

**Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held in School on Tuesday 2 July 2019**  
**at 6.00pm**

**Present:** Shaista Ahmed (SA); Zed Aziz (ZA); Liz Currie (ESC); Jane Dixon (JLD); Gareth Harris (GH); Keith Wilson (KW); Mr P Roberts (PDR); Mohammed Hans (MH) (from 19.40pm)

**Non-voting:** Mr J.Flynn (JMF); Mrs C Proud (CEP); Mr S Taylor (SAT); Mrs D Ellis (DME) -Clerk

**Apologies for absence:** Tony Atherton (TA); Derek Cross (DC); Stuart Eakin (SE); David Hall (DH); Jonathan Hodgson (JH)

JLD opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to her first meeting as the Chair of the Governing Body. JLD explained DME was covering as minute clerk in Jody Dunn's absence.

**1. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising**

Governors accepted the minutes as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

JLD and JMF have worked together to streamline the process for reviewing policies. JLD noted the Governor training event that is addressed as item 3 of the agenda.

PDR confirmed that the partnership with the Dewsbury Learning Trust had formally ended. The schools involved had noted their appreciation for the support offered by past and present SLT members.

The school have been working with parents and a local coach company, Coach Travel Services (CTS) with regard to the introduction of bus services from Huddersfield and Wakefield to the school. An initial parent survey had achieved 82 expressions of interest but now, only seven had signed up for the Wakefield service and 12 for the Huddersfield service. A minimum of 32 pupils were required for each to make any service financially and operationally viable.

In addition, a group of parents from the LS17 (Alwoodley) area of Leeds had contacted PDR regarding the possibility of the introduction of a service for existing and new year-7 pupils. PDR and JMF met with CTS and the parent Group on 1<sup>st</sup> July and can now confirm that this service will run from September 2019. Whilst the cost per pupil for the year is higher than a scheduled bus (£1,100 per pupil or about £5.40 per pupil per day return) CTS do offer a safe and reliable service that will deliver pupils to school on time.

Governors asked questions around why the Huddersfield and Wakefield services had not had the same success; how the pupils from those areas currently get to school; if payment options are available to spread the cost and if the standard Arriva bus companies could offer a similar service.

PDR and JMF confirmed payment options are available; the school had previously looked into an Arriva service costing about the same but this had not been successful.

JMF explained that bus services could only be provided by reputable independent bus companies and, whilst financial subsidy of any service is theoretically an option, academy finances would not be placed 'at risk' in this way.

PDR concluded that we would be writing again to the Huddersfield and Wakefield parents this week to encourage parents to sign up. ESC observed that this is time consuming for the finance team, with little direct benefit for the school.

Governors accepted the minutes of the Special Governing Body Meeting – Election of the Chair of Governors as a correct record.

## **2. Review of sub-committee meetings/minutes**

### **Finance and Resources (F&R)**

The minutes of the F&R meeting will be issued to JLD and JH before circulation to the Governing Body. JLD noted the meeting had generated lively discussion and had been productive.

JMF explained that the main items discussed at the F&R meeting were also included in the HT report – item 5 of the agenda, including approval 2019/2020 Revenue Budget.

### **Curriculum and Staffing Sub-Committee (C&S)**

#### **Teaching and Learning Report**

CEP commented that feedback from the June visits to other school had gone well with sharing of ideas and lots of positive feedback from staff. The new assessment and reporting policy (ARR) was welcomed and adoption of the policy going well. The wider leadership team are currently developing a revised system for quality assurance linked to the raising achievement agenda.

Results from the recent survey of parents showed that 98% of parents would recommend Heckmondwike Grammar School to others and this is very positive and good to hear.

SA queried the pupil survey result about year 8 bullying – PDR confirmed SLT had reviewed the comments and related issues and had no concerns.

Results from the staff survey show that staff are proud to be a member of school again another positive result. Staffing issues now appear to have settled and staff turnover has reduced significantly.

Q. GH asked if there was any further information regarding the switch to making MFL a non-compulsory option for GCSEs.

PDR confirmed we now offer only French and Spanish. There had been initial dip in the number of students choosing to take a MFL option, but then take up had then increased in the last year. SAT commented for some students there had been a positive impact on their wellbeing, with not having to choose an MFL option.

