

Tadcaster Grammar School Governing Body

Tuesday 20 June 2017

Minutes

Present: Philip Turnpenny (Chair), Martyn Sibley (Head), Mike Dunphy, Jon Bliss, Heather Smith, Chris Burt, Ruth McHenery, Karl Shields, Jess Ryan, Sam Foster, Ria Hennessy, Jeremy Airey

In attendance: Cayte Mulhern (Deputy Head), Wendy Wilson (Deputy Head), Siân Henderson (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

New governor Sam Foster was welcomed to his first meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted from Roger Riley and David Gluck

2. Confidentiality and declarations of interest

Governors were reminded of the confidential nature of discussion at meetings. No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2017

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters arising

- (i) Safeguarding training – David Gluck and Heather Smith have been unable to access the training. The clerk will send a new link to these governors plus Sam Foster.
- (ii) Annual governance report – Jeremy Airey will complete last year's and this year's report by the end of this term.
- (iii) Exclusion – an appeal against the governing body's decision was unsuccessful.
- (iv) In-house mental health support – funding remains an issue; options are being explored
- (v) Parents' evenings – Jon Bliss and Jess Ryan have not had the opportunity to fulfil the governor role at parents' evenings as they have been required to attend as parents.
- (vi) Ofsted report – this has been circulated to parents; no feedback has been received
- (vii) Young carers – a report will be added to the next safeguarding report.

5. To note the meetings of the governing body held on 24 April and 3 May

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 April were approved and signed by the Chair. It was noted that a workshop meeting looking at the SDP was held on 3 May.

6. Headteacher's report

The following items were covered:

- (i) Staffing – concern over the availability of teachers in core subjects was noted. Turnover of staff has improved considerably from last year (down from 13% to 8.4% overall). A governor asked which of the two years would be more typical and the headteacher responded that this was not entirely clear as data has only been collected for two years, but his belief is that the first year had unusually high turnover. A governor asked about staff retention in the English department and was provided with information by school staff. It was noted that national staff shortages in English mean that there is a wealth of opportunities for talented staff. A governor asked whether benchmarking data was available and the headteacher reported that he was not aware of any useful information. A governor queried the size and quality of the field for advertised appointments and was informed that this is variable by subject.
- (ii) Student tracking – the Chair of the School Development Committee reported that there are no unexpected issues revealed by tracking. The focus remains on disadvantaged students in Y11. The value of pinks and greens, particularly for middle leaders, was noted. A governor asked at what point it would be expected that greens would exceed pinks and the headteacher replied that the SDP highlights actions designed to reach this target in subjects that are currently showing weakness. A governor asked about the basis of the benchmark for pinks and greens and Mrs Wilson replied that the aspiration for greens to exceed pinks is linked to school performance being in the top 20% in the country according to FFT data. This is a comparative measure and therefore dependent on performance in other schools. Miss Mulhern noted that the data is very beneficial for staff in comparing performance between classes or cohorts.
- (iii) Student attendance – detailed analysis was provided. Sixth form attendance will be provided for the next meeting.
- (iv) Exclusions and internal sanctions – data was provided for cohorts and student groups. Governors requested further information on the increasing number of fixed term exclusions, internal exclusions and isolations, and Miss Mulhern reported that the introduction of a new policy had impacted expectations. Numbers are beginning to reduce as the policy becomes embedded and the new system is being reviewed to eliminate unintended consequences. Further information can be found in the minutes of the SD Committee.
- (v) Pupil Premium – a detailed presentation was provided for governors at the immersion morning.
- (vi) Governor engagement
 - Immersion mornings – a report from the last immersion meeting was circulated to governors. A suggestion was made that parents might be approached to fund Chromebooks and this will be discussed at the Resources meeting; Mike Dunphy will produce a paper.

- KS/vulnerable learners floodlight meetings – KS5 floodlight minutes were circulated
- (vii) Parental engagement
- Parents' evenings – attendance has improved following the increase in appointments offered; excellent feedback from parents has been received. A governor asked about staff wellbeing given the expectations of parents' evenings and the headteacher replied that evenings are particularly demanding partly due to the requirement that only one evening per year group is offered. The leadership team is mindful of the pressure and offer breaks and refreshments. A governor asked whether the offer to parents of children making good progress not to attend evenings has reduced the pressure and Mr Dunphy reported that it had helped to some extent.
 - Parent forum – an *Emotional Coaching* presentation took place last term for a targeted audience; those who attended found it very valuable although attendance is low at these events.
- (viii) Peer review pilot – planned for later this month, focusing on low prior attaining boys
- (ix) Student numbers
- (x) Student recruitment – 259 are expected to join Y7. The intake into Y12 is anticipated to be above 100 which represents a major improvement on last year. A governor asked what strategies had been employed to raise recruitment and the headteacher outlined several measures. A business plan is available for governors who would like more detailed information. The majority of the plan's strategies have been successfully introduced and will be reviewed in September.
- (xi) Careers
- 48 Y12 pupils have taken part in a *Future Jobs* project involving one week's work experience and an in-depth career interview that results in an individual learning plan.
 - A careers event for the whole of Y12 is planned for the end of term. Support for those applying for university is in place.
 - 15 Y10 students are taking an employability skills qualification.
- (xii) Parent and student surveys – results were circulated; no significant issues were raised. Governors requested clarification on the intention behind the question on 'availability of resources' and 'school facilities' and will be advised by the headteacher. It was noted that there is still work to be done in managing parents' and students' expectations of marking and feedback.
- (xiii) School visits
- (xiv) Visit approval – the following visits received the approval of the governing body
- October 2017, 2 night visit for Y7 to Dearne Valley
 - November 2017, 3 night Christmas market visit, Y8/9
 - February 2018, 3 night Munich history visit, Y12/13

- May 2018, 3 night battlefield visit, Y10
- February 2018, 3/4 night geography visit to the Bay of Naples, Y10
- March 2018, 1 week ski trip to Austria, Y12/13
- July 2018, 5 day French visit to Normandy, Y10
- February half-term 2019, Y8 ski trip to Italy
- March 2019, overnight Y8 pro- football match day experience to Ipswich Town FC
- April 2019 (Easter Holidays), Y10 ski visit to Jasper, Canada
- May 2019 football tour of Florida, Y8/9/10
- June/July 2019, Y9 visit to Wimbledon Tennis Championships
- July 2019, Y9 water sports visit to France or Spain

All visits are risk assessed and led by approved staff.

A governor noted that governing body approval should be sought before bookings are taken, particularly where new visits are being offered.

(xv) Diary dates

7. Committee reports

- (i) Resources (including approval of the Start Budget) – the last two sets of minutes were circulated. The introduction of a door security system was noted. The Chair gave an outline of the outturn, budget and forecast.

The budget and financial forecast, as circulated, were approved by the governing body.

- (ii) School Development – the last two sets of minutes were circulated prior to the meeting. No issues were raised.
- (iii) Headteacher’s Performance Review – the group has held its interim meeting and the three objectives set for the headteacher are expected to have been met by the end of the cycle.

8. 6th Form

Covered under other agenda items.

9. Academisation

A presentation was circulated prior to the meeting and a discussion took place. Further information will be provided at a special meeting in the autumn term.

10. Governance

- (i) Confirmation of local authority governor nomination – the local authority has supported the appointment of Philip Turnpenny, which was confirmed by the governing body.
- (ii) Election of Chair and Vice Chair, 2017/19. Philip Turnpenny was nominated as Chair by Chris Burt, seconded by Heather Smith, and unanimously elected to a two-year term beginning in September 2017. Jeremy Airey was nominated by Heather Smith, seconded by Jon Bliss, and unanimously elected to a two-year term beginning in September 2017.
- (iii) Committee arrangements from September 2017

Resources:

Philip Turnpenny, Karl Shields, David Gluck, Mike Dunphy, Ria Hennessy, Jon Bliss, Sam Foster, Martyn Sibley

School Development:

Jeremy Airey, Heather Smith, Chris Burt, Ruth McHenery, Roger Riley, Jess Ryan, Martyn Sibley

Governor links and responsibilities:

SEN – Heather Smith and Ria Hennessy

Safeguarding and E-safety – Chris Burt and Jess Ryan

Pupil Premium – Ruth McHenery and Jon Bliss

Health and Safety – Sam Foster and David Gluck

Careers – Sam Foster

Sixth Form – Karl Shields and Jeremy Airey

Governor attendance at Key Stage floodlight meetings has been poor and the headteacher recommended that these will be run as internal meetings for staff in the future. Governors will be welcome to attend, but the content of the meetings will not be particularly targeted towards them.

It was agreed that the immersion mornings have been successful and will be continued.

Once the academisation issue has been settled, the local governing board will consider absorbing committee functions into the main meetings to enable all governors to have a better understanding of all aspects of the school.

Two meetings during the year to consider the SDP will continue.

The headteacher reported that governor contribution to staff interviews is valuable and encouraged governors to offer their services wherever possible. It was agreed to give as much notice as possible of interview days.

- (iv) Parent Governor elections – it was agreed to continue with the usual election process to find replacements for the two parents whose terms of office end in November 2017.

11. Safeguarding annual report to governors

A written report was circulated to governors prior to the meeting. It was agreed that all policies will have review dates added and it was noted that the RPI policy has been updated.

A governor asked whether policies were easily accessible to staff and Miss Mulhern reported that all staff sign to show that they have read the policies on an annual basis. She did observe, however, that some staff remain unaware of some policy requirements and engagement with policy content needs to be improved. Key information relating to safeguarding and the staff code of conduct is provided.

A governor asked whether appropriate safeguards are in place for student on work placements and Miss Mulhern reported that this is the responsibility of the organising agency and that she is confident that requirements are being met.

12. Health and Safety

Nothing to report.

13. Correspondence

None

14. Any other business

Two groups of students have requested a meeting with governors to discuss make-up and gender-neutral uniform; a small group of governors will meet with them to hear their concerns.

15. Dates of future meetings

To be circulated

| Actions | |
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| Clerk | Circulate link to online safeguarding training |
| Jeremy Airey | Complete 2 x annual governance reports |
| Cayte Mulhern | Add report on carers to next safeguarding report |
| Cayte Mulhern | Data on 6 th form attendance to be provided for next meeting |
| Mike Dunphy | Produce paper on leasing of Chromebooks for the next Resources meeting |
| Martyn Sibley | Provide clarification on the resources and facilities question on parents' questionnaire |
| Cayte Mulhern/Claire Earl | Add review dates to all policies |
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