

THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL
Minutes of the Board of Governors' Meeting
Monday 6th February 2023

Time: 6 pm
Place: The Hub
Present: David Whewell (chair) (DW), Jo Trigg (JT), Matthew Woodville (MWO), Gemma Pugh (GP), Andrew Hawkins (AH), Toby Corden (TC), Amanda McClean (AM), Martin Sandford (MS), Pete Gear (PG), Daniela Coy (DC), Kevin Eames (KE), Eleanor Shergold (clerk) (ES)
Advisers: Nigel Reeves (NRE), Ben Rhodes (BRH)
Apologies: Sarah Marsh (SM), Glyn Coy (GC), Sophia Oleszynski (SO)

Agenda Item	Actions Agreed	Who
38/23 b)	To complete Governor Services safeguarding training	All governors
38/23 e)	To provide summary information re school priorities for March board	MWO
39/23 b)	Feedback from the staff wellbeing survey to be shared at March board meeting	DW
39/23 b)	To send a response to staff as an outcome of the survey	DW
39/23 d)	Skills audit to be carried out later in the year	TC
39/23 e)	To circulate and ask governors to respond to the Key Questions document for discussion at March board meeting	DW
40/23 a)	To ask WW Headteachers for elective home education data	MWO
45/23	Governor postcards to be sent to identified staff	DW/AH
46/23	Feedback re governor postcards to be passed on to SLT	MWO/BRH

36/23 Apologies and Welcome

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

37/23 Declaration of Business Interests

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

38/23 Minutes and Matters Arising

- a) 28/23 c) – to discuss feedback from student voice re gender neutral toilets and changing rooms. Discussion took place. **Ongoing.**
- b) 29/23 a) – to complete governor services safeguarding training – **reminder given** to those still to do so.
- c) 29/23 c) – to discuss what needs to be reported through committees and what needs to be included in the HT's report. SLT will continue to contribute to the HT's report which will be more aligned to Lavington's structure from term 4.
- d) 30/23 b) – to recirculate information re Equa Trust Board vacancies. **Completed.** JT and DW have applied. The John of Gaunt's board of governors will cease to exist.
- e) 31/23 – to provide summary information re school priorities. MWO will put this together in advance of March board meeting. **Action carried forward.**
- f) 35/23 – to pass on contact re local cereal partners. **Completed.**
- g) 35/23 – to approach Active Trowbridge to see if they could run a breakfast club. The school has been able to staff this internally with a member of support staff. This runs between 8 and 8.25 am targeting PP students but the invitation is for all to attend. Currently the uptake is small but provision is there and it will grow. **Completed.**

The minutes of 5 December were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

39/23 Chair's Report

a) Governor's Report

This is a DfE requirement. Draft report circulated in advance of the meeting and accepted by governors at the meeting.

b) Staff Wellbeing Survey

This has been sent to all staff from DW as chair of governors using a survey provided by Equa and will serve as a benchmark going forwards. DW will analyse the feedback and the analysis will be shared at March board meeting.

Action – feedback from the staff wellbeing survey to be shared at March board meeting

DW

A question was raised re the purpose of the survey. It will give an overall picture and is timely before joining the Trust. Equa carry this out annually. **A point was made that staff perception will be that changes will be made as an outcome of the survey to improve wellbeing. BRH asked if a response will be sent to staff.** There was a time of discussion around this. An open section has been added at staff's request so that there is an option to add any comments. MWO added that there are a number of channels which staff can use to communicate and the importance of promoting a culture of openness. It was agreed that a response to staff is required.

Action – to send a response to staff as an outcome of the survey

DW

Parent and student surveys – these belong to the school. Governors hear student voice at S&C committee meetings.

c) Structure Post April

Board will continue as a Local Governing Body (LGB). S&C will also continue. DW asked for governors' views on the proposed structure. AH – CLES concluded that the LGB and CLES agendas are very much aligned. MS confirmed that S&C had agreed to continue due to its emphasis on student welfare and behaviour as well as student voice. TC – R&A items will be discussed at Trust board. **Governors hope that they don't lose that sense of local contact.**

DW will not be standing for chair of the LGB and had circulated a request for expressions of interest. TC has volunteered. Governors thanked him for this. DW will meet with him for a handover.

Link Governors – DW suggested that current link governor roles continue to the end of this academic year rather than stop part way through the year. This was agreed. The LGB will then agree the way forward. There are statutory roles that need to be in place.

d) Skills Audit

This hasn't been done in the last 12 months and is an expectation of the DfE. DW will pass this on to TC.

Action – skills audit to be carried out later in the year

TC

e) Governance and Ofsted Expectations

Key Questions Ofsted Inspectors Might ask Governors. DW shared this document at the meeting and will circulate it for governor comment. **Governors noted the value of shared knowledge when Ofsted visit.**

Action – to circulate and ask governors to respond, for discussion at March board meeting

DW

40/23 Headteacher's Report

a) Headteacher's Report

School Context – the school is seeing an increased number of in year admissions of students that

otherwise would have gone through a managed move process. This means that support that would otherwise be available isn't. A change in the admissions code means that being over PAN isn't a reason to refuse an application. **Governors asked for clarification re the impact on the school community.**

Elective home education – the school never advocates this. **Governors asked if it would be appropriate to offer an exit interview.** MWO said that this could easily be included in the letter that he sends to parents. **Governors asked if there is a monitoring process for home education.** There isn't. The school informs the local authority and keeps the student's place open for 2 terms. **Governors asked how this compares to other schools locally and if it's possible to have comparable data.**

Action – to ask WW Headteachers for elective home education data

MWO

EAL – the number of students has increased. EHCPs – at the end of the last academic year there were 28 students with an EHCP. Currently there are 40 with an additional 4 expected.

Recruitment – is relatively stable. Summary information included in the report, which includes a DL for MFL and a maths teacher. **Governors asked about a Y10 academic mentor, discussed previously in CLES.** There were no applicants for previous adverts for a KS3 mentor so support has been provided through tutors instead.

Governors asked about the MFL faculty, quite a devastating few weeks for the team. BRH – it has been a challenging term. The team were aware of VLO's plans to retire.

A question was raised about staff absence. This term has been better than last term.

Pupil Achievement – same table shared with CLES. Y11 mock 1 results are low with an overall P8 of -0.65. However, mock 1 last year was similarly -0.64. The tracking point data is a better indicator at -0.10. **Governors noted the gap between boys and girls P8, discussed more fully at CLES. A question was raised as to whether there is national data for this.** MWO – there is a holistic P8 but he not aware of boys/girls' data.

Teaching and Learning – everything is linked through the JOG essentials. This helps run a tight ship in terms of making improvements in incremental steps. The school is increasing the number of middle leaders doing Developmental Drop Ins. Going forwards an increase in peer to peer coaching will be more impactful.

CPD – is generally a real strength of the school. Exam board (OCR) CPLD completed by two members of the History team. There are a number of staff working on NPQs.

Student Behaviour – the number of fixed term suspensions has increased significantly, over 50% of these are due to verbal abuse or threatening behaviour towards an adult (30 out of 54 suspensions, 56 out of 107 sessions). There is an extraordinary increase in the number of Y11 students suspended this year – 30 out of 54 students compared to 7 out of 24 year to date last year. Inability to permanently exclude because of the SLA with the LA and limited Alternative Provision means that suspension is the only option. The school is reviewing the behaviour policy and will be consulting with all stakeholders to consider a more graduated response to challenging behaviour. PG due is to meet with HKE as link governor for behaviour.

Governors asked about the possibility of improved Alternate Provision across the MAT. There are ongoing discussions about how to best utilise what both schools are doing.

There was a discussion around destinations. JOG students have access to careers advice. Students on AP are flagged with the Wiltshire team. There have been some recent changes to provision for students coming in to school for AP and this is working well.

Child Welfare Concerns – there is a significant increase in need across most year groups as the year progresses.

Transition Activities – 'an evening with the stars' received lots of positive feedback, attended by

approximately 200 hundred primary children and parents.

Building on previous success, a summer school is being run and is supported by Active Trowbridge. It is open to all Year 6 students who will be transitioning to JOG in addition to any Year 5 students who wish to attend. The school is currently recruiting staff to offer sessions to help with continuity.

Leadership and Management – MFL, English and PE faculty reviews have taken place. Governors are updated through CLES.

Strike action – MWO gave an update. 29 staff went on strike with the unions taking a hard line of staff not informing the Headteacher in advance. This makes planning for staff absence more difficult. MWO will ask staff again for the March dates. 29 is quite a proportion of the staff team. Challenges around cover and supervision discussed.

b) SIP

The School Improvement Plan was circulated for governor information in advance of the meeting. This had been RAG rated by SLT. Reds – have flagged no significant concerns. MWO explained the reasons for this. **Governors asked questions to clarify.**

c) Proposed Term Dates

Discussion around this took place at the governors' focus forum in January. **Governors asked about feedback from staff.** This had not been shared as not yet approved. The reasons for the proposed changes are around student absence. Governors unanimously agreed to the changes.

41/23 School Resource Management Self-Assessment

This is an annual requirement. The answers are the same as last year and it is likely to be the last time that the school has to submit the SRMSA. NRE asked if the trust has held an AGM in the last year. This took place on the 22nd December 2022. Governors confirmed that they agreed with NRE's responses to the questions.

42/23 Reports from Committees

a) CLES

P8 and attainment as per HT report covered more fully in CLES. Results this coming year will be compared to 2019. P8 is currently the same as 2019. Y11 has an attainment opportunity which will be considerably greater than 2019. Y13 is in an exceptional position with no previous experience of formal examinations, a challenge for team and the school. Hence all the mock exams.

Confidential minute discussed.

KE left the meeting.

b) R&A

ASD support base – the hope is for this to start from September with provision of funding from the LA. The school will resource and recruit, the latter may be a challenge for September. One of the mobile classrooms is being utilised which will need some work carried out for it to be ready for use.

CIF bids submitted for the sports hall roof and outstanding fire doors.

Gender neutral toilets and changing rooms – R&A shared a guidance document with S&C which addresses some of the challenges, including the potential increase in safeguarding issues. This is an ongoing conversation requiring further thought.

c) S&C

Student voice – students provided feedback on the rewards system.

ZLE gave an update on Y7 transition.

Link governor visit carried out to complete safeguarding audit.

Gender neutral toilets and changing rooms discussed.

Andrew Tate and toxic masculinity influences is a growing concern in school, as serious as Prevent. MWO – found some advice which he circulated and shared with parents and changes have been made to the PSHE curriculum, giving staff confidence to challenge it.

Uniform policy – consultation discussed. This is going to the student council, staff and parents, a holistic review of the policy. Suggestions and proposals were shared at S&C and this will come back to S&C after the consultation has taken place. Presentation shared with all governors in advance of board.

Governors considered this to be a thorough and excellent presentation, making complete sense and giving more choice.

43/23 Governor Training and Development

Updated information re governor training and conference programme circulated in advance of the meeting. Concern expressed again about being able to continue to have access to Right Choice after joining Equa and the value of being outward looking. Reassurance given that there is no pressure to drop Right Choice.

44/23 Policies

Records Management Policy with Retention Summary

Gritting

Lockdown Procedure

All policies approved.

45/23 Governor Postcards

Discussed and agreed.

46/23 AOB

Governor postcards discussed. Feedback has been received about the importance of making sure that they are sent to the right people at the right time and that they are relevant, specifically mentioning what people are being thanked for rather than just a general thank you. **Governors asked for this to be passed on to SLT to help make sure that things aren't missed.**

Action – feedback re governor postcards to be passed on to SLT

MWO/BRH

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm. Date of next Board meeting Monday 27th March 2023.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____