

**Meeting of Full Governing Body
23rd February 2017
Eco Building
6pm**

MINUTES

Governors Present:	Julian Benkel (from 7.09pm), Jon Dee (Chair), William Deighan, Judith Ford, Giovanni Franceschi, Di Francombe, Alex Marsh, Jess Morris, Rob Reed,
Officers Present:	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
In Attendance:	Simon Davies

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
1	Introduction a) Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence received from Oliver Cattermole and Ian Rodgers. b) Declaration of Interests None - The declarations register was circulated.	
2	Last Meeting dated 1st December 2016 a) Acceptance of Minutes The Full Governing Body reviewed five pages of minutes from the meeting held on 1 st December 2016. The Chair signed the minutes as confirmation of their accuracy. b) Matters Arising not Included Elsewhere on Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEN - The Chair of Governors advised that he had picked up the outstanding action regards reviewing a selection of vulnerable student cases. 	
3	Chair's Update The Chair of Governors provided an update on business that had been conducted on behalf of the Governing Body since the last meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grievance had been settled. • Headteacher performance review completed and targets set relating to the School improvement plan objectives. • The School had received four requests for places for students with complex special needs before response letters were sent. Without a guarantee of an appropriate band of funding being attached the School was not able to meet the students' needs. • A Parent Governor election was underway with seven candidates going forward to a ballot. • The Clerk outlined the procedure for the election of the Chair and Vice Chair, which would be the last agenda item at the next Full Governing Body meeting. 	
4	Headteacher's Report The Headteacher's report was presented on an assumed read basis inviting questions from Governors. There were several questions relating to maths progress with discussion as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current predictions for % achieving good GCSE maths grades in 2017 were 40%. This appeared low compared to previous years when grades A* - C was the measure but was in line with the expected national percentage of 44% of achieving grade 5 or above. The School Leaders and Governors agreed that the schools predictions were still not as good as they should be and were aiming to do better than national average. • The second pre public entry (PPE) exam would give school leaders a clearer picture and perspective of which tier of exam each student would be entered for. Previously under a 	

	<p>very different curriculum 80% were entered for higher exams. It was likely that 50% of students would be entered for higher exams in 2017. More targeted information would also be available after the PPEs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current year 11 syllabus was only finalised 9 months before the exam later, which was much later than usual. The style of exam paper was also significantly different including mostly higher mark questions and requiring more literacy skills to understand the questions. Governors noting that literacy was a major barrier for some students were anxious that some individuals would be disadvantaged by the curriculum changes. • It was noted that nationally schools were anxious about student outcomes particularly in maths and that historically after any curriculum changes there is a dip in grades and that in primary when a similar significant change was made the dip was around 20%. 	
5	<p>School Improvement Item - Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare Simon Davies talked Governors through the progress and impact of school improvement priorities in the section relating to personal development, behaviour and welfare (section 1.3 items 16 to 25 on the Headteacher’s report). The following is a summary of discussions:</p> <p><u>Attendance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95.2% year to date, lower than previous year at the same time. Illness had been the biggest contributing factor along with several holidays extending into the start of autumn term. Procedures relating to holiday requests were being followed in line with Local Authority guidance. • Persistently absent pupils absence improved to 10.4% (11.7%). Education welfare officer (EWO) working with families in collaboration with school bases and outside agencies. The School directly employed and funded the EWO along with one attendance officer. • The School’s attendance performance remained the best in the city. <p><u>Exclusions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two permanent exclusion decisions for the year to date. • Fixed term exclusions (FTE) at 367 occasions covering 507 days. The % of students with FTEs was up indicating a lower number of exclusion days for each student. • Notably exclusions in earlier years were on the rise due to a few high tariff students. Governors asked whether there was an issue regards the quality and depth of the information received on transition from primary. In response the advice was that it depended on the primary school and that staff were going out to schools to gain information for early planning. • It was noted that permanent exclusions within the city had escalated significantly during Autumn 2016 term in part due to a reduction in alternative solutions to avoid exclusions. • Behaviour hub in Aspire to Achieve (A2A) unit is being used as an in house alternative to exclusion. • Clerk to Governors to meet with leadership team regarding process for Governors disciplinary committees considering exclusions. <p><u>Embedding Behaviour 4 Learning Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative justice becoming a day to day practice. This involved repairing and building conversations with students to aid understanding of the impact of their actions. On call staff using revised language more suited to restorative justice with reminders on lanyards provided. Generally the response of staff had been very good to the change in culture regards behaviour management. • The behaviour 4 learning policy had been simplified and made clearer for staff and students. <p><u>Developing Students into Global Citizens</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude to learning targeted through the rewards policy. • Developing a thirst for learning an area under current development. Governors commented that progress in this area would be hard to measure. 	

