

**HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY
HELD AT 7.00PM ON TUESDAY 19 JUNE 2018**

Part 1 Business

Present:

Mrs. C. Astill	Mrs. M. King
Mrs. C. Emmings	Mr. S. Lucas
Mr. T. Fitzakerly	Mrs. F. Manning (Headteacher)
Mr. C. Hall (Chairman)	Mr. S. Mills
Mrs. N. Job	Mr. C. Minton
Mr. A Jones	Mr. T. Scott
Dr. K. Middleton	Mr. M. Seaman Hill

In attendance: Mr. T. Hankin (Clerk)

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Mr. K. Balfe, Mr. K. Down, Mr. G. Edwards, Mrs. D. Kaur and Mrs. S. Morrison. Mr. S. Sprawson 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 pecuniary or other interest in the items for discussion. There were none.

4. Minutes of previous meeting.

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2018.

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

4.2 Matters arising.

ICT Apprentice (from item 7.4). Mrs. Manning informed Governors that an Apprentice ICT Technician has been appointed.

5. School Improvement Plan 2017/18

A copy of the current SIP had been circulated prior to the meeting and Mrs. Manning reported on progress. Key points highlighted included:

- Preparation, planning & delivery of the new linear GCSE and A level courses
- The revision programmes, in particular for Year 11
- Completion of the Sports Hall
- Development of the Growth Mindset agenda
- Planning & preparation for expansion of the school
- The growth of the Teaching Alliance, with greater recognition of the Alliance across Hertfordshire and beyond.

- Development of the Curriculum Cluster Groups
- Development of CPD opportunities, including the licence from UCL to deliver NPQSL & SSAT to deliver NPQML training.

A final review will be presented to Governors after the summer once the examination results have been received and the final outcome of some of the actions is known.

Governors thanked Mrs. Manning for the update.

6. School Improvement Plan 2018/19

Mrs. Manning reviewed the draft SIP for 2018/19 which had been circulated in advance. Recruitment and retention of teaching staff is still a national problem and the Department for Education has produced a document on managing workload with guidance and suggestions for doing less of some things and stopping doing other tasks. The SIP has been prepared with this guidance in mind.

Mrs. Manning explained that the plan was shared with staff at the INSET Day in April and she highlighted to them the many things that HGS already does to support staff, some of which are suggested in the DfE document. The rationale in the plan is the same as this year and is about wanting to reduce workload whilst continuing to be exceptional and improve outcomes for students. Mrs. Manning also referred to “being brave”, and looking at the reasons why things are done and making decisions that are best for the students and staff at HGS.

Departmental objectives will be based on:

- Refining new course schemes of work in line with school best practice.
- Developing methods of feedback and assessment for students which will reduce workload for individuals.
- Utilising Go4Schools for Year 12 & 13 markbooks.

Governors asked about the change in focus on marking and assessment and whether this met Ofsted requirements. Mrs. Manning advised that there is no requirement regarding frequency, but that it is about ensuring feedback and assessment is meaningful and that students know where they are and what they need to do to improve. It does not all have to be written in books.

Governors discussed the focus on doing what is right for students and staff and felt that delivering successful examination results can be achieved through the successful implementation of the plan.

The SIP for 2018/19 was unanimously **APPROVED**.

7. Headteacher’s Report

Mrs. Manning reviewed her summer term report and highlighted a number of items including:

- Year 6 transition process, school visits and admission numbers for September. The new students are coming from 42 feeder schools.
- The Year 11 revision and Year 7 Pupil Premium weekend residentials held at Grafham Water.
- The very low number of exclusions this year.

- Progress on the Headteacher's Objectives.
- Staffing update.
- Staff CPD report.

Mrs. Manning was thanked for her report.

8. Committee reports

8.1 Admissions Committee

Mrs. Job reported on the meeting held on 1 May 2018. The committee had received a report on admission numbers and also discussed the address checking process for applications from Hitchin.

Governors were pleased to note that all ontime applications from Hitchin that had not ranked a school higher than HGS had been met.

8.2 Curriculum & Performance Committee

Mrs. Job reported on the meeting held on 1 May 2018. A report on data and progress was received and discussed. All is on track, although it is difficult to make predictions due to the course and examination changes.

