



Minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting on 21st March 2023 at 6.30 p.m. via Teams

Governors Present:

Phil Bevan (PB) (Head Teacher)
Alex Bond (AB) (Community) Chair
Paul Ray (PR) (Community) Vice-Chair
Jane Braddy (JB) (Community)
Ruth Long (RL) (Community)
Mirabelle Stobbs (MS) (Community)
Kathleen Thomas (KTh) (Staff)
James Barnes (JBa) (Parent)
Liz Holmes (LH) (Associate)

Guests:

Jo Bettle (JB) Assistant Headteacher

In attendance:

Alex Molton - Clerk

Apologies:

Mick Mayes (MM) (Community)
Jane Hulse (JH) (Parent)
Samantha Gould (SB) (Parent)

In Absentia:

Tara Barnes (TB) (Staff)

The meeting opened at 6.40 p.m.

	Procedural Matters	Action
1	Standing Item: Welcome, apologies for absence and acceptance/non-acceptance, resignations, governor recruitment, agenda for today AB welcomed governors and guests to the meeting. Apologies were sent and received from MM, JH and SG.	
2	Standing Item: Notice, Confidentiality and Quorum Requirements The meeting was declared noted and quorate and attendees were reminded re confidentiality of the matters discussed until they were in the Public forum.	
3	Standing Item: Declaration of Interest / Pecuniary Interests for tonight's meeting None were made at this point in the meeting.	
	Ensuring Accountability (<i>Governor questions and comments are in italics</i>)	
4	Standing Item: Approve minutes of 25th January 2023 and review Carried Over Items The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. PB confirmed that he is still obtaining national attendance figures for SEN/PP students but will send this to governors as soon as he has it. PP update to come to the next meeting. KT has done some work with Paul Dipple on our Uniform policy, to follow on from the	



	<p>Behaviour policy.</p> <p>ACTION: AM to add to the next meeting agenda for an update on this.</p>	AM
5	<p>Standing Item: Any Out of committee activity</p> <p>There have been two PEX panel meetings following the drug incident earlier in the term. One parent has appealed the PEX and there is a meeting scheduled for the 21st April.</p> <p>AB explained that a parent complaint was sent to him this term. PB has since met with the parents and this has now been resolved.</p> <p>KT has reviewed the school website in light of what is required to be published and has emailed PB with queries about this. We still need to publish a Uniform policy. PB reminded governors that we will be getting a new website soon.</p> <p><i>What was your opinion of the quality of the documents?</i></p> <p>KT: Overall they were very good. Usability of the website is not as easy as it could be.</p>	
6	<p>Receive Head teacher's Report</p> <p>This was uploaded to GovernorHub before the meeting for governors to review.</p> <p>Key items from this term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Strike days • INSET Day – focus on T&L, SEN, Curriculum Development • Y11/Y12 Parents' Evening • Y9 Options Evening • Paris Trip • Futures and Aspirations Days • Business Studies Subject Review • Increase in capacity in the pastoral support and safeguarding teams. • Looking at SLT structure for September 2023 • Inclusion working group • Ofsted training for SLT <p>A Business Studies subject review took place this term with Matthew Evans, Head of Farmors and Business Studies teacher, which was useful.</p> <p>No significant change in admissions numbers.</p> <p>There has been a slight dip in attendance, with concerns particularly around Y11, PP and SEN students. We are doing all we can to support these students coming into school. We have not had our attendance officer in place for a year yet so can't see the impact of this yet.</p> <p>We have done some work on persistent absence, which is less than 90% attendance. A few students hitting this figure drags the figures down overall.</p> <p><i>Is this what we would expect for attendance at this time of the year?</i></p> <p>PB: To some extent but ours has dropped compared to national.</p> <p><i>Are there a few students with patchy attendance just below the national figure or a few students with really bad attendance which skews the results or a mix of both?</i></p> <p>PB: We need to look at this data in more detail to analyse the reasons for poor</p>	



attendance. We need to understand the barriers to students coming into school and do what we can to support families with this.

Safeguarding incidents have increased - significantly in some cases, which is partly to do with how we are now using CPOMS to log incidents and concerns. Non-attendance is also now logged as a safeguarding concern.

The number of mental health incidents logged this term is connected to Y11 exams and we did an assembly last week on this to help students.

