



HARROGATE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

Minutes of the Local Governing Body of

held on Thursday 5 October 2023 at 5.30pm

Present: Mr A Lindley (Chair), Mr N Renton (Headteacher), Ms J Watson, Dr J Featherstone, Mr D Hurcomb, Mr C Howard, Ms L Charles, Miss B Watson (visitor)

Apologies Mr J Topping, Dr T Stowell

Also present: Mrs Moat, Ms Smith, Mrs A Toulson (Minutes)

Minute No.		Action
LGB 1	<p>1. Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from Mr J Topping and Dr T Stowell.</p> <p>Introductions were made.</p>	
LGB 2	<p>2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair</p> <p>Andrew Lindley was proposed and accepted as Chair of Governors. John Topping was proposed and accepted as Vice Chair of Governors.</p> <p>All governors agreed these appointments.</p>	
LGB 3	<p>3. Minutes of the last meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on 30 June 2023 were agreed as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>This was proposed by Dr Featherstone and seconded by Mr Howard.</p>	
LGB 4	<p>4. Headteacher's Report</p> <p>Student numbers</p> <p>Mr Renton reported that there are no significant changes in student numbers. The numbers of students leaving looks high but this is due to Y13 leaving in the summer.</p> <p>There are also a higher number of Y11 students who have left and not progressed into Sixth Form than previous years. This has been the right decision for those students and they have all received advice on alternative and appropriate options from our Careers adviser.</p>	

A Governor asked what 'Strive' was. Mr Renton explained that it was an alternative provision provider and was run by an ex member of staff.

A Governor asked if the Sixth Form numbers had been affected by the changes in the Rossett Sixth Form this year. Mr Renton advised that we had an additional 23 students following the announcement.

A Governor asked how many Y11 students had not joined Sixth Form. Mr Renton explained that ordinarily we retain about 80% of students however this year, 85 Y11 students left. There are always some students who do not meet the entry or course requirements. Due to the Careers advisor, these children already had an alternative route. We think the cohort was unique and do not anticipate similar levels of progression next year.

Students who did not meet the grades on results day are given a yellow form and a Governor had had feedback about that. Mr Renton advised that this was so that students were easily identified and could be given immediate help and support.

The current Sixth Form plan is that there are sufficient students in Y11 at Rossett to enable them to run their Y12 next year. There will be collaboration and partnership working going forward and we will work on a longer term plan.

A Governor asked how many Y12 students are needed at Rossett for it to be viable. Mr Renton understands that it is 100 students.

Data Dashboard

Mrs Moat advised that Y8 are largely in line with where we would expect them to be.

Y9 are lower than where we would like and there have some challenges in terms of behaviour. We have just introduced a specialist provision in the Phoenix centre.

As reported to Governors before, we are seeing increasing number of students who need support. We currently have a higher percentage of students with special needs and EHCPs than the percentages for North Yorkshire.

We have an Assistant Headteacher who is the SENCO and she has a significant workload. As a result, we are looking to recruit support for her, in particular with EHCPs.

Mrs Moat reported that we have no prior data for current Y10 students so they will be taking YELLIS tests. The results will then provide information for us to produce target grades.

The Government have confirmed that they are looking to provide an alternative for P8. There is no value added in Sixth Form this year.

Y10 are where we would expect them to be and support in is in place for Y11.

Y13 have a 10% higher target than last year.

Mr Renton explained how the ALIS grades are calculated.

Mrs Moat confirmed that the one area that has not performed as well as we hoped is disadvantaged students although, our gaps have not widened as much as nationally. The current Y11 disadvantaged cohort is much larger than last year.

We have an ambitious aim for zero gaps but closing the gap is proving very difficult. We are trying lots of strategies. This cohort is significantly impacted by poor attendance and unfortunately some cases are really hard to reach.

Culture

Mr Renton confirmed that the days lost to suspension last year were 112 days. This is still relatively low when compared to the years before the pandemic.

There were no permanent exclusions last year.

Attendance

The final attendance figure for last year was lower than 2021/2022, even though we have more strategies in place. Our attendance figure is however better than the national figure. It has been difficult to compare year on year as the Department of Education have changed the way attendance is recorded after the pandemic.

There is still an issue around COVID and there has also been an increase in holidays in term times. It is important that parents understand the importance of attendance at school. We are fining for holidays taken in term time. We have added another member to the attendance team and we are in a better position than last year.

As this is a national issue, the Department of Education have started to release attendance data fortnightly.

We have implemented a change in our Just B provision so we can give more support to students.

Ms Smith advised that we have lower persistent absenteeism than North Yorkshire and Yorkshire however, we are seeing an impact and there is still more to do, in particular around parental attitudes.

A Governor asked if the increased absences were as a result of the pandemic and if there is now more general anxiety. Mr Renton confirmed that we have seen an increase in families referring to anxiety. More parents now work from home and are able to be at home to look after the children rather than send them to school if they are unwell.

Miss Smith advised that our target before the pandemic was 97% attendance and we are currently just under 95%.

Safeguarding

Ms Smith is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Mrs Jackson is supporting.

