

The Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting
Held on Thursday, 24th May 2018 at 5.45 pm in the Learning Resource Centre

Present:

Tahir Darr (TD) (Vice Chair);
Tom Davies (TPD);
Duncan Giles (DG) (joined the meeting at 5.55 pm);
Ruth Henry (RH);
Vicki Jackson (VJ);
Verity Lewis (VL);
Steven Mackay (SMK) (Headteacher);
Michelle O'Doherty (MO);
Nick Regan (NR);
Joanna Symons (JS);
Kevin Ward (KW);
Stuart Weatherall (SWe) (Chair of the Governing Board).

1.1 **SWe welcomed** everyone to the meeting.

1.2 **Apologies** were received and accepted from:

Kelly Ogden (KO);

Barry Raynes (BR).

RH advised that she would need to leave the meeting at 7.00 pm due to a competing commitment.

1.3 **The meeting was quorate.**

1.3 **In attendance:**

James Gare (JG), Partner, Monahans Financial Services;

Patrick Heuff (PH), Deputy Headteacher;

Jessica Lobbett (JL), Assistant Headteacher;

Marya Marriott (Clerk).

1.5 **Declaration of Business Interests and Conflicts of Interests.**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Notification of Any Other Urgent Business**

SWe advised that clerking arrangements for 2018-2019 would be added to the end of the published agenda; the Clerk would leave the meeting at that point.

3. **Finance Briefing: Overview of Financial Responsibilities**

The following documents at the meeting:

a. Financial governance & sector update

b. Roles and responsibilities as Trustees

c. Benchmarking Report for the Oldfield School, Year ended 31st August 2017.

JG advised that Monahan's Financial Services would be pleased to offer governor training twice each year as part of the service it provided to Oldfield.

All governors needed to be aware of their roles and responsibilities:

- a. To ensure that the school was operating legally, ie in line with its Articles of Association and the requirements laid out in the AFH (Academies' Financial Handbook). To ensure this responsibility was fully discharged the Board had to ensure robust financial controls were in place, internal audit processes took place, responsibility was delegated correctly, specialist advisers and professionals were contracted and the school's staff were appropriately experienced.
- b. Effective financial governance. This is could be achieved by undertaking regular Reviews of Governance and Skills Audits.

It was noted that the Board had commissioned an External Review of Governance in November 2017. The findings had been built into School Improvement Planning.

- c. Ensure that the school achieves good value for money. This could be achieved by ensuring that robust tendering processes were in place, benchmarking and scrutiny of management accounts and budgets.
- d. Manage school resources responsibly. This could be achieved by ensuring that a risk register was in place, there was a robust reserves policy and that management accounts and budgets were monitored.

In its most recent report (November 2017) the ESFA (Education & Skills Funding Agency) had highlighted a marked increase in schools being targeted by fraudsters; more cases of fraudulent activity by school CEO's had been identified.

JG advised that the school needed to think in '3 dimensions' ie beyond a simple surplus/deficit approach. The school needed to be considering its assets and liabilities and its reserves when making financial decisions. The school needed to ensure that it had funds to run the school, and whether those funds were freely available.

Benchmarking data (31 schools - single academy trusts in B&NES, Wiltshire and Somerset as at 31st August 2017) indicated Oldfield reserves were mid-range – equivalent to 35 days running costs. JG noted that this was a good position for the school to be in. Some schools' position was precarious; some governing boards risked being criticised for holding too-large reserves, which should be spent on the children in their school.

Governing boards needed to decide and apply their reserves policy. JG noted that Oldfield's actions were in line with its policy but the policy would be improved with some refinement ie 'train track' ie upper and lower level approach introduced. **Action: KW; F&GP Committee.**

An alternative approach to calculating an appropriate reserves figure would be to consider the risks e.g. if pupil numbers were high and likely to remain so, and the school roof was in good condition, it might be argued that a much lower reserve figure was needed.

