

**Meeting of Full Governing Body**  
**10<sup>th</sup> December 2020**  
**6pm**  
**Via Zoom**

**MINUTES**

<b>Governors Present:</b>	Julian Benkel, Simon Bowes, Jon Dee, William Deighan, Alex Marsh (Chair), Hope McAdam, Emma McCrea, Ian Rodgers, Emma Warde-Robinson
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Shelley Baker, Laura Fairbank, Lynn Hill, Gareth Hughes, Andy Roberts

	<b><u>Agenda item</u></b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>
1	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>a) <b>Welcome</b> The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome. There had been a nomination for Ian Rodgers reappointment as a Co-opted Governor prior to the meeting with unanimous agreement from Governors received by email.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The reappointment of Ian Rodgers as a Co-opted Governor was confirmed by the Full Governing Body.</b></p> <p>b) <b>Apologies for Absence</b> Judith Ford and Giovanni Franceschi were absent from the meeting.</p> <p>c) <b>Declaration of Interests</b> The completed declarations register for 2020/21 was included within meeting papers. There were no additional declarations relating to agenda items.</p>	
2	<p><b>Last Meetings dated 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020</b></p> <p>a) <b>Acceptance of Minutes</b> The Full Governing Body reviewed and approved five pages of minutes from the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.</p> <p>b) <b>Matters Arising not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A separate paper had been circulated summarising the changes to provision and the engagement with the wider community in response to two serious incidents during 2018 and 2019.</li> <li>• Governors and School Leaders had met for a strategic discussion on longer term school priorities.</li> </ul>	
3	<p><b>Chair's Update</b></p> <p>The Chair of Governors provided an update on business conducted on behalf of the Governing Body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Headteacher's performance review process had been completed by the Chair and Vice Chairs with the support of an independent assessor. Objectives had also been set for the current year.</li> <li>• Pay panel had two meetings with proposals for teachers pay progression approved.</li> <li>• Secondary Chairs meeting attended where Headteacher wellbeing was a key area of discussion recognising the additional pressures on school leadership teams. There had been an additional discussion around covid case numbers in the authority with the advice that generally cases were lower than in other local authorities. Governors were interested in seeing more comparative data across schools. Other agenda items were the Gatsby measures for careers guidance and an overview of latest PAN</li> </ul>	

	proposals across Brighton & Hove.	
4	<p><b>COVID-19 - including update on school measures / student and school team cases and status of the risk assessment / next steps</b></p> <p>School leaders provides a verbal update on COVID 19 related issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The risk assessment set up for September remained in place with no changes for the first half term.</li> <li>• There had been some positive covid cases in October, two year 9 students leading to around 100 students being sent home for self-isolation and then a staff member case leading to 15 students and 5 staff members going in isolation just before half term. During half term there had been one student and one staff case not requiring any others to isolate. No further cases recorded in the term.</li> <li>• At any one time the school was running on around 12 students in isolation which was fairly low at below 5%.</li> <li>• The main change to process at the school had been the introduction of facemask wearing in class in addition to corridors. The school leadership team were mindful that there might be increasing number of cases in the local community around the time of the November lockdown and that the greatest risk was likely to come from transmission in classrooms. Compliance with mask wearing requirements had been good with some exemptions and flexibility, there had been around 8/9 parents contesting the policy with two leading to formal complaints. Governors were advised that the science used to inform decisions on covid safe measures had been the world health organisation.</li> <li>• The Department of Education had advised that school's would need to be available for contact tracing six days after the term and could use the 18<sup>th</sup> December as an inset day. As the school's inset training days had already been mapped pout and advised to families and alternative arrangement of remote learning on 18<sup>th</sup> December had been decided to enable the contact tracing responsibility to end on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.</li> </ul>	
5	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>The Headteacher presented his report on an assumed read basis highlighting a few points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One student had set a UK record for the longest javelin throw for someone of her age.</li> <li>• Another student had appeared on the one show having won a competition of script writing with the prize of having her script produced.</li> <li>• Within the limitations of the covid risk assessments there were attempt to keep school life as normal as possible. Whilst there were a number of exciting extra-curricular activities operating it had not been possible to keep the usual number of outside school activities going because of the bubble requirement. Adjustments had been made to break time arrangements due to the colder weather and school bases had started to reopen again.</li> <li>• One disadvantaged student had just been awarded a 100% scholarship to attend Roedean School with two others receiving similar supported places at Brighton College.</li> <li>• The annual awards including the Governors' award had been given to the most improved students through the Varndean Development Trust. Details to follow in the school newsletter.</li> </ul>	
6	<p><b>School Improvement Plan - Teaching Learning &amp; Assessment</b></p> <p>School leaders presented the "deep dive" on the school improvement area of teaching, learning and assessment at Varndean. A summary report that had been circulated prior to the meeting was shared on screen for discussion. It was noted that the summary document included links to other more detailed documents within each topic.</p> <p><u>Vision</u></p> <p>Three key principles being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students fully embrace learning and are challenged in their thinking.</li> <li>• Ensuring students are able to access all pathways post 16.</li> <li>• Varndean is recognised locally and nationally for excellent outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>Following identification of the principles school leaders considered what the vision would look like in practice and how the teaching consistencies introduced previously provided appropriate</p>	

structure.

#### Recovery curriculum

- Five phases for recovery had been set out and followed since school reopening in September with the final phase of preparing students for assessment, modelling and responsive teaching well underway. Feedback from staff members had been positive and detailed many successes within departments including students working harder with better results from assessments.
- The recovery process had been extended to include the whole community with form tutors supporting students with rebuilding confidence and resilience to learning and families being supported through making the grade and well-being sessions.

#### Intervention strategy

- Additional tutor group formed with an experienced tutor focussing on 15 students to support with revision and general wellbeing.
- Heads of departments running intervention during morning tutor time.
- Boys group working with person responsible for careers to support them with planning their next steps.
- Catch up funding used to engage two intervention tutors for maths and English for all years.
- Revision sessions started in school alongside webinar timetable that students were engaging with.

#### Continuing professional development (CDP)

- New ways of teaching for staff. Ten hours of inset time given to departments for an opportunity to develop approaches to ensure all students reached and teachers being responsive to needs.
- The CDP plan for year had been developed , this was underpinned by the world class education vision. The plan included 25 hours of twilight, teaching and learning team meetings, teaching consistencies, literacy and middle learning tool kits, the role of the tutor and sharing of appraisal research targets.
- From January the focus would move from recovery to encompassing equalities, careers, literacy and the role of special educational needs.

#### Assessment

- Looked at methods for assessment which would be useful if doing centre assessed grades.
- Ranking students within departments for year 11 a system popular with teachers.
- Attitude for learning data to end of September revealed a need to work with year 7s having lost out on normal transition processes. Year 11 in the right frame mind possible dure to being back at school at end of previous year.
- Progress 8 current data at +0.11.
- Pupil premium data around the same levels as the previous year with around 9/10 in each school base currently below expected levels.

#### Department reviews

- Process of redevelopment of departmental reviews moving to six review stages with different activities for different people to involve the whole department. Very focused on celebrating what had been going well, sharing of practice and self-evaluation.
- Heads of department to join up in the process of evaluation.
- Model based on challenge partners.

#### Remote learning

- Strategy for supporting students if partial or full\_closure and for those students isolating at home.

#### Partners

- Working with PIXL as an organising and further partnering with challenge partners through a hub with two other schools within the city.
- Challenge Partner review scheduled for January.

7	<p><b>Financial Control</b> The finance group had met on 20<sup>th</sup> November, notes from the meeting had been circulated to Governors.</p> <p><b>a) Budget Monitoring Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school's financial strategy had been to retain a level of reserves to maintain school operations. Current forecasts were that the budget was on course to exceed the levels of reserves set by over £100k which was a good position for the school to be in despite the additional costs and the disruption to the way the school operate as a result of Covid.</li> <li>Plans underway to install security fencing and a canopy to provide outside shelter at break times which would use some of the capital.</li> </ul> <p><b>b) Schools Financial Value Standard Return (SFVS)</b> The SFVS return had been finalised ready for submission by the end of January 2021. The checklist confirmed good levels of financial control throughout. There was one in part response to question 29 in relation to the analysis of the financial dashboard as the latest financial information had not been received at the time of the checklist completion. Governors were comfortable that the surplus position demonstrated good controls and that the ratios at the school evidenced value for money in light of school's outcomes.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the schools financial value standard for submission.</b></p>	
8	<p><b>School Infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>a) Buildings Group</b> The buildings group had met on 20<sup>th</sup> November, notes were provided from the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that the expansion works had further slipped with completion not expected until end of 2021 at the earliest. Temporary buildings would therefore be in operation for longer than previously expected. Contractors would be onsite from February with the more invasive work planned to commence at Easter.</li> <li>The membership of the buildings group had reduced leading to a suggested reduction in the quorum for meetings within the term of reference.</li> </ul> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Buildings Group terms of reference as presented.</b></p> <p><b>b) Business Continuity Plan</b> The business continuity plan had been significantly changed following the experience of dealing with the exceptional circumstances from Covid restrictions whilst incorporating the incident management section.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the business continuity plan subject to some final formatting.</b></p>	
9	<p><b>Other Reports and Recommendations</b></p> <p><b>a) Pay Panel</b> The pay and appraisal policies were proposed for approval by the Full Governing Body.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the pay policy and appraisal policy as presented to Governors.</b></p>	
10	<p><b>Policies and Other Documents for Approval</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body reviewed and approved the following three policies subject to some minor final adjustments to format and resolution of questions about the SRE policy.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a) First Aid Policy</b></li> <li><b>b) Data Protection Policy</b></li> <li><b>c) Sex and Relationships Education Policy (SRE)</b></li> </ul>	

11	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>a) <b>Governors Skills Audit, Training &amp; Recruitment</b>          The skills audit summary had been completed for the year using the National Governors Association format. The average score across all areas were all either 4 or 5 (out of 5). Whilst no training needs there had been some discussion about opting back into the Governor Support service as Governors had been missing out on some of the communication from the Local Authority around Covid issues.</p>	
12	<p><b>Any Other Business</b>          The Chair of Governors concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their contributions over the past year. It had not been a straightforward year but was held together a strong community and achievement of another year of good outcomes.</p> <p>Meeting ended at 7.36pm          Date of next meeting 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021</p>	