

Extra Governor's Meeting – Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday 20 August 2020

Meeting Venue: Via Zoom Meeting Time: 5:15pm

Governors: Julian Mace, (JM), Chair

Louise Baxter (LB), Vice Chair

Alison Allart, (AA)
Paul Amos, (PA)

Selene Edwards, (SE)
Glyn Freeman, (GF)
Sara McKenna, (SM)
Gabrielle Mace, (GM)
Joel Newman, (JN)
Trevor Scott, (TS)
Joyce Swann, (JS)
Matt West, (MW)

Marilyn Benzing, (MB)

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

Also in attendance: Catherine Geldard, (HOP), Head of Primary

Jemma Graffham, (DSF), Director of Sixth Form

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

Dominic O'Driscoll, (AHT-SEN), Assistant HT - SEND Coordinator

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: Martyn Ashley Taylor, (MT)

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Item	Discussion	Action
1.	 Welcome and apologies for absence Chair welcomed Governors and SLT to the Extra Governors Meeting. Chair welcomed Dominic O'Driscoll, the school's new SENDCo; (hereafter 'AHT-SEN'). Chair explained the purpose of this EGM is to discuss reopening and A-Level and GCSE results. 	
2.	Declarations of Interests • Governors declared various interests in respect of their children who attend the school.	
3.	Minutes of previous Education Committee Meeting • Governors agreed the Minutes as an accurate record of the 9 July FGB, and the Chair virtually signed a copy.	
4.	 School Reopening SRv explained that the school intends to open for all Year Groups across 7th and 8th September, except for Reception who always have a staggered start. All Year groups will be kept in bubbles with their own areas and timings. Years 10/11 will be classed as one bubble, as will Years 12/13. There are some ongoing issues to resolve regarding catering provision, and discussions are ongoing with Pabulum about this. Timings will change throughout the day with the end of day being staggered and all arrangements will be reviewed every fortnight. A new risk assessment is being completed for all vulnerable staff and the HR Manager is contacting those people to review their individual circumstances. The SLT still need to devise a strategy for in the event of an outbreak, but this will be informed by advice from PHE. AHT-A&C added the SLT have put in place plans to help reintegrate students back into the habit of learning. LB joined the meeting at 5.25pm Chair asked what guidance has been received from Government. SRv said they have received very outline proposals without being prescriptive. The main advice is about preventing cross-contamination and the heavy use of sanitisation, especially around PE. Chair asked about feedback from parents. SRv said there has been nothing of any concern and a lot of parents have offered their support. Chair asked about what the guidance says if the school has any positive cases. SRv said he will revert to ESCC and PHE and follow their advice. Governors asked how school clubs for the foreseeable future, including Prep and Twilight. Governors asked about why these decisions are being made now and not in July. SRv said he expected the advice would change again. He also wanted all staff to take an uninterrupted 3-week break before they had to start planning for the new term. Gove	SLT

- contacted all parents of SEND students to establish where they are, and the trend seems to be they have largely coped well from a mental health perspective but academically they have slipped behind
- AHT-SEN said he has also asked the same parents to give an indication of the needs they think their children will have upon returning. He does not want to impose a blanket approach.
- Governors asked about how an individual approach can fit with Year Group bubbling. AHT-SEN said he has started to design how Oasis will work in terms of access and egress and explained how he plans to split the provision for different year groups to keep them apart. There will also be a triage area in the entrance for those students who self-refer to Oasis.

MB joined meeting at 5.35pm

- AHT-A&C said the rationale for Years 10/11 and 12/13 being classed as joint bubbles is to limit
 the disruption to their curriculum because they need access to specialist rooms, i.e. Music
 Room. However, for the vast majority of time they will be isolated away from the other Year
 Group.
- <u>Chair asked</u> about external Year 7s and welcoming them to the school. SRv said Year 7 will be alone in the Secondary phase on 7 September and they will be toured around the school without the normal hustle and bustle of other Year Groups this is for all Year 7s.
- Governors asked AHT-SEN about those students who need ad-hoc support. AHT-SEN said he
 has a meeting with AHT-B&A next week to combine their efforts. He is going to try to ensure
 that only students who have a Retreat Card come to the Oasis. Governors asked what a Retreat
 Card is, and AHT-SEN advised it is a new system he is implementing from September.
- DSF added that there will be staff out and about and in classrooms to look for signs of anxiety and mental health issues this will be a whole pastoral team effort. She added that support can, of course, take place outside of the Oasis.
- Governors said they are aware of familiarisation sessions taking place at another Eastbourne school and asked if anything like this is planned. AHT-SEN said he has asked parents of SEND children if they would like to come in next week and only 4 have opted to do so.
- Governors suggested it would be worthwhile to conduct a monitoring visit with a focus on these students early in the new term.
- DSF said all staff have had training regarding safeguarding and she talked about Sussex Police's
 Operation Encompass. Staff have spent time looking at increases in social and emotional health
 issues post-Covid at the last INSET day and they will do so again on 3 September. There has also
 been a lot of Educare training taking place too. She is going to handover properly to AHT-SEN

and the new Pastoral Support Assistants to ensure all vulnerable students' needs are addressed.

- Governors asked if staff have had training on recognising gambling and alcohol issues through lockdown. DSF said they have had training around issues at home and a lot of work will be done about enabling students to talk and open up to staff about their concerns.
- DSF said she has been in communication with ESCC throughout regarding those students who
 have a Child Protection status. In her view it is about making students once again feel safe and
 secure enough to make disclosures and for staff to feel comfortable dealing with those
 disclosures.
- <u>Governors added</u> there will also be issues with lots of parents being made redundant and often people behave in different ways when faced with financial insecurity. DSF said the staff are good at bringing areas of concern to her attention.
- AHT-SEN said lots of these issues will be individualised and the school needs to identify these things as such so that each student's needs are met whatever they may be.
- Governors asked about PPG funding. SRv said he routinely sends out reminders to all families
 twice a year to register for this if they qualify because it means they will be able to enjoy the

Governors

benefits and the school gets more money to support their children. He will re-emphasise this more often in the year to come.

