



AUTUMN TERM (2) 2019

MINUTES of the meeting of the Governors of Holmer Green Senior School held at the School on Wednesday 11 December 2019 at 19.30.

PRESENT	Miss E. Ginger (EG) Mr S. Barrett (SB) Mr P. Davies (PD) Mrs T. Ellis (TE) Mr A. Green (AG)(Chair) 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) Mr J. Leftwich (JL) Mrs S. Stewart (SS) Mrs L. Swain (LS) Mrs A. Thomas (AT)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mrs L. Jackson (LJ) Mr P. Tang (PT) Ms E. Walker (EW) Miss A. Lewis Miss M. Brodie	Director of Finance, HR and Resources Deputy Headteacher Clerk 6 th Form Management Team Rep 6 th Form Management Team Rep
ABSENT:	Ms M. Selby-Boothroyd (MSB) Mrs H. Jones (HJ) Mr D. Greenwood (DG)	Apologies received and accepted Apologies received and accepted Apologies received and accepted

NB. Governors' questions are highlighted in *italics* throughout these minutes.
Governors agreed to take the agenda items out of order in order to allow the two students to leave after their presentation.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1 NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following item was notified as an item of Any Other Business:

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Hillyard declared an interest in item 8.1. There were no other interests declared however, the following standing declarations of interest were made:

- Mrs Starling is a governor at Highworth Combined School.
- Mrs Stewart, Mr Davies, Mr Green and Mrs Khan all have Local Authority affiliations.

ACTION

3 STRATEGIC PLANNING

3.1 REPORT OF STUDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM REPRESENTATIVES

Mr Hillyard introduced Abigail Lewis and Melissa Brodie.

Governors were updated about the following matters by Abigail and Melissa:

- The Sixth Form Open Evening had gone well and they had interacted with students who are not currently at HGSS.
- Year 13 are busy completing their UCAS applications and they have benefitted from a great deal of support from Miss Harrison and form tutors. A variety of universities and courses are being applied for including one student who has been successful in being selected for an interview at Cambridge.
- Year 12 took part in the National Skills Challenge which had been a great success
- Students continue to benefit from opportunities offered by World Challenge and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Applications for all award levels are higher than in previous years.
- Sixth Form students benefit from a broad range of enrichment activities during period 5 on a Wednesday this has included, yoga, gym, band, first aid and cooking on a budget.
- Our Sixth Form has been commended for being in the top 10% of schools nationally for progress for the 3rd year in a row.
- An assembly was organised as part of the Mind Mentorship Programme to support and sign-post additional support for any student who needs it.

The Chair thanked the Sixth Form Management Team representatives on behalf of the governors for giving up their time to attend their meeting and update them. They were commended on being such good ambassadors for the school. The contribution by those students who had contributed to the Christmas concert was acknowledged too and the Chair asked that the governors' thanks be passed onto to all who were involved.

Abigail and Melissa left the meeting.

Mr Hillyard paid tribute to those students who were determined enough to sit the Oxbridge entrance exam irrespective of the outcome. He acknowledged the work undertaken by Miss

Harrison in supporting them through this process during the half-term break.

3.2 REPORT OF HEADTEACHER AND SEF

The Headteacher's report was noted.

EAL - Mr Hillyard drew governors' attention to the EAL banding data now included in his report. He reiterated that all students are tracked but the data about sub-groups of students is shared at meetings of the People and Personnel Committee.

Attendance – In response to a query about the information in his report, Mr Hillyard clarified that the attendance rate is just above target and significantly above the national average. It is also high in relation to other upper schools in Buckinghamshire.

In response to a question about the colour coding of attendance charts, Mr Hillyard agreed to include a key to show the reason for the colours in future reports.

Behaviour – information about behaviour sanctions and achievement points is reviewed and discussed in detail by the People and Personnel committee. It is encouraging that every student has received at least one achievement point.

Do we always have more boys than girls?

Mr Hillyard stated that this depended on the intake into grammar schools.

