



**Meeting of Full Governing Body
21st September 2016
Varndean School
6pm**

MINUTES

Governors Present: William Aristide-Deighan, Jon Dee (Chair), Giovanni Franceschi, Di Francombe, Alex Marsh, Jess Morris,

Officers Present: Teresa Dee (Clerk)

In Attendance: Jo Cassidy, Simon Davies, Jo Meloni, Mark Sorrell

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
1 Introduction	
a) Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence received from Julian Benkel, Oliver Cattermole, Judith Ford and Rob Reed. The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate.	
b) Declaration of Interests Governors were asked to review their entry on the declarations of interest register. There were no declarations relating to agenda items.	
2 Last Meeting dated 9th June 2016	
a) Acceptance of Minutes The Governing Body reviewed and approved six pages of minutes from the meeting held on 9 th June 2016 subject to the amendment to the Governors in attendance section. The Chair signed the minutes as confirmation of their accuracy.	
b) Matters Arising not Included Elsewhere on Agenda Governors reviewed the actions arising from meetings during the previous year.	
ACTION - Three action items were carried forward into 2016/17.	
• Examination of a selection of vulnerable student case studies with the leadership team.	JM
• Seek alternative uniform supplier with lower cost whilst meeting ethical requirements.	HG
• Report on school trips insurance arrangements.	HG
3 Chair's update	
a) Co-opted Governor Appointment	
AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body confirmed agreement to the appointment of Di Francombe as a Co-opted Governor for 4 years following recommendation from the Nominations Committee.	
b) Governors Work Plan and Responsibilities The Governors school improvement agenda for 2016/17 had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was available in table mat format at the meeting.	

AGREEMENT - Individual governor roles and responsibilities were agreed as follows:

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

Buildings, Resources PFI	Julian Benkel
Equalities	Judith Ford
Finance	Alex Marsh
Governance development, recruitment & evaluation	Julian Benkel
Governance Procedural Matters	Teresa Dee
Health and Safety	Oliver Cattermole
Performance, Pay and Staffing	Jon Dee
Safeguarding	Di Francombe
School Improvement Strategy	Jon Dee
School Operation	William Deighan
School Trips	Alex Marsh
Special Educational Needs	Oliver Cattermole
Stakeholder Engagement	Judith Ford
Student Behaviour	Di Francombe
Student Progress Data	Rob Reed

c) Local Authority Consultations

Governors were updated on two Local Authority consultations.

- Admissions - The change to catchment areas had been postponed due to difficulties in finalising a premises for the University of Brighton sponsored free school. Varndean would retain its shared catchment with Dorothy Stringer School with the potential of a shortfall of 100 school places in the area. The aim of Secondary Headteacher's to fill all existing schools remained.
- City Partnership - A pre consultation had been completed that sought feedback on ways for city schools to work together in formal partnership. There was a lack of clarity on the proposed model and what people were voting for. Governors asked about the proposed timelines for the consultation and were advised that it was intended that something more formal would go to council in November with a potential consultation until January.

d) Governor Panels

There had been no further notifications of action on the two permanent exclusions that had been reconsidered following an independent review.

A grievance had been heard by the Chair at stage 1 and advice had been received from the individual that it was likely to progress to stage 2. A panel of three Governors would be required to hear the grievance within 20 days, once the formal request had been received.

e) Succession Planning

In accordance with the Governing Body standing orders restriction on the length of term of office of the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors to four years an election will be held in the summer term. Governors were asked to consider if they were interested in standing for election and that the Chair would be contacting them all individually.

4 Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher presented his report to Governors summarising some key issues before Mark Sorrell presented the main strategic item for the meeting. The following points were highlighted in the overview:

- Sports day excitement had been captured by a student in a video that has been published

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on the website.

- Enrichment week had been a big success again and planning had already started for the next one.
- The investment in musical instruments had provided the opportunity to a large number of year 7 students to participate in the summer music concert.
- The introduction of specialist schools had been well received by families.
- One long term absence being covered by supply and three maternity leaves coming up that would require cover.
- Student attendance for 2015/16 improved to 95% (national average 94.7%). Now doing very well against other city schools but remaining ambitious to improve further.

Strategic Item - Outcomes for Students

a) GCSE Exam Results 2015/16

Governors had received an analysis report confirming the upward outcome trend for Varndean students.

