



Board of Governors Meeting -Minutes

Date: 08 November 2016 **5:15pm** **Location:** Gildredge House – The Hub

Present: Julian Mace (JM) Chair, Louise Baxter (LB) Vice Chair, Gabrielle Mace (GM), Adam Molloson (AM), Steven Blower (SB), Trevor Scott (TS), Rachel Moreton (RM), Aidan Delaney (AD), Graham Walker (GW)

Ex officio: Lea Gilbert Head Teacher (HT)

In attendance: Janice Logan (DFA), Paul Barber (DHT), Danny Simmons (AHT)

Apologies: Nicola O Donnell (NoD), Paul Amos (PA), Neil Best (NB)

Clerk to Governors: Helen Archer (HA)

| Item | Detail | Action | Date |
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| Procedural Matters | | | |
| 1. | Welcome and apologies for absence | | |
| | Apologies received with reasons for absences. Apologies accepted by FGB. | | |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest | | |
| | Declarations of interest were raised for AHT, DFA, AM and DHT in relation to agenda item 7 (pay and Progression). It was agreed these individuals would leave the meeting during discussion of this agenda item. | | |
| 3. | Governance | | |
| 3.1 | <u>Minutes</u> Minutes of the FGB meeting held on 13.10.16 were approved by FGB and signed by the Chair. ACTION: Clerk to send NoD final minutes of P&P meeting held on 15.06.16 for clearance. | Clerk | ASAP |
| 3.2 | <u>Head Teacher recruitment</u> Chair updated Governors on the on-going Head Teacher recruitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two potential candidates came forward at the Head Teacher recruitment open event. | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair met with Lesley Young (Consultant Head Teacher, East Sussex) last week, who is offering support with the process. | | |
| 4. | Matters arising not already on this Agenda | | |
| | <p><u>Timetable changes</u></p> <p>Governors requested an update from HT on timetabling and staff reactions to proposed timetable changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HT explained that the majority of staff were not in favour of the proposed timetable change. HT made Governors aware of a possible imminent parent complaint re a timetable issue. HT further highlighted the proposed staff cost (for Laurie Marsden's time) involved in implementing any changes. HT concluded implementing any timetable changes should be avoided. <p><u>Governors challenged</u> this conclusion, and asked for further explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HT/DHT said the Science department were happy to not change the timetable. Maths department have accepted double periods, despite initial reservations. English department were not happy with retaining existing timetable. <p><u>Governors asked</u> DHT whether he can make existing timetable work, given issues with English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT said at this stage in the year timetable change should be avoided. From a leadership perspective, next year's timetable is already being considered. <p><u>Governors asked</u> whether we are seeing a resulting negative impact on student progress and expressed concern that if a significant drop occurs by the end of December, this will be revisited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HT expressed concern with this, as all efforts are currently focused towards creating the Sept 2017 timetable. <p><u>Governors challenged</u> whether we are confident we can get it right for next year.</p> <p><u>Governors emphasised</u> the importance of communicating back to staff and giving comfort that whilst it is not being changed this year, procedures are in place for how it will change next year. It is important staff feel a robust process is in place.</p> <p><u>Governors further challenged</u> the presumption that if progress suffers, we are seen to be 'making do'.</p> <p>HT responded that staff will ensure students do not suffer.</p> <p><u>Governors appreciated</u> the difficulty in carrying out any timetable change now, but emphasised the Governing body's duty in needing to be seen to react if December's results show any significant decline.</p> <p><u>ACTION: bring to Education Committee meeting in January 2017</u></p> | | |
| | | CLERK-AGENDA ITEM | Education- Jan 17 |

