



Governing Board - Minutes

Meeting Date: 22 March 2018
Meeting Venue: TG9, Temple Grove, Gildredge House
Meeting Time: 5:15pm

Governors: Julian Mace (JM), Chair
Alison Allart (AA)
Paul Amos (PA)
Steven Blower (SB)
Selene Edwards (SE)
Gabrielle Mace (GM)
Sara McKenna (SMc)
Rachel Moreton (RM)
Joel Newman (JN)
Trevor Scott (TS)
Martyn Ashley Taylor (MT)

Ex officio: Stuart Reeves (SRv), *Head Teacher*

Also in attendance: Paul Barber (DHT), *Deputy HT – Teaching & Learning*
Danny Simmonds (AHT-B&A), *Assistant HT - Behaviour & Attendance*
James Towner (AHT-A&C), *Assistant HT – Assessment & Curriculum*
Janice Logan (DFA), *Director of Finance & Administration*
James Gardner (JGa), *Head of Languages – for Items 1-3 only*

Clerk to Governors: Steve Quayle (SQ)

Apologies: Louise Baxter (LB), Matt West (MW), Fiona Wright (FW)

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Item		Action	Date
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair welcomed Governors and SLT and thanked them for attending. Chair accepted apologies from LB and MW. Chair introduced JGa, Head of Languages, who is attending the first part of the meeting to discuss his proposals regarding changes to the language curriculum. 		
2.	<p>Declarations of Interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors declared interests in relation to their children who attend the school. No other declarations of interest were made. 		
3.	<p>Languages Department Strategy Proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair invited questions from Governors in relation to JGa’s proposals paper for languages. Governors queried if Miss McCollins is still employed to teach languages, JGA confirmed she is. Chair then paraphrased the differences between Options 1 and 2 in the paper, namely that in Option 1 Latin is no longer taught. Governors said that there are perceived benefits to Latin, but asked JGa for his opinion about the benefits of teaching it. JGa stated his favoured option is Option 1 where no Latin is being taught because, in his view, the school already offers a good mix of foreign languages; however, he conceded that Latin can help students work with grammar. JGa explained that the proposals look at the advantages and disadvantages of offering so many different language choices and asks whether having less on offer will allow the school to focus more on the remaining subjects. PINK PAPER A. Governors asked about how this would go down with prospective Year 7 parents who have chosen the school because it offers Latin. JGa said he doesn’t think many parents would change their decision about their children coming to the school because of not offering Latin but it could be a complication for some. Governors asked if Latin helps students get into universities, JGa said there is no evidence of this; he went on that Latin has been classically associated with private schools and the Russell Group universities prefer a language but they don’t specify which one. Governors stated that the view is that Latin provides a good basis for other languages. JGa said currently the school offers French, Spanish and German as well as Latin, with French as the core language. Governors asked about the impact of dropping Latin for those students who have already started studying it, but SRv advised they would continue studying it. JGa advised that those in Year 9 would continue studying it into Year 10 but we would stop offering it to the new Year 7s from September. Governors asked about how this would impact on the House choices in the lower school and whether this area would need to be reviewed. SRv said the impact this would have on the House system is minor as this would just be a timetabling issue. Governors asked about Option 2 and whether there could be the possibility of increasing Spanish to 3 classes and keeping one Latin class going in Year 8 specifically for Gifted and Talented students. JGa said the issue here would be the effect it would have on the balance of the Year group as we would have one more able side of the year than the other and this would create an imbalance in the ability profile of the two halves of the population. Governors said the common assertions about Latin arguably aren’t true and we should look at lifelong benefits and not just about students getting into university. Governors stated that our Latin GCSE results are predicted to be high and it could be argued we would be culling a subject we are good at teaching as the only school in Eastbourne offering it. Governors asked which languages are forecast to do best in recent mocks, AHT/A&C replied that Latin currently has the highest forecast results with German as the lowest. Governors asked JGa which languages he thinks offer the most benefits. JGa said it used to be French, and clearly we have a close geographical proximity to France, and it is an easier subject to introduce in the lower school, but Spanish is more widely spoken throughout the world; whereas Latin is the least valuable. SRv added that looking at the numbers coming through the popularity of Latin is dwindling and German is following suit too. SRv said we are 		

