



Full Governing Board – Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday 4 June 2020

Meeting Venue: *Via Zoom*

Meeting Time: 5:15pm

Governors: Julian Mace, *(JM), Chair*
Louise Baxter *(LB), Vice Chair*
Alison Allart, *(AA)*
Paul Amos, *(PA)*
Marilyn Benzing, *(MB)*
Selene Edwards, *(SE)*
Glyn Freeman, *(GF)*
Sara McKenna, *(SM)*
Gabrielle Mace, *(GM)*
Joel Newman, *(JN), (Items 9-15 only)*
Trevor Scott, *(TS)*
Joyce Swann, *(JS)*
Martyn Ashley Taylor, *(MT)*
Matt West, *(MW)*

Also in attendance: 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

Apologies: Stuart Reeves, *(SRv), Head Teacher, Fiona Walker, (FW)*

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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 explained that SRv is absent due to sickness and AHT-A&C will stand in for him for this meeting. Chair advised Governors that FW has resigned as a Governor due to work commitments and wished her all the best for the future. 	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors declared various declarations in respect of their children who attend the school. 	
3.	<p>Minutes of previous Governing Board & Committee Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors agreed the minutes of the January FGB are an accurate record of the meeting and Chair ‘virtually’ signed a copy of the minutes. Education Committee Governors agreed the minutes of the March Committee are an accurate record and Chair of the Education Committee ‘virtually’ signed a copy of the minutes. Chair explained that due to the current circumstances, the minutes of the 28 April Enterprise Committee, the 19 May Education Committee and the 26 May Extra Governors Meeting are not yet ready for approval but will be signed off at the next available opportunity. 	Clerk
4.	<p>Items not already on the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
5.	<p>Chair’s Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair advised that a local paper recently published a story about an incident in the school from December, which was dealt with at the time, and asked Governors to refer any queries relating to this to SRv. 	
6.	<p>Governance Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair advised that new Terms of Reference have been drafted and approved by each of the Education and Enterprise Committees which will need to be approved at the next FGB before being published on the school’s website. Chair advised that the mid-term review of the Headteacher’s Appraisal has been cancelled due to the circumstances, so the annual review will take place, as planned, September. External adviser informs us that this common practise in these circumstances. Chair asked for a volunteer to replace FW on the panel – MT volunteered. 	
7.	<p>School Reopening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair advised that Governors have been provided with an excellent risk-assessment summary and reminded Governors that this subject is being revisited tonight for ratification, having been first discussed at last week’s EGM and scrutinised in detail by a working party of governors who visited the school on the 29 May. In SRv’s absence, AHT-A&C explained that things are changing quickly so this is a working document which is being continually amended. There are a couple of recent adjustments around the timings for arrivals and departures of students, plus a more cautious approach as to whether Reception and Year 1 can be brought back at some point once capacity issues are better understood. Also, the specifics around cleaning have been designated to the areas of the school that will be in use. Governors said some Year 10 parents seem unclear if Year 10 are coming back full time or just once a week. AHT-A&C said this will be clarified by the end of the week via a video being developed for Year 10s which will answer FAQs. He explained that initially it is not feasible to offer optional subjects to 	

