

COTHAM SCHOOL

Meeting of the Academy Governing Body

Wednesday 11 September 2019

MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Dora Alderson, CG	Claire Burston, Co-opted	Jo Feather PG
Jack Barber, SG	Jo Butler, Headteacher	Sandra Fryer, Co-opted
John Bass, PG	Ed Carpenter, SG	Morag Pirie, SG
Jim Bowyer, Co-opted (Chair)		
In Attendance (non-voting) Allison Crossland, Business Manager Chris Reed, Deputy Headteacher Domini Leong, Deputy Headteacher	Apologies Massimo Bonaddio, CG Jane Chamberlin, PG Absent: Lucy Hunt, PG Hannah Russell, CG David Yorath CG Delroy Hibbert, CG	Governors in Post: 15/19 Quorum = 5 (1/3 rounded up) AM = Associate Member CG = Community Governor PG = Parent Governor SG = Staff Governor SMT = Senior Management Team

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB JBo welcomed everyone. Apologies accepted. Everyone introduced themselves.
2	Elections Chair – Jim Bowyer elected unopposed Vice Chair – Sandra Fryer elected unopposed Committee Chairs Learning & Wellbeing – MB is considering standing down as a Governor. JBo asked for volunteers to chair LWB. Suggestion that there could be co-chairs. To be discussed at the committee Finance, premises & General Purposes – Sandra Fryer elected unopposed Personnel & Training – John Bass elected unopposed Appointments & Standards – Jo Feather elected unopposed
3	Review & sign Code of Practice LS to organise a way to make an electronic declaration that this has been read and agreed to. Review & sign Declarations of Interest – these were distributed at the meeting
4	Headteacher's Report JBu highlighted the School Improvement Plan, which has been reviewed. The framework now mirrors the new Ofsted framework. This is an overview document, below which sit faculty actions plans etc. This could be covered in more detail at the Governor Conference.

	<p>The key priorities have been slightly modified to be clearer. The work on the appraisal pilot, teaching and learning and the curriculum review is emphasised.</p> <p>JBu also included a summary of how Governance will be inspected under the new Ofsted framework. JBu highlighted The Key for Governors as a useful resources.</p> <p>JBu has provided a summary of priorities for the year based on the SIP objectives and talked through the key points.</p> <p>Year 7 numbers – there were 16 students who did not arrive on the first day of term, and may of these are being followed up. There will be students who want to fill any spaces, but we must ensure that those who are not here are not taking up their place.</p> <p>The picture at Post-16 is very positive, with 222 in Year 12 and possibly 195 in Year 13. This is in the context of fewer Year 12 students across the city.</p> <p>Discussion around the curriculum and the opportunities and challenges of the school’s cohort.</p> <p>DL highlighted the restructure of the SEND and Inclusion team and location. Discussion around this and the use of The Hub. There is a need to monitor this and ensure that space is used effectively.</p>
5	<p>Safeguarding Briefing</p> <p>DL gave an update.</p> <p>There is a 2019 update to the Keeping Children Safe in Education, that Governors must read and complete the declaration on GovernorHub. LS to post the link and instructions for completing the declaration on GovernorHub.</p> <p>DL has summarised the key changes in the Headteacher’s report. DL will be handing the DSL role over to Aurora Reid, who will be taking over this role.</p> <p>DL highlighted the work being done around BAME students and under achievement.</p> <p>DL also highlighted the work being done on the LGBT group.</p> <p><i>DL left the meeting</i></p>
6	<p>Headteacher’s Report continued</p> <p>Q – Why are there courses where we face challenges? These are A-Level courses where students did not achieve well last year. There are explanations for some of these. There is a need to investigate the reasons for this and whether the courses are suitable for the current cohort.</p> <p>There will be a discussion around curriculum at Learning & Wellbeing and the suitability of courses for Cotham’s cohort.</p> <p>Discussion around some of the subjects affected by this, the issues that can affect course suitability, and some of the logistics of teaching them. This will be discussed in detail at Learning and Wellbeing.</p> <p><i>JBas left the meeting</i></p> <p>Request that Governors who are not usually members of Learning and Wellbeing have the opportunity to be involved in this discussion.</p> <p>Further discussion about some of the possibilities and the potential impacts of these. Ultimately Governors are responsible for the curriculum but the focus has to be on delivering the best curriculum for our students. Considering how we deliver GCSEs and Post 16 qualifications could have impacts on finances and staffing which will need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>Discussion around the best way to continue this conversation.</p> <p>AC discussed staff vacancies and highlighted the work done around these.</p> <p>AC highlighted the work done by the IT and site team. AC thanked both teams for their work.</p>

