

FULL GOVERNORS BOARD MEETING 2021/2022

Meeting Minutes			
Date	Wednesday 8 December 2021	Time and Location	15.30 Schering Suite
Attendees	Initials	Attendees	Initials
Di Hunt (Chair)	DH	Kate Kenny	KK
Clare Brittain (Vice Chair)	CBr	Cecilia Harvey	CH
Judith Ward	JW	Tom Freestone	TF
Anra Kennedy	AK	Sophia Hunnisett	SHu
Colin Brace	CB	Jamie Chandler for Item 6	JC
Mark Wignall	MWI	Matt Ashdown for Item 7	MA
Amanda Reid	AR	Jo Cobb for Item 7	JCo
Jim McMahon	JMc	Emma Bates (Clerk)	EB
Eva Field	EF		

Apologies	Initials
Sue Hatton	SH
Clem Leneghan	CL

	Agenda	Led by
1	Welcome and Apologies for Absence	Chair
2	Declaration of Interest	Chair
3	Minutes of Last Meeting – 6.10.2021	Chair
4	Matters Arising	Chair
5	Urgent Matters	MWI
6	GDPR Update	JC
7	Pupil Premium Strategic Plan	MA
8	SDP Update	MWI
9	Risk Assessment Update	Chair
10	Safeguarding and Child Protection Update To include ratification of Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	Chair
11	Budget Monitoring	MWI
12	Federation Update	MWI
13	Academisation	MWI
14	Headteacher's Report	MWI
15	Chair's Update To include ratification of: i. ECF Policy ii. SEND Policy	Chair
16	Items Arising from Committee Minutes	Chair
17	Governor Monitoring Feedback, School Website Information, Link Departments, DSA	Chair
18	AOB	Chair
19	Date of next meeting	Chair

Item no.	Discussion	Action	Due Date
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1	Welcome and Apologies for Absence - Welcome to JCo for item 7 - Apologies were received from SH and CL		
2	Declaration of Interest There were none		
7	Pupil Premium Strategic Plan Item 7 was taken at this point and is minuted below		
6	GDPR Update Item 6 was taken at this point and is minuted below		
3/4	Minutes of Last Meeting/Matters Arising Attendees and Apologies - CH needs to be removed from the attendees list Item 12 Headteachers Report Q Has lockdown practice taken place? Not yet as the pandemic has postponed plans for a practice Item 13 Chairs Update - MWI has spoken to the member of staff concerned and JC is to book a date for KK to meet with him Item 15 School Website Information - JW has spoken to Governor Services. County do not require a copy of the checklist Item 18 AOB - DH has updated all paperwork and distributed to Governors The minutes of the last meeting held on 6 October 2021 were agreed to be a correct record and signed by the Chair		
5	Urgent Matters Pupil Number in Mid-Sussex 		

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	DH reminded all Governors this information is strictly confidential		
6	GDPR Update • Since September 2021 we have received 4 requests, 2 for subject access requests (SARs) and 2 for Freedom of Information (FOI) • SARs are very time consuming because any communication relating to that student including their education record is printed off and names redacted • JC is looking at a more efficient process to reduce admin time of GDPR requests • JC has a GDPR expert coming into school to audit us at the end of January to make sure the right policies are in place, and we are documenting everything correctly • Q What are the underlying reasons for parents to ask for their child's educational record? They may not be happy with how school has dealt with something • Q What do they do with paperwork received? No idea • Q Do you only print off the communication if the child is referred to by their full name? No, anything that student is named in parents have the right to see		

