

AUTUMN TERM 2019



THE GRANGE SCHOOL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Governors of **The Grange School** held at the School on **5 December 2019** at 6.00 pm

PRESENT:	Mr A Sherwell (Chair) Mr M Cardoso Mrs M Dobbie Mr A Hamshere Mr N Hood	Mr V Murray (Headteacher) Mrs V Kuht Mr J Parker Mr D Waters Ms E Westley
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mrs B Brown Ms R Zehra Mrs M Mitchell	Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum) Curriculum Co-ordinator English Clerk
ABSENT:	Mrs Z Sutcliffe Mr P Harper Mr P Jackson (AM)	Apologies received and accepted. Apologies received and accepted. Apologies received and accepted.

1

SUBJECT LEADER REPORT – ENGLISH

Governors invited Ms Zehra to address the meeting.



DocumentsGovernors English 2019.pptx

2019 Outcomes:

- Progress is improving but is still below national average.
- Group analysis has highlighted High Achieving Pupil (Boys) and PP Boys as target areas to improve.

Actions this term:

- Urgent action was taken early in the Autumn term in response to the lack of progress in English Language evidenced in the GCSE results.
- Analysis of the results highlighted issues with timing – students did not complete the challenging questions fully in the time available.

ACTION

- Alternative exam boards were reviewed and the decision was made to move from Edexcel to AQA. The skills and knowledge addressed are the same but the exam structure is different (5 long questions rather than 8) and the curriculum text is more boy friendly. A number of staff are also AQA examiners and the majority of staff are familiar with AQA.
- Schemes of work have been reviewed; exam structure and practice are now included at KS3 to begin to develop the skills needed to perform successfully at GCSE. Knowledge, skills, vocabulary and general literacy are critical to GCSE success as is the need to improve student's response time to questions.
- The curriculum offer has been improved with increasing complexity and challenge in the texts as students move through KS3. Poetry has been strengthened to include comparative analysis in addition to single analysis. Significantly there has been increased use of non-fiction texts; non-fiction provides greater opportunity to develop a wider vocabulary. In exploring, and understanding, a wider vocabulary cultural capital (general knowledge) is also expanded.
- To support this a focussed reading scheme has also been introduced with teacher led guided reading of non-fiction texts.
- Teachers who are also examiners are leading the interventions for the focus groups identified.
- Homework provision has been reviewed – a tracking system has been introduced to ensure weekly homework is being set and that homework is evidenced in books.

Impact - 2021 Predictions (current Year 10):

- The changes are not yet impacting on Progress 8 (P8) and working at grade (WAG). There is a settling period with the change to the new exam board and embedding the initiatives detailed above.
- Teachers are being trained to deliver the new curriculum and there is increased moderation in place to ensure consistent standards and assessment.
- Sets have been changed to meet the needs of learners.
- Book looks are taking place and early interventions are being put in place.

Quality of Teaching and Learning:

- Work has been done to improve marking and feedback and generate meaningful student responses to the feedback. A new system has been introduced through participation in the LA Side By Side improvement projects – one assessment objective (rather than a whole piece of work) is marked using a yellow box and coding system reflecting the examination success criteria. Students re-work the objective to take account of the feedback and meet the assessment criteria.
- Ms Zehra shared some examples which demonstrated how this worked in practice.
- Comprehensive student tracking is in place to inform planning. KS4 students have a personalized learning checklist (PLC) which enables them to track their own learning against the key requirements.

Mr Cardoso joined the meeting at 6.25pm.

- The reading intervention programme addresses inference and comprehension skills.

Next steps:

- Continue to develop and embed the initiatives introduced this term.

Arising from Governors' questions, observation and discussion:

- **Marking and feedback:** Staff welcomed the new system which was less time intensive and more effective. There is a transition period for students as they have to take responsibility for decoding what is required, understand it and respond. The new system was tested successfully on one class before rolling out across the subject. Students responded positively, and there has been a marked improvement in their response to marking once they understood the new approach.
- **High Ability Pupils** used to be defined as those achieving L5 at KS2 under the old grading system. Under the new system HA is judged to be those performing above the national average (scaled score of 104). The FFT grades students as low, middle and high ability; this information is the baseline for teachers who make their own a judgement on the performance of the students in front of them.
- The introduction of the new AQA syllabus should be relatively smooth; the team is very experienced and stable and a majority have experience of AQA. These are being paired with staff for whom AQA is new.

