



SUMMER TERM (2) 2024 MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

Date 10th July 2024
 Time 18.00
 Place Online via Zoom

- PRESENT:**
- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Tony Green (TG) – Chair | Michelle Edwards (ME) |
| Ed Hillyard (EH) – Headteacher | Jeremy Hunt (JH) |
| Claire Asare-Archer (CAA) | Roy Kamp (RK) |
| Paul Davies (PD) | Paula Myburgh (PM) |
| Kirsty de Groot (KDG) | Victoria Strutt (VS – to 7pm) |
- IN ATTENDANCE:**
- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Lynda Jackson (LJ) | Director of Finance, HR and Resources |
| Jenny Knight (JK) | Governance Professional |
| Sarah Lary (SL) | Deputy Headteacher |
| Kerri Stone (KS) | Assistant Headteacher |
- APOLOGIES:** Melissa Miller, Beccy Roberts, Steve Pilgrim
- 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"> TG welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Melissa Miller, Beccy Roberts and Steve Pilgrim. Liliana Minton was not present. Ed Hillyard was delayed until 6.50pm due to traffic and tech problems. 	
2	<p>Notification of Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest against this agenda</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest, either new or against items on this agenda.</p>	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
4	<p>Minutes of the 24 April 2024 Meeting 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"> • Some EH actions re including data in the HT Report had not been done, but this was discussed when EH joined the meeting for the HT report section. • Other actions complete. 	
5	<p>Governor Membership</p> <p>TG welcomed Kirsty de Groot and Michelle Edwards to their first FGB meeting as new Governors. He expressed his appreciation for their taking on the role as he felt it important to have staff representation on the Board.</p>	
6	<p>Governor Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training module provided on the agenda has been archived since it was distributed so Governors were not able to complete it. • However, next year’s full schedule of Governor NGA Learning Link training had been shared. 	
7	STRATEGIC PLANNING	
7.1	<p>Curriculum – Duke of Edinburgh Award</p> <p>A presentation was shared on screen with commentary from Lara Beacroft, the DofE Manager (not present at the meeting as she was out on a Gold DofE expedition).</p> <p>The presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is required of students to complete each level (Bronze, Silver, Gold) • Types of volunteering roles and skills learned • 2900 hours of HGSS students’ time given to volunteering every year; 2700 hours given to learning new skills; 3000 hours given to improving physical fitness • Expedition programme • Student reflections on benefits of the programme • HGSS pass rate for DofE is more than 80% as compared to the national rate of 50%. This is one of the best results in the county and reflects the strong admin of the team in getting all the students’ activities signed off. <p>TG thanked the school for success in this really worthwhile programme and expressed pride in the exceptional pass rates.</p>	

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7.2	<p>Report of Headteacher</p> <p>This item, as well as 7.3 and 7.5 took place after item 10 as EH was delayed.</p> <p>EH highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports are produced four weeks in advance of the meeting, so some data has moved on. • Together As One D&I programme has been successful. • Teaching & Learning observations continue. • A behaviour re-set has been underway and suspensions are consequently up. • Attendance is a real concern (though this is also the case nationally). • Fixed term suspension figures nationally have not been released by DfE for a few years now. • EHCP increases: HGSS is not the only school with such high numbers but they do come with their challenges. It is good to be recognized for being supportive of SEN students, but we have to put in a lot of resource. We need to be thinking proactively about what we can do with these students. • The parent survey happens once a year after parents evenings. Results are now back, but not in time for this report so these will be shared in the first FGB meeting of the new term. <p>Q – With the P8 figures on page 2 of the report, comparative figures have still not been provided. How can Governors understand accurately where progress stands at this point in the year?</p> <p>A – Last year’s cohort was very different to this one. The comparative figures for this point in the year were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -0.14 Progress 8 • 47.15 Attainment 8 • 35% 5+ English & Maths • 66% 4+ English & Maths • 31% eBacc <p>Q – You are saying they are not comparable because they are a different cohort, but what do you then base your targets on?</p> <p>A – They are based on KS2 results from the end of Year 6.</p> <p>Q – It remains difficult for Governors to compare. Is School in a good position? If the comparison is always between Term 1 and the end of the year, the figures will always be rag-rated red. Is there any way to make this more informative?</p> <p>A – KS3 and KS4 forecasts are reported. The previous year can be reported, and looks broadly in line. When the rank order system is</p>	

