



## Full Governing Board – 31 January – Minutes

**Meeting Date:** Thursday 31 January 2019  
**Meeting Venue:** TG7, Temple Grove, Gildredge House  
**Meeting Time:** 5:15pm

**Governors:** Julian Mace, *(JM)*, Chair  
Louise Baxter, *(LB)*, Vice Chair  
Alison Allart, *(AA)*  
Selene Edwards, *(SE)*  
Sara McKenna, *(SM)*  
Gabrielle Mace, *(GM)*  
Paul Amos, *(PA)*  
Trevor Scott, *(TS)*  
Fiona Walker, *(FW)*  
Matt West, *(MW)*

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

**Also in attendance:** Paul Barber, *(DHT)*, Deputy HT, Teaching & Learning  
Catherine Geldard, *(DLS)*, Director of Lower School  
Jemma Graffham, *(DSF)*, Director of Sixth Form  
Janice Logan, *(DFA)*, Director of Finance & Administration  
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:** Steven Blower, *(SB)*  
Rachel Moreton, *(RM)*  
Joel Newman, *(JN)*  
Martyn Ashley Taylor, *(MT)*

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| Item | Discussion   | Action  | Date  |
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| 1.   | <p><b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair welcomed Governors &amp; SLT and received apologies from SB, RM, JN, MT.</li> </ul>   |         |       |
| 2.   | <p><b>Declarations of Interests</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governors declared various interests in relation to their children who attend the school.</li> <li>SE declared an interest in the recruitment section of the agenda.</li> </ul>   |         |       |
| 3.   | <p><b>Minutes of previous Governing Board Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair advised that OFSTED have recommended our FGB minutes should be less wordy – Clerk to action this change from today’s meeting onwards.</li> <li>Chair signed the minutes of the December FGB as an accurate record of the meeting.</li> </ul>   |         |       |
| 4.   | <p><b>Action Summary Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair and SRv talked Governors through the Action Summary Report which resulted in a number of actions being signed off as completed.</li> </ul>  |         |       |
| 5.   | <p><b>Items not already on the agenda</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None forthcoming.</li> </ul>  |         |       |
| 6.   | <p><b>Chair’s Correspondence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair advised Governors of Chair’s correspondence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirmation of a permanent exclusion having been upheld last week.</li> <li>Complaint from a former staff member in relation to safeguarding. OFSTED requested a ‘responsible person’ be appointed to investigate. That investigation has now taken place and the complaint was not upheld.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |         |       |
| 7.   | <p><b>Governance Matters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair explained that due to other commitments the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) are unable to meet regularly, and so FGBs will include a section to discuss strategic planning.</li> <li><b>OFSTED INSPECTION:</b> SLT agree with findings. This report has informed new draft SDP with an 18 month timeframe. (See item 9)</li> <li><b>Governors asked</b> if the goal of a Progress 8 score of 0.0 (FFT 50) is aspirational enough. SRv explained this is to be a benchmark. All ESCC schools are aiming at FFT 20. This would demand a significant leap in one go. We need to set a realistic annual target based on the ability of the cohort. Current target for Y11 to be FFT 50.</li> <li><b>Governors asked</b> what defines a ‘Most Able’ and ‘Least Able’ student. SLT explained for Years 10 and 11 it is students who achieved above a level 4 in their SATs or below a level 4, but for Years 9 and below a SAT score of 110+ is high ability, and below 90 is the least able. <b>Governors asked</b> how best for them to monitor development on this and SRv said he will report back to Governors at every FGB. <b>Governors asked</b> if SRv is confident we have developed data to back up these benchmarks, he confirmed yes.</li> <li><b>PROGRESS DATA:</b> The need for governors to take on Key Stages for data analysis was agreed. This would work well with targeted monitoring of certain KS areas and subjects. <b>Governors stated</b> the usefulness of narrative, case studies and the implementation of individual tracking of student progress (flight paths). Data reporting to be discussed at training session 06 Feb. SLT to work on data dashboard for governors, liaising with external advisor.</li> </ul> | AHT-B&A | 6 Feb |