currently skating across 4 different languages and not doing any of them in depth. He also commented that despite having the largest cohort of students in Eastbourne doing a language at GCSE, we still get a low take up at A-Level. JGa said the national trend is that languages are diminishing, and by narrowing our offer we could encourage more students to take one of these subjects through to A-Level because they will have studied it in more depth. SRv stated that students cannot currently drop French until end of Year 9, and under these proposals we would hopefully have enough students to be doing French as an A-level in 4 or 5 years' time. **Governors asked** about dropping German altogether, JGa said it has been considered. **Governors asked** for the numbers of students studying the languages at GCSE level currently – JGa confirmed Latin has a class of 13 students, and German has 15/16 students but added that we don't start teaching German until Year 9 currently, whereas Latin starts from Year 7 and we are still only getting these numbers studying it for GCSE. SRv said Latin teachers state that it is a subject best suited to those of high ability. **Governors questioned** whether it would be ethically sound for only high achievers to be able to do it. **Governors asked** if we were to take the option to remove Latin from the timetable, could it still be taught to Gifted and Talented students as a separate entity. JGa suggested the possibility of offering Latin as a Prep/Twilight subject. SRv commented that this wouldn't result in an exam as they wouldn't receive enough study time. **PINK PAPER B. Governors asked** if, by changing subjects, we are presumably seeking to improve results, what are the current results and what would we predict in the future? **Governors said** society is moving away from Latin as a prerequisite to get a job and we ought to be offering subjects that will lead students towards a career path. **Governors asked** if we should therefore be offering Mandarin. SRv said Mandarin is a discussion for a years' time, but our accountability should be where our students are five years after they've left us. JGa said he has looked at Mandarin but there are two problems, firstly the GCSE is very hard for non-native speakers, and secondly it is exceedingly difficult to recruit and retain teachers to teach it. SRv suggested Governors could propose that Spanish should be the default language if that was what was desired. JGa confirmed we could swap French for Spanish as the core subject if we wanted to. **Chair said** that in Option 1 it is similar to a carousel system from term to term with different languages and a lot of people may consider this as difficult for the students, but there is a view that children are capable of learning lots of languages. **Governors confirmed** that the situation with languages is always very flexible and it often depends on the strengths of the teachers. JGa said the perception is that French is harder than Spanish, and he confirmed that Spanish is easier in the earlier stages, up to KS3. But from GCSE onwards it gets harder than French, which is why the grade boundaries are higher in Spanish than they are in French. **Chair asked** if we have costed out Options 1 and 2. SRv said the curriculum time would be the same ... **PINK PAPER C. Chair asked** if the SLT are seeking the Governors approval to adopt Option 1. SRv said he has been convinced by JGa that it is the right option, but the implications and ethos of the school would be affected and he doesn't have a handle on how many people have chosen the school because of the Latin offer, even though the numbers of those taking up Latin are dwindling. SRv said he dislikes the concept that only high achievers can do Latin and he doesn't subscribe to that approach. **Chair said** there is the issue about the school having a broad curriculum and by offering Latin it may appeal as an added extra to a lot of parents. **Governors asked** if teachers would be prepared to teach Latin as a Twilight subject so we can keep it as an offer, or alternatively as 3 x Preps. **Governors also asked** if doing this would be a waste of time if it did not result in a qualification. AHT-A&C suggested the SLT would have to compensate the teachers teaching it in Twilight as they would be staying late three nights a week. JGa commented that there is a difference in the level of teaching in Prep versus normal teaching. AHT-B&A commented there would also be a gap between the end of school and Twilight which they would have to address. **Governors said** they hoped none of these issues are insurmountable and it would help to soften the blow of removing it from our curriculum, and then if no-one wants to study it then at least we will have the evidence. DHT mentioned previously there was a Greek club offered through Twilight which didn't lead to a qualification, however he cautioned about the fact that in a Twilight scenario it would be going up against other activities such as sailing and horse-riding, etc, so Gifted and Talented students would be being asked to study Latin while others participate in other activities. **Chair queried** if this isn't the case with all Gifted and Talented programmes though. DHT said he would be far more

