

Full Governing Board – 17 October – Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday 17 October 2018

Meeting Venue: TG7, Temple Grove, Gildredge House

Meeting Time: 5:15pm

Julian Mace, (JM), Chair **Governors:**

Louise Baxter, (LB), Vice Chair

Alison Allart, (AA) Selene Edwards, (SE) Sara McKenna, (SM) Gabrielle Mace, (GM) Joel Newman, (JN)

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

Paul Barber, (DHT), Deputy HT, Teaching & Learning Also in attendance:

> Catherine Geldard, (DLS), Director of Lower School Jemma Graffham, (DSF), Director of Sixth Form

Janice Logan, (DFA), Director of Finance & Administration

Gill Nicholson, (HIL), Head of Individual Learning (Items 1-3 only) Danny Simmonds, (AHT-B&A), Assistant HT, Behaviour & Attendance James Towner, (AHT-A&C), Assistant HT, Assessment & Curriculum

Clerk to Governors: Steve Quayle, (SQ)

Apologies: Paul Amos, (PA)

> Steven Blower, (SB) Rachel Moreton, (RM)

Trevor Scott, (TS)

Martyn Ashley Taylor, (MT)

Fiona Walker, (FW) Matt West, (MW)

Full Governing Board – Meeting Agenda, 17 October 2018

Item	Discussion	Action	Date
1.	 Welcome and apologies for absence Chair welcomed HIL to the meeting and thanked her for attending. Chair accepted apologies from PA, MW, MT, TS, FW, SB and RM. Chair confirmed, following advice from the Clerk, that this meeting remains 'quorate' for normal FGB business, despite the high number of absences, as long as 5 Governors remain in attendance throughout. 		
2.	Declarations of Interests Governors declared various interests in relation to their children who attend the school. No other interests were declared.		
3.	 SEN Strategy Chair invited HIL and DHT to talk Governors through her report on the SEN Strategy. DHT explained this is about a vision of what we want our school to become and central to this is the concept of inclusivity. DHT and HIL highlighted the school's SEN Strategy with the aim of making all students feel included in their experience within the school. The HIL is leading on the development and delivery of this strategy. HIL then talked Governors through the action plan in her report and highlighted the inclusion of comments she has received from Governors who have responded to her survey. She explained that her work involves the identification of needs for SEN students to ensure we include all students, regardless of their individual needs. This work has come out of a SEN Review by ESCC and from Governor monitoring visits and learning walks across the breadth of the school, and the identification of a robust assessment of the needs of vulnerable students. As explained by DHT, this is not just about Teaching & Learning but about a visible and palpable culture across the whole school community with all staff demonstrating inclusivity. DHT, HIL and AA have agreed on a set of 'non-negotiables', which have been identified via consultation with students, parents, staff and Governors – these are:		
	consultation within the lower school. She remarked there have been interesting responses from the students, which, for the most part, have not centred on 'being taught'. She has extended the survey now until 31 October to get a broader set of responses, with 66 parent responses having been received so far. Governors asked about which students were asked – HIL said she chose students from all groups. HIL explained that her action plan sets her a target for the end of January to launch the new SEN Vision and she is seeking to write the Strategy based on full opinions, and so she needs to consider everyone's views as part of this. HIL talked through the responses		

