

Meeting of Full Governing Body
19th December 2019
6pm
Library

MINUTES

Governors Present:	Simon Bowes, Jon Dee, William Deighan, Judith Ford, Giovanni Franceschi, Alex Marsh (Chair), Hope McAdam, Emma McCrea, Ian Rodgers, Emma Warde-Robinson
Officers Present:	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
In Attendance:	Shelley Baker, Tim Clarke (for item 2) Lynn Hill, Gareth Hughes, Andy Roberts, Vicky Thorn

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>a) Welcome The Chair welcomed Tim Clarke to the meeting followed by introductions.</p> <p>b) Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence received from Julian Benkel.</p> <p>c) Declaration of Interests The declarations register was circulated. There were no declarations made relating to an agenda item.</p>	
2	<p>Presentation from School Leader - Tim Clarke</p> <p>Tim Clarke provided Governors with an overview of his role and responsibilities as curriculum development manager including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student personal development including the learning 4 life curriculum. • Developing the relationship and sex education curriculum which would be statutory from September 2020 and might require some changes to policy. • School assembly programme. • Careers lead with responsibility for the careers programme. Working towards the Gatsby benchmarks. • Organises the three collapsed timetable days, one per term. The focus of these being around careers and PHSCE. • School enrichment week , allocation of students to activities. • Entitlement curriculum recognising student achievement in the graduation assembly. • Year 8 options. • BTEC quality assurer. <p>An update on careers was provided in more detail with a handout provided summarising the actions taken to date and planned to meet the 8 Gatsby benchmark measures. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Compass + tool to enable systematic recording of students' experiences of career and enterprise activity. • Engaged a Higher Education champion role to track participation. • Providing opportunities for students to have encounters with employers was a challenge. Achieved currently through year 10 and looking to build into year 7 specialist school. Introducing Real game careers learning resource being brought in for year 8 and careers events to be held for years 9 and 10. • Work experience for around 50 students last year and looking to build this up in current 	

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

	<p>year. Governors asked whether there was competition for work experience places and were advised that there was some so in addition to the database of employers that provided work experience opportunities the students were encouraged to find placements through their own contacts. Governors commented that assistance might be given to students with finding placements through Governors' own links and those of former students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra funding from two projects had enabled additional careers adviser time with all year 11 students having had at least one careers interview before submitting their college applications. <p><u>Questions from Governors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would additional workload be covered if increased the capacity for work experience? • Timing of careers advise, almost too late in year 11. <p><u>Response to Governors questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration support available for work experience. • The School talk to students about careers well before year 11 doing much of the work in year 10. From September to December there had been dedicated assemblies, making the grade evenings and colleges had been in. <p>6.17pm - Tim Clarke left the meeting.</p>	
3	<p>Last Meeting dated 2nd October 2019</p> <p>a) Acceptance of Minutes The Full Governing Body reviewed and approved six pages of minutes from the meeting held on 2nd October 2019/ The Chair signed the minutes as confirmation of their accuracy.</p> <p>b) Matters Arising not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding - Recent meeting held between staff and governor leads to go through the actions arising from the safeguarding review. • Governor responsibilities - Jon Dee had taken on the lead role for finance. Open to Governors expressing interest in covering any specific areas of responsibility. <p>ACTION - Recirculate the Governors' Responsibilities list.</p>	TD
4	<p>Chair's Update The Chair of Governors provided an update on activities since the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance group had met, feedback under item 7. • Letter sent to the Local Authority regards concerns on slow progress of buildings work. Meeting held the previous week. • Attended secondary chairs meeting where discussion items included buildings, school leaders' wellbeing, disadvantaged students and supporting of each other following lessons learnt from the death of students. • The Headteacher appraisal and objective setting process had been completed by the Chair and Vice Chairs with the support of an independent adviser. Extracts from the report would be circulated to Governors to support their understanding of the School and the Headteacher's contribution to its success. • A key objective for the current year was the closing of the progress gap for disadvantaged students. • A session for Governors on the school improvement plan had taken place. A governor who attended the session provided brief feedback on the session and planning process. 	
5	<p>Headteacher's Report The Headteacher with the support of school leaders presented his report to Governors highlighting the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive on happiness and wellbeing for school community commencing with staff training. Four sessions delivered to students each with reflection after and tailoring them as they go. Next sessions planned for after the Christmas holidays. • Local authority had put together some sessions for holidays to ensure that families have a 	