Governors noted that the F&GP committee had looked at school risks in this context and had included issues such as the Penn building in its considerations. In terms of income there was low risk but the condition of the school site was a much higher risk. Several recent issues had arisen where unplanned repairs were needed, those had led the committee agreeing that, in the current financial year, the remaining planned capital spending to improve the school would be stopped so that budgets were not overspent.

Management accounts. JG advised that the accounts governing boards received were often historic – they should be future-facing where possible. As an example, JG suggested Governing Board/F&GP KPIs could include monitoring data such as primary school enrolment.

Most schools had more cash than reserves ie committed expenditure – this was true of Oldfield School. Some of the schools in the benchmarking data had achieved almost 2% return on safe investments such as National Savings and Fixed Year Bonds. It was agreed that the F&GP Committee would consider how funds could be invested to secure a better return. **Action: KW/F&GP**

Internal Audit. Schools paying for audit services often received transaction-based low-level reports – internal audit could be used more strategically to develop policy. **Action: F&GP** to consider.

JG reminded governors that controls in relation to connected parties must be secure. It was noted that the school did not have any related or connected party arrangements in place.

The Governing Board thanked JG for his useful and thought-provoking session. JG left the meeting at this point (6.20 pm).

4. Presentation: Acceleration Programme

The following documents were circulated in advance of the meeting:

- Acceleration Programme presentation handout (PowerPoint presentation).
- A Mentoring Progress Book
- Kotter: 8 Step Transformational Change Model
- Oldfield School Acceleration Programme 2018: Lectures and Workshops.

JL was studying for the NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship). As part of that programme, JL had to:

- a. Lead a school-change programme to improve pupil progress and attainment. The programme centred on enhancing MABLE (more able) learners engagement and behaviour for learning.
- b. Design a financial action plan to meet a placement school's resourcing and capability needs.

Governors were advised that JL was hoping for governors' participation in relation to the 'what next aspects of the programme.

Acceleration Programme: JL highlighted the following:

Current issues for the school were student passivity; inconsistent expectations (Behaviour for Learning); the need for a cohesive MABLE register, which tracked progress within learning areas.

Key actions: increase challenge across the curriculum, develop an enrichment programme, monitoring of MABLE students learning.

At the start of the programme, data tracking, including SIMS (school information management system) was not used comprehensively - teachers did not always know who their most able learners were.

MABLE data, for 2017-2018 and the current cohort, had been carefully analysed. It was noted that the school's intake had increasing numbers of MABLE students – the school needed to ensure that all were being stretched.

A condensed version of the programme had been shared at the parents' evening held on 16th November 2017. Discussions had been held with individual families; there had been an enthusiastic response to invitations to join the programme.

Research showed that there was a physical explanation as to why teenage boys could appear less mature than teenage girls.

To promote academic acceleration 'The Brilliant Club – Scholars' Programme had been introduced. The programme was highly selective. At least 1/3 of students taking part must be supported by Pupil Premium. It was intended that Year 7 students on the programme would be working at Year 10 levels, Year 8 at Year 11 etc. Students enjoyed the programme.

There was Russell Group (universities) involvement, there had been visits to Cambridge. There had also been a visit to Cardiff University.

Governors asked: How do you know it's having the intended effect?

A: It is easy to measure students' aspirations changing e.g. one student didn't want to join the programme – now they want to undertake a doctorate.

Aspirational Mentoring: Students had received guidance on how to make their university applications stand out and there had been a focus on raising aspirations. A large number of staff was involved - on a voluntary basis.

JL reported that the programme was quite expensive ie £7k for 34 students.

Monitoring & Sustained Impact: JL identified a comprehensive range of action, including staff mentors being asked for help if a student was not engaging with the programme. Students were placed in mentoring groups.

Governors asked: How do you score Growth Mindset?

A: We use a questionnaire by Carol Dweck [the Professor of Psychology, who discovered Growth Mindset.]

JL advised that the programme would be launched across in September 2018. To date, 28 lectures had run; lots of students had attended them all – the programme had been a huge success.

