



Hitchin Boys' School

MINUTES FOR FULL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING 26th January 2022 at 6.05pm

Board Members	Attendance 2021/2022	Present at this meeting
Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee – Chair	4/4	Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee – Chair
Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee – Vice Chair	4/4	Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee – Vice Chair
Mr Philip Addison (PA) Parent Trustee	3/4	Mr Philip Addison (PA) Parent Trustee
Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trustee	3/4	Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trustee
Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee	3/4	Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee
Ms Kirsty Harvey (KH) Parent Trustee	3/4	Ms Kirsty Harvey (KH) Parent Trustee
Mr David Hutchinson (DH) Trustee	3/4	Mr David Hutchinson (DH) Trustee
Mr. David Ingledew (DI) Trustee	2/4	Mr. David Ingledew (DI) Trustee
Ms. Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee	3/3	Ms. Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee	4/4	Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee
Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee	4/4	Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee
Ms Jen McCall (JM) Co-opted Trustee	1/4	
Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Headteacher	3/4	Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Headteacher
Mrs Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee	4/4	Mrs Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee
Miss Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee	3/4	Miss Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee	4/4	Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee
Mrs Liz Taplin (LT) Co-opted Trustee	3/4	Mrs Liz Taplin (LT) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee	4/4	Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee
Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee	4/4	Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee
Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee	4/4	Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee
Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee	4/4	Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee

In attendance:

Bob Goldsmith – Clerk
Charlie Inman – Head Boy

	The meeting was conducted remotely using MS Teams owing to Covid-19 restrictions. The meeting was quorate.	Action
1.	Welcome and introductions. Trustees were welcomed to the meeting.	

Approved: _____
Board of Trustees 26th January 2022

2.	To receive apologies and approve absences . Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Jen McCall	
3.	To declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting and any changes in declarations of interest . <i>'Trustees 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> . There were none.	
4.	To receive notification of Any Other Urgent Business There was none.	
5.	To receive the Head Boy's Report Charlie Inman presented his report. Now was the time for the prefects' team to knuckle down to revise for their mock A-Levels. However, in the coming week they would still be engaging with a visit by the local MP, managing the submission of questions. Charlie predicated that the environment would be a key topic for discussion. The Eco-Prefects were working on questions to ask the MP with Mr. Freeman. Looking further ahead, there would be visit to Greenwich in the Summer. Charlie also reported that the prefects had been very active at the end of the Autumn Term with an issue of 'Student Voice' and charity events. In particular they had raised £210 from students at a Formulae One event. The Trustees acknowledged that it was the day for submission of university preferences to UCAS and wished the students well. FM was pleased to report that 95% of the Year 13 pupils had submitted forms.	
6	(Duplicate Entry on the Agenda)	
7.	To approve the minutes of Board of Trustee meetings held on 11th November and 9th December 2021 . The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and were APPROVED. These will be signed electronically on GovernorHub. ACTION 1.	HC
8.	Matters Arising from the Minutes a) 11th November 2021 1. Sign the minutes of FGB of 29 th September on Governor Hub. HC COMPLETE 2. Code of Conduct to be updated and details circulated. HC ON THE AGENDA Code of Conduct The Chair had posted a draft Code of Conduct on Governor Hub, based closely on the National Governors Association model. She asked trustees to read through the code and let	All Trustees BG