- received from Governors so far and thanked those 5 Governors who have responded, and asked other Governors to take the time to respond.
- Governors asked about the Vision & Ethos for the wider school community and what are the key priorities for SEN. HIL said this is where the 'non-negotiables' come into play in that we need to offer a broad, balanced, diverse, bespoke and destination-driven offer which follows a curriculum that is based on their needs, whatever they are. HIL explained that the pastoral needs are just as important as what is learnt in the classroom. SRv added that our curriculum needs to be looked at to ensure it is accessible for all students.
- Governors asked about the different progress scales which help to demonstrate the
 progress for students with different SEN needs. SRv said this is about HoDs and teachers
 owning the progress and not passing everything back to HIL. He said the majority of this
 work needs to be 'mainstreamed' so that only the really specialist needs are taken out
 of the classroom. SRv suggested Governor's learning walks can help to identify the issues
 and priorities with this.
- Governors asked for written feedback from SEN students. Governors asked how HIL evaluates our SEN offer. HIL said learning walks are recorded and issues are then raised and addressed. Governors asked SRv if this relates to the training of teachers; and SRv said some teachers develop specialisms. Governors asked about differentiation; SRV said it's not HIL's responsibility to deal with all these issues herself but to make sure all teachers and HODs are owning these issues and for them to raise issues with HIL about how to deal with students when what they are doing isn't working.
- DLS explained primary school strategy, SRv said the process of how Governors can be
 assured they are satisfied with what's going on is the same. HIL said she has a lot of
 information from parents and there is a general realisation that the needs of students in
 Primary and Secondary parts of the school will never be exactly the same. Governors
 stated they should conduct a Reception visit with a section focusing on SEN.
- Governors asked for clarification around the changeover transition from Primary to Secondary – HIL and DLS said some of the secondary school students come back into the lower school from time to time to access facilities under the supervision of HIL. SRv said we still need to check we have the structure of SEN right as the school is not yet full.
- Governors said they retain concerns about the school not having a full-time SENCO Officer. SRv acknowledged this is an issue.
- Governors stated there is a lot of difference between those students with very low-level needs and some with very high functioning needs. HIL said this will continue to be the case as there are more and more students with SEN needs because the dedicated special schools cannot cope with more students due to lack of funding so we are receiving more and more students with needs that wouldn't have been addressed in mainstream schools only 5 or 6 years ago. DLS added that up to 60% of Reception students are now coming in to school with speech and language needs. SRv stated that the external services are pulling back due to previous overspending. He added that we don't have a history of built up skills in this area and so we need to work out how best to develop our staff.
- HIL advised she has a staff training session organised with teachers for 5 November regarding each teacher's top five students with needs that they are struggling to engage; the lower school process will be different.
- Governors said HIL added that sometimes being in the classroom isn't the right thing for some of these students and sometimes we need to be creative and find other options.
 Governors said we need to make sure these students are also getting an education as well as their special needs being addressed.

- Chair asked what the biggest blocker is and HIL and SRv both confirmed it is funding. HIL explained that she previously needed admin support. 15 hours per week has now been provided and this is already making an impact. Moving forwards, HIL's teaching time has been reduced and the SEN support officer in the lower school has also been given more time to focus on this area. HIL is also trying to access as many interventions externally as she can while conducting staff training and using support staff more, like the TAs, who will also be involved in the CPD on 5 November.
- Chair asked about how transparent the SEN budget is, and HIL said it's always difficult to pin down. DFA said it's not as clear as it used to be in the budget as some of it gets swallowed up into staffing costs. Governors clarified if we were to get challenged about a student attracting £X amount could we specify how that money benefits that child? and HIL said she already does this as she is required to show how much we are spending on each student, broken down minute by minute. She explained we receive up to £6000 per student, and above that ESCC look at whether it's appropriate for each individual student. Whereas a full time Individual Needs Assistant costs £18k plus and so we are never going to be allocated an appropriate level of funding for this area.
- Governors asked if the funding is outcome focussed, HIL said yes and she can send Governors some examples. Chair asked if the priority for spending is based on the needs of the child HIL said yes. HIL explained that some Year groups have a high number of SEN students, and some are challenging and have to be overseen individually. Governors asked if we always overspend on EHCPs. SEN said yes we overspend on every single one by about 30%, and for some we get no extra funding at all. SRv said combined across the school this equates to somewhere around £30-£50k that we are not funded for. Governors noted the shortfall in funding. SRv said it's a very odd profile as we don't have an equal number of EHCPs throughout the whole school but it is largely focused in the middle age group. Governors suggested we attract a large number of SEN students because once they are in the school they don't need to change schools at Year 7 which is attractive for parents of SEN students, and also because we are enjoy Outstanding status. SRv commented that we also have a lot of Looked After Children (LAC) too for the same reason.
- Governors asked about the progress for SEN students, and HIL said we are just above the national average in terms of outcomes. Governors asked about students at a double disadvantage by being both LAC and SEN HIL confirmed about 80%. It was commented that adopted children also have a much higher chance of having extra needs too.
- Governors asked about the SEF evaluation for SEN SRv said this had been discussed with the SLT last week and he thinks we are 'Requires Improvement'.
- Governors asked if there is any scope in reaching out to charities about developing a specialist unit on site for SEN students. SRv said we would need to work with ESCC to make sure they also funded it. SRv said the Strategic Planning Group should make a decision on whether this is something we want to pursue. Governors said this will mean we would attract more SEN students, and SRv said this would be ok if we are properly funded for it. HIL commented that ESCC were asking for schools to consider developing specialist SEN units a few years ago but they were making it clear there was no extra funding available for it. SRv said it's a possible step for the future.
- <u>Chair thanked</u> HIL for attending the meeting.

