



Full Governing Board – Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday 12 December 2019
Meeting Venue: TG7, Temple Grove, Gildredge House
Meeting Time: 5:15pm

Governors: Julian Mace, *(JM)*, Chair
Alison Allart, *(AA)*
Marilyn Benzing, *(MB)*
Sara McKenna, *(SM)*
Gabrielle Mace, *(GM)*
Fiona Walker, *(FW)*
Matt West, *(MW)*

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

Also in attendance: 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: Paul Amos, *(PA)*
Louise Baxter, *(LB)*
Selene Edwards, *(SE)*
Joel Newman, *(JN)*
Trevor Scott, *(TS)*
Martyn Ashley Taylor, *(MT)*

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Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting and invited MB to become a full Governor with this being her second meeting – MB confirmed and so became a full Governor with immediate effect. Chair commented that there are a high number of apologies this evening, but that we remain quorate with at least seven Governors; (50% of the total number appointed). <p><i>AHT-B&A joined the meeting at 5.40pm, due to a parents' evening clash</i> <i>SM joined the meeting at 6pm, due to a parents' evening clash</i></p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors gave various declarations in respect of their children who attend the school. SRv gave a declaration of interest in respect of the Head Teacher's pay award and will leave the meeting room for that item. 	
3.	<p>Minutes of previous Governing Board Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors agreed the minutes of the October FGB as an accurate record of the meeting and Chair signed a copy of the minutes. 	
4.	<p>Action Summary Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors, Chair and SRv worked through the action points on the ASR, which resulted in a number of items being ticked off as completed. 	
5.	<p>Items not already on the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None forthcoming 	
6.	<p>Chair's Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair explained he has received a few emails from parents, but these related to operational issues which SRv is now dealing with. Chair advised there was a mini-fire in the school at 2.57pm on Thursday 21 November. The evacuation was carried out expertly and there were no problems other than that some parents Facebook livestreamed the fire engines arriving at school which led to some other parents who could not get to the school being distressed. SRv advised that an evacuation so close to the end of the school day was challenging because many parents were on site to pick up children, some of whom were then taken off site by parents. East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service advised the school they would not rely on registers in any case and they would search the building for anyone remaining inside. 	
7.	<p>Governance Matters START OF PINK PAPER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A 'pink paper' refers to items which relate to a named person who works, or who it is proposed should work, at the school; to a pupil at, or candidate for admission to, the school; or to any other matter that, by reason of its nature, the governing board is satisfied should remain confidential.</i> 	

	<p><i>The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013. Regulation 15(3): www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1624/regulation/15/made</i> END OF PINK PAPER</p> <p>DSF advised Governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sixth Form we have so far had 82 applicants for Year 12, which this early in the year is very promising, and this comprises students from 17 different secondary schools, as opposed to 10 last year. <p>Chair confirmed that MB will be joining the Admissions Committee with immediate effect.</p>	
8.	<p>Strategic Direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair & Governors worked through the sections of the Governor’s Action Plan, which resulted in some of the areas being re-RAG rated. 	
9.	<p>Headteacher’s Report</p> <p>The first aspect of the HT Report was a request for Governors to ratify SRv’s pay review recommendations:</p> <p>SLT, (excluding SRv), and SM left the room:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay review – SRv has made recommendations re the SLT. <u>Governors ratified the proposals.</u> <p>SRv left the room and SM re-joined the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay review – Chair and our external consultant have made recommendations re SRv’s pay review. <u>Governors ratified the proposals.</u> <p>SRv and SLT re-joined the meeting</p> <p>SRv then talked Governors through his Head Teacher’s Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has undertaken a countywide peer review that has resulted in three recommendations, which are being followed up. The school’s toilet provision is being improved. SRv highlighted areas of the SEF that need work and explained that within each section we need to be consistently Good on all metrics and the statements at the top of each section needs to be met too in order to achieve Outstanding. 54% of staff have received a pay uplift due to their performance. SRv has become aware that pastoral care has reached its capacity in terms of staff availability and as a result some TAs are being pulled into pastoral roles which means they are stretched. He is looking at how to address this. SRv highlighted some safeguarding issues, particularly in relation to areas of Gildredge Park which provides hidden areas. Update on Recruitment – there have been resignations from the Head of History and the SENCo with interviews to backfill these positions due to take place. SRv would like a discussion as to whether the SENCo position should become part of the SLT team. HR Policies – SRv is planning to consult with staff in February/March with a view of adopting the ESCC suite of HR Policies, to implement in September. <u>Governors had no questions</u> regarding this proposal. The recent Sixth Form open evening was very well attended. SRv believes the school needs to think about middle leadership development a bit more. <p><u>Governors discussed</u> if we ran a full-course Religious Studies it would give us another GCSE in the open bucket, but would this help our results? SRv suggested if we do it, we should conclude it in Year 10 and</p>	