Recent full staff meetings incorporated a session on staff wellbeing and this had been recorded as a positive piece of work.

## **3. Ethos, Values, Aims**

PDR explained that a lot of work had gone into reviewing the School Ethos, Values and Aims. Initially SLT had noted their ideas and worked with each department. JLD and SLT presented the initial ideas at the full Staff meeting where staff were encouraged to add their suggestions.

Key focus was on the school and the Heckmondwike town Motto – ‘Nil Sine Labore’ (nothing without work). This motto featured prominently in the address given at the Year 7 open evening and was well received.

Staff had agreed on three key Values:

Respect  
Responsibility  
Excellence

The main aims focused on giving all students and staff the opportunity to flourish; academic rigor; diversity; encouraging a life-long love of learning; work hard/play hard; enhancing partnerships with parents and the local community.

PDR said that all staff had been involved in the process and that they had sought to make the ethos values and aims clear and memorable for all staff.

CEP noted that the link to the new Ofsted framework “every child to achieve their potential” the aim had been to keep a traditional and heritage element whilst also embracing forward thinking.

Governors were invited to share their views

ZA –Happy staff will lead to happy students and happy parents, the ethos, values and aims are easy to read and understand.

GH requested the wording “by way of top university education” be changed to appear less elitist

Governors agreed that once the wording per GH is amended, the document would be circulated to all staff.

#### **4. Safeguarding Update**

A verbal report was given by SAT relating to safeguarding referrals since the last meeting. There were 47 referrals in total, the majority related to depression and anxiety: others included self-harm and emotional abuse. SAT noted there is continual monitoring in school. We continue to work closely with the Student Support managers (SSMs), school nurse, counsellors and a variety of external agencies such as CAMHS as appropriate. Currently there are no child protection, LAC or Children in Need or Section 47 cases in school.

SAT confirmed that all staff have completed the appropriate safeguarding training with the exception of a recent new starter to the lunchtime supervision team and a staff member returning from maternity leave. These staff will undergo training in the near future.

Most Governors have also now completed the training.

Q. GH asked if the headings for Safeguarding reporting were prescribed.

SAT said that he regularly attends the Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) network meetings and confirmed that the headings are the same in most other schools.

Q. KW queried if some students fell within more than one category?

SAT confirmed this is the case.

Q. JLD asked if there were any obvious trends?

SAT confirmed anxiety and depression were the main reason for referrals, but these are not always linked to school life. CEP and SAT also noted for some students school is their safe place.

Q. GH asked if there is any more that the school can do to help?

SAT and CEP explained that thresholds for referrals to other agencies had been raised with recent cuts to key services within local authorities. Many cases are referred back for the school to manage; there is also a broader range of disclosures to deal with.

Q. SA queried if we receive calls from parents regarding safeguarding issues?

CEP confirmed we regularly speak with parents regarding their concerns and we advise where they can go for help wherever possible. CEP also noted that a lot of referrals are from peers.

A recent Governor Skills audit had highlighted a gap in the governing body skill set in terms of safeguarding.

Following a discussion, governors agreed to co-opt Sue Doubell onto the governing body. Sue is a former Governor and was the safeguarding link governor at the school.

Governors thanked SAT for his time and he left the meeting at 18.40pm.

## **5. Headteacher's Report**

PDR said that he would not talk through the whole of the document but would address certain points of interest and answer any questions anyone has, as everyone should have read the report in advance of the meeting. PDR also invited comments regarding the format of the report

### **Data dashboard**

Progress 8 scores improved from +0.4 (2017) to +0.5 (2018) i.e. every child had achieved half grade higher on average in every subject, given their KS2 starting points. Y11 predictions are +0.62 for 2019, which would be a significant improvement. KS4 predictions had previously been secure and typically accurate, 6<sup>th</sup> form less so.

Progress 8 for disadvantaged pupils is predicted to be +0.44 with a gap of -0.18 to non-disadvantaged students compared to a gap of -0.50 last year.

