

COTHAM SCHOOL

Meeting of the Academy Governing Body

Thursday 22 September 2022

MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Dora Alderson, MG	Jane Chamberlin, PG	Richard Puttick, PG
Fatima Ali, CG	Sandra Fryer, CG	Rebecca Reid, PG
Jack Barber, CG	Sophie Hamilton, PG	Emma Smith, CG
Jo Butler, Headteacher	Lucy Hunt, MG	Ian Spencer, CG
In Attendance (non-voting)	Apologies	Governors in Post: 18/20
Graham Nutbrown, CG pending DBS	Peter Huckle, MG	Quorum = 6 (1/3 rounded up)
Chris Reed, Deputy Head	Isabel Tobias, MG	MG = Member Appointed Governor
Domini Leong, Deputy Head	Jo Feather PG	CG = Co-opted Governor
Aimi Potter, Director of Post 16	John Bass, CG	PG = Parent Governor
Allison Crossland, Director of Finance & Resources	Absent:	
Leanne Sowersby, Clerk	Daxesh Patel, CG	
	Richard Storer, PG	

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	<p>Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB</p> <p>Apologies accepted. Everyone introduced themselves. GN formally appointed pending DBS check. JBas has resigned. SF advised that IS will be leaving the school as a member of staff, but will remain in post</p>
2	<p>Election</p> <p>LS took over as Chair. Chair – Proposed RR, seconded ES, Sandra Fryer elected unopposed. SF took the chair again. SF noted that she is willing to take the position of chair for one more year. Vice Chair - Rebecca Reid - Proposed LH, seconded FA, elected unopposed</p> <p>Committees</p> <p>Learning & Wellbeing – Peter Huckle, proposed JC, seconded DA elected unopposed Finance, Premises and General Purposes – Rebecca Reid proposed KH, seconded ES elected unopposed Personnel and Training – Richard Puttick - proposed RR, seconded DA - elected unopposed Communications and Community – no volunteers. Will consider rotating the chair</p>
3	<p>Code of Practice</p> <p>Review & sign Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Keeping Children Safe in Education</p> <p>Academies Trust Handbook</p>

	<p>LS advised that information about all of these declarations has been shared on GovernorHub and all will need to be completed.</p> <p>Safeguarding Training</p> <p>KCSIE now requires all governors to complete, ‘appropriate’ safeguarding training, which equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. This training should be regularly updated.</p> <p>We are exploring options for this, there is a training module from the NGA, The Key and the Local Authority are developing and GDS are also developing on-line courses.</p> <p>Discussion around the best way to deliver this training. DL will chase the LA.</p> <p>Feeling Governors would prefer in person training to be delivered.</p> <p>RP is attending training for the link governor role in November, link to this to be shared.</p> <p>LS to add a declaration to GovernorHub.</p>
4	<p>Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>DL talked through the key points.</p> <p>LS to add a declaration for governors to say that they have read this.</p> <p>Q – Are the priorities in any order? The first four are all of equal concern, young carers is an ongoing concern.</p> <p>This is adapted from the Local Authority model policy.</p> <p>RP had some queries. Discussion around these and the best way to address these, such as definitions of vulnerable learners.</p> <p>Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Approved</p>
5	<p>Academies Trust Handbook Update</p> <p>DFR talked through the key points.</p>
6	<p>Headteacher’s Report</p> <p>HT talked through the key points.</p> <p>Q- What is the reasoning for going back to in-person parent’s evenings? It is hybrid – it will be in-person for KS4 and Year 13. There is feedback from families is that they feel really distant from the school and this is a risk in terms of the home-school relationship.</p> <p>Years 7 and 8 will be virtual, but will have an in-person family consultation day.</p> <p>There had also been a significant drop in the number of parents attending the virtual events, and have identified that those not attending were the harder to reach families, for whom the virtual events were potentially a barrier.</p> <p>We cannot have a blended model within a year group.</p> <p>Noted that feedback on the virtual events has become less positive over time.</p> <p>Noted frustrations for in-person parents’ meetings. Will keep it under review.</p> <p>Q – What is the school doing around the cost of living crisis? Think about all of the time, both from the perspective of the students and the school’s financial position. We have breakfast clubs, hardship funds, second hand uniform, help to sign up for food banks, have ensured that all students have a mobile device. This is not new for the school, so the systems and staffing is in place, but the problem is bigger. Noted that the catering team are excellent at spotting when a student has not had a meal for a while and address this.</p> <p>AP noted the changes to the Post 16 Bursary system to provide additional help.</p> <p>There is also an issue with the influx of refugees into the country. Discussion around the refugees that Cotham has taken into school and how this has been managed.</p>