	<p>thus start it in Year 9. Governors asked about the disengagement of non-chosen subjects following the options process and could some of this time be used to teach it instead. SRv said there are differing views on offering a broad range of subjects up until the end of Year 9.</p> <p>Governors commented about work done in challenging our most able students. Governors asked whether identifying 10-15 students who are aiming for Grade 8s and 9s is enough, but SRv said this would equate to about 10% of the cohort which is way more than the percentage who get 8s and 9s. Governors asked about those students a little bit below this level who are on line to get 6s but with support could be pushed up to a 7s or 8s and SRv said his focus is on everybody being pushed up across the whole school. Governors asked about the open bucket and how it appears to be an area we are not that strong on and why that is because it appears it is going to repeat itself again this year. SRv said it is a combination of reasons, some students choose these subjects because they think it will be practical-based whereas in reality there is a lot of theory, and perhaps the choices available aren't wide enough. Chair said he is aware that some students see PE as an easy lesson not a serious subject. AHT-A&C said they are pushing to improve things all the time and the most important thing is the teacher working with the students and recognising when they submit work if it is not good enough. Governors asked when the 1-2-1 teaching comes into effect, SRv said we need a culture of it all the way through, so it becomes second nature by Years 10 and 11.</p> <p>SRv is going to come up with some ideas re pastoral care and put forward his suggestions in due course. He said the Heads of Year are being sucked into providing pastoral care more than they should be and he wants them to be progress leaders and not just behaviour leaders. SRv would like to have a non-teaching specialist type post but he would need to work out how we can get that into the structure within our finances. AHT-B&A said this has a knock-on effect to low level safeguarding and attendance. Governors asked about training and AHT-B&A said the only training they have had is Mental Health First Aid, but they don't have the time to go on more training courses at present.</p> <p>Recruitment of the new AHT/SENCo. SRv said everything he has considered about this has led to his belief that raising the profile of SEN by making the SENCo a member of the SLT is the start of the answer. He explained that this would not be massively expensive due to current pay rates, but he needs ratification of this approach by Governors. Chair relayed the views of some absent Governors who have written in about this issue. Governors asked about the line management of the Primary SENCo and SRv advised the SENCo would be their line manager as well as for the Secondary TAs. DFA said the SLT are supportive of the SENCo becoming part of the SLT and confirmed that it does not represent much of a financial cost. Governors asked about how this would be perceived given the recent SLT restructure, but DFA said this is a completely different role and has no parity to previous decisions. SRv clarified that this situation has been borne out of the resignation of the current SENCo. Governors asked about savings targets and where this extra money would come from. DFA said currently her forecast is just that and it is not set in stone, and she regularly needs to find extra money for extra costs throughout the year for other unexpected costs; she added that the financial position of the school is a lot stronger than it has been. Governors concluded that we need to have a SENCo but asked how making the them part of the SLT is going to generate a fast turnaround. SRv explained that bringing someone in on SLT pay rates will bring a better calibre of applicant to the role who will hopefully be able to change people's hearts and minds, but agreed it will take longer than 12 months to make a discernible difference. Governors agreed the gaps in attainment for SEN students are currently large. SRv added there has been lots of early interest via phone calls and visits and he would prefer to appoint someone on their leadership skills rather than their SEN skills, which can be taught. DSF said this would be an exciting opportunity for someone. Governors wondered how the structure would work in terms of the Assistant HTs. Governors asked if this is what other schools do and SRv explained it is relatively typical to have the SENCo on the SLT. Chair asked Governors to vote on the proposal – Governors ratified.</p>	SRv
10.	<p>Data Review of ESCC Data Pack – Secondary phase</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair said the tables on this data pack are very clear and asked AHT-A&C for his views. He said what is nice about it is the comparison from one year to the next which shows progression but the area that clearly requires more work is SEN. AHT-A&C said the differences in the Progress 8 score are due to differences between various sources. He has looked at the last 3 years grade conversion tables which show the bar is continually increasing, which makes predicting final grades very difficult. For SEN and Disadvantaged students, compared to the local authority figures, we are comparable, except on the Open Bucket. Governors asked for confirmation of what 'Disadvantaged' means – advised it incorporates both PP and LAC. <p>First Data Capture Point</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AHT-A&C explained this data set goes right up to the end of term. He has added narrative to link in to the above document. Year 7 reflects changes made to the curriculum, but much of this has come from guidance from the OFSTED framework. In Year 9 there are some subjects that stand out in terms of larger numbers of 'working towards' students and similarly in Year 8 in Art and Design and Music. In Years 10 and 11 the progress is better in Art and Technology, but these are options-based subjects in Years 10 and 11. The information is useful for subject leads and it can help to inform options and gives meaning to the choices they are making where they can see a tangible relationship with KS4 data. In KS5 the SLT are aware of impact on Economics. The new subject lead has turned things around as best he can to get the students working as well as they can. • Governors queried the data for the Year 10 Open Bucket which says in DT and Food that 80% of students are 'working towards' and asked if this means they are not where they should be based on a projection, which means 18% of them will get a 5 and above. Governors asked about Drama, which is exceptionally good across the board, and AHT-A&C said in Years 9 and 10 we have particular strength in Drama. He line manages Performing Arts and has challenged this having learnt from previous mistakes; he is also an active member within forums of specifications by exam boards. Governors commented that 90% of SEN are at 'working towards' level. Governors commented that the Year 8 Modern Foreign Languages data are quite generous considering they haven't been in the past. AHT-A&C said instead of them studying so many languages the number they are being taught has been reduced. SRv said he line manages Languages and thinks there will be little change in results next year but the year afterwards there will be because they were given the option of languages. Governors asked if there is a danger of students selecting an 'open bucket' subject where they could have done a language instead, but AHT-A&C explained this should not make a difference to our results. Chair thanked AHT-A&C for his narrative and for identifying what areas Governors should be looking at. Governors said this is very useful for teachers and asked if they can see individual results. AHT-A&C said this is an overview, but individual results comes from marking sheets. 	
11.	<p>Policies</p> <p>Anti-Bullying Policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors asked if the policy could also state that parents are encouraged to use the formal process instead of airing their issues on Facebook. SRv agreed this could be included in a number of other policies. Governors commented that there have been instances on social media where a child's name has been used, which is wholly inappropriate. SRv believes the negative noise on social media has reduced of late and is not as prevalent as it used to be. AHT-B&A informed Governors about the review of bullying and the feedback was that students feel safe. Governors asked if the gap closing between Primary and Secondary students had helped or hindered the bullying situation; AHT-B&A thinks it has helped. SRv said he sees almost no Secondary on Primary bullying, and cannot remember the last time this happened. Governors asked why staff-on-staff bullying is not in the policy but SRv confirmed this is in the Staffing Policy. Chair confirmed this is an SLT-led policy so does not need to be ratified by Governors and is for information only. 	

12.	<p>Finance</p> <p>Budget forecast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFA explained that she knows she will have to revise the forecast as it was originally drawn up 7 months ago. She explained the Pupil Number Adjustment (PNA) amount has firmed up and is now £140k, which will need to be repaid next year. The end result is the forecast shows a significant surplus due to the changes Governors have approved, including the larger class sizes and the restructure of the SLT, however we do still need to repay the ESFA’s loan repayment of £200k. She added there are also changes due to the pay grant and pension grant and she will revise these figures and ask Governors to approve the new forecast at the next meeting. • DFA is concerned about buildings maintenance with a number of windows failing and problems with the boiler needing a replacement flue and there’s also issues with the lifts – some of these items come with significant costs. There has also been a level of vandalism as well as the high cost of fire door replacements. DFA explained that normally the gas budget forecast allows for a bad winter, and she is very prudent with when the heating is being used, so there will be extra money on this budget line which will help to offset the extra costs. She is looking to put in a capital grant bid next year for the buildings maintenance. She will be getting consultants in in the New Year to help her prepare this. The heating and boiler system are the main priority, but there are some concerns about roof repairs too. Governors asked if we have to pay the consultant mentioned above, but DFA said they work on a no-win-no-fee basis so no payment will be made to them unless we are successful. • SRv pointed out that although the surplus looks good it only equates to 2.8% of total income so not as good as it looks. DFA said she would like to get to the point of having a contingency at some point, but this will be in the future. • Governors asked about the problem in the kitchen. DFA explained she was quoted several thousand pounds to replace the bespoke fan equipment so instead she is looking to replace it with something new that’s easier to repair and it should be fixed by Monday. They have hired in equipment to make do until it gets fixed. Pabulum have been very helpful bearing in mind how little they have had to work with. <p>Governors’ report and audited accounts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair explained this document is very formulaic and legalistic and difficult to access. SRv pointed out it looks completely different from the accounts Governors normally receive and it can be difficult to make sense of. SRv advised that from discussions with the auditors they believe we have control over everything we have control over, but there are other issues that we cannot control such as wear and tear on the building and the pensions liabilities. Chair asked for comments. DFA explained some of the terms in the report so Governors could understand better. DFA said she is looking for a new finance system next year which should help with this going forwards. Chair explained that once the Board has approved the accounts they will need to be signed by the Trust – Ratified by Governors. <p>Resource Management Assessment Tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFA provided a verbal update and explained this is a new tool from DfE which allows Academies to be benchmarked. She thinks that once this is fully in operation Governors will really like it because it provides quite a lot of information relating to how we benchmark against other schools. DFA explained that she is redoing the budget at the moment and so she will bring the RMA Tool report to Governors at the January FGB. DFA and AHT-A&C will be working together on allocating teacher time into the tool, which links back to the report last year where they advised we were somewhat overstuffed. <p>Financial Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFA provided a verbal update and handed out a sheet with some small changes and explained these are simply because of the HR Manager which we didn’t previously have who now completes some of the tasks previously completed by the HT’s PA. DFA asked for any objections to this, and Chair advised there is nothing which is a problem from what DFA has said. DFA asked for this to be ratified in the minutes – Ratified by Governors. 	DFA