HIL left the meeting at 6pm

4.	 Minutes of previous Governing Board Meetings Chair approved the minutes as an accurate record of the 19 September FGB and signed them accordingly. Chair approved the pink paper as an accurate record of 19 September FGB and signed them accordingly. 		
	A 'Pink Paper' refers to items which relate to: i) a named person who works, or who it is proposed should work, at the school; or ii) to a pupil at, or candidate for admission to, the school; or iii) to any other matter that, by reason of its nature, the Governing Board is satisfied should remain confidential. The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013; Regulation 15(3): www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1624/regulation/15/made.		
5.	 Action Summary Report Chair and SRv talked through the actions on the Action Summary Report, which resulted in a number of actions being marked as complete. 		
6.	Items not already on the agenda • None were forthcoming.		
7.	 Chair's Correspondence Chair advised that he has received the following: A letter of complaint about safeguarding; however this has since been resolved. An email from a sixth form parent about being interested in becoming a governor – Chair will respond to him directly. 	Chair	ТВС
8.	 Governance Matters Chair explained that the Governor's Code of Practice has been updated by the Clerk to be made gender neutral and the review date extended to 2019 – Governors ratified the new document. Chair talked Governors through his draft allocation of their roles and asked if they were are happy with these – no negative comments were forthcoming. Governors discussed what the staff welfare governor does; SRv invited JN to come to a staff welfare meeting. Governors pointed out that this ties in with mental health and wellbeing so AA will also link in with this as part of her role. Chair said he will add a sub-committee about Master's House to the allocation list. Governors asked about how often they should meet with the Heads of Year in their roles as Link Governors for various Year Groups, and it was confirmed this role is more about looking at the data and progress through the year. Governors stated they wouldn't expect it to be more than 3 times a year. Governors asked, as the school has grown, whether it should be the whole FGB looking at all the primary data and suggested it should be just a few key Governors looking at it who are specialists in these Year Groups. Governors asked about PP being addressed by all Governors during monitoring visits and Chair advised he has changed the monitoring form to include this. Governors suggested 	JN/AA	ТВС
	 SEN should be on there as well and Chair will make this change accordingly. Chair talked Governors through his draft allocation of monitoring visit responsibilities. Chair advised Governors they should liaise with SRv about timings to work out dates to 	Chair	ASAP