	<p>Q – Why is there no detail on GCSE results in the HT report? It was on GovernorHub and will be discussed in detail at LWB.</p> <p>HT noted that staff were exceptionally pleased with all of the outcomes. There is, of course, still work to do and gaps. The gap between boys and girls this year was negligible.</p> <p>Outcomes in English are significantly up.</p> <p>There is still a gap between PP and non-PP. The gap between SEND and non- SEND students has increased, likely due to the impact of remote learning.</p> <p><i>JBar joined the meeting</i></p> <p>Q – Did the school do better than expected? We will never really know, without performance tables etc. Performance tables are back this year but only on grades and we have always been strong on progress. AP talked through the issues with previous years. For the progress to be positive was very pleasing. We will sit much more comfortable in the performance tables than had been anticipated.</p> <p>CR gave an overview of the GCSE grades, the presentation will be shared for LWB.</p> <p>Noted that 190 GCSE students and some A-level students were within a few marks of the next grade boundary and have been submitted for reviewing.</p> <p>Q – What are the attendance figures at Cotham? Our attendance sits quite well against national and very well against the local averages. This will be reported in more detail at LWB.</p> <p>Discussion around whether this is returning to pre-Covid levels. It is hard to get a clear picture. We are significantly above the LA average.</p> <p>Noted that some families have extended holidays into term time, such as family visits overseas, as they were unable to travel during Covid.</p> <p>Q – How many people are involved in the Behaviour Support to Year Groups? This is one per year group.</p> <p>Discussion around how well this has been communicated to parents – parent governors fed back that it has not been clear in the communications so far.</p> <p>Feedback is that the new policy is easier to use.</p> <p>AP gave an update on the Post 16 student who has died and the actions taken around this. JBu noted AP’s exceptional work around this.</p>
7	<p>Review Committee Structures, Membership & Terms of Reference – Agreed to continue with the current committee structure.</p> <p>Review Scheme of Delegation – Committees to review. LS to add, ‘N/A’ where review dates are not needed</p> <p>Review Link Governor Roles</p> <p>SF had shared a roles and responsibilities document.</p> <p>HT clarified the role of a Link Governor. Discussion around other opportunities for governors to come into school. Governors can ask to come into school by arrangement if they would like to.</p> <p>SF would like someone else to take over the Careers, Education, Information and Guidance Link role.</p> <p>Governors to look at the list of roles and contact SF if they are interested in any of the roles.</p> <p>DL to share the dates of Gill Carter’s visits</p>
8	<p>NGA Visioning Exercise</p> <p>This is Monday 3 October, 5 to 8pm.</p> <p>JBu talked through the purpose of the session. This is to consider the vision for the school moving forward – talked through the outline of the session.</p> <p>SF has posted a task for governors to complete before the session.</p> <p>Discussion around the proposed pay rise for teachers and the issues around this.</p>

9	<p>Governance Review</p> <p>This is the Confederation of Schools Trust review. JBu had previously posted this on GovernorHub and the responses given were in favour of option one. JBu has gone back to CST to discuss moving forward with this option.</p> <p>Discussion about how this links with the NGA visioning work.</p> <p>This review would cover the areas of effectiveness laid out in the Governors' Handbook.</p> <p>JBu will re-post the proposals.</p>
10	<p>Ofsted Training Follow up</p> <p>Key area is for governors to come into school and be comfortable in the school.</p> <p>Discussion around developing a briefing pack for governors with key information and policies (or links to them).</p>
11	<p>Minutes of last meetings – Agreed as correct.</p>
12	<p>Matters Arising and Action List – See Actions Report</p>
13	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><i>Open Evening 28 September – can any governors attend - .</i> FA and SH volunteered</p> <p>JBar is aiming to launch a trip which will need governor approval</p> <p>LA SEND Ofsted Review – this is due to happen soon, but is unlikely to affect Cotham.</p>

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

Next Meeting – Thursday 8 December 2022