

**HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL  
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY  
HELD AT 7.05PM ON TUESDAY 18 JUNE 2013**

**Present:**

Mr. K. Down	Mrs. M. McPhail
Mr. T. Fitzakerly (from item 5.2)	Mr. S. Middleditch
Mr. C. Hall	Mr. C. Minton (Chairman)
Mrs. N. Job	Mrs. S. Morrison
Mrs. M. King	Mrs. K. Rowe
Mrs. F. Manning (Headteacher)	Mr. M. Seaman Hill
Mrs. J. Marland	Mrs. L. Vallance

**In attendance:** Mr. T. Hankin Clerk

**1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

Mr. Minton welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Mr. S. Burgoyne, Mrs. K. Smith and Ms. T. Stojko. Miss F. Barnard was absent.

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

There were none.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

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

**4. Minutes of previous meetings.**

4.1 Approval

The minutes of the meetings held on 12 March 2013 and 4 June 2013 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Matters arising

**School Improvement Plan 2013/14 (Item 4.2 from 12 June).** Mrs. Manning advised that an additional item will be added, referring to the monitoring of how Pupil Premium funding is used. A copy of the updated whole school plan along with the relevant departmental plans will be distributed to Governors shortly.

**5. Reports**

5.1 Headteacher's report

Mrs. Manning referred to her report and highlighted a number of items including:

- Curriculum changes regarding Health & Social Care, and the decision taken not to introduce a BTEC qualification from September as changes to the assessment process do not make it an attractive proposition for our students.
- The progress with lesson observations. Mrs. Manning confirmed that over the course of the 3 observations carried out for full time staff, the aim is to cover each of the three key stages.

- The awarding of funding from the Education Funding Agency's Academies Capital Maintenance Fund for the new Sixth Form Centre, following the appeal against the initial decision.
- The continuing discussions with the Local Authority regarding the need for permanent additional secondary school places in the town from 2015. At a recent meeting, the Local Authority confirmed that the preferred strategy for the town would be to add one form of entry to each of the three secondary schools, with the Girls' School likely to be the first. The Authority has submitted a bid to the Department for Education for funding to support school expansion in the County and a decision is awaited.
- The admission numbers for September 2013.
- The work underway on a new pay policy for September which is required following the government requirement for pay decisions to be based on performance and not on annual increments. The draft policy has been prepared based on a model provided by the Local Authority and following discussions with other local Headteachers. It will be presented to staff shortly, following which there will be a 28 day period of consultation. The draft policy and feedback from the consultation will be discussed at a Personnel Committee meeting in September, prior to a recommendation being made to the full Governing Body.
- The staffing changes at the end of term.

Mrs. Manning then updated Governors on the whole school OfSTED inspection taking place over the next two days.

Mrs. Manning and Mrs. Rowe left the meeting. Mr. Fitzakerly joined the meeting.

## 5.2 Admissions Committee

Mrs. Job reported on the meeting held on 15 May 2013. It was noted that the change to the admission rules to allocate a fixed number of places to students in the Hitchin parish has addressed the previous imbalance in allocations and has resulted in a reduction in the number of appeals.

## 5.3 Asset Management Committee

Mr. Seaman Hill reported on the meeting held on 8 May 2013. He referred to the subsequent good news regarding funding for the Sixth Form Centre which will have a beneficial impact on the use and maintenance of the whole lower field. He also referred to the maintenance & refurbishment work planned for the summer, including the changing room, main school toilets and art room refurbishments.

Following the Public Inquiry regarding the Village Green Application for Benslow Field, a decision is still awaited from the Planning Inspector.

## 5.4 Curriculum & Performance Committee

Mr. Hall reported on the meeting held on 8 May 2013. The committee had discussed the findings of the recent Kirkland Rowell Parent, Student and Staff surveys which had been very pleasing. Actions from the surveys have been identified and form part of the School Improvement Plan, including reviewing homework strategies and increasing communication with parents regarding behaviour and bullying procedures.

Government education proposals were discussed, although they continue to frequently change which makes planning and preparation very difficult.

The meeting had also reviewed a number of updated policy documents.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy was recommended for approval.