	<p>her have their comments. The final draft would be submitted to the next meeting for approval.</p> <p>ACTION 2.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="237 255 1050 360">3. Read Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2021 and complete the online quiz by 6th October 2021. Complete confirmation on GovernorHub.</td> <td data-bbox="1050 255 1145 360">ALL</td> <td data-bbox="1145 255 1366 360">COMPLETED</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="237 398 1050 432">4. Decide how to report on horizon scanning.</td> <td data-bbox="1050 398 1145 432">HC</td> <td data-bbox="1145 398 1366 432">IN HEAD'S RPT</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="237 470 1050 535">5. Check with University of Hertfordshire whether they can support of parental training of personal development.</td> <td data-bbox="1050 470 1145 535">DI</td> <td data-bbox="1145 470 1366 535">NOT VIABLE</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="237 573 1050 607">6. Correct page numbering and dates in Behaviour Policy</td> <td data-bbox="1050 573 1145 607">FM</td> <td data-bbox="1145 573 1366 607">COMPLETED</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="237 645 1050 678">7. Report overall themes from Exit Interviews</td> <td data-bbox="1050 645 1145 678">FM</td> <td data-bbox="1145 645 1366 678">IN HEAD'S RPT</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="237 716 1050 781">8. School Admissions Policy: Report on the Outcome of Consultation on the Proposed Change</td> <td data-bbox="1050 716 1145 781">FM</td> <td data-bbox="1145 716 1366 781">ON AGENDA</td> </tr> </table> <p>b) 9th December 2021</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	3. Read Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2021 and complete the online quiz by 6 th October 2021. Complete confirmation on GovernorHub.	ALL	COMPLETED	4. Decide how to report on horizon scanning.	HC	IN HEAD'S RPT	5. Check with University of Hertfordshire whether they can support of parental training of personal development.	DI	NOT VIABLE	6. Correct page numbering and dates in Behaviour Policy	FM	COMPLETED	7. Report overall themes from Exit Interviews	FM	IN HEAD'S RPT	8. School Admissions Policy: Report on the Outcome of Consultation on the Proposed Change	FM	ON AGENDA	
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9.	<p>To receive the Headteacher's Report</p> <p>The Trustees received and considered the headteacher's written report. submitted to trustees prior to the meeting, together with appendices providing more recent covid data (further updated at the meeting) and a summary of exit interview outcomes.</p> <p>Trustees focused on the following matters when considering the report:</p> <p>a) Covid</p> <p>The Headteacher updated the Covid snapshot. 24 boys were currently off with Covid, the majority in Years 7 and 8 where vaccinations were still taking place. Four staff were off.</p> <p>After a relatively high number of absences during the first week of term, probably a reflection of the high level of socialising over the holiday period, numbers had now dropped with no spikes in infection levels. The wearing of masks was now optional for both students and staff when moving around the school.</p> <p>b) Staff Wellbeing</p> <p>Q1: It is difficult for trustees to observe the wellbeing of staff, not being able just now to visit the school. The Staff Survey suggests there are a few problems, including scope for some staff to meet with their line managers. To what degree is this a problem?</p> <p>A: There are a small minority of disgruntled staff. Some may opt to leave. This is normal for an organisation the size as HBS (165 staff).</p> <p>Q2: Eight members of staff are receiving counselling. Without breaching confidentiality, what types of issues are they experiencing, should the trustees be concerned about this?</p>																			

	<p>A: The Hitchin Mental Health Recovery Team are offering counselling to the school. In addition to staff, they are also supporting 21 students. The issues are not just covid related, they also relate to personal issues that people normally experience in their lives on occasions, including life / work balance but other things too that are unconnected with the school. The Chair's Steering Group has been briefed on a confidential basis.</p> <p>In general terms, it will be good for the sense of wellbeing for staff to see trustees visiting the school once the situation with covid makes this possible.</p> <p>Q3: Did staff responding to the survey see HBS as a good place to work? A: Yes, although there was less satisfaction among support staff than teachers. This tends to reflect the lower opportunities for job progression available to support staff.</p> <p>c) Exit Interviews The headteacher introduced his separate note summarising the feedback from recent exit interviews with staff. In most cases, staff were leaving for positive reasons such as retirement, promotion, desired career changes (such as support staff going into teaching, or teachers moving into child care) or relocation. There will always be a few disgruntled leavers within any organisation, but no more than two recently (whose issues should remain confidential).</p> <p>Q4: Will the level of staff moving-on for promotion or new career opportunities increase now that covid constraints are being eased? A: Most likely yes. More opportunities are being published now, particularly for senior leadership posts. So, trustees should not be surprised to see middle leaders within the school moving-on. Some mobility can be beneficial for a school, bringing in new ideas and approaches.</p> <p>Q5: Will this mean that the experience profile may change as staff leave? A: Again, most likely yes. Many of our teachers have been at HBS for 10 – 15 years. Their successors will probably be younger with less experience. This is not necessarily a problem.</p> <p>Q6: So, you are not concerned really about the feedback from the exit interviews? A: No, there is nothing worrying about the feedback received.</p> <p>d) Exclusions</p> <p>Q7: There seem to be quite a high number of fixed-term exclusions recently. Is this a correct reading and, if so, why is the increase occurring? A: The level is not unusually high – 20 days in total over the period September to January. These days mainly relate to two Year 9 students, one of whom is a looked-after child experiencing considerable challenges. Both students are being supported by the North Hertfordshire Education Support Centre because of recurring behaviours that the school cannot sanction. There has also been drug-related incident relating to a Year 12 student, on which the school is working alongside the police.</p>	
10.	<p>Hitchin Boys School Determined Admissions Arrangements 2023 – 2024 The Board received the determined admission arrangements for HBS for 2023 – 2024 as recommended by the Headteacher for adoption, following public consultation.</p> <p>The consultation had been on replacement of the current Rules 5 and 6 within the school's current allocations policy that prioritise on the basis of parish proportionality with a new provision using nearest school and distance from the school gates as the basis for decision-making.</p>	

