



**Meeting of Full Governing Body
24th April 2014
Training Room at Varndean School
6pm**

MINUTES

Governors Present: Maggie Barradell, Oliver Cattermole, Jon Dee (Chair), William Deighan, Francis Franklin, Richard Lumley, Jess Morris

Officers Present: Teresa Carter (Clerk)

In Attendance: Anthony Easton

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
<p>1 Introduction - The Chair welcomed Frances Franklin to the meeting as prospective Co-opted Governor.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a) Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence received from Julian Benkel, Anne Cox, Robin Marlin and Robbie Mitchell. Governors were advised of the resignation of Anne Cox as Co-opted Governor.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b) Declaration of Interests None</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c) Appointment of Co-opted Governor</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body appointed Frances Franklin as Co-opted Governor for a period of four years following the recommendation by the Nominations Committee.</p>	
<p>2 Last Meeting dated 30th January 2014</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a) Acceptance of Minutes The Full Governing Body reviewed an approved six pages of minutes from the meeting held on 30th January 2014 subject to an amendment regarding approval of the home school agreement. The Chair signed the minutes following the amendment as confirmation of their accuracy.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b) Matters Arising not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There had been no response to the note to staff members regarding the opportunity for them to apply to be a co-opted governor. There were now two co-opted governor vacancies following the recent resignation.• The newly appointed Head of PE had started at the school and maths department were fully staffed.• The purpose of the template for governors to complete to provide students with information of their backgrounds and employment was clarified. One governor had provided information, which would be circulated as an example.	
<p>ACTION - All Governors to provide information via the Clerk on their background and employment in line with the example to be circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governors requested further information on the amount of pupil premium used towards the ski trip and the benefits to those attending.	<p>ALL</p>

Signature.....Date.....



ACTION - Information to be emailed to Governors regarding the pupil premium contribution for eligible students attending the ski trip along with a summary of the benefits to those attending.

WD

- There were discussions following up from the request for suggestions on potential uses of the school fund balance. There was an existing bequest administered by trustees which was solely for girls and governors felt that the most appropriate use of school funds was to have similar scheme that recognised the efforts made by boys and served as a motivator to performance and good attendance.

ACTION - Governors requested further information regarding the scheme for rewarding girls under the existing bequest to see if a matching scheme for boys only was appropriate.

WD

3 Governance and Other Regular Items

a) Chair's Update

The Chair provided an update of Governor activity and key issues since the last meeting.

- Two governors had been involved with the recruitment of a Deputy Head/Head of School.
- There had been a complaint that had gone through all Governor stages of the complaints process. The panel had rightly recommended that a feedback process following complaints needed to be established.

WD/JD

ACTION - The panel of governors involved with the complaint to meet with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors for a case review and consider any panel recommendations.

- The Director of Education had directed both Varndean and Dorothy Stringer schools to take an additional 10 students over published numbers from September 2014. The Headteacher explained that further students may be allocated to both of the schools as a result of appeals and it was uncertain therefore what the final year 7 intake number would be, making planning very difficult. Governors whilst concerned at the difficulties faced by the school in accommodating and delivering to an increased student number were pleased to see that Varndean was becoming more popular as a first choice for more families.

4 Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher presented his report to Governors highlighting key issues in all areas and fuller in depth information regarding behaviour and safety and progress of year 11 students.

- The CHOCS group had been particularly successful in fundraising with a total of £6500 raised for charity during the year. It also provided a focused business model for students to learn from.
- Predicted end of year performance for year 11 was lower than targeted with 52% (current 42%) of students estimated to achieve 5 GCSE's including English and maths at levels A* - C grades. As it was the first year of using professional predictions the Headteacher advised that some staff might have been over cautious in their predictions.
- A raising attainment plan was provided detailing the for year 11 interventions in the subject areas of most concern, this was

Signature.....Date.....

- discussed in full later in the meeting.
- A vacancy in the leadership team for one term had provided development opportunities for a number of staff to step up and take on additional responsibilities outside of their role.
 - Governors commented that variances in performance across the four schools had been noted and asked how the incoming students were allocated. The process was detailed and governors heard how efforts were made to provide a range of student ability and special needs across each school. The year 7 transition class of students was made up of individuals from each school but prior to the four school structure there was a transition tutor group and this was allocated to school in its entirety. This may have led to some variances in outcomes across the schools.
 - The Achievement for All (AFA) initiative had been introduced via the schools learning partnership to provide coaching and support to teachers on how to initiative to effectively work with hard to reach families.

Strategic Item - Behaviour and Safety

a) Student Absence and Attendance

Attendance had been brought to Governors attention previously and this had impacted on the progress of some students. Plans to and extend the teaching beyond the usual study leave start time for Year 11 was planned. It was noted that the level of attendance had improved slightly and in response to questions on why this might be governors were advised that an increase in the number of prosecutions in addition to the in school activities had led to the improvement. A concern regarding the persistently absent students and particularly those within year 11 remained. Governors asked whether there was an identified issue regarding absence of students from any particular area. The school agreed to do some research to see if there was a pattern or persistence absence in any particular postcode area.

b) Behaviour Management and Exclusions

Anthony Easton presented to governors by power point on the activities and outcomes relating to behaviour management at the school. A copy of the power point will be posted on the governors' Google site. Governors asked a number of questions to which the following information was provided:

- More staff were on duty at break times and students were able to report incidents to duty staff or their school base. Reporting could be done at anytime of the day and would be attended to immediately.
- There was a gap between the level of behaviour incidents reported and the comments made by students in a survey. This disparity would be investigated further and consideration given to how incidents could be reported in an anonymous way.