**The Governors noted the recommendation and Mrs. King proposed, seconded by Mrs. Marland, that it should be APPROVED. This was unanimously AGREED.**

The Behaviour for Learning Policy was recommended for approval. It was noted that the new school policy on mobile phones has resulted in a reduction of issues surround these devices.

**The Governors noted the recommendation and Mr. Seaman Hill proposed, seconded by Mr. Fitzakerly, that it should be APPROVED. This was unanimously AGREED.**

The Anti-Bullying Policy was recommended for approval.

**The Governors noted the recommendation and Mr. Down proposed, seconded by Mrs. Job, that it should be APPROVED. This was unanimously AGREED.**

The Complaints Policy was recommended for approval.

**The Governors noted the recommendation and Mr. Seaman Hill proposed, seconded by Mr. Fitzakerly, that it should be APPROVED. This was unanimously AGREED.**

The Equality Scheme was recommended for approval.

**The Governors noted the recommendation and Mr. Middleditch proposed, seconded by Mr. Down, that it should be APPROVED. This was unanimously AGREED.**

The Children Looked After Policy, ESTMA Policy and Substance Use and Misuse Policy had also been reviewed and approved **and the Governors NOTED the approval.**

## 5.5 Finance Committee

Mrs. McPhail reported on the meeting held on 22 May. It had looked at the budget position for the current year and discussed the variance report and the reasons for any variances to budget. The report from the Responsible Officer was also noted, and no issues had been raised.

The budget for 2013/14 was reviewed, and a balanced budget is proposed with expenditure covered by the income received in the year. The proportion of the budget allocated to staffing costs was noted and it was agreed that this was being maintained at an acceptable level. It was also pleasing to note that salary levels and grades were not taken into account when appointing a new member of staff. There will be a change to the capital element of the budget to include the recent approval of the ACMF grant.

Mr. Hankin confirmed that the budget includes an allocation for ongoing refurbishment projects. With an increase in the students, assets and buildings, Governors asked whether this amount should be reviewed for future budgets and perhaps set as a percentage of income and it was agreed that the matter be considered at the next Asset Management meeting.

The Budget for 2013/14 was recommended for approval.

**The Governors noted the recommendation and Mr. Middleditch proposed, seconded by Mr. Seaman Hill that the budget for 2013/14 be APPROVED. This was unanimously AGREED.**

The proposed letting charges for 2013/14 were reviewed and recommended for approval.

**The Governors noted the recommendation and the charges were unanimously APPROVED.**

## **6. Risk Register**

Mr. Hankin referred to the updated Risk Register which had been circulated for review earlier in the year. A number of minor changes have been made as a result of the review.

**Mr. Minton proposed, seconded by Mrs. Job, that the Risk Register be APPROVED and this was unanimously AGREED.**

## **7. Link Governor Visits**

Music – Mrs. Marland reported on her time in the Music department where she was pleased to hear of the number and range of extra curricular groups that take place.

Art – Mrs. Marland also reported on her visit to Art and the high quality of the work on display. It was good to know that some refurbishment of the art rooms will take place in the summer. Governors were encouraged to attend the Art Show taking place on Thursday evening.

Health & Social Care – Mr. Hall reported on his time in the department, where the main subject discussed had been the possible changes to the exam syllabus.

Science – Mr. Down reported that the science department were very happy now that all the laboratories have been refurbished. They also discussed the role of Learning Support Assistants in the classroom. Staff are also looking for ways to publicise students successes in science.

Student Development – Mrs. Job advised that changes in staffing in the department have taken place and she hopes to join them for some team building sessions.

History – Mr. Minton reported on the enthusiastic use of the Moodle Learning Platform in the department.

## **8. Proposed meeting dates 2013/2014**

The schedule of meeting dates for 2013/14 was **AGREED**.

## **9. Any Other Business**

Sixth Form thanks. Mrs. McPhail wished to record her thanks to the Head of Sixth Form for all the support that is given to students and also for supporting the University of Hertfordshire research project on Health which has resulted in three Year 13 students participating in a research seminar at St. Andrew's University.

## **10. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 17 September 2013. 6pm