



Tadcaster Grammar School Governing Body

28 March 2018

Minutes

Present: Philip Turnpenny (Chair), Martyn Sibley (Head), Ria Hennessy, Mike Dunphy, Heather Smith (part meeting), Jon Bliss, David Gluck, Georgina Wright, Liz Wilson, Jeremy Airey, Jess Ryan

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

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Karl Shields and Chris Burt. Heather Smith's notification of her late arrival was also accepted.

2. Confidentiality and declarations of interest

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

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2017, 6 February 2018 and 13 March 2018

The minutes from all three meetings were approved

4. Matters arising

December meeting:

- (i) DBS clearance – Liz Wilson and Georgina Wright have now received clearance
- (ii) Safeguarding online training – all three governors required to complete this training have now done so.
- (iii) Sam Foster – the clerk has informed Mr Foster that his position as governor has not been confirmed.
- (iv) Cayte Mulhern reported that a new student sign-in system is in use
- (v) Annual governance report for 2017-18 will be completed by Jeremy Airey by October half term.
- (vi) Pupil premium data was circulated for review by the full governing body, rather than the School Development Committee, on this occasion
- (vii) Catch-up Premium will be an agenda item at the next SDC meeting
- (viii) Three permanent exclusions this term have been upheld by the pupil discipline committee

- (ix) All weather pitch negotiations with Selby Council – nothing further to report

February meeting:

none

March meeting:

none

5. Headteacher's report, including safeguarding and inclusion

A written report was circulated prior to the meeting.

- (i) **Staffing** – details of changes were provided, along with an analysis of staff turnover. The high level of staff long term absence and maternity leave has had an impact on student experience and outcomes. This situation is of concern to leadership but is very difficult to manage. Annual turnover of staff was predicted to be 10% but current information suggests that the final figure will be lower.
- (ii) **Student tracking** – report circulated. Pinks and greens are reviewed at each SDC meeting. Comparing data for Y11 now and at this same point last year shows similar predictions although Pupil Premium outcomes are forecast to show significant improvement.
- (iii) **Student attendance** – report circulated. Attendance is giving cause for concern and the target of 96% is unlikely to be achieved. Absence codes reveal that health issues have been a significant contributor and exclusions have also had an impact. PP students are not meeting their attendance target of 93%. Miss Mulhern noted that court proceedings against the worst offenders have little impact and that a focus on raising the attendance of those in the 85-90% range is most effective. School staff are very aware of this issue and continue to seek appropriate and effective remedies.
- (iv) **Exclusions and internal sanctions** – reports circulated. No questions raised regarding internal sanctions. It was noted that to have three permanent exclusions in one term is extremely unusual and the involvement of substance misuse in all cases has led to an examination of the school's response. The local authority is involved with staff in reviewing their model drugs policy and are advising on curriculum provision in this subject. Work is being undertaken with local police to deliver an extended assembly and a parent workshop is being considered. A governor asked whether drugs is a growing problem in school and the headteacher replied that it is certainly a growing community problem and that this is likely to have an impact in schools. However, school processes are enabling issues to be detected and dealt with promptly. The deputy headteacher commented that the Tadcaster experience is replicated in many other schools, such as those in York and Richmond.
- (v) **Pupil Premium strategy** – report circulated. A governor noted that almost quarter of PP students are persistent absentees and school staff confirmed that they are aware of this situation. A governor asked whether there is good evidence for effective spending of PP and staff replied that appropriate strategies are in place and that the best evidence lies with the data showing improved outcomes.

(vi) **Safeguarding** – report circulated. Jon Bliss and Georgina Wright agreed to undertake safer recruitment training and will have necessary information forwarded to them by school staff. It was agreed that policies will have review dates added to them as a standard requirement, noting that many policies have a three-year review cycle. The safeguarding issues being prioritised by school staff were highlighted to governors.

(vii) **Governor engagement**

Immersion mornings – the most recent event looked at KS3

Strategy meetings – those governors who have attended meetings were thanked and others were encouraged to follow their example. Liz Wilson agreed to become a 6th form link governor to replace Karl Shields who will be stepping down next month.