- The decision to move to AQA took account of the needs of the students both in the exam and in the material being covered. Whilst the text is more boy friendly it is equally accessible to the girls.
- The Headteacher added that there is a frustration within the profession around the variability across the exam boards and the lack of consistency. There is an increase to teacher workload in changing exam boards and a risk to outcomes during the transition; the risk is being minimised as there are AQA examiners on the staff and there will be increased moderation with other schools.
- What is not tested in the exam process is the extent to which students enjoy English and develop a love of reading and of writing. This is a core objective for the school; not just to pass the exam but to develop a love of English.
- Governors recognised the value of non-fiction texts in broadening vocabulary, social development and increasing general knowledge.
- The Chair suggested that ALPS may want to consider how to apply this approach to the development of vocabulary across key stages.

Governors thanked Ms Zehra for her time.

Ms Zehra left the meeting at 6.45pm.

2 NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair had taken no action under his emergency of delegated powers.

5 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

5.1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2019 having been circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record and handed to the Headteacher for display at the school.

Headteacher

5.2 MATTERS ARISING

All addressed within the core agenda.

BOARD MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS

6 GOVERNOR MATTERS

6.1 MEMBERSHIP

There had been no nominations for the Parent Governor vacancy. The Chair will consider the options available moving forwards.

6.2 TRAINING

Governors have access to the following training:

- NGA Learning Link – online training
- Local training offered by teaching schools and other governing boards
- Governorspace free webinars
- NSPCC – safer recruitment and safeguarding – costs associated
- BEP face to face training – pay as used

The Development Governor advised that analysis of training showed a wider spread of subjects covered but highlighted that little training had been completed since May 2019.

Governors had previously agreed to commission a facilitated data analysis session similar to that completed last year. The FFT data is now available and the IDSR will be published this month.

Governors discussed options for accessing core training both knowledge based and skills based, for example participation in HR, exclusion and complaints panels. There is little available on the latter.

The Clerk had shared details of Safeguarding for Governors – 10 week e-mail course, highly recommended by Governors that have completed it. [safeguarding in schools: governors](#)

Actions:

- **Governors to update their training records and complete a training cascade form to share information.**

Governors

- Development Governor to share the confirmed BEP training offer – Governors to access on a pay as used basis booked via the Business Manager.
- A value for money assessment of the BEP training package to be completed to inform 2020-21 purchasing decisions.
- Development Governor to liaise with the Business Manager to commission HfL to provide data training in January, date to be agreed.

ACTION
Development Governor

Chair Development Governor

After meeting note: The Clerk has raised the question of skills based training for panel members with BEP as an identified need.

7 POLICIES

Policies reviewed in line with the school's management schedule had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Governors **approved** the:

- **Teachers' Pay Policy – model policy personalised to reflect the school's choices and approach**
- **Teacher Appraisal Policy – terminology clarified**
- **Support Staff Appraisal Policy – annual review no changes**

Governors questioned why the school does not have a pay policy for Bucks Pay employees; these staff are covered by the Bucks Pay and Conditions document. There is no scope for personalisation by the school. Progression is automatic within the pay scale; movement between pay scales can only take place following a job evaluation process to determine the correct scale.

Governors discussed the value of a formal appraisal process for support staff where their pay could not be affected by the outcome and agreed that all staff should have the opportunity for formal dialogue on their performance and professional development.

The Blue Sky management information system which supports the appraisal process in school can be slightly cumbersome but is transparent and enables all 'conversations' to be captured as they occur across the year providing a clear overview of performance.

CORE FUNCTION 1: ENSURING CLARITY OF VISION, ETHOS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION.

8 RISK REGISTER

Mrs Sutcliffe had circulated the first draft for comment.

