

**Minutes of a meeting of the Governor's Education & Standards Sub-Committee held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 6.00p.m.**

Present: Ms J Mills (Chair) Mr A Worth  
Mr P Buckland Miss R McMann (Clerk)  
Mr M Worrall Mrs T Boving-Foster  
Dr C Hansford Mrs R Chapman  
Dr Mawson

Visitors: Mr R Dawson (Member of the SLT)  
Mr A Martin (Head of Sixth Form)

Quorum per Terms of Reference – 4

Governors in attendance – 5 until the end of item 6. 6 thereafter and for the remainder of the meeting.

Ms Mills chaired this meeting until the end of item 6, Mr Hansford chaired the remainder of the meeting

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted for Mr M Bauer (work committment) and Dr Castles (personal reasons).

2. Declarations of Interest in Agenda items

There were no declarations of interest

3. Sixth Form Dress Code

This item was moved to the top of the agenda as Mr Martin had kindly given up his time to attend this meeting and answer any questions.

Ms Mills introduced this by asking if the proposed dress code had caused any issues and if so, on what scale? Additionally, she asked how the survey information was utilised.

Mr Martin answered by saying that the survey had been used to get as many opinions as possible and use this information to help make a decision. He added there was never any promise of the outcome. Mr Buckland stated that he had received 15 emails and 1 written response from parents. All parents received a reply and there was only one response arising from this. Mr Buckland also stressed that this was not a democratic vote, but a survey. Additionally, the results were not being discounted, the school's position is not final and this is the time to reflect on it.

Mr Martin expanded on this by reporting that he had met with the Sixth Form Council and also the Year 11 and Year 10 Council representatives and circulated a document detailing the proposed Sixth Form dress code (appendix 1). On the whole, they were largely fine with the proposed changes and most of the concerns were down to understanding the information. Moreover, more options had been added into the 'appropriate column' to give as much variation and clarification as possible. Mr Martin felt that there is a lot of flexibility in this and the students had been listened to. He cited examples that pristine black jeans had been added and plain t-shirts as a trial to address the students' biggest concerns.

Ms Mills felt that this was never about curtailing creativity but just about making things more defined. Mr Martin supported this adding that it came from himself and Miss Smith as the dressing had becoming increasingly casual and they felt that this was impacting on the Sixth Form. Mr Buckland said that in actual fact the survey results backed this up and also that he himself had listened to the results as he had voted for a formal dress code.

Mrs Boving-Foster made reference to a letter from a Governor with an opposing view stating it was a step backwards for the school. However, Mrs Boving-Foster also added that the survey was very clearly worded and it is a difficult situation.

Mr Worth questioned the purpose of this discussion given this appears to be an operational issue. Ms Mills answered that she felt as there had been some complaints / queries it was right to bring it to the Governors out of respect to those who had written to the school. It was noted that SLT will make the final decision.

Mr Worrall felt it worth noting that whilst there are clearly some strong views, these are actually a minority and that in such situations, generally those who feel the most strongly speak the loudest. Thus, he concluded that whilst these views should be taken into account, the SLT should not be put off, particularly if there is a long lead into these changes. In response to a question regarding the timescale for implementation, Mr Martin answered it would be from September, giving students 7 months' notice.

The discussion was closed and Mr Martin was thanked for his time.

#### 4. Social Media Policy

Mr Dawson introduced this by saying that this is a brand new policy as there is an increasing need for schools to have one. He was advised to put one in place even if first time round it is not perfect. He confirmed that all Governors had read the policy and invited questions and comments:

- *Given this is such a small community where it is likely teachers will be friends with parents for example, how will this policy work in reality (TBF)?* This has caused some discussion and have to be pragmatic. A lot of the wording in the policy is suggesting the best thing to do as opposed to staff must or must not (RD)

- *Is there any leeway with safeguarding existing relationships (TBF)?* Elements of the Teaching Standards and Code of Conduct overlap with lines of communication so that staff can discuss (potential) issues and find a way that is both practical and protects staff (RC).
- On board with this, for example, use the school's Facebook account to contact parents if necessary about sports fixtures (AW).
- Staff are really good at going to speak to Mrs Chapman (EM)
- Mrs Chapman is very approachable (AW)
- Ultimately social media is a powerful tool to promote the school (RD).

**It was unanimously voted to accept the policy. Mr Dawson was thanked for his time and left the meeting.**

5. Minutes of Education and Standards meeting held Thursday 2018 E&S201819(6)

Mrs Boving-Foster wished to make it clear that when asking about the use of volunteers with SEND pupils she meant unpaid volunteers. The minutes were unanimously accepted as a true record and Ms Mills signed them.

6. Matters Arising

With regards to the Carlisle Federation, Mr Buckland will find out if Governors can get involved in some way.

7. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Mrs Chapman introduced this by reminding Governors that the policy was completely re-written last year and therefore, she had been through it to check that the processes and links were all still relevant. Questions and comments were invited.

Mr Worth queried the equalities statement on page four, as he felt that everything was covered in the first paragraph to then almost contradict itself and single out special considerations. Whilst all those present saw the logic in this, Dr Mawson and Mrs Chapman thought that perhaps every policy has to identify the protected characteristics as per the Equalities Act 2010. It was concluded that this could potentially be re-phrased but Mrs Chapman would look into this further.

**Subject to Mrs Chapman looking into the wording detailed above, the Governors unanimously agreed to adopt the policy.**

8. Headteacher's Update

Mr Buckland had the following updates:

- Numbers are full in each year group, with the exception of Year 11
- No exclusions since the last meeting
- 1 CLA child in Year 7 and also 1 in Year 8
- There is a child protection investigation pending.
- Plans in place regarding two long-term absences in the teaching staff

- Support has been obtained via Kirkby Stephen Grammar School's Business Manager to cover long-term absence in the support team. Whilst this had made a big difference, it is not sustainable and thus, looking for some more regular support. Mrs Rae has met with a potential candidate.

Mr Buckland reported that mock exams had gone well and thanked Mrs Ellwood and Mrs Warner for their efforts in their organisation of them, meaning that the students coped well. Results were in line with attainment but slightly down on progress. However, mock exams are marked harshly. Overall, Mr Buckland felt optimistic. Whilst Progress 8 is impossible to predict, he felt that target of +0.3 is achievable. He reported that 15 students were dropping one subject due to significantly underperforming. This is a one-off situation as this is the last cohort that will sit 11 GCSEs. There has been a lot of subject intervention with Dr Mawson organising a timetable to avoid any clashes. However, the school remains sensitive to those students who need a break.

The Sixth Form open evening was received very positively and the fantastic support of Miss Smith, Mr Martin and Mrs Denyer was noted. It was reported that 20 new families attended and 5 others had expressed an interest but were unable to make it. Ms Mills re-iterated that she felt that this event is better year on year and the two students who spoke were brilliant. Mrs Boving-Foster echoed this adding that she felt the physical prospectus is a lot better. Thanks were extended to Mr Dawson for all his efforts with this.

Mrs Boving-Foster informed the committee that Dr Castles had sadly had to resign with immediate effect for personal reasons. Therefore, in her capacity as Vice Chair, she would continue to step-up at Chair of Governors for the time being. This will be on the agenda for the Full Governors' meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March. Mr Buckland expressed his thanks to Mrs Boving-Foster for taking on the responsibility of the Chair of Governors in the interim.

#### 9. Additional Items to be Added to Next Agenda

Mrs Boving- Foster asked that where the school gets its income from and a breakdown associated with this be presented / discussed. Whilst Mr Buckland said he would happily facilitate this, he felt it would be best done once the long-term absence in the support team had been resolved.

- Link Process

#### 10. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 2019, 6.00pm

Meeting closed at 6.50pm