

**HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY
HELD AT 6.00PM ON TUESDAY 7 JUNE 2016**

Present:

Mrs. C. Astill	Mr. S. Lucas
Mr. K. Balfe	Mrs. F. Manning (Headteacher)
Mr. K. Down	Mrs. M. McPhail
Mrs. C. Emmings	Mr. S. Mills
Mr. T. Fitzakerly	Mr. G. Montgomery
Mr. C. Hall (Chairman)	Mrs. S. Morrison
Mr. A. Jones	Mr. M. Seaman Hill
Mrs. M. King	

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

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence

Mr. Hall welcomed everyone to the. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. N. Job, Mrs. J. Marland, Mr. C. Minton, and Mr. S. Sprawson.

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. Minutes of previous meeting.

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2016.

Mr. Balfe queried a sentence in item 7.4 relating to guidance for Governors on representing interests of individual groups. The Chairman advised that this related to guidance he had referred to from the National Governors Association (NGA). He agreed to check the actual wording used by the NGA and clarify this in the minutes if required.

(Post meeting check: The guidance from the NGA states that governors should 'act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board'. The minutes have been updated to use this wording).

The minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Matters arising.

There were none.

5. School Improvement Plan 2016/17

Mrs. Manning reminded Governors of the procedures in place relating to the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

The 2015/16 SIP has been reviewed by the Senior Leadership Group each term, with progress and outcomes updated, and these have been shared with Governors at the termly meeting. Progress and achievements were shared with staff and Governors at the Review and Development INSET Day in April. The outcomes have now been summarised in a final review document and this was shared with the Governors.

Work on the 2016/17 SIP began at the Senior Leadership Group planning day in March, which was held shortly after the publication of key documents from the Department for Education relating to eliminating unnecessary workload around marking, planning and teaching resources, and data management. These documents have been taken into account when preparing the new SIP. There is a lot of change in the education sector at present, and the SIP is about focussing on the core work of education of young people.

Mrs. Manning then went through each section of the plan, asking for comments and questions from Governors as she highlighted some of the key objectives and actions.

Teaching & Learning

- Preparing students for linear examinations, monitoring schemes of work and reviewing assessments.
- Reviewing marking policy and practice, in line with Government workload feedback, not to increase this but to ensure more effective outcomes.
- Collecting and using student voice data and feedback through learner surveys and governor/student forums.
- Supporting the parent community in building greater resilience for themselves and their children.

Governors asked whether the T&L objectives included any actions resulting from any specific issues that occurred during the year. Mrs. Manning advised that there is reference in the plan to improved communication, and the creation of student/Governor forums will be used to help gather additional feedback from students on any T&L concerns.

Curriculum

- Key Stage 3 – review of content and skills to support engagement, enjoyment and support at all levels
- Key Stages 4 & 5 – continued development of preparation and delivery of new courses

Data & Assessment

- Ensuring assessment is meaningful, manageable and motivational for all
- Moving to 'Life without Levels'
- Facilitating a visit to a primary school for all teaching staff to allow them to gain a greater understanding of assessment and the curriculum at Key Stage 2.
- Running parent/carers information events to explain assessment and reporting changes.

Governors commented on the proposal to establish greater links with primary schools and agreed that this will be very important in understanding new assessment methods and supporting transition.

Communication and Collaboration

- Establishing more proactive communication with parents, with the development of an HGS protocol for effective home school communication,
- Reviewing and rationalising in-school communication to support work–life balance.
- Establishing a greater public presence for the school on the local and National stage
- Increasing all stakeholders' awareness of eSafety measures

Governors asked how the school measures the impact of self-learning against staff led teaching. Mrs. Manning advised that this is very difficult to measure. The school monitors and evaluates progress regularly. At A Level, staff are able to quickly tell if students are not undertaking enough self-learning as they tend not to make sufficient progress.

Leadership & Management

- Evaluation and updating the self evaluation framework for 2016/17.
- Developing and increasing opportunities for middle and senior leaders, which includes three secondments to the Senior Leadership Group.
- Reviewing the TLR Scheme for September 2017.
- Establishing a clearer structure to identify the work expected of Upper Pay Spine teachers.

Environment and Resources

- Development of the new Sports Hall and facilities
- Working with the Local Authority on expansion proposals

Governors noted that there was no specific reference to the use of Pupil Premium funding in the plan. Mr. Crowther advised that work and activity that is already embedded and taking place in school is not usually included unless further development is required. Mrs. Manning stated that one of the secondment posts for the Senior Leadership Group will lead on Pupil Premium and student intervention. It was agreed to add a reference to increasing parental collaboration regarding pupil premium in the communication section of the plan.

Governors also asked about recruitment difficulties and whether this should be included. Mrs. Manning advised that this is a national issue, especially in some subject areas. It is a key strategic area for Herts. for Learning and the school is working with them, through the Teaching Alliance, on this issue. Reference will be included in the separate Alliance action plan.

Mrs. Manning was thanked for presenting the proposed plan. Mr. Hall recommended that the School Improvement plan 2016/17 for approval.

Thirteen governors voted in favour, with two abstentions. The plan was therefore **APPROVED**.

6. Expansion update

Mrs. Manning and Mr. Hankin updated Governors on the latest information relating to the proposed expansion. The Local Authority Council Cabinet have confirmed that they wish to see an expansion of Hitchin Boys' and Hitchin Girls' Schools by 45 places each from

September 2018. This is subject to the required statutory consultation. The schools will be asked to enter into a funding agreement to allow the required facilities to be provided to support the expansion. Timescales are very tight.

A meeting with the Local Authority will take place at the end of the week to gather further details on the next stage in the process and Governors updated at the next meeting.

7. **Any Other Business**

None.

8. **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 21 June 2016

The meeting closed at 7.15pm