

COTHAM SCHOOL

Meeting of the Academy Governing Body

Thursday 21 September 2023

MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Dora Alderson, MG	Peter Huckle, MG	Jared Rufus, CG
Jack Barber, CG	Lucy Hunt, MG	Emma Smith, CG
Jo Butler, Headteacher	Graham Nutbrown, CG	Ian Spencer, CG
Sandra Fryer, CG	Richard Puttick, PG	Isabel Tobias, MG
Sophie Hamilton, PG	Rebecca Reid, PG	
In Attendance (non-voting) Chris Reed, Deputy Head Domini Leong, Deputy Head Aimi Potter, Director of Post 16 Allison Crossland, Director of Finance & Resources Ed Carpenter, Ass Director of Finance & Resources Leanne Sowersby, Governance Professional	Apologies Absent: Sadia Shakoor	Governors in Post: 15/20 Quorum = 5 (1/3 rounded up) MG = Member Appointed Governor CG = Co-opted Governor PG = Parent Governor

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB SF welcomed everyone, especially IT.
2	Minutes of last meetings – 6 July 2023 - Agreed as correct.
3	Matters Arising and Action List – See Actions Report
4	Elections - Chair – LS took the chair for this item. SF elected unopposed. - Vice Chair – PH and RR proposed as Co-Vice Chairs. Agreed - Committee Chairs – PH elected as LWB Chair. IT elected as P&T Chair. RR elected as FFPF Chair.
5	Strategic Item – Strategy and the Golden Thread to School Improvement Plan SF noted that the Strategy group would work on the School Improvement plan and being an updated version back to FGB in December. For the future, this work would be done around May. We will be considering a Governors’ away day in May/June, possibly as a weekday twilight session. Governors were happy with the idea of a twilight session.
6	Governance Review – Committees, Link Governors and Scheme of Delegation <i>IS joined the meeting</i> Discussion around monitoring the action plan. This could be tracked at the audit committee which meets three times per year. Still need to add the owner of each action and dates for each action for FPGP in November. RP is lead audit governor.

	<p>Governor roles and responsibilities – This aims to map roles to the school improvement priorities and make the work of governors more cohesive.</p> <p>There is still a need for strategic KPIs in the overall plan.</p> <p>There is a need to ensure that there are at least five members in each committee to ensure that meetings are quorate.</p> <p>Discussion around link roles. To discuss membership of Bristol Schools Forum off-line – AC to check whether vacancies still exist, ES might be interested.</p> <p>SF, AC and LS to look at the format of the Scheme of Delegation, as well as streamlining the policies to ensure only the essential ones are coming to governors.</p> <p>Discussion around the number of policies on the scheme of delegation and how many are statutory policies, as well as how much of the content is procedure rather than policy.</p>
7	<p>Policies</p> <p>Discussion around managing changes in policies and how these are communicated. Noted that changes in KCSIE are summarised on The Key.</p> <p>Safeguarding and Child Protection – There have been minor tweaks to wording.</p> <p>Q – Are we confident that staff know they need to know who the Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor are? Yes, DL has given a staff briefing covering both of these items.</p> <p>Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Approved.</p> <p>- Whistleblowing – AC noted the changes. AC will ensure this is put into the new format. Whistleblowing Policy Approved</p> <p>- Financial Regulations – AC talked through the changes. Contract value will be the gross value over the life of the contract. Financial Regulations Approved</p> <p>- Careers and Employability - Careers and Employability Approved</p>
8	<p>Management Accounts Approval –</p> <p>Management accounts for April, May, June and July 2023 Approved</p>
9	<p>School Trip Approval</p> <p>CERN School Trip – JBa talked through the trip.</p> <p>AC explained that all residential and overseas trips must be approved by the GB as the GB are ultimately responsible. Governors should consider whether this trip is appropriate (educationally etc.) cost effective and safe. Risk Assessments are delegated to the HT and DFR.</p> <p>Governors assume that the trip has been planned inline with the schools education trips policy.</p> <p>Q – Is there assistance for students who might be unable to afford this? We have looked at funding this for bursary students.</p> <p>Discussion around the ability of governors to assess the safety of the trip without seeing risk assessments etc.</p> <p>AC and JBa will work out a template for what governors need to see for approval of trips.</p> <p>Trip to be approved via GovernorHub subject to appropriate risk assessments by school trips coordinator.</p>
10	<p>Headteacher’s Report – Exam Results</p> <p>HT talked through the key points.</p> <p>Q – Has the numbers picture changed? Yes, this will be looked at in LWB in November.</p> <p>PH noted that his visit had been very positive. Noted that we have five students in one year group with EHCPs and that they are doing well.</p>

	<p>AP noted that this year feels like a big step forward in terms of the impact of Covid and the lack of routine etc. Students are engaging well so far and it feels positive compared to other years.</p> <p>Brief discussion around some of the issues that were going on across Bristol schools last year and the safeguarding issues – there are still some concerns about potential child criminal exploitation. Also noted that there has been more demand than usual for second-hand uniform this year.</p> <p>The city has become much more diverse over the past few years.</p> <p>Q – Do the concerns about child criminal exploitation have a ripple effect on the year groups? Yes, it can. We are doing a lot of work around this which will be discussed in more detail in the November LWB meeting, as well as at the safeguarding link meeting with LH.</p> <p>AP talked through the Post 16 results and core priorities for the coming year.</p> <p>Q – What were destinations of students? There is a report on this for LWB. There has been an increase in apprentice provision and also university. There has been a higher number taking gap years. Five students had offers for Oxford and Cambridge, four gained entry and a fifth gained entry through reconsideration's.</p> <p>Q – Do students go to local universities? Yes. Bristol and UWE have been working on persuading students to stay local. Discussion around this and Bristol's work on inclusion and embedding diversity and their own reputation, as well as why students might choose UWE rather than Bristol.</p> <p>CR talked through the GCSE results.</p> <p>Noted concerns for SEND and PP students. These will be the focus of the discussions with faculty leaders, around how to encourage these students. We are able to use the national figures in some cases to support our analysis around this.</p> <p>The SPI (subject performance index) is useful to see how we perform against other schools – this is all state schools without contextual information.</p>
11	<p>Safeguarding Briefing</p> <p>DL gave a briefing.</p> <p>Q – Do LAs still have a Truancy Officer? No, this would now be the Education Welfare Officer and we have to purchase their services. This is now one person for the whole city and the work now relies on the school.</p>
12	<p>Academy Trust Handbook Changes - A report was shared – no questions.</p>
13	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>C Block Roof – A report has been shared. ADFR talked through the key issues. Proposal is to award the tender to BS3 Services, costing £150,800.51 to complete all of the work as tendered by Smith Consult. To allow Smith Consult to complete the final stages of the project at the previously agreed cost of (£11,760.00) (Total £162,560.51) This will resolve all of the issues.</p> <p>Approved total spend of £162,560.51</p> <p>Stoke Lodge Hire – as we are currently unable to use the playing fields, the income from hiring the fields does not cover the cost of maintaining the land, solely for the use of the groups hiring the area. Discussion around whether these groups would have alternative accommodation if they are unable to use this space. There is also an issue that the school have decided that the playing fields are unsafe for us to use, and therefore they are also potentially unsafe for these groups to use and we cannot guarantee their safety. Governors agreed to stop hiring at Stoke Lodge.</p>

Meeting closed at 20:00

Next Meeting – Thursday 7 December 2023

Initials: