

HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting held on

Monday 21 September 2020 at 5.30pm,

Via Zoom

Present

Governors:

Mr Matthew Ryder (MR) – Chair of Governors
Mr Mark Coles (MC) - Vice Chair of Governors
Mr Mark Patterson (MJP) - Principal/Governor
Mr John Brown (JB) - Foundation Governor
Mr Paul Askew (PA) - Co-opted Governor
Mr Alan Winchcombe (AW) - Co-opted Governor
Mrs Vicky McGregor (VM) - Co-opted Governor
Mrs Emma Leach (EL) – Parent Governor
Mr Steve Fidler (SF) - Staff Governor
Mr Brad Panther (BAP) - Staff Governor

In attendance:

Miss Anna Nightingale (AN) - Vice Principal
Mr Simon Cooke (SAC) - Vice Principal
Mrs Kate Tandy (KMT) - Vice Principal
Mrs Debbie Warner (DW) - Clerk to the Governors

1.	Apologies for absence
	There were no apologies.
2.	Declarations of Interest
	There were no new declarations of interest.
3.	Elections/Terms of office
	<p>Matthew Ryder confirmed his interest in continuing as Chair for another year. This was unanimously approved by governors.</p> <p>John Brown's candidature to continue as a Foundation governor for a 4 year term was supported by the Chair of the Foundation of Hinchingbrooke, Paul Fenney.</p> <p>Mark Coles' term of office as a co-opted governor expires in December 2020 but will continue as Vice Chair until this time.</p> <p>Paul Askew's term of office as a co-opted governor expires in December 2020.</p> <p>The Chair agreed to speak with governors outside the meeting regarding succession planning.</p> <p>ACTION: CHAIR TO SPEAK TO GOVERNORS REGARDING SUCCESSION PLANNING</p>
4.	To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2020
	Minutes were approved as submitted, with no amendments, and will be signed by the Vice-Chair (electronically) as an accurate record of proceedings.
5.	Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda
	There were none.
6.	To complete register of pecuniary interests
	Governors completed their annual register of pecuniary interests.

Signed:



Date: 07/12/2020

7.	To provide strategic leadership
	<p><u>7.1 To adopt the Academy Code of Practice</u> The Chair advised governors that governors were required to adopt the Academy Code of Practice which sets out the broad principles that governors should work to. Governors were happy to adopt the Code but noted that, as a local governing body, they did not have responsibility for overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent as this is now under the Trust's remit.</p> <p><u>7.2 To confirm governor responsibilities</u> The Chair asked governors to confirm they were happy with the roles set out in the membership document. Governors to continue with their link governor roles but further discussion highlighted some uncertainty around statutory and desirable link governor roles and the Chair asked the clerk to clarify this to ensure the LGB are compliant. It was noted that a link governor for Equality would be an important role to fill; VM confirmed she will take on this role.</p> <p>ACTION: CLERK TO ASCERTAIN STATUTORY LINK GOVERNOR ROLES VM TO INVESTIGATE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LINK GOVERNOR EQUALITY ROLE</p> <p><u>7.3 To confirm governor training</u> The principal asked governors if there were any specific areas of training they would like to undertake for the academic year. There were 2 areas that governors felt would be pertinent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ofsted refresher training• Understanding the curriculum under the new framework <p>In addition to training sessions, governors made the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-cursor training on the key principles of topics contained in the LGB agenda plan• Update on the school's position; Hinchingbrooke Approach to Teaching (HAT).• Staff and pupil voice; a focus on well-being of staff and pupils• Curriculum review; how it is being supported by teachers and by school development to gain an understanding of what is driving the curriculum and how it compares to other schools.• Safeguarding update – scheduled March 2021 meeting. <p>ACTION: ARRANGE OFSTED REFRESHER TRAINING FOR GOVERNORS AS FIRST TRAINING SESSION (JAN 2021) - PRINCIPAL ARRANGE FUTURE TRAINING AS DISCUSSED IN ITEM 7.3 – PRINCIPAL/AN/KMT/SAC</p> <p>The Vice chair advised that, although training was important, there was a need to be mindful not to over-burden staff due to the current additional workload relating to COVID-19.</p>
9.	To ensure accountability of the SLT for the educational performance of the school
	<p><u>9.1 To receive the Principal's report (MJP)</u> Governors confirmed they had received and read the report prior to the meeting. The Principal explained that, unsurprisingly, the report is largely COVID-19 focused. A good start to the school term with both staff and students coping well. He added that staffing is currently stable and the school had been able to make some very good teacher appointments and although unable to appoint a Head of DT, Anneli Lombard is providing support in this area. Attendance figures are currently 96.4%. COVID-19 related absence is not included as per DfE guidelines and the real attendance figures are therefore lower than the recorded figure. Currently, there are 31 COVID-19 related absences. There have been 2 exclusions since the start of term. The school roll is included in the report and the Principal was pleased to report that numbers are healthy, including sixth form students, showing an increase on previous years. He informed governors that in line with previous years, the school is oversubscribed with a large waiting list for Year 7 students.</p> <p>Questioning/challenge: A governor asked if the Principal had been pleased with how the start of the term had gone so far. A governor noted that calmness and focus on teaching and learning at the beginning of term had been impressive. The Principal advised that despite COVID-19, the start of term had been fantastic with an enthusiastic student body. He was also pleased to report that staff morale is extremely high.</p>

