



**Hitchin Boys' School**  
**Meeting of the Full Governing Body**  
**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023**  
**Time: 6.00pm**

**In-Person at the School's Woodlands Building and online via MS Teams**

**Present:** Phil Addison (PA), Dami Ajagbonna (DA), Neil Broughton (NB), Helen Corkhill (HC), Bryan Gillingham (BG), Deborah Ivory-Webb (DI-W), Hazel Jones (HJ), Steven Marlow (SM), Martin Monks (MM), Janet Radley (JR), Kathryn Rainbow (KR), Chris Schanschieff (CS), Bhagwant Singh (BS), Liz Taplin (LT), Michael Taylor (MT), Richard Thake (RT), John Turney (JT), Jo Weston (JW), Kris Whitmore (KW)

**Clerk:** Siobhan Morgan

No.	Item	Action
1.	<b>Welcome and introductions.</b>	
2.	To receive <b>apologies</b> and approve <b>absences</b> .  David Hutchinson, Phil Laws, Vicki Whent and Jen McCall gave their apologies.	
3.	To declare any <b>conflict of interest</b> that may arise during the meeting and any <b>changes in declarations of interest</b> .  <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>  <i>Trustees are reminded to complete their declaration of pecuniary/business interests and review their declarations on GovernorHub by 01 October 2023 Trustees should click on their name and 'view their profile'. Select the 'declarations' tab at the top of the page to access this area.</i>  There were no conflicts of interest.  LT informed the Board that she was a signatory for the stationery budget. DI-W confirmed that she has overall responsibility for the budget and so this would not be classed as a conflict.  Trustees were reminded to check that they have reviewed their declarations of interest on GovernorHub.	All Trustees
4.	To receive notification of <b>any other business</b> .	

	There was no other business.	
5.	<p>To approve the <b>Membership of the Board of Trustees' Committees for the 2023 – 24 School Year,</b></p> <p>HC had emailed the Board to see if there were any complaints from Trustees regarding their allocated committees. The Membership of the Board of Trustees Committees was approved.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Appointment of Chairs:</b></p> <p>a) to consider the appointment of Chair  HC informed the Board that it had been her long-stated intention to resign as Chair at the meeting tonight, which comes at the end of five years in post. However, as succession plans are not yet in place, and subject to the wishes of the Trustees, she was prepared to stay in post on an interim basis until a new chair has been appointed. This offer is subject to additional responsibilities being undertaken by a range of Trustees.</p> <p>There were no volunteers to take over the role of Chair. Four Trustees agreed to support HC in the short term. HC to email Trustees again to seek additional volunteers.</p> <p>The Board confirmed that they accepted HCs request to resign and that she would remain but a limited capacity for the time being.</p> <p>Q. How long would it take someone to be appointed?  A. Normally 3 months.</p> <p>Q. When we put out an advert for the Chair will it be made clear what can be delegated and what must be done by the Chair?  A. The Chair has to be a signatory for governance documents and all serious complaints must go through Chair.</p> <p>HC will send a broken-down list of the Chair's duties to the Board.</p> <p>Q. Is it worth having a second Vice-Chair to lessen the workload?  A. We used to have two. I did that when I was originally appointed. I wanted to split the role three ways, but the DFE refused.</p> <p>b) to appoint a Vice Chair  John Turney confirmed he was happy to continue as Vice-Chair. Michael Tayler proposed and Hazel Jones seconded.</p>	<p>HC</p> <p>HC</p>
7.	<p><b>Minutes of the Meetings held 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b></p> <p>a) To approve the minutes  b) To consider matters arising</p>	

	<p>Item 7 – The Minutes refer to the SEN launchpad lead as a qualified teacher. She is not a teacher but support staff. This is to be corrected.</p> <p>Item 7 – The Minutes state that the Staff Wellbeing Survey will be shared when complete. This has not been fed back to the relevant person. The Pastoral Committee will follow up.</p> <p>Item 11 – Typo, should say improved not improve.</p> <p>Subject to those amendments the Minutes are agreed and will be signed.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u>  <i>Headboy to suggest a code of conduct to students. This will be brought forward to the next meeting for further discussion. – This will be postponed until December. Dami to advise Headboy.</i></p> <p><i>To revise the Complaints Policy and Procedure to ensure it is more accessible and more easily understood by parents. – HC and HJ to do this for the December FGB.</i></p> <p><i>The Complaints Policy and Procedure needed to be amended in section 5.46. Stage 2 should be changed to Stage 4. – Done</i></p> <p><i>The HBS Behaviour Policy is to be renamed the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy -Done but needs to change references from fixed exclusions to suspensions.</i></p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>PA</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>HC</p> <p>DA</p> <p>HC / HJ</p> <p>Helen Leaver</p>
9.	<p><b>Governance Matters</b></p> <p>a) To approve the Code of Conduct  This was updated in July. The Chair brought it to the attention of Trustees so that they are aware of the document.</p> <p>b) To note the Board’s Operational Procedures as included in the HBS Governance Policy, due for review in March 2024. To take note of the changes and actions listed in the Academy Trust Handbook – Updated 31 August 2023  This is in date and was brought to Trustees attention.</p>	
8.	<p>School Budgets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve the revised <b>“School Budget 2023-2024”</b></li> <li>To receive monthly management accounts for July2023</li> <li>To receive update on pending teaching and support staff pay changes</li> </ul> <p>The School Business Manager had uploaded the latest version of the budget on GovernorHub. Trustees were informed that the school had</p>	

