



## Hitchin Boys' School

### MINUTES FOR A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 at 6.00pm**

**held in person at the school**

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Attendance 2022 / 2023</b>	<b>Present at this meeting</b>
Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trustee – (Chair)	2/2	Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trustee – (Chair)
Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee - (FGB Chair)	2/2	Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee (FGB Chair)
Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee	1/2	Absent
Ms. Kirsty Harvey (KH) Parent Trustee	1/2	Ms. Kirsty Harvey (KH) Parent Trustee
Ms Jen McCall (JM) Co-opted Trustee	0/2	Absent
Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Head Teacher	2/2	Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Head Teacher
Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee	2/2	Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee	2/2	Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee
Mr Chris Schanschieff (CS) Trustee	2/2	Mr Chris Schanschieff (CS) Trustee
Mr Philip Addison (PA) Trustee	2/2	Mr Philip Addison (PA) Trustee
Mr David Hutchinson (DH) Trustee	1/2	Absent
Ms Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee	2/2	Ms Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee	2/2	Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee
Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee	2/2	Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee
Ms Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee	1/2	Ms Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee
Ms Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee	2/2	Ms Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee	2/2	Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee
Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee	2/2	Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee
Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee Vice-Chair	2/2	Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee Vice-Chair
Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee	2/2	Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee
Ms Liz Taplin (LT) Co-opted Trustee	2/2	Ms Liz Taplin (LT) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee	2/2	Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee
Ms Vicki Whent (VW) Co-opted Trustee	2/2	Ms Vicki Whent (VW) Co-opted Trustee

**In attendance:**

Mr Feranmi Olusanya (FO) – Head Boy

Ms Sarah Dare (SD) – Careers Leader

Mrs Siobhan Morgan – Clerk

No.	Item	Action
1.	<b>Welcome and introductions.</b>	
2.	<p>To receive <b>apologies</b> and approve <b>absences</b>.</p> <p>BG, DH, JM, Andrew Gilbert and Stephanie Kiernan sent their apologies.</p>	
3.	<p>To declare any <b>conflict of interest</b> that may arise during the meeting and any <b>changes in declarations of interest</b>.</p> <p><i>Governors are reminded they must declare a particular interest, financial or other, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting for that item.</i></p> <p>There were no conflicts of interest.</p>	
4.	<p>To receive notification of <b>any other business</b>.</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Minutes of the Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To approve the minutes</li> <li>b) To consider matters arising</li> </ul> <p>The only amendments to be made were to add the surnames to Alison Lawrence and Anne Marie Hetherington.</p>	
6.	<p>To receive the <b>Head Boy's report</b></p> <p>The Head Boy spoke to the Board about the things that he has been involved in at the school.</p> <p>Pupils have been working on the garden with tools provided by the PTA. They have also been litter picking.</p> <p>Students have been having conversations about race. A questionnaire was sent out and they have now received the responses. This work will be continued by the next prefect team.</p> <p>The school has a Race Equality and Diversity Group called "Red". This is a student support group who are trying to tackle student inequality.</p> <p>The Student Council had a meeting about catering. Students are going to sit down with the catering company so that they better understand why prices have risen and to discuss other issues. The members of the council can then feedback to their year groups about what they have learned.</p> <p>Pupils have been busy with interviews for apprenticeships. The school want to keep directing students to the traditional routes but also offer alternatives. The Head Boy has apprenticeship interviews with both Jaguar and Aston Martin. The school is working hard to diversity the exit routes from school.</p>	

	<p>There was a discussion about apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships and the pros and cons of each route. The school plan to introduce T Levels so there will be two academic tracks for students in sixth form.</p> <p>The Governors thanked Femi for his service as Head Boy, congratulated him on his interviews and wished him the best of luck for his future.</p>	
7.	<p>To listen to a <b>Talk from Sarah Dare on careers</b></p> <p>Sarah Dare spoke about her work as the Careers Leader for the school.</p> <p>She spoke about the difficulties of building back connections with businesses after Covid.</p> <p>The benefit of having an in-house career's lead is that they have knowledge of the school timetable and can find pupils at all times. This means if a pupil fails to attend a career's appointment you can find the student and reschedule. Previously the school bought in an advisory service from youth connections. Appointments with students were planned but if they didn't show up that appointment was missed.</p> <p>There have been big changes recently regarding careers' guidance. Independent training advisors are brought into school to meet with students in all years except Year 7.</p> <p>In addition to the training advisors, businesses like Shuttleworth and a football training academy have been invited in to meet the students. Ofsted are working on producing a thematic approach to careers advice and will publish guidance on what that means for schools in Autumn. Ofsted have been inviting themselves into a select number of schools to get ideas about good practice.</p> <p>Q. Do you get the impression that this Ofsted initiative of visiting schools to observe best practice is a back door inspection?</p> <p>A. I was dubious at first. But I recognise that you can be employed and be independent. I know that some schools are insular and don't like to invite companies in. Our student retention at sixth form is high at 72% compared to the national average of 59%. Our students leave for good reasons like apprenticeships.</p> <p>The board were told that the Careers advice on apprenticeships is a recent shift from just focussing on applying to university. Students attend CV writing workshops and it becomes evident that not every student wants to attend university and the school must cater to that.</p> <p>Hitchin Boys is an inclusive and non selective school so need to provide a wide variety of careers options.</p>	

	<p>A big change to the UCAS system from 2024 is that students will no longer be required to write a personal statement. Instead, the application will move to a questions and answers format.</p> <p>The school use Unifrog as it has the biggest database for apprenticeships. In the future students will be able to apply through UCAS for apprenticeships.</p> <p>The school will spend a day with the Yr12's to teach them how to improve their applications. Cambridge and Oxford University representatives will also attend.</p> <p>Q. How do you inform the students about all the things they could be interested in?  A. We hold events where we bring companies in, we do lunchtime chats, we build links with all the curriculum heads. We will have a Careers Week where we will focus on all departments. Information is also available in google classroom.</p> <p>Q. Do you tap into parents and previous students?  A. We have asked parents before and got a fantastic response so we will build on that. We are building a portfolio of ex-students.</p> <p>The school have always provided advice on Oxford and Cambridge interviews in the past but have struggled recently as they didn't have the contacts.</p> <p>Q. What do you do to support children with SEND?  A. Anyone with an ECHP gets seen by me (Sarah Dare) and someone from HCC. There are more meetings and more options available to them. They can also be supported through their college and the education Steps course. With students who don't have an EHCP but still have a need we will work with the Head of Year and let them know that these children will need extra support and follow up. We can link them to appropriate employers. For example, we have links to a recruiter who is fantastic with autistic adults and able to support them in the workplace.</p> <p>Q. In terms of post Yr11 destinations what percentage of students with ECHP continue at the school?  A. It is a 50/50 split. At sixth form students need to study independently and some find that transition challenging. We do an introduction to Sixth form and this helps them even if they choose to go to college.</p> <p>Q. Do you utilise recent students from a couple of years ago whose knowledge of universities is more recent?  A. Yes, we do. We had our old Head Boy come in to talk about his university experience and we had another boy come in to talk about his degree apprenticeship. We need to expand upon this.</p>	
8.	To receive an <b>Update on some areas of Prevent</b>	

	<p>VW gave the Board an update on Prevent. This training was completed online and was focused on educating people to be alert to cases of radicalisation.</p> <p>It is important to be aware that there are many cases happening locally in terms of race, diversity and immigration. The media also work to polarise views.</p> <p>Radical groups have many and diverse communication tools they use to contact children.</p> <p>Lots of these groups use social media and AQ even have their own version of Call of Duty that children can access online.</p> <p>The important message from the course was that if an adult hears or sees anything suspicious, they should report it to Prevent and they will investigate it.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>To receive the <b>Headteacher's report</b></p> <p>Trustees received a written report from the Head Teacher.</p> <p><u>Questions from Trustees:</u></p> <p>Q. You have asked us to look at the School Development Plan in relation to the provisions for students with SEND. Given the restraints of this building how do we go about that without adverse impact to other pupils?</p> <p>A. We know the specialist schools are full. Mainstream schools are having to accept children with more extreme needs. We are trying to create something within the mainstream system for those with more advanced needs and children with sensory needs. We have christened the area "launchpad," we have created a model where teachers go to the student and can support them with their needs in their own separate classroom. Lack of space is a problem; we will need to invest some capital for this building but it can be achieved with a bit of funding.</p> <p>Q. Why is the work on the MAT red on the RAG?</p> <p>A. The Government agenda for the MAT is fluid so work has halted, so it is not the fault of the school.</p> <p>Q. Tell us about the anonymous complaint to Ofsted?</p> <p>A. Ofsted received an anonymous complaint regarding racism and SEND issues about the school. Ofsted speak to HCC and HFL come in and write a report. It is an asymmetric system where someone can make a complaint, the school have no details of the complaint, and it will be logged to look at again at our next Ofsted. The school has a robust process against racism and we deal with complaints as soon as we are made aware of them. I am not concerned and believe it to be a vexatious complainant.</p> <p>Q. Given we are an Outstanding school. Why are we only at 97% capacity?</p> <p>A. Because we have not completed the expansions, we set in place a few years ago.</p>	

	<p>Q. In regards to recruitment and retention, I have noticed that over 90% of staff have only been here for up to four years. Do you analyse those figures?</p> <p>A. Some people make a mistake and realise they don't like an all-boys environment. For those here longer we do exit interview and look at trends. Recently it's been about competition from the private sector. We acknowledge that we need to do more about retention and wellbeing. We need to think about creating internal opportunities and support. But we don't have the budget on a larger scale to do this with all teachers.</p> <p>Q. Do you have a comprehensive induction programme?</p> <p>A. If staff start in the summer term their induction works well. When staff join in September it is not as good. If they start in the mid-year, it is not great. But it is rare that people leave because of a lack of induction. If you have a plan of what you do that'd be good.</p> <p>Q. Some of the School Development Plan has been clipped?</p> <p>A. That was an error I will upload the full document after the meeting.</p> <p>Q. Would it be easier to send the spreadsheet over the pdf?</p> <p>A. Yes.</p> <p>Q. The UCAS stats are interesting.</p> <p>A. UCAS offer this to schools in order to monitor what's going on so we can track it. As we get closer to the deadline, we see more places have been accepted.</p>	Head
10.	<p>To Approve <b>the set of (interim) Terms of Reference for committees</b></p> <p>The committees have been working on their ToRs and these will come back to the FGB in October to be approved.</p> <p>The Pay and Performance Committee has now been separated from the ARR Committee.</p> <p>The Board approved the interim sets as the working papers to be completed over the next few months.</p> <p>Q. How did we create these?</p> <p>A. We used the old ones as a point of reference, we looked at model policies, we looked at other models.</p> <p>The Board would like it recorded how grateful they are to the Chair for all the work she has done on this.</p>	Chairs of Committees.
11.	<p>To receive the <b>Monthly management accounts</b></p> <p>The school is in a strong financial position.</p> <p>The Actuals and Budget are accurate but the Forecast is not. A surplus is forecast by end of the year but energy costs are still unknown.</p>	

	<p>The teaching and support staff pay increase for next year is also unknown. If wages are increased more than 5% the school will struggle. A pay increase without a financial fund to pay for it could force academies to tap into their reserves. Because of these issues the forecast is uncertain for next year.</p> <p>Q. Why are trips recorded as a negative cost?  A. We have included them as income on one side and then need to take them out from the outcome side. When the income comes in it is not our money. We have created an artificial surplus in the beginning.</p>	
12.	<p>To receive <b>Minutes of the following Committee Meetings</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the previous Committee meetings were submitted to the Board.</p> <p>Points to note were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deborah Ivory-Webb offered to do a session on how accounts work in more detail.</li> <li>• There were errors in the email to request volunteers for the get ready to work day.</li> <li>• The school's response to the Andrew Tate case was effective.</li> <li>• BS and RT sent their apologies for missing the last ARR meeting.</li> </ul>	
13.	<p><b>Governance Matters</b></p> <p>a) To change the date of the <b>Teaching and Learning Committee currently 10<sup>th</sup> May</b></p> <p>The Board agreed that the T&amp;L meeting will be moved to the 3<sup>rd</sup> May.</p> <p>BS asked for the ARR meeting date to be moved to the 14<sup>th</sup> June. The Board agreed to this change.</p> <p>Clerk to amend the dates on GovernorHub.</p>	Clerk
14.	<p>To approve the following <b>School Policies</b>:</p> <p>A) Approve (revised and updated) Governance Policy  The Chair informed the Board that there hadn't been a Governance Policy in place for the last five years. The new ToRs will fall under this policy. The Policy was approved and will be reformatted.</p> <p>B) Approve the new Trustee Training and Development Policy and Procedure (draft).  This is a new policy which sets out in one place how to access training and what Governors should be doing. The policy was approved.</p> <p>All other policies have been approved by their Committees and adopted by the FGB.</p>	

	A change will need to be made to the Pastoral Policy. There is a reference to "emphatically" which should read "empathetically".	School Business Manager
15.	<p>To discuss <b>the completed Skills Audit 2023</b></p> <p>This has been completed. The format and scoring system have changed so the data can't be compared with the previous three years.</p> <p>On the aggregate score Trustees are up from last year.</p> <p>This document will go to the ERG meeting in April alongside other documents.</p>	
16.	<p>To receive an update on the <b>External Review of Governance (ERG)</b></p> <p>There is a meeting at The Priory on the 12<sup>th</sup> April to discuss the ERG. There will be a catch-up session for anyone who can't make it.</p> <p>At the meeting the Board of Trustees, the Members, the Head Teacher, the School Business Manager and the Governance professional will talk about how the strands of governance work at the school. A report will follow with actions to take. Auditors will later check that this has been completed.</p> <p>Trustees are to respond to the Chair's email regarding their dietary requirements.</p>	All Trustees
18.	<b>Date of the Next Meeting:</b> The next meeting will be on 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	
19.	To consider <b>Any Other Business</b> – There was no other business to discuss.	
20.	<b>Close of Meeting</b> - The Meeting closed at 19:43.	

Summary of Actions Agreed (as at 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2023)			
Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Status
9.	To upload a complete copy of the School Development Plan.	Head	To update the Board following the meeting.
10.	To complete the ToR's for the next FGB.	Chairs of Committees	To complete for the FGB in October.
13.	To amend the dates of the T&L and the ARR meetings on GovernorHub	Clerk	ASAP
14.	To replace "emphatically" to "empathetically" in the Pastoral Policy.	School Business Manager	ASAP
16.	Governors are to respond to the Chair's email regarding their dietary requirements.	All Trustees	ASAP