Minutes of the Local Governing Body of Harrogate Grammar School held in Room S03 on Wednesday 27th September 2018, commencing 6.15 pm

Present: Mr P Cotton (Chair), Mr J Godfrey, Mrs J Johnson, Mr R Sheriff (Executive Headteacher), Dr T Stowell (Vice Chair), Mr I Sugarman, Mr J Topping, Mrs J Watson

Also present: Mrs K Moat, Mr N Renton, Mrs C Bradbury (Minutes).

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<th>Minute No.</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<td>LGB 1</td>
<td>The meeting commenced at 6.25 pm.</td>
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| LGB 2      | 1. **Apologies**  
Apologies had been received from Mr D Hurcomb, Mrs Johnson and Mr S Howell.  
Apologies were accepted. |
| LGB 3      | 2. **Election of Chair/Vice Chair**  
Both Mr Cotton and Dr Stowell confirmed they were happy to continue as Chair and Vice Chair respectively, there were no further nominations and all Governors were in agreement for their re-election. |
| LGB 4      | 3. **Declaration of Interests – Completion of Annual Form**  
The Clerk, as well as sending them electronically, also gave out hard copies of the Annual Declaration Form and requested Governors to complete. |
| LGB 4      | 4. **Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising**  
The Minutes of the last meeting were checked, there were no errors or omissions, the Minutes were proposed as a true and accurate record by Mr Topping, seconded by Mr Godfrey, all in favour.  
**Matters Arising**  
A Governor asked about *the procurement process discussed by the CFO at the last meeting*. It was confirmed the work has all been done in Sixth Form.  
The SMSC Policy has been updated and is on the website. |
Report back on West End Avenue

It was confirmed that the CFO has had a discussion with the Trust’s Solicitors regarding this matter. The feedback from this is:

He thinks the idea could work although it is not very common. He thinks a licence arrangement would be easier to achieve than a lease, although may not be as lucrative. (A lease however would require cooperation from the LA who may take a slice of the proceeds). A licence is more of a personal arrangement with the resident at the time that essentially dies if the resident vacates whereas a lease is a more complex instrument which would require greater legal attention were a property to change hands.

He recommended:

1. before doing anything else, sound out the LA in principle – would they be friendly to the idea.
2. be wary of incurring legal fees – design a simple process for residents to opt in via a generic sign-up form
3. hold a “Town Hall” style meeting to explain the scheme to parents. Try and do it in "one shot". Avoid engaging with multiple lawyers on the residents’ side.

It was agreed that the Executive Headteacher would speak with the Local Authority. All Governors were in favour of proceeding this way.

5. Executive Headteacher’s Report

The Report had been issued to Governors ahead of the meeting. The Executive Headteacher gave an overview of the report. He thanked Mrs Moat and Mr Renton for having done a fantastic job over the last year, very strong team in place and grateful to them for the work they have done.

With regards to admissions and leavers, there were concerns last year about retention of Year 11 students which stood at 72%. This year has increased to 81% which is back up to the normal level. For Sixth Form, currently in year 12 there are 313 and in year 13 277 which is 590 students. Looking likely to get 600 next year with the current year 11 numbers.

The Executive Headteacher wanted Governors to be aware of the work which goes on during the summer months to support and help students following their exam results, helping those who were not as successful as those who were.

The Associate Headteacher took Governors through the Data Dashboard. Happy with the results at KS3, although there is some differences between the targets and final outcomes, due to the methodology used by our teachers. In the process of re-training the staff to help with this. On an individual level the teachers are picking up those children who are under-achieving. A Governor asked if we take an example of Year 8 Maths 9-5 the target was 91 and in the Summer this ended up at 58, are you saying for next year the target is more likely to be around 60 or has the 58 been marked up too harshly? Yes, they were marked too harshly, 91 was a high target, this is what was shown in FFT (Fisher Family Trust), not entirely accurate but does give national data set. A Governor asked is the FFT score for our school? Yes, takes into account a child in this school, same age, month of birth, gender and what they went on to achieve, it does not take into account personal circumstances. Work is being done across the Trust to look at KS3 data to help each of the schools. There was a query for the marking too harshly for the 9-5’s, they will still be getting more than 5 so are the 5’s being marked down as well? There are a good number of grades at 7, 8 and 9, it is the lower level where they are struggling to mark. Slightly concerned as for FFT a couple of Years ago you were say it is good, not you are saying it is not? It is a good measure to use, it is a Statistical target, which is explained during assemblies and is a challenging target for them to work towards. Target setting has inherent weaknesses whatever the methodology.
For the Year 12’s, KS5 data, A*-B the target is 69%. Governors may wonder why target grade is higher than previous cohort, this is simply because the bar is being set higher which puts the school in the top 10%, which is something to bear in mind when the tracking data is looked at.