	conduct monitoring. SRv and Chair will look at this closer to allocate some dates and Governors who are down to do visits will be contacted. Chair advised that some Governors have still not done any monitoring visits. Vice Chair offered to support new	SRv/Chair	ASAP
	 Governors in the completion of their monitoring visits. Chair asked Governors to look at The Key for research and to adhere to the monitoring protocol. Chair advised he has updated the Governor's Action Plan progress and plans to meet with Jane Branson (external advisor) to discuss. Chair advised the update to the Admissions Committee will be covered in SRv's Head Teacher's report (below). SE was asked to sign the Declaration of Eligibility form, the Code of Practice & the Register of Business Interests having been absent at the September FGB. MT still to sign Business Interests form, so carried forward to December due to his 	Chair	твс
	absence tonight.	MT	Dec FGB
9.	 SRv talked Governors through Head Teacher's report. He explained that he needs a decision from Governors about Sixth form offer in March. SRv talked Governors through the number of applications for Year 7 admissions received and explained that, to date, the numbers are looking very healthy and there is no cause for concern. SRv explained that these figures are stronger than this point last year. SRv talked Governors through his request for work experience placements for Year 10 and asked if any Governors are able to offer a placement in their places of work. SRv explained that the school has received legal advice that we have to consult about reducing our PAN for Year 7 next year down to 84 because of our own Year 6 students who will be coming up. Governors asked for a fuller explanation as to why the change of policy is needed and SRv explained that our Year 6 students are automatically guaranteed a place in Year 7. Our Year 6s will have the right to apply elsewhere if they want. AHT-A&C left the meeting at 6.55pm		
	 Governors asked if EU nationals are entitled to state funded places – SRv said yes if they meet the criteria. Chair asked for a vote on the new policy – Governors ratified the policy and the admissions consultation proposal. Governors were asked to attend the evening of 21 November for the launch of the consultation. Chair advised he will remind Governors on 14 November at the Governor's Training event. 	All Gvnrs	21/11
	 Governors asked that we keep a close eye on the growing number of siblings and the effect on admissions. SRv explained that the school is going to potentially get close to our stated net capacity figure soon. DFA and Chair to look into contacting the Secretary of State ASAP. DSF asked Governors for their opinion about Sixth Form students privately paying to retake their A-Levels to improve grades. SRv said we need to look at this next year to address this. Governors asked if there is funding available for this if they don't achieve the desired grades and DSF explained some wish to improve their grades for university. SRv asked for Governors to approve for him to make a decision in March about which subject courses we will offer for next year's Year 12. Chair suggested this could be discussed at the FGB scheduled for 13 March, but SRv said he needs to know today if Governors are ok with him making the decision. Governors asked how he can be sure on numbers in March, and SRv said the data is not yet reliable enough but will be better 	DFA/ Chair	ASAP

- by then. <u>Governors asked</u> about the financial impact of this, SRV said we would have already worked out how many teachers we would need.
- Governors asked if we have any more information about students applying for scholarships and whether we will know this in advance, and SRv said we won't know this until September in all likelihood. SRv explained to Governors the information we have available at the moment and explained the subjects where there's the most current interest. SRv produced a report which demonstrated the percentage of cost over income according to subjects based on the current interest levels. He explained that he wants to aim for an 80% cost versus income basis and currently the school is at around 82%/83%. SRv said we need to agree that we are unable to offer all 27 subjects for the Sixth Form, but we need to make sure our offer facilitates 95% of degree courses. Governors suggested we also need to look at BTECs and what other colleges are offering.
- Governors asked if we have any knowledge about how other Sixth Forms work. SRv said his view is that 350 students is the minimum number to enable anywhere to have a Sixth Form with a complete set of subjects available.
- Governors talked about the ways other colleges offer subjects which they might not
 ultimately run. DSF said if students go elsewhere and discover it is not what they were
 expecting they need to be aware they can come back to GH and we will support their
 return.
- Governors asked about post-census funding and SRv confirmed we get nothing if they
 enrol after the census is complete.
- <u>Chair asked</u> if Governors agreed to SRv's request <u>carried by Governors</u>.