	<p>comfortable if there was some form of accreditation at the end of the course. Governors said the school is trying to create rounded individuals and if Latin doesn't help them as opposed to other subjects, while it might seem nice to offer it, it's not the best use of their time and is taking away from other things we could offer them. SRv asked Governors to determine how Governors feel about Latin. Chair called for Governors to vote in relation to adopting Option 1 and exploring Latin as a Twilight activity and for Spanish to become the core language; although this needs more modelling and exploration to keep this open and flexible into the future. Agreed, by a majority vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair thanked JGa for his ongoing work towards developing really talented linguists. • JGa left the meeting 		
4.	<p>Minutes of the Governing Board Meeting – 1 February 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors suggested the following amendments should be made to the minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Item 9 – Early Years section – the last bullet point should say “... <i>there is nothing in the data to suggest we don't continue to be 'Outstanding' ...</i>” ○ Item 13 - 5 lines from bottom – should state “... <i>asked if there should be a marketing leadership opportunity around enterprise and ...</i>”. • Chair accepted the above amendments, annotated the hard copy, and signed the minutes as an accurate record of the 1 February FGB. <p>Pink Paper minutes from 1 February 2018 FGB Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair signed the pink paper minutes as an accurate record of the 1 February FGB. <p>PINK PAPER D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors asked about the review of new school access points – SRv said after Easter he plans to submit the planning application for the change of use of Master's House, change of school hours, and for a pedestrian entrance by the side of the sports hall, if Governors agree to this. SRv advised the suggestion of using the Old Town end of Love Lane as an entrance has received the most opposition. Chair said Governors should set up a working group to consider land and buildings. Chair asked if there are any Governors who would like to volunteer to be on that group, and SE, SB, MT, TS all volunteered. <p>A 'Pink Paper' refers to items which relate to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a named person who works, or who it is proposed should work, at the school; or to a pupil at, or candidate for admission to, the school; or to any other matter that, by reason of its nature, the Governing Board is satisfied should remain confidential. <p>The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013; Regulation 15(3): www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/1624/regulation/15/made</p>	SE, SB, MT, TS	TBC
5.	<p>Action Summary Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair talked Governors through the Action Summary Report and ticked off a number of actions. This prompted the following discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lock-down procedures and practice and how this would need to be handled sensitively, especially with the youngest students. Chair asked SLT to put some proposals together for a lock-down procedure. This is currently being explored by DHT who has attended training in this area. ○ Staff welfare survey – JN to liaise with SRv regarding this. ○ SEF distribution – Chair asked SLT to send the SLT to the Clerk when it is updated and it will then be posted on the Governor's SharePoint site. 	SLT JN, SRv SLT	ASAP TBC TBC

6.	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRv talked Governors through his report, and focused on the following areas: • 6th form update – it now looks like we can offer 13 of the proposed 14 subjects for September 2018, with the need to drop BTEC Business, because only 4 students have chosen it, and this would mean we will be offering 12 A-Level subjects plus BTEC Sport as our final offer. He confirmed that 61 offer letters have been sent out that fit the current block system. SRv commented that even today a prospective student has changed one of their choices so it is a very 'live' situation and he can't predict how many students will ultimately come but there will be a big financial implication if we drop down to say 40 students instead of the expected 60, but at least we have much more control over what we're doing now than we have done previously. Governors asked about 6th form admissions and why offers have been sent to student's personal email addresses, but not to their parents, some of whom don't know about the offers. SLT confirmed this is the normal process as the email is system-based and sends it to the email address registered on the UCAS account. Governors expressed concern that the offer, sent this Monday, only gave them 4 days to reply before the 23 March deadline. SRv said he would monitor the responses and when the school resends out offers for a fresh push the school will pick up parent's emails as well as student's. Governors asked if we have enough current staff to run the proposed curriculum. HT confirmed yes. Governors asked where our students are going on to study, SRv confirmed various locations such as BHASVIC, Bexhill College, Eastbourne College (scholarships), and Sussex Downs College. He went on to explain that the numbers accepting will only increase from now if those students with two relevant choices change their third choice to one of the subjects we're offering. PINK PAPER E. 6th form staffing – SRv confirmed that the new Director of Sixth Form has been recruited. In addition, the new Head of Year 12 has been recruited, and the current Head of Sixth Form has handed in his resignation. Governors asserted the school should announce the appointment of the new Head of Year 12. SRv confirmed that the Head of Year 13 position will remain vacant throughout the 2018/2019 school year due to low student numbers in that year group and the new Head of Year 12 and Director of Sixth Form will manage the responsibilities of that role between them. • RAG rating – SRv asked for comments on changing the RAG rating. None forthcoming. • Support staff structure – SRv stated the school is in desperate need of an HR manager and he proposes to recruit to this position as a flexible position working generally between the hours of 10am-2pm, and thinks this will elicit a highly qualified HR manager. Governors asked if this position will be recruited from current members of staff, SRv thought this was unlikely. DFA added that as the school gets larger we require more and more HR support. Governors asked about whether we have a package for employment disputes, DFA confirmed that ESCC provides this. Governors stated that the business support services of the school seem under stress and enquired as to whether we have done a stress risk assessment to prevent health issues and so they feel supported. SRv confirmed that DFA has done some work around this area and confirmed it is a concern as we have a very slim team; however this is not uncommon in many schools as it is often support services that have paid the price of funding cuts, alongside Teaching Assistants. SRv confirmed the SLT have constant vigilance over this concern but they haven't done a formal risk assessment as such. Governors asked about the high turnover of support staff. SRv explained that exit interviews are conducted but there are no patterns emerging. DFA said there has been some work done through CPD to upskill people more and some of this work is now paying dividends in terms of people working more efficiently, and the SLT are looking at efficiencies all the time. Governors expressed concern that there appear to be a lot of people reporting into the DFA, and asked if some of these responsibilities could be delegated to lower staff, but SRv confirmed there are only 6 reports to DFA, which is manageable. DFA explained there is no doubt there is pressure amongst the support staff but they are trying to make efficiencies where possible. The main office has been reorganised to create one reception hatch, rather than two, which has helped create a back office, and also siting the medical room off reception has helped significantly. DFA also explained that the phone line call divert has been changed to try and release some pressure and there are further pieces of work she is looking at. Governors commented that new processes will invariably put people under more pressure while they are being introduced before they bed down. SRv said the team remains a very happy team even though they are busy. DFA and DHT are moving 		
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	<p>offices, and the Estates team are investing in new software to provide a better oversight of their actions and progress. Chair said Governors will examine these pressures when the staff survey results come out. SRv stated the HR manager will report to him as he wants to be involved in all recruitment decisions and be aware of stresses and strains on staff and understand the patterns better. Chair asked for the costings for the HR Manager post, SRv confirmed the post will be paid the FTE of between £27k-£34k, but it will be an 0.6 x FTE post so around £17.5k actual cost. Governors asked about the impact of this cost on budgets, and DFA confirmed it would be an additional cost. Governors asked if we can afford this in terms of our repayment schedule. SRv explained it will be a relatively small cost in terms of the security it will provide him. DFA advised there were some other costs in the previous budget which have now been taken out. Governors requested that in future they be provided with financial information to hand when the SLT are asking for new spending such as this. SRv said he is still working on reducing the staff cost as a percentage of income. Governors agreed that DFA will meet with the Lead Governor and Deputy Lead Governor for Enterprise to look at what the recruitment of an HR Manager does to the numbers, and delegate this decision to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PINK PAPER F. ● Religious education policy – Chair explained that previously we had involvement from SACRE Standing Advisory Council for RE (the independent body which considers the provision of RE in the area of jurisdiction of its local authority) and explained that the Governing Board legally must have oversight of the school’s religious education policy. Chair stated that this can be a contentious area to manage because of Governor’s individual personal beliefs. SRv said we need to seek advice on this area and go back to the funding agreement, and we should appoint a Link Governor to oversee this area, as teachers need some input, and the status quo needs to be reviewed. Chair said SACRE came into the school and did a check on our actions, and DHT confirmed