ACTION - Report back to Governors following consideration of a method for providing anonymous reporting on behaviour incidents and an investigation of the student survey feedback. AE

- A different set of students had completed each of the surveys and 45% across the school had completed the safe and well at school survey. The other survey was targeted by tutor group, according to availability of ICT for completing the survey online.
- A short stay facility was proposed similar to that used effectively in the west of the city. The number of places that would be

available for Varndean students was not yet known.

- Low level disruption was something for each teacher to deal with within class by the provision of interesting lessons to stimulate and engage students. The hard work put in previously to tackle the more serious behaviour issues had led to availability of time and resources for a focus on lower level disruption.
- Support staff also responsible for tackling behaviour issues following appropriate training.
- Once the year 11's had moved on a concentrated effort would be made on tackling any on compliance with the uniform code.
- Once the amended behaviour policy had been approved assemblies would be held to communicate the principles of the stepped approach to students. The use of case studies might be an effective way of getting the message across on the consequences of poor behaviour. The policy would be published alongside an accessible guide for parents.

c) Aspire to Achieve

Discussions of this item were included within 4b above.

Discussions returned to the raising attainment plan (RAP) at this stage as Governors wished to evaluate in depth the actions in place to boost the performance of six underperforming departments. The Headteacher provided a verbal report in addition to the RAP provided in advance of the meeting, which included a summary of the whole school initiatives for raising attainment. These included the following:

- Partners in excellence with appointed job share to lead n exploring the curriculum and coaching on use of data and strategies.
- Weekly targeted 12 students with strategies to move them forward.
- Allocation of mentors to students with an 18 week programme to support them. 80 students supported by this method.
- Headteacher meeting with families to go through individualised intervention plans.
- Six weekly measures of data on student progress.
- After school sessions for specific students on specific subjects and parts of the curriculum where they were struggling.
- Easter revision sessions for maths and science.
- Overstaffing on a temporary basis in some areas.

The Governing Body noted the predicted results overall and specifically for the six departments identified within the RAP. The Governing Body accepted that the likely outcomes would be below the challenging targets set in the SIP and supported the senior leadership team's view that no more could be done in the immediate term to further improve departmental performance.

5 Policies and Other Documents for Approval

a) School Behaviour Policy (Behaviour for Learning) Including Behaviour Principles Written Statement.

The Governing Body proposed some minor changes to the Behaviour for Learning Rewards policy as follows:

- Title of Policy to be Behaviour for Learning, Including Rewards Policy.
- Disability to be included within the first bullet pointed list on page one.



AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Behaviour for Learning Rewards policy subject to amendments as discussed. Approval of the final version of the policy delegated to the Headteacher.

- b) **Child Protection Policy and Procedures (Safeguarding) Including Statement of Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff**

AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy subject to the addition of one sentence as recommended by the Local Authority. Jess Morris was appointed as the nominated Governor with safeguarding responsibility.

- c) **Equalities Policy**

AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the equalities policy in principle subject to a review by a governor with equality responsibility. Maggie Barradell was appointed as Equality Governor.

ACTION - Equality Governor to undertake a review of the equalities policy with a member of leadership team and bring back the policy with recommended changes at next scheduled meeting of the Full Governing Body. MB/AE

6 Reports and Recommendations

- a) **Finance**

The Chair provided Governors with a verbal update on the schools financial position supported by a written report.

AGREEMENT/ACTION - The Full Governing Body noted the outcomes of the review and the financial position of the School

- b) **Varndean Links**

The Governing Body noted the contents of the Associate Member's report to the Governing Body.

- c) **School Information on Website**

The Clerk reported that an audit that she had undertaken of the schools website had revealed that access arrangements for disabled visitors needed to be more prominent but this had since been rectified by the publication of an accessibility statement.

7 Any Other Business

None

Meeting ended at 8.42pm

Date of next meeting - 19th June 2014



Actions arising from Full Governing Body 24th April 2014

Action Agreed	By Who	By When
All Governors to provide information via the Clerk on their background and employment in line with the example to be circulated.	All Governors	End May
Information to be emailed to Governors regarding the pupil premium contribution for eligible students attending the ski trip along with a summary of the benefits to those attending.	WD	End May
Governors requested further information regarding the scheme for rewarding girls under the existing bequest to see if a matching scheme for boys only was appropriate.	WD	Next meeting
The panel of governors involved with the complaint to meet with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors for a case review and consider any panel recommendations.	WD, JD	Next meeting
Report back to Governors following consideration of a method for providing anonymous reporting on behaviour incidents and an investigation of the student survey feedback.	AE	Next meeting
Equality Governor to undertake a review of the equalities policy with a member of leadership team and bring back the policy with recommended changes at next scheduled meeting.	MB AE	Next meeting