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|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HOUSE SYSTEM:</b> Recently the House system has been neglected. SRv sees importance in developing Vision and Ethos and competition to drive up results. AHT-B&amp;A to lead improvements</li> <li>• <b>PPG: <u>Governors questioned</u></b> strategy of allocating 70% of PPG budget to staff recruitment and development. SRv explained the money MUST directly benefit the PPG students it is intended for. SRv considers the best strategy is for staff to own the issues and problems around PPG students.</li> </ul>  |  |  |
| 8. | <p><b>Head Teacher's report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRv talked Governors through his HT report and highlighted points of interest.</li> <li>• He explained we are moving into the recruitment season and he is still aiming for 80% cost to income ratio, but this is currently standing at 83% due to a large number of staff being high on their pay scales.</li> <li>• <b><u>Governors commented positively</u></b> on the high number of sixth form applications. SRv advised half of them are GH students. SRv commended DSF and DHT on a good job in gaining interest from other schools. <b><u>Governors asked</u></b> how we manage expectations of GH students where we cannot offer their first choice of subjects, but SRv explained that all students know what we will definitely be offering upfront so we are taking away uncertainty. DSF explained the blocking system works well for 81 applicants and for a further 63 it covers 2 of their 3 preferred subjects. <b><u>Governors commented</u></b> the current Year 11s will pass on the message to the Year 10s that they were well supported, which is crucial. We are running invite-only taster days where we have asked students to select another subject so they know what they're getting into. <b><u>Governors asked</u></b> if we would go down to two classes if lower numbers turn up; DSF said we will know better after the interviews. <b><u>Governors commented</u></b> that it is a hugely better situation that we were in last year. <b><u>Governors asked</u></b> if it has been modelled on 120 students getting the subjects they wanted but SRv explained we would need around 500 students to make this happen to enable 23 subjects to be offered. <b><u>Governors wondered</u></b> if we need to adjust our long term numbers and formally aim for 80 students because this affects our PAN and accommodation strategy.</li> <li>• In the Year 9 options the staffing implications have been factored in, and there is a huge interest in Economics GCSE.</li> <li>• Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), <b><u>Chair explained</u></b> that Governors are being asked whether or not we should retain German and the implications this would have on staff, students and Values &amp; Ethos. <b><u>Governors talked</u></b> about external data regarding which MFLs we should offer because German is rated as the 5<sup>th</sup> most important, and this takes into account where other countries speak English well. <b><u>Governors commented</u></b> on the letter from the Head of MFL and asked what parents have said they wanted. SRv advised there is a wide spread of opinion about it – some want Latin back, whereas some think we should teach no MFL because everyone should speak English. SRv advised he is getting data from feeder schools about what MFL they teach. <b><u>Governors asked</u></b> if we could trial three languages for a year, but SRv said German wouldn't have a chance because we're not teaching it until Year 8. He advised there would be no cost to starting German from Year 7, but that if we start it in Year 7 we need to support those students all the way through to their GCSEs. SRv explained that if all students were put through all 3 languages on a carousel system this would help to ascertain who is best at what language. <b><u>Governors wondered</u></b> how often a MFL result is an outlier for a student's normal level of attainment and whether this would make a difference to their overall results. <b><u>Governors asked</u></b> DLS and AHT-A&amp;C about their view on teaching 3 languages before Year 7 – they stated they have no capacity. <b><u>Chair said</u></b> the problem we have is that feeder primary schools aren't teaching MFL in much detail. AHT-A&amp;C said the majority of primary schools just teach French, however German tends to appeal to low ability boys, and <b><u>Governors agreed</u></b> this</li> </ul> |  |  |

is an important consideration. SRv said to lose German would mean we are making a choice about restricting a child's curriculum at a very young age. **Governors asked** if the choice is German or no German as opposed to another MFL or subject in its place. SRv said around 10% of students have significant gaps in cognitive knowledge in English who would be better served having more time dedicated to English rather than MFL. **Governors asked** what works best in other schools, SRv explained that some schools argue that MFL should be compulsory up to GCSE, whilst others struggle to employ any staff who can teach them. **Governors asked** if we have enough MFL teachers to teach German from Year 7, SRv confirmed yes and that if we reduced to 2 languages there would need to be redundancies. **Governors asked** the staff members present what their individual preferences would be, and there was a mix of opinions, however none of them supported making German compulsory up to GCSE. **Chair asked Governors to vote on whether to retain German or not - carried that we should keep 3 MFL.**

