

Minutes of a meeting of the Governor's Education & Standards Sub-Committee held on Thursday 27th September 2018 at 6.00p.m.

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

Visitors: Mr Proctor, Head of R.E. and Philosophy

Quorum per Terms of Reference – 4

Governors in attendance – 7 until item 3, 8 for the remainder of the meeting

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted for Mrs Nicol (work).

2. Declarations of Interest in Agenda items

There were no declarations of interest

3. Link Report R.E. E&S201819(3)

Welcomes were extended to Mr Proctor, who said he was glad of the opportunity to meet members of the Governing Body for the first time.

Mr Proctor highlighted the main issues at KS4 and KS5 for the Governors.

KS4: the main issue with this years' results was the gender imbalance (girls obtaining an ALPS score of 4 versus 7 for the boys). Mr Proctor reported that historically attainment has been the same between boys and girls. Additionally, due to the nature of the new exam (which is now very specific about religion) it has impacted on the less able / motivated students as there are only 70 minutes teaching time per week to teach a more extensive curriculum, whereas the more able / motivated students can get to grips with the material and this is also reflected in the results.

KS5: Mr Proctor informed the Governors that there have been a few issues in recent years which led to the decision to offer Philosophy as opposed to R.E. (the Government dictate that the course content of R.E. must be 30% based on a religion which is not feasible in this school). Philosophy is a complex A-Level to teach. However, the ALPS score was 5 this year which is good and an improvement on last year. Mr Proctor reported that on the whole results reflected that the motivated / able students get the grades whereas those who were not motivated did not. To an extent this is reassuring as it demonstrates the problem is not from the teaching side but motivating students to put the

work in. Although Mr Proctor was pleased with the ALPS score, he would really have liked to have achieved a 4.

Mr Buckland echoed that these were a good set of results for the department and praised the efficiency and hardworking nature of Mr Proctor, who regularly gives up his own time and is a model Head of Department. Dr Mawson praised the amount of work Mr Proctor has put into preparing for the changes in the curriculum.

Mr Bauer asked if the reference to the problems with staff morale had improved. Mr Proctor answered that one of the biggest factors in this were the changes to the curriculum which he personally found very stressful. The member of staff taking a sabbatical has helped and he praised the teachers in his department, citing their enthusiasm.

Mrs Boving-Foster concluded this item by relaying that she feels cautiously optimistic about this department going forward, in contrast to being worried the very start.

Mr Proctor was thanked for his time and left the meeting.

4. Minutes of Education and Standards meeting held Wednesday 4th July 2018 E&S201819(1)

With the exception of a couple of name errors (Mr Bauer and Ms Mills), it was agreed that the minutes were a true record and Mr Hansford signed them.

5. Matters Arising

Mrs Boving-Foster raised the Admissions Policy as per the July minutes and it was confirmed that this will be on the agenda for Full Governors' meeting.

6. Link Reports

Sixth Form E&S201819(2):

Due to a communication error, the Heads of Sixth Form had not been invited and it was felt that they should have the opportunity to attend. Therefore, this is postponed until the next meeting.

In relation to Link Reports, Mr Hansford reported that he had been looking at the process with a view to doing things a different, more effective way as currently the system is not working (an action arising from the previous Full Governors' meeting). It is difficult for trustees to find time to visit school and write a report. Each department has 1 trustee assigned to them, which makes the Governing Body as a whole faceless, something which resonated in Mr Proctor's presentation. The themes of the reports that are done are essentially the same – budget constraints, not enough curriculum time etc, so perhaps instead would it be better to invite Heads of Departments to attend meetings and get them to present current themes in their department to the committee and have that interaction with a group of Governors? With all this in mind, Mr

Hansford said he would like Governors to think about an appropriate way forward and email thoughts to himself or Miss McMann.

A short discussion followed with the following points raised:

- Important to keep that connection with a Governor (MB)
- Agreed with the above, adding that a Link Governor can often be a sounding block (JM).
- Obtain feedback from Heads of Department before making any final decisions on a new process (JM).
- Have had different experiences when doing link reports and not all Heads of Department have the same enthusiasm and willingness as Mr Proctor (TBF).
- Need to be realistic and look at priorities (TBF)
- Need to adopt a creative approach given the limited resources and always keep an open door policy (TBF).
- In a previous school, adopted a combination of methods - Heads of Departments were invited to meetings on a rotational basis and also operated a themed Governor week where they could come in and meet staff, observe lessons and pick and choose when they came to fit in with work / life schedules. Once staff knew what was expected of them they were ok with it and were only asked to report on three general questions (EM).
- Currently a disparity between departments – some have not been visited for five years, whereas others are visited as per the guidelines. This needs to be corrected (TC).
- Do not see how the current link report form adds value – a lot of the information can be sourced via exam feedback. Governors need to look at what they want to achieve from the process (AW).
- The personal touch is important (AW).
- Many staff do not know who the Governors are and it is increasingly important that this is corrected (MB)
- Governors also need to glean a perspective of what it is like to be a student and thus, get into school and interact with the pastoral team, look at extra -curricular activities for example (PB).
- Trustees must look carefully at the time and commitment they can give. It is no longer sufficient to rely on ‘the Headteacher reported on it’; must go into school and verify / question ourselves (TC).
- The SIP must be used more to form the basis of themes that need to be picked up upon (TBF)
- Thematic approach would work well (MB)
- Getting better at taking a thematic approach with the establishment of a Link Governor for Sixth Form and two Governors taking responsibility for teaching and learning (TC).