CPG – *Is it possible to have details of the numbers of staff who complete evaluations?*

Mr Hillyard agreed that this information would be provided in future as part of Mr Wooller's reports to the People and Personnel Committee.

Personal Development - In addition to the enrichment and extra-curricular activities listed, there are many other opportunities for students organised and delivered within school.

Key Dates for Next Term - It was noted that there were some discrepancies in the dates and times listed.

ACTION: To re-circulate the timetable of meetings

Clerk

3.3 SIP 2019-20

The RAGged progress towards the SIP objectives was noted.

3.4 REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN

Governors noted the action in the Governance Development Plan which had been amended after the last meeting to strike through Priority 4 (it is still visible to demonstrate that this has been discussed).

Priority 3 has moved forward in that Ofsted Inspector facilitated training has taken place.

Priority 2 - Mr Hillyard asked if a governor would write an article for the next newsletter to parents.

ACTION: a governor volunteer to approach the Headteacher

All governors

Did the Governors' Annual Report get circulated?

Mr Hillyard stated that it had been placed on the website but he was unsure if it had been emailed out to parents.

ACTION: Mr Hillyard to check and report back

EH

Priority 1 – Mr Hillyard stated that he had approached the Headteacher of another upper school in Buckinghamshire with a similar catchment area to HGSS to ask whether their governing body would be prepared to share practice. Unfortunately, this school was not in a position to be able to do this at this point in time.

ACTION: Following discussion it was agreed to contact Amersham School

EH

Our governing board benefits from a number of people who are, or who have been, governors elsewhere although they are primary school related.

3.5 TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2020-21

Governors were reminded that they had been circulated with two possible schedules for term and holidays dates for 2020/21 depending on whether they wished to continue the two week Autumn half-term and additional 3 INSET days or revert to the previous pattern.

Mr Tang circulated a summary of responses to the survey. Governors noted that:

- 96% of the 75 members of staff who responded were in

favour of a 2 week half-term (4% against).

- 92% of the 64 students who responded were in favour of a 2 week half-term (8% against)
- 75% of the 4 governors who responded were in favour of a 2 week half-term(25% against)
- 55% of 415 parents who responded were in favour of a two week half-term (45% against)

Mr Tang cited the key issues as outlined in his report including:

- The importance of being able to offer an recruitment and retention incentive to staff
- A number of schools locally are responding to the recruitment crisis in similar ways and HGSS needs to be competitive
- Parents not in favour had cited reasons of childcare, loss of taught curriculum time and the consistency of home learning set.
- Some had queried the need for an INSET day immediately after a 2 week break.
- Some had asked that the additional week be the same as other schools (ie the week before the Bucks half-term)

A governor commented that any analysis of the benefit of the 2 week half-term needed to be considered alongside an analysis of performance.

A governor asked if there is a correlation between the additional week's holiday and a reduction in staff absence? It is important for governors to consider this too when reviewing this.

It was noted that information in relation to staff absence and staff turnover would be referred to the P&P committee.

A governor commented that it would be useful to see if there is an impact on staff retention and recruitment also.

A governor asked about pupil absence.

Mr Hillyard explained that there had been in fall in attendance last week from 96.4% to 96.3% as is expected at this time of year.

A governor asked how they would know that a stability in absence is attributable to the 2 week half-term?

Governors also commented that they would wish to see comparative data for other schools before making a judgement. They felt that data for 1 year was not a good data set to look at and make a decision on.

A governor asked if there has been any positive impact on recruitment and whether this could be evidenced? Does the school undertake recruitment monitoring?

Mr Hillyard stated that this year there are no agency staff employed at HGSS but recruitment data will need to be collected and analysed further.

A member of staff commented that they felt that the current Year 11 students are more focused on studying that had been the case at the same time last year.

Governors felt that the rationale for the change needed to be made clearer to parents to get them on board as well as assessing how effective the 2 week break is as set against the rationale.

