



**Gildredge
House**

Education Committee – Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday 11 March 2020
Meeting Venue: Headteacher's Office, Gildredge House
Meeting Time: 5:15pm

Governors: Louise Baxter, *(LB)*, Chair
Gabrielle Mace, *(GM)*, Vice Chair
Alison Allart, *(AA)*
Joyce Swann, *(JS)*
Matt West, *(MW)*, for Items 1-4 only

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

Also in attendance: Julian Mace, *(JM)*, Chair of Governing Board
Catherine Geldard, *(DLS)*, Director of Lower School
Jemma Graffham, *(DSF)*, Director of Sixth Form
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: Fiona Walker, *(FW)*
Sara McKenna, *(SM)*
Marilyn Benzing, *(MB)*

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Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair welcomed Governors and SLT to the first in the new regime of Education Committee meetings, and accepted apologies from FW, MB and SM. Chair introduced and welcomed new Governor, JS. 	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
3.	<p>Committee Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JM advised he has prepared a TOR for this Committee. Chair advised she will review this offline and circulate to the committee members by email, take comments on board, and then present to FGB. Chair confirmed that ‘Behaviour & Safety’ falls within the Education Committee’s responsibility <p>Allocation of Lead Governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary School – Chair & JS SEND – Chair & AA Safeguarding – MW (for the whole school) Gateway – Chair & Vice Chair Secondary School – Vice Chair and SM with MB (<i>Chair to check with MB</i>) Sixth Form – hoping MB and FW will be able to cover this (Chair to check with MB/FW) Governors discussed a Governor overseeing PPG, but the majority preferred for this area to be covered by all Governors during their other responsibilities. Agreed to move PPG to top of monitoring. SRv advised Safeguarding, SEND and PPG should be standing items at every meeting. AA added MHEW to this. MW said all Governors should be considered safeguarding on every visit. Vice Chair – Sixth Form behaviour and admissions, but she would like help with the data. JM suggested Chair check on the Key what the statutory requirements are for governors. He confirmed he does the school’s RE visits as a statutory requirement. 	<p>Chair Chair</p> <p>Chair</p>
4.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MW asked ESCC for a safeguarding review, from which he has had feedback: overall very positive. Summary has been received but he has not had chance to read it before this meeting, but he will ensure those actions are covered in next few visits. SRv said there are 4 immediate actions to comply with and lots of observations to read through. DSF has now been invited to the best practice group in light of the inspection. MW said he is not using the standard monitoring template, but Governors will receive a standard report for each visit. JM confirmed Safeguarding will remain an agenda item on FGB as well as being considered at this committee. MW is conducting a review of DSF as DSL. Had a couple of issues that have been dealt with and a couple still running. MW said he and DSF are both new in posts but building their relationship well. He is being kept up to date with everything he needs to know about, and he is happy with the way things are going. <p>MW left the meeting.</p>	