	<p>place to go when school's closed. A toolkit for schools also being developed for dealing with tragic events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising attainment plans had been used effectively for several years and many departments had come off plan leaving just four. A different approach was being taken in relation to the remaining departments that had not improved. • School improvement plan had been finalised following the Governors session and provided in printed copy for Governors at the meeting. <p><u>Questions and comment from Governors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were there any early indications of the strength of the current year 11 cohort? • Did the data provide indications of gaps closing? • What was in place to address the gaps? • When would learning cycle two data be available? <p><u>Response to Governors' comments and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data at the end of learning cycle one almost identical to same time in previous year with a sense that the school was doing better at the top end and that cohort more coherent and positive. • Some concerns around the patterns for vulnerable groups which were similar to previous year with some individual dips. • A full range of strategies at classroom level, every vulnerable student known and being supported. Monitoring by Heads of Department. • During the first week in February the learning cycle two data would be available with the first pre public examination (PPE) results following shortly after providing a good source of data. <p>A series of graphs demonstrating progress 8 over a three year trend was available for Governors comments. Governors felt that the graphs were a useful addition to the information provided demonstrating a pattern of progress over time for different cohorts. There was a query regarding the trend for a drop in progress for year 11 after the first assessment. In response it was advised that there was a trend of over prediction in years 9 and 10 and that these became more realistic in year 11. There was some under prediction in year 11 which improved throughout the year. Governors commented that predictions had improved over the past few years but still had concerns that inaccurate predictions may lead to misdirection of support. The school provided assurance that the assessment process was rigorous and improving as teacher's confidence improved. There was also confidence from school leaders that on daily basis in class the teachers were aware of student progress and their next steps to get them on the right track.</p> <p>ACTION - Update on the progress gaps and actions being taken at March meeting.</p>	SLT
6	<p>World Class Education - Only the best will do. Seeking, sharing and developing best practice</p> <p>School leaders presented to Governors on the school development area for a world class education supported by four documents.</p> <p>a) External Data</p> <p>Governors were provided with two analysis documents providing external data that supported what school leaders had been saying about the school's performance and how it benchmarked against other schools nationally. These were the FFT Aspire summary dashboard and the Ofsted inspection data summary report.</p> <p>On the FFT summary Governors noted the mainly "green" ratings and raised questions regarding the amber areas of % of students taking 3 sciences and mobility of students. School leaders responded that the lower level of triple science entries was mainly historic when the department had been one of concern. It was now in a position where entries for triple science could be expanded. The mobility reflected that of the city and whilst not a concern would be further analysed against the other city school mobility data.</p> <p>b) Challenge Partners</p>	

	<p>The findings report following a Challenge Partners review in November 2019 had been circulated to Governors. The focus of the review had been to examine the pastoral side of the school and to have an external evaluation of the four school structure. The report was very positive recognising the pastoral support as an area of excellence for the school alongside an ambitious leadership with high expectations for students inside and outside of the curriculum.</p> <p>Governors asked whether the reality of this outcome would be that other schools would visit to see the model and were advised that other schools had already visited. .</p> <p>Noting comments within the report around the “even better ifs “ of the disadvantaged provision Governors commented that there might be some value in seeing what other school with outstanding in this area were doing differently. School leaders responded that an “Excellence for All” programme providing classroom resources was being looked at to strengthen the disadvantaged provision.</p> <p>c) Varndean Curriculum An overview of the what the school curriculum looked like in terms of intention and implementation had been provided. All departments working on as well with the curriculum being update on the website</p> <p>Currently the school had a two year key stage 3 and three year key stage 4 . There had been a steer from Ofsted against this model had it had the potential to narrow the breadth of curriculum at key stage 3. The school had been following this model over a period of time and it had proved successful for outcomes. It was recognised that there pros and cons of both models for key stages, Governors early opinion was sought in advance of the school carrying out further thinking and research. Governors’ opinion was that the school’s performance was good in many of the measures and whilst a three year key stage 4 might be a potential blocker for achievement of outstanding Ofsted classification getting the best outcome for students was more desirable. The Headteacher advised that the considered the school to have a breadth of curriculum in key stage 3 but remained open to debate.</p> <p>d) World Class Document A summary document of activities planned to support the world class education vision highlighting where the school was in its journey and what next steps were to be taken. Some highlights on coaching and training activities were drawn from the document. Governors commented that the “teacher rounds” system for appeared to be an effective format for coaching and asked what the feedback had been. In response they were advised that comments had come back about it being the best type of continuing professional development that they had experienced.</p>	
7	<p>Financial Control</p> <p>a) Finance Group Meeting 8th November The Finance Lead Governor supported by the Director of Operations and Finance provided an update on business conducted at the finance group meeting on 8th November 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting held termly to scrutinise the school’s financial outturn report. Current position was looking favourable against original budget for the year by around £40k - £50k. This surplus together with available capital funds was being considered for the improvements to the reception area that had not been included within the basic needs buildings improvements planned by the Local Authority. <p>ACTION - Distribute the financial outturn considered by Finance Group to all Governors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group had considered the finance of school trips and had received some detailed costings. As a result, the group would be looking for a more even spread of support for disadvantaged students across future trips. The Director of Operations advised that the photocopiers were coming to the end of contract and that action would be needed including the write off of existing equipment. Governors had been asked to consider the implementation of fining of parents whose children had been excluded but continued to be on school site. The charging and remission policy had been amended to include the option for charging the fee. Some clarity on the wording within the policy was requested on when fee might be charged 	TD

