

THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL
Minutes of the Board of Governors' Meeting
Monday 20th May 2019

Time: 6 pm
Place: The Hub
Present: David Whewell (chair), Paul Skipp, Jo Trigg, Liz Summerson, Pamela Raymond-Heath, Sarb Gill, Debbie Youngs, Sarah Bergg, Kevin Eames, Jordan Mockett, Helen Thorne, Sally Andrews, Pete Gear, Eleanor Shergold (clerk)
Advisers: Ben Rhodes, Louise Hamilton, Nigel Reeves
Apologies: Andy Williams, Glyn Coy, Andrew Hawkins

Agenda Item	Actions Agreed	Who
53/19	Governor survey to be carried out	PSK/DW
53/19	Safeguarding training to be arranged for governors not able to attend previous sessions	ES/HKE
56/19	Governor feedback re governance arrangements to be collated and circulated	ES
56/19	Governance arrangements to be reviewed in 12 months' time	DW/PSK
57/19	Governors were reminded to complete work on the objectives for the year	ALL
58/19	DY and SA to meet to discuss safeguarding link governor role	DY/SA
59/19	SLT to give consideration to how staff can be better informed re policy reviews	PSK
59/19	Student Confidentiality to be brought back to Board next term	ES

51/19 Apologies and Welcome

DW welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were agreed and accepted.

52/19 Declaration of Business Interests

Governors were reminded to declare business interests and to update them as necessary.

53/19 Minutes and Matters Arising

43/19 - KE and AH have both agreed to be P16 link governors, sharing the role with JT
 43/19 - Governor survey to be carried out
 44/19 Safeguarding training to be arranged for governors not able to attend previous sessions
 The minutes of 1st April were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

54/19 Reports from Committees

CLES - Raising outcomes - KBO gave a report on the PE faculty review. Focused interventions on improving attainment have given students extra opportunities to achieve. GCSE has been changed to Cambridge Nationals. KBO highlighted ways in which the profile of sports and wellbeing could be raised.

DH report - data from Y10 tracking point two (TP2) is looking very positive. There is still a gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. Focus areas remain the same. Middle ability students and girls are predicted to make most progress.

LHA gave an outline of JOG essentials, which should develop greater consistency across the school - a point raised by Ofsted.

Disruption free learning - the new behaviour system is having an impact and is contributing to closing the gaps, judging by Y9 TP2.

Resources & Audit - Premises - update given on work completed during the Easter holidays. Chiltern toilet refurbishment is well under way.

Work planned for the summer includes reception and site security and relocation of the library. The new catering provider will also be making changes to the canteen.

Finance - projected year end revenue balance is £1.15m and the contingency of £950k remains intact. The budget is looking healthy over the next 5 years and will be brought back to Resources and Audit for approval next term.

H/R report - EGR informed governors of the low staff turnover this year.

S&C - Attendance - is nearly 1% better than last year and is above the national average. Persistent absence

is 5% better than last year. This strong result is based on the huge amount of work that has been put in. Governors were pleased to see that a new attendance letter has been created in a more accessible format.

Reward and recognition - Y8 student council representatives gave positive feedback at the meeting. More content is covered in class but students raised the need for consistency to continue in application. They felt that rewards seem less visible. Students continue to get significantly more reward than behaviour points.

Safeguarding - the number of safeguarding referrals was discussed.

Student council - raised lack of peer mentoring in KS4 and 5. Governors asked what the school could be doing to reduce stress. The potential for taster sessions re option choices was discussed.

Tutor groups update - generally positive about the move to horizontal tutor groups but there is still a need for mixed year group opportunities.

Student MH - HKE updated governors on the reduction in the CAMHs worker's hours. Concerns raised at Resources and Audit (R&A).

55/19 HT Report

Report circulated in advance of the meeting.

Student leavers - Governors asked for clarification re 'missing students'. PSK explained what the term means - students who have not been in school and not contactable for 20 days have to be reported to the LA as missing. PSK gave a summary of other student leavers since September.

Governor concerns re off-rolling discussed and the need for the school to ensure that it is being transparent. PSK - S&C is able to look into this in more detail including evidence re students that are electively being home educated. This is essential particularly now that off-rolling is such a hot topic

Attendance - Governors asked for clarification on 'My Plans' - Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Y10 attendance discussed.

Child welfare concerns - 4 % of students are known to have provision to support them with their mental health. This number is growing and yet external provision has been drastically cut over the last few years. As reported to S&C, the school's CAMHs workers' hours have been cut this term. R&A raised the question re the school's surplus. CLES discussed the possibility of yoga and mindfulness. PSK - one of the challenges is the initial diagnosis, which needs to be made through professional channels. JOG's provision compares well to other local schools. Governors noted concern and raised the question of whether this is an area that the school should be investing in. PSK agreed that this should be looked into further.

Summer capital work - mending of the gates was built into the CIF bid (Condition Improvement Fund). The work is due to take place during the summer break.

56/19 MAT (Multi Academy Trust)

This agenda item re governance arrangements was postponed at the recent governor strategy morning due to time constraints. An open dialogue regarding advantages and disadvantages of joining a multi academy trust at this present time took place, incorporated in this was an activity aimed at stimulating high level discussion.

Brief feedback was given after a time of group discussion on the benefits of being part of a MAT.