5.	<p>Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AHT-A&C advised that the new ISDR data report confirms the school’s judgements on all key stages. It shows the progress of the school with consistent attainment and progress in Primary. It shows a contrast between KS4 results from 2018 and 2019, which is encouraging as that confirms the school’s beliefs. • The data flags languages as a particular area with lower results, which the school were already aware of and they have a plan in place. Governors asked if this is helped by the streamlining of the language offer; AHT-A&C confirmed it is. SRv added this year’s Year 11 are the last cohort who were required to take a language. • AHT-A&C advised the data provides a positive reflection of the school in comparison with other schools, but this doesn’t consider relative starting points. It also flags up different groups of students and this correlates with what has been shared with Governors before. • History and the core subjects reflect very well. Governors said the report highlights we receive significantly less funding than the national average. Governors added there is a noticeable difference between certain year groups. • AHT-A&C has been looking at exclusions and comparing against other schools and these have significantly reduced. • Lowest attainers are a cause for concern, and Governors asked what the plan is to improve this. SRv talked about the changes made to the PE curriculum as an example of how the school are trying to improve things. There will also be a change of curriculum in DT for current Year 9s. Governors asked about staff training and if the results are going to map similarly. • Governors noted that SEND student’s Persistent Absence is an ongoing issue, which prompted a discussion around the fact that some Primary students have additional needs and are thus on a part time timetable. AHT-A&C said some of this is cultural but there is better provision now, so the school is more accessible. Governors wondered whether Gateway has assisted with this too. SRv added the school has done a lot of work on attendance, because SEND was previously used as a reason to take a term time holiday. Governors said we cannot allow SEND to be used as an excuse for this. 	
6.	<p>PPG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AHT-A&C advised it is difficult to decouple PPG from SEND. For PPG students they tend not to perform as well, like SEN students. The school is quite fortunate there are not any other major groups that flag up in the data. The school is looking at how to eradicate these gaps, or at least narrow them. • The school recently looked at PPG spend, and where it is allocated, and what impact it has, and how this can be developed. They expect to see an improvement in results, but only in line with improvements elsewhere. This work takes time to have a significant impact because there are factors that limit its progress, so they do not expect progress to be immediate. • During CPD moving forwards the core focus is on catering for the needs of all learners. Governors asked if we get it right for all students this should mean we will also help all SEN and PPG students too. AHT-A&C confirmed that is the plan but stated if there is a gap to start with and everyone increases there will still be a gap at the end. Governors asked if the school have looked for best practice of what other schools have done with PPG funding who are performing well, AHT-A&C confirmed the school have looked at this locally. <p>AHT-A&C joined meeting at 6pm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors said the school needs to think creatively about how to spend the money as an opportunity for PPG students to shine and make them want to come into school. Governors said the school needs to be impacting quickly on this and finding out what works. Governors said they would like to clearly see the impact of the money. Governors discussed what the school is currently doing and concluded they would like to see quicker results on this to enable Governors to prove we are closing the gap. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SRv said there will always be a gap, but the school needs to keep trying. He has broken the funding down into 3 tiered approaches – some on teachers regarding their day-to-day practice, then some targeted approaches for those who do not respond, and finally breaking down barriers and improving PPG student’s cultural capital. Governors said they would like to see a breakdown of spend between Primary and Secondary and some case studies for individual students so they can measure the impact of the spending and what improvements can be seen. Governors asked how often this is being reviewed because once a year seems too long; SRv said 3 times a year at each data drop. Governors asked if parts of the school have PPG budget or if it a whole school budget; SRv said PPG students are not a homogenous group which makes it very difficult to monitor them. Governors said 3 times a year is not often enough, and the school needs to plan a programme for them and should know quickly if it is right or not and change the strategy. SRv said they do not know how they can produce data for these more than 3 times a year. Governors said the school does not need to wait for the next data drop if the course students have been put on is not working. Governors added it would be good to see this also happening for SEND. <p>DSF joined meeting at 6.10pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair said she will inform AHT-A&C offline what information she would like to see at the next meeting. JM asked if there is any news about PPG funding potentially being scrapped. SRv advised PPG funding has not had any impact nationally so there is a concern that it may be withdrawn by the Government, so the school needs to be cautious about what it commits to in case the money dries up. Currently the school is only committed to spending £52k of the funding. 	<p>AHT/A&C</p> <p>Chair/ AHT-A&C</p>
7.	<p>Attendance & Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AHT-B&A talked Governors through the attendance report overview. Governors asked what the attendance target is; 96%. Different year groups have different levels and generally as they get older, they progressively get lower. Overall the figure is 95.87%, which is very good. AHT-B&A said the Education Welfare Officer works really hard and he cannot speak highly enough of them, and they know every situation with every child. The percentage of attendance has increased from 92% when AHT-B&A took over the responsibility. He advised he has put new systems in place as their absence rate escalates and he is very pleased with how rigorous it is. GH and Cavendish are the highest performers on this metric in Eastbourne. Behaviour Survey – AHT-B&A said it is not the best time to ask staff, but he wanted an honest assessment and asked them for the negatives. He revisited it at a CPD session and shared feedback with Heads of Year and others. He has now commissioned a behaviour review with a behavioural expert. Recently he held a half-day CPD session on behaviour and he is devising a new behaviour policy. This will be different for Secondary and Primary and he is working with DLS on the latter. AHT-B&A advised that staff have been informed that College Central is full, so the school needs to reduce the number of exclusions because every time the school exclude a student it means we are in line to receive the next student excluded from another school. Staff were not aware of this process previously. JM commented he recently completed ESCC training where it was clear they are trying to dissuade schools from excluding. Governors asked why the staff did not know about the policy and AHT-B&A advised it is a new ESCC policy. Governors said they would like a paper at the next meeting around the behaviour policy and how it is working. SRv said the wider issue is the school does not have the resources to respond to these students and so AHT-B&A has visited a number of Eastbourne schools to see how they deal with this, and has learnt some ideas, however other schools have diverted a lot of money at the problem. Often the school does not have the provision to take school-to-school placements like some other schools do. Governors said it is not just these few students, it seems to be a wider issue of low level behavioural problem, which is an issue, and the survey was worrying because it seems to say that behaviour across the board is disrupting learning. Governors queried if SWAT is the right tool to be 	<p>AHT-B&A</p>