The Chair thanked the Principal for his positive report and noted that the new routine seems to be going well and teaching staff have adapted extremely well. The Chair thanked the Principal and SLT on how well the school has been led during a difficult time.

The Principal advised governors that there continues to be a lot of work going on behind the scenes to develop remote learning in the case of possible future lockdowns.

9.2 To confirm focus for governor visits for Autumn, Spring and Summer term (SAC)

SAC advised governors that it is usual to arrange one visit per term. A visit on curriculum and the changes that are taking place in this area deemed to be appropriate for the first visit. Topics for further visits will be discussed at the next meeting.

A governor thought a future visit could be focused around students and staff and how their education has been impacted by COVID-19 in order to get their perspective on how they feel about their education and progress.

ACTION:

LOOK AT DATES IN AUTUMN TERM FOR CURRICULUM VISIT – SAC

DISCUSS TOPICS OF FURTHER VISITS AT NEXT MEETING – CLERK TO PUT ON AGENDA

9.3 To receive School Development Plan and Recovery Plan 2020-21 (MJP)

Governors had received the plan prior to the meeting.

The plan currently shows:

AN working with Heads of Department on curriculum plans and working on Knowledge Organisers. Looking at curriculum to ensure effective timelining. Getting Ofsted ready.

SAC leading on Hinchingbrooke Approach to Teaching (HAT). Tightening up on expectations. Form time activities have been launched.

The Principal advised that the document will be populated as progress is made and will be agendered again at future meetings.

Another focus will be improvement to the Sixth Form. The Principal indicated that this had been a weak area in the past but was optimistic that the recent appointment of Head of Sixth Form, Vicky Rix, will lead the sixth form to a better quality provision.

Questioning/challenge:

A governor remarked that there is strong evidence of cohesion within the leadership team.

A governor noted that the priorities for the school are very clearly defined.

A governor noted a high degree of confidence within the team with strong signs of clarity and focus. Going forward, he remarked on the strong foundation in place but would like to see more evidence on quality analysis.

A governor referred to section 2.7 in the document and asked how the school was measuring the learning deficit

AN advised that she is working with Heads of Department to bring forward concepts on future work and looking at retrieval practice with the confidence to put in new topics to encourage students to catch up.

A governor asked if RPE GCSE for Year 10s would go ahead

AN is hopeful that this will be the case. RPE curriculum has resumed and are revisiting elements. Building confidence where there is anxiety is a focus at the moment.

9.4 to receive an update on start of term review

KMT was pleased to advise that the start of term has been very positive. Success in this area can be apportioned to Groundwork that has been put in by staff over the summer. A guidebook has gone to staff, parents and students to ensure a consistent message on expectations. A staged start in September was extremely successful and helped to alleviate anxieties amongst students. The pastoral team are encouraging students to talk about their experiences and what has happened over the summer. The site team have done an excellent job in creating a safe one way system for students. Year 7 were able to do a transition week to help them settle in. New timings to the school day has benefited students from a pastoral perspective. Local news is being fed to students via SMSC. Femi Walker is putting together initiatives on diversity and emotional checks are being carried out by Heads of Year.

9.5 To receive an update on summer 2020 grades (AN)

AN circulated a report prior to the meeting. She added that unsurprisingly this summer has been extremely difficult. Dealing with appeals and the government U-term has been very emotional for students. AN was pleased that students had now received CAG results and was satisfied that these indicated accurate results for the students. AN advised governors that there will be no national data and Ofsted will use last year's data rather than the more impressive results of this year. AN advised that the Disadvantaged group did not perform as well and this will be an area where catch up funding will be utilised to try to reduce this gap.

Governors thanked staff for all the hard work that had been done in the background in producing accurate sets of results for students and acknowledged the likely anxieties of the staff.

9.6 Remote Learning (SAC)

SAC had provided a report to governors prior to the meeting. He referred to the government guidelines on the expectations of how remote learning is conducted. He advised governors that, with a couple of days' notice of lockdown, remote learning was predominately set for students via Doodle. SLT have put planning in place for all the different scenarios as per government guidelines. Progress made in terms of remote learning since the start of lockdown has been impressive with all staff having access to a digital device to deliver remote learning. Teachers are setting work on Doodle but will also be using Microsoft Teams in order to make regular contact with students. Teachers are able to dial in and introduce lessons and use the worksheets that have been uploaded via Doodle. SAC advised governors that many departments are up to speed with remote learning and he will be doing training with other departments over the next few weeks. SAC advised that correspondence will be going out to parents at the end of September to inform parents of what the school is delivering in terms of remote learning. Departments are also moving to Google Classroom to deliver lessons.

9.7 To receive an update on HBK digital strategy

DJP and DIB who are leading the development of digital strategy at Hinchingbrooke School and updated governors on the proposed direction for the school. Currently, a working party is trialing Google Classroom as a platform to use across the schools in the MAT and ascertain its viability as a remote learning tool. Early indications are promising with positive feedback from users.

Questioning/challenge:

A governor referred to the numerous systems already used by the school and asked for clarification on how this would fit with Zoom/Loom/Doodle etc.

DJP explained that Doodle is a homework tool only and its limitations as a remotely learning platform were evident during the first lockdown. Google Classroom is interactive giving students editing rights and a much better remote learning experience for students.

A governor asked that, with Hinchingbrooke being a Microsoft school, was Google Classroom compatible with Microsoft and how is this being planned for.

DJP confirmed that they can coexist, especially in the short term. There will be a need for students and staff to have gmail accounts but mapping software will be utilized to enable both platforms to work together.

A governor acknowledged that the plan looks cohesive and well planned for but stressed the emphasis should be more about pedagogy rather than any particular platform.

DIB confirmed that input from the planning phase will ensure that this area is considered.

A governor asked if there any been any input from the MAT; will it be a Trust wide approach to use Google Classroom.

DJP confirmed that the CEO of the Trust is keen for the strategy to sit at Trust level which will assist in the continuity of remote learning of students and staff, albeit more significant to Hinchingbrooke School.

The Principal thanked DJP and DIB for their time and acknowledge the additional workload they were taking on to ensure the school has the best possible outcome in terms of remote learning. He added that Google Classroom appeared to the front runner at this time and there will be requirement to apply a strategy around the pedagogy.

The chair thanked DJP and DIB for their excellent presentation.

8. AOB

The Chair thanked staff for the excellent work that was going on in the school during this difficult time.

8. Date of next meeting

Confirmed as Monday 7 December at 5.30pm via Zoom

Meeting closed at 7.50pm

Signed:



Date: 07/12/2020