There has also been an increase in County Lines cases.

Is the number of overall issues a lot compared to previous years?

PB: This is hard to know as our previous record keeping was quite different so it is hard to see how numbers in particular areas have increased. Having our Safeguarding Administrator in place has helped a lot as she is able to analyse this data to look at trends, which we have not been able to do before.

Are there potentials cross references between different incidents? I.e. attendance issues may be linked to County Lines or other safeguarding issues?

PB: Yes, we could make these links.

Is the child on child abuse a growing concern at FCC?

PB: This is a new category in CPOMS so it is hard to say as it would previously have been logged differently. We need to see how this looks later in the year to able to review this properly.

There are concerns about the level of exclusions, particularly for SEN and PP students. We continue to work on supporting these students as much as we can.

PB explained that there has been a doubling of the number of PP students at school over the last 5 years. Our figure is below the national average but still a significant increase, even taking out the military pupils.

SEN has increased from 18% to 21% over the last 5 years and this is now sitting around national levels.

PB confirmed that we should know by the next LGB meeting whether we have been successful in our application for the Mulberry Tree/Oxford Brooks inclusion project.

Up to date CPD details have been added to GovernorHub.

There has been a slight change in staffing numbers.

Y12 Parents' Evening and Y9 Parents' Evening took place this term.

Parent attendance at second safeguarding event was good and the Y9 Options Evening Event was very well attended and positive.

Clare Ellson (CE) to attend the next meeting to give an update on site security as we have now received quotes for fencing.

Do you have any more information about the Business Studies review?

PB: Business Studies and Economics results have been down over the last few years. The review concluded that there is good teaching but the subject needs some



	<p>structural change in order to make this accessible for all students. Matthew will come and do some work with our subject lead to support improvements in the subject and increase the pace of change.</p> <p>Maths, Science and Business are the focus subjects for this year as they were the worst performing last year.</p> <p><i>Good to see we have some mentoring to help to drive this forward.</i></p> <p><i>We need to ensure we regularly check in with the subject leaders to make sure we stay on track.</i></p> <p>PB will invite subject leaders to the LGB meetings to give updates as appropriate.</p>	
7	<p>Receive and review curriculum update</p> <p>JB shared a presentation on this with governors.</p> <p>Principles of the curriculum were shared: one of the things we have been doing this term is asking departments to review their curriculum intent and these will soon be uploaded to the school website.</p> <p>Structure updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will have 90 students in each year group from September. There will be five tutor groups in Y12 and 13. - Mixed ability teaching groups in Y8 and 9 have worked really well this year – this has split up the more difficult students and improved the abilities of others to work with new students. - Most subjects are still taught in tutor groups in Y7. Pupils are set in Maths, Science from Y8 and DT/PE stay in mixed groups. - Almost all Y7, Y8 and Y9 have studied two languages in mixed ability groups this year. <p><i>Are most schools offering two languages now?</i></p> <p>JB: It is becoming increasingly common, particularly in local schools. We want a higher update of languages at KS4 – as this is part of the BACC and EBAC. Numbers are increasing again so hoping this will continue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Y9 options deadline is the end of this week. We are offering the same curriculum offer as the last few years. English and options subjects will be taught in mixed ability classes and Maths, Science and RE in sets. - A triple science choice will not impact upon Maths groupings this year. We expect just below half of the year group to study separate sciences. - We've had a good numbers of applications in for 6th Form already for September. Depending on numbers, we might be able to run some new courses or some we have not run for a few years due to the choices which have been made. - We are keen to introduce music A-level but there is likely to be only 1 or 2 students who choose this next year. - Product design A-Level is likely to run but Food and Textiles is less likely for next year. - We have introduced a new alternative provision this year – aimed at around 20 students across year groups who struggle to engage with our current curriculum. We will shortly have a review of the interventions which have worked; forest school and boxing were popular but some others were less successful. We also had numeracy and literacy interventions running. We will shortly be looking at how we will run our alternative provision next year, how it will be resourced and how we can keep improving it. 	



- The alternative provision provides a bespoke programme for each student – with a mix of ‘normal’ lessons and AP.
- We have provided a dedicated classroom for them to take ownership of.

Will the current mixed classes in Y8 and 9 stay the same as they move through the school and how is progress for them being measured?

