

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College held on 17 March 2016

Present: Peter Sowrey (PS) (Chair), Kevin Fry (KF), Sally Hunt (SH), Addy Balogun (AB), John Barker (JB), Richard Goodsell (RG), Ashley Harrold (AH), Fiona Bauermeister (FB), Andrew Wallace (AW), Jenny Rusted (JR),

In attendance: Kate Hodson (temporary clerk), Sarah Hextall (SH) – Senior Business Manager - arrived 17.33pm, left 19.03pm, rejoined 19.25pm, Lyndsey Thompson (LT) - Deputy Head, Ruth King (RK) – Deputy Head – arrived 17.49pm

Quorum: – 10 governors - meeting was quorate throughout.

Welcome – meeting started 17.15pm

1. Attendance.

1.1. Richard Mills (RM), Gareth Chan and Peter Gerry (PG) sent apologies - accepted.

2. Urgent Business - none

3. Declarations of interest

3.1 RG declared an interest in anything concerning C South

4. Minutes

4.1. The minutes of the meetings of 28 January 2016 were agreed as a true record and duly signed by PS, with minor alterations as follows:

4.2. P1 – 1.1 – Fiona Bauermeister's apology included, initialled by PS

4.3. P8 – FBG changed to FGB, initialled by PS.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 DBS forms. AB, SH, RM brought in forms with ID. SH checked forms during the meeting.

5.2 PS reminded governors of DBS process and requested GC, FB, JR, AW be sent forms.

ACTION: SH to send forms.

5.3 P8 Actions The Key – The Key works on question and answer format, which AH likes. Governors asked if the GB should be on the governor version? – **agreed to revisit at the next FGB.**

5.4 RAISEonline logins – **AH agreed to take this away**

6. Finance Committee Report

6.1 There was a predicted surplus of £84K. However, an error has been made over salaries which means the end of year position has changed to a surplus of £50K. That amount will be carried forward.

6.2 By the end of the financial year, the school is confident the non public fund will be able to be separated from the school fund. There had been a problem with historic signatories on the non-public account. The non public fund now available is £100K, to be used to enrich learning in school.

6.3 The school has collaborated with Brighton Hockey Club, to finance the establishment of all weather hockey pitches. Brighton Hockey Club has increased its initial (agreed) demand for access to the pitches, at specific times, causing some strain in its relationship with the school. AH has talked to the chair of Brighton Hockey Club and the school has now agreed to more slots for the club, resulting in some community access being denied.

6.4 C South building work is going ahead – work to start in the Easter holidays. The building is to be handed over before October 2016 half term, for fit out over that half term holiday.

6.5 The school heating system is being overhauled, starting in May in the west side of the building, to give individual control over class heating. There will be temporary buildings in the car park for a year.

6.6 Brighton and Hove CC has agreed to match fund fire and safety improvements across school.

6.7 PS noted the positive turnaround in the budget from a deficit a couple of years ago.

7. Head's report

7.1 AH highlighted admissions preferences on p4, and School Development Plan (SDP) progress on p5, where each strand tracks back to Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Governors noted the high number of 1st 2nd and 3rd choice preferences for the school, showing the school is healthily oversubscribed.

Governors had the following questions:

Pupil Premium (PP) Gap predictions – table on p3

7.2 Are predictions based on marks? AH clarified prediction is the most likely outcome, informed by mock grades, class assessments. In addition, English was over predicting grades, so the school has put in some fixed markers. Students have to retake in sixth form if they don't get A-C grades.

7.3 What is being reported this year? Progress 8 is reported. Looking healthy – but there will be change this year because of everything being reported.

7.4 AH mentioned the school will be putting in an internal mock exam instead of AS level. In the sixth form the current trend is now up from 32% to 46% A*to B.

ACTION: AH to record attainment for next report.

Attendance – table on p3

7.5 AH said he is not happy with the level of attendance and has done a lot of work around this, with the role of the tutor being key – how tutors can mentor students.

7.6 The two measures of attendance are overall attendance, which ideally should be 95% and persistent absence. There is lots of positive work we can do - PP students' attendance mirrors progress.

7.7 Governors would welcome more breakdown on attendance figures, offered by LT

PP gap chart – p4

7.8 AH said PP gap should be coming down to lowest gap ever in English, with Maths being harder to address. Consistency of input should help to address problems.

=Behaviour – p5

7.9 A governor expressed concern about lunchtime and break behaviour – LT is going to add something in the next school bulletin and look at staffing in certain areas of the school, where students congregate.

8. Passport points system

8.1 AH introduced the passport points system to governors, which enables students to earn points and then choose a reward eg skipping the lunch queue for a week. It is one mechanism supporting what makes young people perform.

8.2 Each year group has a leader board for the top 100 students. Students can earn and lose points in areas such as behaviour, attendance and achievement.

8.3 Some students are motivated more than others to earn points. One improvement could be to get more consistency across all teaching staff, as some staff use it more than others – the system needs a separate login to use. The system is intended to support.

9. Uniform change process

9.1 AH says the current uniform is worn well by students. AH mentioned there have been complaints from a small number of girls about the uniform policy being discriminatory, in respect of the trousers they are able to wear. The uniform could do a better job – there is now a group in school looking at uniform, with student input central.

9.2 AH proposes a gradual roll out starting with new Year 7 intake and a gradual introduction in other years. AH has identified a stream of funding to improve school environment, which can be used. Also the normal hardship fund now includes element of new uniform costs.

9.3 AH received over 200 responses from parents to questions about the uniform, including ranking points about uniform. AH summarised very disparate views across parent view in his HT Report (p9), from no uniform at all to a new uniform meaning a new direction and higher standards. Parents' priorities are cost, comfort and washability. Opinion is divided over blazers. AH mentioned studies show a blazer correlates with high standards.

9.4 AH wants higher standards across the school. The school has high expectations of students, yet when students look around they don't see excellence. AH feels a change in the school physical environment is needed. A change in uniform can provide a visual impact which says the school is an outstanding school. AH is keen to make this change. He believes it's an operational change, but would like further opportunity to make his case to the governors

9.5 Governors discussed the proposed uniform change and raised the following points and questions in summary:

9.6 The parent survey shows a majority support for the current uniform. Governors requested more flesh on the idea as it is a huge change for the school. Governors wanted to understand how AH has prioritised the uniform change, a decision which will be attached to AH as a new head. Some governors mentioned the uniform is smart and reflects a high standard.

9.7 Governors wanted to understand what is the value of change? Can any difficulties be sorted out with the current uniform? A new uniform won't bring greater compliance by students.

9.8 Can governors see the parental breakdown of survey answers?

9.9 The next steps are a consultation with students; with GB being involved too. Governors want to support AH and want more of a case made by AH at **next FGB meeting**.

10. Sixth Form Review

10.1 The school wants a sustainable Sixth form and is looking at a partnership with Hove Park to make it affordable. The school timetable timings are now identical to Hove Park, meaning students can study subjects on both sites.

10.2 There are 2 main aspects: quality assurance and funding. Funding can be dealt with by which site teaches more students in any one subject.

10.3 Quality assurance – published results will be attributed to the school where the course is taught, so there is a clear need for QA.

10.4 Governors asked how it would work. AH replied it would involve joint working, ultimately needing one Head of Sixth.

10.5 There will be a model policy in both schools, without needing to alter whole school policy. There could be an online system or other technology use to support the system This is relatively early – but AH believes it could be in place for Sept 2016.

10.6 Governors asked what subjects would be based here? These would be subjects the school is strong in and be linked to staffing. For example the school could offer drama and languages. There needs to be stability with the same subjects being on-going.

10.7 Governors asked for current sixth form numbers – 64 - which is not sustainable. The reality for the new school year is that numbers only stabilise in September/October, after the sixth form application process across Brighton and Hove.

