<p><b>Disadvantaged &amp; CLA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BR has a meeting in two weeks and will report back to the next FGB meeting.</li> </ul>	
<b>10</b>	<b>POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS</b>	
10.1	<p><b>Complaints</b></p> <p>The policy had been circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review term is annual.</li> <li>• P&amp;P Committee reference to be removed.</li> </ul> <p>The policy was approved subject to these amendments.</p>	LJ
10.2	<p><b>Conduct and Discipline</b></p> <p>The policy had been circulated.</p> <p>This is a Bucks policy, approved by the unions, so substantive changes are unlikely. LJ to note on front of such policies, for Governor clarity.</p> <p>The policy was approved.</p>	LJ
10.3	<p><b>Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Feedback</b></p> <p>The policy had been circulated.</p> <p>JH to email LJ with minor typos.</p> <p>Acronyms to be written in full at first mention.</p> <p>The policy was approved subject to these amendments.</p>	JH LJ
10.4	<p><b>ECT</b></p> <p>The policy had been circulated.</p> <p>There were no comments and the policy was approved.</p>	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
10.5	<p><b>Examinations Contingency Plan</b> The policy had been circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dates in title and footer to be made consistent.</li> </ul> <p>The policy was approved subject to this amendment.</p>	LJ
10.6	<p><b>Examinations Malpractice</b> The policy had been circulated. There were no comments and the policy was approved.</p>	
10.7	<p><b>Governor Visits</b> The policy had been circulated. The policy was approved at this stage, but PD would like to benchmark it against others in the near future.</p>	
10.8	<p><b>Numeracy</b> The policy had been circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date to be updated.</li> </ul> <p>The policy was approved subject to this amendment.</p>	LJ
10.9	<p><b>Support Staff Appraisal and Capability</b> The policy had been circulated. This is a model Bucks policy as 10.2 above. The policy was approved.</p>	
10.10	<p><b>Supporting Students with Medical Conditions</b> The policy had been circulated. There were no comments and the policy was approved.</p>	
10.11	<p><b>Teacher Appraisal and Capability</b> The policy had been circulated. This is a model Bucks policy as 10.2 above. The policy was approved.</p>	
10.12	<p><b>Looked After Children</b> The policy had been circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LAC to be changed to CLA (Children Looked After) everywhere.</li> </ul> <p>The policy was approved subject to this amendment.</p>	LJ
10.13	<p><b>SMSC and British Values</b> The policy had been circulated. There were no comments and the policy was approved.</p>	
10.14	<p><b>Mobile Phone</b> The policy had been circulated, having been previously amended and circulated by email.</p>	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
	There were no further comments and the policy was approved.	
<b>11</b>	<b>OTHER MATTERS</b>	
<b>11.1</b>	<b>NGA Review of Governance</b> Governance Development session to take place on Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May at 5-7.30pm. <b>This meeting is for all Governors.</b>	<b>Govs</b>
<b>11.2</b>	<b>Review of Governor Engagement with School</b> On hold until after the Governance Review is complete.	
<b>11.3</b>	<b>Governor Lanyards</b> LJ took photos of all Governors present and issued lanyards. <b>Any Governors without a lanyard should send LJ a photo</b> and one will be given to them next time.	<b>Govs</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Dates and Times of Meetings</b> Next Meetings: Friday 14 June 2024, 9am – 1.15pm - Governor Day Wednesday 10 July 2024, 6.30pm - FGB	
<b>13</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b> <b>Policy Reviews</b> The possibility of the Governing Board only reviewing statutory policies was suggested. This will be discussed further as part of the Governance Review and a decision made in July.	
<b>14</b>	<b>Evaluation of Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governors agreed that the meeting had been conducted appropriately and effectively.</li> </ul>	

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

**Minutes approved by the Governing Board:**

Signed .....  
Mr T Green – Chairman of the Board

Date .....