

Full Governing Board Meeting 2023/24

Meeting Minutes			
Date	Wednesday 20 March 2024	Time and Location	3.30 p.m. PPA Room
Attendees		Attendees	Initials
Di Hunt (Chair)		Andrew Hunter	AH
Linda Anderson		Sam Kashmiri	SK
Colin Brace		Diana Marsland	DM
Clare Brittain		Kimberley Nelson	KN
Eva Field		Lydia Paynter	LP
John Godley		Mark Wignall	MW
Sue Hatton		Chris Karley (Clerk)	CK

Apologies	Initials
Mark Longley	ML

	Agenda	Led by
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence	Chair
2.	Declaration of Interest	Chair
3.	Minutes of Last Meetings – 24 January 2024	Chair
4.	Matters Arising	Chair
5.	Urgent Matters	Chair
6.	Reading Strategy	SK
7.	Budget Monitoring update	MW
8.	Safeguarding and Child Protection Update	Chair
9.	School uniform	Chair
10.	Headteacher's Report	MW
11.	Chair's Report	Chair
12.	Policy Reviews: - Designated Teacher Policy (ratification) - Discipline & Student Behaviour Policy (ratification) - Teachers & School Leaders Pay Policy (ratification)	Chair
13.	Chairs of Committee Reports – items arising from Committee minutes	CB/EF
14.	Reports: - Lead Governor visits - Link Governor visits - Governor training - DSA	Chair
15.	AOB	Chair
16.	Date of next meeting: Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 15.30 (Strategy Meeting)	-

Dr Alex M. Hatton

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Item no.	Discussion	Action	Due Date
	The meeting started at 3.30 p.m.		
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence - Apologies for absence were received from and accepted for ML. - JG advised that he would have to leave the meeting at 5.15 p.m.		
2.	Declaration of Interest None		
3.	Minutes of Last Meetings – 24 January 2024 The minutes of the FGB meeting held on 24 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.		
4.	Matters Arising Item 6 - Pupil Premium Strategic Plan - MW advised that funding was received for adopted children through the budget. WSCC would be aware of all adopted/looked after children. MW confirmed after the meeting that the school was allocated £51,400 for 2024-25 for these students. Item 13 – Chair's report - DH confirmed that the Policies working group would meet on Wednesday 27 March 2024. - MW advised that WSCC would in future advise schools when policies that they had drafted were updated. Item 14 – Policy reviews - CK advised that Claire Davies had confirmed that there was a link to the Digital Systems Policy in the induction booklet for new staff and that any updates were highlighted at staff briefings or meetings. - The corrections required to this Policy had also been made.		
5.	Urgent Matters None		
6.	Reading Strategy SK spoke to the attached presentation. - Reading has been identified as the 'master skill' of the curriculum and Ofsted gave the mandate for change. The school decided that it needed to provide more reading time and to ensure that both comprehension and decoding were learnt. - The school now assesses reading ages so is aware of those pupils that struggle. Digital reading tests are not always reliable so tests have been expanded in Years 7 & 8 and efforts are then concentrated on the lowest 20% (L20). - Expert training has been provided to English staff and TAs on phonics.		

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	• Small group intervention has been introduced for Years 7 & 8. This is curriculum light but pupils need to be ready to re-join the mainstream. • There is also individual tutor time and support from Year 10 buddies, which is a good fit with ROCKS. The next step is to engage with parents. • Another initiative in hand is disciplinary reading, which teaches different approaches to reading for different subjects. There is also Library intervention. The overall aim is to develop a culture of reading. • Q – How can the school get parents informed and involved? • They are told of interventions. Letters will go out next week asking them to attend an evening session on how to encourage reading. Engagement can however be difficult. • Q – How is the impact monitored? • Reading ages are tested six times p.a. There is also a fluency scale. • Q – Is reading linked to performance? • Yes, definitely. Speed and comprehension have a direct impact on exam performance. • Q – Do pupils track their own reading? • Yes, Library lessons are very structured. In DEAR time teachers ask pupils to read to them one to one. The Governors thanked SK for all she had done to introduce this vital initiative.		
7.	Budget Monitoring update • MW highlighted a slight overspend on staffing. Some long term absences had led to expensive supply costs, especially in specialist subjects. This is unpredictable. There have also been maternity cover and alternative teaching costs, including blended learning. The school has looked at insurance for supply cover but the cost means this is not viable. • The school will use agencies less to recruit ancillary staff as the cost is very high. • With >100 pupils in Year 10 being granted access arrangements for exams many more invigilators have had to be hired. • Despite this the overall budget picture is OK. The school expects to break even this year, which is positive given the increase in costs. • Gas costs will reduce under the new contract and should be on budget. • £30k has been spent already on next year's exams, so the apparent overspend will regularise. • Supervision costs are up in line with staff costs. • SDP includes Benenden Health costs, which will be reviewed next year. • Reserves are still sound. • Reimbursement from WSCC for the toilets project will be received in the next couple of weeks, regularising this significant overspend to budget.		
8.	Safeguarding and Child Protection Update • DH advised that she continues to meet Graham Odlin (GO) monthly. • SCR training has led to an improvement in data recording and the migration of data onto Bromcom.		