	<p>Year 10 so the provision will be in core subjects only; but this may change throughout the summer term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors requested to see videos that are going out to parents. AHT-A&C said he will send these to Governors. • Governors asked how much PPE the school has and whether it is PHE standard. DFA said PHE-approved PPE is available but it is not recommended except for cleaners. She explained there is more than enough should people want it and she is quite confident the supply chain is reliable. Governors commented that PPE standards are different for different workplaces and many people do not wear it correctly. • Governors asked for an update on Reception and Year 1 reopening. AHT-A&C said the school could potentially have up to 156 key worker children on site, numbers fluctuate daily, but the numbers are increasing. This means those class sizes are increasing and to maintain a maximum of 15 students in a classroom means this is using up 5 or 6 rooms, plus the 4 that are needed for Year 6, so currently the school does not have capacity to offer Reception and Year 1 as well. DLS added she has received 14 new key worker requests just today, which makes 35 more than in the original survey and if they all came in on the same day the school would need 7 classes for Year 6 and the associated staff and keeping them all apart from each other would be very challenging. • Governors said the Government guidance on Reception and Year 1 is quite clear and asked if there is a reputational risk by the school not allowing these students back. AHT-A&C said SRv has been in communication with the other Eastbourne Heads and ESCC and they are all supportive of the plans; he added that Brighton & Hove schools are not opening for any year groups. He said that the school is reassuring parents they are doing all they can and will look to open to more students if it is safe. • Governors asked about the policy for communications if someone proves positive for Covid in the school. AHT-A&C said the school would be open and transparent about it with the community. Chair said he and SRv are committed to transparency. • DFA said 2 Governors are due to visit the school tomorrow to inspect preparations – Chair, GM and MW will attend tomorrow; MW for Safeguarding. DFA explained the new toilets are being cleaned tomorrow and she has workmen due back on Saturday to finish off. • Chair asked about the communications with parents. AHT-A&C said the risk-assessment plan will be finalised and sent out to all parents tomorrow in PowerPoint format. Governors said it makes sense for this to be a PowerPoint, but some parents will not be able to access it. AHT-A&C said he is mindful of this and so SRv's Executive Assistant is busy converting it into various mediums so that parents can access it. DFA added it will also be uploaded to the website. • Governors ratified risk assessment. Chair expressed his thanks to SLT for their hard work on this comprehensive risk-assessment. 	AHT-A&C
8.	<p>Committee Updates</p> <p>Education Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of Education Committee advised that her committee had allocated Lead Governor roles and highlighted the importance of PPG and SEND being considered at all monitoring visits. 35% of the school's students are being monitored for additional needs, which is much higher than the national average. Governors commented that FW's allocated roles on the committee will now need to be reallocated. Chair added that the Special Needs Review had recommended that SEND should be a standing item on every Education Committee and FGB going forwards, similar to Safeguarding. <p>Enterprise Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of Enterprise Committee advised his committee had approved the amendments to the finance regulations. They had received a thorough presentation regarding income and expenditure, and it was positive to see good progress has been made on the loan repayments. The committee also discussed the draft budget, including the recruitment of the Pastoral Support Assistants and ultimately gave approval for 2 posts, as proposed by SRv and DFA, although there were views expressed that 4 were 	

	<p>needed. The Committee received an update on the CIF bid for the Devonshire wing repair work and the boiler.</p> <p>Admissions Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of Admissions Committee provided Governors with a breakdown of the number of applications for Primary and Secondary in September and advised the school continues to be well over-subscribed with first choices alone. A small number of Primary appeals have been lodged so far and due to Covid there will be a new appeals process this year • GH internal Year 6s can hold two places for Year 7 and there are a handful who have applied to other schools. All external places offered have been accepted. A small number of Secondary appeals have been received so far. • DSF advised Governors of the number of sixth form applications, those who have accepted offers and the number yet to confirm. She said the new application system makes it easier to track and communicate with applicants, and we are still receiving enquiries. Numbers of applicants remain fluid and SLT have strategies for changing scenarios. • Governors asked about the PAN and Chair of Admissions Committee explained the rationale around numbers and also commented on the lower number of appeals this year. 	
9.	<p>Finance</p> <p>Budget Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair explained the draft budget received in depth scrutiny at the Enterprise Committee but needs to be approved by the FGB and asked DFA to talk through any changes made since the Enterprise Committee meeting. • DFA explained there is an issue with the car park foundations, and she will give more information at the Enterprise Committee; the investigation alone will cost £17k. A decision will need to be made about this in due course, but she has not highlighted it in the budget at this point. • The cost of living pay increases has been built in using a best estimate, and she has started looking at a 5-year plan. DFA will talk about the 3-year plan at the next FGB which needs to be submitted to the ESFA by the end of the school year. • The building works are progressing through a CIF bid. • Governors asked if parents choose to keep their children away in September will the school still get funding for them. DFA explained there is a lag system where the ESFA look at last year's numbers and make an estimate and then catch up the following year. • Chair reiterated that the Enterprise Committee was satisfied with the buffers that have been built in. • Chair of Enterprise Committee said he was hoping for the 3-year budget forecast to be presented to this meeting, but DFA said she has had a lot of additional work to do in the meantime – it has been started but not finalised because her time has been taken up with Health & Safety. • Chair said ESFA have permitted late submissions of 3-year budgets, but DFA said she thinks they are still expecting a 3-year plan by the end of the school year. <p>JN joined meeting at 6.10pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors asked how teachers' pay performance increases are going to be settled when many have been away from school for so long. DFA said she always budgets for everyone successfully meeting targets, but that performance management still applies, and performance is judged on the part of the year staff have worked. AHT-A&C said no one should be disadvantaged as a result of the circumstances and this process is an ongoing one, it is not just based on one determinant. Staff who are vulnerable to not making progress have already had these discussions with their line management. • Governors asked how the SLT are managing to make these judgments on staff. AHT-A&C said staff conversations have continued remotely and the SLT will make it fair and transparent for everyone. • DFA said the school uses external advisors and has an HR manager now and they follow the professional advice. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair asked Governors to approve the budget – Governors approved. <p>Recruitment of Pastoral Support Assistants (PSA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair explained that due to a resignation and a restructure, savings have been found and the school would now like to recruit 4 PSAs instead of the 2 agreed at Enterprise Committee. Governors discussed whether finances would allow this and whether 3 would be a better compromise. Chair of the Enterprise Committee said SRv made a very clear recommendation at the committee that the PSAs would make a significant difference to students. The committee acknowledged the need for 4 posts and only reduced this to 2 because SRv and DFA advised there was not the budget for more. In his view there is no question as to whether this is a sensible use of resources. DLS said in her view the school definitely needs 4 because the teachers are spending a lot of time dealing with pastoral issues meaning this intrudes into their teaching time. AHT-B&A agreed that, post Covid, schools are anticipating a large increase in student well-being concerns and he is expecting the PSAs to be very busy when school reopens. DLS said there are reports of students experiencing and witnessing things through lockdown they would not normally be exposed to. Governors commented that being practical they need to look at other options which are also important in different ways and that it should be balanced as to how and where we spend the money with limited resources. Governors commented that even if 4 are permitted this would still leave a budget surplus. Chair asked SLT to explain the research as to where the figure of 4 came from. AHT-A&C said looking at the budget figures the school has historically had a vast percentage of the budget spent on staff costs and this has already been improved. Having mentioned the requirements for SEND and Safeguarding it is impossible to differentiate Safeguarding, SEND and these positions as they all entwine. The reason for 4 is because of the breadth of year groups from Reception to Year 13 all of which require different skill sets. AHT-B&A explained that if 4 are agreed these will be split as Reception - Year 4, Year 5 - Year 7, Year 8 - Year 9 and Year 10 - Year 11. Chair said these duties are currently taken on by Heads of Year. DSF added that the TAs are taking a lot of this on currently and GH is a very large school with just one DSL and one deputy, which is a very small team for the size of the school, so the ability to train the PSAs up in low level DSL responsibilities will be a great help. DLS added that as Primary has grown the team have been spread more thinly over the last 2 years. Chair asked if Governors are content to vote now without further debate – Governors approved. Chair asked Governors to vote for the recruitment of 4 PSAs – Governors approved. 	
10.	<p>Staffing and Organigram</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors said the organigram is not clear as to which Pastoral Support Assistant will look after which year groups. AHT-B&A will resolve this in the structure charts. Governors asked for the reasons behind the subject areas covered by the AHTs. AHT-A&C said this is based on knowledge and expertise and previous working experience with colleagues. 	AHT-B&A
11.	<p>SEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSF advised the school is currently updating the SEND register. The number on the register is high and these students need to be monitored from Primary so the school can correctly identify students and make sure they are correctly identified on the register. TA's are currently undertaking online SEND CPD training. DSF explained the school is working with ESCC and things are clearly moving in the right direction. She explained students are apprehensive about returning to school so there is a lot of SEND work around this as the school is already seeing the emotional effect of Covid and lockdown on SEND students. Governors asked about TAs providing differentiated work and whether this should happen. DSF said when they are in class the TA may present the work differently for the SEND student and in the same way they are currently talking to these students over the phone and assisting them with work. This 	