- **Governors asked** whether we need a Head of Year 13 at the moment due to the low level of students in that year group. SRv said we need to invest in the sixth form so we can make sure our offer is really good and don't want to wait for students to come before we invest. It is only a Leadership costs that will be extra, not the whole salary cost. **Governors asked** if we need to increase our Careers faculty and SRv said DSF is already working on this to ensure the Careers Advisor is only required to do what is on her JD and then examine what more support we need. DSF said we need a cultural shift in Careers advice, so class teachers understand its part of their job too. Ultimately the new Head of Year 13 can pick up some work currently being completed by the Careers Advisor.
- Primary Data – DLS said these are based on summative tests. Writing data has been made more robust in conjunction with ESCC but a lot of this hasn't been taught yet, and she expects to achieve 'Greater Depth' by the end of the year. Year 3 has difficulties with some individuals, so doing all we can to support those students. SRv said we are going to see more struggling students coming into mainstream schools; we receive £2000 extra funding for them but it's nowhere near enough. **Governors expressed concern** if mainstream schooling is right for every child with extra needs. SRv said the pressure on special schools is growing and it is massively challenging process to get a child into that setting. **Governors asked** about parental involvement. SRv advised affected parents have to name a school, and this supersedes County's opinion of where the best place is for their child. **Governors asked** if Year 3 is pulling resources from other Years and expressed that it's a shame because we could be pushing more children to achieve Greater Depth if we could reallocate the resources. **Chair said** we need to explore how other schools deal with this. SRv reiterated that PEX is absolute last resort and the problem is that every alternative place is full. SRv explained we need to make sure we have done everything possible, without exception, before considering PEX, otherwise we would be judged to have acted inappropriately, and this process also costs £4k. **Governors suggested** they would be willing to help with this, such as lobbying or raising this strategically. SRv said he will advise Governors when there is a lobbying opportunity that would be helpful and might add more power to the argument. **Governors asked** if our data improving goes against our argument about providing more resources. SRv said some staff feel de-skilled in these circumstances and worry what other staff think of them, but DLS said primary staff are not judgmental and supportive of each other. **Governors asked** about 90% attendance being low, but SLT are not concerned as it was affected by one long term absence. DLS explained the disparities between the requirements for achieving 'Greater Depth' in Writing compared to other subjects. DLS added that having two phase leaders has been brilliant, enabling pupil progress and training meetings and she doesn't feel isolated.

