

## Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Penrith

### Minutes of a meeting of the Governor's Education & Standards Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 5.30pm via Teams.

Present: Mr C Hansford Mr N Ruddick  
Mr D Marchant Mrs S Denyer (Clerk)  
Mrs T Boving-Foster  
Dr J Jenkins  
Mr A Worth

SLT present: Mr Dawson

Visitors: none

Quorum per Terms of Reference – 5

Governors in attendance – 6

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were accepted for Ms Mills (work) and Mr Worrall (holiday).

#### 2. Declarations of Interest in Agenda items

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. SEND Update

The SEND report was previously circulated to Governors. Mr Munro started by saying he has looked to create stability within the department over the past year. A new coding structure has been introduced to better identify students receiving SEN support:

- E = EHCP – meaning the LA has intervened to allocate dedicated support to student. This however causes pressure on the schools SEN budget as the first 9 hours are self-funded. QEGS currently have 9 students with EHCP's.
- K = students who have longer term needs and require extended support for approx. 12 months to provide stability.
- Q = students who need 6-10 week intervention.

The Q code is a recent introduction and is inspired the QUALITY first teaching approach. Students will have targeted intervention of approximately 6-10 weeks and then be supported by quality first teaching. The SEN team will share classroom strategies and will actively monitor students. Only E and K codes are recorded on the school census, which previously the number recorded was considered high for a grammar school. The introduction of the Q code means the number is more consistent with other grammar schools.

To ensure staff are able to deliver the best education to SEN students, Mr Munro has introduced a monthly focus to share ideas and strategies – this month’s focus is autism. He also reported the pastoral and SEND team have a greater focus on sharing information with each other and this has been very helpful.

Comments and questions were as follows:

*(JJ) welcomed the changes to the report layout; providing meaningful feedback and making it easier to compare like for like. She liked the concept of the Q code and its quality first teaching link.*

*(TBF) asked Mrs Munro to review the figures stated in the report to ensure clarity. She also requested additional statistics to show how many students have been taken off as well as on to the Q code. **Mr Munro will take this action.***

*(NR) commented too many SEN students do not go onto FE / HE. Mr Munro noted that COVID has had a huge impact on this progression. The school have invested more time/resources in careers advice to guide SEN students onto the next step.*

#### 4. Minutes of the June 2022 Meeting

It was unanimously agreed that they were a true record and Mr Hansford will sign these as soon as is practicable.

#### 5. Matters arising

Mr Marchant has received a formal complaint regarding the LGBTQ+ Policy, ratified at the previous meeting. On reflection, Mr Marchant feels that a standalone policy on a protected characteristic is not required and the Equality Policy should include for all protected characteristics with the relevant amount of detail required. There were no objections raised to proceeding with this enhanced format of the Equality Policy rather than a standalone policy for LGBTQ+. The Governors want to ensure all students, parents and staff feel represented and supported by the policy.

**Action: Mr Marchant to review the Equality Policy in line with the discussions from this meeting and incorporate the relevant points from the LGBTQ+ Policy.**

#### 6. Key Stage 4 Learning Review

The review report was circulated prior to the meeting. Mr Marchant explained SLT had spent over a week conducting paired learning walks and reviewing student books. The purpose was to take a view of where we currently are, and KS4 chosen as data is the most variable in terms of progress and outcomes. A number of strengths were noted and in particular the high degree of specialist knowledge within subjects and the excellent teaching this offers students. The main action points highlighted were:

- Student feedback on marking is not happening in most cases and this will be a focus of the T&L group, to introduce a culture of students taking time to correct work in response to teacher feedback/marking.
- Some lessons are very structured and do not accommodate for those who are the most able or struggling.
- Students rely too much on teacher input and some teaching felt too safe. Students are not enabled to make mistakes and Mr Marchant wants to stretch this to drive a culture of autonomous learning.

Mr Marchant will support teaching staff to action the changes through CPD and the T&L group. A version of the report will be shared with staff at the next CPD session, where SLT will emphasise this is about building a culture and aim to remove the stigma of lesson observations.