	<p>allows them to differentiate the work they are being asked to do and sometimes they will limit the amount of work if they are becoming overwhelmed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSF explained this links into academic stumbling blocks and enables TAs to provide an additional worksheet, for example. Governors confirmed this means the TAs are just going a step further in differentiating work. DSF said 1-2-1 conversations with students means that differentiation is wider now. • DSF said the impact of the work in this area will be seen through monitoring visits when they can be reinstated, and of course the new SENDCo will be the driving force for his vision of SEND. • Chair said personally he would like to see evidence the staff have undergone training and CPD throughout lockdown. DSF said she sends a weekly overview to the rest of the SLT and she will get that report out to Governors. AHT-A&C said the report will show a percentage of staff who have undertaken training - all, some or none – but will be made anonymous. • AHT-A&C said the SLT is aware of some excellent practice across the school, but they know there are some gaps and part of increasing the importance of SEND is to eradicate those differences. 	DSF
12.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MW said he has undertaken a review of DSF as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and she has also conducted a self-review. • Chair thanked MW for being very involved in the lockdown safeguarding actions • GF said he would like to come into the school to spend some time on Health & Safety with DFA 	DFA/GF
13.	<p>Policies</p> <p>Virtual Meetings Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair thanked SRV's Executive Assistant for producing this policy so quickly. Chair proposed that Governors adopt this policy on behalf of the school. • Governors commented that having to introduce yourself before speaking each time is not necessary on video calls, and Chair agreed but decided to leave it in the policy for telephone conferences where it may be more appropriate. • Governors commented that for video calls Governors should be logging in with their own name rather than using the Zoom accounts of partners, children, etc. • Governors ratified the policy. 	
14.	<p>Any other urgent business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None forthcoming 	
15.	<p>Meeting Close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair closed the meeting at 7pm 	