A member of staff commented that some students are already anxious about the INSET date after the May half-term as they have an exam on that date. Those staff who support certain students will need to be available on that day.

A member of staff commented that having all INSET dates on Mondays disproportionately impacts on certain subjects more than others, particularly if they are exam classes and double lessons.

Mr Hillyard stated that this was unlikely to be the case next year. An analysis of any impact on results will be undertaken.

Mr Hillyard stated that he was aware that a number of parents have been asking about the term dates for next year and these needed to be published on the website.

It was agreed to

- Support the extension of the pilot for one further year (version 1).
- Change the second week of the Autumn half-term to the week before the BucksCC half-term week in line with some other local schools and in response to feedback.
- Collect evidence during the next year to enable governors to make a decision whether to support the permanent approval of a 2 week Autumn half-term break going forward.

3.6 GOVERNOR DAY PLANS – 22.01.20

The schedule for the Governor Day on 22 January 2020 was noted.

The following governors confirmed their attendance:
Anna Thomas, Emma Starling, Jim Leftwich, Paul Davies, Toni Ellis,
Si Khan, Tony Green.

4 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

4.1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2019, having been circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

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4.2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5 GOVERNOR MEMBERSHIP

Governors noted

- the resignation of Mr Lorraine Allen, Staff Governor since the last meeting.
- That the term of office of Tony Green was due to end on 22 March 2020.

Mr Green left the room.

Governors discussed the reappointment of Mr Green and agreed that he be reappointed with effect from 23 March 2020.

6 COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 FINANCE, PREMISES, HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2019 were noted.

6.2 PEOPLE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2019 were noted.

6.3 LEARNING AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019 were noted.

6.4 HR RELATED PANELS, COMPLAINTS PANEL AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES

This item is covered in the Part III Restricted Confidential minutes.

6.5 MAT WORKING PARTY

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2019 were noted.

7 GOVERNOR REPORTS

7.1 CHAIR

Mr Green stated that he had taken no action under his delegated powers.

7.2 DEVELOPMENT

Mrs Swain reported that the OFSTED training had been a success, the next whole governing board training event on 26 February will be on safeguarding (Staff Governors do not need to attend). Mrs Swain encouraged governors to continue undertaking the online NGA training through Learning Link. Governors were encouraged to undertake the Exclusions training module if they have yet to do so.

All governors

All governors

7.3 SAFEGUARDING

Mr Pilgrim reported that he had met with Mrs Hawkins earlier in the day. The school has received feedback from some of the other schools who have been undergoing OFSTED inspections recently under the new framework. As a result, he encouraged all governors to sign up to the free safeguarding training available via these links

<https://safeguarding.pro/governors-safeguarding-seminar/>

<https://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/understandingsafeguardingandgovernance2/>

Mr Hillyard reported that the school has used an external company to train staff and audit in safeguarding and SEND to give confidence that the school is not relying on advice from a poorly rated local authority.

7.4 SEND

There was no report in the absence of Ms Selby Boothroyd.

Mr Hillyard reported that the external review will be held on 3 February 2020 (date change) to look at the school's SEND provision.

7.5 DISADVANTAGE

There was no report in the absence of Ms Selby Boothroyd.

8 OTHER MATTERS

8.1 HEADTEACHER'S PAY

This is covered in the Part III Restricted Confidential minutes.

8.2 POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS

The policy on Equalities and Cohesion was reviewed and approved subject to the reference to the Equalities governor being removed. Equalities matters are under the remit of the Learning and Curriculum Committee.

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9 DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS

Governors noted the dates of future meetings according to the meeting schedule, the next meeting being, 1 April 2020.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11 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

- reviewed the progress towards meeting the SIP priorities for 2018-19.
- agreed to extend the pilot of the additional week’s holiday in the Autumn half-term and 3 additional INSET days.
- received and considered a recommendation regarding the Headteacher’s pay as outlined in the Restricted Confidential minutes.

Meeting concluded at 20.55

Signed Date

CHAIRMAN