



SPRING TERM 2019

MINUTES of the meeting of the Governors of Holmer Green Senior School held at the School on Wednesday 27 March 2019 at 19.00.

PRESENT	Mr S. Barrett (SB) Mr P. Davies (PD) Mrs D. Deanus (DD) Mr A. Green (AG) (Chair) Mr D. Greenwood (DG) Mr E. Hillyard (EH) (Headteacher) Mr A. Jones (AJ)	Mrs S. Khan (SK) Miss J. Kirkpatrick (JK) Ms F. Kiss (FK) Mr S. Pilgrim (SP) Mrs E. Starling (ES) Mrs S. Stewart (SS) Mrs L. Swain (LS)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mrs L. Jackson (LJ) Mr P. Tang (PT) Ms E. Walker (EW)	Director of Finance, HR and Resources Deputy Headteacher Clerk
ABSENT:	Mrs L. Allen (LA) Miss E. Baddeley (EB) Mr J. Leftwich (JL) Ms M. Selby-Boothroyd (MSB)	Apologies received and accepted Apologies received and accepted Apologies received and accepted

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

1 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

The Clerk reminded governors that Mr Greenwood had reported his intention to stand down as Chair at the end of the last meeting. Nominations had been sought for this position and a nomination was forthcoming for Mr Green Tony. There were no further nominations either sent in advance or at the meeting.

Mr Green withdrew from the meeting whilst governors discussed his suitability for the position.

Mr Green returned to the meeting and his appointment as Chair of Governors was confirmed.

Mr Green thanked governors for the confidence they had expressed in him and thanked Mr Greenwood for his efforts on behalf of the school over many years.

ACTION

ACTION: It was agreed that the appointment of a Vice-Chair would be deferred to the next meeting. All governors were asked to consider nominating themselves for this position.

2 NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared specifically in items on the agenda however, the following standing declarations of interest were made:

- Mrs Starling is a governor at Highworth Combined School.
- Mrs Swain, Mr Pilgrim and Mrs Selby-Boothroyd are governors at Manor Farm Community Infant School.
- Mr E. Hillyard is a governor at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School.
- Mrs Stewart is employed by Bucks County Council as a surveyor on the school expansion project.

4 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

4.1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2018, having been circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record and would be made available for inspection in the School.

4.2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5 GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

The Clerk reported that Mrs Whitehead had resigned from the governing body since the last meeting owing to work pressures. Governors thanked Mrs Whitehead for her very valuable contribution to the school and governing body over a number of years.

Mr Hillyard reported that he had met a prospective governor – Toni Ellis – with Mr Green. Mrs Ellis' children had attended HGSS in the past and she was keen to give something back to the school. She is employed part-time as a Finance Manager for a Multi-Academy Trust not within Buckinghamshire. Mr Hillyard and Mr Green recommended her as a suitable governor candidate. Her application form was circulated and considered by governors.

ACTION: It was agreed to appoint Mrs Ellis as a Community Governor with immediate effect.

ACTION
LJ/LS/Clerk

Mrs Ellis would be able to chose which committee to serve on but would be probably best suited to Finance, Premises, Health and Safety or People and Personnel.

It was noted also that the terms of office of Mr Pilgrim and Mrs Deanus would be ending at the end of April.

Mrs Deanus stated that she would not be re-standing as a Parent Governor due to other pressures on her time.

The Chair thanked Mrs Deanus for her contributions to the school and Governing Body.

ACTION: It was agreed that nominations would be sought for parent governors from the parent body.

LJ/Clerk

6 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

6.1 REPORT OF THE HEADTEACHER AND SEF

The Headteacher's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The following matters were highlighted:

Safeguarding – an external review of safeguarding had been commissioned and the draft report had been received. Mr Hillyard thanked Mr Pilgrim, Safeguarding Governor, for coming into school as part of the review. The review had confirmed that the school is compliant, with many strengths – multi agency working, IT filtering systems and work on attendance. Areas for improvement have also been identified and would be shared with the Safeguarding Governor to report back on.