	<p>used. AHT-B&A said half the staff support SWAT and half do not. Governors voiced concerns about the 50% of staff who do not think SWAT is working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors asked if the school is going to harvest student voice and parent voice as that may yield a different perspective; AHT-B&A said this is the next part of the consultation. DLS said she has already done the same thing in Primary, and it was helpful. Governors said there are comments regarding the SLT presence and asked if this is more perception than it is reality, and SRv said it is a reaction to the SLT passing the issues back to the staff to try and deal with it. Governors checked themselves as to whether they were straying into operational matters rather than strategic. Chair clarified what AHT-B&A is doing going forwards, and confirmed she is content that Governors already have enough involvement in overseeing this without needing to stray into operational oversight. SRv said that SWAT has a shelf life and the school recognise this and that they need to do something about it, and Governors should expect to see greater improvement the next time there is a survey. SRv said there are Teaching & Learning issues hidden in the results too and Governors agreed. Governors said there is a significant difference between what has been seen on monitoring visits and this survey. Governors said they always view things strategically, which is the difference between the visits and the survey. SRv said Governors need to come to a global view from a snapshot of a visit. JM said every single person who comes in to the school comments on how good the behaviour is. Governors added they witnessed two fire alarms and all they saw was impeccable behaviour. 	
8.	<p>SDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SRv talked Governors through his SDP update, covering PPG, SEND, Estates Team, Master’s House improvements. Governors asked if they need to have more input into RAG rating the SDP. JM said there is an expectation for Governors to be part of the SDP and queried whether receiving it and then discussing it is enough. SRv said he would prefer Governors to be involved in the strategic formulation of the SDP, not in RAG rating itself. SRv said there should be an item at the end of the year to work this out and to formulate the development plan for next year. Chair said Governors need to focus on transition and we need it on the next agenda. Chair said parents are concerned about it and some people are unclear about who is managing it. Governors commented that this may also be operational, but Chair said Governors need to understand how things are working. SRv said the school is going to get 84 new students from outside the school, so this needs careful handling. Governors said this should be the focus of one of their Primary visits for later discussion at a committee meeting. DSF said the transition process has started and explained there are 2 taster days and the preparation for this is in progress. DLS said it would be lovely if Year 7s helped the new Year 6’s make the transition. Chair clarified the school cannot make a full measurement of the new students in the first 6 weeks, but SRv said there is lots of soft evidence that can be amassed and is useful to know. Chair said it would be useful to see if the students already here have less of a seamless integration than the externals. SRv asked how much of a problem this is creating outside and Chair said there is quite a lot of chatter about it, but she is uncertain about whether it is just that their children are going into Year 7. SRv said the school is very comfortable about it; we have 30 feeder schools and 60 of the students are coming up from our own Year 6. 	Chair/JS
9.	<p>Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair asked SRv which policies this committee needs to review. SRv advised that Kate Lamprell is creating a policy tracker and it will come to next meeting. 	Kate Lamprell
10.	<p>Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gateway & Behaviour Visit – Clerk to remove the word ‘draft’ – Governors asked if parents ask for a reduced timetable and AHT-A&C said this is normally for SEND reasons and requests come from parents. Governors asked if it is normal and DLS said sometimes teachers request it in the best interests of the student. AHT-A&C said sometimes requests are declined as it needs to work for all 	Clerk

	<p>parties, including the school. Governors clarified this is reviewed six-weekly. SRv said ideally we would have none but that is not always possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND Visit. There has been a change of the SENDCO. AA has learnt she needs to challenge things a lot more, so she will be asking for evidence of things going forwards. Governors asked how hard it is to identify SEND needs, DSF said she is coming at this from the outside but there needs to be some more work with staff and the new Pastoral Support roles will help to identify SEND needs going forwards. 	
11.	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
12.	<p>Confidential Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
	<p>Meeting Close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair closed the meeting at 7.05pm 	