

**Meeting of Full Governing Board  
25<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
4.30pm in School Library**

**MINUTES**

<b>Governors Present:</b>	Matt Hillier, Dick Knight, Emma Morey, Catherine Packham, Bronagh Shevlin, Bridget Taylor (Chair)
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Sara Bailey, Ian Charlesworth, Andrea Cumming, Nick Imrie, Giles Ward

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
	<p><b>Pre- Meeting Presentation/Training</b> Giles Ward the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead provided an overview of safeguarding and updates to the "Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)" document as part of the governors' annual safeguarding training.</p> <p><b>ACTION – Governors to read Annex A of the KCSIE 2023 document and complete the Dorothy Stringer safeguarding quiz, advising the Clerk when completed.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION – Contact card to be produced for Governors with key contact details in case of an urgent situation , including safeguarding.</b></p> <p>Note: Item 7a was taken next. The minutes are written in original agenda order.</p> <p>5.02pm – Giles Ward left the meeting.</p> <p>5.03pm – Ian Charlesworth and Nick Imrie joined the meeting.</p>	<p><b>All Govs</b></p> <p><b>School</b></p>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p><b>a) Welcome</b> The Chair welcomed all to the first meeting of the academic year.</p> <p><b>b) Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence received from Mick Baker, James Bennett, Rachel Borland, and Hiba Nour.</p> <p><b>c) Declarations of Interest</b> There were no declarations relating to items on the agenda.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Last Meeting Dated 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b></p> <p><b>a) Approval of Minutes</b> The Full Governing Board reviewed and approved seven pages of minutes from the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The Chair signed the minutes as confirmation of their accuracy.</p> <p><b>b) Actions and Matters Arising Not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</b> All included within the Head's report</p>	

<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Chairs Update</b> The Chair provided an update on current priorities and matters since the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Philip Brown had stepped down as a Co-opted Governor at the start of term.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vote of thanks – To Philip Brown for his contributions to the Governing Board including the role of safeguarding lead governor.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A complaint had been received from a group of parents regards the ski trip cancellation. As there were legal proceedings underway in regards on claiming reimbursement under insurance the complaint had been put on hold pending conclusion of these proceedings. The complainants had been advised.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The portfolio holder at the council for schools and education had visited the school during which a discussion about student numbers had been held which had been useful.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Headteacher’s Report including Exam Results</b></p> <p><u>Exam Results</u> Andrea Cumming provided the presentation on exam results for 2023 covering the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2023 exam outcomes were being compared with those from before covid had impacted from 2019.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A solid set of results for English and Maths with a 6% increase in students achieving grade 4 or above in Maths, a slight decrease in the English results due to the literature section.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attendance in school important with a direct impact on individual student outcomes. Those with poor attendance tended to perform less well in subjects like English and Maths. Data on the percentage of students who attend school regularly provided some insights into the impact of attendance on academic performance. Those disadvantaged students that had good attendance were performing better than expectations.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Higher attaining students were struggling more in achieving expected progress in English literature.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Early indications of Progress 8 score were very encouraging at +0.28 , being an average of quarter of a grade higher than expected based on student key stage 2 results. Focus areas for the year ahead were vocational subjects, design and technology, English literature, and conversion of grade 3s to 4s in languages.</li> </ul> <p><u>Comments and questions from Governors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Congratulations were given on a good set of exam results noting the impact of attendance. What was the school strategy for improving attendance?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The link between attendance and grades could be a powerful motivator for students.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Had the school met with those students who did not get their predicted grades to identify what the school could have done better to support?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Was the school doing anything to support neuro diverse students who might struggle with the language used in maths exam questions?</li> </ul> <p><u>Responses to Governor comments and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attendance currently at 93% which was still down on pre pandemic levels. There had been some students taken out of term already for family holidays. The school were implementing a firmer line on fining parents in line with procedures. A new system of points was being introduced as a “passport to prom” which included additional points</li> </ul>	