CH/SP

School Visits – The School performed well during a recent Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) inspection - DoE at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels is offered to all pupils. Mr Hillyard thanked staff for their work in enabling these opportunities to be offered to the students, particularly Miss Stratton who co-ordinates the DoE scheme for the school. This year, the first cohort of pupils attaining DoE Gold will be invited to Buckingham Palace to receive their awards.

Youth Award – Mr Hillyard congratulated those students at HGSS who were runners up in the recent Chiltern District Youth Award.

Subject Excellence – an ex-student from HGSS had been awarded a national art award. As part of the prize, an artist will come into school to work with the students.

Mr Hillyard confirmed that these achievements would all be published in the newsletter and on the website. A governor suggested involving local radio in promoting these achievements.

6.2 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018/19

Governors noted the detail in the School Improvement Plan as circulated and the change in colour coding as improvements are introduced and embedded. Governors were advised that the action on monitoring schemes of work will be in place in September 2019, not at the beginning of the Summer Term as implied in the report.

6.3 3-5 YEAR PLAN

The Headteacher explained that the School Development Plan 2018-2023 was a working document. A small group of governors, who volunteered at the last meeting, are involved in developing the current working document.

A governor commented that this new way of working and enabling governors to have a strategic input into the development of the school was very valuable. Being a strategic document, this would need to be considered for approval by the full governing body at some point.

Mr Hillyard reminded governors that the school is due a short inspection in Summer 2020. Assuming it is a one-day monitoring inspection and not converted to a two-day Section 5 inspection, the best outcome the school can hope for is for HMI to confirm the judgements given in 2016. This is frustrating being that the Sixth Form has improved vastly since the last inspection.

Following a question, Mr Hillyard confirmed that all actions relating to 2018 were contained in the School Improvement Plan.

6.4 PROPOSALS FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Mr Hillyard introduced the proposed changes to governors as follows:

- 1. To change the number of options our students take from four to three so that they are in line with the average number taken in the County and can therefore focus on quality grades, rather than quantity.**

Mr Hillyard explained that these proposals were in response to a lot of research. His proposal to reduce the number of GCSE subject options would bring HGSS into line with most other schools across the County. The new GCSEs have more exams and it was important to take account of this in terms of the well-being of students. The quality of exam outcomes is regarded by universities as being more important than the quantity taken.

A governor asked what impact this would have on those students who are less likely to go to university? Would this proposal reduce their options?

Dropping a GCSE option will free up teacher time to support students with their exams. Mr Hillyard was not of the opinion that this would have a negative impact on any student – whether opting for university or not. They would still be able to choose vocational options in the third option block.

Would students still be able to take 2 options from the open basket?

Mr Hillyard confirmed that they would. Language take up will be encouraged where appropriate.

- 2. To increase the number of staff training days from six to eight per year in order to improve the consistency of teaching across each student's timetable. These training days will be on:**

2.9.2019 Monday	11.11.2019 Monday	20.4.2020 Monday
3.9.2019 Tuesday	6.1.2020 Monday	1.6.2020 Monday
4.9.2019 Wednesday	24.2.2020 Monday	

Year 7 and 12 will have their first day back on 4 September 2019 for induction. All other year groups will start on 5 September 2019 at 08:55am as per normal.

Mr Hillyard explained that schools typically have 5 INSET days a year. He was proposing that this be extended to 8 INSET days. The rationale for this proposal is to encourage the further development of teachers to enable students to have the best learning opportunities possible.

- 3. To 'pilot' a two week October half-term for 2019 from 28 October 2019 to 8 November 2019. This is a pilot and feedback will be sought about it in the next academic year.**

Mr Hillyard explained that a number of schools nationally have adopted a two-week autumn half-term holiday to give staff and students ample time to have a break during a long and busy term. He proposed that this be trialled and reviewed.

A governor asked if the proposed changes to INSET days and the two week autumn half-term holiday would mean that the pupils would be in school for 8 days less than was currently the case?

