



Gildredge House

Education Committee Meeting - Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday 9th October 2025

Meeting Venue: Teams

Meeting Time: 5pm

Governors: Lea Owen, *(LO)*, Committee Chair
Eddie Erasmus, *(EE)*
Gabrielle Mace, *(GM)*
Nicoleta Uzorka Ion, *(NUI)*
Katharine Paradas, *(KP)*

Ex officio: Craig Bull, *(CBu)*, Executive Head Teacher

Also in attendance: Richard Thornhill, *(COG)*, Chair of Governors
Tom Addems, *(AH-I)*, Assistant Head – Inclusion
Vickie Jenkins, *(HOS)*, Head of Secondary
Rebecca McGuinness, *(AAH-P)* Associate Assistant Head - Primary
Dominic O’Driscoll, *(DH-QE)*, Deputy Head – Quality of Education
Helen Punter-Bruce, *(HOP)*, Head of Primary
Danny Simmonds, *(AH-PD)*, Assistant Head – Personal Development

Clerk to Governors: Rif Aslam (RA)

Apologies: J Swann *(JSw)*

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Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair welcomed Governors & SLT to this ‘virtual’ Education Committee via Teams. • Chair extended a warm welcome to EE as the new governor to this Committee. • Chair accepted apologies for absence from JSw and advised that both she and HOS have to leave this meeting early. 	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interests There were no declarations of interest made.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of previous Education Committee Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair confirmed that previous Committee Minutes were signed off at July FGB. 	
4.	<p>School Development Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 -26 SDP – HOS invited questions following the paper presented at the FGB. COG questioned if everyone felt SDP addressed how we will improve. Whatever funding we have will drive us to spend on this SDP. EHT advised that he will come back to this question at the end of this section. <p>HOS went on to highlight the aspects of the SDP for Secondary phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Curriculum – our main focus and driver. Key for us to embed teaching and learning. As far as funding is concerned, we have moved to a faculty structure with allocated funds for the Heads of Faculty. We are thriving in the SDP to hold these middle leaders accountable. We are also looking at the significance of the Lead Practitioner role in moving us forward. ○ Behaviour – we do know we are moving in the right direction. The emphasis is now more engagement thus improving the quality of teaching & learning. Ensure a consistent approach from our staff. ○ Inclusion and Belonging – aligning AHT-I and AHT- PD’s SDP priorities so that we know every single child and are tracking them to ensure that they’re making progress. The sense of belonging generated through our House and Student Leadership systems will allow us to ensure that all children are thriving and feel a sense of belonging within our community. <p>COG stated that we will do our best to fund the priorities you have spoken about.</p> <p>Chair emphasised that it is vital to ensure funding is there for specific targets relating to our PP students and those currently at grades 3-4. HOS advised that funding has been allocated for a PP Mentor to drive these targets. Already holding him and all the staff around PP to account. Hope to show impact of this soon.</p> <p>HOP highlighted aspects of the SDP for Primary phase. HOP explained that both phases have common goals and objectives. In Primary our teaching and learning is different in that teachers teach all subjects. The same expectations are laid out to all staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Curriculum – Teaching & Learning and professional development continues to be a focus. Individual teachers will become subject champions. New role of Teaching & Learning Practitioner in place this year. We’re already seeing positive impact in terms of her relationship with the teachers. She and AAH-P are getting into classes and coaching in the classroom. AAH-P is working on their leadership skills. Discussions are taking place with our phase leaders around support for students with complex needs. We currently have 3 students who hope to be allocated to a special school. In the meantime we still need to meet their needs whilst also not neglecting the needs of all the other children. There is a heavy demand on our resources to ensure all children leave Key Stage 1 with secure 	

	<p>phonics knowledge and arrive in Key Stage 2 with ability to read and write so that we can develop that ready for them going into Year 7.</p> <p>EHT added that the substantial funding governors provided for teaching & learning and CPD made a significant difference. Curriculum, teaching & learning and professional development are the key areas for us.</p> <p>COG remarked that the Ofsted Lead Inspector noted a variation in for example English. Are the great results this year a result of addressing that variation. HOS confirmed they were. It's been a key priority to embed the GH 5 and consistency in teaching. Lesson observations confirm variation is reducing. Retrieval is happening in every lesson. For example, all English lessons deliver the same curriculum, the same lesson plans and slides. Now we need to move onto the nuances of how that's embedded. They all know what is expected and know how to do it. Now working on all delivering to the high standard that is expected. It's an exciting time and found staff more reflective. 2 years ago, they wouldn't have known what the issues were.</p> <p>Chair commended progress. DH-QE added that Faculty Heads and their Deputies are able to accurately diagnose the quality of teaching in their areas. Positive start to the year.</p> <p>COG commented that it is crucial to ensure the investment is reaping a dividend. HOS agreed and stated we will need to continue investing in CPD for Faculty Heads. EHT added that this was the case for middle leadership Primary too. HOP added that there is huge engagement. Staff are excited and have their action plans. It's about upskilling our phase leaders and giving them the skills to be able to hold their teams accountable. AAH-P echoed comments.</p> <p>Governor shared his positive experience of attending a tour of the school today.</p> <p>Governor questioned where Careers sat in the SDP. HOS & HOP both confirmed it was under curriculum in SDP1 to give it prominence. AH-PD suggested that monitoring visit for Careers be carried out at the same time as governor attended to do SDP 6.</p> <p>Chair thanked SLT for all their input.</p>	
5.	<p>Head Teacher's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Good Practice at GH – HOS explained that she was asked by East Sussex TASS if they could observe our behaviour in practice as GH has the lowest suspension numbers in Eastbourne. They attended on 18th September and produced the report after their visit. They were shown how we educate the students and parents. Really proud of our students. No one stopped to see who the visitors were but just got on with lessons. It was clear our students were used to observations. TASS could see why we don't need to suspend as frequently as others. Our own focus will be on internal reflection next term to stop reoffending. <p>Chair noted that data on suspensions really sands out and commended school. Clerk read out complimentary comments from absent governor.</p> <p>HOS left meeting at 17:32</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Summaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Behaviour and Culture – AH-I referred to paper and highlighted that PP students receive a disproportionate number of behaviour points. Work this year is to support PP students to receive more aspire points. This is to promote a sense of belonging in school, feel their voices are heard and that they are part of the school community. Term 6 saw rise in uniform issues particularly short length of skirts. We had a drive to implement consistent standards amongst staff. Consistent logging of issues by staff highlighted the culprits. We wrote letters home to parents and those that repeated misdemeanour had to wear trousers instead. Those that came in wearing trainers had them confiscated and lent school shoes to wear until the end of the day. <p>Governor pointed out inconsistency in figures. AH-I confirmed it was a typing error.</p>	

