

**Meeting of Full Governing Body
19th July 2021
4.15pm for 4.30pm start
Via Zoom**

MINUTES

Governors Present:	Mick Baker, Lara Coleman, Jane Dickson, Alison Frost, Les Gunbie, Vanessa Hickey, Matt Hillier, Reg Hook, Dick Knight, Millie McDevitt (Chair), Jenny Poore, Bronagh Shevlin, Haydn Stride, Derek Swindells
Officers Present:	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
In Attendance:	Andrea Cumming, Roshan Dias, Jeremy Holtom, Catherine Mockeridge, Liz Uren, Paul Watson

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
	Note – Item 7a was taken immediately after the break. The minutes are written in original agenda order.	
1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>a) Welcome The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome.</p> <p>b) Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence received from Lydia Bower.</p> <p>c) Declarations of Interest No declarations made relating to items on the agenda. The declarations register had been circulated with the meeting papers.</p>	
2	<p>Chair's Update The Co-Chairs provided an update since the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sad news that a staff member had passed away following a short illness. The Headteacher provided further details advising that the funeral was taking place the following Friday with representation from the school. Counselling had been put in place at the school for any staff or students for support. • Secondary chairs update meeting on 23rd June attended by one co-chair. The discussion items had included an update on the school places consultation, which to date had not had much of a public response. The Local authority priority for school places was to manage the reduction in pupil numbers without having to close any schools. A further discussion was held regards concern regards the impact on school leaders of additional work around contact tracing into the summer and the appeals process following GSCE results publication. It had been further noted that the induction process for newly qualified teachers was changing significantly with attached financial implications for schools. • Governors had received parental communication relating to the school's response to covid. The health and safety lead governor was thanked for the work involved in overseeing the covid risk assessment process on behalf of governors and ensuring that the changes being recommended from the local authority (LA) and local public health, many at very short notice, were being implemented. The Headteacher advised that NHS were supposed to have taken over track and trace, however following a request from the LA the school were 	

	<p>continuing to cover it for the rest of the week at least. He further advised that student attendance was low that day, possibly due to parents trying to avoid an isolation over the summer holiday.</p>	
3	<p>Last Meeting Dated 14th June 2021</p> <p>a) Approval of Minutes The Full Governing Body reviewed and approved five pages of minutes from the meeting held on 14th June 2021.</p> <p>b) Matters Arising Not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND governance conference – attended by two governors. The theme of the conference reinforced much of what had been reported on at the previous meeting. Governors were reminded of their responsibilities relating to SEND. Further guidance to follow from the National Governors Association. The Headteacher advised that the SEND policy was being updated to fully meet the latest framework. In addition, the behaviour policy was to be updated in relation to SEND through the autumn term and brought to governors in January , slightly later than scheduled. 	
4	<p>Headteacher’s Report The Headteacher introduced his colleagues presenting on the main two items under this section.</p> <p>a) Anti – Racism Catherine Mockeridge, Jeremy Holtom and Paul Watson presented a PowerPoint to Governors to update them on the anti-racism work going on at school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially the model used for poverty proofing was to be replicated and developed to research what was going on at school. Following the first meeting of the anti-racism working party the direction was changed as it was apparent that there was a wider range of personal experience than had been expected and that staff did not feel fully prepared to be able to deal with effectively. • A safe place was provided for students to go to at any time to discuss their situations, feelings and to report incidents. • There was a need to prepare students of colour for their lives beyond the school, to provide the skills to support them emotionally and to navigate their lives as they encounter racism. • Additional safe place provided for staff to talk about what was happening to them at school, with a separate group for female staff of colour. City wide the “Educators of Colour Collective” had been set up feeding directly into the council meetings. • Systems reporting being updated to include the four categories of incidents that had been identified alongside key policy updates , such as the dignity at work policy. • Training to underpin the anti-racism approach and phased over three stages. Racial literacy training had been completed with 27 staff having received the training during the summer term. Staff facilitators training planned for 16th September to enable workshops to be provided to students with two further sessions of racial literacy offered in autumn term and a whole school version for delivery to all staff at a later date. • There had been a whole school reading of The Colour of Humanity during set reading time. The book talks about the experience of two boys growing up together, one of colour and one not of colour. Following the reading there had been engagement with students many who spoke about their own experiences, these were summarised within the PowerPoint for governors reference. 	

