

HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY
HELD AT 6.05PM ON TUESDAY 3 JUNE 2014

Present: Mr. K. Balfé Mr. C. Minton (Chairman)
Mr. K. Down Mr. G. Montgomery
Mr. T. Fitzakerly Mrs. K. Rowe
Mrs. N. Job Mr. M. Seaman Hill
Mrs. M. King Mrs. K. Smith
Mrs. F. Manning (Headteacher) Mr. S. Sprawson
Mrs. J. Marland Mrs. L. Vallance

In attendance: Mr. J. Crowther (Deputy Headteacher)
Mr. T. Hankin (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Mr. S. Burgoyne, Mr. C. Hall, Mrs. M. McPhail and Mrs. S. Morrison. Miss Barnard was absent.

2. Notification of items to be raised under Any Other Business.

None

3. Declarations of Interest

Governors were reminded of the need to declare any interest in the items for discussion. There were none.

4. School Improvement Plan for 2014/2015.

Mr. Minton referred to the plan circulated to Governors and thanked Mrs. Manning for the content and detail included in the report and asked her to review the main points.

Mrs. Manning advised that the 2012/13 plan has been reviewed but that as some of the actions relate to exam results etc. the full review cannot be completed until after the summer. Alongside a review of the actions and outcomes, staff were asked at the Review and Development Day to list their highlights and successes for the year and a summary of these was circulated. The interim review of the 2012/13 plan will be circulated to Governors this week, with the outstanding areas reviewed at the Governing Body meeting in September.

The plan for 2014/15 has now been prepared and covers 4 terms, so there is some overlap with the 2012/13 plan. To help determine the objectives and actions, Middle Leaders were asked to consider four questions:

- What do we want learning to look like at HGS?
- What do we want lessons to look like at HGS?
- What do we want students to look like at HGS?
- What do staff and departments want to be doing in 2014/15?

The Senior Leadership Group reviewed the responses and this helped identify the key objectives for the year. The focus of the plan is on Teaching and Learning and on developing the Growth Mindset in the school community. The rationale and explanation of this is included on page 4 of the plan. In summary, the three priorities for the year are:

- Getting the curriculum right
- Sharing good practice
- Developing student independence in learning

Governors were encouraged to ask questions as the plan was reviewed. Key items highlighted and discussed included the following.

a) *To raise attainment and achievement through the provision of a relevant and effective curriculum.*

Mr. Crowther gave an overview of the work that will need to happen as a result of changes to the National Curriculum. Much of the detail is still unknown, so there is a need for a rolling plan over the next 4 years as the changes are phased in. There will be a massive workload for staff in preparing for and managing the implementation of the changes and the provision of time to support this is a key priority.

Changes to specifications for Sixth Form courses will need to be discussed and agreed across the Consortium and this is scheduled to take place in September.

b) *To raise attainment and achievement by developing a culture which puts teaching and learning of the whole school community at the centre of all we do.*

Mrs. Manning advised that this is a key area for the promotion of independent and student led learning and is included as a whole school objective in departmental plans. It can be difficult to quantify success but evidence will be collected via discussions with students, lesson observations, book monitoring etc. The sharing of good practice between departments and other schools is also encouraged.

Mrs. Rowe advised that new homework guidance has been prepared following consultation with staff and students and this should help to reinforce these objectives.

Governors noted the involvement of staff in this working group and encouraged feedback and involvement of all staff in promoting and developing ideas and practices. Mrs. Manning confirmed that staff have many ways to raise & discuss ideas or concerns and are encouraged to do so via staff meetings, line management meetings, 1:1's, through Staff Governors and Union representatives, working groups, teaching & learning group etc.

The importance of maintaining good communications with parents was noted and a Parent Governor thanked the school for the responses received from staff.

c) *To raise attainment and achievement through effective use of assessment and data.*

Work will continue on the effective use of the Go 4 Schools system. Strategies will be deployed to support Pupil Premium students and other groups identified as requiring additional support e.g. with examination preparation, time management. Support and guidance will be made available for specific year groups or groups of students at an earlier stage in the academic year.

Another working group has been developing a new marking policy with the aim of improving the quality of written feedback, an action from the OfSTED report.

d) *To promote safety and positive behaviour for all of our school community.*

Focus will include increasing awareness of e-safety with information and guidance for students, staff and parents, and the establishment of support programmes particularly incorporating self harm and sexual exploitation which is a major concern in Hertfordshire. The Anti-Bullying policy will be reviewed and updated to ensure it reflects the increased impact of social media.

e) *To fully utilise our assets to plan for future provision*

Planning for any future development to accommodate Local Authority expansion requirements should take place next year and the school will also continue to review existing accommodation and resources. The sharing of support staff knowledge and experience will be encouraged to support succession planning.

f) *To provide high quality and consistent leadership, management and governance.*

A number of actions have been identified to help increase awareness and address issues of staff morale and well being including revision of the calendar taking account of staff views, early communication and effective planning of new initiatives, and the continuing provision of staff counselling and well-being opportunities.

Governors will be encouraged to attend school events and increase their engagement across the school. Mr. Minton asked that a review of the Governing Body committee structure is included in the plan to ensure that it meets the current needs of the school as well as its statutory responsibilities.

Mrs. Manning was asked what was no longer being done in order to provide time for the new actions and initiatives. She advised that a number of actions from the previous plan have been removed such as development of careers education and guidance and establishment of the Moodle Learning Platform as they are now embedded in the daily life of the school.

Governors thanked Mrs. Manning for her work in producing the plan and also acknowledged the support provided by staff in its preparation and implementation.

Mrs. Manning advised that, following this review, she will now produce the final version which will be sent to all Governors. Mr. Minton recommended the plan be **APPROVED** and this was unanimously **AGREED**.

5. Any Other Business

None

6. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 17 June 2014 at 7pm.

Governors were also reminded of the exclusion training to be held at 6pm on 8 July 2014.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.