

**Minutes of a meeting of Governors of Queen Elizabeth Grammar School,
Penrith, held on Thursday 9th December 2021 at 5.30pm.**

Present

Miss R McMann (Clerk)
Mr M Worrall (CoG)
Dr J Jenkins (CoG)
Mr C Hansford (GbS)
Mr G Miller (P)

Mr P Buckland
Mrs T Boving-Foster (P) (Chair)
Mr J Ray (CoG)
Mr M Bauer (CoG)
Mr P Airey (CoG)

SLT present: Dr E Mawson
Mr A Martin
Mr R Dawson
Mrs J Scott

Visitors: none

Governors in attendance: 9

Quorum per article 114 – 6 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 standard meeting, there were presentations from the Heads of Department of Maths, English and Modern Foreign Languages. Mrs Boving-Foster said it was excellent to hear from these departments and have a good, positive focus on the educational aspect of Governance.

.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were accepted for Ms Mills (long-term absence, illness), Mrs Rae and Mr Worth both work related).

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 in October 2021

With regards to the action points from these minutes, there has been no further information readily available with regards to access to meeting papers as well as the minutes. The minutes, once ratified, are available on the website for the public. It would be impractical to store all papers on the Governors page as it would create reams of papers. Thus, as the papers are stored on the OneDrive since the year 2019-20, should there be a request to see these, there are a number of people who could easily access and share them, if appropriate to do so.

It was unanimously agreed that the minutes were a true record and Mrs Boving-Foster will sign these.

5. Matters Arising

Mrs Scott requested that it be formally noted that she has the paperwork to remove Dr Mawson as a signatory from the HSBC account, due to her resignation. Mrs Boving-Foster will sign these.

6. Minutes of the Education and Standards Meeting held November 2021

The minutes had been previously been circulated and Mr Hansford had nothing further to add. There were no questions or comments on these.

7. Minutes of the Finance and Pay Committee held November 2021

In the absence of Mrs Rae, Mr Ray offered to take and questions or comments on the previously circulated minutes. There were none.

8. Minutes of the Risk and Audit Committee held November 2021

Mr Ray highlighted that as per legal requirements, this is now a separate committee to the Finance and Pay Committee, with its own agenda and terms of reference. There were no questions or comments on the previously circulated minutes.

There was a break in the meeting to discuss a confidential item. All Governors and SLT had briefed on this and all remained present for this item.

9. Statutory Accounts

The accounts and accompanying management letter had been previously circulated to all Governors and the Risk and Audit minutes contain details of the presentation by Mr Thompson, auditor, and the discussion. There were no questions or comments on these. Mrs Boving-Foster extended her thanks to Mrs Scott and her team for their hard work on achieving an excellent audit. However, due to a new development, the accounts cannot be ratified or signed at this meeting.

10. Financial Procedures Manual

As per the Risk and Audit minutes, this has been updated, discussed and approved subject to being ratified at this meeting. Mr Ray highlighted that the intention is for this to be an evolving document and that he will stress test it in April / May when he next conducts an internal audit. The biggest changes are to ensure that Governors have better oversight without undermining SLT. Comments were as follows:

- In response to a question, it was confirmed that the Whistle Blowing policy is to be reviewed in the coming months but felt that the document was very good (JJ).
- A constructive document and a good way to reflect on recent times (MB).
- A very readable document with thanks to Mr Ray, Mrs Scott and her team (TBF).

A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Financial Procedures Manual.

11. Safeguarding

a) Safeguarding Policy

Mr Allen advised the Governors that this is per the legal requirement to update the policy annually in line with the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe (2021-22) in Education. One of the biggest changes is the terminology and expanded sections on sexual harassment and online safety for example. There were no questions or comments. **A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed to adopt the policy.**

b) Additional Updates

Mr Worrall gave his thanks to Mr Martin and also added that there is just one outstanding Governor to complete their safeguarding training.

12. SIP

This is a standard item on the agenda and it is also now a standard item on the Education and Standards agenda for every meeting. Mrs Boving-Foster asked if Mr Buckland had any

worries about any of the targets being met? Mr Buckland answered that he did not but the approach is to take things slowly with staff.

13. Health and Safety

There were no updates from Mr Buckland or Mr Miller as Health and Safety Link Governor.

14. Articles of Association

The final draft which has amendments from the DfE incorporated is still waiting approval. An update was meant to be have been given on 26th November but Miss McMann has not had any correspondence from the DfE. **Action point: Miss McMann to chase the DfE for an update.**

15. Governor Matters, including training

Mrs Boving-Foster said that she had attended a webinar with the Regional Schools Commissioner. She reported that she felt that it might be appropriate to move forward with an independent review of the board.

With regards to the advertised Governor position, there was one applicant. Whilst the applicant did openly did not have the educational background as per the advert, he has experience as a Governor at a primary school, as well as having the time to commit to the role. It was questioned whether or not now is a good time for a new Governor. It was decided to see how things progress in the next week and brief the potential new Governor in the new year, should the vote be favourable. **A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed to appoint the Governor applicant.**

16. Headteacher's Report

As this report was previously circulated and there were no additional updates, Mr Buckland invited any questions. Dr Jenkins asked how much has been able to be done on social mobility in light of the pandemic. Mr Martin answered that a lot of things have been going on, for example sessions targeting primary school staff to try and remove any misconceptions about the school and the entrance test.

Mr Ray was pleased to report that his recent internal audit was as clean as a whistle. This will be added to the next Risk and Audit agenda for further discussion but all Governors have received a copy of his report.

A presentation was given to Dr Mawson who is leaving at the end of term. Mrs Boving-Foster thanked her for all her hard work and care towards the children and will be a big loss

to the school. Dr Mawson also gave her thanks, saying that she felt she had learnt a lot during her time at QEGS.

17. Items to be Added to the Next Agenda

It is likely that there will be an extraordinary meeting at the start of January. This will be arranged as soon as practicable.

18. Date of Next Meeting

The next regular meeting will be on 27th January 2021, 4.00pm.

The meeting closed at 7.27pm