- The racial discrimination student support service at lunchtimes was set up to ensure that there were some visual signs of things happening in response to disclosures made.
- Support for students in their daily school life being looked at specifically around uniform and whether long sleeved polo shirts could be available as an option along with relaxation of rules around hair styles as promoted by the Halo Collective.
- There was a big piece of work going on around the decolonisation of the curriculum and would be a standing item for Head of Department meetings.
- Next phase would be to involve the parent community , a respect assembly for students and establishing a library of key books for staff to read on racial issues as well as taking the working part forward.

Governor comments and questions

- The anti-racism journey was a long one and governors should not expect fast results or actions, the journey had started and was headed in the right direction.
- The work and process underway were endorsed. Phrases such as “working collectively from within” were all signs that the process was flexible enough to change direction. It was. Strong piece of work held together by a strong team. If it could be linked into the climate justice aspect it would work well together.
- The work was a fundamental aspect of what should be happening in schools.
- Does the school community have a statement of conjoin belief in what it stands for and if not were there plans to create one early on so people could share where the community was?
- The students need be involved directly and it was a good opportunity for them to be involved in leading on it.
- Would Governors be offered some racial literacy training?
- For Governors one issue being raised was the overwhelming whiteness of Governing Bodies. What can governors do to support the work and that those efforts were being recognised?
- What support could be put in place should there be a backlash particularly on staff for being proactive in this area?
- Have you thought about bystander intervention training?
- Alongside giving positive examples of black history and academics was there an opportunity to talk about colonialism and systemic inequality?
- The school global studies at Sussex University might be able to support with reviewing the curriculum.
- Lack of diversity on governing bosies is something that all schools are faced with less than 5% of board members being from a non-white background. This would be something to pick up through the nominations committee.
- It was enlightening to hear the elements that the school was bringing forward not just about race, ethnicity, or religion. Young people are frequently unwilling to talk about their problems , they have to operate from a basis of trust. A safe place to talk needs to be discreet with the information shared kept in a secure place.
- What are we teaching young people when they experience something like the school trip to Ghana? The school need to ensure that it does not reinforce colonialism by its own unintended actions.
- Parental engagement and awareness of what the school was doing was key but needed to be thought through carefully as it could be an emotive topic.
- The school had received a letter about the critical race theory copied into Governors.

Responses to Governor comments and questions

- Currently there was not a statement, however the school was working on a rebrand around respect in its broader sense. This would be launched in September with additional work taking place with students.
- There would be facilitated groups of students looking at issues and forming groups to take things forward.
- The Junior Leadership Team were the representatives of the student community, it was likely in the autumn term some input on direction would come from that group.
- The first meeting of the working group was around how students were organised to become investigators. It became apparent that the group needed to reflect on how they were working with the staff body and about some of the underlying things going on.
- The training was available to the whole school community including Governors who would be invited to the next round of training.
- Schools could be hard to reach for some parts of the school community, enabling them to understand that the school is for them as it is for their children might encourage them to think about being part of the governing body.
- There was a culture of some students who would not say anything, an area that required tackling. Work had started on talking about anti - racism being everyone's responsibility with advice on steps to take if they see anything.
- There currently had been no backlash from the students not of colour , however it was an area for consideration.
- Following the reading there were some students coming forward to talk about things that had happened and not really knowing what to do.
- There had been people come forward criticising the makeup of the working group but not putting themselves forward, this was a major challenge. The support service had a mix of people but there were not enough staff of colour putting themselves forward to man it.
- The school was using racial literacy training to inform what it does. It had been invaluable and helpful but was not dictating everything that was being done. The student facing work was based on situations that had happened in school not external events.

b) Teaching & Learning Walks

Liz Uren provided an update on the use of teaching and learning walks to monitor the quality of teaching.

- Originally it was decided to use teaching and learning walks in 2019 to replace the hour long appraisal observations.
- Learning were considered to be a more useful tool to judge the daily diet of teaching that students were receiving.
- A lot of time had been taken in the last year to look at the curriculum and develop the departmental statements of intent, these were a work in progress as many departments were working on diversifying their curriculum further.
- The aims of the curriculum learning walk model was to check that people were confident with the statements of intent, that they understood what underpinned the curriculum and the way that learning that progresses.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy especially reading was very high on the Ofsted agenda and as such the learning walks were very much looking at teaching of these areas.
- In February 2020 a learning walk of the English department was completed, this went very well, and everybody involved was happy with process and outcomes.
- Assessment of what was happening in the classroom was paused during the period of COVID restrictions to avoid having extra adults in the classroom. They were picked up again in the later part of the spring term 2021.

- The process consisting of five steps commencing with the line managers talking to heads of department about their curriculum and ending with discussion on how they had found the learning walks. All four heads of department were happy to return to teaching and learning conversations enjoying the holistic nature of the process.
- Step two was the actual process of observation , with senior leaders observing every teacher within one year group. Heads of department and years invited to join the observation. On average 30 minutes were spent in each classroom.
- Each observation was followed up with a discussion with teachers to talk through what they were teaching and how it fitted into the curriculum.
- Key questions to teachers were around how they know students are making progress, what subject specific training they had undertaken and how was their wellbeing being supported by school leaders.
- Whilst observing two students from each class were taken out with their books and asked questions focussed on assessment, feedback, and progress with examination of the books for examples. All teachers were aware of the questions students were going to be asked in advance.
- Following observations, a selection of student workbooks was examined to identify progress overtime being made, that feedback policy being followed and that evidence of explicit teaching of vocabulary evident.
- All information gathered was then collated by the lead for teaching and learning followed by conversations with heads of department.
- In maths there was consistency of what was being taught and the structure of the lessons. There was effective behaviour for learning , a positive teacher /student relationship with focussed classrooms. Students who were spoken to (year 8) were very positive about their progress in maths and numeracy since joining the school. It was obvious in maths that staff had a rich understanding of what had taken place in primary school and key stage 2 maths. The areas for further discussion included students not all being fully engaged with the lesson introduction, use of questioning , lack of feedback recorded in books. Presentations of books varied with some being unacceptable , some were battered and tatty from being taken home. The maths department commented positively on the co planning highlighting it as the best CPD during the year.
- In humanities the areas of good practice were the same as in maths. Additionally, there was an interest in talking about the importance of studying humanities in shaping the world to promote healthy and responsible living. Most staff understood key stage 2, and all had a view that what the students were studying would lead to success in GCSE courses. There was a variety of levels of written feedback with limited pick up after the period of online learning. The presentation of written work was generally good and better than the previous last year. Without exception teachers felt they were listened to and that their wellbeing was well looked after. There was limited evidence of a variety of reading strategies that had been part of the inset day training. One are of real concern was how students were able to articulate how they had made progress or been shown how to improve. A few spoke about low level disruption not being challenged, on the whole behaviour was excellent.
- Areas for development carried into the school development plan were greater consistency in questioning, further discussion with students on how they could improve and resetting of expectations around assessment and feedback.
- Investment in visualisers at school had assisted with improving presentations.

