

Minutes of the Governing Body of Heckmondwike Grammar School Governors Tuesday 22 March 2016 in Room 105/106 at 6.00pm

Present: Mr N Barker, Mr G Harris, Mr M I Cook, Mr J Longridge, , Mr S Hafez, Prof Donnelly, Mr E Ineson, Mr M Pinder (Chair), Mr T C Riddles, Mrs S Doubell, Cllr. D Hall, Mr A K Atherton, Mr D Cross, Mrs S Ahmed, Mr Z Aziz, Lt Col Haider, Mrs V Maynard, Mrs S Minto,

Non-Voting: Mr P Roberts, Mrs C Proud, Dr S T Gregson, Mr J Flynn, Mr J K Wilson (Clerk to the Governors)

Observer: Mr N Bulley, Head Teacher Designate

Apologies for absence: Mr L Reed, Mrs Glover, Mrs S Morris, Mr S Eakin, Mr J Hodgson, Mr T C Riddles

313. Declaration of interests - there was none.

314. Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body 08 December 2015 were accepted as a true record.
(i) Matters arising there was none.

315. Minutes of the Special Governing Body 11 February 2016
(i) Matters arising there was none.

316. Head Teacher's Report

Mr Cook made his report. There were 1446 on roll this means that the school was almost the largest Grammar School in England.

Admissions – 180 offers had been made and so the school would be full in Y7. There had been 42 in year applications from Y9 students and after testing 12 offers of places had been made. Entry to Y12 continues to be buoyant with the same number of applicants as last year, about 765, and looking at estimated exam results will probably lead to a similar intake.

The inspection dashboard has been updated by the DfE; the new dashboard, which includes post 16 VA information, will be considered at the curriculum committee in April. Performance tables were also available. All of the data points to the effectiveness of the school. The school had received a DfE local award for pupil premium performance; we only have a small number of recipients. The internal assessment data was considered – attainment is expected to be broadly similar this summer. Work was being undertaken to try and ensure that the 4 levels of progress in English and Maths was maintained. There is a good deal of complexity about Y10 grades with changes currently going on in grading systems.

There was a discussion about a perceived drop in standards at A level and Mr Cook responded that at A2 attainment was lower in 2015 and lower than in 2014: this was attributable to the removal of the opportunity to take January modules, the changes in the prior attainment profile of cohort – extra ones not selected at 11, the number with modest GCSE scores will be factor. He stated that looking at value added there was not much change. He made Governors aware of the non-selective nature of our Sixth Form we are no more selective than others locally. Most Grammar schools continued to be highly selective. Dr Gregson reinforced the point about the much larger sixth form with a wider ability range. He also mentioned again the changes in retake policies. The sixth form aspirations were to return to previous result levels and to improve them further. The point was made about the effectiveness of Sixth Form outcomes, the high standards, progress made, the breadth of the offer, and retention. The destinations of students from the sixth form overall are also important and showed progression to Higher Education and high quality employment.

There was a discussion about league table position at A level, probably newspaper tables and that perhaps we should look to raise entry levels at GCSE. Newspaper tables tended to report on total scores and grades A*-B, Governors had been warned that when we reduced the number of subjects at A levels taken this would lead to a decline in league table places. If access to A level courses were restricted to students with As we would have a smaller and probably an elitist sixth form; we are now a major provider of level three education. Students with Bs at GCSE are being successful here and going on to university and good quality employment.

(signed)

07 July 2016

There was comment on the DfE performance tables where the high levels of attainment and progress for all pupils were outlined. At GCSE the high numbers of pupils who had made expected progress in English at 90% and maths at 99%. The Best 8 value added was excellent. The capped points score was 417.8 with 12.4 subjects per student. Post 16 A level attainment average grade was C-B and the aspiration is to move B. All students in Y13 had obtained 3 A Levels. The A level value added score is very close to 0 - indicating expected progress.

Absence data showed we were 3.3% authorised as opposed to 5.2% nationally. Persistent absence was at 0.8% as opposed to 5.3% nationally.

The Inspection Dashboard lists the school strengths and no weaknesses.

Questions about comparable schools are no longer published.

Quality of teaching and learning and assessment evidence brought forward in the past has now changed; lesson observations were not always accurate, indeed there was some academic research that suggested that if two people observed a lesson they were at least as likely to agree as disagree, the resulting judgements were unmoderated. The school has used lesson observations for a variety of purposes; not all compatible with each other. New ideas had been discussed on an inset day and this will lead to a stop on simply judging lessons but on forming opinions on a wider range of evidence as OFSTED now do. So the evidence of lesson observations would not feature in the HT report. The judgement about teaching and learning standards would be presented on a wider range of evidence. Heads of subject would look with SLT at activities seen in lessons, scrutiny of students' work, level of personalisation, outcomes, and observations by students themselves leading to an agreed judgement. Observations still go on but no longer grading each one.

There continued to be more rewards than consequences issued - an indication that behaviour continues to be outstanding.

It was reported that the restructure of support staff was almost complete except for a careers post. Mr Bulley, the Head Teacher designate was to work with SLT on producing an interim development plan for the next period - our development plan would normally be renewed in September but it seems appropriate that the new Head should influence the plan.

