

**HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY
HELD AT 6.00PM ON TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 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. C. Minton
Mr. C. Hall (Chairman)	Mr. G. Montgomery
Mrs. N. Job	Mrs. S. Morrison
Mr. A. Jones	Mr. S. Sprawson
Mrs. M. King	

In attendance: Mr. T. Hankin (Clerk)

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence

Mr. Hall welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new year. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. J. Marland, Mr. M. Seaman Hill and Mr. J. Crowther (Deputy Headteacher).

2. Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair

Mr. Minton nominated Mr. Hall as Chair for a further year. This was seconded by Mrs. Job and unanimously **APPROVED**.

Mr. Hall nominated Mrs. Job to continue as Vice Chair. This was seconded by Mr. Minton and unanimously **APPROVED**.

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

None

4. Declarations of Interest

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

5. Minutes of previous meeting.

5.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2016.

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

5.2 Matters arising.

There were none.

6. Proposed School Expansion

6.1 Expansion consultation

Governors reviewed and discussed the responses received during the consultation process which had taken place in July. There was an overwhelmingly positive

response to the proposal to expand the school by 1.5 forms of entry (45 students) from September 2018. It was therefore unanimously **AGREED** to proceed with the expansion of Hitchin Girls' School by 45 students from September 2018.

Following the decision to proceed with the expansion, the Governors ratified the decisions taken at the meeting in July regarding the appointment of Lyster Grillet and Harding as the Design Team, and the signing of the Funding Agreement with the Local Authority.

6.2 September 2018 Admission Criteria

Governors discussed possible changes to the admission criteria for September 2018, linked to the proposed expansion of the school. The Local Authority Admissions Policy Manager had presented various options and modelling data during a presentation held before the meeting and this information was reviewed. The expansion of the school is to support the increased demand, primarily from Hitchin with some increase from local villages, and Governors agreed that it was important that the admission criteria supported this. It was noted that further proposals for new housing in the town and villages could increase demand even further, but any changes made to the criteria are to address the current prediction of student numbers.

Although the proposed expansion is to increase the intake by 45 students to 210, this does require planning approval to be obtained for a new building. As this approval is unlikely to be in place until Spring 2017, and the consultation on the admission criteria changes has to take place at the end of 2016, Governors **AGREED** to an increase in the PAN (Published Admission Number) to 180 for September 2018. If there is a need, at the Local Authority's request, the school would agree to take additional students over the PAN number for 2018 in order to meet local need. The PAN would then be formally increased to 210 from September 2019.

Governors **AGREED** to consult on the changes to the admission criteria for 2018:

- To increase the places allocated to the parish of Hitchin to 120
- To introduce a cap on the number of places allocated to students from the parish of Letchworth of 20. This cap will include places allocated under all rules, including siblings.
- To remove Baldock from the list of priority parishes. It was agreed to amend the sibling rule so that if an existing student at the school lives in Baldock and has a sibling who wishes to apply, they would still be eligible under rule 3 (siblings in the priority area).

7. Appointment of Committees

Mr. Hall reminded Governors that it has been agreed to merge the Finance and Asset Management committees this year into a new Finance & Resources committee.

7.1 Committee Appointments

The membership of the committees was reviewed and **APPROVED** (Appendix 1).

The following appointments as Chairs of the Committees were unanimously **APPROVED**.

- Admissions – Mrs N. Job
- Personnel – Mrs. N. Job
- Finance & Resources – Mr. K. Down

- Curriculum & Performance – Mrs. J. Marland (Subject to confirmation as she was not at the meeting).

7.2 Committee Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were reviewed, in particular with regard to the merging of the Finance & Asset Management Committees, and **APPROVED**.

8. Examination results summary and Headteacher's update

Mrs. Manning gave an overview of results following the summer examinations. She reminded Governors that more detailed analysis will be given to the Curriculum & Performance Committee and all Governors are welcome to attend for this.

At A level, over a third (35.2%) of the grades achieved by students are A* and A grades. 64.0% of the grades attained by students are A*, A or B and 87.3% of the grades are A* - C. This figure increased by 5% compared to 2015 and is the highest number of A* - C grades achieved by students in recent years. 99.7% of all entries are A* - E passes. Fewer students had to go through Clearing this year for a University place, and there was an increase in the number of unconditional offers.

AS results were good, but the mix of new and legacy qualifications made analysis against previous years a little harder. The school compares well with national figures. There are a few subjects where work is needed to improve outcomes and this will be discussed during the exam results meetings held with each Head of Department. The percentage of A and B grades is 47.8%. 71.2% are grades A - C and 92.8 % of all entries are A - E passes.