Actions:

- **Governors to read and provide suggestions direct to Mrs Sutcliffe.**
- **Revised Risk register to be considered at the second meeting of the Spring term.**

Governors
Mrs Sutcliffe
Clerk: Agenda

CORE FUNCTION 2: HOLDING THE HEADTEACHER TO ACCOUNT FOR THE EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL AND ITS PUPILS, AND THE PERFORMANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF STAFF.

9 HEADTEACHER REPORT

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting; some questions had already been submitted. The Headteacher will share the questions and responses via GHub.

The Headteacher highlighted the following:

Context: There had been a number of requests for places under the Fair Access Protocol whereby students moving into an area, without a school place, have the right to apply to the school of their choice. Under the Admissions Code schools are expected to take an additional 3% of PAN for each year group under the protocol. There are now 246 students in Year 7, 6 over PAN but within the 3% limit.

Achievement: Provisional data has been published but makes no reference to non-selective secondary schools despite every other form of secondary provision being included. This information would be useful to know to give a deeper understanding of performance for the sector.

Teaching and Learning: The school's approach is supportive and developmental, enabling teachers to develop their skills and progress their careers. Students have in place Personal Learning Checklists which give the student ownership of what they are learning and what areas they need to strengthen. The introduction of the checklist has highlighted how challenging teaching has become. Teaching mixed ability classes is very demanding. Staff are committed to their students, challenging them to think more deeply and the need to commit their learning and understanding to paper.

Educational Visit Report: The report is evidence of the commitment and motivation of staff to provide students with an enriched curriculum through visits. The report indicates that visits are more prevalent in the later years; subject leaders have been asked to consider visits across all years and to take a planned approach reflecting the progression through the curriculum.

There is scope within the Evolve system to evaluate visits; this is currently the weakest area of the process in school and is being addressed with staff to ensure visits add value.

Extra-curricular activities: The report shared with Governors at a previous meeting shows the breadth of activities available to students outside the classroom. Whilst sports feature within this there is a wide range of clubs on offer. These are an important part of the school life and the development opportunities available to students.

Behaviour and Attendance: Exclusions remain below national average but are slightly higher than last year for the same term. There is a small cohort of students which had been very challenging; some have now moved to special school provision and others will be starting the 12 week placement at Aspire to address their behaviour. Challenging behaviours are very wearing on staff and impact teaching and learning; diverting teacher time and disrupting lessons. The range of needs, other than educational, is quite alarming and is increasing.

The school has good provision through the Inclusion Room which, whilst punitive in some instances, is also restorative and gives access to mentoring. The inclusion room is a place to reflect and reconnect with the school.

Leadership and Management: The Headteacher highlighted that students at the school had participated in the Pisa Maths test which had seen the UK move up the European rankings. This was voluntary and required a lot of effort for the students.

The Headteacher highlighted the impact of the school's **curriculum offer** which meets the needs of the students but may impact on movement up the performance tables. Students are not necessarily directed to subjects where they will have most academic success but to those which will give them the best life choices. A high percentage of students study 4 of the 5 EBacc subjects; the number studying 5 is increasing slowly but is not a priority for the school to achieve if it does not meet students' needs.

Activity within **ALPS** has been re-ignited through subject leader meetings across all key stages 1-5. Curriculum plans have been reviewed to ensure students are ready for the next stages of their education as they progress through the schools. Staff are excited and invigorated by the work; there is a real buzz arising from this work and positive feedback to the SLT on the project.

There had been a lot of time invested in the performance management process which is overseen by Catherine Bright. Processes in the school are robust, fair, open and transparent.

Safeguarding: The Headteacher reported that there had been 6 MARFS (Multi-Agency Referrals) this term, there are 8 children in need, 90 have welfare forms in place and 228 are being monitored on CPOMS. All of this has a significant impact on staff.

The relationships with social services and First Response are good; it is a very effective team.