More staff would be involved going forward. It was noted that Vera Hobhouse, MP, would be leading a session on how to run a campaign. Several governors had also volunteered to lead sessions.

It was hoped that the work would have some impact on the school's exam results in 2018, and that it would have a long-term impact on school culture. The action plan was required to cover a minimum of 3 terms; it was not intended as a quick fix and would continue regardless of JL's course.

JL had used the Kotter Model (transformational change) before and liked the approach. JL advised that she particularly enjoyed the aspects of the project that allowed her to work with other people to change the whole culture – students, staff, governors, parents – to *'form a powerful coalition.'*

Governors asked: Are the students in the Brilliant Club a sub-group?

A: They are on the Acceleration Programme but get invited to the Brilliant Club.

Governors asked: Will you be running more visits to universities?

A: Yes. We will be starting earlier – we want to push this with students.

Governors asked: Can I still refer students who would be suitable for the programme but have not been identified as MABLE?

A: Yes. Although that, ironically, is not very Growth Mindset. The driver for the project was the under-achievement of the MABLE. We intend that within a couple of years the programme will be used across the whole school. There will be official MABLE groups but we will also create 'Gifted and Talented' lists.

[RH left at this point, 7 pm.]

Governors asked: What's the impact on staff?

A: For those who want it, there is a chance to get involved in a new project – ie very Growth Mindset. Next year we will consider the programme in terms of whole-school development.

Governors asked: What are the risks, in terms of roll-out?

A: We will always have some students who won't engage. Parents might ask why one of their children is on the programme but another not. Resourcing is an issue – but the benefits will outweigh costs.

The Governing Board agreed the programme was excellent value and it was delighted to support it.

Governors asked: How do we volunteer?

A: Provide JL with your subject and dates you could be available during the school day. Sessions are 25 minutes long – they are very popular.

The Governing Board thanked JL for initiating this exciting project, and for sharing it.
[JL left at this point, 7.10 pm.]

5. Safeguarding Quiz

BR had planned to lead this item but had been unable to attend the meeting. It was agreed that it should be deferred to the next meeting. [Post meeting note: it was agreed at the PSW, held on 14th June 2018, that Sarah Mills would provide a 30-minute presentation on Safeguarding to the term 1, 2018-2019 FGB Meeting. Governors would attend having completed the quiz in advance. Action: Sarah Mills.]

All governors present confirmed that they had read KCIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) Parts 1 and 2).

6. The Minutes of the last Full Governing Board Meeting, 15th March 2018.

6.1 The minutes were approved and were signed by the Chair.

6.2 Matters arising from the last Full Governing Board Meeting

Please see page 8.

7. Headteacher's Report

SMK's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

SMK highlighted the following:

7.1 Staff would soon meet to evaluate the SIP and discuss school improvement priorities for the coming year, that meeting would be informed by the last Governing Board/Senior Leadership Team meeting. It was likely that the objectives for 2018-19 would be very similar to the current year.

7.2 Student outcomes had been added to GovernorHub. It was noted that students supported by Pupil Premium had the largest gap. This was a very significant challenge for the school due to factors beyond its control - hospitalisation, persistent non-attendance and students on roll but being partly home-educated. A group of 10 students was involved, they would have a significant on the school data.

Governors asked: Can we strip those students out of the overall data?

A: Yes - but only for our purposes.

Governors asked: Is this going to happen every year?

A: It shouldn't. There have been detailed discussions with Sarah Mills – we know that many issues have arisen because the school didn't do enough earlier.

Governors asked: Could we have predicted this?

A: No. Previously there was much less pastoral support than there is now. But for this cohort, in at least 2 cases, there was no indication that this would happen. But we will be identifying issues earlier and intervening. Many things – social and mental – don't show their impact until Year 10; it is not just an Oldfield issue.

7.3 Pupil Premium outcomes suffered from low attendance from this group of students. Sarah Mills was leading on that area. The capacity of the attendance officer had been increased and would focus on tackling the barriers to attendance.