**DLS left meeting at 7.55pm**



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|     | <p>in place some extra security measures, which are costly. In the curriculum budgets teachers have been very frugal in their spending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governors said</b> it is good news re the negotiations with ESFA. <b>Governors asked</b> if the sickness absence is related to work related stress and how robust the school is at managing this and getting staff back to work ASAP. SRv advised that all staff now have a return to work meeting and the SLT are now alerted when they reach a certain amount of absences. He said there is a lot of work related stress but he recently attended the staff welfare meeting and the atmosphere was positive. All teachers are now up to their full allocation. <b>Governors talked</b> about JN conducting a staff welfare survey. <b>Governors asked</b> if ESCC offer wellbeing sessions or counselling, but SRv said this would be down to us to provide now. He bemoaned the societal loss of colleagues socialising outside of work to unwind and unload. The SLT are working on ways of getting the Heads of Department together as they share many of the same issues but don't realise it. AHT-B&amp;A talked about the introduction of Mental Health First Aiders. <b>Governors asked</b> if we have completed a workplace stress risk assessments and suggested Governors should have a more conscious eye on this in the future. SRv talked about building up staff's resilience, but we must remember there is a difference between stress and depression. <b>Governors said</b> we need to have a suite of measures to deal with staff stress and offer resources appropriate to what is needed. <b>Chair requested</b> DFA and SRv to come up with some possibilities. SRv ran through a number of options to cover staff sickness. <b>Governors asked</b> if people need to be working more efficiently and marking work more effectively might help to reduce workloads.</li> <li>• Procurement Report – DFA explained the delegation of authority limits and explained we don't get many exceeding £30k requiring Governor approval. DFA remarked that we now only spend £783 per pupil on non-pay expenditure; <b>Chair asked</b> how this compares with other schools, and DFA advised we are very frugal.</li> <li>• DFA explained the procurement process she uses to try to drive best value. She is testing the market for a new cleaning contract, due to a number of recent leavers meaning we are currently buying in agency staff; and this will need Governor sign-off as over £30k. SRv said another option being considered is to increase the pay of our cleaners to see if this is a better way of saving money. <b>Governors asked</b> about whether we could piggy back on a wider cleaning contract, ie. with County. DFA said she has looked at this but it is a mixed bag. SRv explained DFA has built up networks with other schools enabling her to explore working with other schools for service contracts.</li> <li>• DFA advised the teacher's pay increase is going ahead, which is a significant increase. She concluded we are trying to keep the staff costs down but every year we end up needing more staff and it is a constant struggle. SRv added our average teacher cost is higher than the most as we have a significant number of UPS-graded teachers.</li> </ul> | <p>JN</p> <p>DFA/SRv</p> | <p>TBC</p> <p>TBC</p> |
| 10. | <p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chair explained</b> there had been several monitoring visits since the last meeting and thanked AA for her report. <b>Chair advised</b> of all the monitoring visits that are ongoing.</li> <li>• SRv said the school should've advised AA what we were going to show her and this didn't happen and communications need to be improved to make this process work better. DHT suggested we should contextualise the report at a second visit and then come back with a fuller report. <b>Chair said</b> AA's report picked up that things are moving but too slowly, which is what OFSTED thought too. <b>Governors said</b> we don't know what we don't know, which is the difficulty, and we need more input from SLT on what to look for. <b>Governors confirmed</b> all we are there for to find evidence of the impact, we are not there to judge.</li> </ul>   | DHT/AA                   | TBC                   |
| 11. | <p><b>Admissions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair asked Governors for question re the new Admissions Policy – none forthcoming.</li> </ul>  |                          |                       |

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|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#"><u>Governors voted on the adoption of the changes to policy - Carried.</u></a></li> </ul>   |              |                |
| 12. | <b>Safeguarding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair asked DHT to report back on this at the next meeting, due to meeting overrunning.</li> </ul>  | <b>DHT</b>   | <b>Mar FGB</b> |
| 13. | <b>Policies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not discussed, due to meeting overrunning</li> </ul>  |              |                |
| 14. | <b>Monitoring Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not discussed, due to meeting overrunning.</li> </ul>  |              |                |
| 15. | <b>Any other urgent business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair confirmed that our external advisor is coming to provide Governors with training on data and will help Governors on how to analyse data.</li> </ul>  | <b>Chair</b> | <b>6 Feb</b>   |
| 16. | <b>Confirmation of future FGB meeting dates (5pm):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wednesday 13 March 2019</li> <li>Thursday 16 May 2019</li> <li>Thursday 20 June 2019</li> <li>Thursday 11 July 2019</li> </ul> <b>Confirmation of Governor Training dates (5pm):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wednesday 6 February 2019</li> </ul> <b>Confirmation of Governor's Away-Day:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friday 29 March 2019 (12.30pm – 5.30pm) Venue TBC</li> </ul> |              |                |
| 17. | <b>Meeting Close</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair closed the meeting at 8.30pm</li> </ul>  |              |                |