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	- The options evening went well and the school can start timetabling 2/3 weeks earlier this year. - The Governors asked that Annie Nee be congratulated on the outstanding Dance Show. - Bromcom is improving; the system is good but implementation has been less so. At a recent meeting their COO acknowledged the shortcomings and had provided an action plan to address them. - Following a recent WSCC visit the school was rated in the top category. - Q – Who from WSCC assesses the school? - The Link Advisor, Helen Gabrielides. The school has a good relationship and she is critical in a positive way. - Year 10 exams are starting earlier this year to allow time for feedback to students. - WSCC is uneasy about the use of the term Federation to describe the school's current cooperation with three other schools. It will possibly be referred to as 'Partnership Working' instead. The schools might introduce more joint working with students next year, possibly including a joint orchestra.		
11.	Chair's report - The four Chairs of the partnership schools had met and further Board collaboration is being considered. The joint training that had been cancelled might be rearranged for 2 May. - Two new Parent Governors have been appointed with effect from 27 March 2024. - No applications had been received for the two new Co-opted Governor vacancies, and Governors were requested to keep looking for potential candidates. - Q – Can the Board run with these vacancies? - Yes. - DH had held a good meeting with Felpham Community College and will keep in touch. They have a different model for Governors with no Committees as such. - A Complaint Panel had met last week and a letter had gone to the parents. The child was no longer at the school. A second Stage 2 Complaint had been received but the parent had not wanted a meeting. An informal panel had met to discuss the issue which was about lost property. - Q – What did the parent want from this complaint? - For the Governors to acknowledge the issue, and a response will be sent. - Meeting dates for the 2024/25 school year would be circulated shortly. There will be one less FGB meeting. - No Governors attended the Year 10 meeting as none were available. Governors were asked to make themselves available for such meetings/events if at all possible. - Q – What do Governors do there? - They have a desk from which they can answer specific questions, but also provide general help to parents and seek informal feedback. - Q – Could more than one Governor share this responsibility as the meetings are three hours long? - Yes, if enough volunteer.		

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12.	Policy reviews • Designated Teacher Policy (ratification) ○ Q – Should this state that it is a WSCC Policy? ○ Yes, this should be made clear for all relevant policies as they come up for review. ○ This Policy should also be reviewed again in September 2024 to reflect the name of GO's successor. ○ The Policy was ratified subject to the above amendments. • Discipline & Student Behaviour Policy (ratification) ○ The changes to this Policy originally envisaged, e.g. tightening up sanctions for not bringing vital equipment to lessons, have been held over until September when the changes will be made. ○ Q – Has the Policy been cross checked to the uniform rules on the website? ○ Yes, JC has done this. ○ Q – Have Student Voice views been taken into account? ○ Not recently, but the student survey would touch on behaviour. GO's replacement will be in charge of Student Voice. ○ MW noted that the school generally follows Government guidelines on behaviour policy, and that he had also presented on this subject at assemblies. ○ Q – How can Governors glean a cross section of views? ○ It is difficult as only the more engaged would participate. Surveys can be more informative. There used to be a Governor link to disadvantaged pupils. This could be considered again. ○ Q – Is the pupil survey compulsory? ○ Yes, it is completed online in tutor time. ○ MW noted that the school is still trying to award five positive ROCKS points for every one negative sanction; the ratio is currently 4:1. ○ Some pupils are impervious to sanctions and the SLT is paying a lot of attention to this. ○ Q – Do most pupils achieve more positive ROCKS points? ○ Yes, but a small number are overwhelmingly negative. ○ The Governors agreed that the survey was a good starting point. ○ The Policy was ratified subject to review in September. • Teachers & School Leaders Pay Policy (ratification) ○ It was agreed that this should also state that it is a WSCC Policy. ○ The Policy was ratified subject to this amendment.	
13.	Chairs of Committee reports – items arising from Committee minutes • FAB – CB advised Governors that Kathy had left the Sports Centre after leading it successfully for many years. • POW – EF would be meeting Matt Ashdown in April to discuss maximising pupils' potential. • SLL – DH advised the Governors that LA had just taken over as Chair of this Committee following the resignation of Richard Donovan (RD).	

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14.	Reports: Lead & Link Governor visits, Governor Training & DSA Visits – Lead Governors • CBr noted that SEND was under pressure to take on Year 8 and 10 pupils with high needs. MW noted that the number of pupils with special needs was rising across primary years. • LA had completed her first Attendance visit and highlighted the investment of time and the dedication of the team to address this issue. There had been a new WSCC training course on attendance but no secondary schools had signed up. • Q – Could we collaborate with Partnership schools on this? • It might be possible for Lead Governors to get together on this, and on other issues. DH will raise this with the other Chairs. • DH sought a volunteer for the Curriculum Lead role to replace RD. DM would be happy to discuss this further. Visits – Link Governors • There was nothing to add to the reports that had been circulated. Governor Training • Two Governors had received their certificates since the last meeting. • DH encouraged all Governors to keep training up to date. DSA • £11,795 has been raised already this school year. KN advised that Comedy Night would take place on 10 May and the Summer Fayre on 29 June. • MW noted that the DSA provided very important funding for many initiatives. • KN advised that they still needed a Treasurer. It was agreed that an advertisement for this role could be put on the school website.	DH	30.04.24
		DH/DM	30.04.24
15.	Any Other Business • MW advised Governors that a former pupil of the school, Leon Chiwome, had played for Wolves in the FA Cup that weekend.		
16.	Date of Next Meetings • The next FGB meeting will be on Wednesday 22 March 2024 at 3.30 p.m. in the PPA Room. This will be the annual strategy meeting. The meeting closed at 5.45 p.m.		

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