### **Level 3 Value Added (L3VA)**

Y13 -Last year was - 0.03, this year is predicted to be -0.44 that is a cause for concern. Y13 is much harder than work in Y12 with some external students underperforming due to a poor work ethic, not being used to having homework to do and toughening up of the internal testing regime has highlighted those students who are not being successful. The challenges of predicting grades and a proposed new system was discussed in the C&S Sub-Committee meeting.

Y13 L3VA predictions showed there are some large deviations from the average based on ethnic origin data.

As discussed in previous meeting, issues with poor performance in the sixth form had been reviewed. Measures such as meetings with parents, withdrawal of study leave for Y13, resitting mock exams, placement of students 'on contract' for Y12 had been introduced.

Following a period of consultation, 3 pupils had now decided to switch to more appropriate vocational courses in other settings with a likely another 3 to follow. Our careers team had offered appropriate advice and guidance.

Q SA questioned whether pupils and parents were alarmed with the feedback they had received.

PDR and CEP said that regular updates on progress had been provided and PAG grades shared with parents. EC confirmed that feedback is routinely given throughout Y12 over a number of months and the current system of 'RAG' rating addressed attainment alongside the question of 'how students were settling in to the 6th form.

Q. ZA asked if this approach had been successful?

PDR said that whilst 37 students had been subject to review, six had decided to leave; the remainder were spending more time in the independent learning area (ILA) and were being actively supported to change their behaviour and attitude to learning.

Discussion ensued around the financial impact of potentially lower sixth form numbers; subject choices on offer compared to other establishments and specialist teacher provision in the sixth Form. Raising the bar in terms of entry requirements could mean that the school has to take a financial hit for a smaller sixth form cohort, the aim being to recruit students with good behaviour, a stronger work ethic and higher ability.

Of the 201 Y11 leavers, initial indications suggest that 160 would return in Y12; with 30 looking at other local sixth forms, 20 others were unsure. A lot of effort has gone into encouraging the Y11 students to return in Y12. 500 students were deemed a viable number for 6<sup>th</sup> form. Governors agreed our range of A Level subjects is appropriate. There was a consensus that we should 'play to our strengths' rather than try to copy other establishments.

Q Governors asked about results data compared to local sixth forms

HGS results are typically in line with other providers. PDR and SLT encourage teachers to mark for the exam boards as this is good CPD and broadens their experience. PDR has been working with Dr Phil Mark from Kirklees LA looking at ways of improving 6<sup>th</sup> form results.

CEP confirmed for September 19 intake we will be looking at Y11 skills gap and focusing on sessions on "How to study for A Levels" linked with setting the expectations/bar at the outset

**Disadvantaged students** – the gap is closing, which is a positive movement.

### **Behaviour and Exclusions**

Five sixth form students were excluded for 5 days. Behaviour in 6<sup>th</sup> form particular has at times been challenging but appears to be settling down.

## **Year Group Assessment**

There has been a return to holding formal full cohort exams in the sports hall for all year groups

## **Staffing**

There are two staff leaving in the summer term, one promotion and one is going to work abroad. In terms of staff turnover, this is a significant improvement on the last year. Sickness levels have reduced; staff are generally much happier in their jobs. A series of staff events have been organised (Staff breakfast, Run for Jo event) and feedback from these has been well received. JLD has had staff directly approaching her with positive feedback

## **Premises and Safeguarding**

PDR confirmed we are installing two new gates to increase site security, one at the side of the Crellin building so that visitors cannot get direct access to the school and middle yard from the reception car park, the other gate will be installed at the side of the sports hall to the rear of the school. These gates are a more cost effective option when compared with the installation of a fully automated gate across the reception car park entrance.

A Governor training session has been scheduled for 6pm Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019. There will be 20-minute sessions covering the following areas

- Data - PDR
- Finance – JMF
- Safeguarding – SAT
- SEND – Jeremy Barnett (JCB)

PDR invited Governors to attend other events in school particularly the Annual Prize Giving at Dewsbury Town hall on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019, Jo Cox's parents and Kim Leadbeater will be the guests of honour.

All Governors are invited to the staff BBQ on the last day of term Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 1pm.