Feedback from Governor/Student panels was received, and it had been pleasing to note that concerns that had been raised in early panels were now being referred to as addressed.

The recent learning walks had highlighted a need to focus on Tutor Time and this has been included in the SIP for 2018/19.

A report from the Learning Support Coordinator and an update on the Teaching Alliance had been received.

8.3 Finance & Resources Committee

Mr. Fitzakerly reported on the meeting held on 8 May 2018. Despite concerns over funding, it had been pleasing to note that expenditure is on track this year and within budget. A draft budget for 2018/19 was received which showed a potential in-year deficit of £80,000 and this was discussed. Although income is slightly up, mainly due to increased student numbers Post 16, staff and utility cost increases as well as inflationary pressure on other contracts exceed the additional income. Further savings are needed.

A premises report had been received and reviewed. An arrangement has been made with a locker company which will see new lockers installed around the school which are available to students to rent for an annual fee.

An agreement has also been made with School Lettings Solutions Ltd. who will administer the letting of school facilities to the local community from 1 July 2018. This will increase the letting income that the school receives each year.

The committee had reviewed the updated Risk Register which was recommended to the Governing Body for approval. This was **AGREED**.

The committee had reviewed and approved the updated Data Protection Policy, Privacy Notices and Financial Procedures manual. This was **NOTED** by the Governing Body.

Mr. Hankin presented the proposed budget for 2018/19. He explained that further savings have been identified since the Finance committee meeting and the proposed deficit for 2018/19 had reduced to £20,000. This was primarily related to fixed costs for the new buildings and would be covered in future years by the increasing student numbers. Reserves are higher than required and can cover this in-year deficit.

Governors discussed the budget and it was then **APPROVED**.

A suggestion was made that the Governors produce a short newsletter for parents to follow up the letter sent by Headteachers in North Herts. regarding the financial situation in schools and set out the actions the school has had to take, but also explained how the funding for the Sports Hall and expansion of the school is provided and ring fenced. The Chair agreed to progress this.

8.4 Personnel Committee

Mrs. Job reported on the meeting held on 8 May 2018. The staffing establishment for 2018/19 was agreed and is being closely monitored as the school expands. A large number of policies were reviewed following changes to the model documents provided by Herts. for Learning.

Governors **NOTED** the approval of the following updated policies and procedures by the Committee:

- Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling at Work Policy
- Family & Carers Guide
- Flexible Working Policy
- Harassment and Bullying Policy and procedure
- Health & Attendance Policy
- Support Staff probationary Policy
- Shared Parental Leave Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Staff Leave of Absence policy

Governors **APPROVED** the following updated policies and documents as recommended by the Committee:

- Appointment of Support Staff – Terms and Conditions
- Capability Procedure
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy

9. Expansion update

Mr. Hankin gave a progress update on expansion work and the related changes required around the school. A considerable number of department and office moves will take place in the summer, along with the fitting out of the new buildings. The project schedule remains very tight and it is likely that some finishing off of the new buildings will continue into September.

Mrs. Manning explained that although only 2 departments are moving into the new building many others are affected by changes to their teaching space and will need time to set up at the start of term. She asked Governors for approval for a day's closure on Tuesday 4 September to allow staff to complete moves and preparations. This was **APPROVED**.

10. Meeting Dates 2018/19

Committee and Governing Body meeting dates for 2018/19 were agreed. Governor training sessions will also be held on 18 September and 20 November.

11. Link Governors

Mr. Lucas reported on time spent with the Social Science department. It had been pleasing to see how much happier and stable the department is, compared to a couple of years ago.

Mr. Scott reported on a visit to the Philosophy & Ethics department where he had sat in on a Year 13 lessons. He had discussed department concerns relating to the lack of new resources to support the curriculum and examination changes, but the staff were still very positive.

Mrs. King referred to her time in school on the INSET day and felt that the atmosphere amongst staff was good and that they appreciated the work being done to reduce workload. She had also has a discussion with Mrs. Mills on the changes being introduced relating to Safeguarding guidance.

12. Any Other Business

Mr. Hall noted that this was Mr. Jones last meeting as a Staff Governor as he is moving to a new school. He thanked him for his time as a Governor and Head of Department and Governors congratulated Mr. Jones on his promotion and wished him well.

13. Dates of next meetings

Tuesday 11th September 2018

The meeting closed at 8.25pm