SM left the meeting at 7.10pm (the meeting remained quorate with 7 Governors in attendance)

10. Safeguarding

- DHT presented an update on Safeguarding to Governors. He explained that there is a safeguarding monitoring visit due to take place with RM on 14 November regarding the school's compliance with the new 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' policy.
- He explained there are some changes we have had to make on the back of that
 legislation, which principally involve the introduction of Part 5 child on child sexual
 violence and harassment, key recommendations about holding more than 1 emergency
 contact and regarding the transfer of files between educational institutions and how this
 is managed. He explained that the school's use of 'My Concern' enables us to transfer
 files electronically.
- DHT explained the legislation also makes demands on the school about keeping children safe whilst they are with other providers particularly students with additional needs and reminds us that we are overall responsible for their safeguarding in these situations. Additionally under the new legislation we can request information about students on school placements before we accept them he reiterated that we wouldn't ask for this and then not accept them.
- DHT explained that the DfE have introduced the legislation with effect from 3 September and he has amended the school's policy accordingly by using a template policy supplied by ESCC which complies with the changes. DHT suggested he will go through this policy with RM on 14 November and highlight the differences.
- SRv asked what Governors need to have read DHT explained the Keeping Children Safe
 in Education policy part one and appendix one. He explained that ideally Governors
 should read the policy and know the policy and asked Governors if they would like to
 cover this more in the December FGB. Governors asked if this is statutory DHT
 confirmed yes and it will form part of the safeguarding training going forwards. DHT
 explained all staff have been sent an assessment test to make sure they've read the

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•	policy. Chair asked the Clerk to make an agenda item for the next meeting for all Governors to have read the policy in advance of the next FGB. Governors asked about clarification around visiting teachers – DHT said these will have had safeguarding training by their employing institution, our procedures are robust and they are identified by a red lanyard. DHT also explained that work experience placement hosts need to know their responsibilities around this, but in response to a query DHT confirmed they do not need to be DBS checked themselves. DHT talked about work experience placements not being risk free, but SRv said he really does not want to lose the valuable experience students gain from completing work experience. SRv said we complete mitigations against these risks as much as we can. SRv said Open Evenings is another example of a pressure point because of 800+ strangers mixing with the students all over the school campus. DHT reiterated that the school does everything it can to minimise these risks. Chair asked if RM has been in to look at single central register, SRv confirmed she had but she hasn't had time to report back to Governors on this yet. Chair asked for any other questions – none were forthcoming.	Clerk	Dec FGB
11 Fin	anne Undete		
11. Fin.	DFA talked Governors through the monthly accounts and explained we are in the process of auditing the annual accounts so they may be subject to variances and journals yet. Overall she confirmed we have kept a really tight grip on the finances and have kept everything under control so it is a much improved picture. DFA asked Governors for any questions. DFA explained we are still working with estimates and quotes on some lines and there will be some additional costs but we are looking at these being self-funding by the sale of equipment, as previously approved by Governors, which will be offset against these costs. DFA explained that some departments have been physically moved around and they are now in better positions with staff working nearer their line manager, and the feedback from staff has been favourable. She explained that the performing arts area has been redesigned which has worked really well and this has improved staff morale. She explained that money is now only spent if it is linked to a need but if there is a need then it gets funded, and the concept of using up all the money available before the end of the financial year is not acceptable. DFA explained that last winter was kind to us. Staffing continues to be challenging with a few long/medium term absences which represent a significant budget pressure that has overspent. But all in all it's a good picture. Chair of Enterprise Committee emailed comments: "Can I firstly pass on my congratulations to Janice and the whole team for the positive news on the accounts, with the generation of the additional surplus putting in a positive position this year". In response to this DFA said it's down to the whole school and not just her work. DFA explained that SRv has been very upfront with staff about our finances. Governors said the report is very easy to understand and they had no questions. SRv commented that it feels nice to be more in control of the budget now. DFA said this is significantly down to SRv's control over the finances. DFA explain		
•	refinance our loan. DFA has been informed there is no external advisor available at the current time. DFA talked Governors through her report on the Income Generation Strategy –She explained that the Premises Group needs to look at the whole area of lettings because		