they were happy with what they saw; hence the teacher in charge of Philosophy previously came to a Governing Board meeting and advised Governors what had been agreed with SACRE. DHT explained we call this subject Philosophy & Belief, rather than RE, and he explained his views on the Philosophy provision and that he would prefer a move away from Philosophy and a move towards religious teaching, to also encompass ethics. DHT confirmed RE is only half a GCSE and a lot of students perceive it as less valuable than other subjects. DHT talked about the dynamic provision of RE at a previous school he taught at and put forward his belief that the school should teach students about all the faiths that are out in the local community. Chair said Governors need to look at this whole area. DHT said he has a local contact within SACRE who will complete a free audit which could inform future work. SRv suggested the school should have the audit which will elicit some suggestions and then bring the appointed Link Governor in to be part of the conversation. Governors said they are aware of some students who are negative about the subject of Philosophy & Belief. Governors asked about the rules on core subjects, and DHT explained this is a subject the school taught from the beginning, which is similar to private schools, but in his view the order needs to be the right way round – he believes it is difficult for students to philosophise about a belief they don’t understand. Governors asked if RE and Ethics could be fitted in within the timetable, and DHT said it would need to be mapped out across the whole school from Year 2, and then in Year 9 we could turn the discussion into more about Ethics so the subject evolves. Chair asked Governors for a volunteer to become the Link Governor for RE, but none was forthcoming, so accordingly the Chair volunteered himself and will begin this work by liaising with DHT and SACRE. 	DFA, TS, PA	ASAP
7.	<p>Items not already on the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chair asked DFA about the feasibility of Governors having fobs to allow themselves into and out of Temple Grove for meetings. DFA will explore this and report back. 	DFA	ASAP
8.	<p>Chair’s correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chair confirmed he has received the following correspondence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A letter about alleged bullying. 		TBC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2 emails from parents about 6th form choices – and SRv has responded. Chair thanked SRv for his speedy responses to all such correspondence. 		
9.	<p>Governance Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniform – Chair of the Uniform Committee explained that the members have met (virtually) and have agreed that lower school students will stay in their current uniform and will transition at Year 7 to wearing blazers, with the only change being the backpack for Year 5s onwards. She added that M&S and Brigade continue to stock lilac dresses, in addition to other retailers, so these can be sourced from anywhere the parents wish. Governors asked if there will be communications to Year 4 parents about any uniform changes to Year 5. SRv advised he will link this to an invite for parents to meet the new Y5 teachers. For all students we will no longer specify where skirts and trousers must be sourced from and so they can come from any supplier or retailer adhering to the school uniform policy. This includes sports skins, shorts/skirts and tracksuit bottoms – as long as they are plain black. A GH sports top will be required, with an optional sweatshirt available with the school’s logo, or parents can buy their own plain black sweatshirt from any supplier, but it must not have a hood for safety reasons. Regard will need to be given to the current Year 7s who have only been wearing their kit for 6 months, so it has been agreed there will be 2 year grace period where the previous clothing will remain acceptable. Chair of Uniform Committee will come in to school to meet with SRv to finalise. It was noted that there is some residual stock left over. Governors asked for confirmation that the list of uniform is now gender neutral, confirmed. Governors requested all these changes need to be communicated to parents, DFA said they need to get the message out ASAP. • Admissions – Chair of the Admissions Committee advised Governors that Year 7 admissions are lower than normal this year, but it is a low birth rate year. There were 144 spaces offered and as of today at 3pm we have received 132 acceptances, with 3 declines. The school’s Business Manager has confirmed today that her gut feeling, taking into account the remaining places who haven’t yet confirmed, is that we will end up with around 140 students. The remaining unconfirmed places have until 16 April to accept. The school has not had any appeals lodged to date, and it was confirmed that we only go to appeal if the year is full. There are currently 3 students on the waiting list, who are still interested. SRv said if we end up with 132 he would consider moving to a 5 form entry year, but Governors expressed concern that this would result in 27 students per class. Governors stated we can’t do anything about this until after 16 April in any case. Governors stated that if we do end up with 140 this would equate to six forms of entry with around 23 students per class. SRv said the cost saving for 5 forms of entry would be in the region of £60k, but Governors queried whether all classrooms have capacity to take a larger class size. DFA confirmed all classrooms would be ok with 27. Chair reminded the SLT and Governors that low class sizes is a key ethos of the school, but confirmed that if we end up with 130 or less then Governors would consider options. Governors stated there is always movement in these numbers between now and the July final cut off. • Admissions Arrangements Policy – Chair of the Admissions Committee confirmed this policy has been signed off with no changes this year. • Careers - Chair drew Governors attention to the notes he took at the Careers session on 1 March. • Careers Strategy and investment in the ‘Quality in Careers Standard’ – Chair explained these initiatives from the Careers Advisor. Chair explained the ‘standard’ could be implemented at no cost - Chair asked if Governors were happy to approve strategy – agreed. • Catering provision – DFA asked Governors to consider her survey results paper. She explained that there was a very low number of responses to the survey, so the results may be unrepresentative of wider views; however she conceded that there is clearly a certain level of dissatisfaction with the catering provision. DFA explained that some of the views expressed are the result of poor marketing or ineffective communications and there are a lot of misunderstandings. DFA advised Governors she will have a meeting with Pabulum, who have already received the survey results, and some of the actions highlighted have already been addressed. Governors said Pabulum offered to meet with parents and students to find out about their views, but a very low number of people attended, so there will be further 	<p>GM</p> <p>DFA</p> <p>DFA</p>	<p>TBC</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>TBC</p>

