

**Meeting of Full Governing Body
30th September 2019
Training Room
4.30pm**

MINUTES

Governors Present:	Mick Baker, Jane Dickson, Alison Frost, Les Gunbie, Matt Hillier, Reg Hook, Jennifer John, Dick Knight, Jenny Poore (Chair), Rosie Reekie, Bronagh Shevlin, Haydn Stride, Derek Swindells
Officers Present:	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
In Attendance:	Richard Baker, Andrea Cumming , Roshan Dias

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>a) Welcome Governors were welcomed back for the year and Matt Hillier was welcomed to his first meeting as Headteacher.</p> <p>b) Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence received from Vanessa Hickey.</p> <p>c) Declarations of Interest The Clerk reported that not all declaration forms had been returned for the year and the register that was circulated was therefore not up to date.</p> <p>ACTION - All Governors to complete and submit a completed declaration form.</p> <p>There were no declarations made relating to items on the agenda.</p>	ALL
2	<p>Last Meeting Dated 8th July 2019</p> <p>a) Approval of Minutes The Full Governing Body reviewed five pages of minutes from the meeting held on 8th July 2019. There was one paragraph at the top of page two that required amendment as it was not grammatically correct. Subject to amendment of that paragraph the minutes were approved and signed by the Chair</p> <p>b) Matters Arising Not Included Elsewhere on Agenda Equalities monitoring - Governors had agreed that a collection of Governors' data in relation to equalities monitoring would be completed.</p> <p>ACTION - Equalities monitoring form to be checked by the Chair and then circulated to Governors for completion and return.</p> <p>The actions arising list from the previous year was reviewed and updated. There was an outstanding action from the March meeting relating to the circulation of notes from any fundraising meetings to the fundraising link governor.</p>	Chair/ All govs
3	<p>Chair's Update The Chair provided an update on her activities on behalf of the Full Governing Body since the last meeting. These included welcoming of the Headteacher.</p>	
4	<p>Headteacher's Report The Headteacher provided an introductory report to Governors outlining his vision of being the highest performing school in terms of progress in the Local Authority with the aim of achieving a</p>	

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	<p>+0.5 Progress 8 score within three years. This target was considered achievable with a push on progress for the boys group. Other updates included the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student numbers slightly down on projected with spaces in year 10 & 11. 352 students came into year 7 with some outstanding admissions appeals to be worked through. ▪ Attendance good at beginning of year with strong performance in year 11. Year 10 was the lowest group for attendance. ▪ Six term exclusions during the year to date for a variety of reasons, being higher than usual. ▪ Some backlash on uniform policy enforcement, nose studs had been allowed but rings were not due to health and safety issues. Uniform policy for year 7's from 2020 to be introduced to rectify the issue of safeguarding around very short skirts. Blazers as rumoured were not to be introduced. ▪ Two near miss health and safety issues reported, one relating to an electricity supply and the other relating to the casing of an air conditioning unit that fell off the wall. The units had been cable tied whilst a method of fencing off the areas permanently was explored. ▪ Staffing changes at the start of the year included a number of maternity leavers. The Head of computing had resigned, and an advert would be placed for replacement from January. Computing was a difficult area to recruit to and the department had suffered with lower results. Changes in music had been anticipated, the department had been over staffed and with a reduction in music teachers the need for split classes had been reduced. Languages provision would need to be increased to deliver changes in the curriculum. History teacher recruitment to free up a geography teacher who was currently covering the department. ▪ A staff member had been affected by the recent large fire in Brighton and the school were looking at practical ways of supporting her and her family. ▪ New site team working well together with identified issues dealt with promptly. ▪ PiXL an online teaching aid was being purchased to supplement and improve teaching and learning in the school. The potential benefits were explained to Governors. Two other schools in Brighton & Hove were known to have rolled out PiXL successfully reflected in their improved student outcomes. ▪ An area noted for tightening up on was prompt arrival at lessons as too much learning time was being lost. ▪ Open evening 10th October and Ghana visit to Stringer 11th October. <p>Governors questions were around the identified “wildly important goal” of +0.5 progress 8 score. The Headteacher explained that outstanding schools in West and East Sussex had progress 8 scores nearer to +0.8. It was an appropriate target for a school with a cohort such as Dorothy Stringer and with some improvement in boys progress it could be achieved. It was noted that there were more boys than girls in every year group. There had always been a tendency to have more boys at the school.</p> <p>There was a further question regards the strategy for bringing years 10 and 11 up in student numbers and providing the additional support that in year transferred students might need. The Headteacher advised that there was no need to actively recruit as it was likely that students would be coming in on appeals in lower years and that a good network of support was in place for students coming in on managed moves in year 10 and 11.</p>	
5	<p>School Development Area - Quality of Education</p> <p>a) Student Outcomes 2018/19</p> <p>Andrea Cumming presented a PowerPoint to Governors on the student outcomes for 2018/19. The following points were noted/discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As a year group the year 11 were slightly lower prior attainers and there was a higher level of non-attenders ▪ Focus for attainment had been on GCSE grades of 5+. 78% of students achieved grade 5+ in English and 64% a grade 5+ in maths. Those achieving a grade 5+ in both subjects were at 59%. ▪ Attainment 8 score for the school was 53.75%. ▪ Two good sciences at 75%, an excellent result. 	

