

HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL HARD FEDERATION

GOVERNING BODY MINUTES SPRING TERM 2016

**MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 6PM –
A13 – QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL**

PRESENT: Mr Simon Kitchman
Mrs Sandra Thompson
Mr Tony Brown
Mr Graeme Atkins (Executive Headteacher)
Mrs Barbara Hignett
Mr Patrick Ferguson
Mr David Hartland
Ms Sarah Kemp
Mrs Jo Grey
Mr Jonathan Holmes

ALSO PRESENT: Mr Andy Byers (Head of School - Associate Member)
Mrs Judith Minto (Head of School - Associate Member)
Mrs Charlotte Gaines (Clerk to the Governors)

PART 1 (CLASSIFIED NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

Items discussed under Part 1 of this agenda will not be classified as confidential: consequently the minutes and supporting documents should be made available to any person wishing to inspect them.

1. Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

2. Declaration of personal or pecuniary interest in any agenda item

Governors declared that they had no pecuniary interest in any item on the agenda.

3. Consider & Adopt Minutes of Governing Body Meetings

Minutes of the following meeting, having been circulated to the Governors, were adopted and signed as a true record:

13 January 2016 (Part 1)

20 January 2016 (Part 1)

Matters arising from the minutes:

Governors discussed whether it was appropriate to meet with HMS staff. There are currently no suitable events planned for governors to attend with staff, and there are several commitments for staff next term, for example parents' evenings. It was agreed not to arrange any additional commitments for them at this time.

The three Governors on the Pay and Performance Committee have met to discuss the review cycle. Objectives have already been set for this academic year and ST commented it would not be appropriate for any further discussion regarding these for this cycle. However, looking ahead the intention was to take views from governors before GA's appraisal meeting. Governors agreed to discuss pay and performance under part 2 of the September governing body meeting.

ST/JG/TB

Governors asked whether there had been any matters arising following the change in option choices. AB advised that the Year 9 brochure had been given to students yesterday. Although there has not been much time for feedback a small number of calls requesting clarification have been received at school. There will be a Year 9 parents' evening on Tuesday 23 February to discuss the options.

AB added that staff are currently carrying out 650 individual options interviews with Year 9 students and their parents. The interviews with Year 12 went more smoothly than they had done last year. The changes appear to have been accepted.

Governors asked if there was any further information about the change to the timetable. AB advised that the proposal has gone to staff for comment; few comments have been received. Some concerns had been expressed about extra planning but new specifications were requiring this anyway. Generally reactions are mixed: languages and maths like the proposal whilst more practical subjects are less keen.

SKi expressed thanks on behalf of the governors to all those involved in the interviews.

4. Membership update – Co-opted Governor vacancy

Governors discussed whether it was appropriate to appoint to the unfilled vacancy. SKe commented that it would be inappropriate given that there are likely to be changes taking place. It was agreed not to fill the vacancy at this time.

5. SIP visit

GA advised that the letters confirming the outcomes of the SIP visits had been received today and were very positive. SKi suggested holding discussion around the QEHS report until governors had an opportunity to read the letter, but that the HMS report should be discussed tonight, given the impending Ofsted inspection. JH indicated that the QE report would be considered at the forthcoming monitoring group meeting.

QEHS MG

SKi asked GA and JM to draw out the key points of the HMS report. GA

advised that they are pleased with the text and the overall conclusions. He brought governors' attention to the areas for development highlighted at the end of the report. A meeting has been arranged on Friday for SLT and the curriculum leader for English to reflect on the issues raised regarding handwriting and spelling, punctuation and grammar.

JH asked if the Attendance officer from QE had impacted on Year 8 girls at HMS. GA advised that this had not been implemented, partly because Y8 attendance has been improving and partly due to the need to address particular issues at QE.

SKi noted that there were a couple of small development points for the new Head of English and Acting Head of Maths but that overall the experience had been a good and valuable exercise for them.

SKi asked for further details regarding the Acting Head of Maths and longer term plans. GA explained that the current arrangement is working very well and the department is moving forward well under his leadership, with Judith closely involved. TB commented that he appeared to have the respect of his colleagues in taking the subject forward. GA explained that there would be a need to advertise and then appoint substantively to the vacancy but that this may be undertaken internally.

6. Bursary Fund Policy

JH commented that the revision of the policy had been raised at the QEHS monitoring group meeting but it had not been brought back for discussion. GA explained that the minutes indicated that it could either go to the monitoring group or the FGB depending on the scheme of delegation. SKi clarified the delegated authority.

JH commented that the new policy is not clear in terms of whether other years can apply, or with regards to aspects relating to attendance.

DH asked if the potential cost of the policy had been considered. AB explained that this was difficult given some of the criteria. SKi and ST commented that the issue is that not enough students are accessing the money and it is not getting spent. PF queried the definition of exceptional circumstances He also questioned how families are enabled to know about the bursary. AB advised that students and parents are made aware by the pastoral leader of the sixth form.

SKi questioned the certification of sixth form absence. AB advised that it was a staged process within which the sixth form team can take away the right for self-certification at a level one meeting.

JH advised that the policy should be considered outside the Full Governing Body. ST and SKi were concerned that this would cause further delays in allocating the bursary to students in need.

Governors delegated authority to GA to clarify whether the bursary is paid retrospectively, and to ensure further clarity about what the fund can be used for. The policy will not be brought back to FGB, but will be put into practice following clarification from GA.

GA

7. Any Other Business

There has been no audit committee meeting since the last meeting of the FGB; the next meeting is scheduled for 22 March 2016.

The HMS monitoring group will agree a date to meet immediately after this meeting. The QEHS monitoring group will meet at 3:30pm on 3 March 2016. The minutes from the meeting on 15 January have been circulated. SKe asked for clarification regarding the sixth form executive, which JH provided.

There has been a safeguarding issue which is being appropriately managed at QEHS; no issues at HMS. The safeguarding group is due to meet in the next term.

8. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

Part 1 of the meeting was concluded.

Governors moved to Part 2 of the agenda.

Chair
Date