	<p>received the funding from the Government to help toward the pay increases.</p> <p>It has been agreed that Teachers pay will be increased by 6½% and schools are waiting for this to become statute. It is likely that this will happen in November.</p> <p>Support staff pay increases should happen on 1<sup>st</sup> April. The unions have still not accepted the pay increase. It is likely that support staff will have to wait until December to receive their pay increase, which will be back dated to April.</p> <p>Trustees were informed that the revised budget has factored in the anticipated pay increase for all support staff, the teaching pay increase, Pupil Premium and the associated uplifts from government.</p> <p>The Business Manager has been through every single payment to reduce the deficit. The Board was reminded that although schools are allowed to submit a deficit budget, the government does not like it. The budget has now been balanced.</p> <p>Q. Why are the pupil numbers increasing? A. The Sixth Form are bigger than they were last year.</p> <p>Q. With reference to the key performance indicators. Is there a national average? A. It is in the software. It is on the Government website. You can put your school in and find out this information.</p> <p>It was suggested that it would be a good idea to research this as an exercise at the ARR meeting.</p> <p>Q. Are we benefitting from gas prices coming down? A. Yes, it is in the budget.</p> <p>The Chair thanked DI-W and the staff for all their hard work on the budget over the Summer.</p> <p>Trustees were informed that the DFE had extended the deadline to submit the school budget (to 31<sup>st</sup> August) due to the uncertainty over the pay increase.</p> <p>Trustees agreed the revised budget.</p>	
9.	a) To receive an update on <b>RAAC</b>	

	<p>The school have received confirmation from Kiers that they do not have any buildings with RAAC. DI-W has informed the DFE and a letter has been sent to all parents from MM. There has been no communication from parents regarding any concerns.</p> <p>Q. The report says that visual access was limited. What do they mean by that?</p> <p>A. When conducting the inspections surveyors needed to pull apart ceilings and do some damage. We recommended that they only inspect the parts of the building which were built in the years when RAAC was used.</p> <p>b) To note the updated Risk Register in respect of RAAC</p> <p>The Risk Register was shared with Trustees. It was last reviewed in September 2023.</p>	
10.	<p>To receive the <b>Acting/Co-Headteachers' Verbal Report</b></p> <p>Trustees were told that the school has been very busy with two open mornings and one open evening. The feedback was that the Yr8 and Yr13 guides were very good. Yr11 parents have been in for a talk on "how to revise with your son". SLT have begun to do rounds to visit every member of staff and learning walks have been calm and productive.</p> <p>Launchpad has launched and is working well. KR has taught in there and has witnessed its value. An example was given of a child known to her now displaying better behaviour and producing better quality work.</p> <p>The plan is that after eight weeks the children will be able to return to mainstream lessons. The challenge for the school will be how they transfer the children back into mainstream education.</p> <p>Trustees were told that the optimum number of pupils in launchpad is 6. The launchpad lead has significant experience in this work and trained as a social worker.</p> <p>Q. Is launchpad something we bought in?</p> <p>A. No, we have come up with it. They have breakfast there. They start their day with Charlie and then teachers visit and teach. They have breaktime and lunch. They finish at 3pm.</p> <p>There are 7 KS4 students going out to college to do vocational practical studies. The school has received good reports for 6 out of the 7 pupils.</p> <p>Attendance at the school is good (92.82) and is climbing.</p>	