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	• Q Is there a protocol in the way students are referred to in emails? Staff are more aware to be careful what they write in emails • Chair shut the conversation down because it was becoming operational JC was thanked and left the meeting		
7	Pupil Premium Strategic Plan A copy of the plan had been circulated prior to the meeting and is filed with the minutes. • JCo is the Pupil Premium Support Officer (PPSO) and MA meets regularly with her • The plan shows Pupil Premium funding for this academic year and where that funding is allocated within school • The disadvantaged strategy is a new DfE requirement • The strategy is 3 tier and is based on research followed over a few years • First key point is recovery and is merged with pupil premium funding to encourage a coherence around additional funding where several catch-up funds have been made available • Second key point provides a statement of intent of our ambitions, values, and principles • There are four key principles to our strategy plan 1. Consistent high-quality teaching, which benefits all students 2. Equity of provision and experience 3. Build on a sense of community and belonging 4. Promote wellbeing • Since returning to school the widening attainment gap shown during lockdown among disadvantaged students appears to be back to pre-Covid levels according to data • We expect high expectations for Pupil Premium students, which must be always maintained • We put a big focus on literacy and numeracy • JCo gave examples of students who come to school having not eaten any breakfast. This impacts on behaviour and learning • She makes sure the students have been fed, which is a basic need and is arranging for the families to receive a food hamper at Christmas • Pupil Premium students feel they are in the minority at Downlands and are aware they do not fit the mould • JCo said getting to know the family and establishing a relationship with them as well as the student is important and inspires them to do well • She can provide good quality clothing if it is needed so the students feel like their peers • Generally, Pupil Premium students don't get involved in extra-curricular activities		

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	• We have bursaries to allow these students to go on trips • These experiences enhance their world and gives them a sense of purpose and belonging • JCo has spoken to the Character Lead identifying those students to be given opportunities • The expectation is that the PP students need to be in school • JCo has helped families complete forms, which is greatly appreciated by them • JCo is a great advocate in school for these families and provides the connection with school they need • During the pandemic JCo made sure families received food vouchers • She also delivered laptops to the families during the pandemic, and these are still on long term loan The Governors would personally like to thank JCo for all her hard work JCo left the meeting Catch up • Three-tiered model for school planning 1. Teaching with the key focus on recovery plans. Working party starts next week 2. Targeted academic support with a focus on after school tuition 3. Wider school initiative with a focus on character to build resilience and promote wellbeing as well as provide extra-curricular provision • MA did not have much success with the National Tutor Programme (NTP) • Instead, he has appointed 4 additional Learning Mentors who will be starting in January • A bespoke process has been developed to support students with independent learning • This will show where their strength and weaknesses are and will be used to develop bespoke strategies • They will then be assessed again to see the progress made • This will be an ongoing process and catch-up money will support for 2 terms • Also looking at increasing counselling time. Currently school employ 2 counsellors working a day each • Q How will students be chosen for the programme? Each Head of Year will recommend 50 students, who will be screened using a survey and from there 40 students will be chosen MA was thanked for his hard work and left the meeting		
8	SDP Update A copy of the SDP had been circulated prior to the meeting and a copy is filed with the minutes.		

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	• Each section starts with a vision • Key performance indicators (KPI's) are what is being monitored • SEF also shows areas for development, which are based on evidence and data to develop KPI's • MWI monitors SLT on their KPI's • Limited progress so far as the start of term has been tough • Q How does the Governors SDP fit with schools SDP? They sit separately but mirror each other, so may have to alter Governors SDP slightly • Any thoughts or suggestions, please let your Chair of Committee know		
9	Risk Assessment Update • The risk assessment can be found on the school's website under Covid • Please check for the latest updates • Risk assessment is reviewed regularly and was last updated on 22 November to include the new guidelines about the wearing of face coverings by students in communal areas		
10	Safeguarding & Child Protection To include ratification of Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy • No issues reported from Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) • All alterations from emails received about the policy have been updated • Recommend Governors read Section 6.3 Responsibilities of the Governing Board • Governors unanimously agreed to ratify the policy • Thanks were offered on behalf of the Governors to DH and the DSL for going through the policy so thoroughly		
11	Budget Monitoring A summary financial report had been previously circulated. A copy is filed with the minutes. MWI reported by exception: • Advised to put 3% pay rise in for teaching staff but this is now not happening • MWI would like to put that money into projects • Have included 2.75% pay rise for ancillary staff, but they will probably receive 1.75% • Casual Supply is high because there is a lot of staff absence • Covid-19 costs are rising rapidly • Business Manager has prepared the 3-year budget • School will receive more funding if we take the bulge class in 2022 • ECT's salary may rise to £30k, but there is a lot we still don't know Thank you to the Business Manager for all her hard work		