- The estimated Progress 8 score of +0.22 marked a significant improvement indicating that students on average were making more progress than they were in 2014. Confirmation of the actual progress 8 score was due in October.
- Varndean students' outcomes in English and maths did not replicate the drop in attainment in both subjects nationally.
- Moderation of course work in English IGCSE coursework had resulted in a three mark drop for the cohort which the School were trying to get further information on. Other Schools that had the IGCSE were similarly affected. Governors asked for and received confirmation that the IGCSE was no longer being undertaken in the school following changes to subjects qualifying for national performance tables.
- There was varied performance across individual subjects highlighted by a subject review report. Meetings had already been held with the Heads of Departments where there were concerns about outcomes with a view to identifying and overcoming any issues.
- The introduction of an ambitious whole school aim of 4 levels of progress had been thought by some staff to be unattainable when introduced three years ago but many examples across the school demonstrated that it was potentially an achievable target for all students with significant increases in 5 levels of progress in some areas..
- Governors remarked that science appeared have a chronic problem requiring a long term strategy for improvement. It was noted that science department would be subject to a raising attainment plan for 2016/17 and that it was likely that external help would be brought in.
- Spanish and PE were highlighted as areas that had responded well to the additional support and Governors were pleased to see great improvements in both subjects.
- Within maths there had been thorough intervention programmes and with a stable and improved teaching from year 10 had resulted in a stronger set of results.
- English also had performed well brought down slightly by the IGSE course work marking issue.
- There had been a considerable improvement in the accuracy of predicted outcomes throughout the year which the leadership team put down to better understanding of marking and course content. Additional testing of students under exam conditions had also contributed to the improvement in teacher assessment.
- Progress gaps of Varndean pupil premium students against national non pupil premium students were predicted to have reduced significantly though the in Schools gap less so. A notably high number of students had been in the pupil premium cohort for year 11 in 2015/16 (91). High prior attainers were also making good progress, there was a minimal progress gap for special educational needs students and black and minority ethnicity students had strong progress.

- Overall it was noted that the School was in a reasonably strong and improving position, which was backed up by the data.

b) School Improvement Plan 2016/17

The School Improvement Plan had been updated following the GCSE results

- Key priorities for the year included continuing professional development for staff as a result of staff survey analysis and literacy across the whole curriculum.
- Governors noted variations in the strengths of year groups asked whether the School was moderating its approach for different year groups. this was being developed and the SIP would be updated during the year. An updated version of the SIP would be shared with Governors in early 2017.
- Governors asked about parent reaction to the introduction of Key Stage 4 in year 9 instead of year 10 and were advised that after an initial reaction the feedback had been positive and the change had been accommodated well. Other Schools were now following the same approach.
- Governors asked whether the School was considering changing the closing the gap strategy previously reported on and were advised that the strategy was being reviewed with changes to be reported back. A challenge the gap initiative had been set up between a number of local schools involving a small group of students focussing on the correlation between attendance, behaviour and student outcomes.
- An update on the use of homework was requested and Governors heard that a there was a drive to get all staff to use the same platform for setting homework enabling closer monitoring by the leadership team to ensure consistency and quality. Further information on this would be reported within the teaching and learning deep dive report later in the year.

c) Student Outcome Targets for 2016/17

Whole school targets remained as stated on the school improvement plan

Progress 8 to be +0.5 or above.

Attainment 8 to be 5.4 or above.

Basics measure to be 76% or above,

Ebacc to be 39% or above.

These were recognised as aspirational long term targets.

ACTION - Targets to be set for each year group based on FFT20.

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Before moving to the next item Governors reviewed the data dashboards for each year group and agreed that the level of information provided was sufficient for their requirements. A brief explanation was provided to support understanding and interpretation of the data sets.

5 Other Governance and Regular Items

a) Raising Attainment Plan (RAP)

A summary of results from those departments subject to a raising attainment plan in 2015/16 was provided. The data was difficult for Governors to interpret whether the RAPs had positively impacted on student outcomes and there was some concern that the snap shot data did not provide any indication of how long a department may have been on a RAP. Where some departments were struggling the focus going forward would need to be on the strength of leadership and management and quality of teaching practice. Some departments had recruitment difficulties. Future RAPS would focus on actions within these areas.

ACTION - Raising Attainment Plans for 2016/17 to be brought to Governors for information.

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b) Complaints Summary Report 2015/16

Formal complaints were down to 8 in 2015/16 from 10 previously with the majority being

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resolved at stage 1 of the procedure. Governors asked for an explanation on what complaints were contained within exclusion and disciplinary complaints, as Governors had not been involved. These were unrelated to parental requests to make representations to the Governing Body and were able to be dealt with at school level.

6 Policies and Other Documents for Approval

a) Appraisal Policy

Governors noted the proposed changes to the Appraisal Policy as outlined in the Executive Summary and asked two questions for clarification.

- What had been staff reaction to the introduction of a 4th target? It was reported that there were no concerns raised.
- How are staff appraisal records stored? Electronic records had been held for the last 2 years appraisal and a system would be required to destroy them after six years. It was less clear regards storage and disposal of paper appraisals and the Headteacher advised that this would be looked into. Some data protection training was being undertaken which would reinforce messages regards storage and disposal of confidential records.

AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Appraisal Policy as presented.

b) Charging and Remissions Policy

The charging and remissions policy had been presented without proposed changes. Governors noted that some minor amendments to format were required and removal of the reviewing committee from the front page.

AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Charging and Remissions policy subject to some minor adjustments.

c) Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The Freedom of Information Publication Scheme had been presented without proposed changes.

AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme as presented.

7 Any Other Business

a) Smoke Free Policy

An appendix to the Smoke Free Policy relating to vaping and electronic cigarettes was presented for approval.

AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the appendix to the smoke free policy as presented.

b) School Events

The School's open evening was the following day and Governors were invited to attend. A list of other school events during the year was circulated.

c) Skills Audit

Governors were asked to complete an up to date skills audit to assist the Nominations Committee with the Governor recruitment and development planning.

Meeting ended at 7.29pm

Date of next meeting - 1st December 2016

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