The training provided in after school sessions was highlighted. Activities had included: questioning techniques, learning indicators, use of seating plans and a seating plan tool called MINT class, higher order questioning and how to access higher order thinking skills through planning. A whole school training day had spent the morning considering ways to improve the impact of lesson observation and on how to respond to some differences in progress and learning indicators emerging from internal and external data. A specialist leader in Education had visited the English department and provided a helpful report to support the department in improvement planning. Some bespoke training had also been conducted by AQA examiners, who had scrutinised the department's recent examination results at question level, and provided some very sharply focussed feedback on where outcomes could be improved. AQA had also provided some face-to-face training for the languages staff, and a visit has been arranged from a specialist in a high-performing department elsewhere to support the team in its improvement planning.

Curriculum plans have now been finalised in line with the planned timescales, taking account of the new qualifications framework. Relevant decisions included:

- i. Keeping the same number of GCSE options but removing the requirement to choose a DT subject or Computing.
- ii. Not imposing the EBacc until further notice – this is subject to national consultation at the moment.
- iii. The sixth form curriculum to comprise 4 Linear A level courses for most students in year 12, with an agreed reduction to 3 for most in year 13.
- iv. 3 year Y12 courses will be agreed where appropriate for some with lower GCSE attainment.
- v. No AS examinations to be taken in linear subjects.

School events were listed and described as outstanding.

A list of achievements were mentioned.

317. Staffing report

Nathan Bulley: Appointed as Head teacher from 1st September 2016, Lisa Heeley: Appointed as a Science Technician (Chemistry), Anju Ramesh: Appointed to the post of Temporary Senior Information and Exams Officer to cover the maternity leave of Mrs Helen Gardner. Liz Currie: Appointed to the post of Head of Department (History) - Liz is currently acting Head of Department following the retirement of Mr Colin Jones in late 2015. John Whittaker, teacher Geography, Gemma Crowther, teacher of History, and Dawn Almond teacher of RE were approved.

There was a question about staff absence rate and this was discussed.

(signed)

07 July 2016

Governors asked about the reasons for permanent exclusions (there had been 2 in the last six years).

318. A list of trips & visits provided for information were received.

319. Minutes of Sub-Committees

(i) Minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee 3 March 2016 were received

320. Financial Matters:

(i) Budget Monitor to 31/01/2016 was mentioned - £90k potential deficit led to restructure of support staff looks like a break even this year but it continues to be monitored.

(ii) Budget 2016/17 – information obtained in February – expect to balance the budget next year. Current *pensions hot topic* by auditors; discount rate for teachers' pension scheme will increase from 2019-20 means we will have to pay about 6.8% could be as much as £300k for the school. Mentioned savings in energy – saving of £16k on gas costs on current volumes. There was a question about the figure of £245k attributed to debtors - probably HMRC VAT figure. Impossible to forecast from 2017 as national funding formula is in the offing

(iii) Responsible Officer Report Quarter 1 2015/16 was received.

321. Building Matters – CIF bid is in to replace roof of Sixth Form and library wall. Get the news of the bid in April. If we do not get bid may prioritise the library wall for use of school reserves. There is a small amount of asbestos to remove.

322. An oral safeguarding update was presented to Governors outlining the current situation with regard to pupil safeguarding and counselling. As a result of training there has been an increase in the number of people who hold a recognised first aid qualification. There was a useful discussion about radicalisation and the way the PREVENT strategy has been working in the school.

323. Policies for Approval:

Admissions policy 2017 entry was approved. A comment attributed to local parents about the difficulty of obtaining a place at HGS from outside the catchment area was explored. The Head Teacher said despite continued efforts to reassure parents it was necessary to continue to explain the oversubscription criteria and to say that if pupils meet the standard they are likely to get a place as distance from the school is not a factor. It was suggested that we publicise the fact that pupils in Y7 come from some 74 primary schools!

324. The current SEF was discussed as well as a summary. This is a quality assurance document. After A level and GCSE results a departmental SEF is written, need to wait for validated data to produce whole school SEF. Out of this comes the school development plan. The school considers itself to be grade 1 in all areas. The Sixth Form is in line with national averages in attainment and achievement. There is some explanation in SEF to show outcomes are overall outstanding; even so at 16+ there is a need to raise results. The most important factor in the results is value added. With OFSTED cannot have outstanding in other areas unless the outcomes are outstanding – it is interconnected.

325. Any Other Business:

(i) Report on Governor Visits & Governor Training. Governors had been extensively involved in the appointment of the Head Teacher and in the appointment of the Head of History. The clerk undertook to remind Governors of the GEL training that was available. A new parent governor had started her induction programme.

(ii) Sub-Committee Membership; these were as published. Mrs Maynard agreed to join the Admissions Committee and Lt Col Haider expressed an interest in the Curriculum Committee.

(iii) The Appraisal Policy was approved, subject any small amendments as a result of consultation.

326. No items were to be excluded from the minutes

327. Date of the next meeting; 7 July 2016 at 6.00pm

Meeting closed at 7.55pm

(signed)

07 July 2016