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	<p>introduced next year it might be more informative. It is difficult to give a proper forecast as all subjects are only completed at Easter time. Christmas mocks only assess what has been covered up to that point. A red rag rating is always a concern, but we go through the same process each year and the P8 results have been positive year on year so far. A full set of revision classes has been run for those who need them and a successful Easter revision course was run for key groups of students this year.</p> <p>Q – Regarding behaviour targets in the school improvement plan summary, how do we improve behaviour, in particular exclusions, given that behaviour has become more challenging nationally?</p> <p>A – Our lofty aspiration is to get exclusions down to zero. Some years we don't have to exclude; some we do. We are looking at the profile of our students e.g. those in The Bridge provision. We run Governor Warning Panel meetings to try to prevent PEX. Sometimes this works. Sometimes an EHCP is applied for and then the student may go to a specialist provision. We always want to try to avoid a PEX because life chances are reduced for those excluded from school. We also try managed moves and other methods to avoid PEX.</p> <p>Q – If we set a target (of zero permanent exclusions) and we don't meet it, how does this affect us, e.g. in terms of Ofsted inspection?</p> <p>A – We aim for zero because we are not aiming to PEX students. If we aimed for 1% it would suggest that we want to exclude. With Ofsted we would look at what has been done in particular cases. We have case studies of what has been tried (summary versions of what is in a PEX pack) to profile this.</p> <p>Q – On page 10 regarding behaviour instances, there have been 53 suspensions this term. This looks very high; why is this?</p> <p>A – Yes. We have been having a push on behaviour. There are particular issues in certain year groups. We have a set of non-negotiables and some are not following these. We use fixed term suspensions as a way of supporting that. Parent sometimes cite SEN as a reason why their child can behave in a certain way. I have to make reasonable adjustments but I also have to sift out what is SEN and what is not. I want staff to be able to teach. Some students are just not following instructions. There is a therapy process as well as sanctions but some of this takes a long time. Of 1263 students at school, over 800 have no behaviour points at all.</p> <p>Q – Recognising that there are concerns over behaviour, would you still class School as 'Good' against the Behaviour & Attitudes section?</p> <p>A – Yes, absolutely. When Governors come in for visit mornings, we don't hide what is going on and you don't see excessive behaviour.</p>	

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	<p>There are lots of visitors in school and other schools visiting too. Lots of them comment that our behaviour is amazing. I still feel we need to sort it out, however. I am always looking at what we can do to improve.</p> <p>Q – Regarding page 9 Attendance figures – Is the two weeks in May where attendance is below the national average due to GCSEs?</p> <p>A – Yes. Different schools have study leave at different points. Retrospective coding is applied here, so this will sort itself out.</p> <p>Q – Regarding the rank order plan, when will this be implemented?</p> <p>A – There will be two assessment points in the new academic year, the first being in February. Students will be ranked by subject and overall. Subject Leaders are preparing students and parents with revision packs for these. There is also a plan to get together a group of parents to agree what is shared, i.e. what would be a useful and accessible document to communicate results.</p> <p>Q – Do we have a more positive story to tell, e.g. the 800 students with only positive behaviour points?</p> <p>A – Since Covid, the DfE haven’t published data on suspensions so it is hard to compare. We have done a lot of being supportive of students but some of them need to know where the line is. Covid had a worse effect on particular year groups but some are just taking advantage.</p>	
7.3	<p>Annual Governors Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report had been circulated. • TG thanked all those that had been involved in a report which shares what has been achieved this year. There are many positives, both materially and individually for students and staff. • PD felt it was excellent but hyperlinks need updating. • The report was approved for publication on the website. 	EH
7.4	<p>Estates Update</p> <p>LJ had shared a premised update and reported:</p> <p>Reception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reception development is completed and is working very well. The separation of visitors and students is a great improvement. • PD commented that the new reception looks fantastic, the team loves using it and the whole of the school looks more business-like as a result. Thanks to LJ and the team for making it happen. • LJ thanked the site team for their efforts. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TG agreed it was money well spent, on a project that really finishes off/modernises the look of the school since the expansion build was done. <p>Solar project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is underway on a solar project to install 400 panels. • Funding opportunities were sought for this but none were available so a company was found that would put in the entire capital investment for a share of the profit. • This will mean lower reliance on fossil fuels/the national grid and a reduced carbon footprint for the school. • Currently waiting for planning approval; hope to go ahead over the summer holidays with installation. • Additional monitoring devices will be installed, which can be used by students for analysis in some lessons. <p>Q – Were any other quotes sought, in addition to the chosen company?</p> <p>A – Other options were sought but it was a struggle to find any other companies that would provide the entire capital investment. The proposed scheme is backed by NatWest who want to invest in green projects.</p> <p>Q – The scheme shows net savings in energy costs but the budget shows a net increase. Why is this?</p> <p>A – The savings have not yet been included in the budget. We want to see the effectiveness of the panels first. The budget will be updated once the system is up and running.</p> <p>Q – Can the company be held accountable if savings are not made?</p> <p>A – We can only go on their calculations; we need to see what the panels generate.</p> <p>Q – 400 panels should generate a big income. Can this be put back into the grid for revenue?</p> <p>A – This is included in the calculations. The reality for the school is that during the main six weeks of energy generation (the summer holidays), the school is not in session using that energy. There used to be good income from FiT schemes but currently only about 7p per kWh is available.</p>	
7.5	<p>School Development Plan</p> <p>EH thanked those Governors who were involved in updating this document.</p> <p>The main foci for next year will be:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Teaching & Learning • Attendance • P8 figure (which will be influenced by quality of teaching & learning) • Inclusivity • Fixed term suspension figures <p>The SDP was approved, subject to page 6 being updated with parent survey results.</p>	
8	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
8.1	HR Panels, Complaints Panels, Student Discipline Committees None held since the last meeting but two Governor Warning Panels are being planned for early in the new term.	
8.2	FPH&S Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2024 had been circulated. • The budget had been scrutinised by the Committee and was proposed to Governors for approval by TG. • Governors approved the budget. 	
9	GOVERNOR REPORTS	
9.1	Chair Nothing to report.	
9.2	Development JK reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Governors KDG and ME had been inducted and they found the process useful. • Two recently appointed Governors had also been re-inducted as they missed out on the process the first time (MM and VS). • Thanks to all who have completed the skills audit. The dashboard had been circulated with the papers and is also available in the Governor Evidence section of GovernorHub. • JK highlighted key findings from this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The average skills scores are mostly a '3' but the average score in the Chairing experience category is a 2. Opportunities for Governors to gain experience chairing are limited due to there being only one committee. PD commented that a conversation has been started in this regard, particularly as this was something that also came out of the Governance Review, and PD/TG are working on this. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governors had expressed an interest in the comments section about whole board training sessions, in particular for Equality & Diversity and unconscious bias. TG asked if face to face training sessions could be arranged rather than online modules; there also being a networking benefit to these. JK to look into BEP face to face training, to which School doesn't currently subscribe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SL commented on good relations with – and feedback about – the D&I group Together As One, with whom staff have been working. SL to contact with regard to running a session for Governors. 	<p style="text-align: center;">JK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SL</p>
9.3	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>SP was not present but had circulated his Safeguarding Report. Governors had no questions on this but found the report reassuring.</p>	
9.4	<p>SEND</p> <p>PD had visited School the previous day for his termly meeting; a report will follow. PD summarised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers quoted are current (therefore slightly different to the HT report). • Total SEND numbers are 171 but including children of concern and SEN K the total is 299. This represents 25% of the student population. • This level is equivalent to a special school in terms of SEN provision. • Recognition of this, and opportunities available for these students, are positive aspects. • Next year there is a 20% increase in EHCP students to 72. There will be some additional funding but also a 20% increase in consumption of resources. • Laura, the SENCO, leaves at the end of term, to be replaced by her current deputy, Sarah Wilson. All is in hand for a smooth transition and issues are not expected. This is also an opportunity for career progression within the school. • Staffing is in a neutral position, with some staff still undertaking SEN training. An advert for a new LSA will be going out in the new term. • The Annual SEND Report will be provided at the first FGB meeting of the new year. <p><i>Q – A new special school is being built in Stokenchurch. Will this take any pressure off HGSS?</i></p>	

