AGENDA:

Board

Governing Body meeting

Date

28th February 2019

Time

6:00 pm Pupil Voice; 6.30pm meeting start

Venue

Meeting Room

GOVERNOR’S ATTENDING

Libby Blake (Chair)
Jacqui Tovey (Interim Principal, ex-officio governor)
Soshana Austin (Community Governor)
Elisa Valdez (Staff Governor)
Katherine Priestly (Community Governor)
Jas Kaur (Staff Governor)
Barbara McBrien (Community Governor)
Simon Blackburn (Parent Governor)

GOVERNORS’ APOLOGIES

Robert Walkington (Vice Chair)
Steve Finch (Parent Governor)
Isa Ros Lopez (Community Governor)
Richard Allalouf (Parent Governor)
Joseph Osunde (Parent Governor)

GOVERNORS ABSENT

Abi Agidee-Adekunle (Community Governor)

IN ATTENDANCE

Philip Matson (Clerk)
Chris Allan (Deputy Principal)
The Code of Conduct for Governors requires Governors to be honest and open with regard to conflicts of interest (either real or perceived). Governors must not use their position for personal gain in business, political or social relationships. Therefore, a governor who has, or may be perceived to have, such a personal interest in a particular matter under consideration should declare that interest, withdraw from all discussions relating to it and take no part in any vote on such matter.

Items marked * are those in which a majority of Governors may have an interest because of some shared attribute. When considering these items, Governors should aim to achieve a balanced view, paying particular attention to the sources of information and advice, and remind themselves of their duties as Governors and to act in the public interest.

PUPIL VOICE PRESENTATION

Student representatives described the recent bedroom refurbishment, which included new display boards, workspaces, mirrors, and beds. They responded to more detailed governor questions and distributed the results of a feedback survey from female students.

The student representatives reported that, following work in the school on safeguarding their peers now had a better understanding of the lanyard colourcode system. Students would appreciate more user-friendly versions of school policies. JT agreed that it would be helpful to produce student-friendly versions of policies. Governors agreed that this would be a positive way forward.

It was reported that the School Council would like more student access to Youtube and other internet facilities for learning and leisure purposes. Governors discussed the safeguarding and technical issues affecting the possibility of extending wi-fi accessibility.

LB asked what had happened to the governor picture board which had enabled student feedback. It was explained that it had been removed during re-decoration and would be restored.

LB referred the previous request from students for a clear homework policy. A governor asked the student representatives how homework was allocated; they replied that it was set on request. A governor asked if students wanted homework. A student representative replied that it was considered useful as part of preparation for exams. A governor asked what types of homework were preferred. A preference for practical and IT-based activities was expressed and the example of “My Maths” was given. A representative said that she would like project-based activities. A governor asked when homework should be set. One preference was for Enrichment time. A representative explained that he received college homework on a Thursday. A governor asked how frequently homework should be given. A representative said that he would like homework which supported his college studies. A governor asked what kinds of homework the college set. The representative responded that it was mostly research work. Governors discussed the potential for extending access to computers in bedrooms. Safeguarding constraints were identified.
The school is working to widen IT access and more wireless hubs are being installed throughout school. The student representatives expressed a preference for the adoption of a flexible school approach to the setting of homework. Governors and student representatives discussed the need to establish a homework policy that recognised the different needs of the student population. A governor stated that it was important that parents understand the rationale for homework. A governor stressed the need to ensure that homework did not appear punitive.

A governor asked how many students currently had access to smartphones and/or l-pads. It was estimated that most pupils had a mobile phone, there were half a dozen l-pads and no laptops.

LB asked if the student representative had any further comments. The students reported that some students were requesting Amazon “firesticks”. Governors discussed relative utility of the “firestick” compared with digital tv. LB asked the student representatives to update the next meeting on progress made in this area.

Governors thanked the student representatives for their presentation and their participation in the discussion that ensued.

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from RW, IL, JO, SF and RA. AA was noted as absent.

2 NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no late items of Business not on the Agenda.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REGISTER OF INTERESTS

3.1 There were no declarations of interest in relation to any matters to be considered during the meeting.

3.2 There were no declarations of gifts and hospitality received or given.

4 MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS, 13th December 2018 and 1st February 2019

The minutes of the meeting of the FGB on 13th December were accepted as a true and accurate record, with the amendment below

Page 3, the reference to “Governor Space” should read “Governors for Schools”.

Governors agreed that the minutes of the 1st February extra-ordinary should be treated as a confidential. They were accepted as a true and accurate record.

5 MATTERS ARISING
LB asked governors to sign a document confirming that governors had read and understood the DfE’s Keeping Children Safe in Education document (September 2019). The confirmation document was circulated at the meeting and all those present signed.

6 CHAIR’S REPORT (6.40 pm)

LB reported on the appointment of a permanent Principal. The contract had been agreed. Governors were informed that preliminary meetings between the new Principal and the Chair and with the SLT had been arranged. A governor asked if the new appointee had signed the contract. He was informed that the contract would be sent out in the next few days. Governors sought assurance that due diligence had been observed in the recruitment process; this was given. Judicium’s role in the process was explained.

LB informed governors that additional capacity had been found to provide strategic planning support in addition to JT agreeing to provide an additional 7 days for strategic planning. Governors briefly discussed the nature of this support.

LB told governors that RA had recently attended training on intergenerational funding opportunities training and possible funding streams identified.

LB informed governors that her efforts to recruit two governors had, to date, been unsuccessful. Governors agreed to assist in the effort to find governors who could bring financial and teaching expertise to the board.

7 HEADTEACHER’S REPORT

JT referred to the headteacher report that had been distributed earlier. She invited governors to address any questions or comments arising from the report.

A governor sought an explanation for the increase in unauthorised Looked After Children absences. JT explained that the figures related to a single student who was refusing to attend school. She explained that an alternative placement was being sought. A governor asked for the reasons for the breakdown of the placement; JT gave details of the case. A governor asked for clarification of the procedures for dealing with the breakdown of a placement. JT described the procedures. LB commented that it would be useful for governors to have a record of the reasons for children leaving during year and the findings of an exit interview with the parent(s). JT responded that an explanation for reasons for leaving was included in the annual review.

A governor asked about the attendance figures for FSM and PP children. JT agreed that there was an issue of increased unauthorised absence. Governors briefly discussed possible reasons for this increase. A governor asked what was being done to address this issue. JT explained how the procedures for following up absences was being used to target pupils vulnerable to non-attendance. A governor sought clarification on the definitions of “authorised” and “non-authorised” absences. A governor asked about children with a higher than 10% absence. JT identified two children and explained the contexts of their absences. Governors discussed how the school could help the parents of children with poor attendance.

JT confirmed that there were no pupil exclusions. In the light of the discussion about persistent absenteeism, a governor sought clarification. JT pointed out that absenteeism and exclusions should not be conflated.
A governor commented that the report on incidents did not include a gender or sexual harassment heading. JT assured governors that this will be addressed and reported to the next FGB meeting.

A governor asked why there had been a notable increase in year in the number of physical interventions. JT explained that the data covered the whole spectrum of interventions. She explained that the two children with highest number of interventions (10 or more) were both boarders as opposed to day pupils; another two pupils with 3-4 incidents each were new to the school. JT informed governors that the number of interventions was reducing. LB sought further clarification; JT confirmed that there had been no changes in training, nor the method of recording. She agreed that there might have been some over-reporting. LB asked for comments from Teacher governors; they believed that recent training had impacted on staff awareness.

A governor asked about the accuracy of progress figures. The Deputy Principal explained the way that the figures had been calculated. He agreed that they should be revisited. Similarly, the data regarding risk rating was questioned. The Deputy Principal explained how these figures had been calculated. LB commented that, despite the issue of accuracy, it was encouraging to see the improvement in the tracking of progress.

A governor sought an explanation for the significant increase in the number of concerns raised. JT explained that it was not an issue of over-referrals as many of the concerns were not referred onwards. JT said that this was partly the result of the school’s success in raising the profile of safeguarding and improved recording. JT commented that training had raised awareness of safeguarding issues and that there may have been cases of over-recording; the SLT had discussed the issue and JT was working with the Safeguarding Lead to improve staff understanding, including clarification exercises at staff briefings and information on noticeboards. A governor asked what was meant by “LADO referrals”? JT explained the difference between child protection and social work referrals. A governor asked how the increased workload was being managed. JT reported that the SLIM and deputy SLIM posts were being reviewed and administrative tasks rationalized.

8 REVIEW SIP PROGRESS

JT informed governors that the SIP had been reviewed by the Curriculum & Strategy Committee; the identified actions were being addressed. JT invited questions from governors.

LB requested that committees plan learning walks to monitor progress against actions in the SIP. In particular, she recommended that governors focus their learning walks on the “red” actions in the SIP.

