

THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL
Minutes of the Curriculum, Learning and
Educational Standards Committee Meeting
Wednesday 22nd March 2023

Time: 6 pm
Place: The Hub and via Zoom
Present: **In person**
 Andrew Hawkins (AH) (chair & note taker), Ben Pope (BP), Daniela Coy (DC),
Via Zoom
 David Whewell (DW)
Advisors **Via Zoom**
 Abbie Lanng (ALA), Amy Eyers (AEY), Katherine Bodman (KBO)
In person
 Ben Rhodes (BRH)
Apologies: Kevin Eames, Martin Sandford

Agenda Item	Actions Agreed	Who
40/23	To raise the redrafting of CLES's equality objective " <i>to narrow the gap between boys and girls in English KS3 and KS4 results</i> " at the next Local Governor Board meeting	AH

34/23 Apologies

Apologies were agreed and accepted.

35/23 Declaration of Business Interests

Governors were reminded to declare business interests as necessary.

36/23 Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of 18 January were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. This included an additional confidential minute (30/23).

37/23 Y11 & Y13 Tracking Point 2 Update/Mock 2 Results and Y12 TP2

BRH informed Governors that Mock Y11 results were a little delayed. There had been a recent change to the original plan of holding a "mock results day" until which mock exam papers had been embargoed from the students. Following feedback and consultation the new plan allows mock papers, as is usual, to be used in framing Y11 individual revision sessions.

38/23 PE Faculty Review

KBO supplied the Faculty Review document before the meeting. The picture was good in most areas and validated by an external adviser from a Devizes school. There is a new curriculum in KS3 "Me in PE" which sounds very broad, including not only physical, but also social and health aspects, "ensuring all students can succeed in PE". Most student in all Key Stages reported enjoying PE and felt supported in making progress. The curriculum is taught following Learning Cycles and Medium Term Plans via a series of Gap-Embed-Mastery (GEM) and mini-GEM cycles. Most students in each Key Stage could articulate what they were doing and why. KS4 has great success rates with the second highest Subject Progress Index (SPI) score of any subject taught at JoG – these contribute to the school's Progress 8 (P8) measure.

However, learning walks, which were used to gather information for this report, revealed weaknesses in KS5 teaching and learning around pace, progress, stretch and challenge, and structure. Though some positive evidence in these areas was found in the Work Samples activity. Another area for improvement across Key Stages was moderation and evidencing of work, possibly by the use of video.

Governors asked what area was most in need of improvement; teaching in KS5 was clearly identified. **Governors asked about KS4 student recruitment;** there will be 2 large groups working towards a Cambridge Technical Qualification, a new qualification for JoG with teachers still requiring some support.

KBO left the meeting.

39/23 English Faculty Review

AEY supplied the Faculty Review document before the meeting and presented its findings. Presentation to governors had been delayed due to illness and AEY is covering for the Director of Learning.

This was a very well written and detailed report, so written as to provide a Continual Professional Development (CPD) opportunity to focus on the Ofsted themes of “Quality of Education” and “Leadership and Management”.

Generally the report was positive, particular highlights were building of cultural capital in theatre visits and the use of online platforms - English Media Centre and Digital Theatre - to enhance and broaden perspectives “beyond the exam specification”. Results at KS4 trend towards improvement: the SPI for English Language is solid at 0.22, and just in line with national averages for English Literature, at KS5 Value Added (VA - a similar concept to SPI) is good at 0.54.

Areas for improvement included, changes to the learning cycles to emphasize grammar, punctuation and spoken language skills, Joint Professional Development (JPD) opportunities to improve the teaching of grammar, modifications to the timetable to avoid delivery of multiple lessons in a single day, attempts to enhance parental engagement in reading, and the proactive subsidy of enrichment opportunities for Pupil Premium (PP) students.

Governors raised a question in relation students reaching “expected grades” (grades predicted possible from KS2 data) **and departmental success** in English (and more broadly). This came about as, previously noted English had a solid SPI (+0.22) but 40/23 (below) revealed that, 68% of girls and 66% of boys “underachieved against their expected progress targets”. It was unclear what all this meant.

40/23 Teaching and Learning Strategies

AEY provided a report prior to the meeting subtitled, “Closing the gap between boy’s and girls’ performance at GCSE”. This was an informative document that in part set out to challenge subject-gender stereotyping: i.e. boys good at Maths, girls good at English. In reality at JoG, in 2022, more boys attained top grades in English than girls, and more girls than boys did not match their expected grades in English. In Maths, the success in meeting expected grades for girls in Maths was higher than that of boys.

This led to considerable discussion, particularly as the document also cautioned against, “looking for gaps (in performance)” between different segments of the student cohort. **This led governors to conclude that the CLES equality objective “to narrow the gap between boys and girls in English KS3 and KS4 results” (57/22) may need redrafting.**

The key conclusion was that, “the most important thing to pay attention to is school behaviour” which, although may particularly benefit boys, will also, naturally, benefit girls too. Other key concepts included “Confidence (Aspiration)” and High Quality Teaching and Learning”. Behaviour and Teaching and Learning being recent or planned subjects for teacher development.

AH observed, paraphrasing the aphorism offered at the end of the document on Confidence: “the boy, the girl, the student, who knows what they want from school will succeed.”

AEY left the meeting.

41/23 Pupil Premium (PP) Funding Plan – Spending and Actions

ALA provided a document before the meeting detailing PP funding activities pursued, and outcomes.

In the current climate it is very difficult to gauge where outcomes stand. In the table provided data for 2022 was compared to 2019. For all JoG students strong English Bacculaureate (EBacc) pass rates nearly doubled to 20%, but for PP students this number decreased from 7 to 5%. Again, English 4+ rates for all students had increased to 83% from 75% (now well above the 2019 national average) but PP pass rates remain flat at 66%, (granted well above 2019 PP national average). However, the PP P8 shows very significant improvement from -0.32 to only -0.11 (well above the 2019 PP national average).

The document and presentation made clear that there are few activities solely directed at PP students. The JoG approach being focused on providing a high quality teaching and learning experience through such work as Talk for Writing, GEM learning cycles, and Reciprocal reading. However, some interventions do disproportionately involve PP students, generally because of their lower prior attainment at KS2: e.g. enhanced transition arrangements, the Nurture Group, and the use of KS4 mentors. The lack of a KS3 mentor was again noted (see 4/23).

There was one activity almost solely would be directed at PP students, that of using the “Contingency Fund” to proactively provide financial support (in part or whole) to PP students so to allow more ready access to cultural experiences and other school organized activities. This was presented with some passion, and was put forward in the context of “Affordable Schools”, a county-wide initiative.

ALA left the meeting.

42/23 Policies

The following policies were reviewed and recommended to the next Board meeting for approval:

- a) Exams
- b) Exams Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown
- c) Exams Equality & Access
- d) Exams Malpractice
- e) Exams Whistleblowing
- f) Non-Exam Assessment

The following procedures were also noted:

- a) Contingency Plan
- b) Internal Appeals and Complaints

43/23 Governor Postcards

None suggested.

44/23 AOB

AH noted that this was the last CLES meeting and thanked fellow governors and advisors for their contributions.

There was no further business to discuss. The meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____