Governors asked: Boys have by far the most behaviour points – is it that they are just naughtier?

A: Yes. Girls generally behave better and have better GCSE results. But boys here do significantly better when compared against the national picture and they do better at A' Level.

Governors asked: Five years ago this was an all-girl school and some staff had not adjusted their teaching – is that still an issue?

A: That has mostly run its course – occasionally there is an issue but it's rare.

- 7.4 Attendance: This was an area of high focus for Sarah Mills. Overall attendance was at 94.5% - it needed to be at least 96%. However, it was noted that it was in line with other schools in the local authority area.
- 7.5 Some parents had complained that there was too much homework – that was in response to the new policy. The quality of homework had been improved. Lucy James would discuss the issues with parents – homework needed to be purposeful and worth doing.
- 7.6 Sixth Form: This was an area of success, in terms of recruitment and outcomes. Year 13 retention needed to improve. It was hoped that 70-80 students would join the sixth form in 2018-2019.
- 7.7 Budget/Resources: The reserves would drop to a relatively low figure in the coming year. However, the school had more than adequate cash and could choose to reduce spending if needed. Beyond that next year, the financial picture looked positive.
- 7.8 Capital Programme: The programme was on hold. Remaining capital for the year would be spent on the upgrade to the fire alarm system.
- 7.9 Admissions: B&NES had told SMK that the bulge class would not be needed after all. Staffing had been put in place for the anticipated extra 30 pupils. The LA's decision had significant negative financial implications for the school.

Governors asked: Will you lodge a complaint?

A: Yes. We hope to admit the students on our waiting list so in the longer term we will receive the lagged funding.

- 7.10 Staffing: New team members had been appointed to the Economics and Business Department. It was noted that 2 long-serving members of staff were retiring.

8. Outcomes of Joint Governor/SLT Strategy Meeting

Strategy: The group had met on 19th April 2018. A comprehensive plan was in place. In light of discussions, the number of pillars had been reduced. KW would update the plan. **Action KW**

9. CIF Bid Outcomes & Expansion Bid

- 9.1 The bids for CIF (Capital Improvement Fund) had been very close to the required score. Appeals had been submitted; the results were due on 25th May 2018. If the appeals were successful the funding of up-front costs for the works would present an immediate challenge. A tendering process for the works had already been completed.

- 9.2 Expansion Bid: The process was underway. Architects had been engaged. The CIF bid would be submitted before the end of December 2018.

10. Recruitment of Deputy Headteacher

SWe reported that, after a busy and testing 2 days, Jonathan Reeves was selected by the panel. Currently an Assistant Headteacher in Brislington, he was the stand-out candidate. He was the unanimous first choice of staff and student council members, as well as for the selection panel.

11. External Adviser Visit (Standing Item)

The most recent report had been circulated via GovernorHub. It was agreed that Chris Healy would be asked to attend the next FGB meeting. **Action: SWe.**

12. Committee Reports

The Board noted that the key items discussed by the 3 Committees had been covered earlier in the meeting.

12.1 Curriculum

The committee had met on 24th April 2018.

12.2 Pupil & Staff Welfare (PSW)

The committee had met not met since the last FGB meeting. The staff survey would be discussed at the next meeting.

12.3 Finance & General Purposes (F&GP)

The committee had met twice (22nd March and 16th May 2018) since the last FGB 2018.

13. Parent Governor Recruitment

SMK advised that there had been no response to notices of the vacancy, sent to parents. The vacancies would be advertised again when the new Year 7 cohort had joined the school. **Action: SMK**

14. Link Governor Appointments

TD, who was leading on this aspect of the Board's work, had been unable to attend the meeting, it was therefore agreed that this item should be deferred. **Action: TD**

15. Governing Board Structure/Practice

This item was deferred. **Action: TD**

16. GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) Action Plan

PH advised that the school would hit the deadline for compliance, and summarised the action taken:

- The school's policy had been approved by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Management of CCTV was compliant with GDPR regulations.
- The security of the school's ICT server was being improved.
- The use of flash drives by staff had been banned.
- Passwords had been updated and security prompts put in place.
- Privacy Notices for students and staff had been completed.
- The Home-School Agreement had been updated.