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12	Federation Update • Involves four schools (Downlands, Imberhorne, Oathall and Sackville) with similar ethos • First meeting in November involved Headteachers and Chair of Governors to discuss the move forward as a Federation • This involved the major changes to teacher training which is looking to move away from Universities into School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) • SCITT focuses on the idea of learning through experience and trainees spend 38 weeks a year in school • We want to be in position if and when this happens to recruit the best trainees, so have spoken to GLF to be put on a list for SCITT training in 2024 • This will tie us together as a Federation • It was agreed the Headteachers would attend each other's FGB meetings in the New Year to do a presentation • Headteacher of Sackville is retiring and has offered his services as a consultant to investigate shared resources for the Federation • Imberhorne Headteacher is retiring next summer		
13	Academisation • Academies are still state funded schools, but their money comes straight from the Government • They can decide their own pay scale, term dates, and have as many inset days as they like • Government is keen all schools become academies and those standalone academies become Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) • We are collaborating across a group of schools with the Federation and it is important to work with local schools • There are a lot of different models of MATs and it is effectively like running a business • In academy there is tight financial planning and a loss of autonomy as you are not able to run the school as you would want • MWI sees more disadvantages to becoming an academy • He would like to stay with the Local Authority (LA) • Q How much choice/pressure is put on schools by the Government? Nicky Morgan said schools had to become academies and tried to make it advantageous to be MATs • Q Is it worth having a back-pocket strategy? We have a strong Federation of like-minded schools with 6000-7000 students between us • Q What is the reason/benefit of being an academy? There is no evidence being an academy would be better or the students would do any better • JMc strongly supports MWI view because people don't realise what the LA does i.e. payroll, personnel, legal, insurance, transport, Governor support among other things		

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	• Q Memorandum of Understanding may be a good way forward for the Federation? This was discussed at the recent meeting and is to be explored in further detail		
14	Headteacher's Report A copy of the Headteacher's report was circulated prior to the meeting and is filed with the minutes. Our Students • Students have been amazing and a pleasure to work with Our Staff • Staff have been brilliant especially in the last few weeks of term Catch Up Funding • See Item 7 Covid • As well as a lot of student absence, there were 12 teachers and 6 support staff off school at one point • There was a lot of staff cover required, but everyone pulled together in difficult circumstances • Students were offered the vaccine at school in November, which could be why we are seeing a fall in cases Covid-19 Risk Assessment • Risk assessment has been changed to include the wearing of face coverings in communal areas and daily LFD (lateral flow device) testing Lateral Flow Testing • We are required to test those students with consent on their return to school in January Staff Wellbeing • Looking to spend the refund received from exam boards on a masseur to come into school on a Friday afternoon to give staff the opportunity to book a shoulder and neck massage • Also giving faculties up to £500 to spend on anything they feel will support their department • These will be launched next month Number on Roll • 1198 students at present Numbers in September 2022 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Recovery • Faculties are developing recovery plans and meeting with MWI and MA to discuss these plans • These will be implemented after Christmas Appraisal • All appraisal meetings will be completed by the end of next week Curriculum • This is being re-launched at the inset day on Tuesday 4 January		