JB: Y8-9 will be mixed again. In KS4 students will be in new groups again according to their options. We are continuing to collect working pathway data in the same way as we have done previously. Data will come through at the end of this term and again at the end of the year.

Are you hoping that these new structures will have an impact from next year onwards?

JB: There is no reason why we shouldn't see some impact of this this year. For some pupils it is making a big difference already. It has enabled us to split up groups of more difficult students who can be more disruptive in classrooms which affects the learning of all students across the year groups.

Recruitment

One of our primary advertising places is TES and we spend about £10k on this per year. We were forced into taking on a subscription packages as individual adverts are incredibly expensive.

We are increasingly struggling to get good quality applicants and retain them:

- MFL maternity cover – issues covering.
- Maths maternity cover after Easter – still not filled – JB and other staff to cover this for Y11 in the interim.
- Music maternity cover after Easter - just advertising.
- IT/Computing – have two candidates through an agency to interview this week (though there is a cost implication to using agency staff). The post has been advertised three times.
- DT/food – interviewing next week but only 1 applicant.
- Physics – good appointment made (only 1 applicant).
- History deputy subject leader – good appointment made but not a strong field.
- Maths deputy subject leader - just about to advertise.
- History – about to advertise.
- MFL – about to advertise.
- Physics maternity cover – can't yet advertise.
- Plus more vacancies we don't yet know are coming up.

Agencies charge around 30% of salary for a finder's fee.

There are also issues with recruiting TA's and support staff etc. Recruitment is currently taking up a lot of time, as well as money.

Are there issues because we are advertising too early?

JB: No, and there are procedures we need to follow in terms of maternity cover which affects when we can advertise these roles.

How many TA/support staff jobs are we advertising for currently?

JB: We have a constant advert out for TAs as we never have enough. There are a couple of admin vacancies too.

Are we carrying out exit interviews on staff who are leaving?



JB: Yes but there are no common themes as to why staff are leaving.

JB asked governors for advice/suggestions on how we could better attract and retain teachers.

What is the policy with newly qualified teachers – could they fill the gaps, aiming for them to stay on and become subject experts with us?

JB: Yes but they are just not applying for the vacancies we have. I have visited jobs fairs but this doesn't seem to help either. National statistics confirm that there are not enough ECTs coming through.

Governors recognised that recruitment is a Trust issue as well as a national issue.

Are we in a position where we can start to be more creative with pay and less rigid?

JB suggested we could look at:

- Cycle to work scheme
- Recruitment/retention allowances
- Car scheme
- Health benefits
- Gym memberships

And what else? How can we make progress on this ASAP?

Governors recognised that some of these would be Trust-limited.

Are we allowed to offer a relocation allowance?

PB: You can offer this. It is more about whether we can offer a better starting salary and be more flexible on this for new staff.

Perhaps we need to look at how we appeal to new teachers and ensuring we have enough support in place for them.

Are ECTs on permanent or temporary contracts?

JB: They are always permanent posts.

JB explained that we have previously had interns and we have then supported them to study but over the last few years these have not been of a high enough calibre for us to then employ.

Is this a generic picture across Oxfordshire or are some schools recruiting/retaining staff better?

JB: I am not aware of any schools doing particularly better. There are just not the applicants coming through for these roles. Sometimes it is just about advertising at the right time. There is also an issue with the cost of living where we are located as we are one of the more expensive places in the country to live.

Are we sure that we need to wait until receiving a MATB1 form in order to advertise a role? Could we advertise if a staff member consents?

JB: I will ask HR about this but I think it is a legal issue.

Do any other local schools use schemes to attract staff?

JB: I have seen them in adverts but they are not widely used across the board. We



	<p>need to have a look at our adverts and how we make the school attractive to applicants rather than focusing on what we want from a candidate.</p> <p><i>Is anyone looking at the data to review how successful our adverts are being?</i> JB: Not at the moment due to resources, but it would be useful to analyse this.</p> <p>Ofsted-readiness continues; new curriculum intents will shortly be shared with the LGB and added to the school website. Subjects leaders are also putting together a sheet to explain the termly topics for all subjects and how parents can help to support their children on this work at home.</p> <p>ACTION: JB to send on these info sheets so that governors can see these.</p>	JB
8	<p>Standing Item: Health and Safety update AB could not access the accident software for FCC but is not aware of anything significant that has taken place this term. PB confirmed there have not been any significant issues. AB has done reviews with CE and Jason and is content that although there are a few minor issues there are no big concerns.</p>	
9	<p>Governor Link visits PR has met with the Business Studies lead. AB urged governors to make sure they are carrying out these visits this term and upload reports to GovernorHub for all governors to review.</p> <p>AB asked if everyone has a way to contact their subject lead. RL explained that she has not had any contact with her subject lead yet and wasn't sure how to go about this. PR confirmed that email addresses for all subject leads are available on the school website.</p> <p>ACTION: AM to add a pro forma for visits to GovernorHub for governors to use.</p>	AM
	Strategic Matters (<i>Governor questions and comments are in italics</i>)	
10	<p>Policies to approve: - Behaviour This was uploaded to GovernorHub before the meeting for governors to review. <i>This is a very thorough policy and really sets out the expectations and consequences really clearly.</i> PB explained that the document may be slightly amended as more staff feed into this, although the principles will remain the same. PB explained that we have had more issues raised by parents about actions taken following behaviour incidents recently, so this helps to make it clear to all exactly what is expected and the consequences of actions and non-compliance.</p> <p><i>It would be good to have a separate shortened document to pull out the key strands for students to be reminded of expectations and put these up around the school.</i></p> <p><i>We need to think about how we are recording sanctions in order to ensure this is clear and transparent.</i></p> <p><i>The policy quotes 5 days/10 days of exclusion in different parts of the policy?</i> PB: I will get Mark Adams to correct this – it should be 10 days.</p>	



	<p><i>Should we add in something to the policy to remind parents of the minimum ages for social media – i.e. 16 for What's App?</i></p> <p>PB: It would be a good idea to remind parents of this. We have a staff member in charge of monitoring e-safety and they do feed into our assemblies etc. to remind students about these issues.</p> <p><i>There is a section about school planners in the policy but how well used are these?</i></p> <p>PB: They are not really very well used and we have considered getting rid of these before, but we would like to see them used more so have added them into the policy.</p> <p>The policy was accepted by the LGB subject to minor alterations.</p> <p>ACTION: PB will add the final policy to GovernorHub when this is confirmed.</p>	PB
11	<p>Site update</p> <p>AB confirmed that the 5 year site condition survey has been done. About £2m worth of work has been identified as needing to be addressed – about £500,000 of this in the urgent category.</p> <p>Floor tiles in the PE corridor need urgent attention and this work is scheduled to be done over the Easter holidays.</p> <p>Lots of issues have come up to do with roofs and drainage – AB will be meeting with CE and Jo Ray to see what we can do and that where work is completed it is done to a modern quality standard.</p> <p>We don't think that the ducts in the maths block which have been identified as needing to be repaired are still being used.</p> <p>ACTION: AB to add the site report to GovernorHub for governors to review.</p> <p>The new build classroom is still a work in progress.</p> <p>No further news on the all-weather pitch.</p> <p><i>Has there been any contact made with Vale Academy Trust, who have fenced all of their sites over the last few years and may have recommendations/suggestions for contractors?</i></p> <p>ACTION: PB to investigate this.</p>	AB
12	<p>SLT re-structure</p> <p>A draft of this was made available before the meeting for governors to review.</p> <p>PS confirmed that he is looking to add in capacity into the SLT in order to address the issues which come with the school's increase in numbers.</p> <p><i>The draft structure shows no Head of Y12 and Y13?</i></p> <p>PB: Maria has now moved to be head of Teaching and Learning across the school in order to be in less of an operational role. We are looking to incorporate the SLT roles into being cross-school roles.</p>	PB
	Other Matters	
13	<p>Good News Items</p> <p>School trips have been really successful this term; feedback from staff and parents has been good.</p> <p>Two author visits have taken place this term. There are lots of good things taking place in the library which is always popular and busy.</p> <p>Extra revision sessions for Y11 and have taken place and we have had really good</p>	



	<p>feedback on these.</p> <p>Y10 reports had a positive response from parents.</p> <p>Year 12 Physics trip to Cern was a success.</p> <p>We are looking to get more support staff to go on school trips. This is really beneficial to them and costs less than sending teachers!</p>	
14	Next meeting dates: 23 rd May 2023 20 th June 2023.	

Meeting closed at 9.05pm