

**Minutes of a meeting of Governors of Queen Elizabeth Grammar School,
Penrith, held on Thursday 5th March 2020 at 5.30pm in Room ML1**

Present

Miss R McMann (Clerk)
Dr E Mawson (Deputy Head)
Mr G Miller (P)
Mr M Worrall (CoG)
Dr J Jenkins (CoG)

Mr A Martin (S)
Mr P Buckland
Mrs T Boving-Foster (P) (Chair)
Mr J Ray (CoG)
Mr A Worth (S)
Mr M Bauer(CoG)

Visitors: none

9 Governors in attendance

Quorum per article 114 – 7 Governors
(one half of the governors holding office rounded up to the nearest whole number)

GbS – Governor by Statute
MaG – Member appointed Governor
CoG – Co-opted Governor
S – Staff
P- Parent

Prior to the meeting, Governors listened to presentations from the following:

Round the table positive starters to the meeting were given by all in attendance.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted for Mr Hansford (ill), Ms Mills (holiday), Mr Shephard, Mrs Rae and Mr Airey (work).

2. Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

There were no declarations of interest in the agenda items.

3. Any changes to the declaration of Business Interests

There were no changes to the declaration of interests.

4. Minutes of the Governors Meeting Held 30th January 2020

It was unanimously agreed that the minutes were a true record and Mrs Boving-Foster signed them. Mrs Boving-Foster apologised that the appendix detailing the strategy discussions was not available in time for the meeting.

5. Matters Arising

Mrs Boving-Foster reminded Governors of the transition to school email addresses and that going forward personal email addresses will only be used to remind Governors to check their emails. No specific information will be sent to personal email addresses.

6. Finance and Pay Sub-Committee

Due to the bad weather there was no meeting in February. However, the accounts needed to be sent off and so they were issued via email and approved in that way.

Mr Buckland gave a brief update on the management accounts.

- There is a slight variance due to an oversight in staffing of around £30,000. However, he reassured Governors that the three year budget is still within these figures.
- Mr Buckland made Governors aware that the minus figure for technology (£18,000 variance) was due to transferring costs from the technical budget to the capital funding.
- There have been extra staffing costs due to absence but these are coming to an end
- Catering is doing extremely well

To conclude it is projected that by August 2022 there will be £380,000 in reserves.

7. Education and Standards Report

In the absence of Mr Hansford and Ms Mills, Mrs Boving-Foster presented the minutes. Specific reference was made to the mock exam results and Mr Buckland added that there are a lot of revision classes, staff are being fantastic and a strong stance is being taken with those who need it (i.e. revision classes are compulsory).

Mrs Boving-Foster commented that she found the data drop very useful and Miss McMann said that she had set up folders on the OneDrive for the data to be stored and be accessible to Governors.

In response to Dr Jenkins' question on Coronavirus and the potential impact on the school and exams, Dr Mawson said that there is a contingency plan which will include using the OneDrive to enable students to work from home. It was noted that this was to be covered later in the meeting under the Headteacher's report.

8. Careers

Mrs Boving-Foster introduced this item giving thanks to Mr Martin for going above and beyond his remit as a staff Governor.

Mr Martin used a PowerPoint presentation which was based on the previously circulated information. He reported that Mr Dawson is happy that the school will fulfil the Gatsby Benchmarks by the end of 2020 but that it will be a huge job that will perhaps needs a separate member of staff to take on.

Questions and comments during and after the presentation were as follows:

- *The consideration of whether or not A-Levels is right for the student is highly important (GM) Absolutely agree (AM)*
- *Who monitors this (JR)? OFSTED under personal developments and this is statutory guidance (AM)*
- *It would seem that work experience in Year 10 is very rigorous but perhaps not so in Year 12 (TBF)? Would agree that this is perhaps not as consistent. In Year 12 arrange things for work experience to help with university applications or the future (AM).*
- *Would a joint approach / job-share appointment with UCC be an idea to help (JR)? A good idea and will explore (AM / PB)*
- *The need to build a programme of work experience, 1:1s, visits to different employers: do not need to specify each one (TBF). Can show evidence – depends on the amount of detail which is difficult to put on but take the point that missing a document with year on year experience pinned down (AM)*
- *The new website needs to have a much easier place to find information on careers development and use examples (TBF) The new website will achieve this and there will be a backbone of consistency but do not have the big businesses and scale of industry in this area (PB)*
- *Could email Year 7 parents and see if any of them have a business that could help (JR). A good point – do every three years in Sixth Form when students leave (AM). Do ask of Year 7s (EM).*
- *Recruitment is difficult in Cumbria - home grown is the best (MB)*
- *Services have been squeezed and the school has to pick this up and is doing an excellent job (MW)*
- *Be mindful of pupil premium as they do not have the same access to resources and thus, should be something systematic for the children in Year 7,8 and 9 and evidence it (JJ)*
- *It is clear that the school does a lot and has a lot going on in this area – just need to document and organise it into year groups (GM) Agreed that there is some re-jigging to do but are very close to meeting the standards (PB)*
- *A lot of local businesses are supportive and thus need to tap into these resources (JR). Agreed but these businesses are only able to help one or two – they are not big enough to cope with the number of students (AM)*