GCSE saw the introduction of new performance measures – Progress 8 and Attainment 8 and the school has done very well against these measures. The Unvalidated Progress 8 score for the school is 0.71 which means the Year 11 cohort achieved greater than average progress compared to similar students in other schools nationally by almost three-quarters of a grade per subject. The Attainment 8 score is 6.23 (this equates to an average of just over a B grade) while the percentage of students achieving the threshold in English and Maths (currently a C grade) is 88%. The percentage of students achieving 5+ A* - C grades is 90.5% and the percentage achieving 5+ A* - C including English and Maths is 87.3%. 92.6% made expected progress from KS2 to KS4 in English with 88.5% making expected progress in Maths from KS2 to KS4. Governors were reminded that all results are provisional and subject to change following Enquiries after Results (EAR) and the validation of national data.

Governors congratulated the staff and students on the excellent results at a time of great uncertainty and change to courses and the curriculum. Thanks were expressed to Mrs. Emmings, (Examinations & Data Manager) for all her work on the examination process.

Mrs. Manning confirmed that the school has started the term fully staffed. Two staff are on one term appointments (Physics & Health & Social Care) and adverts for permanent positions from January 2017 will be published shortly. Mrs. Manning also updated Governors on the former member of staff found guilty during the summer of offences of breach of trust.

Mrs. Manning reported that the new Year 7 students have settled in well and very positive feedback has been received from parents following the Induction week. Ms. Brady, Head of Year 7, was thanked for organising the week.

9. Sports Hall project update

Mr. Hankin provided an update on the project. There has been a slight delay to work starting on site whilst issues are addressed regarding highway access for construction vehicles and further soil investigations are completed to establish the most suitable and economic solution for the foundations. The contract for the construction of the project is not yet signed as confirmation of costs relating to the foundations are awaited. The initial Letter of Intent has expired and the contractor has requested a further one to cover the design and other preparatory work that has already taken place and is continuing this month. The potential costs need to be established before a further Letter of Intent can be considered.

10. Multi Academy Trust update

Mrs, Manning gave an update on Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) and possible options for the school. She advised that there are lots of informal discussions taking place within schools across Hertfordshire regarding conversion to academy status, establishing or joining a MAT and converting from a single Academy Trust (such as HGS) to a MAT. Herts for Learning are establishing a separate MAT which schools may join if they wish. She gave examples of potential benefits of being in a MAT, (such as greater sharing of resources, financial and operational efficiencies, improved career development for staff, better recruitment and retention of staff, opportunities to support and develop other schools) as well as possible disadvantages (danger of perceived loss of identity, inability to subsequently separate from the MAT, the idea of one Headteacher as CEO being Line Manager of another Headteacher). It is possible that, if the school were not to form or become part of a MAT, there is a risk of being 'left behind' and missing opportunities to collaborate formally, set up new schools and provide support for others.

Governors discussed the Government focus on academisation and the MAT options. They believed it important that the school remains at the forefront of educational initiatives, provided these are for the benefit of students and the community. They agreed that it was important to fully investigate the options and impact on the school and requested that more detailed information is gathered on the options, structure, benefits, concerns, risks and issues relating to becoming a MAT.

11. Link Governors

There were no changes to the list of Governor link departments. Mrs. Job reported that she had spent a half day in school taking part in a learning walk with a focus on SEN which had been a very useful way of seeing the school in action.

12. Any Other Business

Mrs. Manning mentioned the latest Government announcement regarding possible option admission selection by ability. Until further information was available, Governors agreed that there was little further to discuss.

13. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 6 December 2016

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Appendix A

HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2016/2017

ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Mr Ken Down
Mr Chris Hall
Mrs Nesta Job (Chair)
Mrs Frances Manning
Mrs Michelle McPhail
Mr Steve Mills
Mr Colin Minton
Mr Stuart Sprawson

Clerk: Mr Tony Hankin

CURRICULUM & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Mrs Chris Emmings
Mr Chris Hall
Mrs Nesta Job
Mr Andrew Jones
Mrs Mary King
Mrs Frances Manning
Mrs Jane Marland
Mr Steve Mills
Mrs Sonia Morrison

Clerk: Mr Tony Hankin

CONSORTIUM JOINT GOVERNOR COMMITTEE

Mrs Nesta Job
Mrs Frances Manning
Mr Chris Hall

FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Mrs Charlotte Astill
Mr Kieran Balfe
Mr Ken Down (Chair)
Mrs Chris Emmings
Mr Tony Fitzakerly
Mr Chris Hall
Mr Simon Lucas
Mrs Michelle McPhail
Mrs Frances Manning
Mr Steve Mills
Mr Colin Minton
Mr Geoff Montgomery
Mr Mark Seaman Hill

Clerk: Mr Tony Hankin

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Mr Chris Hall
Mrs Nesta Job (Chair)
Mrs Mary King
Mr Simon Lucas
Mrs Frances Manning
Mr Colin Minton
Mrs Sonia Morrison
Mr Stuart Sprawson

Clerk: Mr Tony Hankin