	<p>Governor queried strategies in place for PP students. AH-I advised that we are looking through the lens of a PP student with everything. PP Mentor will support students to get them into interventions and meet them regularly to talk about what they are finding difficult in school. PP Mentor and Heads of Year will deliver information about PP students to all staff. For example, staff were made aware of personal circumstances of a particular PP student. Gives staff context around why they may be seeing certain behaviours. We have been approved for TASS to provide mentor sessions for 11 of our PP students on how to regulate emotions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attendance and Persistent Absentees – AH-PD referred to paper. We’re well above National in all areas. Drive to improve gap between PP and non PP students. We want to lower that 15% gap between them. Gap between SEND and non SEND is 6%. PP Mentor and Attendance Team member to drive improvement. Primary is well above average. Secondary need to focus on KS4 PP students. Decision needs to be made on whether to have separate target figures for Primary and Secondary. <p>Governor asked if other schools include EYFS attendance figures on league tables. HOP advised that most have 2 sets of figures as some parents decide to elect part time attendance for their under 5’s.</p> <p>Chair inquired how well parents respond to attendance letters. AH-PD advised it was a mix. Important for us to reach out to parents to offer them support in attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safeguarding – EHT explained that the report was done by KMa and invited questions. Data relates to Term 6. <p>Chair noted the rise in anxiety and asked if it also linked with attendance issues. AH-I advised that our Pastoral Team play a key role with those students. Building relationships with families and students experiencing anxiety. We focus on what will get them through the door. We have an out of class pass and get the pastoral team to them when a transfer is requested. EHT advised that 11 children identified and being supported by Me and My Mind as well as Place2Be. We do a lot to support mental health at our school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inclusion – AH-I referred to Inclusion Newsletter. One of our students has written a blog about impact of Forest School. <p>Governor commended newsletter.</p> <p>Governor asked who receives the Newsletter. AH-I advised all our Inclusion parents and all staff.</p> <p>Governor recommended the Newsletter should be celebrated at our Open Evenings with a separate stand. AAH-P added that GH is positively known for its support for mental health and wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of SEND Support and Actions (Primary) – HOP advised we are currently without a SENDCo. Role is being covered by herself, AH-I, AAH-P and LFe. HOP thanked them for all their support. Last week, we appointed a candidate who will start in January. Outside consultant has come in to support us in the interim. She did an audit and report is attached. Please note the actions already taken. Received positively on the whole by parents. HOP expressed gratitude and pride for the support provided by the team mentioned. Parent Coffee meetings next term to introduce them to our team. <p>Chair noted tremendous amount of work done. AAH-P added that it has been really positive for team to have gone through these hard conversations. AH-I commended other members of team. They have spent a significant amount of time doing the ground work in getting students back in classrooms from the Nurture Room.</p> <p>COG requested thoughts on whether additional funds need to be allocated for this area.</p> <p>Chair thanked everyone and left meeting at 18:15. COG took over chairing the meeting.</p> <p>EHT praised HOP for recognising that this was an area of need in the school.</p>	
6.	<p>Admissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of Admissions advised figures are similar to last year. 31st Oct deadline for Secondary applicants. An emails sent to all parents and a social media push too. • New parent governor Lucy has volunteered to come onto the Admissions committee. 	

7.	<p>Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree Link Governors for specific SDP targets – COG offered to take on the Leadership (SDP7). NUI stated preference for Careers bit of SDP1. GM agreed to take on SDP6. KP offered to be second governor on any of the Monitoring visits. 	
8.	<p>Any other urgent business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COG advised there was none.. 	
9.	<p>Confirmation of future Governor Meeting Dates for 2025/2026</p> <p>FULL GOVERNING BOARD: 11th December 2025 26th March 2026 2nd July 2026</p> <p>EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 22nd January 2026 14th May 2026</p> <p>ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE: 13th November 2025 12th February 2026 11th June 2026</p>	
	<p>Meeting Closed COG thanked governors and SLT and closed the meeting at 18:25 hrs.</p>	