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	 for Governors to take reassurance. DLS said the new staff on board as Phase Leaders, has really helped. Governors asked about our assessment of Years 3, 4 and 5 in 'Working at Greater Depth'. DLS said the external assessor advised us our levels are extremely high. Chair said Governors are mentioned in the report a couple of times but it's not clear how Governors are going to be involved in monitoring the Action Plan contained in the report. Vice Chair said she will reference both the main SEF and the Action Plan in her monitoring reports. Governors asked if the Action Plan is the same as, or separate from, the SEF; DLS advised it is different. SRv said if we had an OFSTED inspection we have a whole file of information about how Governors are monitoring progress. Chair said the section about Pupil Premium demands improvement. DLS talked Governors through some of the points that can be addressed. Chair said the external assessor was obviously extremely impressed and asked if Governors had any questions. Governors congratulated DLS on a great result. DLS said we have some challenged students and the more limited amounts of support we are going to be able to offer going forwards may have an impact on our ability to run extra sessions by teachers – SRv said when we work on our strategic risks the risk of our academic successes is one to be considered. Governors said one of their concerns is that 		
	 Governors said one of their concerns is that if we don't invest the resources in early years there may be a knock on effect. DFA said she has some concerns about staff welfare. SRv said he has pulled together an absence report because of more staff being up to a greater allocation of work and it's too early to say if it's having an impact, but he is monitoring it closely. SRv said another side to our potential income generation agenda is the possibility of selling our leadership services in a consultancy type fashion, but this is a conversation for the future as we need to be really secure first with what we are doing and have some more capacity. 		
13.	 Policies Anti-Bullying Policy – SRv confirmed this is an SLT-led policy, so just for Governor's information. Charging & Remissions Policy – SRv confirmed this is an SLT-led policy, so just for Governor's information. SRv talked Governors through the small changes made to the policy. Governors asked about music lettings who have told parents they are being charged a fee for using the premises and asked if we allowed to charge for this. DFA explained that as this is not part of the curriculum and it's an external provision it is common practice to charge a basic lettings fee to help cover costs incurred by the school. 		
14.	 Monitoring Update Chair asked about SDP in relation to the aspiration to increase student applications for Years 7 and 12 and whether this has now been achieved, and if so whether we can move this up one mark or not. SRv said he would rather we wait until enrollment. Governors commented they are going to feed back on the fire drill that took place this morning as it was very impressive. 		
15.	 Any other urgent business Governors asked about the consideration of the introduction of a unisex blazer, dependent on contractual obligations and stock levels, and asked other Governors if they wanted this to be investigated. Governors discussed the differences between male and female blazers and SRv suggested both types should be gender neutralised but both kept available. Governors stated that Brigade market them as 'boys' and 'girls' blazers. Governors said part of this reason for this request is about passing outgrown blazers 	SLT	ТВС

16.	 Teacher's appraisal. He advised the panel will be made up of Chair, FW and PA and he asked for the Board's approval for this – Governors carried. Governors are proud to announce that Oliver Davis in Year 4 was awarded a Child of Sussex Award last week. SLT have asked for him to bring his trophy to an assembly so other students can learn about his actions. Confirmation of future FGB meeting dates (all at 5pm): Thursday 6 December 2018 Thursday 31 January 2019 	
	 Wednesday 13 March 2019 Thursday 16 May 2019 Thursday 20 June 2019 Thursday 11 July 2019 	
	Confirmation of Governor Training dates (all at 5pm): Wednesday 14 November 2018 Wednesday 6 February 2019 Confirmation of Governor's Away-Day:	
	Friday 29 March 2019 (12.30pm – 5.30pm) Venue TBC	
17.	Meeting Close • Chair closed the meeting at 8.15pm	