

**HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY
HELD AT 7.00PM ON TUESDAY 19 MARCH 2019**

Part 1 Business

Present:

Mr. K. Balfe	Mr. S. Lucas
Ms. J. Briggs	Mrs. F. Manning (Headteacher)
Mr. K. Down	Dr. K. Middleton
Mr. G. Edwards	Mr. S. Mills
Mrs. C. Emmings	Mrs. S. Morrison
Mr. C. Hall (Chairman)	Mrs. K. Rowe
Mrs. N. Job (Vice Chair)	Mr. T. Scott
Mrs. D. Kaur	Mr. M. Seaman Hill
Mrs. M. King	

In attendance:

Mr. T. Hankin	(Clerk)
Mr. J. Crowther	(Deputy Headteacher)
Miss R. Crowe	(Head Girl)

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. C. Astill, Mr. C. Minton and Mr. S. Sprawson. Mr. T. Fitzakerly 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 4 December 2018.

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

4.2 Matters arising.

None

4.3 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2019.

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

4.4 Matters arising.

None

5. Head Girls' report

Miss Crowe reported on some of the school activities this term.

- The Classics play directed by Year 13 students had been a big success and the money raised was passed on to Herts Young Homeless and a food bank in Greece.
- Selection of students for the two SGLI trips this summer has been completed and it had been a very difficult decision to choose the six who will be attending.
- The Ambassador programme continues, with Year 12 students supporting younger students in lessons, providing 1:1 support and running clubs and events.
- The Peer Mentors continue to provide pastoral guidance to other students.
- Year 12 have just returned from a UCAS day at Brunel University which had been very useful. They have also had workshops on revision tips and motivation.
- Year 13 are preparing for their exams, and also looking forward to their prom once these are over.
- Many House charity events have been held.

Miss Crowe was thanked for her report.

6. Headteacher's report.

Mrs. Manning noted some key points from her report, circulated in advance of the meeting, and invited questions from Governors.

She reminded Governors of the current Ofsted consultation and encouraged them to read this and respond. She referred to the ongoing CPD across the school and the new peer observation programme introduced this term

The admissions information for September 2019 was reviewed. All on-time applications from the Parish of Hitchin were satisfied. There are a small number of appeals lodged at present and these will be heard in the next few weeks.

The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board has been renamed the Hertfordshire Partnership and continue to provide training for the DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Lead). The Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher are currently renewing their Safer Recruitment training.

The North Herts. Teaching Alliance continues to run the National Qualification Programme for Middle and Senior Leaders and the feedback is very complimentary. A 'Women into Leadership' course, partially funded through a DfE diversity grant began in February and is oversubscribed.

An Enthuse project is being run in conjunction with the National STEM Centre and some staff have had fantastic training at the National Centre in York. Governors were encouraged to read the Case Study attached to her report.

Over 70 applications have been received from students in other schools who are interested in joining the Sixth Form in September. This is higher than in previous years and regular contact with them is being maintained. This year they have been invited to come in

and shadow an existing Year 12 student to gain a better understanding of the courses they are interested in.

Mrs. Manning was asked how many of the applicants usually join. Based on previous years, approximately 40-50% can be expected to take up their offer of a place. Miss Crowe was asked whether she felt the shadowing helped those looking to join. She confirmed that feedback from the students involved was that they found the opportunity very useful.

Mrs. Manning was thanked for her report.

7. Committee reports

7.1 Curriculum & Performance Committee

Mrs. King referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2019. The Committee had reviewed the Ofsted School Inspection Data Summary report for 2018.

Progress 8 in 2018 was significantly above average and in the highest 10% for two groups of students; all, and middle prior attainers. Progress 8 was in the top quintile (20%) for at least two years for all pupils, high and middle prior attainers and disadvantaged pupils. Low attainers are too small a cohort to be included. Attainment 8 in 2018 was also in the highest 10% of all schools and in the top quintile (20%) for at least the past two years.

The committee had received details of the Self Evaluation activity that has taken place and also feedback from the visit of the HfL Standards Advisor. He had been very impressed with the school and its achievements and particularly liked the use of G4schools to manage data and monitor student achievement and progress.