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| 5. | Chair's Correspondence (PINK PAPER) | | |
| Strategic Matters | | | |
| 6. | School Development Plan/School Performance | | |
| 6.1 | <p><u>Monitoring:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding & Behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RM gave feedback on recent monitoring visit held on 1st November <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Took place both inside and outside school ▪ Looked at random, anonymised safeguarding files. ▪ Relayed that it was a good visit. ▪ No areas of concern. ▪ Report to follow <p><u>Governors asked whether dinner queues had improved.</u> All dinner queues had now improved. Sports Dept staff monitor area. Some juggling of timing different year groups has alleviated time queuing.</p> <p>Governors gave thanks to DHT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chair highlighted email sent to Governors on 1 November re Gel online. ○ Chair requested all Governors to complete the safeguarding course ASAP. ○ RM highlighted the desire to do East Sussex safeguarding training. DHT agreed to look into this. <p><u>Governors asked whether we are on track re SEF and safeguarding.</u> DHT would check and confirm as the SEF is currently being reviewed within the next week. Despite not having the answer, DHT relayed his optimism here.</p> <p><u>Governors asked about tutor times.</u> DHT responded this is now tighter and that there is evidence standards are being followed.</p> <p><u>Governors queried safeguarding procedures around FOGH, ie whether all volunteers are DBS checked.</u> It was reiterated that any FOGH helper not holding a DBS check should always be under the supervision of an individual holding a DBS certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DHT asked whether Governors had any questions on the paper circulated. Yellow reflects updates made since the report was last circulated to Governors. ○ <u>Governors requested Lower School attendance figures.</u> ○ Otherwise it was agreed to use this model going forward. ○ <u>Governors asked about Show My Homework.</u> It was agreed this encourages parents to keep involved. | <p>All Governors</p> <p>DHT</p> <p>DHT</p> | <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> |

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| | <p>Governors were informed that more teachers are using this programme. HT explained there is a training session due. This will also be in the SEF report.</p> <p>DHT then took Governors through the Prep and Twilight Report (see agenda item 11.1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6th Form: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GM gave Governors an update on the imminent open evening numbers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 77 are currently booked in. ▪ St Catherine’s have a big event on the same evening. ▪ 7 have currently applied. | | |
| 6.2 | <p><u>Risk Register Report</u></p> <p>HT summarised the Report circulated prior to the meeting. Nine areas are currently red.</p> <p>HT pre-warned Governors at the previous FGB in October that there would be 2 additional red areas due to: (i) quality of leadership due to HT’s departure; and (ii) deficit recovery plan.</p> <p><u>Governors shared</u> concerns regarding the 6th form numbers. It was agreed to focus efforts on marketing and recruitment of the 6th form.</p> | | |
| 6.3 | <p><u>Insurance</u></p> <p>DFA took Governors through one quote obtained for long term absence cover. HT explained this will be fed into the SEF.</p> <p><u>Governors asked</u> whether other schools self-insure against this type of risk. HT explained there are some that do.</p> <p><u>Governors tried</u> to get an idea of the contingency needed to be put aside for this area. Governors agreed it was clear the contingency currently in the budget was not high enough.</p> <p><u>Governors asked</u> whether there is management training in place to manage staff back to work after sick leave. HT replied the East Sussex policy is currently being adopted. The DFA, DHT and HT all conducted return-to-work interviews last year.</p> <p><u>Governors questioned</u> “free periods” in the 1265 method and whether teachers are expected to do supply. HT gave a general explanation of the 1265 method. HT highlighted the need to protect PPA time (10%). But shared the reality that there are 5 free periods/week as currently overstaffed. This currently appears as blank in their timetable. HT highlighted that a forensic spreadsheet has been put together to look at this area further.</p> | | |