	<p>and whether it included just the student coming on site.</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the charging and remissions policy subject to some clarity on when the fee might be payable.</p> <p>Governors asked whether there had been an update on the term time only settlement and were advised that the underpayments on holiday calculations had been finalised and it was looking like £52k being the full settlement figure. As a result of the exercise some errors became evident i.e. holiday entitlement not been incremented along with length of service. This was back with the council to consider centrally as a city wide issue.</p> <p>b) Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) Governors were advised that the Finance Group considered a section of the SFVS checklist at each of its meetings. This enabled a more thorough process throughout the year. The final return was available for approval prior to submission.</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the SFVS return prior to its submission to the finance team at the local authority.</p>	
8	<p>Other Reports</p> <p>a) Pay Panel Report The pay panel had met on to receive a report on teacher performance appraisal outcomes and recommendations for pay proposals on 8th November. A summary report was available for all governors of the outcomes from that meeting. The % of staff that had met their objectives was noted as 69% , partially met as 22% and not met as 9%. This had been reflected in the pay awards. It was also noted that the pay panel had also approved the pay policy and the appraisal policy under delegated powers.</p> <p>b) School Trips/Enrichment The contents of the report to Governors following a review of school trips was noted. There was a comment that the trips were checked for inclusivity and that young people were supported to attend as much as possible within the school’s budget constraints. Trips were also checked for health and safety risks and curriculum benefit. Further work was being undertaken on providing financial support for equipment and other items required whilst on trips.</p> <p>7.43 pm - Simon Bowes left the meeting.</p>	
9	<p>School Infrastructure</p> <p>a) Buildings Expansion Governors were reminded that work on conversion of the fitness suites to science labs had been delayed from summer. This led to considerable concerns about delays for the more substantial longer term works if the smaller project was causing issues. A letter had been sent to the authority followed by a meeting with representatives where school leaders and governors were able to express concerns in person leading to an agreement for further high level meetings to check milestones being reached. There was a tight timeline due to restraints of current accommodation that would not be sufficient from September 2020 for the increasing student numbers. The nature of work involved an expansion on the current footprint which created a logistical challenge.</p> <p>The buildings group had met on 8th November and approved the designs which had been displayed in school and on the website as part of a pre consultation. Planning was submitted the following day with approval end February or March and go ahead in summer. A technical workshop had been held to consider the work involved and understand the potential disruption.</p> <p>There was no guarantee that phase two work would start in the summer and whilst there was confidence that the Local Authority would do what they could to ensure that successfully completed there had been commitment to drawing up a “plan B” on how to</p>	

	<p>accommodate the school expansion.</p> <p>Consideration had been given to how to deal with any objections to planning by engaging with the parent body to positively support planning.</p>	
10	<p>Governance Matters</p> <p>a) Governors Skills Audit - Recruitment & Training The outcomes from the skills audit had been analysed and a summary was provided for Governors consideration. It was concluded that the outcomes did not really reflect the strengths of the Governing Body using an averaging of scores. A further analysis would be undertaken to ensure coverage in those areas with lower scores in terms of number of governors with particular skills. One area that it was felt that the Governing Body was underrepresented was in community liaison. Governors were encouraged to develop skills by attending meetings of groups where they were not members and to also attend training. Governors were advised that the primary schools had been discussing having a pool of experienced Governors to support and may look to Varndean for support. The Clerk confirmed there was a previous collaboration agreement for the schools within the partnership in leadership and learning.</p> <p>ACTION - Collaborative agreement to be circulated to Governors for information.</p>	TD
11	<p>Policies and Other Documents for Approval</p> <p>a) Capability of Staff Procedures</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the capability of staff procedures as presented.</p>	
12	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p> <p>Date of next meeting - 28th February 2020</p>	