JT actions had been addressed in the pupil voice discussion.

JT informed governors that CPD had been a major focus for the school. She invited governors to discuss the CPD programme with school staff.

The item on procurement was addressed in the item on Procurement Policy.

LB referred to the improving the quality of teaching & learning priority. She asked how the school measured the progress. JT agreed this area still required a great deal of work; a more consistent approach to learning walks was being rolled out. The item would be addressed at the next Curriculum & Strategy committee meeting.

A governor asked if there was a leadership capacity issue. JT agreed that there was insufficient capacity at SLT level. SLT monitoring was in place, but peer mentoring needed to be introduced. HLTA and STA observation would be taking place for the first time in the next tranche of monitoring.
GOVERNANCE ISSUES - Report on Vision, Mission and Strategy

LB presented the results of the working party on vision, mission and strategy. She explained that the working party comprised LB, SA and RA.

VISION

LB explained the vision underpinning the work of the group. Governors commented favourably on the brevity and relevance of the statement. Governors agreed that it encapsulated the school values and school ethos, including removing the barriers to learning, holistic support, providing a transformative learning opportunity, enhancing the quality of life of all students and preparing them for leaving school.

A governor stressed the importance of promoting a good quality of life for all, including staff and families of students.

Governors discussed the range of stakeholders with whom the school should be collaborating, including members of Cooperative movement, Local Authorities, and contractors. A governor agreed that it was essential that the vision inculcated the values of cooperation and was underpinned by kindness.

MISSION

LB summarised the mission statement

- Growth through personal and social learning
- Creating learning, expertise, skills and fun on and off site for students and their families
- Co-operating with partners and neighbours for educational and social impact
- Opening school doors independently to share our resources and site.

Governors discussed the relevance of the mission statement priorities and agreed their relevance and appropriateness for the school.

STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

LB summarised the proposed strategy for growth,

- Embedding a top-quality curriculum that drives great teaching and learning.
- Reviewing pupil age range and/or increasing the number of places to help meet demand in London and the South East.
- Improving boarding accommodation and offer to outstanding provision.
- Improving the biodiversity and educational benefits of the school site for shared use
- Developing the school’s cooperative Membership.
- Increasing the engagement of parents in the school offer.
- Setting up a trading cooperative and investigating apprenticeships on site.
- Being a resource for disability of use to local schools and area.
- Demonstrating good value for money

Governors agreed to approve the work on vision and mission. They agreed that the priorities should be explored in more detail in committee and would contribute to future years’ School Improvement Planning.
10 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2019-20

LB informed governors that the school must consult about admission arrangements every 7 years; consultation would need to take place within the next 3 years. JT informed governors that, currently, she was consulting with local authorities to consider anticipated future needs. Governors agreed that they should initiate a formal consultation in the near future.

ACTION: governors agreed that setting the date for an admissions arrangements consultation should be an agenda item for the first FGB meeting of 2019-20.

11 GOVERNING BODY REPORTS (verbal reports)

11.1 Curriculum & Strategy

SA identified the policies that had been reviewed by the committee. She explained that monitoring the SIP had comprised a large part of the committee’s work. Lead governors for key work areas had been identified, apart from Safeguarding. Vision and Strategy work was ongoing.

11.2 Finance & General Purposes

BM summarised the recent work of the committee: FENSA certificates for windows; advice from KCC on sustainable heating; monitoring monthly accounts, including a benchmarking report from Baxters; the deployment of agency staff; staff structure, including the proposal to change the SLIM post to a Head of Safeguarding and Care with membership of the SLT; the consideration of policies - Risk Assessment, Scheme of Delegation, Premises management, H&S.

11.3 Safeguarding - including KCSiE assurance

Governors were informed of a Safeguarding learning walk undertaken before Christmas as a means of testing the recent safeguarding audit. The findings were fed back to JT and the SLT. LB and SA have now attended Team Teach training which gave insight into the strategies for the safe management of pupil behavior that the school adopts. LB told governors that she had undertaken refresher Safeguarding training.

11.4 ESFA Annual Letter for INFORMATION

LB informed governors of receipt of the ESFA annual letter. Its contents had been discussed at the recent FE&GP committee meeting. LB flagged up concerns regarding high levels of executive pay in other schools; LB commented that the letter had encouraged her to consider what is a reasonable pay differential between leaders and other employees in a cooperative organization. Governors discussed briefly and agreed that, as a cooperative academy, the school should set an example.