One of the key changes to the safeguarding policy is the introduction of monitoring and filtering of what children can access online. This is especially important at HGS given the prevalence of IT in school. As a school, we want to be able to identify the child accessing the harmful material although, this is not compulsory in the guidance. Our current systems

Feedback to Governors on monitoring and filtering

do not allow for this and the matter has been raised with our CEO, Mr Sheriff. This is an urgent action and we will update Governors at the next meeting.

Staff

Mr Renton advised that we are very pleased with our new staff and how they have settled. Mr Renton confirmed that we had carried out work last year in appointing an Assistant Headteacher in maths and there were also significant staffing changes in that area. The colleagues we have recruited have settled well and there is a very positive culture.

A Governor asked how many maths teachers there are in total. Mrs Moat confirmed that there were 18 maths specialist teachers.

Finance

Mr Renton confirmed that at the end of last year, the deficit was £200,000 which is what we had spent on the Sixth Form extension. This is a much improved position than the £500,000 projected at the start of the year. We are now forecasting a surplus of between £150,000 and £200,000. This will allow us to update the changing rooms and science rooms within the Sixth Form. It will also cover recruiting additional roles.

Our new Business and Operations manager has been tasked with identifying additional funding. We have also been able to release some PTA funds for a new mini-bus. We have used crowd funding in the past and will use this again, particularly for the new mini-bus.

A Level results

Last year's Y13 cohort did not have as high an ALIS target as previous years but their grades were closer to this target. The business and economic results are excellent and these have totally turned around compared to a few years ago.

Mrs Moat gave an update on the gender gap and how they compared to target. The overall grades were slightly down compared to 2022 but more in line with 2019. They are where we expected them to be.

The Art and Design grades are much lower than previous years as they were moderated significantly down by the exam board. Overall, the art grades were a grade lower than we had predicted. We have had the grades re-moderated and we have appealed against the re-moderation today.

We have finished the exam review meetings and there have been fantastic individual subject performances. Music has been identified as a key area for an action plan. Core maths is also not where we want it to be.

Overall, we were really pleased with how Y13 have performed and it is unfortunate there is no national value added data this year as we would have done very well.

We also had pleasing BTEC results.

A Governor asked why there is such a big gender difference in the BTEC results. Mrs Moat explained that there are a lot of boys that take the BTEC Sport qualification linked to the rugby academy. There are also more boys taking BTEC Business.

	<p>GCSE results</p> <p>We are really pleased with the GCSE results, especially as students were examined on the full content.</p> <p>Nationally, there were 125 students who achieved grade 9 in 11 subjects. Two of those students were from HGS.</p> <p>We have a very clear picture on the PP students.</p> <p>Mrs Moat advised that only 87% of the cohort will count towards the P8 score due to a lack of KS2 data for children that have come to us from private sector, overseas or have special needs.</p> <p>Some schools have reduced their subject offer but our children have a breadth of curriculum. We believe that it is a sound curriculum decision to continue to do GCSE RS and high numbers of triple science. There are good messages coming from Ofsted inspectors about not giving too much importance to the P8 score and not to narrow the curriculum to increase the P8 score.</p> <p>Subjects that we are concerned about are music, PE, RS and iMedia.</p> <p>The PE team has had a robust conversation about whether they are offering the right course and are looking at alternatives. We are also investigating potential alternatives to iMedia.</p> <p>There were issues in Music (KS3), identified as part of the deep dive review last year and we are working on this. Unfortunately, there has been a decline in student numbers taking music, although we currently have two Y10 classes. Work is ongoing.</p>	
LGB 5	<p>5. Chair of Governors report</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
LGB 6	<p>6. Link Governors</p> <p>It was agreed that Mr Howard would be the link Governor for HR and Miss Charles would be the link Governor for Maths and the Maths Hub.</p>	<p>Arrange link meetings with key colleagues</p>
LGB 7	<p>7. School policies for approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding policy 2023-2025 <p>This policy has already been approved by Trustees but it was sent to Governors for awareness.</p>	
LGB 8	<p>8. School improvement plan</p> <p>Mr Renton advised that since he reported on this at the last meeting, action plans for music and iMedia have been added.</p> <p>The risk register has been updated and the following issues have been highlighted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music provision and iMedia 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantaged strategy • Increasing number of students with EHCPs and additional support for the SENCO. • Safeguarding – due to the new structure and monitoring and filtering • Attendance • Reputational risk around partnership working in the Sixth Form <p>A Governor asked if there was a risk around cyber security. Mr Renton confirmed that this was monitored by the centralised IT services. There is a new cyber training course and we now use more robust authentication processes.</p>	
LGB 9	<p>9. AOB</p> <p>Mrs Toulson asked for volunteers for future meetings that need Governor input.</p>	
LGB 10	<p>The next meeting will take place on Thursday 30 November at 5.30pm at Harrogate Grammar School.</p> <p>The focus plan for the next meeting will be Sixth Form.</p>	

Action Points

LGB4 Feedback to Governors on monitoring and filtering

LGB6 Arrange link meetings with key colleagues