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	- Discussions will continue with Heads of Faculty in their Line Manager meetings - Three twilight sessions are to be held next term Ofsted - Staff to be briefed in January because we expect a visit before summer 2025 Federation - See item 13 Open Evening - This took place on Thursday 4 October and was a ticketed event - The evening appeared to go well, and we received some positive feedback from those who attended Downlands Forum - Held recently to discuss Year 7 language provision - DH and CBr attended - MWI listened to parent/carer feedback and slight changes will be made to this provision in the future - Next forum meeting will be about uniform Extra Languages Provision - Aiming to offer after school sessions in French, Spanish and German for Years 7 and 8 students - This will be a paid provision, but we will support any disadvantaged students - MWI talking to possible language teachers this week Q Have you got a sense of demand? French 14, Spanish 14, German 8 - Sessions will be held on different days after school Cancelled - Dance Show postponed until 18 and 19 January Early Career Framework (ECF) - We have 8 Early Career Teachers (ECT's) in school each following a set of modules to give them a body of knowledge - We also have 3 great coaches supporting them School Council - Each tutor group has 2 student representatives who attend year council meetings - The minutes from these meetings go to MWI and he formulates an agenda for the school council meetings 2 student representatives from each year group attend school council meetings along with Senior prefects and DH - Minutes from these meetings are fed back to each tutor group Q Please can Governors see the meeting minutes? DH to send to all Governors Character Development - This is an exciting project headed up by Noel Buckley - He will update the Governors in the new year		
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	Recruitment - Unable to fill the support staff vacancies we have currently so are reliant on supply and recruitment agencies Community - Christmas Fayre was cancelled, but the Christmas Tree Forest went ahead with the Year 7 students decorating over 20 trees with donations from local businesses Holly Barbour - Year 10 student who recently won a team gold medal at the Junior Gymnastics Championships in Portugal Thank you - To all Governors for their continued support MWI was thanked for his report		
15	Chair's Update - DH attended the School Council meeting and found the discussions with pupils very enjoyable - MWI Performance Management was held recently, and the panel agreed he had passed all aspects of the objectives - DH and CBr continue to meet with MWI in school fortnightly - Please attend the Ofsted training in-house on Wednesday 9 February at 6pm - Please attend any relevant Governor County training sessions that are available on their website - Let DH and JMc know any that you attend so the training record can be kept up to date - On behalf of all Governors, DH would like to thank MWI and the staff for all they have done in this incredibly stressful term Policy ratification: i. ECF Policy - Governors would find it helpful to have the acronyms spelt out in full initially. DH to update - Governors unanimously agreed to ratify ii. SEND Policy - This policy needs a major review, which MA, CBr and SENDCO have agreed to do in January - Therefore, the policy will go to POW in March to be re-adopted and FGB in April to be ratified		
16	Items Arising from Committee Minutes - AK would encourage all Governors to read the POW minutes - SENDCO spoke about the pressures and the positives about work done during the pandemic with SEND students		
17	Link Governor Reports Thank you if you have been into your link department or been in touch with the Head of Faculty		

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	- JW is monitoring the school website and making sure it is being kept up to date - DH has sent all Governors an email about the updated visits proforma, which can be found on Teams - At the top of the form is what to do with it once completed - Also, the two rows at the bottom of the form (dates) will be completed by EB. Please make sure you still sign and date the form. - DSA had to cancel Christmas Fayre, but the raffle was a success and raised £5k		
18	Any Other Business Q Due to the new Omicron variant were hybrid meetings being considered for the new year? We will see how things are next term, but unfortunately the camera and microphone do not work in the Schering Suite. - We are monitoring the situation all the time regarding Covid and the Prime Minister is making another announcement at 5.30pm JMc left the meeting - May have the option once back in the PPA room to use camera and microphone so Governors can possibly join a meeting virtually - On occasions some Governors can't physically be at a meeting, or they are struggling because of work, but that is a discussion for another time Q Is it a budgeting issue? No - DH thanked everyone for their support and wished everyone a good rest over the Christmas break		
19	Date of next meeting - Wednesday 2 February 2022 at 15.30 - Meeting closed at 17.45		