Feedback from the Key Stage 5 student panel was reviewed. Students were very positive about the school.

Discussion had taken place regarding the rationale for the reduction in teaching hours at A level from September 2019 from 10 to 9 per fortnight. This is not ideal but a result of budget pressures. It does bring the school in line with most other Hertfordshire schools, although there are some that have reduced teaching to 8 hours.

Governors discussed the need to ensure that parents and the local Member of Parliament are aware of why this change is happening and that it is not the schools fault.

The committee had reviewed an updated Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy and recommended it for approval. The policy was **APPROVED**.

The updated Collective Worship Policy was reviewed and approved by the Committee and this was **NOTED** by Governors.

An updated protocol and template for recording details of Governor visits to link departments was also agreed by the Committee and Governors were recommended to use this. Completed forms should be forwarded to the Clerk.

7.2 Finance & Resources Committee

Mr. Down referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2019. A report on the current year financial position was received. Expenditure is in line with the planned

budget. The additional DfE grant for 'little extras' has been received, but this can only be used for capital expenditure.

Grant funding information for 2019/20 has been received. Excluding the impact of the additional students, overall funding has gone up by just 0.75%. The projected increase in salary scales for next year is expected to be 2% and other contract values are also likely to increase by a similar amount. Further savings in the overall budget therefore need to be made.

Premises and Health & Safety reports were received and there are no major issues or concerns. Snagging work on the expansion building is almost complete.

An IT Steering Group is reviewing the infrastructure and IT platform used across the school. The current Novell based system is not used in many other schools and support is harder to source. A move to a Windows based platform is underway, with completion due for September.

The committee had reviewed the Charges, Refunds and Remissions Policy, Health & Safety Policy and Accessibility Plan and these are all recommended to the Governing Body. These were all **APPROVED** by the Governors.

The committee had also approved the Anti-bribery policy and Records Management and Retention Policy and this was **NOTED** by Governors.

7.3 Personnel Committee

Mrs. Job referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2019. A staffing update had been received and the difficulty in recruiting a Teacher of Computing was noted. Mrs. Manning advised that this vacancy still exists.

A number of policies had been reviewed and approved by the Committee. The previous Family and Carers guide has been separated into separate policies to make them easier to read. There are now policies for Adoption, Maternity, Parental Leave, Paternity Leave, Paternity Pay and Shared Parental Leave. The Staff leave of Absence policy has been updated and is now called the Staff Time Off Work policy. An Online Safety Policy has been produced to replace the previous Esafety and Data Security policy.

Approval of these policies by the committee was **NOTED** by the Governors.

Mrs. Manning informed Governors that the Personnel Committee had also reviewed the updated Pay and Appraisal policies for Teachers and Non-teaching staff. However, she asked that approval of these was postponed to allow staff to provide feedback to her on the updated policies. This feedback would be considered at the next Personnel Committee meeting and the policies brought to the next Governing Body meeting for approval. This was agreed.

8. Link Governors

Mr. Mills reported on the Classics play which had been very successful and congratulated all involved. He also reported on the GSCE Evening of Dance where students performed to a very high standard. He thanked Miss Crowe for the work she has been doing supporting other schools, for being an amazing Head Girl and a fantastic ambassador for the school.

Mr. Edwards reported on time spent with the Art department. The work that is produced by students is exceptional. There was a sense of calm in the Year 11, 12 & 13 lessons that he visited and the Year 13 students appreciated having their own personal studio space. The department are happy with the level of resources they have but would appreciate an upgrade to and relocation of the computers in the department.

9. GDPR update

Mr. Crowther provided an update on GDPR activity in school. The current focus is on reviewing data retention in line with the approved policy and he reminded Governors of their responsibility regarding personal data, confidentiality and document retention. A GDPR audit is underway to identify any areas for change or improvement.

10. Any Other Business

Mr. Crowther informed Governors that the Founders' Day speaker this year is Helen Pankhurst, the great-granddaughter of Emmeline Pankhurst.

11. Dates of next meeting

Tuesday 4 June 2019

The meeting closed at 8.20pm