	<p>opportunities to do this. Chair stated that it is a low return rate but there are clearly things that need to be discussed with Pabulum. DFA explained that everything is cooked from scratch on site, which is preferable to the previous offer. She explained that some complaints have been made regarding the Food Cube. DFA explained Pabulum will be changing their approach in September to cater for Years 4 and 5. DFA explained that Pabulum won the tender based on the quality of the food, and thinks many of the issues raised could be addressed by them getting the message out in a more effective way, and confirmed that very few complaints have been received. Governors said they are aware of concerns from lower school parents about small portion sizes. DFA explained that Pabulum are using weights and measures based on government recommendations, and that initially some younger students weren't getting time to go and play as they had too much food on their plate, and from what she has seen there is certainly not a lack of food being provided, and there is a lot more variety on offer than previously. Governors stated that Pabulum seem to be very responsive and are more than happy to talk to anyone about feedback. DFA advised she will do another survey later in the year, as they only started in October, so she will come back to the Governing Board with these results at end of the summer term. Governors bemoaned the lack of water fountains around the school, and SLT confirmed Pabulum do provide jugs of water in the dining room. Governors asked if water cooler towers could be provided, but DFA said this would be very costly.</p>	DFA	Jul FGB
10.	<p>Review Prep & Twilight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT explained to Governors he has undertaken a review of the new Prep and Twilight arrangements and as part of this he has received feedback from 32 staff, 187 parents and 44 students. There is a massive disparity between parent's and student's perceptions of how effective Prep is. DHT admitted there is a lack of statistical data on the impact of changes to Prep/Twilight but there is anecdotal feedback, for example, many staff feel the freeing up of time for CPD has been highly effective in helping them to do their jobs and a high number support the continuation of this. DHT explained that one thing which is becoming an obstacle with Prep is the availability of resources. He said he is finding that some departments are setting homework which is IT based and the school doesn't have the resources to provide all students with IT access within Prep, and conversely some departments set homework which is heavily reliant on the use of textbooks which causes a different resourcing issue. DHT advised that Prep and Twilight are a fundamental offer of the school and we need to make sure they are being used properly. The feedback shows that the Twilight offer is too narrow, according to some parents, and there have been suggestions of Greek, Latin, a wider sports offer, community service, volunteering work, etc, and so he thinks we need to look holistically at the whole Prep and Twilight offer. In his view he would favour a move away from Prep as 'prep' – which he views as an unhelpful label – and a move towards more of a model of independent learning/working for Years 7-9 and for intervention work for Years 10 and 11. The changes would be about how Prep worked and what it looked like and he believes we should be looking at study skills and towards knowledge retention. This would mean Prep would become more silent, and would focus on the learning of facts and knowledge. DHT asked Governors for their early thoughts. SRv said he agrees with DHT that Prep should be used for knowledge base learning. DHT said that the labels Prep and Twilight aren't helping us, and instead the sessions should be focused on what the students need, and Prep should be about an extended school day. DHT advised that he would propose a level of consultation with parents as he believes a significant number of parents would be prepared to pay more financial contribution for Prep/Twilight. Governors asked about the use of the VLE system for the Prep/Twilight survey as they found it to be a convoluted process to get onto the platform. DHT said he took advice on the best process from the IT expert staff, and added there had been a large number of responses so he is happy the results are representative of the majority. Additionally, Google Forms can be difficult to get responses out of. Governors asked DFA to look into the security of the VLE platform. Chair said Governors will revisit this issue next term. 	DFA Chair	ASAP May FGB