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| | <p><u>Governors asked</u> whether the expectation is that teachers cover each other AHT explained that in a previous school, there was no expectation of teachers covering each other.</p> <p>A general discussion followed regarding the English department and cover.</p> <p><u>Governors asked</u> whether an increased amount should be allocated in the budget for <u>supply</u>. AHT highlighted the pressures this places on teaching staff when cover is provided by them. This area needs to be closely monitored.</p> | | |
| | <p>6:20pm GW briefly left the meeting</p> | | |
| <p>Business Management (PINK PAPER)</p> | | | |
| | <p>7pm GW rejoined the meeting.</p> | | |
| 8. | Finance/Budget | | |
| 8.1 | <p><u>Update on draft recovery plan sent to EFA/response:</u></p> <p>DFA updated Governors on a recent conversation with Louise Hemsley from EFA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan was being considered by accountants • The DFA was expecting a report back imminently. • Current work taking place re-profiling budget lines with further detail. • It is expected that the EFA will be running the school's cashflow. <p>This was acknowledged as positive news. But more detailed work to be done. DFA is due to have a further conversation with Louise Hemsley.</p> <p><u>Governors highlighted</u> that it is likely that schools will suffer more funding cuts with the rolling out of the governments National Funding Formula. There is currently no allowance made for this loss in the draft recovery plan.</p> <p>It was acknowledged there are key significant items in the Plan that still need examining.</p> <p>HT acknowledged income generation is a key consideration although highlighted how support staff are stretched.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged the above news gives much needed breathing space until January and emphasised detailed work needs to continue on finding cost savings.</p> | | |
| 8.2 | <p><u>ICT Strategy/Procurement review update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phones and CCTV are now approved by GW/AD. • GW took governors through paper circulated just prior to the meeting. | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GW highlighted that AD and he will respond to urgent requests and will set up with AHT an ICT strategy group to look at a 3-5 yr plan. Monthly IT strategy group meet to be set up. GW expressed intention not to lock ourselves into any cost obligations long term. <p>ACTION: GW to report back to Enterprise Committee in February.</p> | <p>GW/AD/AHT</p> <p>GW</p> | <p>ASAP</p> <p>ENT –Feb</p> |
| 8.3 | <p><u>Masters House/CIF Fund</u></p> <p>SB took Governors through a paper presented on the night and explained the current Permitted Use status for Masters House.</p> <p>It was agreed a working party needs to be set up with interested parties contacting SB to look into this further. A plan should be submitted next year.</p> <p>Governors discussed possibility of using Masters House for future bookings.</p> <p>It was agreed any conversion of the current permitted use of Masters House would have to go through the Trust as the body responsible for the building.</p> | | |
| 9. | <p>Review of Policies</p> | | |
| | <p><u>Policy Review:</u> No further comments were received from Governors on the Policy Review.</p> <p>HT will therefore publish the Policies on the understanding these are now approved by Governors.</p> | <p>HT</p> | <p>ASAP</p> |
| | <p><u>Uniform Policy</u></p> <p>HT took governors through the results of a recent survey on a proposed change to the uniform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Council (year 9 students) gave an impressive presentation to SLT on a proposal for girls to wear trousers. Pictures were passed round for Governors to see proposed trousers. Results from the parent survey: 126 in favour of the proposal/58 were against/7 were unsure. HT brought to Governors’ attention the diverse range of comments received from parents. <p>Governors passed on formal thanks to the Student Council for their presentation.</p> <p>Governors then debated the subject.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors acknowledged all arguments (including but not limited to equality) supporting this request. GW wanted to formally note his agreement to this proposal. | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern was expressed and discussed regarding vision and ethos of school being eroded, especially alongside timing of HT leaving. • HT highlighted Student Council voted unanimously in favour of the proposal. • DHT raised suggestion that students from Student Council should hear Governors’ debate. • Governors asked whether it was equally worth considering a summer uniform. • It was acknowledged parents would now be expecting a response from the survey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>It was agreed:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain Governors would attend a Student Council session. • Some additional time was needed to explore this request further. • Governors voted (in the majority) to defer the decision until the above has happened. <p>HT would in the meantime, send out a summary letter to parents.</p> <p>Action: defer to January FGB</p> | <p>CLERK: AGENDA ITEM</p> | <p>FGB Jan</p> |
| <p>10.</p> | <p>Training/Development</p> <p><u>Governors’ Self-Review</u> Deferred to January FGB</p> | <p>CLERK: AGENDA ITEM</p> | <p>FGB Jan</p> |
| <p>11.</p> | <p>Any other urgent business</p> | | |
| <p>11.1</p> | <p><u>Update on Education Committee:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Progress Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GCSE Subject Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Governors asked whether final decisions regarding the provision of triple science have yet been made for y10.</u> HT replied this has not yet been decided. ▪ There were no further comments on the GCSE data paper <p><u>Governors highlighted their expectation to have seen middle school data by now.</u> It was agreed more in depth data would come to this next Education Committee meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional needs/Pupil Premium data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HT explained this paper does not reflect progress data. ▪ <u>Governors highlighted a comparison to other schools is needed.</u> ▪ Governors raised the need to investigate the pupil premium further in the next Enterprise meeting. | <p>HT</p> | <p>Jan Education</p> |

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| | <i>8:45pm RM and GW leave the meeting.</i> | | |
| 11.3 | <u>Update on Admissions Committee</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM gave Governors an update on the paper circulated prior to the meeting. • Year 7 has the most ever applications – 411 for 144 places. • 15 November – further Consultation evening for the wider community on proposed increased class sizes. | | |
| 12. | Review upcoming meeting dates | | |
| | The 8 Dec FGB will be solely for ratifying the accounts. | | |
| | <i>Meeting closed at 9pm</i> | | |