Mr Hillyard confirmed that, if adopted by governors, this would mean that pupils would be in school for 182 days per year rather than 190 as was the case currently. He explained that as an academy, governors had the flexibility to make these changes. In the independent sector, pupils commonly are taught for about 160 days per year. He hoped that this would be a recruitment and retention incentive for teachers.

A governor asked how we would be able to evaluate whether the trial had been successful?

Mr Hillyard acknowledged that there had been variable feedback from parents and some, with younger or more vulnerable children, were concerned about the increased childcare implications for them. Mr Hillyard suggested that parents and staff would need to be surveyed. He knew of another school which had adopted this and would be prepared to share information with HGSS.

A governor stated that some students had also expressed concern at the impact on them of having 8 days fewer teaching days in school.

A governor asked what impact this would have on teachers' directed time?

It was confirmed that there would be no effect on teachers directed time.

A governor asked about the impact on support staff? Would they lose pay because of this initiative?

Mr Hillyard reported that the initial proposal would have meant that support staff would either have to take unpaid leave for the additional week or work in school at the discretion of their line manager. This proposal had been amended in the light of feedback and in recognition of the part played by all staff in school. Now all staff will be treated

the same in terms of pay for this additional week.

A governor commented that some support staff had said that they would need to work on some of the INSET days because they clashed with the exam timetable.

Could additional training be offered for support staff also?

Mr Hillyard stated that teachers would gain from training opportunities during the additional INSET days but support staff would not in the same way.

A governor asked how these proposals compared to what is on offer at local grammar schools?

Mr Hillyard explained that there is a mix of arrangements in place across grammar school academies. Some have adopted a two week autumn half-term break. It was being introduced here very much as a pilot.

A governor asked if any schools had lengthened the school day?

Mr Hillyard stated that some schools had lengthened the school day for some year groups. This is not being considered currently at HGSS.

Mr Hillyard stated that these proposal were part of a range of additional measures being introduced. HGSS would be able to offer teachers 60% more training days than in other schools.

A governor asked why parents had been told that these arrangements had been confirmed when they had yet to be considered by the Governing Body? These proposals were strategic matters for the Governing Body and would have a significant impact on the school community. The fact that some parents knew of these arrangements before some governors had compromised them.

Mr Hillyard apologised for the timing of these changes. Governors on the SDP working party had been informed of these proposals but he accepted that not all governors had been made aware of the proposals. He would learn from this experience and ensure that did not happen again.

A governor commented that there were no minutes from meetings of the SDP working group.

It was confirmed that this was because it did not have terms of reference or any delegated responsibilities.

Governors agreed to adopt the proposals with effect from 1 September 2019.

6.5 EXTERNAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE

Mr Hillyard proposed that it was timely to undertake a Review of Governance as it had been clear from the self-evaluation exercise undertaken recently that this would be beneficial and because there had been a change in governing body membership.

Mr Hillyard stated that he had speculatively approached the NGA and they had confirmed that they would be able to undertake a review if that was the wish of governors.

It was noted that a self-evaluation process has commenced with each of the committees and full governing body having been assigned the areas relevant to their remit to review and reflect upon. This would be included on the agendas of next term’s meetings. Mr Jones reported that the Finance Committee had chosen to look at the terms of reference as a starting point.

ACTION: It was agreed to commission the NGA to undertake a Review of Governance. A scoping meeting would be arranged to have input from the Chair, another governor, the Headteacher and the Clerk initially. All governors would be involved in the actual review.

6.6 GOVERNORS’ DAY

6.6.1 EVALUATION – 27 February 2019

Governors have completed their evaluations which have been shared on the Headteacher’s report for this meeting.

EH

6.6.2 PLANS – 23 April 2019

Mr Hillyard explained the agenda for the next scheduled Governors’ Day and encouraged governors to attend if they could.

A governor asked how governors would interact with staff at departmental meetings?

Mr Hillyard said that he was flexible about that and staff would be made aware that governors would be visiting.