- 30% of grades achieved were at level 7+ and 200 of them were at the highest level of grade 9.
- There were 70 students with 8 or more GCSEs at grade 7+ representing over 20% of students and 8 students who achieved eight at grade 9.
- It had been the last year of fast track French. Half of students entered got a grade 7+. Unlike in previous years these early entries would count in towards the school's performance in published information.
- Design was a subject causing concern last year and the performance in this subject had significantly improved. Health and social care and computing remained as subjects causing concern.
- Examples of the individual high performing students was provided noting that in attainment the top three were all boys. In progress there were examples of h achieving over 3 grades higher than national average relative to their starting point.
- A large number of disadvantaged students had made outstanding progress. The efforts put in by staff was making an impact.
- On results day each school in the local authority declared their results. It was thought that one school's declaration had not included the students that they thought would be disapplied. Taking that school out of the Local Authority data set it was demonstrated that Dorothy Stringer had performed best in the majority of standard measures. Governors asked why there was a differential between the Maths and English outcomes in all schools as both subjects included the same groups of students. In response it was advised that in English there were two subjects (language and literature) and that the one with the best results went forward to school results. There was a further question on whether maths outcome was in decline nationally. It was advised that the new maths exam specification was difficult to compare with the previous one and that the exam was now more challenging including aspects of A level maths.
- Compared to forecast outcomes the result were in line confirming a four year trend of accurate forecasting. Governors were impressed with the accuracy of predictions and were pleased that interventions would have as a result been directed where most needed.
- Progress 8 predicted score overall was +0.16. With the low attendees (less than 50%) taken out the score would be +0.38. Governors asked whether attendance was a problem everywhere and were advised that in Brighton & Hove there was a bit of an issue, however in the local authority students educated elsewhere were not taken out of roll which was not the same as in other authorities. The most successful schools would have attendance figures around 97%. A discussion followed about reasons behind persistent absence and what the interactions were with parents. School leaders advised that there had been more individualised responses to non-attendance and a stronger line taken where necessary with an increase in the level of imposed fines. There was comment from Governors about the possibility that increased student numbers created a more stressful environment and therefore might be impacting on students' enjoyment. There was further comment that non-attendance was likely to be more of a social issue.
- There was a gender gap at the school with boys progress 8 at -0.13 and girls at +0.49. This differential did not reflect us much within the disadvantaged groups. Governors commented on social pressures to conform that appeared to be greater in the boys group. There was further comment that working on attitudes appeared to be important and there was interest in what strategies might be deployed to change attitudes. The Headteacher advised that the introduction of a personal learning checklist for students would provide concrete steps for them to work to and along with quality feedback this should make some positive difference.

b) School Development Plan Final 2019/20

The priorities coming out of the results had been incorporated into the school development plan for 2019/20. These included the following:

- Reducing absence rates.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued focus on disadvantaged group. ▪ Boys achieving as well as girls. ▪ Focus on computing & IT and social care. ▪ New tracking at KS3 to ensure early intervention. <p>Governors commented that the priorities within the school development plan would be difficult to measure and encouraged school leaders to reflect on what success for them would look like and to include the criteria within the plan.</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the school development key priorities as presented.</p> <p>5.55pm - Derek Swindells left the meeting.</p>	
6	<p>Business Manager's and Business Group Report</p> <p>a) Financial Outturn The Business Manager presented the financial outturn to month 5 highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct staff costs - variance within teaching staff due to long term absence and six staff forecasted to be on maternity during the year. Departmental support roles had been reviewed resulting in some savings through redistribution of duties. ▪ Term time only contracts as reported previously would be subject to a recalculation of pay as part of the change in holiday entitlement with back pay applied for 5 years 3 months. The Local Authority had offered to cover 50% of these costs with the remaining 50% being charged to the schools with an option of a 10 year loan facility. Governors were disappointed with this offer as the issues had arisen due to an error in the way holiday entitlement had been calculated by the Local Authority. The original budget had been set on the previous method of calculation though had been adjusted in the outturn forecast. Letters were due to go out to individual members of staff with the intention of reaching agreements on back pay at which time the schools would be clearer on how much the liability would be. Governors were surprised that the error had not been picked up in previous audit processes and were concerned at the additional undue financial pressure to the school. ▪ A further change following a tribunal decision had resulted in a further liability regards holiday entitlement on additional hours worked. ▪ Salaries had been forecasted using the budget tool and the autorec facility was now working. ▪ Supply and agency costs relatively high to date and out of line with the tight budgets set. ▪ Additional 30p per day being added to the free school meal eligible students to cover a breakfast of cereal. Take up was quite low. ▪ Additional high needs funding had been agreed for additional students that joined in September. ▪ Current forecast for the year was a deficit of £10k. An application to pay redundancy payments over 5 years was therefore being made. <p>b) Internal Audit The final audit report had been circulated in advance of the meeting together with the proposed action plan that had been agreed by the Governors' Finance Group. The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liability insurance for contractors had been reviewed with contact made to increase insurance cover from 5 million to 10 million. The majority of contractors had come back with the correct level of insurance. Those that had not would not be used going forward until confirmation received. ▪ Actions were being taken to reduce the amount of cash held on site and more secure methods of banking being explored. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Issues with PFI over summer held back some planned works including the fencing. The Local Authority were taking over the contract. ▪ Income reconciliation in terms of catering was in place but was being found very time consuming. A system for accounting the parental deposits was being explored. <p>Governors were surprised and concerned at the partial assurance audit outcome being responsible for finance management. In response it was advised that the liability insurance levels was the main contributing factor. Governors were keen to have a further audit once the recommended levels of insurance were in place.</p> <p>c) Premises Governors asked for an update on the planned works to science classrooms and student access to water. Further adjustments were to be proposed to the science class work and plumbed in chilled water dispensers were being considered.</p> <p>d) Terms of Reference - Business Group The Business group proposed some changes to the group term of reference and referred to discussions about conversion of the group to the committee. It was noted that conversion to a committee would require two additional members. Dick Knight agreed to join.</p> <p>ACTION - The Chair requested some further time to consider the implications of conversion of the finance group to a committee.</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Business Group terms of reference with the tracked changes incorporated.</p> <p>e) School Fund Audited accounts for school trips and school fund had been received and were noted by the Governing Body.</p>	JP
7	<p>Other Reports from School/Governors No further reports.</p>	
8	<p>Policies and other Documents Approved under Delegation or for Approval</p> <p>a) Teachers' Pay Model pay policy only received the day before the meeting.</p> <p>b) Teacher Appraisal Teachers appraisal policy had been updated and would be considered alongside the pay policy.</p>	
9	<p>Governance</p> <p>a) Governors Work Plan & Responsibilities for Year The governor link responsibilities in terms of infrastructure and school development for 2019/20 were considered. Governors were advised that Sue Middleton had stepped down as an Associate Member following the expiry of her term of office. This left a vacancy for governors community link.</p> <p>ACTION - Governors to advise the clerk which of the school development areas that they wished to be linked to.</p> <p>The Governors' annual agenda plan was noted. Four core business meetings to be held</p> <p>b) Instrument of Government The Instrument of Government was considered noting that there were currently vacancies for two co-opted governors.</p> <p>c) Governors' Code of Conduct</p>	ALL

	<p>ACTION - Governors were asked to consider the National Governors Association Code of Conduct with a view to adopting next meeting.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Exclusion from Sport Parent Governors had been dealing with matters relating to the exclusion of students from sports activities as a sanction for poor behaviour following contact from parents. b) The Diamond Fund The school were submitting an application to be a charitable trust. Governors representation as a trustee was requested. c) Training Evening Governors were invited to attend a training session for parents. d) Youth Climate Strike Les Gunbie volunteered to be a link governor for environmental issues. <p>Meeting ended at 6.54pm</p> <p>Date of next meetings 11th November 2019 - Strategic Priorities and Projects 20th January 2020 - Full Governing Body.</p>	