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13.	<p>Monitoring</p> <p>Chair thanked all Governors who have submitted monitoring visit reports, which were all very interesting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour – Governors reported that the SWAT behavioural stages method is working well and gives the ability to see which staff are using it properly, as well as monitoring where the problems are. Governors praised the increased level of reporting which will help them with evidence if it is needed in the future. Governors reported there needs to be more collaboration between the Gateway and the SEN Dept to gain a better understanding of what is behavioural and what is SEN. AHT-B&A has provided evidence to show that exclusions have reduced in the first quarter of the year. Governors will be revisiting in January to see how the two departments are working together better and what impact that is having, and they will be requesting another report on exclusions. It is important that this be seen as everyone’s responsibility. SRv reported that the facilities have improved with two rooms away from the main teaching area and AHT-B&A confirmed this a much better location. Governors confirmed this was a good visit. • Maths – Governors are reviewing core subjects and started this by a visit to look at Maths. Governors reported that the lessons they witnessed were very interesting and they observed all students being really engaged. Governors conducted an interview with HoD who gave Governors a lot of useful information. He wishes he had more time, but due to staff absence, he often has to write lesson plans for absent teachers. Governors reported they saw no behavioural issues. Governors reported the Teaching Assistants were good too. Governors held a meeting with some Year 10 students, and they were able to triangulate the information given by the HoD. Governors expressed concern that the students said some departments do not collect in their books for marking, although this was not true of Maths. All students highlighted the behavioural change that occurs after options have been selected but before they have actually dropped the subjects they have not chosen, but they had no solutions about how to deal with this. SRv and Governors wondered if one solution would be for students to start their option subjects as soon as they are chosen but admitted this is easier said than done because of timetabling. • Eco Schools – Governors advised the school has now achieved the silver award, which is great, and a lot of progress has been made. Governors acknowledged this agenda is a tool which could be used for some students to help them engage and so it would be good if they were encouraged to get involved. DFA added that the school is looking to create an eco-park on site with plans for recycling bins and raised borders. She acknowledged there have been difficulties with recycling rubbish being contaminated with non-recycling which leads to extra costs. The Primary phase are planning on a meat free day. Governors added this agenda is a hot topic for the student’s generation, so it is good to utilise their keenness and to educate them about it at the same time. Governors suggested this could be a useful area to engage SEN and PP students. DFA said she has people coming in to look at the boilers, lighting and water management concerning what environmental improvements we can make. Chair added that the school should pursue the top, Green, award. • DFA asked Governors to arrange a Health & Safety Monitoring Visit – Chair agreed. 	
14.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MW advised Governors that he came in to school and studied the single central register and has witnessed the improvements that have been made to it following on from recommendations made a couple of terms ago. One of the few remaining areas are in obtaining second references but there’s not much else and it seems to be going very well. He advised that DSF has brought in a policy in relation to volunteer’s training and DBS requirements. • Governors commented that one area of concern is in relation to FOGH volunteers who need to be H&S trained in addition to their DBS checks. At the recent Primary disco two staff members had 	

	<p>to stay to ensure there was the appropriate quota of qualified adults. Governors agreed this needs to be raised with FOGH committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MW advised he had also met with DSF to look at ways forward in other areas. They are planning to conduct a self-review, a site visit audit, and he is also planning a site security visit. • MW is planning to continue to visit the school monthly, as well as planning a visit for H&S. DFA said since the restructure there is now a staff member responsible for H&S. • Chair advised that MW needs some support in this work from another Governor. Chair and MW talked about the template to use for his Safeguarding visits as the normal Governor template is not relevant. MW confirmed that going forwards Governors should receive his reports in advance of the meetings. 	<p>FOGH C'mittee</p> <p>All Gov'rs</p>
15.	<p>Any other urgent business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None forthcoming 	
16.	<p>Confirmation of future FGB meeting dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 29th January 2020 • Wednesday 11th March 2020 • Wednesday 29th April 2020 • Thursday 18th June 2020 • Thursday 9th July 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor's Training Session – confirmed as 20 May 2020 • Governor's Away-Day – TBC 	
	<p>Meeting Close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair closed the meeting at 8.30pm 	