Governors were asked to let the Clerk know if there were able to attend.

All Governors

7 DELGATED REPORTS (COMMITTEES)

ACTION

7.1 FINANCE, PREMISES, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Premises, Health and Safety Committee held on 20 March 19 had not yet been circulated. Mr Jones, Chair, reported that forecasts remain healthy. The remaining discussions were in the minutes which would be circulated.

AJ/Clerk

7.2 PEOPLE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the People and Personnel Committee on 6 March 18 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. There were no updates as matters had been covered in elsewhere on the agenda.

7.3 LEARNING AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Curriculum Committee on 12 March 19 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. There were no further updates other than to ask the governing body to consider appointing Mr Barrett to this committee.

ACTION: It was agreed to add Mr Barrett as a member of this committee.

Clerk

Governors thanked Mrs Starling for taking on the role of chair of the Learning and Curriculum Committee. This role would mean that she would become a Member of the Academy Trust as well as a Trustee/Governor.

LJ

Governors and Members present endorsed this decision.

7.4 HR RELATED PANELS COMPLAINTS PANELS AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES

A meeting of the Student Discipline Committee had been held earlier in the evening and, therefore, it was not yet possible to report the outcome.

7.5 MAT WORKING PARTY

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2019 were circulated.

Governors noted that Widmer End and Manor Farm Junior Schools had expressed an interest to the EFSA in forming a MAT. Five or six other primary schools are also interested and HGSS will continue to monitor the situation.

ACTION

Governors noted that there was no impact on HGSS of the loss of the Bucks Learning Trust as it did not buy in any services from them.

Mr Hillyard said that the priorities for the school are:

1. to gain an Ofsted 'outstanding' rating,
2. to deliver on the expansion project and
3. to explore further forming a MAT.

Governors agreed that these are currently the strategic priorities for the school.

8 DELEGATED REPORTS (GOVERNORS)

8.1 CHAIR

Mr Greenwood reported that he had undertaken no delegated action on behalf of the Governing Body this academic year. Mr Hillyard had, however, been in liaison with him over the closure of the school for a snow day.

8.2 DEVELOPMENT GOVERNOR

Mrs Swain, Development Governor, reported. She asked governors whether they were confident with the NGA Learning Link log in process?

Governors confirmed that they were.

Mrs Swain reported that it had been agreed at People and Personnel Committee that the Clerk would send out a monthly reminder to governors to undertake an online course each month. Topics would be highlighted as appropriate.

Clerk

Mrs Swain agreed to inform the Clerk of training undertaken by governors.

LS

8.3 SEND, LEARNING SUPPORT, INCLUSION GOVERNOR

There was no report from Ms Selby Boothroyd, SEND Governor, being absent from the meeting. Mr Hillyard reported that he was aware that Ms Selby Boothroyd had visited school and met with Mrs Hawkins, SENDCO.

ACTION: It was agreed to defer the report from Ms Selby Boothroyd to the next meeting.

MSB

8.4 SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION GOVERNOR

Mr Pilgrim, Safeguarding Governor, reported that he had visited Mrs Hawkins, Designated Safeguarding Lead, and participated in

EH

ACTION

the recent safeguarding audit (Minute No. 6.1 refers). The outcome of the audit would be shared with Mr Pilgrim.

8.5 GOVERNOR FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

Mrs Deanus, Governor for the Disadvantaged, had nothing to report.

9 POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS

There were no policies for review and approval at this meeting.

10 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 3 July 19 at 7.00pm in accordance with the schedule of meeting dates.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 SCHOOL EXPANSION

A governor asked if there would be reports to the full governing body about the expansion plans?

It was explained that the detail of the expansion is discussed at meetings of the Finance, Premises and Health and Safety committee. The plans would be part of the consultation for planning permission.

ACTION: It was agreed that

- an update would be given at each governing body meeting going forward and a Standing Item would be included on agendas to facilitate this.
- the item on the July FGB meeting agenda would be to update about the whole school expansion project but also to report on the readiness of the school to accept an additional 2 forms of entry from September 2019.