DPO (Data Protection Officer): The school was considering entering an agreement with Audit West, shared with Newbridge School. **Action: SMK** – confirm DPO appointment at next meeting.

Governors asked: Do governors have to sign anything?

A: No, that isn't necessary – there has been some suggestion that it was but that appears to be driven by firms seeking to make money out the changes. It was noted that there was very little from which those involved with schools (students, staff, parents) could opt out.

The Board offered PH sincere thanks for leading the complex work related to GDPR compliance.

17. Any Other Urgent Business

17.1 Clerking Arrangements 2018-2019. The Clerk **withdrew at this point, 7.55 pm**

A proposal for the clerking arrangements for 2018-2019 was agreed. **Action: SWe**
The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Term 6 Meeting Dates:

Thurs	14.06.18	5.30pm	PSW 3/3
Thurs	28.06.18	5.30pm	F&GP 6/6
Thurs	05.07.18	5.30pm	Curriculum 4/4
MON	16.07.18	5.30pm	Full Governing Body* 6/6

Items noted for the next Full Governing Board agenda: Chris Healy Presentation.

6.2 Matters Arising

From 15th March 2018

- 5.3 **Action: SMK** Comparative data to be added to future reports so provide sense of data significance.

External Adviser Visit:

- 6.1. **TD and KO** [Performance Management Governors] would attend at 9.30 am.

- 6.2. **Action Ongoing: VJ** to attend Behaviour for Learning review. [Re-scheduled.]

- 7.2 **Action: SMK** [annual] Staff Survey was due to take place; the 2017 questions would be used. [This would be discussed at the next PSW meeting, 14th June 2018.]

- 12.3 It was agreed that the completion of the Skills Audit should take place annually. **Action Clerk.** [Logged]

13. **Action carried forward: TD** Lead suggestions on governing body structure/practice would at next meeting.

- 14.2 Safeguarding Quiz, used with staff to highlight gaps in knowledge, would be circulated, and discussed at the next meeting. **Action carried forward: BR.**

- 15.4 **Clerk** to send a summary Governing Board data collected to PH.

16. **Subscription to Governor Services – 2018/2019** [Purchase agreed.] **Clerk** to advise Finance and Facilities Manager.

- 17.2 **Deputy Headteacher Appointment.** **All governors** to advise Ishbel Tovey of their availability.

From 8th February 2018

- 2.1 **Application for Stopping Up of Public Highway.**

It was agreed that the school would investigate whether it was feasible to install additional CCTV.

Action: SMK/F&GP Committee. [Additional CCTV had been installed.]

- 3 **Parent Governor Election**

It was agreed that the vacancies would be advertised. **Action: SMK** **AGENDA**

- 8.11 **Bullying Log:**

Governors asked: Do the types of incident trigger responses from the school?

Action ongoing: KO to discuss with Sarah Mills, Assistant Headteacher. [Sarah had added more detail so that it was clear whether incidents were one-offs or actual bullying.]

- 8.13 **Praise:** There had been 43 items of praise.

Governors asked: Can we be provided with some more information so that we get a feel for what is going well?

Action carried forward: SMK

- 3.1 **Conflicts of Interest**

List of school contractors to be provided so governors can identify all potential conflicts.

Action carried forward: SMK.

- 3.2 Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) TORs to be reviewed at the committee's next meeting. **Action: Clerk.**

From 7th December 2017

3. **Further Action: Clerk** to update terms of reference and scheme of delegation.]

From 13th July 2017

- 17 **Strategy (GB/SLT) Meeting Dates**

...would continue to examine 2 of the pillars in the School Development Plan at each meeting; pillar 5 and 6 would be addressed at the next meeting. **Further action: SWe and KW** to liaise.

- 23 **Website Profiles** All governors without a website profile to forward **Action: KO**