Governor comments and questions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liz Uren was thanked for her outstanding work as teaching and learning lead at the school and for the detailed overview. • The governors did pre covid have a few tours with senior leaders looking at attitudes to learning and behaviour, were these continuing? • The school was going in the right direction moving away from the appraisal observations and getting the triangulation between the students , the written work and what had gone on in lessons. Should this process be tightened as some students were not making the level of progress and some did not have the attitudes for learning to enable them to progress? Those students were the ones to focus on so that feedback could be provided about why the students might not be making the levels of progress expected or don't have appropriate attitudes for learning. • It would be useful to give staff the feedback and tools necessary to change strategy specifically towards those students that the staff are saying are not making progress. • What could be included was the extent that teachers were thinking about how SEND informs their pedagogy and the extent of their confidence of the understanding of the needs of SENs students. <p><u>Responses to Governor comments and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors were welcome to join senior leaders on the curriculum walks and post observation activities. These would cover attitudes to learning and behaviour. • All heads of department have an hour on their timetable where they are supposed to be in and out of class to monitor what's happening regards attitudes for learning and to support teachers. • The process could have something added to widen the student feedback beyond two students per class. • Ofsted inspections were currently interested in strategies for SEND along with disadvantaged students and how the strategies were translating into the classrooms. Inset day in September will include a session on SEND strategies generally and for individual students. <p>Prior to a break in the meeting Governors were advised that Jenny Poore was stepping down after 12 years as a Governor at the school. There was a vote of thanks for the contribution that she had made over the years including a period as Chair of Governors and lead governor for Human Resources.</p> <p>6.32pm – Jenny Poore left the meeting</p> <p>From 6.32pm to 6.40pm there was a break in the meeting.</p>	
5	<p>School Development Plan (SDP) – Leadership & Management</p> <p>a) 2021/22 SDP overview</p> <p>The Headteacher talked Governors through the key school development priorities for 2021/22 .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving outcomes for specifically for boys with extended writing and traditionally they did not do as well as the girls. • Embedding the curriculum learning walks. • Analysis of student outcomes with raising standards leaders put in place for both key stages to support. • Literacy and reading a big focus that would need to be carried forward due to missed time in school. • SEND strategies and provision implementation. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of CPD research to sit with one of the new assistant heads. • Reduction of gender, SEND and disadvantaged gaps. • Improvement in six identified subjects. • Student attendance below where the school would like to be, punctuality to lessons also required improving. • Reporting of prejudice based incidents ensuring that different ways for reporting available. • Mental health and well-being had improved , it would remain a focus for the following year. • Improvement of engagement of disadvantage students in extracurricular activities. • Embedding of new whole school values. • Measurement of careers programme against the Gatsby benchmarks. • Ensuring the curriculum would enable outstanding progress for students. • Disadvantaged students interventions in place and effective. • Budgeting to support future school improvement. • Carbon neutral strategy to be developed. • Policy on feedback on progress to be updated to support consistency. <p><u>Governor comments and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was assumed that the more detailed version of the school development plan would have more around the three strategic items of creativity, resilience, and respect. • How was the school doing on the practical implementation of the school strategy? <p><u>Response to Governor comments and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for signage , headed paper , website banners and all other practical aspects of old strategy ready to be removed and replaced. The three key values would be displayed across the school. 	
6	<p>Business Manager and Business Group</p> <p>There had been a number of catch up meetings on health and safety with a business group meeting to look at finance in more detail on 2nd July – notes from this meeting included within papers for Governors’ reference. An updated scheme of delegation, governors allowances policy and the latest budget monitoring report had also been circulated. It was that the model budget monitoring spreadsheet did not allow for the year to be changed and that it was for May 2021 not May 2020.</p> <p>a) Budget Monitoring Report</p> <p>The Business Manager highlighted a few key points from the report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been additional slots let to use the football pitch resulting in an increase in anticipated lettings income. • Refurbishment of caretakers house on schedule with accommodation being brought up to modern standards at PFI costs. • School trips were returning with robust insurance arrangements. • Summer school provision was currently being negotiated. <p>It was further noted that delays to the building programme for increasing toilet provision continued with uncertainty over when work would commence. Governors expressed ongoing concerns over the ongoing delays to toilets and science rooms.</p> <p>There was a question on whether approval had or was needed for the proposal to set aside additional funds for the artificial turf pitch refurbishment. It was thought that approval was not required but this would be checked to ensure clarity.</p>	