Governors were shown the final version of the school calendar, this will be issued electronically with the minutes.

## **6. Financial Matters (including approval of 19/20 budget)**

As per the latest budget monitor for April we are predicting a £108k underspend due to careful and prudent budgeting.

Q. KW – how confident are we that £108K is the right figure

JMF we take a prudent approach to budgeting and forecasting, it is possible we may report a higher underspend, but it is unlikely to reduce (but the final outturn will depend on spending decisions that are taken between now and year end).

JMF presented the 2109/20 Revenue budget and related assumptions at the F&R committee. This is a balanced budget with the two key points to note

- Additional Employer Teacher Pension contributions of 7.2% or £235k will be paid in 2019/20.
- To offset this additional cost, a new grant will be received for the full year

- It is not clear though what will happen in years 2 and 3
- If no support financial support is given, the full cost will be borne by the school
- This would place us in deficit, a position that would be common in most schools
- If the grant is mainstreamed, the issue then becomes one of distribution via the funding formula which is managed by the local schools forum
- Teachers Pay grant – the budget assumes no Teaches Pay grant
- But latest information suggests we *may* get a part or full year grant in 2019/20
- We do not know whether or not a pay grant will be available beyond 2019/20

Both these assumptions as consistent with ASCL guidance and current assumption made by other local academies (per the academies network group).

Governors approved the 2019/20 budget.

A 3 year forecast had been presented at F&R with nothing alarming to note. Forecasts are linked to pupil numbers as reported in the school census, GAG income for 2020/21 is based on October 2019 census data. JMF informed Governors that the ESFA are looking at trying to identify academies with financial issues as early as possible placing reliance on the forecasts as reported on the BFR form returned in July each year.

At the F&R committee governors requested additional information on the price of a free and standard school meal. Reviews of the catering sales figures suggested increasing the price of a meal would increase income to cover the shortfall in catering income.

JFM explained the complexities of the Catering trading account and in particular the impact of increased staffing costs linked to an enhanced NJC pay award; removal of unhealthy food choices along with apparent flaws in the current pricing strategy. JMF urged caution, too high an increase could lead to a fall in income and adverse publicity if the Heckmondwike increase was far in excess of what others were charging and the Kirklees Council recommended charge.

After reviewing the information Governors agreed the price of a free school meal and a standard meal would increase from £2.35 to £2.45

## 7. School Development Plan

PDR explained to Governors that a completely new SDP is being written and is a direct reflection of the items identified as part of our Self Evaluation Form (SEF):

- Improve Post 16 L3VA score to +0.1 by reducing inter-subject variations
- Reduce admissions gap post 16
- Embed a culture of high work ethic post 16
- Improve KS4 Progress 8 by increasing boys' and disadvantaged students' achievement
- Make the most of our site facilities

PDR will issue the finalised SDP to Governors next week.

## 8. Policies for Approval

Medical Needs policy	approved
Governor Code of Conduct Policy	section added to cover Social Media approved
Complaints	Flowchart to be added, Chair to review/approve
Charging and Remissions	Adjustments required, Chair to review/approve

## 9. AOB

Governing Body committee membership & Structure - Governors were shown a document detailing the current committee structure and membership.

Governors were asked to email any comments to JLD or Dawn Jepson-North.

Q. MH asked how the school dealt with allergen requirements

JMF responded and confirmed that the catering team are aware of and are trained dealing with allergen issues. Posters are displayed in all eating areas and pupils are asked to speak to a member of staff if they are affected in any way. The Head Chef is made aware of allergens and food intolerances at the start of each academic year. There are separate food preparation areas and equipment where separation is required.

This diligence has to extend to school suppliers we purchase from.

JMF advised governors that the Head Chef was aware of the recent outbreak of listeria but the pupils and staff in the school had not been affected.

Q. GH asked about a recent occurrence in the exam process were a child had not left the room for comfort or food breaks

PDR/CEP and KW reassured that pupils are granted access to comfort facilities at any time during exams if they ask one of the invigilators.

JLD had visited school on a number of occasions and commented that some staff had approached her to pass on compliments/ positive comments about improvements around the school.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.