11. Secondary School Admission Arrangements 2018/19

11.1 AH reported there is nothing new from last time.

11.2 AH has sent an email round asking for comment on proposals

11.3 AH wants to respond in different ways, representing parents, the school and a community response. The outcome should be to end up with full schools

11.4 AH reminded governors that the school benefitted from a 2 choice situation – as students tend to choose Blatchington Mill. RK reminded governors there is an online survey and that currently this is only the engagement phase

11.5 The Chair highlighted the maps sent round with the papers

11.6 Governors made the following points:

11.7 Collaboration take up hasn't really happened in this area

11.8 How does it fit with government policy to make all schools academies?

11.9 Consider how sibling links are protected

11.10 Concern about catchment areas and schools such as Stringer, Varndean and Poets Corner all being very vocal

11.11 Issues like Pupil Premium will have an impact for some families in giving them better chances of having choice met.

12. Safeguarding policy

RK has just become the fully trained Designated Safe guarding Lead (DSL). RK highlighted the following in a presentation to governors.

- 12.1 Training: from September 2015 – 276 staff have received basic safeguarding training, including volunteers and students, with new subjects being Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and radicalism. Canteen staff have provided certificates.
- 12.2 E-safety is separate. In October 2015 e-safety training was delivered to staff during an inset day. RK is aware of the need to provide e-safety awareness to parents and carers.
- 12.3 Sound bite training sessions of 15mins are to follow next term, to include safeguarding around domestic violence, introductions to legal highs, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- 12.4 Information on safeguarding issues will start to appear in the school bulletin
- 12.5 The Safeguarding team has been looking at who is on site from a safeguarding perspective and has found Blatchington Mill to be very diligent and vigilant.
- 12.6 RK has placed materials on sexting on Firefly.
- 12.7 RK tried an information stand at Year 11 parents evening. However, there wasn't enough warning to parents beforehand - the school will work on that to find right balance of events going forward.
- 12.8 The school now has signs on the back of every toilet door – information on where to go for help – plans to change the signage regularly to keep students reading.

RK detailed the following Actions around safeguarding since September 2015

- 12.9 The school has referred 80 cases to the Multi Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH), the largest group being 22, for emotional abuse/neglect.
- 12.10 The school has discussed 3 incidents with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and 2 with the police force PREVENT team (which were not formalised and no further action was taken).
- 12.11 Referrals are made by all staff, including cleaners etc.
- 12.12 The school has 9 children in child protection plans i.e. 0.005% of children in school
- 12.13 The policy provides there are to be no lets which include children aged 8 and under, as there is a whole raft of different safeguarding issues for that age group. From April 2016, all external lets will have specific paperwork.
- 12.14 RK picked out some points from the Ofsted framework for governors, on which she would welcome more detailed questions, at another meeting? A school needs to evidence effective safeguarding to be Outstanding.
- 12.15 RK plans to work with Capita to enhance SIMS to record Child Protection issues; to work with families and provide information they want and overall to work preventatively, not just reactively.

ACTION: RK to circulate presentation with meeting minutes and add a section listing what questions governors should ask about safeguarding.

ACTION: RK to meet with safeguarding governor once a term

Governors agreed to accept the policy, with the following amendments

1. p12 - bullet 6 no 9 – needs clarification
2. p14 – outside providers – School always checks with Local Authority whether contractors on current list

ACTION: Clerk to put on agenda for FGB July meeting

13 School policies

- 13.1 Equalities policy

13.2 Governors highlighted Lead member of staff has no one named-

13.3 AH had to develop quickly as there was no current policy. It is as short as it can be, based on LA template – the school would like to go through longer period of involvement by other groups next time its written.

Governors agreed to accept the policy

13.4 Child Protection

Governors agreed to accept the policy

14 Clerk to Governors job vacancy

14.1 Following an unsuccessful recruitment process for a new clerk for the FGB, PS has asked the current clerk to Finance Committee (David Harvey - DH) to extend his role to include clerking for FGB. DH has agreed.

14.2 Student governors were mentioned and lack of attendance – it was suggested the agenda be structured to encourage attendance by student governors – perhaps with items relevant to them at the beginning – they could then leave the meeting.

15 Training – none mentioned

16 Chair's actions - none

These minutes are an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Signed ...

Position ...

Date ...