- *Are there any other areas not being covered by Governors / require attention / discussion before Governors look at SLT capacity? Organisation of trips is a big role but would have to go away and think (AW) Careers an area but again would have to go away think (PB)*
- *Need to think about how to improve rather than just firefighting (MW)*

As this is such a big topic and as per the guidance, Mrs Boving-Foster asked for a Governor volunteer to become a careers link. Mr Ray volunteered as he said this was an area of interest but said that this would have to be instead of the OFSTED committee. **It was agreed that Mr Ray would be the new careers link.**

It was concluded that this is something which needs to be followed up and an update will be given in the October 2020 Full Governors' meeting. With regards to potentially recruiting a careers post it is a question of finances and this will be brought up in the June 2020 Finance and Pay Committee meeting. Mrs Boving-Foster gave her thanks to Mr Martin and Mr Dawson and the item drew to a close.

9. SIP

Mr Buckland said that he had nothing to report as all items are ongoing. Mrs Boving-Foster commented that there is a lot of yellow on the report and was he happy things were progressing as they should? Mr Buckland answered that he was and that the lack of change is because most items have an end of year deadline.

10. Safeguarding

There are no new issues to report.

Mr Worrall reminded Governors that they all by now should have completed the online course and that it is part of the OFSTED judgement so to please complete it. This was reinforced by Mrs Boving-Foster. **Action point: Miss McMann to follow up with those who have not yet completed the training.**

11. Health and Safety

Mr Buckland reported on an issue with the music room – due to the bad weather the ceiling fell down. Fortunately nobody was in the room at the time. The loss adjustor has been in. However, an asbestos assessment needs to be done which will delay things. Mr Buckland reassured Governors that the school is able to work around this.

As Health and Safety link, Mr Miller reported that he had been into school and spoke about the different risk assessment tools used by different departments. Whilst he had no concerns or criticisms and was satisfied that the school does what is required, it is eventually his aim to have one school based system which is stored in a central location with a sign of system and is written in plain English so that everyone can easily use them.

12. Training

Governors gave an update on the courses they had completed:

- Prevent training which was evaluated as interesting (GM)
- Safer Recruitment done via The Key and recommended that all Governors do it (MW)

Mrs Boving-Foster concluded the item by saying that she had been signed off her Cahir Development Programme and will be issuing another round of 360 degree feedback if Governors could please take the time to do it and if possible leave some comments as these are the most useful.

13. Headteacher's Report

The only question arising from the circulated report was how the number of days a child is to be excluded for is decided. Mr Buckland said that each case is judged in its context (e.g. it may not be a first offence). Additionally, some of the terminology in the exclusion letters which is set by the government makes the offence sound worse. All decisions are taken in consultation with SLT, Heads of Year and any relevant members of staff. Dr Jenkins sought reassurance that the school looks if the child is SEND and thus, in need of support. Mr Buckland answered this is the case and that work closely with Mrs Bellas in these instances. Mrs Boving-Foster thought that it would be interesting to compile data on this and see if there are any trends, if it would not be too much extra work. Mr Worth pointed out that the only problem is that it could be the same child.

Mr Buckland had some new items to add to his report:

- Maths appointment, Mr Price-Jones, will start in September 2020
- Praise to the P.E. department, Chloe, Liz, Rebecca and all the students for a great dance evening.
- Credit to Mrs Denyer and Mrs Chapman on the success of the school tours with around 300 families visiting. A mop-up will be done due to the bad weather.

Mrs Boving-Foster agreed that the dance evening was lovely with a really good standard. However, she felt that there was a very clear gender stereotype. In response to this Mr Worth said that he was discussing this within in his department. Mr Worrall felt that the students were very supportive of each other, which says a lot about the ethos of the school.

With regards to Coronavirus the guidance in accordance with gov.uk is not to close schools unless there is a confirmed case and this must only be done in discussion with Public

Health England. This message has been conveyed with two very clear ParentMails. In the CASH meeting, the LA link to COBRA said that schools would not be routinely closing due to the knock-on effect to society and that individual schools will react to circumstance.

The German exchange has gone – there was no reason to cancel the trip and all guidance has been followed. However, the French school have cancelled the French exchange as the government have banned all trips. It is hoped that the RPA should cover the cost but in any event only 50% of the ferry cost had been paid for. It may be that activity week will have to be re-evaluated. Finally, with regards to Year 11 and Year 13, the school is looking at ways to work as currently exams will be going ahead as planned.

14. Notices

It was noted that the next Full Governors' meeting is the day before the first May bank holiday and thus, would it be better for this to be moved. Monday 4th May was cited as a potential date. **Action point: Miss McMann to ascertain which date is best for the majority and arrange accordingly.**

15. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed via email.

The meeting concluded with a round the table analysis of the meeting. Mr Worth and Mr Allen were asked to leave as there were two confidential items to address.