	<p>AC talked through the key points of the fundraising campaign, 'pay it forward'. Q – How much of the donation is regular? AC will be able to share this information in future.</p> <p>CR gave an overview of the exam results and talked through the key points.</p> <p>JBar highlighted the 45% A* for Maths A-Level</p> <p>The 2018-19 GCSE results are still provisional.</p> <p>There were significant numbers of students within 3 marks of a grade boundary and many of these were at the 4/5 boundary.</p> <p>The drop in attainment was expected and relates to the cohort. GCSEs are harder and the marking is now tougher. Students who should be getting 4s and 5s are disproportionately affected.</p> <p>Q – Is there a possibility that teachers have focussed on A-Level to the detriment of GCSE? CR does not believe so. Teachers are used to having to manage the two exam groups. There were over 30 students in maths within 3 marks of a grade boundary. Exam analysis is still being done to see whether the results mirror the national picture or show other issues.</p> <p>Discussion around the choices of GCSE subjects available and the balance between the core subjects and, 'open bucket' subjects. GCSEs are not criteria assessed – they are proportionally assessed, only the top 3% of candidates in any year will be awarded a grade 9.</p> <p>Governors to send questions to CR in advance of the Learning and Wellbeing meeting.</p> <p>There is a need to be clear about the timescales for these discussions. Quick decisions need to be made around courses, but preparation may be needed for longer term decisions such as moving to a 2 year KS3 curriculum.</p> <p><i>CR left the meeting</i></p> <p><i>MP left the meeting</i></p>
7	<p>Academies Financial Handbook Update</p> <p>AC talked through the changes. JBo thanked AC for the summary provided as this was really helpful and clear.</p> <p>Q – When are papers normally circulated? They would normally be circulated a week before the meeting. Towards the end of the last year, some meetings had papers that were circulated later. There is usually a specific reason for this.</p> <p>JBu requested that FGB meetings be on Thursdays. JBo to send an e-mail discussing the possibility of moving dates this year, but this move to be considered for future years.</p> <p>Discussion around the information about Government Spending Round 2019. No decisions to be made relevant to this until we know what it means for funding for the school specifically.</p> <p>JBo thanked AC and other staff that have been working over the summer break.</p> <p>Governors noted their appreciation of the work of staff to achieve the results.</p>
8	<p>Governor Conference</p> <p>The date has been set as Saturday 9 November.</p> <p>The key focus should be Link Governors and monitoring, as well as challenging and supporting</p>
9	<p>Review Committee Structures, Membership & Terms of Reference</p> <p>Some errors in Committee membership were corrected.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference were approved</p> <p>Review Scheme of Delegation - approved</p> <p>Review Link Governor Roles – JBo to be H&S Link Governor</p> <p>Discussion around the size and composition of the Governing Body. There is a need to consider succession planning.</p>

	Discussion around the issue of Member recruitment. JBo to clarify the process for appointing new Members, and reach out to potential Members.
10	<p>Governing Body Objectives</p> <p>JBo intends to use the Governors' Conference to launch a Governor objective as above. The agenda is around the School Improvement Plan, what the priorities are and how Governors can best support and monitor this.</p> <p>Discussion around the need for an Annual Governance Review and the best way to do this.</p> <p>There needs to be discussions with each Governor about their role, which will feed into an overall evaluation of the Governing Body as a whole. Could bring in someone from the NGA to support the process. It could be useful to do an interim one internally before bringing the NGA back.</p> <p>To be discussed further at Appointments and Standards</p>
11	Minutes of last meetings – Agreed as correct.
12	Matters Arising and Action List – See separate actions list
13	Any Other Business - None

Meeting closed at 21:15

Next Meeting –

Signed

Date

Initials: