

THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL
Minutes of the Student and Community Committee Meeting
Wednesday 25th January 2023

Time: 6 pm
Place: The Hub
Present: **In person**
 Martin Sandford (MS) (chair), Pete Gear (PG), Amanda McClean (AM), Daniela Coy (DC), Eleanor Shergold (ES) (clerk)
Via Teams
 Isabelle and Emma (Y11 students), Zoe Lewis (ZLE)

Advisers: **In person**
 Helen Kerr (HKE)
Via Teams
 Sara Ambrose (SAM), Linda Baines (LBA)

Apologies: Sophia Oleszynski (SO), Gemma Pugh (GP)

Agenda Item	Actions Agreed	Who
33/23	To ask the school council for input on the rewards system and rewards available	HKE
34/23	List of link charities and health agencies to be sent to SAM for consideration	ES/GP
34/23	To bring the need for gender neutral toilets & changing rooms back to R&A	PG
34/23	To share the interventions map	HKE
43/23	Staff Code of Conduct to be ratified at March S&C	HKE/ES
44/23	Governor postcards to be sent	MS

31/23 Apologies

Apologies were agreed and accepted.

32/23 Declaration of Business Interests

Governors were reminded to declare business interests as necessary.

33/23 Student Leadership KS4

Isabelle and Emma were welcomed to the meeting.

Students were asked for feedback on the rewards available for positive behaviour points and how this could be developed further. Feedback included the following – rewards are a good idea but it feels like the points aren't given out as much. Students who misbehave get noticed more often for good behaviour. Negative points and sending people to the PBSC is good but some teachers should send more students out of class. It was noted that teachers want to keep students in class as it is GCSE year. **Governors asked how this could be improved.** HKE – this can be highlighted with teachers, brought up in a staff briefing as coming from the student council. Consistency needs to be addressed, the whole point being to catch people doing good.

HKE is about to review behaviour system. Part of the review will be student voice through the school council and will include how the PBSC is used, the rewards system and how it is used to recognise all students.

Students suggested that bringing back the prom voucher would encourage older students. HKE will make sure that this is added to the options. LBA asked if prizes could do with a review. Students agreed that this is the case. HKE will ask the school council to provide suggestions. It is very much driven by student voice as well as what the school can get hold of.

Governors asked for feedback on what the school does well and whether students feel safe and happy. The school gates/fencing makes the school feel safe. Y11 feels safe. In terms of behaviour and bullying sometimes there are fights but this isn't often and students didn't think that there was anything that could be done to completely prevent them from happening.

Governors asked if there were any concerns. Planner homework feels like an extra thing added on top of all of the other things that students have to do. It could be made optional or changed so that students have to put together a revision piece each night. LBA – KS4 students have also fed back about the planner homework.

Students were asked why they attend school. Not only is school good for learning but it's also really good for socialising with others. Students like the structure and knowing what's going on each day. Covid made being behind with work and not seeing people difficult. Being around people suddenly after Covid was also really difficult.

Governors asked if students feel ready and think that the school is preparing them enough for the next steps. Yes, we have a lot of opportunities to look into P16 options.

Has the school been good at supporting you with upcoming GCSEs and how confident do you feel? Covid has had a big impact and everyone missed out on a lot of work, causing stress for students and teachers. Period 6 – it would really help if more were put in place as an option for students to attend if they need help. Both felt that the support is there when needed.

HKE asked if both felt that they have a trusted and safe adult at school. Both confirmed that they did. HKE asked for the question to be kept live with the school council.

LBA, Isabelle and Emma left the meeting.

34/23 Minutes and Matters arising

8/23 – List of link charities and health agencies to be sent to SAM for consideration – **carried forward**

19/23 – To refer the need for gender neutral toilets & changing rooms to R&A. This was discussed by R&A who shared 'Guidance for maintained schools and academies in England on provision for transgender pupils' with S&C governors. The conversation is **ongoing. PG will bring this back to R&A. Governors asked about the number of students expressing gender identity distress.** HKE is confident that the school supports students as issues arise. This doesn't need to be reported as separate data as the school gets good feedback on this.

23/23 – To bring interventions map to January S&C – **carried forward.**

The minutes of 16 November were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

35/23 Attendance

SAM circulated an attendance update in advance of the meeting.

Latest live data – fundamentally the post Covid legacy continues, a climate of absence being normal. There has been additional absence due to recent advice around Scarlet Fever and Strep A. Drawing data is more challenging as there is no related code, it is a case of delving further.

Persistent absence – persistent absence doesn't compare with previous understanding. Currently (as at 13 January) it is 30.6%. Pre-Covid it was 12% with a target of below 10%. The vast majority of those with 85% attendance and above have had an infection. The school is prioritising those whose attendance has dropped below 80%. SAM meets with the student development team once a fortnight, checking in and trying to unpick barriers to attendance. They ensure that those with poor attendance have been referred to all relevant agencies.

There has been some improvement in that persistent absence is now 29.9%. Overall attendance remains

the same at 90.2%.

There is a new Educational Welfare Officer and the LA has had a restructure. The post is now full time. The EWO attended last week's internal attendance meeting and the school has had a number of LA meetings as a result.

Governors asked if there is anything more that they could do. PG meets with SAM as attendance link governor. Staffing discussed. **Governors asked about patterns of attendance re year groups.** Factors that have an impact discussed.

Children missing in education – SAM expressed concerns re the long delay before the LA picks this up.

SAM left the meeting.

36/23 S&C Committee after Transfer to EQUA

This was discussed at the governor focus forum on the 9th January. Resources and Audit tasks will become a function of Equa trustees. CLES tasks will come under the agenda of the local governing body. S&C is likely to continue as a sub committee scrutinising student welfare and safeguarding, etc. One of the strengths of Equa is around retaining autonomy where possible. **Governors expressed concern about the possibility of training being delivered centrally and moving away from Right Choice.**

37/23 Uniform Consultation

Proposed changes re uniform policy circulated. This was for governor information as the proposals need to go through a significant consultation process. This will then be brought back to committee.

Some parents struggle to buy the uniform that they are asked to and the school doesn't want the policy to contribute to financial hardship. Polo shirt – reducing branding is in line with government guidance. **Governors asked questions to clarify the proposed changes.**

HKE asked if governors were happy with the process. **Governors confirmed that they were.**

38/23 Y7 Transition

ZLE was welcomed to the meeting and attended to give an update on Y7 transition.

This is a massive year group with 274 students. They are doing really well. Impact of increased numbers – there are 9 tutors with 30-32 students per class, the team are effective. Tutor groups are usually 24-28 students. Moving around site – the canteen is busy with huge queues. This is an area that students and parents have mentioned. In lessons students are working well, with few reports of needing to move sets. **Governors noted that reading scores were better than anticipated.**

There are lots of highlights – there has been good feedback from the PGL trip. The school is looking at the entire year group attending the same trip next year instead of 2 separate trips. **Governors asked if it would have the same impact with a bigger group.** ZLE – it will effectively run as 2 separate groups taking place at the same time. Their experience will be the same but it will cut down on disruption.

Governors noted high scoring data despite Covid disruption. The number of SEN students was also noted. ZLE – there are gaps due to online learning. Staff will stretch and challenge as they need to in lessons. The ongoing impact of Covid on students was discussed.

ZLE was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

39/23 Alternative Provision

HKE gave an update. Some of the external providers that the school had been using weren't offering GCSEs. The school has been able to resolve this. Students are in school for 2 lessons every day for core subjects. Y10 and Y11 also includes PSHE. They are making good progress. The school might look at 1 day of vocational studies at College to support their learning.

Governors asked about students attending alternative provision elsewhere – this includes College, SMEH and Academy 21. HKE does QA and meets with parents to review. She is also chairing WWA behaviour and attendance.

Governors asked if the school could be challenged around 25 hours provision. HKE – no as provision is much more intensive in smaller groups and students would not otherwise access education.

Governors asked if joining Equa will help with alternative provision. HKE – long term yes. The Trust is committed to this, but it will take time.

40/23 Behaviour and Bullying

HKE is reviewing both policies. Bullying – HKE has met with JCA (overseeing anti bullying ambassadors) to get feedback. The main problems are around perception and education. Effective recording also needs to be reviewed.

Behaviour – there is an increase in the number of students being sent to the PBSC. HKE met with DLs recently to review how they are owning their areas to ensure fairness and consistency of approach. Every week HKE gets faculty data about who is being sent out and which staff are sending them to the PBSC. **A question was asked to clarify about warnings.**

Governors noted that negative behaviour points for Y11 are quite high in comparison to other year groups. HKE – this figure relates to a small number of students.

There is an increase in student suspensions in comparison to this time last year. Some of this relates to truancy.

41/23 Safeguarding and Student Wellbeing

Data circulated in advance of the meeting. The safeguarding audit is due to be completed.

The LA is changing the way they are approaching safeguarding and will allocate a key social worker. It is unclear at this stage what this will look like.

42/23 Stability Report

Circulated in advance of the meeting.

43/23 Policies

Staff Code of Conduct – there are no changes to this policy so it will be brought to next S&C to be ratified.

Governors asked why the young carers policy isn't on the website. Reminders will be included in the school newsletter and it is included in Y7 induction packs.

44/23 Governor Postcards

This was discussed and agreed.

45/23 AOB

Breakfast Club – this starts next Monday. The school has funding and is going to apply to charities. FSM students have been informed and all students are welcome to attend.

Andrew Tate – communication re the influencer discussed.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm. Date of next Student & Community Meeting Wednesday 8th March 2023.

Signed: _____

Date: _____