Communications – in order to comply with GDPR regulations, and to follow best practice, future communications with governors will be through school email addresses and the Google platform. Training will be provided for governors at the April meeting, until which point personal emails can continue to be used. It was agreed that the governors' calendar will be added to Google.

[Heather Smith joined the meeting]

(viii) **Parental engagement** – a report on attendance at parents' evenings was circulated and no concerns were raised.

(ix) **Teacher development** – details of training days and conferences were supplied

(x) **Peer review** – two reports were circulated, and it was noted that the recommendations of the sixth form review are being implemented.

(xi) **Student numbers and recruitment**

Current numbers: on roll = 1553, sixth form = 255, Y7 = 263

Recruitment: Y7 places accepted 256, total first preferences 253
Y12, 165 applications received from a year group of 255 (including 10 external applications) What is the conversion rate? Expected to lose about 20 as has happened this year. Similar stats. Sixth form is growing, not creating problems although physical space would be an issue with further growth. Capacity has been increased in recent years. Growth is from weaker cohorts and staff are aware of what this means for them.
Appropriate provision.
Y13, 143 Y12 students moving into Y13 (including 9 SHS)

(xii) **Visits**

Noting of visits already taken place

Approval of future residential visits: Germany November 2018 – approved
Iceland April 2019 – approved

(xiii) **Head's digest** – circulated

(xiv) **Policies**

Work Experience – new policy approved
Examination Access Arrangements – updated as required by examination boards, approved
SEN – amendments noted and adopted
Safeguarding and Child Protection – amendments noted and adopted

(xiv) **Diary dates**

[Cayte Mulhern left the meeting]

6. **Committee reports**

(i) **Resources**

The current financial position shows an in-year deficit of £16.5k which represents a significant achievement against the position four years ago. Further improvements before the year end are also anticipated.

Chromebooks – a letter for parents is being prepared. The monthly cost will be £11.05 for three years. A launch evening for new parents will be held in June and it is anticipated that take-up will be sufficient to make the scheme viable. In response to a governor question, Mr Dunphy reported that during this pilot year, options for extending provision will be considered.

(ii) **School Development**

No questions were raised regarding the recent minutes.

It was agreed that Ria Hennessy will transfer from the Resources Committee to the SDC, that Georgina Wright will join the SDC and that Liz Wilson will become a member of the Resources Committee.

7. **Sixth Form**

Nothing further to report

8. **Group update**

Uniform and make-up policy (appearance policy) – a student attitude survey will be conducted and reviewed by members of the leadership before the views of parents and other stakeholders are sought. A draft policy will be produced in the light of these results for discussion and confirmation at the June meeting of the governing body. The intention is to introduce the new policy for September 2019.

9. **Health and Safety**

Nothing to report

10. **Correspondence**

None

11. Any other business

Governor feedback – a discussion on the most appropriate way to inform the governing body of matters arising from governor visits to school took place and it was agreed that notes from meetings or visits could be uploaded to the governor section of Google drive. Where matters for further consideration were noted then these should be passed to committee chairs for inclusion on meeting agenda. It was agreed that governor reports should be included as standing agenda items for committees.

12. Academisation

The scheme of delegation was circulated to all governors.

[Mike Dunphy, Wendy Wilson, and Ria Hennessy left the meeting]

Martyn Sibley was congratulated on his appointment as transitional CEO of the STAR MAT, from 1 May 2018 to 31 August 2019. The following arrangements were noted:

- Mr Sibley will remain as Executive Headteacher of TGS and continue to work out of the building with 20% of his salary and time allocated to the school;
- a new temporary appointment of Head of School will be made;
- a job description for Head of School was tabled and agreed by the governing body;
- the additional cost of this appointment will be met by the Trust;
- an appointment will be made for 1 May; Georgina Wright, Philip Turnpenny and Martyn Sibley will form the interview panel which will meet on 25 April;
- the position will be advertised internally to the core senior leadership team;
- the successful candidate's existing role will be filled from current staff.

The Chair noted that the school is in a good position to support this change with good results, secure finances, an experienced SLT, and no prospect of an imminent inspection.

The headteacher reported that additional funding of £100k has been secured from the DfE to support disadvantaged students across the MAT>

13. Dates of future meetings

25 April at 5.30 pm (Development Planning Review/Mindfulness/Teacher Development)

27 June at 5.30 pm