To conclude it was agreed that thoughts would be emailed to Miss McMann by next week so that Mr Hansford could put them together and present the Full Governing Body with a recommendation that would be finalised at this meeting. Thereafter it will be communicated to Heads of Departments / Years for their input. See Actions.

7. Results

Dr Mawson circulated a slightly updated paper (numbers at the top of the page differ a little) but highlighted that this information is strictly confidential as data has not yet been published. This report shows the headlines, with the more detailed subject review being presented at the Full Governors' meeting in order to avoid repetition.

KS4: very positive headlines Dr Mawson gave a special mention to Maths, Art, Drama and Resistant Materials.

KS5: also a very positive picture, especially given the staff were working with a cohort who had already exceeded expectations at GCSE level. Special mentions were given to Modern History, Maths, P.E., Physics, Art, Textiles and Drama.

To celebrate the school's achievements, staff are having a celebration on Monday 1st October. The Governors asked if there was anything they could do to show their appreciation and it was decided that a card congratulating all staff to be pinned on a notice board would be a good idea, as well as cards for the subjects mentioned above. **See actions.**

Questions and comments on the presentation were as follows:

- *Is anything being done to address the results in French and German at A-Level (MB)?* This is the first year that the results have gone down in French and German. Additionally, there were very small numbers of students taking these subjects so have to be careful when analysing data. Must also consider the context and circumstance – this year there was a student with an unconditional university offer and also personal tragedy. Satisfied that the department did all they could and this is not a trend (PB).
- In relation to the above, that is exactly why the SLT have exam review meetings to explore the context (EM).
- *How do you encourage the less motivated students (MB)?* A meeting is held and the bottom 60 Year 11s are picked out and plans for the next steps are put into place. The pastoral side is very important and the school is building up resources and capacity to deal with this (PB).
- *Why is the A-Level ALPS score lower (TBF)?* Can't truly compare the two as the number of A-Level students is less. Additionally, this year saw a high cohort, which makes it harder to add value (EM).
- In relation to the above point, must be careful looking at ALPS data as this is not the data that the school is sold on (AW).

Mr Hansford thanked Dr Mawson for her informative presentation.

8. Headteacher's Update

Highlights from Mr Buckland's update were as follows:

- 882 students on role.
- No exclusions thus far.
- 1 Looked After Child in Year 7 and also 1 in Year 8
- No child protection cases but there is one pending

- The current year 11 is made up of 55% boys and given gender inequalities in grades this could prove to be challenging.
- Year 7 have made a good start with a very positive event welcoming parents on 13th September.
- Entrance test has taken place using the new provider, CEM. 288 sat the test versus the 320 booked in. This is an improvement on last year where there were 254 booked to take the test and this is testament to the team of staff who focussed on outreach work in primary schools.
- A need to change the way in which the test is run – currently 17 rooms are used in the morning exam, 16 for the afternoon and 5 rooms for SEN. This requires 68 staff in on the Saturday of the test and costs £10,000 in salaries. Thus, planning to run in three large areas (gym, hall and new block) which will cut down on staff by 50% and also rule out inconsistencies.
- Letters to parents with the results of the entrance test will go out on 12th October. Planned 160 students for 2019 entry and this is included in all financial projections.
- With regards to staff, the new temporary member of staff in physics has settled in well and had a lesson observed; one member staff off sick but this has been covered and; the new cover supervisor has settled in well.
- Sponsored Walk will take place on Friday 28th September.

Dr Castles wished to add that there are three vacancies on the Governing Body and asked Governors to consider if they knew of anyone, particularly with a financial background. Additionally, due to the resignation of Mrs Nicol at the end of this half-term, there is an opening for Vice Chair of Governors. Thus far, there has only been one volunteer so if anyone else would like to consider it please email Miss McMann. It is on the agenda for the next Full Governors' meeting.

9. Additional Items to be Added to Next Agenda

- SEND Update
- Sixth Form report

10. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 22nd November 2018, 6.00pm

Meeting closed at 7.30pm

Actions:

Governors to email thoughts on the way forward with the Link Governor process to Miss McMann – all Governors

Purchase eight congratulations cards for departments that achieved outstanding results and one for staff as a whole – Miss McMann