11.5 Principal’s briefing on proposed Ofsted framework for INFORMATION

JT informed governors that the proposed Ofsted framework was out for consultation and available on the DfE website.

12 FINANCES AND PREMISES UPDATE

12.1 Approval of fees for academy year 2019/2020[LB1]
JN explained the rationale for the recommendation for the PAN. She explained that school income would reduce as a result of any decrease in the number of pupils. She told governors that notification of the funding agreement was imminent and would impact on the school budget.

JN explained the reasoning behind budget planning, including factors such as the PAN, pay awards/scales, staffing (particularly, the overspend on residential staff).

JN informed governors that the implications of the budget plans on fees was being addressed.

JN anticipated more concrete pupil numbers by next FG&P committee meeting.

JN asked governors to consider different options for setting school fees for 2019/20.

- Option 1 setting the PAN at 105 students, keeping the fees at the 2018-19 figure and removing or freezing 5 (surplus) unfilled establishment posts

- Option 2 setting the PAN at 100 students, raising fees by 1% and freezing the 5 unfilled establishment places.

JN anticipated that option 1 would result in a small budget surplus and option 2 a balanced budget.

A governor asked about the size of the current student population. JN confirmed that there were 102 pupils currently on role for September although the school is waiting to hear back for three other offers of places.

A governor asked about possible worse case scenarios. JN identified option 2 without an increase would result in a deficit budget.

A governor raised the concern that, by not raising fees, the school could arouse Local Authority concerns that school fees had been set too high for 2018-19. LB confirmed that fees were higher than some other providers; a governor commented that the higher fees reflected a unique offer. A governor commented that fees should increase by at least 1% as a matter of principle as inflation has been higher than this and utility bills are set to rise.

A governor commented on the necessity of ensuring that the budget at least to break even.

Governors discussed the financial basis of any fee increase. LB explained the context of budget setting and the rules surrounding the process.

A governor anticipated that efficiency savings would have a positive impact over the next year, but believed that a 1% increase was necessary to ensure a balanced budget.

A governor sought clarification on the need to make a decision at the FGB. LB confirmed that governors needed to make a decision at the 28th February meeting in order to notify Local Authorities in a timely way.

A governor commented that local authorities would have factored fee increases into their budgets.

LB expressed her opinion for setting a PAN of 105 and explained the reasons for this.

JN supported the proposal for a PAN of 105 and advocated a fee increase of 1% in order to balance the budget.
DECISION: governors agreed to set the PAN at 105 pupils and a fee increase of 1%.

12.2 Budget monitoring

This was addressed in 13.1

13 STAFFING STRUCTURE REVIEW

LB informed governors that the staff structure review had been submitted to the FG&P committee. The committee had agreed the establishment of the role of Head of Safeguarding and Care. Governors were informed of the decision to award TLR points for 4 posts. A governor asked about the budget implications of the decision; JN explained that the TLR awards were already in the budget as they had been awarded on a temporary basis last year. There was no additional cost, but it did involve an establishment list change.

DECISION: the FGB confirmed the decision of the FG&P committee to a Head of Safeguarding and Care post (subject to the agreement of the incoming Principal) and to the formalization of the TLR awards.

14 DELEGATED POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

DECISION: Governors agreed to the updating of the following policies

- Addition of Appendix 2 on Allegations against staff to Child Protection Policy/Procedures
- The Freedom of Information Policy
- Governors Code of Conduct
- Scheme of Delegation

15 HOMEWORK POLICY

This item was covered in the Pupil Voice section of the meeting. The Curriculum & Strategy Committee agreed it would consider the matter further at their next meeting.

16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Governors recorded their gratitude to Chris Prisk, Student Liaison and Inclusion Manager for her dedicated and skilled work at the school over many years and wished her well in her retirement.

Governors agreed that, although the school does not exclude pupils, it still needed to report.

17 MEETING DATES FOR 2018-19

Full Governing Body meetings

20th June 2019, 6.00pm
### ACTION CHECKLIST

<table>
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<th>Agenda items</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Identify potential governors to fill vacancies</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Committees to focus learning walks on red priority Areas in SIP</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Committees to address Vision, mission and strategy Document through agenda item at sub-committee</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ASAP9</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Date for Admissions consultation agreed</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
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<td>C&amp;S committee consider homework policy</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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### PART II

**ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

There were no confidential items.

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**SIGNED: Library Blake**

**DATE: 20th June 2019**