	<p>b) Governors Allowances Policy</p> <p>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Body approved the governors allowances policy as presented.</p> <p>c) Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Body approved the scheme of delegation as presented.</p>	
7	<p>Other Reports and Recommendations</p> <p>a) Safeguarding</p> <p>The Lead Governor for safeguarding provided a verbal update to Governors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of annual safeguarding audit underway , submission to Local Authority was due in October. • Webinar attended on peer on peer abuse which led to discussions with school safeguarding lead about harmful sexual behaviours something the school had a zero tolerance on. A process for students to report and be encouraged to report such behaviours had been suggested in line with the method of reporting for bullying. It would be necessary to reinforce with students the types of behaviour that were unacceptable. • Five heads of year and five non-teaching pastoral managers would be in place for next academic year providing an outlet for students to have conversations where they had concerns • The single central register had been reviewed by the governors and school safeguarding leads. • There was some unease being communicated from the parent / carer body about school uniform and the school skirt in particular (in terms of both its design and oversight of this in school). In response, school leaders advised that the new uniform policy introduced tailored trousers, tailored shorts and the school skirt and states that the skirt may not be altered from the supplied length. Further, school leaders advised that uniform policy is implemented across the whole student body and not directed at girls in particular with most issues around uniform policy relate to skirt length / shortened skirts and low-slung trousers or jeans, which senior leaders advised was inhibiting the focus on teaching and learning. • Some Governors had connection problems at this stage of the meeting and were unable to contribute to express their interest and / or concerns. • As not all governors were able to participate and because governors have some concerns about this area it was felt that a more detailed discussion and focus in the new academic year in relation to uniform, the respect agenda and sexualisation of girls was necessary. <p>6.45pm – Lara Coleman left the meeting.</p> <p>6.48pm – Alison Frost left the meeting</p> <p>b) Any training/ courses/ meetings that governors have attended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors had received a proposed monitoring plan for student wellbeing with an invitation for comment about whether the level of monitoring had the right balance of challenge and support whilst remaining strategic. The Headteacher confirmed that it was right that governors had a deep dive in student wellbeing to see how the system worked and how it might be adjusted. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a discussion about how staff wellbeing would be most effectively monitored and supported by Governors. The staff association had become dormant , other communication methods for staff voice required for the new academic year with feedback via the staff governor. <p>7.19pm – Haydn Stride left the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A governor had attended the climate education conference for governors, notes had been uploaded to training page on the governors shared drive. There was a brief discussion about climate change initiatives at school and the approach being taken by the Local Authority. • Governors schools conference from 20th to 24th September. • Two governors had met with the school lead for careers for an initial discussion. 	
8	<p>Other Policies and Other Documents for Approval</p> <p>a) Staff Absence Management – new LA policy for noting Governors were advised that a new absence management policy was being introduced by the Local Authority from September which the school was to adopt.</p>	
9	<p>Governance</p> <p>a) Chair & Vice Chair Election The Clerk chaired the meeting for this item. Nominations for the post of Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors had been invited in advance of the meeting. Nominations had been received for Jane Dickson as Chair and for Millie McDevitt as Vice Chair. They both left the meeting whilst the appointments were discussed further.</p> <p>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Body elected Jane Dickson as Chair of Governors and Millie McDevitt as Vice Chair of Governors. Both appointments until the end of the last meeting of 2021/22.</p> <p>7.38pm – Vanessa Hickey left the meeting</p>	
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>a) Tutor Group Photos There was comment that photo boards required updating.</p> <p>b) Planning Meeting An early governors’ business planning meeting proposed for autumn term.</p> <p>Meeting ended at 7.47pm</p>	