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	A – It may help but there is an increase nationally from 4.3 to 4.8% students with EHCPs so even if some pupils go to the new Stokenchurch school, there will be increasing numbers to follow them.	
9.5	CLA and PP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BR was not present but had circulated a report. • There were no questions. 	
9.6	Careers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BR was not present but had circulated a report. • EH thanked BR for coming in and commented that Careers are in a good place at HGSS. The Careers Advisor has nearly completed her Level 6 qualification and has met with many of the more vulnerable students to discuss their career options individually. 	
10 POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS		
10.1	SEND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy had been circulated. • Dates need updating but otherwise there were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
10.2	Accessibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy had been circulated. • There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
10.3	Safeguarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy had been circulated. • There were no comments and the policy was approved. • JK reminded Governors that this policy would be posted on GovernorHub along with KCSIE for Governors to read and confirm by the start of the new term. 	
10.4	Use of Reasonable Force <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy had been circulated. • There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
OTHER MATTERS		
11	NGA Review of Governance Report TG thanked Governors for their participation in this process. It was an unduly lengthy process, which was disappointing. Key take-outs were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion of holding a strategy day or session • Policies: Governors to approve only statutory policies. The remainder to be reviewed and approved by SLT but made 	

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	<p>available to Governors via GovernorHub. Governors will have the opportunity to feed in but not formally approve these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills audit: some gaps to be filled from a training perspective, e.g. chairing experience as discussed above. • 360 reviews • Succession planning <p>Q – RK and PM are not included in the Trustees list in the report. A – LJ to get these added in.</p> <p>PD commented that some of the above improvements are already underway. PD and TG are working together on how to review governor expectations and experience of being on the Board.</p> <p>LJ and JK to work with Liz Barber to agree new process for policy approvals and alerting Governors to newly-reviewed SLT policies.</p>	<p>LJ</p> <p>LJ/JK</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Dates and Times of Meetings</p> <p>Next meeting: Wednesday 9th October 2024 (6pm food/networking, 6.30pm FGB start).</p> <p>This pre-meet will be trialled for the October meeting with a view to having regular informal pre-meets in the future.</p> <p>The full set of proposed dates for 2024-25 meetings was circulated and was approved by Governors. JK to update GovernorHub with all meeting dates over the summer.</p>	<p>JK</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>PD thanked the School and Governors for a fantastic year and gave best wishes for the summer holidays.</p> <p>TG reiterated that there had been enormous challenges and thanked everyone for their tireless efforts.</p>	
<p>14</p>	<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 7.45pm

Minutes approved by the Governing Board:

Signed

Date

Mr T Green – Chairman of the Board