11.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RM completed her latest safeguarding monitoring visit. For discussion at the next FGB. 	RM	May FGB
14.	<p>Finance Matters - <i>(brought forward due to TS needing to leave the meeting at 8pm)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DFA advised Governors of the indicative funding figures received from ESFA and highlighted the differences between this year and last. She explained that the funding formula has increased but ESCC have reduced their lump sum grant and our figures are also affected by 6th form student numbers. The income figure is higher than the plan submitted to the ESFA. Overall the deficit plan is £174k less, but there is some work to be done to key in income figures against previous estimates and forecasts and the updating of staffing costs and resources for next year to create a draft budget plan. The national wage rises are yet to be agreed and these could be quite significant, especially for support staff, which will eat up some of this extra money. DFA will take all the figures apart and balance it out. DFA advised that next year the ESFA are looking for us to start repaying our deficit funding as well as the Pupil Number Adjustment (PNA) from 17/18. DFA plans to ask if the two elements can be rolled-up together and the loan refinanced with staged repayments. She reminded Governors that if we want to defer the repayment of the PNA then the ESFA require us to produce a business plan, with a three year forecast needed, although we will requesting a five year repayment plan. DFA explained that the Free School Meals income will go direct to catering so will not be available to go into revenue. The extra Maths revenue comes in from this year, and SRv confirmed this will be 14 x £600 if we have 28 students studying Maths at A - level. Governors asked about improving the school estate and whether we have funding set aside for the delivery of projects, and if not, do we have any solutions to this. SRv said we may need to stop considering some of these plans. SRv advised Governors he plans to seek funding for the development of Master's House during his trip to China next week by requesting the Chinese schools invest into developing the building and in return they can then use it over following years as their base in England. Governors asked if we have started to build up a fighting fund, and SRv said we need to refinance the ESFA loan in order to enable us to start building up a fighting fund. DFA is exploring grant funding for works to some of the school estate, but she said the financial situation is no less tight than previously, given all the factors. Chair commented that it has been reported nationally that 8 out of 10 schools are currently posting deficits. Governors asked if we've made any improvements about being more visible on the internet in terms of venue hire, and DFA says we have improved our visibility online and this has elicited a few queries about it, particularly in relation to breakfast clubs and language schools, with a couple of firms having come to look at the school. <p>TS left the meeting at 8.05pm</p>		
12.	<p>Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AHT-A&C talked Governors through the headline Progress 8 figures for Year 11 from the most recent data drop, and explained the combined English and Maths GCSE predictions for 5+. These have been broken down into groups and now demonstrate the progress that has taken place between December to March, including most of the data from the most recent data drop. All data shows improvement in this area. In December the data showed that students were, on average, 1 grade behind where they should be by the summer, and now they are showing as 0.75 behind where they should be in the summer. He is hopeful of further improvement by the summer. AHT-A&C commented there has been a massive improvement in Maths in the newest data, but we aren't able to see any trends to this because no previous year's data exists. SRv said the national figures showed those expected to achieve 5+ in Maths were 50%, whereas we are now predicting 57.1%. Governors asked if English is included in the data, but AHT-A&C advised this data is not ready yet as the English deadline is the end of the week. He confirmed that in Maths we are playing catch-up, whereas in English we were always ahead. AHT-A&C stated the SLT still has some concerns and they have put actions in place; post the mock interviews the students have moved into 6th form interviews and now the revision is increasing students really have a sense of purpose. Students have been invited to take part in intervention. 		