Arising from Governors' questions, observation and discussion:

- **Context:** There is no option to deny a place offered under the Fair Access Protocol; the impact on schools is understood and transparent. All schools in Aylesbury are having students placed with them; there is increasing pressure in the area, mainly as a result of new housing, which is projected to continue.
- Schools facing financial hardship as a result of the additional placements in year can request up front payment from the LA but funds do eventually even out across the years as budgets are based on student census information taken in October each year.
- Placement in the school is determined by the choice of MFL studied; this means that one class may have 2 additional students and another may have none.
- The cohort is very fluid; there have been 32 admissions this term.
- Student mobility is driven by the fluidity of employment with some big local employers such as the NHS (Stoke Mandeville Hospital is on the edge of the school's catchment), migration, housing expansion and the movement of those with housing needs from London to areas with more capacity.
- **Staffing:** A geography teacher is leaving at the end of term; this is a shortage specialism and there is a lot of competition locally for geography teachers. The post will be covered through supply with a view to permanent replacement in September 2020.
- **Teaching and Learning:** The school has in place strong access arrangements to support the identification of students who may need additional time and/or resources in exams. A specialist teacher is employed by the school to assess access needs. It can be challenging to meet the needs of all students in the timetabling of the exams.
- **Extra-curricular activities:** Ms Westley commented on the school's participation in the Young Enterprise event in the town centre the previous week-end. She had introduced herself to the students and talked with them about their experiences in progressing their project. She noted that some teams from other schools included ex-Grange students.
- **Behaviour and Attendance:** Attendance is 0.5% lower than the same period last year.

ACTION

- The Attendance Officer is continuing to work closely with disadvantaged students with poor attendance and has had a significant impact. Only one student's attendance has gone down with the remainder increasing attendance significantly.
- Of particular note is a former school refuser who is now attending for 51% of the time.
- The Attendance Team comprises of 3 staff; they have been affected by their own absences which has impacted the response time to parents when students have been absent. Capacity in the team has been increased; the 5 day job share has been increased to 6 days.
- Governors noted that the resilience of the Attendance Team was an example of the risk of dependency on key personnel and should be reflected in the Risk Register. The impact is not just around temporary absence but also leavers where relationships with parents have been established and must be rebuilt when people leave.
- To mitigate this Form Tutors are being asked to be more involved in attendance and the welfare issues of their tutor group.

Actions:

- **Governors to submit any additional questions to the Headteacher by 13 December.**

Governors

10 QUALITY OF EDUCATION: OUTCOMES

Mrs Brown had circulated the reports prior to the meeting. The Pupil Premium Report and Catch Up Premium Report had been published.

10.1 ADDITIONAL PREMIUMS

PP: There has been updated guidance from the DfE with a new format report and recommendation to put in place 3 year plans in recognition that interventions require time to embed and take effect. The new format will be used next year. The same information is included but is presented more clearly against three core areas:

- Use of the fund for teaching and learning.
- Targeted academic support
- Additional support – welfare, inclusion.

Governors recognised that the new format supported a rounded approach to supporting students and judging success.

Catch-up premium: This follows the same principles as PP premium but is targeted at closing the gaps for English and Maths at Year 7 so that all pupils are at least in line with national expectations and able to access the KS3 curriculum. Students are tracked into Year 8 to ensure the momentum and improvements are maintained.

Mrs Brown highlighted that students were previously eligible for catchup funding if they achieved Level 3 (against an expected Level 4 at KS2); this has now changed under the scaled scores to those achieving below 100. Funding has been based on numbers identified under the old system however actual numbers of students being supported under the new system has significantly increased resulting in bigger intervention groups.

The interventions for PP and Catchup link with, and build upon, the work undertaken by the SEND department where there is overlap.