Agenda Item

Agenda Item

A governor asked about the impact of the school expansion on the local infrastructure?

Mrs Stewart reported that surveys have already been scoped for this purpose and the information gleaned will be considered by the Highways department and part of the planning process. The success of the planning application will be dependent on this information and as such it is an area of risk. The extra 2 FE for September 2019 will not be dependent on planning.

Mrs Jackson reported that the enabling works for the additional September intake are already planned. County has agreed to release monies for the tennis courts and it is hoped to secure funding for all-weather covers for the courts.

11.2 MR GREENWOOD

Mr Hillyard took the opportunity to thank Mr Greenwood for his services to HGSS as Chair of governors over many years. He was presented with a card and present in recognition of his service.

Mr Greenwood thanked the governing body and wished the new chair, Mr Green, every success in his new role. Mr Greenwood said that he was pleased to have seen the changes in the school over the years to now being in an extremely positive position in terms of teaching, student numbers and outcomes and the sixth form.

12 EVALUATION OF MEETING

Governors confirmed that the meeting was conducted in an open manner and that all governors were invited to participate and contribute to discussions. It was confirmed that all members of the Governing Body would have access to these minutes.

In terms of impact at this meeting, Governors

- appointed a new community governor with relevant skills and appointed a new Chair of Governors;
- noted the contribution of those governors on the working group into the 3-5 year school development planning priorities;
- received a rationale from the Headteacher and endorsed the proposals to introduce 3 additional INSET dates annually, to reduce GCSE option choices by one and to pilot a two week Autumn term holiday.
- Agreed to commission an external review of governance.
- Agreed the three strategic planning priorities for the school.
- Noted the expectation that they would undertake more online training and would be prompted by the Clerk to do so on a monthly basis.

The meeting closed at 20.35

Signed Date
CHAIR

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018/19

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING PRIORITIES	ACCOUNTABILITY to GOVERNORS
Leadership & Management 1.1 Embed the culture of excellence in learning, teaching and assessment in order to improve the outcomes of all learners 1.2 To re-visit the school mission, cores values and vision based on the highest expectations 1.3 All students make outstanding progress – no gaps between groups of learners. 1.4 To develop a balanced curriculum at KS5 that meets the needs of students	FGB FGB FGB L&C
Teaching, Learning and Assessment 2.1 To develop a culture of positive learning behaviour 2.2 To develop a culture of sustained challenge 2.3 To develop highly effective schemes of work that address specific lines of enquiry in each subject area, such as, effective questioning and dealing with misconceptions.	P&P L&C L&C
Personal Development and Welfare 3.1 To raise attendance and punctuality of all groups of pupils so that all pupils exceed national figures. 3.2 To raise aspirations and attendance of key groups: any other Asian background; Pakistani; Bangladeshi and Disadvantaged students so they exceed national figures. 3.3 Improve behaviour for learning through consistent use of routines 3.4 To develop a school culture where pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and are proud of their achievements as learning is celebrated. 3.5 To develop an open culture where pupils feel safe and all work hard to prevent all forms of bullying	P&P P&P P&P P&P P&P
Outcomes 4.1 Reduce the residual/variation in outcomes between subjects, particularly the Open Element, the % of 7-9 grades and boys 4.2 Improve the attainment 8 and progress 8 of boys across all subjects so they catch up with girls 4.3 Increase the attainment 8 and progress 8 of Disadvantaged students so they catch up with their Non-Disadvantaged peers 4.4 - Reduce the variation in progress between subjects (ALPs indicators) so all subjects achieve a ALPs 1-3 rating, particularly Biology, Business Studies, English Literature, Geography, History (below ALPs 4 in 2018) 4.5 - Improve the L3VA Score for Applied General to be at least meeting National Averages in every BTEC subject 4.6 – Ensure that Disadvantaged (ex PP and Bursary) students make progress at least in line with their Non-Disadvantaged peers	L&C L&C L&C L&C L&C