	<p>being allocated to students for good attendance. Assemblies for year 10 and year 11 had included a session on the impact of attendance on grades.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There was no formal process for getting feedback from students once they had left the school. Quotes had been obtained from ex-students through discussions which would be used in assemblies as motivators.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There was work on breaking down the maths exam questions to support all students.</li> </ul> <p><u>Remainder of Heads Report</u> The Headteacher presented the remainder of his report on an assumed read basis highlighting the following key points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Following a meeting with the school's partnership adviser consideration was being given to taking out two priorities within the school development plan that did not relate to teaching and learning, being school budget and carbon neutral strategy. Governors were asked for their opinion on this point.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Premises updates during the summer had included the reversal of the entrance to the canteen easing the student flow and issues of water ingress through the roof that were under investigation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Supporters were raising money towards school minibuses.</li> </ul> <p><u>Comment and questions from Governors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School budgets were critical needing focus during the year though not necessarily through the school development plan. Development plans were contingent on available budgets.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Carbon neutral strategy was part of the culture and values of the school and something that was of interest to future generations. A clear reasoning on why this should be taken out of the school development plan was needed before Governors would consider removing it.</li> </ul> <p><u>Response to Governor comment and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> It had been the suggestion of the school partnership partner to remove both school budget and carbon neutral strategy from the school development plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION – Final whole school development plan to next board meeting for signing off.</b></p>	
5	<p><b>School Development Plan - The Stringer Way</b> Governors were provided with a copy of a new publication "The Stringer Way" which had been developed as a guide for staff to the stringer learning culture. Ian Charlesworth and Nick Imrie provided further context on how the guide had been developed and how it would support school development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School culture and behaviour were key to improving schools , relationships underpin supporting with improving school attendance.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> "The Stringer Way" had come about following an extensive consultation with middle leaders and in effect encapsulates all ideas and what the school does to build best relationships and behaviour.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of the document would take place later in the year.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The section on adaptive teaching outlined the principles of knowing individual students and adaption of practice to get the best from them. The Stringer Learning Gateway (SLG) provided teachers with information on all their classes.</li> </ul> <p><u>Comment and questions from Governors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The document has gone to all staff or just teachers and teaching support.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a link back to the staff survey where feedback was given on behaviour management within the school. The document makes it clearer that all staff are part of the solution to effective management of behaviour.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have students been consulted as part of the document development.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a difference between being equitable and equality , would not like to see this lost in a set of processes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is discomfort with the neuro diverse and less advantaged cohorts being penalised for not having the right equipment or uniform.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A shorter version of the document would be of interest to parents.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The issuing of behaviour points can lead students to think they are “bad”.</li> </ul> <p><u>Response to Governor comment and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The document was given out on the first day back into school to all staff as some elements such as expectations were relevant to all.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> It makes the expectations clearer that will help with consistency , something that is always challenging in a large school.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The first priority was to get the document out to staff for the start of the academic year. Later in the year student voice would be sought through the student council. The school’s expectations were on the back of student timetables.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Some IT changes might be made to how the school communicate with home , shifting to a weekly summary as opposed to communication on each behaviour issue.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The section on adaptive teaching addresses the point of equality .</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Equipment and uniform are not linked to behaviour on the SLG. Students are encouraged to take responsibility and to ask to borrow equipment or uniform where needed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The system of behaviour points had been streamlined and aligned to school expectations better, students would not see their own behaviour logs and once issues had been resolved they would be removed.</li> </ul> <p>6.07pm – Nick Imrie and Ian Charlesworth left the meeting.</p>	
6	<p><b>School Finances</b></p> <p>The School Business Manager presented the budget monitoring report for July 2023 noting that the August report would go to Business Group of Governors the following week. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teachers’ pay increase now confirmed and included within the forecast. Government funding to be received for anything over 3.5% based on number of students,</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overtime would need to be incorporated within the forecast reducing the estimated surplus further.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lettings looking positive and likely to be 7k to 8k over budgeted income. However, Issues with buckling of the floor in the sports hall were resulting in cancellations and lost income.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Average of 5% increase in prices on canteen items proposed from after October half term. Parental survey to be sent out on canteen provision,</li> </ul> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Board increased an overall increase on 5% on canteen food items effective from 2<sup>nd</sup> half of autumn term.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Finances very tight at moment , so the operation of a further catering pod would be put on hold for now. The focus would be on equipment, staffing levels and in house prepared food.</li> </ul>	

7	<p><b>Policies and Other Documents for Approval</b></p> <p><b>a) Child Protection/ Safeguarding Policy</b> The updated child protection and safeguarding policy was presented for approval. Amendments to policy had been highlighted for ease of review. There were comments that the policy document was very comprehensive and that navigation to specific points was challenging.</p> <p><b>ACTION - A suggestion was made to include a summary of the child protection and safeguarding policy with links to additional information to make it easier to navigate. This would be considered.</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Board approved the child protection and safeguarding policy as presented.</b></p> <p><b>b) Exam Policy</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Board approved the exams policy as presented.</b></p> <p><b>c) Governors Virtual Meeting Policy</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Board approved the governors virtual meeting policy as presented.</b></p> <p><b>d) Early Career Teachers Policy</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Board approved the early careers teacher’s policy as presented.</b></p> <p><b>e) Teaching &amp; Learning Policy</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Board approved the teaching and learning policy as presented.</b></p> <p><b>f) Policy Schedule – Agree Delegations and Frequency of Review</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Board agreed to the proposed delegated approving officers and frequency of review of polices as presented subject to the addition of the Headteacher as approving officer for exam policy and teaching and learning policy.</b></p>	School GW
8	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p><b>a) Instrument of Government</b> No changes to the instrument of government required. 12 governors in total was considered appropriate.</p> <p><b>b) Governor Responsibilities – Confirm for Year</b> It was noted that the school had been without a Local Authority governor for a while and that a request had been submitted for someone to replace the outgoing co-opted governor who had lead responsibility for safeguarding. Governors were reluctant for numbers of governors in post to be below 12 for extended periods.</p>	

	<p><b>AGREEMENT/ACTION – If no Local Authority Governor found by the November Board meeting look to move an existing Governor to the Local Authority route or increase the numbers of co-opted governors by one.</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The following changes to government links were agreed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Change the curriculum link role to be literacy specific with Catherine Packham takin the lead.</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Emma Morey to be an additional safeguarding link governor on a temporary basis and subject to exiting link governor’s agreement. (Clerk to check outside of meeting)</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Emma Morey to join the Headteacher appraisal group.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>c) Code of Conduct</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT – The Full Governing Body adopted the revised Governors code of conduct produced by the National Governors Association.</b></p> <p><b>d) Governors Training Log</b> The training log for summer 2023 was noted. Governors were encouraged to look at their own development needs and training available.</p> <p><b>e) Annual Housekeeping</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Declaration of Interest</b></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION – All Governors to complete their annual declaration form and submit to the Clerk.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION – The following three housekeeping tasks would be picked up and discussed at the next meeting.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Diversity Monitoring</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Skills Audit</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Governance Evaluation</b></li> </ul>	
9	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>a) Fundraising</b> Fundraising group becoming active with governor involvement.</p> <p>Meeting ended at 6.41pm Date of next meeting : 16<sup>th</sup> October</p>	

Minutes Approved

Date:

Signature: