



SPRING TERM (1) 2023 MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

Date 8th February 2023
Time 19.00
Place Holmer Green Senior School

PRESENT:

Tony Green (TG) – Chair
Ed Hillyard (EH) – Headteacher
Gareth Davies (GD)
Paul Davies (PD)
Claire Asare-Archer (CAA)
Jeremy Hunt (JH)
Jacqui Kirkpatrick (JRK)

Anna Lee (AL)
Melissa Miller (MM)
Liliana Minton (LM)
Beccy Roberts (BR)
Emma Starling (ES)
Victoria Strutt (VS)
Anna Thomas (AT)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lynda Jackson (LJ)
Sarah Lary (SL)
Kim Joynson (KJ)
Jenny Knight (JLK)
Abdullah Iqbal (AI)
Joe Ball (JB)

Director of Finance, HR and Resources
Deputy Headteacher
Deputy Headteacher
Clerk
Student Management (Item 6.1 only)
Student Management (Item 6.1 only)

APOLOGIES:

Steve Pilgrim, Lisa Swain

Action Support Challenge

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

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
1	Welcome and apologies for absence <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TG welcomed everyone to the meeting.• Apologies were accepted from Steve Pilgrim and Lisa Swain.	
2	Notification of Any Other Business None	
3	Declarations of Interest against this agenda None	
4	Minutes of the December Meeting and Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governors approved the Minutes as an accurate record.	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
	Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Air Dome Pre-app meeting took place. No response yet. Mobile phone policy will take effect from May 2023. 	
5	Governor Membership Currently no Governor vacancies.	
6	STRATEGIC PLANNING <p>6.1 Report of Student Management Team Representatives The Spring Term report had been circulated. Students highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sixth Form have enjoyed assemblies including special guest Andrea Duncan (careers). The Prom has been confirmed for 5th July 2023. A charity bake sale is planned. Enrichment activities include a Christmas quiz. Wednesday enrichment sessions have received positive feedback. Some are very full. The variety has increased, to include software development as well as sport and arts-based activities. Access is limited to one activity per student per term. These are staffed internally. The English trip received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The new coffee lounge is well used and helps with queue times in the main canteen. <p>There being no further questions or comments, the student leaders left the meeting at 19.17.</p>	
6.2	Report of Headteacher and SEF The report had been circulated with an executive summary, which was well received. EH highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 97 internal and 82 external applications for Sixth Form, which is a positive number. The hope is for 160/170 across both Y12 and Y13. Next year Sixth Form will draw from a year group of 210 so it is hoped that Sixth Form numbers will rise to 200. <p>Q – What is the entry requirement for Sixth Form? A – It depends on the course; some have lower entry criteria. Generally a grade 6 is required at GCSE for A-Level courses. Three pathways are available depending on mock results: Vocational, a mixture or purely A-Levels. Selections are based on predicted results.</p> <p>Q – What proportion of Y11 students stay on for Sixth Form? A – Last year it was c.65; this year 82 have applied so far. A Y12 of 80 students would be pleasing but numbers will not be finalised until early September, once grades are known.</p>	

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	<p><i>Q – Is the school budget based on 80 in Y12?</i></p> <p>A – Funding is lagged so it will not be received for this cohort until next year. The budget is based on a conservative total Sixth Form number of 150-160, but actual funding is based on the subjects taken. The census is taken in early October and this drives funding, so it is important to have all students on the right courses by then, should switches be required.</p> <p><i>Q – What is the maximum size of Sixth Form?</i></p> <p>A – 200 is possible but it depends on the subjects taken, e.g. fewer places for heavily practical subjects. The expansion plan is also focused on widening the number of courses available. Different courses are popular for different cohorts.</p> <p>School session times</p> <p>EH: Staff, parents and students have been surveyed about the change to the school day. There was a good response but no definitive preference about starting earlier or finishing later. Transport leaves every half hour. The next step is to co-ordinate with local schools.</p> <p><i>Q – Regarding behaviour points, is the breakfast reward for all students across all subjects? Is there any reward for improvers?</i></p> <p>A – The highest achievers win hot chocolate with Heads of Year each half term. The aim was to embed this first, then refine it – as there are students whose big leaps in improvement are to be celebrated.</p> <p><i>Q – Is Friday self-reflection externally audited?</i></p> <p>A – Yes, by Heads of Year. An Inset was held in January about this and follow-ups happen with tutors.</p> <p>Academic Performance</p> <p>EH reported on focus areas, based on pre-Christmas mock data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography is going well for KS4 & KS5 compared to last year. • History A-Level is strong, but GCSE less so. The department has lacked a permanent HoD but a new staff member is starting after Easter. • Music: Lots to be done in a short time but the music lead has been impressive and students are positive. • Business Studies GCSE is a focus area. A-Level is now really strong, with an exceptional teacher. Economics is only taken at A-Level but students are now really flying and enjoying their course. • Chemistry and English Lit are both looking strong at A-Level. • Computing at GCSE is a focus area. 	

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	<p>Q – Maths ALPS score looks low but this has not been highlighted as a focus area. What is in place to improve this?</p>	
	<p>A – Historically Maths does well and the department tends to put in conservative predictions, so this is not an area of concern. Underachievers have been identified and are being targeted with action points. A-Level students take advantage of a number of after-school interventions.</p>	
	<p>Q – Chemistry is coded green but the score is below the national average. Why?</p>	
	<p>A – Chemistry is moving in the right direction. The prediction is 56% (national average 58%) but if one student over-achieves the result would be 4-5% higher.</p>	
	<p>Q – Detentions have seen a 15% reduction. This seems good, but what is the reason?</p>	
	<p>A – There is a crackdown on students missing detentions. If they miss a detention, the sanction escalates. By preventing this, further negative sanctions are avoided.</p>	
	<p>Q – Regarding the Pass survey, much is green except for Y9 and 10 where attitude to teachers is highlighted as an issue. Why is this?</p>	
	<p>A – The Pass survey results went to SLT, Pastoral Managers and Heads of Year for consideration and formulation of an action plan. This will be fed back at Inset day.</p>	
	<p>The full Pass survey results cannot be shared for GDPR reasons (named students). All students were encouraged to complete it but the main gaps were in Y11 as it was harder to fit in alongside their various interventions.</p>	
	<p>Q – Were any SEN issues highlighted through the survey?</p>	
	<p>A – Keyworker staff have access to the results to see who is highlighted for attention. Pastoral now have lots of one-to-one conversations with students where issues have arisen. KJ to supply an anonymised summary of this to PD.</p>	KJ
	<p>Q – What is being done to support Year 9?</p>	
	<p>A – The PRP (Personal Resilience Programme) is being re-done in Y9 to help improve their study skills and organisation. Training is needed to deliver the PRP. It is a 10-12 week block of work undertaken in tutor time in Year 7 and again in Year 9.</p>	
	<p>EH to add 2022-23 figures for Behaviour into the empty column on page 10.</p>	EH

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	<p>Governance Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors felt that more time is needed to discuss and understand curriculum and data aspects of the FGB agenda (items previously discussed at Curriculum Committee). FGB was felt to be too big a forum, with too many other subjects to cover, to enable this area to be considered in sufficient depth. • EH hoped to cycle through curriculum areas at Governor Days and wasn't keen on reintroducing another evening meeting to impact on staff workload. Quoracy of committee meetings has been an issue in the past. • Governors countered that the Governor (half) Day programme feels rushed and there still wasn't enough time to question staff fully. • It was agreed that the Governor Day on March 9th will go ahead as planned, but the next one (June) will be restructured to allow time to be spent on requested areas of focus. <p>Governors to email these to JLK.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it is still felt that Governor Days are not a workable forum, an evening committee meeting will be reconsidered. 	Govs
6.3	<p>Expansion/Works Update</p> <p>LJ reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is still snagging to be dealt with, but some progress is being made and Bucks have agreed to fund some of this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drainage behind the sports hall is being resolved. ○ Railings will be installed on the half wall in the courtyard near the dining room, as this appears unsafe. ○ Toilets in Pastoral are being refurbished next week. ○ The kitchen extraction system is a problem as the fan is not large enough. Hopefully this will be rectified at Easter. ○ The two ovens are not fit for purpose and are likely to become a liability. It is hoped that Bucks will replace these. ○ The walk-in fridge freezer is currently working. A request has been put in for the warranty to run for one year from when the fridge started working (rather than when it was installed) as concerns are ongoing. • Otherwise, facilities are in good shape. • Reception refurbishment is moving ahead, but school is waiting for an answer from the planning office about whether it falls under permitted development or not. 	
6.4	<p>School Uniform Tender Information</p> <p>LJ had circulated the tender documents and highlighted:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is currently in contract with the current suppliers and extracting themselves early would leave a lot of ordered uniform to be paid for. However, a tender process has been undertaken to benchmark pricing. • The current supplier offers a good deal with 90-day returns and an 8% commission to the school which is ringfenced to help provide school uniform to those families who cannot afford it. • A large stock of secondhand uniform is available (free of charge) to anyone who needs it and availability is emailed out to parents regularly to let them know. • School feels it is doing what it can to make uniform affordable. <p>Q – How is second hand uniform acquired? A – Parents are asked to donate, especially Y11 leavers.</p> <p>Q – The PE kit has the student's initials on. Does this prevent it being used by other students second hand, or increase the cost? A - Initials were added because a lot of kit was going missing. The PE Department say initials have had a big impact on the problem of missing kit (and missed PE lessons because of missing kit).</p> <p>There was some debate about the need for initials on PE kit and the implications in terms of affordability and onward usability.</p> <p>Q – Initials are not mentioned in the school policy. All PE kits are 'branded' items rather than being available from high street shops, making them less affordable. Therefore, is school in breach of the policy because of this? A – Students do not look like a team without the branded kit and they tend to enjoy wearing it. There is only one PE kit (not different kit for different sports). If students are asked to buy e.g. tracksuit bottoms from high street shops, many would choose expensive branded versions rather than budget non-branded ones – so it could be more expensive for parents, rather than less. It also brings in the problem of points of difference between students and may highlight those who are disadvantaged.</p> <p>Q – Could free delivery to HGSS be retained whichever uniform supplied is used? Delivery costs can add significantly to the affordability of uniform, especially when ordering small numbers of items. A – Agreed that this would be preferable.</p> <p>Q – Are there many requests from parents for financial support? A – Yes, there are plenty of requests – some for the full uniform.</p>	

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	<p>Governors felt it was important to communicate regularly with parents about the availability of financial support via the 8% ringfenced from new uniform markup and about stocks of secondhand 'sustainable' uniform.</p> <p>It was agreed that School will benchmark against other schools' uniform arrangements, to ascertain whether they are out of step.</p>	LJ
7	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
7.1	<p>HR Panels, Complaints Panels, Student Discipline Committees</p> <p>Six panels have been convened:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two staff disciplinary matters • One Governor warning panel for a student at risk of PEX. • One parental complaint (not yet taken place; may not be required) • One PEX panel (upheld) • One PEX panel (PEX rescinded) 	
7.2	<p>MAT Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EH had shared papers from the latest discussion and confirmed approximately 7 meetings had taken place with other schools/trusts with one further to be contacted. • EH to add PD to the MAT Working Group for the next discussion. 	EH/PD
8	GOVERNOR REPORTS	
8.1	<p>Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing to report. 	
8.2	<p>Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LS not present. • New Governor induction meetings taking place on Friday. 	
8.3	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP not present. • Report to follow with Minutes. 	
8.4	<p>SEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PD had circulated his report with the papers. • Coffee mornings with SEN parents have been really interesting with useful feedback from Year 7 parents, particularly on transition and communication. The Year 10 parent session was especially positive in tone. • PD expressed his appreciation to the SEN team and invited any other governor to attend the next session (dates TBC). 	

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8.5	<p>Disadvantage, Careers and LAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC had circulated reports following LAC and Careers visits, giving an overview of numbers and the current situation. The new careers advisor has started. <p>Q – Are former students invited to give careers presentations to existing students?</p> <p>A – Yes. Governors are also invited to assist, as appropriate.</p> <p>Q – Is any progress being made on workplace visits for students U16?</p> <p>A – Various trips are planned, including: Y9 to Bucks New Uni, a UTC presentation to Y9 & Y11, a Bucks College group for Y11, Bucks Skills Show for Y10 and a UCAS Sixth Form and Apprenticeship trip.</p>	
9	<p>Policy Reviews and Approvals</p> <p>9.1 School Uniform</p> <p>The policy had been circulated.</p> <p>Q – Where uniform policy is breached, are behaviour points given consistently between boys and girls, e.g. no tie/skirt too short? Is the policy enforceable?</p> <p>A – There is enforcement, but monitoring it throughout the day is harder. The balance has to be struck with the amount of time invested. On the gate in the morning, students are picked up on their blazers/ties/jewellery...but it changes throughout the day. A reminder will be sent out after half term about consistency with the message.</p> <p>Q – Are girls' skirts checked on the gate?</p> <p>A – They are checked on the gate, at class line-ups, as they come into class and at the end of lessons – but girls still roll them up between times. School is doing all it can.</p> <p>Q – Is the state of uniforms noted, e.g. for safeguarding concerns?</p> <p>A – Yes. This would be logged on CPOMS as a concern and the parent called and asked to wash it. The situation is tracked and Pastoral involved as necessary. Efforts are made to avoid confrontation, e.g. students given the option to sort it out before sanctions are given. The Finance team get to know 'regulars' and their issues. There is a large supply of shoes that can be borrowed.</p> <p>The policy was approved but will be reviewed again once benchmarking has taken place.</p>	
9.2	<p>Cyber Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated with changes made as requested at the last meeting. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy was approved. 	
9.3	Leave of Absence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. 5.10/5.11 – consistency with terms ‘paternity’ and ‘shared parental leave’. 5.14 – Eligible up to age 18 not up to aged 5. 4 weeks’ maximum for each child per year. 4.1e – Refer to point 8 for clarity on support staff toil issue. 6.1 and 6.3 – Remove reference to 2019 dates. Remove reference to European elections. LJ to make these amendments. The policy was approved subject to these. 	LJ
9.4	Conduct and Discipline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated and was being brought back to FGB as it had been tested through a recent disciplinary situation and was found to be lacking in clarity. Changes have been made based on the ACAS Code of Practice. There were a number of comments, so Governors were asked to email these to LJ. LJ to run the revised policy past Bucks legal team before bringing back to Governors for approval. 	Govs LJ
9.5	Whistleblowing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated as a new requirement. There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
9.6	Examinations Contingency Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. Crossings-out item 2 and page 8 to be resolved and dates/filenames to be amended. Policy to come back to the next FGB meeting. 	LJ
9.7	Internal Appeals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
10	Next Meeting Wednesday 26 th April 2023, 7pm	
11	Any Other Business None	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
12	<p>Evaluation of Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors agreed that the meeting had been conducted appropriately and effectively. 	

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Minutes approved by the Governing Board:

Signed Date

Mr T Green – Chairman of the Board