SRv

MW joined meeting at 5.55pm.

- Governors asked about teacher's own children and whether they will be able to come into school at the same time as their parents which may mean breaking the bubble. SRv said this is about getting the balance right and so this issue needs to be looked at on an individual basis to try not to break the bubble, because otherwise extra precautions will be needed.
- <u>Chair asked</u> SRv if there are any areas of reopening that are causing concerns or uncertainty. SRv said the only main outstanding issue is with catering but DFA is confident this will be resolved with Pabulum, although this is not yet confirmed.
- Governors asked about the recommendation against face masks and asked if people can wear them if they want to. SRv said nationally face masks are not currently recommended in schools.
- SRv added that TAs who need to get close to younger students will be provided with masks and visors. Likewise, if a student is sick or needs comforting the same thing applies. Conversely, teachers will be teaching from the front of the class and will be at least 2m away from students.
- Governors asked about the position re social distancing. SRv said the advice is very clear that it is virtually impossible to do this with children below Year 7. HOP said Reception and Years 1, 2 and 3 will not be attempting social distancing and so if staff there feel vulnerable, they can wear face coverings.
- <u>Governors asked</u> if the biometric system will still be used for paying, but SRv said this will be done by looking up the students on the system instead. <u>Governors commented</u> an email had been sent out asking students to get registered onto the system.
- <u>Governors asked</u> about working from home in the event of another lockdown and SRv said the SLT had talked about this earlier today and have made plans. Staff will be trained to voiceover PowerPoints and use MS Teams to teach.
- Chair asked Governors to indicate their support for the SLT's plans. All Governors agreed.

5. **Exam Results**

- <u>Chair said</u> he did not plan to go into too much detail with this tonight as it is technically the Education Committee's domain, but requested a general oversight of the results.
- SRv said the A-Level results chaos was very difficult, but these have all now reverted back to the Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) originally proposed by teachers. The downside is for those students who were rejected by university based on the original algorithm grades they can now not get into university, even with the amended grades, because the courses are full. For BTEC students they are still awaiting the delayed results.
- The A-Level results were all roughly as the school expected, as with the GCSEs, which all seemed fair and accurate.
- There have been more applications to the Sixth Form and the school expect to receive even more, which will mean bigger class sizes. No new subjects have been added. SRv admitted it would be tempting to accept lots of extra students but the school has made the decision to keep the interview process as rigorous and robust as previously so the school does not end up with lots of students who cannot cope with A-levels. Also, if the school believes a course somewhere else would be more beneficial, they will tell the students about it.
- DSF said there is still no clarity on university places even though the cap on numbers has been removed. She is unable to rely on the UCAS system at the moment as it has not caught up since the Government announcements. They are in constant communication with those students who are still negotiating with universities. The vast majority are placed and are happy with their places. She will bring a more comprehensive update to the next Education Committee meeting.
- AHT-A&C said the SLT still could not fathom how some algorithm A-Level results were decided upon. In Chemistry, for example, every student was inexplicably downgraded by 2 grades. To

DFA

DSF

	revert to CAGs seems much fairer. For Gildredge House last year 86% received grades A-C, whereas this year it is 87%. He said CAGs will always result in a slight uplift compared to real exams. • In GCSEs there was a similar uplift. Results here were more generous though as any algorithm upgrades were allowed on top of the CAGs and in Maths, for example, 28 students got a higher score as a result. • Governors asked about the subjects that were adversely affected and whether this was related to coursework during lockdown. SRv advised he is unsure what impact coursework had on the algorithm calculations as this has not been explained. He advised there seems to be no way of fathoming how the algorithm worked. DSF said the school was not asked to submit a separate coursework grade for the CAGs – they were just required to submit one grade. • Chair asked about teachers being criticised for some of the CAGs as mentioned in the national press because there is now pressure on teachers to defend those grades, whereas originally they were going to be moderated via the algorithm. • AHT-A&C said after the A-Level results came out all schools were seen as the heroes because the CAGs were largely better than those the algorithm produced, whereas for GCSEs there was never that initial algorithm sense of downgrading so the feeling was very different. However, most GH students were satisfied with judgments that were made. • Chair thanked all school staff for supporting students through the recent grading fiasco. SRv said the staff will continue to support all students whatever their situation is.	
6.	 Any other urgent business Chair advised Governors that SQ has resigned as Clerk and is now working his notice and will leave his position with effect from 30 September. Chair has been in touch with the school about advertising the vacancy. JM and GF will be completing a preliminary visit for Health & Safety in September. Chair advised he is still working on the Governor's monitoring schedule for next school year. Governors agreed the next meeting will remain virtual and they will keep an eye on government guidance regarding when physical meetings should resume. 	Chair JM/GF Chair Clerk
7.	Confirmation of future meeting dates:	
	FULL GOVERNING BOARD: • Thursday 17 September 2020 • Thursday 14 January 2021 • Thursday 29 April 2021 • Thursday 8 July 2021 EDUCATION COMMITTEE: • Thursday 1 October 2020 • Thursday 11 February 2021 • Thursday 6 May 2021 ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE: • Thursday 10 December 2020 • Thursday 18 March 2021 • Thursday 17 June 2021 Chair closed meeting at 6.20pm	