Advantages

- The possibility of having feeder schools as part of a MAT - could help raise literacy levels
- Shared staffing and professional development that the right MAT could give
- An opportunity for more subject specific support for staff
- There is always room for improvement

Disadvantages

- Financial strength and control - the school is currently in a good position - a MAT would want JOG's reserves
- Loss of autonomy and uniqueness
- Links to ethical leadership - if not entirely in control of the vision of the school it takes away the ability to innovate
- Governors' strategic role would be lost

Observations

- JOG is an outward facing school - T4W project, CSL, WWA, WASH, faculty reviews include external professionals, P16 partnership

- One of the impressions from the exercise - with another academy chain JOG would be investing in other schools. This is a really good school
- Raising the profile of the school under a MAT - this is something that JOG is already working on
- It is all about the right MAT - an opportunity not currently available from research undertaken

Discussion took place around whether there is pressure from the RSC/DfE and the potential consequences if JOG is made to join a MAT. Local picture discussed and whether there is potential for JOG to form a MAT. Whilst there is widespread support, it may prove difficult due to the number of smaller MATS within the area.

The school is currently in a good place with pupil progress improving, strong leadership and governance, pupil numbers increasing and a good recent OFSTED in May 2018. Financially the school is also in a strong position.

JOG will continue to have open and honest conversations. It was noted that this item should be repeated regularly but no later than in 12 months' time. Discussion re governance arrangements will continue to be on the agenda.

Action - feedback to be collated and circulated. To be reviewed in 12 months

ES/DW/PSK

57/19 Chair's Report

Governor Objectives 2018/19 - updated at the meeting. External regional and national networking opportunities highlighted, including a Governor Meet at the Hub on 11th June. Benchmarking exercise to take place next month. Training - SA will ask a selection of governors to give feedback on the training development plan.

It was noted that governors have progressed their objectives, but this is not necessarily fully reflected on the document. For next academic year a chairs' meeting will be utilised to focus on objectives so that this can be progressed more efficiently.

Action - governors were reminded to complete work on the objectives for the year

ALL

Chairs Meeting 3 June - postponed as there were no items for discussion.

Meeting Dates 2019/2020 - meeting dates circulated and governors were asked for feedback. Dates confirmed, no concerns raised.

Key info for governors - summary information updated.

Governor visits to school - DW carried out an analysis of governor visits to school from December 2017 to December 2018. There were 150 visits (within curriculum time) during the year in addition to attendance at committee and Board meetings and other events.

58/19 Link Governor Activities

Governors were asked to give an update on link governor activities that they have been involved in during this academic year. This included faculty reviews and post results meetings, where SNI had issued the invitation.

Safeguarding - link governor aims to meet termly with HKE - have been discussing the attendance policy and impact on safeguarding procedures. Single central record - will be checked next term.

MFL - initial meeting in the autumn with VLO and team - faculty meeting looking at how exams had been marked was both interesting and useful. Attendance at an additional faculty meeting was discussion based, also interesting and useful. Regular exchange of emails takes place.

Careers - link governor met with ALY earlier in the year and will follow this up next term.

Drama, music and art - attended exam results meeting. Consistency has been difficult due to staff maternity leave. Link governor unable to make date for faculty review.

English - link governor has met with GGI a couple of times, including a productive discussion re where she sees the faculty going. Will meet again before the end of the school year but conscious of not wanting to put too much pressure on GGI. The invitation coming from the DL is a good plan as they can then fit it into their busy schedule. Would be good to build this into staff induction.

Individual Learning - link governor attended faculty review. Was involved in student voice and able to observe staff feedback. Visits need to be useful and supportive.

6th form - link governor has met a couple of times with LBA - both meetings really useful. LBA open and enthusiastic. Was able to spend some time with 6th form students as well. Really interesting. Met 6th form team.

Communication and marketing - communication is much better. Reception and front of school to be developed during the summer, to then think about marketing going forward.

Attendance and Behaviour - link governor meets with BRH every half term to go through data. Also meets with HKE every half term - discussed progress of behaviour policy all the way through, an interesting process. Pleased to see marked improvement. Has met with PSK to gain a better understanding of the school.

PE - link governor has met with KBO once every whole term and for the faculty review.

Humanities, PSHE and Social Sciences - link governor met all the teachers at the humanities review. Exam results meeting - very interesting and solution finding exceptional.

Computing and Business - attended results meeting. Always interesting to look at the detail. Has met with JRO a couple of times - mainly getting to know the department and what governors can do to support. Attended Bletchley Park trip with Y7 and Y8. Visit to Microsoft for Y8s arranged.

H&S - link governor meets with MDO three times a year. This is more of a checking role due to governors' responsibility. Ensuring trips signed off properly, accidents reported, etc.

Safeguarding link governor - has been link governor for five years. Would like to look at succession planning. SA expressed an interest in the role.

Action - DY and SA to meet to discuss safeguarding link governor role

DY/SA

DW meets regularly with PSK.

PSK also highlighted governor attendance at open evenings, drop-ins re mobile phones and behaviour policy changes, student leadership council, catering reviews, etc. There is a huge amount of link governor input that takes place.

59/19 Policies

A question was raised about policy updates and how teaching staff can be better informed when changes have taken place. PSK - there are simple things that can be done - SLT will pick up on this.

Action - SLT to give consideration to how staff can be better informed re policy reviews

PSK

Code of Conduct for Teaching and Support Staff - governors were asked to note the amendment that should have been made to the Code of Conduct as put forward from R&A.

**Freedom to Speak Up
Mental Health and Wellbeing
Safeguarding
Single Equalities**

All approved.

Student Confidentiality - is being followed up with DCO due to a query re compliance with GDPR. To be brought back to Board next term.

60/19 AOB

There was no further business to discuss.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm. Date of next Board meeting - Monday 8th July 2019.

Signed: _____ Date: _____