	There is a full teaching cohort. One teacher has gone sick, but she has been covered.	
11.	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>a) To receive an update on ' <b>Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2023).</b></p> <p>Trustees confirmed that they read the document.</p> <p>It was noted that the changes this year have been minimal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First big change is to the filtering and monitoring systems.</li> <li>• There is a new category, children absent from education not seen for 10 school days. Schools now have to notify the LA if a child is missing for 10 days.</li> <li>• There is a new category for children who are repeatedly absent.</li> <li>• There is lots of guidance around safer recruitment measures and a reminder to due diligence checks online.</li> <li>• Schools are to be aware that if somebody is using their premises and an allegation arises about that organisation, they are duty bound to report to LADO. All organisations that work at the school are vetted.</li> <li>• The term discipline has been replaced with sanction.</li> <li>• There is more guidance on child-on-child abuse.</li> <li>• There is more advice on mental health and prevent.</li> <li>• It is a crime to force a child into a forced marriage.</li> </ul> <p>Q. Could the school come and talk to us about the monitoring and filtering system we use?</p> <p>A. Yes Lisa Fisher could advise.</p> <p>This presentation will go to the Teaching and Learning Committee with an introduction from the DPO.</p> <p>b) To confirm that all Trustees have read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2023) in full and have signed the declaration on Governor Hub</p> <p>Trustees were reminded to sign the KCSiE declaration on GovernorHub.</p>	<p>DI-W/ NB</p> <p>All Trustees</p>
12.	<p>To receive the <b>public examinations results.</b></p> <p><u>GCSE Results</u> – The FFT study shows how the school compares. The official data will be published on the DFE website in October.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are getting on average a half a grade higher in every subject because they attend HBS. The study considers gender, pupil premium and SEND comparables.</li> <li>• 87% of student are getting a 4 or above in English and Maths.</li> <li>• Compared to the national average, HBS school results are higher.</li> </ul> <p>The second study show the progress 8 score as +0.36 but this takes in students such as one who studied at the school for 10 months in Yr10.</p> <p>It is not expected that the numbers published by the DFE will not vary largely.</p> <p><u>A Levels</u> – Trustees were told there were two issues to note relating to these results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The A level results did not tally with the teacher assessed grades. On average, teachers predicted a 39.01 (B grade) and the results were a 33 (C+ grade). Last year students achieved a B- grade and the school wanted to see an improvement. The school received results they weren't expecting.</li> <li>• The average grades were lower than last year. It was noted that the grade boundaries had been moved so a comparison was made against the known results of local boys' schools, and they had followed the same pattern as HBS.</li> <li>• The Acting Co-Headteachers will work with Heads of Departments to see if they can improve accuracy. They are already mindful of pupils using Chat GPT to produce work so checking for this remains a priority.</li> </ul> <p>Q. You mentioned the lack of data online, can we not ask the other schools in the consortium, HGS and The Priory?</p> <p>A. The schools have not been open about their results because there is an element of competition. They don't have the full facts like us. I (MM) have asked. The Government will publish the average point score by October.</p> <p>Q. A year ago our results were very similar to the boys' school in Bishop Stortford, are they selective?</p> <p>A. At 6<sup>th</sup> form schools have their own entry requirements. But in Hitchin the local parents are saying you must provide courses for my son.</p> <p>When further details are known MM will bring it to the Teaching and Learning Committee.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Acting Co-Headteachers for the research they had done.</p>	MM
13.	To approve the following policies	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To agree amendments to the Behaviour Policy concerning revised arrangements for internal exclusions – Launchpad will now be a site for the internal exclusions. It used to be the case that the school would have to wait for several boys to be internally excluded before they could run it. The change to using Launchpad will create a more instant punishment. The name of the policy has been changed to Promoting Positive behaviour but there is a reference to the old name under section 2.4. This will need to be amended. The policy is approved.</li> </ul> <p>Q. How will you cope with more than 6?</p> <p>A. We still have the SLT framework running and that will kick in when they have over 6. There is always a member of SLT available to assist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve Staff Absence Policy – This policy is approved.</li> </ul> <p>Q. Is that the correct title?</p> <p>A. It is taken from HFL. They have split their absence policy and added a dependant's policy. There doesn't need to be a consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dependants Leave Policy - This policy is approved.</li> <li>Governance Policy – There is a "C" missing on the word committee at item 17. There is an "E" missing from the word performance at item 10. This policy was approved.</li> </ul>	Helen Leaver
14.	<b>Date of the Next Meeting:</b> Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	
15.	To consider <b>Any Other Business</b>  There was no other business.	
16.	<b>Close of Meeting</b>  The meeting closed at 19:32.	

Summary of Actions Agreed			
Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Status
3.	Trustees were reminded to check that they have reviewed their declarations of interest on GovernorHub.	All Trustees	ASAP
6.	Four Trustees agreed to support HC in her role as Chair. HC to email Trustees again to seek additional volunteers.	HC	ASAP
6.	HC will send a broken down list of the Chair's duties to the Board.	HC	ASAP



7.	Typos in the Minutes of the 4 <sup>th</sup> July to be corrected.	Clerk	ASAP
7.	The Minutes state that the Staff Wellbeing Survey will be shared when complete. This has not been fed back to the relevant person. The Pastoral Committee to follow up.	PA	ASAP
7.	The Minutes to be signed	HC	ASAP
7.	<i>Headboy to suggest a code of conduct to students. This will be brought forward to the next meeting for further discussion. – This will be postponed until December. Dami to advise Headboy.</i>	DA	ASAP
7.	<i>To revise the Complaints Policy and Procedure to ensure it is more accessible and more easily understood by parents. – HC and HJ to do for the December FGB.</i>	HC/HJ	ASAP
7.	The Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy needs to change references from fixed exclusions to suspensions.	Helen Leaver	ASAP
11.	The school to advise the Teaching and Learning Committee on the monitoring and filtering system they use.	DI-W / NB	ASAP
11.	Trustees were reminded to sign the KCSiE declaration on GovernorHub.	All Trustees	ASAP
12.	MM to give further details about the A Level results to the Teaching and Learning Committee.	MM	At next T&L Committee
13.	To remove the reference to the Behaviour Policy at section 2.4 of the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.	Helen Leaver	ASAP
13.	To correct typos in the Governance Policy. There is a "C" missing on the word committee at item 17. There is an "E" missing from the word performance at item 10.	Helen Leaver	ASAP