

Tadcaster Grammar School Governing Body

Monday 20 March 2017

Minutes

Present: Philip Turnpenny (Chair), Martyn Sibley (Head), Roger Riley, David Gluck, Jess Ryan, Jon Bliss, Heather Smith, Karl Shields, Ruth McHenery, Chris Burt, Jeremy Airey, Ria Hennessy

In attendance: Eleanor Dodd (Head Girl), Cavan Conway (Head Boy), Cayte Mulhern (Deputy Head), Wendy Wilson (Deputy Head) Siân Henderson (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

All were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Mike Dunphy.

2. Confidentiality and declarations of interest

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

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2016

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair

4. Matters arising

- (i) Minute 5i, parental engagement. KS3 parents are informed whether or not they need to make an appointment to see staff about their child, although all are still welcome to attend parents' evenings should they wish to do so
- (ii) Minute 5v, safer recruitment – Ruth McHenery and Roger Riley have completed online training.
- (iii) Minute 10ii, parent governors – Jon Bliss has joined the Resources Committee and is linked with KS3; Jess Ryan is a member of the School Development Committee with links to KS5; Ria Hennessy has also joined the Resources Committee.
- (iv) Minute 13, basic safeguarding online training – David Gluck and Heather Smith have yet to complete this training. The Clerk will re-send the link.
- (v) Minute 14, annual governance report – Jeremy Airey will produce a report for the start of the next term.

5. Headteacher's report

A comprehensive report was circulated prior to the meeting, covering the following points:

- Staffing – recruitment concerns were noted. Staff turnover data was interrogated and no issues were identified. Maternity leave continues to be a problem.
- Student tracking – this area is covered in detail in the School Development Committee. Y7 PP students are making better progress than their non-PP peers
- Student attendance – separate paper presented. Issues highlighted included actions to address. Further work needs to be undertaken, particularly with key groups, although

whole school data is secure. Sixth form attendance is monitored separately and will be reviewed by governors. A governor asked about the criteria for flagging concerns related to attendance. Miss Mulhern reported that an automatic alert is triggered when attendance falls to 92% but action is influenced by the circumstances of individual pupils. Governors agreed to monitor regularly Pupil Premium attendance.

- Exclusions – separate paper. Internal sanctions have been used less this year but there has been an increase in exclusions, with concerns in key cohorts. One permanent exclusion was upheld by a panel of governors – those involved in the panel were thanked for their diligence. It was noted that there is some difficulty in accessing appropriate provision for Leeds authority children. A governor noted the rising number of students in isolation for missing detention and observed that isolation might be viewed as a preferential sanction. Staff acknowledged that they are aware of this situation.
- Pupil Premium/Catch-up Premium – separate report
- Safeguarding – separate report. The recent Ofsted inspection considered safeguarding to be ‘robust’. A governor asked whether staff are finding it difficult to access the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service and staff replied that access is complicated by geography in the case of some TGS students. Miss Mulhern gave an update on the current involvement with external agencies and the operation of the in-house mental health service provided by short term grant funding. Although the value of the service is evident, sustainable funding is an issue.
- Whole school development priorities 2016-17 – to be reviewed at 3 May meeting
- SEF 2016-17 – to be reviewed at 3 May meeting
- Governor engagement – feedback from the immersion morning was discussed with all governors commending the value of the event. Floodlight meeting minutes have been circulated and the headteacher noted that governor attendance at these is poor. Governors were encouraged to give careful consideration to attending these meetings. Jeremy Airey has met with faculty leaders of subjects with concerns around outcomes at GCSE. Karl Shields is involved in the development of sixth form strategy and Ruth McHenry has worked on the disadvantaged learners’ strategy. David Gluck has conducted a health and safety walk with the school business manager and the local authority adviser. Chris Burt has represented the governing body at the Parent Forum.
- Parental engagement – information on attendance at parents evening was circulated and it was noted that the changed format has improved attendance and parents’ satisfaction. PP parents’ attendance is improving significantly due to the focus on developing relationships. Governors thanked staff for their commitment to improving engagement with parents. School development priorities were discussed at a parent forum attended by approximately 25 parents. A governor asked whether it would be useful to have an identified governor available at parents’ evenings for conversation and head agreed that it would; Jess Ryan and Jon Bliss agreed to take on this role.

[Eleanor Dodd, Cavan Conway and Chris Burt left the meeting at this point]

- Teacher development – a summary paper was circulated
- Peer review pilot
- Student numbers
- Student recruitment – Y7 places for next year are currently oversubscribed
- Careers development plan
- School to school support

- Student wellbeing – details on the MYRIAD project were provided. The seven members of staff who were giving up their own time voluntarily to do the project were commended by governors.
- Student transport
- School visits
- Headteacher’s digest
- Visits for approval – the German visit 29 Nov – 3 December 2017 was approved
- Policy approval
 - The Budget Management Policy was approved with a change of wording from ‘Chairman’ to ‘Chair’
 - The NYCC policies Child Protection, SEN, Pay, Redundancy and Reorganisation were updated and approved.

Ofsted – a one-day inspection has taken place. The school evaluated itself as ‘good’ and it is expected that the report will confirm this judgment. The inspection process was intense and staff and governors were challenged about Pupil Premium progress, particularly in year 11. Outcomes for lower prior attaining PP children remain a concern. Jeremy Airey, Roger Riley and Chris Burt were thanked for representing the governing body to inspectors. The full report will be made available to parents when it is received. A letter will be sent to staff thanking them for their cooperation.

6. **Committee reports:**

- (i) Resources – minutes of the last two meetings have been circulated; no questions were raised.
- (ii) School Development – minutes of the last two meetings have been circulated; no questions were raised.

7. **Academisation**

A STAR teaching school alliance academy working group has been established to look at forming a Multi Academy Trust. The potential involvement of church schools in the MAT will impact the governance model adopted (a plan of probably governance structures was tabled). Conversion is likely to be a staged process due to the number of schools involved although the process might begin in September with TGS being one of the first converters. The governing body supported further work towards this end.

8. **6th Form**

Retention from year 12 to 13 is expected to improve this year. Broadened provision has made the curriculum accessible to a wider group.

9. **Collaboration:**

- (i) STAR Alliance – primaries are engaging in peer review which will involve senior leaders from TGS
- (ii) Post 16 with SHS – a meeting has taken place with representatives from both schools to look at outcomes and retention. Both schools are keen to continue with the

collaboration, partly to provide better resistance to recruitment from sixth form colleges where this is not necessarily in the best interest of students. Governors agreed to the establishment of a group to explore further possibilities for collaboration, although it was acknowledged that the current arrangement would be impacted by the creation of a MAT.

10. Governance

Co-opted governor vacancy – the Head and Chair have met with two prospective governors and recommended the appointment of Sam Foster, who has health and safety experience. This recommendation was accepted by the governing body.

Local authority governor – Philip Turnpenny will be seeking re-appointment as local authority governor from September and governors agreed to support his appointment should the application process prove successful.

11. Health & Safety

Nothing to report

12. Correspondence

A complaint from a parent relating to a school bus has been dealt with.

A young carers letter was circulated and it was agreed to add this responsibility to the safeguarding governor role. A governor asked whether young carers could be included as a group in data analysis and Miss Mulhern replied that the group was too small to provide any useful information. It was agreed that an update on these students will be given at the next meeting.

13. Any other business

As no governor was available to join the interview panel later in the week, it was agreed that the process should continue without governor representation.

14. Dates of next meetings

Wednesday 3 May at 6.00pm (School Development Plan – Review)

Tuesday 20 June at 6.30 pm