	<p>The Headteacher reported on the outcome of the consultation, which had closed on 31st December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five parents, all in support of the proposed change on the basis that it would provide greater clarity; • St Ippolyts Parish Council, in support of the proposal; • Herts County Council’s Admissions Team, in support of the proposal. <p>There had therefore been no opposition to the proposed change.</p> <p>Trustees referred to the detailed wording of the policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 3 (re; Baldock): it was clarified that the reference to the parish of Baldock was correctly included as there were still siblings of students from the parish moving through the school and even potentially still to be admitted. • Rule 4a (re. children of members of staff): The Headteacher agreed that the wording needed revision at point since it did not flow correctly as written (repetition of the word ‘children’). <p>Following discussion, it was:</p> <p>Resolved unanimously that the 2022 – 2023 Determined Admission Arrangements be approved as submitted by the Headteacher (subject to grammatical tidying up the wording at Rule 4a regarding children of members of staff).</p> <p>NB: Richard Thake asked that it be noted that, following reflection, he did not consider that on this occasion he needed formally to declare an interest in the matter as the local county councillor, given that the proposed amendment to admissions arrangements had been supported by all those responding to the consultation.</p>	
11.	<p>Pupil Premium Strategy</p> <p>The Board of Trustees received a written report from the Headteacher, which had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Headteacher emphasised that HBS had high expectations for all students, there was no assumption that pupil premium students cannot meet their academic aspirations. For 2020/21, the school had conclusive evidence that disadvantaged students had progressed through the pupil premium interventions put in place. There are still gaps in attainment between PP students and their peers, but these are reducing significantly. The current proportion of PP students is 9.89% and steadily increasing year on year. Funding for 2021 – 22 is £106,930 along with Catch-Up Grant of £14,500. The Headteacher outlined the targeted academic support provided (for example tutoring, 1:1 support) and wider strategies (to help with behaviour and wellbeing). Good links were being developed with SEN interventions and teachers knew the PP students within their classes and ready to provide additional help where needed.</p> <p>RT, the PP Lead Governor, remarked that the school could be proud of its high level of support for PP students during a challenging period of covid closures and on occasion remote teaching. He thanked the headteacher and his staff. The Board of Trustees echoed this.</p>	
12.	<p>Management Accounts</p> <p>The Board of Trustees received the pre-audit management journals for both December and January, which had been posted on Governor Hub.</p> <p>The Headteacher advised that the financial situation was quite good. There had been unanticipated income from the ESFA and HCC. Expenditure was generally to budget,</p>	

	<p>although supply teaching costs were slightly above budget to cover for absences. The year-end outturn looked on-budget with an in-year surplus of £189k. GAG funding regulations require that the school had a minimum 4% level of reserves. Currently they were slightly below this level, so the Headteacher would be making minor accounting adjustments to correct this.</p> <p>Forecasting further ahead was difficult at this stage. The staffing profile would inevitably change and the finances of the sports centre were not currently clear.</p> <p>Finally, the Headteacher reported that a new Finance Officer had recently been recruited and that there would be further changes in the team.</p> <p>Q8: What is the position on legal costs against budget? A: Hopefully matters were now resolved on the current legal case. However, undoubtedly it would be wise in future years to increase the budgeted sum for legal contingencies.</p>	
13.	<p>School Governance</p> <p>a) Governor Link Visits The Chair advised that it was now good for link governors to re-start their meetings with subject leaders, pastoral leads etc. These meetings should take place online for now, but with the aim of resuming in-person meetings in the Summer Term.</p> <p>The Chair also referred to training for link governors. Those who either new to the role or whose training had expired were asked to contact the Chair so that she can make the necessary arrangements.</p> <p>ACTION THREE</p> <p>b) Annual Audits: Governor Skills and Training The Chair reported that she would shortly be issuing the annual skills audit questionnaire to governors for completion. The outcome would be RAG-rated to identify skills gaps. Trustees were asked quickly to up-date their training logs on Governor Hub.</p> <p>Q9: So many Herts for Learning Training Courses are fully booked. Have we looked at alternative providers? A (Chair): We are looking at alternative providers. Please can governors let me know if they are finding it impossible to book the training they need with Herts for Learning.</p> <p>ACTION FOUR</p> <p>c) Use of Hitchin Boys School Email Addresses The Chair explained to trustees that use of personal email addresses for HBS business risked breaching GDPR. There were some things that simply cannot be sent to personal email addresses for reasons of confidentiality. Those trustees still using their personal email addresses were asked pleased now to set up school addresses, on the basis that from September 2022 only HBS email addresses would be used for trustee business.</p> <p>ACTION FIVE</p> <p>d) Complaints: Thank You and Actions The Chair thanked those trustees who had served on the Complaints Panel for a recent case. However, the matter was still live as the complainant had now submitted an appeal against</p>	<p>All Link Govnr's</p> <p>All Govnr's</p> <p>All Govnr's</p>