	<p>The academic mentor initiative has garnered very positive feedback with students reporting they feel more mature and valued. Holiday work packs have been created generically following staff feedback, and holiday revision sessions have been organised in some subjects, with others choosing not to use this approach so as not to overload students with extra pressure. The History department will be doing a conference style approach in the holidays and the Music department will be using it for extra practice. The additional mock exams will give students more confidence and will enable the development of gap analyses by identifying where individuals and classes have dropped marks and using this to inform planning and where further revision needs to be focused. Meanwhile departmental reviews are ongoing, and allocation of time from Twilight for intervention is also occurring. AHT-A&C explained that Year 11 is priority because of final run-in to exams for Years 11 and 13, but the SLT are liaising with the Head of Year 10 to look at how the experiences of the current Year 11 can be modified for the benefit of Year 10.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixth form prediction scores show a drop which we need to be aware of and so the SLT have developed student mentors and implemented individual action plans and a change of process for arranging cover. In Year 12 there are a couple of students who are at risk of not being able to continue into Year 13 and conversations are already taking place to try to change this situation. Governors stated that nationally 10-20% of students restart Year 12 and so this is not uncommon. • Governors asked if those students who struggle to study at home after the May half term can still come into the school to study instead if they wish to, and AHT-A&C advised that lessons will still exist so they can come in if they want to and they don't have to stay at home. • Governors asked if iGCSEs are included in the Progress 8 scores, confirmed no. SRv confirmed the iGCSE will be discontinued going forwards. AHT-A&C concluded that he is confident the forecasts he made in September for Year 11 will be broadly achieved. 		
13.	<p>Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AA talked Governors through her follow-up report from her first SEN visit, with the purpose of observing the evaluation cycle. She reported that there are a few typos on the website pages re SEN and repetition of paragraphs in the information document. AA stated that the policy is sound, but the thing that comes out of her report is that the monitoring of student progress needs more focus. AHT-A&C said the SLT are looking at the grading criteria in certain subjects. Chair confirmed there has been some progress but there's still a long way to go with this and Governors should monitor it termly, and requested AA to robustly monitor. Chair noted AA's report recommendations and asked SLT if any of these have been followed up yet. SRv confirmed the school we go to visit doesn't need to be a Free School; it just needs to be 'Outstanding' in SEN matters. He said we need to get to a position where we feel that SEN is embedded within school. Chair talked about teachers needing to identify who their SEN students are. SRv advised the SENCO role needs to re-emphasise the importance of this so staff get used to hearing and talking about it. SRv advises this needs a shift of culture so that teachers don't think SEN is all the SENCO's responsibility, but that it is part of every teacher's role. Chair asked if the SENCO should be part of SLT. SRv said this is not necessary as he has previously seen various arrangements of the SENCO being part of the SLT and not, and he doesn't believe this is a determining factor in the efficacy of the role. SRv believes we need lots of extra scrutiny on this area, and the external review we will be receiving will help to get clarity on where the issues are, and what we should do about it. AA said it would be helpful if the SENCO could come and present to Governors. Governors asked if the external review is just for the primary section or the whole school – SRv confirmed it is focusing mainly on secondary, with some primary school scrutiny, and it will be completed at no cost. 		
15.	<p>Any other urgent business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair confirmed no other urgent business has been brought to his attention. 		

16.	Confirmation of meeting dates for remainder of 2017/18 school year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 3 May • Thursday 21 June • Thursday 12 July 		
17.	Meeting Close <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair offered SRv and DFA the best of luck for their working visit to China next week. • Chair closed the meeting at 8.40pm. 		

DRAFT