Arising from Governors' questions, observation and discussion:

- **PP:** It is not possible to establish how funding is used to support the different groups within PP. Funding is used to provide a range of support to meet students' needs including attendance, inclusion and group sizes.
- The PP Review conducted in 2018 identified that how students benefit from PP differs; the priority is to ensure that those that need support receive it. The pastoral development of the Form Tutor role is providing all students with at least one termly conversation with an adult to review where they are and what they need.
- Impact is evidenced through improved attendance and reduced exclusions. There may an increase in internal inclusions whilst longer term strategies take effect and improvements are secured and stable.
- Dedicated resources are used to target areas; the school can evidence the legitimate use of funds however assessing the direct impact on outcomes is more challenging.
- Changes introduced this year include earlier mentoring for higher ability maths students and subject specific tutoring.
- Staff have a better understanding of the students from Year 7 upwards; there is a clear focus on PP students and a strong, dedicated team in place following the review.

- Governors noted the inter-relationships between vocabulary, cultural capital, attendance and behaviour and their impact on outcomes.

10.2 PROGRESS

The progress report had been circulated; a number of detailed questions had been submitted by Mr Waters which will be best addressed through a separate meeting with Mr Waters. A summary of the questions and answers will be circulated to Governors.

Progress will also be addressed in the data analysis workshop.

The need to extend and stretch high ability students is a focus area. Staff are receiving additional training and the thinking hard strategies are being embedded.

Mr Bowers, SIA, is working with subject leads and conducts half termly learning walks. The recent walk assessed the level of challenge in Year 9; improvement was evident. The school is participating in two Side by Side projects; Thinking Hard and Marking and Feedback (Response); both are having a positive impact.

Arising from Governors' questions, observation and discussion:

- Governors sought clarification on the accuracy of the predictions and why they were 'conservative'. The Headteacher explained that the 2021 predictions were for the current Year 10 and had been made within weeks of them starting their GCSE courses. Whilst there is knowledge within the school about their abilities the predictions are made by subject teachers based on their knowledge of the student at that time.
- Governors suggested that a more robust approach would be to take account of all 'corporate' knowledge of the student not just the limited subject teacher knowledge.
- The predictions are indicative and are used to inform interventions – what is needed, by whom, when and for how long.

Mr Waters left at 8.15pm.

Governors agreed to take Behaviour and Attendance next.

11 BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE

The Attendance Governors had circulated their report which will be considered when receiving the Behaviour and Attendance Report at the next meeting.

Mr Parker left the meeting at 8.20pm.

10.2 Returning to discussions:

Mrs Brown advised Governors that the subject raising attainment plans (RAPs) had been circulated but will be updated before the meeting on 16 January. The Art RAP was in the old format; an executive summary will be produced.

Governors had questioned targets within the History RAP; these are being reviewed.

Arising from Governors' questions, observation and discussions:

- Governors were concerned at the projected drop in Grade 5s; this is a key piece of data which will be used by parents to inform their selection of secondary schools. Published data will now reflect 5+; this must be improved if the school is to attract pupils and not fall below other schools locally.
- Specific intervention work is in place between Data Entry 1, on which this is based, and the forthcoming DE2.
- The Headteacher acknowledged that the number of students achieving 5+ in both English and Maths is a challenge; meetings are taking place with the English and Maths leads to address this.
- Governors highlighted that attracting Year 7's, the risks in the performance data, should be included on the Risk Register.

Action:

- Add performance data risk re attracting Year 7 to the Risk Register.

10.3 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Nothing to add to earlier discussions at Item 9. A comprehensive report is included in the information presented in the Appraisal and Pay Review Committee minutes from the meeting on 18 November.

The Headteacher's Performance Management has been delayed due to the availability of the professional advisor but will be completed early next term.

10.4 MATHS GOVERNOR REPORT

Maths Governor visit arranged for January 2020; report to be circulated for discussion in due course.

11 BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE

ACTION

Taken earlier.

12 OTHER REPORTS

The Careers Governor is visiting the Careers Lead on 13 December and will attend the Careers Fair before submitting a report.

OTHER MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

13 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates and times of future meetings had previously been agreed:

All Governors

- Thursday 16 January 2020 at 6.30pm – Curriculum and standards
- Thursday 13 February 2020 at 6.00pm – 6th Form
- Monday 9 March 2020 at 6.30pm – Finance
- Thursday 26 March at 6.00pm – subject tbc

All Clerked.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed Alan Shurvell Date 16/1/2019
CHAIRMAN