	<p><u>Lateness and behaviour incidents</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key data analysis takes place every half term and fed down to school bases. • Lateness being targeted through individual late contracts. • Incidents of smoking, bullying and dangerous behaviour all down. • Overall reduction in behaviour incidents by 29% due to hard work of pastoral teams. • Current focus on behaviour in corridors on lesson changeover. • Detention system clear and swift. • Several inclusion programmes including working with the Head Chef, the caretaking staff and on the allotment. • Full time School counsellor engaged and community CAMHS in for 1 ½ - 2 days a week. • 15 to 20% of school population on vulnerable students register with a range of needs not all within the hard to reach population. <p><u>Safeguarding training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General safeguarding training to all staff at first inset each year and throughout the year on more specific safeguarding areas. • Community CAHMS providing training to pastoral staff in specific areas of need. <p>7.09pm - Julian Benkel arrived at the meeting.</p> <p><u>Equalities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New equalities lead at School. • Calendar of School events around celebration of protected characteristics. • Equalities objectives to be updated on School's website. • Transgender policy being developed. 	
6	<p>Reports and Recommendations</p> <p>a) Looked After Children (LAC) Jon Dee updated the Governing Body on the findings from monitoring activities relating to looked after children (written report provided). This included a review of 2 out of 9 LAC files. It was confirmed that the 2 students selected were on the vulnerable student register with a vulnerability index consistent with their individual challenges. The various strategies and types of support used were also reviewed and appeared consistent with the vulnerability index.</p> <p>b) Safeguarding Update Di Francombe as newly appointed Safeguarding Lead Governor confirmed that she had completed the online safer recruitment training and commenced the Hays online safeguarding and child protection training. She had also read the "Keeping Children Safe in Education" guidance and reviewed the competency framework for Governors with safeguarding responsibilities. An initial monitoring visit had taken place to learn about safeguarding procedures in place at Varndean. This visit provided reassurance that systems described in policy were in place. The recommended action for Governors was noted and agreed.</p> <p>ACTION - All Governors to read first section of " Keeping Children Safe in Education" and to consider any additional safeguarding training that they may require. Keeping Children Safe in Education</p> <p>c) Finance Report Alex Marsh updated the Governing Body on his findings from monitoring activities relating to Finance and Budget (written report provided).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected Outturn - The month 10 outturn report had been reviewed with the School's Director for Finance and Operations. The financial year had started with the expectation that the carried forward surplus would be fully utilised. Good management, a drive on productivity and creative ways of filling staffing vacancies had brought about further savings resulting in an increase on the projected 	All

	<p>reported in December. The underlying factors contributing to the budget improvement were summarised within the written report. Work had commenced on the 2017/18 budget with more realistic ambitions for income and a focus on productivity to avoid a reduction in curriculum. Governors noted that in the current national picture the School's financial position was strong and felt under control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Benchmarking A selection of graphs using the Department of Education's financial benchmarking tool had been provided making comparisons with a group of similar schools and group of local schools. Generally the School came out in the middle of the ranges for staffing ratios and costs per student. • Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) The Chair of Governors presented the completed SFVS return highlighting three questions where an "In part" answer had been provided. Each of the underlying reasons for these not being "Yes" answers was discussed and action agreed. <p>ACTION - Job Description/work programme to be written up and agreed for the Governor/s with financial responsibility.</p> <p>ACTION - Staff Declarations of Interest Policy to be drafted for consideration and approval.</p> <p>ACTION - Outstanding query regarding voluntary funds account to be brought to a conclusion before submission of SFVS return.</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Schools Financial Value Standard return subject to the above actions being completed or included as actions on the return. Submission to be before 31st March 2017.</p>	<p>TD</p> <p>JB</p> <p>JD</p>
7	<p>Other Policies and Documents for Approval No policies due for approval.</p>	
8	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Children's Services Cuts Governors were advised that the council would be voting on a budget cut to children's services by 40% which reduce support services to schools resulting in the need for a higher level of pastoral support within school. b) Goat Race Governor volunteers were invited to take part in the proposed gate race on 24th March. Di Francombe and Jess Morris agreed to participate. c) School Show All those involved in the school show were congratulated for a successful event. <p>Meeting ended at 7.55pm</p> <p>Date of next meeting - 18th May 2017</p>	