Comments and questions were as follows:

*(JJ) supported the drive to enable students to make mistakes and the eventual benefits this brings to students developing resilience and reducing tension around exam time. She highlighted evidence linking this to improved mental health, which will be of value to students.*

*(TBF) welcomed the positive steps to support students' mental health.*

*(AW) agreed with the report findings and emphasised this should also include a culture of allowing staff to fail too.*

## 7. School Development Plan (SDP)

The plan was previously circulated to Governors. Mr Marchant has taken the existing School Improvement Plan and renamed this as a development plan. A number of action points have been added, including around group behaviours and in particular building independent responsibilities around online behaviour. The plan will be shared with the wider school community.

Comments and questions were as follows:

*(JJ) Will there be student input into the SDP?* Mr Marchant will continue to consult via the Student Council. It is vital students are given a voice and there are development points in the plan where student consultation is an action. Mr Marchant will continue to review this.

*(JJ) How are we monitoring, measuring progress?* Mr Marchant explained this is an ambitious SDP and some outcomes may only be measurable in a few years. A review cycle will need to be implemented

*(NR) Are there any negative impacts that should be highlighted? In the example of the proposed Admissions Policy, this will have losers too?* Mr Marchant responded that each action aims to reach a particular outcome and whilst assessing the risks, if a negative impact is considered too great,

then we will stop and re-evaluate. The negative impact for the vast majority of cases is time and money.

*(TBF) How do we monitor so we are not reliant on verbal feedback? Can we identify/record empirical evidence?* Mr Marchant agreed and will add progress comments. He welcomed governor visits, and will include evidence in Headteachers update. By ensuring actions have tangible outcomes, we can report on them and their impact.

*(NR) Regarding sixth form lunchtime lessons, why do we have those?* Mr Marchant noted the restrictions caused by the current curriculum model and school day, meant that in order to fit in the sixth form curriculum, lessons over lunchtime were required. A consultation with staff will be launched this week to propose changes to the school day to alleviate the issue, and to allow for flexibility within the model. Mr Marchant stated he was not comfortable with the number of non-specialists cross teaching and expects the changes to also address this issue.

*(TBF) Is staff welfare covered in the document?* Although there is no specific action, it was discussed that the staff welfare meetings should continue this year. It was felt this should be an important focus due to the number of changes forthcoming.

#### 8. Data Drop for Years 7 & 10

Mr Dawson shared the Year 10 data, showing a summary of expected GCSE grades with a 2021 comparison. The data also includes areas of concern where students are currently expected to achieve less than a grade 5. SEN and Pupil Premium students continue to be an area of concern. Mr Dawson explained specific action plans will be in place, particularly those identified as having difficulties in English, Maths and Science. A dual science award is to be introduced in Year 11 where students are identified at risk of not achieving grade 5's in the three sciences, and potentially not meeting the sixth form entry criteria. The dual science award is the equivalent of two GCSE's and will aim to give students an improved chance of two grade 5's in science.

Attendance in Year 10 & 11 continues to be a concern and Heads of Year are introducing intervention plans for students whose attendance falls below 90%.

Year 7 data includes only Attitude to Learning grades this term. This is a change from recent years and aims to alleviate the burden of staff having to identify progress grades at this stage of Year 7. Mr Dawson noted the inconsistency in awarding ATL grades and this has been included as an action point in the SDP. At the recent Year 7 Meet the Tutor event, individual appointments were made with parents where concerns were noted, and took place with tutors before the social part of the event.

Comments and questions were as follows:

*(JJ) Even at this stage of Year 7, there is a notable difference in the performance of girls compared to boys. How much of this is down to the approach of staff versus the actual behaviour of students?*

Mr Dawson re-iterated the difficulties with consistency in this reporting method and there are definite variations across departments. This is an area to be developed as per the SDP.

*(NR) How is this rewarded? Have we asked students how they would like to be rewarded and why it is a struggle for boys?* Mr Dawson explained the celebration breakfast process, however noted that very few boys managed to achieve this reward. He took on board the feedback to explore student voice on this matter.

9. Heads Update

Mr Marchant recently held a meeting with staff to disclose the ESFA investigation report publication. He will hold a further meeting with staff this week, giving them an opportunity to ask questions. He is in the process of giving assemblies to each year group about the report publication. In both cases, emphasising day-to-day classroom teaching is one thing we do have control over and this will continue.

The date of the next meeting is 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

The meeting closed at 7:05pm