The Executive Headteacher then referred Governors to the exclusion data. This has been discussed at various meetings previously. It is the same trend as before a very small number of repeat offenders who’s behaviour is very difficult to manage, alternative provision is now being put in place for these students. Discussions have been had with other Headteachers in the area, there is a lack of viable provision in North Yorkshire, and is the same across the country. The Associate Heads and Deputy Head have all been working together to plan provision and make sure these children are looked after. A Governor asked number of year 7 and 8 seems to be high, so are they coming to HGS with these issues? Yes, the issues are appearing in years 4, 5 and 6. However, although these numbers, whilst they look high, is a small percentage compared to the overall number of students at the school. The NEST provision is due to start after half term, in conjunction with the Trust schools and Rossett High school.

With regards to attendance matters, last year the percentage was 95, but would like to be at 97%. This is caused partly due to the closure of school last winter with the snow. There has been some work done in analysing students groups who have significantly low attendance, who have a significant impact on the overall figures. Where there are issues, the Attendance Manager is working with contacting families. A Governor asked with regards to unauthorised holiday, where are we with the letter about this? A first letter does get issued, if there is a second absence then it will result in a fine. Have we had any instances of this? Not yet. The request goes to Year Manager first, then to the Associate Head, examples of authorised holiday could be family wedding, terminally ill member of the family – each application is done on an individual basis.

There was nothing significant to report on staff matters. There are a few staff returners, and a student who is now working as a TA within Learning Support. The Associate Heads have already met with each of the new staff and there is a welcome staff induction meal taking place.

The Executive Headteacher explained to Governors that the CFO was away on leave due to working on Trust matters over the summer. He referred Governors to the Finance report. He explained about the matter of the Teachers pay award, which has caused worries, with talk of this being an unfunded pay rise, but 2% had been allocated within the budget. 3.5% has been awarded by the Government which they confirmed would be fully funded apart from the first 1%, budget planning needs to be re-done. A Governor asked how much is 1% of pay for the school? This will be checked and reported back, but it thing it is around £260,000 across the Trust.

Alumni – there is discussion around an official launch of the Alumni site, tried to capture as many students as possible on results day, however this was not high on the list for students to do on the day, however 40 did sign up. It was confirmed that there is also a link on the website for donations.

**Student Outcomes**

The figures are still provision as there are a number of re-marks taking place. An example of a re-mark is a student who’s Sociology script went up by 20 marks from A to A*. Each student across the cohort look to be a grade below where they should have been. This was a particular year group who had faced significant trauma over the past year including the loss of a student and students also losing parents. However, 60% achieved A* - B, which was a good result as at the start of the year the target was 55%. A* - D is down to 92% compared to the target of 99%. There has been an increase in unconditional offers this year, out of 44 unconditional offers 34 students were under their target grades. Overall there has been a very good performance given the context faced this year.

Spring 2 predictions were quite accurate which was a useful measure. Top performing subjects were Spanish, Politics, Further Maths and Maths, Italian and Drama. Subjects of concern include Business, for which Governors had already been briefed on with two years of significant disruption.
A Governor asked has there been any comeback from parents regarding the gradings? No, if the cohort assessment is looked at for business it is less than 10% below what they were targeted so not too far off. Physics is also a poorer performer in comparative terms, a discussion has already been held with the Head of Science in the data meeting. It has been agreed to look at the entry requirement for the course. Music is also of concern, cohort size is a lot smaller, with staffing turnover as well. However there is now a new Faculty leader and her performance measure is to improve results along with uptake and retention. The A Level exam board for English Literature was changed, and although it was thought this was the right think to do, outcomes have dropped so this is now being reviewed. A Governor asked is there any concern with computing? Yes this is on the watch list, difficulty is it is a small cohort, with 11 students, the new Faculty Leader is looking into this already. It was agreed that the Faculty Leader now in post would come along at a future meeting to speak to Governors about the Faculty. There has been a very good performance in BTEC subjects which is really positive.

A Governor expressed concern the gender gap is almost the same as last year but it is still there, saying boys are doing a lot better but this does not seem apparent from the results? It was difficult to track last year within the groups, with the absence of the Data Analyst, different tracking had to be used, however the Data Analyst has now returned so better tracking can now be done. It was agreed that the gender gap matter would be looked further into.

Turning to GCSE Results, the majority of subjects were on the new 9-1 specification for the first time, only three which were not – Italian, Product Design and Business Studies. There was therefore a lot of uncertainty, with no past papers available. However, the outcomes for GCSE are really pleasing. It appears the progress measure will be around .56, it was .45 last year. Meetings have already happened with the Heads of English and Maths with the lower 9-5 results. The EBACC measure has increased, and there have been good successes in the Pupil Premium cohort.

For individual subject areas, Business Studies is there for the same reasons as the A Levels, however it has not affected the popularity and uptake, there are even more students wanting to do business Studies this year with 6 classes in Year 10 and having new teachers in place the lessons have got off to a good start. There were 16 students who wanted to do Textiles within their Art classes, which was a specific group, re-moderation being carried out next week and Textiles has been removed from the future curriculum. There have been staffing issues with languages, especially French, however there are now four new members of staff in the Faculty, Ms Wood has also returned to school part time to pick up some classes. There was not a particularly large cohort for Product Design so this can go up and down. A Governor asked about the results for Physics, 62.7% at GCSE. This is a selective cohort, a smaller number of students who do Triple Science rather than Combined Science.

There were no further comments or questions from Governors. The Chair, on behalf of all Governors, thanked all staff at HGS for the hard work carried out and the great results.

**Class Sizes**

A Governor had asked for this matter to be included on the Agenda. Looking at number of students within each class in the Sixth Form ie., 34 pupils in an English class. The Head of Sixth Form had been asked to look at this in terms of what is the school Policy, is there an adverse effect.

The Governors were handed a pack of papers which covered the research carried out including Year 12 Average Class Sizes at the beginning of September, Student Totals for classes in Year 13 for 2017-18, and for 2018-19 and University applications and destinations.

It was explained to Governors that class size is a complex area in terms of planning. With 200 students from Year 11 and students new to the school this affects what is planned in terms of class size. Due to students changing their minds, recruitment etc., numbers do reduce from the beginning of the term. The only areas of concern still would be Sociology and Psychology, which are being addressed. A Governor asked what is the Policy in terms of maximum number of students in classes? There is no written Policy, however have used research guidance based on 800 studies, shows little link between size and progress. The Governors then had a discussion.
regarding this matter and the Head of Sixth form offered to meet again with individual Governors if they were still concerned.

6. Chair of Governors’ Report

The Chair gave a verbal report to Governors. He had had a difficult meeting with a parent today, which could be a potential complaint, the Chair to look into this further and at Policies and Strategies at school for dealing with bereavement.

7. Link Governors and Visits to School

The Link Governor reports had been issued, there was the Annual Safeguarding Report, along with notes from the meeting with the SEN.


The Executive Headteacher spoke about the new Student Entrance proposals, with plans on screen for Governors to look at. He also spoke about conversations with Judith Kirk from NYCC regarding future proposals and funding. All Governors were in approval for these to be taken further.

9. Correspondence

The Chair spoke about emails received, one from a parent of a child at Western Primary, bemoaning about the fact that girls are not getting support at HGS in terms of extra-curricular PE. Discussions have been held between Governors and the Head of PE, there have been improvements, however there is an issue with the number of children, and lack of female staff to run the session. A Governor raised the point a parent had volunteered for football but no-one had taken him up on this offer. This email to be sent to the head of PE with the Associate Heads to be copied in. The Chair confirmed he had spoken with Mr Brown over the Summer who has taken responsibility for Year 9 Rugby, and the transformation is having someone interested in Rugby is great.

There was a very positive email from a teacher who recently ran the Duke of Edinburgh weekend. There were two students with diabetes, two teachers stayed up all night to help the students. The Clerk to distribute the email.

10. Any Other Business

A Governor raised the matter of feedback from the Rewards Trips which took place in July this year. The park was far too busy, students could not access the rides, so there was a question could this be moved back to September? Further discussion to be had by the Associate Heads with SLT.


The School Development Plan for 2018-19 had been issued to Governors prior to the meeting. The format for this has changed, however the three top priorities are the same as last year. This still being worked out with SLT, and Governors were asked to give feedback direct to the Associate Headteachers.

The Chair thanked everybody for attending the meeting, and the meeting closed at 20:48.