

Minutes of a meeting of the Trust Board for Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Penrith, held on Wednesday 25th January 2023 at 6.30pm, held as a virtual meeting.

Present

Ms M Robson (Chair)
Miss R McMann (Clerk)
Mr C Pyle
Rev D Sargent

Mr D Marchant (Head, Ex-officio)
Mr N Ruddick
Mr M Pannone
Mr N Page

SLT Present: Mr R Dawson and Mrs R Rourke.

Visitors: Nathan Jeremiah, advisor from (EPI)

7 Governors in attendance

Quorum per article 114 – 4 Governors
(one half of the governors holding office rounded up to the nearest whole number)

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

Mr Marchant wished it to be noted that his wife has been added to the supply pool.

3. Minutes from the Meetings held on 5th and 11th January 2023

It was unanimously agreed that both sets of minutes are a true record.

4. Admissions Policy

A proposal has been sent to the DfE to increase pupil numbers to a total of 1065. A consultation process will run until the 31st January, with the hope that the policy can be ratified by the end of February. Trustees will receive the modelling after the DfE have responded on 7th February.

5. First Aid Policy

This had previously been circulated to all Trustees and has been revised as the old one was not fit for purpose. Mr Ruddick suggested that in policies, it is perhaps advisable to use the position as opposed to a staff member's name so that the policy does not have to be re-written each time staffing changes.

An action point arising from a question is to look at certificate status and compliance.

It was agreed that this policy should be reviewed in 12 months time. **It was unanimously agreed to adopt the policy.**

6. MAT

A paper had been circulated prior to the meeting, with a proposal of seven MATS plus one other to look at and decide which of these an expression of interest should be sent. Mr Jeremiah suggested that this list of seven should be narrowed down to three or four MATS.

Each MAT was looked at in turn, with a full and frank discussion taking place and assessing each against the school's priorities.

A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed that four out of the eight MATS would be written to with an expression of interest.

With regards to the timeline for this and the next steps, the following was agreed:

- A virtual meeting to be held on 8th February to decide which MATS to invite to school to do a presentation on their MAT as a result of the expressions of interest.
- The presentations will be held in school on 15th February 2022.

7. School Development Plan

As per the request at the previous meeting, this has been circulated with RAG ratings and a priorities list. Costings will be identified against the priorities.

The Trustees thanked Mr Marchant for updating this document.

8. SEF

As this had been previously circulated prior to the meeting, questions and comments were invited by Mr Marchant.

Mrs Robson commented on the success of this document, given it has aligned with the recent inspection.

9. Management Accounts to November 2022

Mrs Rourke presented the previously circulated accounts. The headline is that against expectations, the school is currently ahead of budget by £86,000. However, whilst not huge, there is some expenditure to come off in December and January's accounts. It was noted that the cash flow is good.

Mr Marchant added that where there have been staff vacancies, these have been filled internally and so will look to what capital projects can be funded with these savings.

Finally, Mrs Rourke informed Trustees that she would be completing the School Resource Management Assessment and this would be shared with them at a future meeting.

10. Curriculum Review

Mr Dawson reported that the feedback from staff on this has been evenly split between the two options given. SLT preferred a 60 period timetable with lessons of 50 minutes but this will not meet the practical needs of the school. Therefore, it is back to the option of a 50 period cycle over two weeks with lessons being 1 hour long. Mr Dawson wished to highlight the following:

- Impact will be on citizenship and PSHE as it rolls through the timetable. However, there are advantages to this in that the whole school will all focus on the same topic.
- Some subjects would be impacted and others would not
- This system will eliminate lunchtime lessons
- It will provide the right pace and challenge
- Benchmarking work has taken place and similar themes were found, particularly in selective schools.

Mr Marchant wished to add that the school day model would have lunchtime at 1.30pm for 1 hour and 15 minutes which would allow for extra-curricular activities with a good chunk of time for games. He also felt that students should be doing 11 GCSES as opposed to 10 as this is an aspirational school. It was deemed that it would be achievable for pupils to undertake a full GCSE in Religious Studies (RS) delivered on a short-course time as the skills required to sit this GCSE are transferable. With regards to Sixth Form, it is the aim to refine the enrichment programme.

The Trustees concluded that the thought process for this has been very careful. They asked what the approach would be should a pupil be struggling with full-course RS and it was answered that it would be dealt with on an individual basis.

Mr Marchant informed Trustees that he wishes to look at non-contact time, which still remains high at 15% with no lesson cover built in. He reported that he had spoken to unions, where there is an expectation of 10% (though this does not include covering lessons). Therefore, he felt that 14% would be a sensible approach with 10% of this protected. The remainder could be used to cover lessons, if needed.

A vote was taken to adopt the following:

- **Timings of the day (1 hour lessons)**
- **Curriculum modelling based on impact of the subject**
- **11 GCSES**
- **Differentiated approach with the most able doing a total of 12 GCSES, including Further Maths and the less able would do dual award science.**
- **Non-contact time at 14% (10% of which is protected)**

The Trustees unanimously agreed to the proposals.

11. Safeguarding

Mr Pannone and Rev. Sargent as the link Trustees met with Ms Smith and reported on a very constructive meeting. An email had been circulated to Trustees with notes on this meeting but they wished to note the strong desire the school has to support children. They will be meeting with Ms Smith on a half-termly basis.

There were no further updates on this.

12. Health and Safety

Mr Marchant reported that as a result of a Health and Safety audit of the Science department, there is a need for a prep room and this will be resolved by Easter.

13. Any Other Business

Mr Marchant had the following items to raise:

- It is the intention to deviate from the LAs term dates for the next academic year, as it means that the Christmas break will be too short. **The Trustees unanimously agreed to this.**
- With regards to the upcoming strikes, for the first day, school will open for Year 11 and Year 13. It is expected that around 37 staff will strike but staff in the affected union are not obliged to state their intentions.
- After receiving feedback from stakeholders, it is the intention to get rid of the LGBTQ+ policy and have this embedded in other policies as opposed to a stand alone policy,

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.