	<p>the decision taken which would need to be considered by a fresh group of trustees alongside an independent trustee. So the Chair would be in contact with Trustees to set up this meeting.</p> <p>e) Preparation for the Trustees' Tea Party with Staff, 11th May The Chair explained that every year the trustees meet with HBS staff to hear their views and feedback about life at the school. It is proposed to hold this on Wednesday 11th May at 5pm, prior to the Trustees Meeting that night. She asked for volunteers to plan this year's event, including one staff trustee would could make the necessary internal arrangements (room booking for example).</p> <p>Philip Addison, Liz Taplin and Jo Weston agreed to do preparatory work for the event.</p> <p>ACTION SIX</p>	<p>PA, LT and JW</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>School Policies, Plans and Procedures</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that the school was making real efforts to review, and update where necessary, all reports in accordance with their scheduled review dates. In doing this, the formats were being made clearer and standardised in their layout and presentation.</p> <p>Given the challenges of covid, progress had slipped behind because of the need to concentrate on immediate challenges. This had generally been the case at Hertfordshire schools. There were currently 65 policies, through which the school would be working in the coming months to update and re-present to trustees for sign-off. Today, the Headteacher had presented those policies, plans and procedures that were most urgently in need of sign-off. It was noted that issues around formatting when loading the reports onto Governor Hub would be addresses.</p> <p>Q10: The Privacy Notice for Students makes reference (on page 5) to storage of data on the school's Google Drive. Should this be a cloud-based system, does this risk breaching GDPR?</p> <p>A: The Headteacher explained the arrangements that were in place. Appropriate approvals had been obtained for storage of the data.</p> <p><i>The following updated policies were approved, as submitted:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Accessibility Plan; b) Capability Procedure; c) Complaints Procedure; d) First Aid Procedure; e) Freedom of Information Policy; f) Health and Safety Policy; g) ICT Staff Acceptable Use Policy; h) Privacy Notice, Students; i) Provider Access Policy (referred by Pastoral Cttee) j) SEND Policy. k) Standalone Reserves Policy (referred by Audit, Resources & Risk Cttee. 	
<p>15.</p>	<p>Board of Members Meeting, 9th December 2021</p> <p>It was noted that the Board of Members had appointed a new chair, Michael Page, in place of Professor Robert Slater (who would however continue to serve on the board for one final year). Trustees noted that Mr. Page had a distinguished career in the Police, holding a Queen's Police Medal.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 9th December were noted,</p>	

16.	Pastoral Committee, 21st November Minutes of the Pastoral Committee's meeting on 21 st November were received and noted.	
17.	Chair's Action Since the previous Ordinary Trustees' Meeting, the Chair had approved a minor change to the school's Behaviour Policy at the request of the Headteacher. This action was noted.	
18.	Other Urgent Business There was none.	
19.	Dates of Future Meetings It was noted that Board meetings were scheduled on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd March 2022; • 11th May 2022; • 8th June 2022 and • 5th July 2022. 	

The meeting closed at 7.55pm

Chair's Signature:

Date:

Summary of Actions Agreed			
Action Point	Action	Responsibility	Status
1	Sign the minutes of the Board of Trustees of 11 th November and 9 th December on Governor Hub.	HC	
2.	Code of Conduct: Trustees to comment to the Chair on her proposed draft by 18 th February. Final version to be submitted to the Board Meeting on 2 nd March.	HC (Trustees to read and comment)	
3.	Link Governors to arrange online meetings with their subject leaders / pastoral leads - to take place before the end of the Spring Term. Also, to liaise with the Chair should they not have received any training on how to conduct link governor visits.	HC and Link Governors	
4.	Governor Hub Training Logs to be updated by all Trustees by 18 th February.	All Trustees	
5.	Trustees to set up school emails (should they not already have them) on the basis that they will be the only email addresses used from September 2022.	All Trustees	
6.	Begin planning work for the Staff Tea Party with Trustees on 11 th May.	PA, LT and JW	

Approved: _____
Board of Trustees 26th January 2022