



St Laurence Governors FGB

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 7 February, 1700

Governors present, K Kilgallen (chair), T Farrer (head), A Craddock, L Wicks, T Chatfield, A Ensom, M Peters, P Lambert, D Roberts, A Dixon Patterson, S Cooper, M Dooley, M Lee

Apologies, P Robertson

There were no additional declarations of interest

The chair noted the sombre tone of the meeting after the death of a student. Staff had been remarkably resilient and the SLT had worked very well together during this tragic incident. A letter from Helena's tutor to the student's parents was read.

27/23 Minutes of previous meeting 13 December.

The minutes were agreed.

Action, governor BoxPhish training and school-based email addresses, this was discussed by the clerk with agreed steps for governors to follow.

28/23 Head's report,

TF updated governors on matters relating to the death of a year 9 student.

The school will be co-operating fully with the coroner's inquest, may be required to be represented and would learn from any recommendations. He had visited the family.

Both TF and the Chair would represent the school at the funeral. The Chair would write a letter of condolence on behalf of the governors.

The parents and the school are considering the student's legacy and remembering them within the school.

Next term there will be a pre-planned mental health & wellbeing week, anti-bullying work is in the SDP plans for the year with the regular policy and practise review by C&E.

A student who was injured in a serious car accident now is out of ICU.

Comment, PL praised the school for their sensitive actions, being respectful to all. The students had been treated as young adults and had noted the expressed emotions of staff. This difficult situation had been handled well. Seconded by AE.

Question, is there any advice from external parties that the school needs to receive to mitigate risk? Will there be support for SLT in any coroner's court attendance.

R, the risk of reputational damage is acknowledged. There is pastoral support for those taking part in any aspect of the school's response. The school retains legal advice, especially as there is no experience of coroner's inquest requests amongst the SLT.

Question, was there any suggestion that bullying played a part in this situation?

R, it is unsure but there are robust safeguarding and myConcern systems in place. The accuracy of any records depends on the quality of reporting.

Question, is there any support that should be given longer term to staff and students?

R, as an initial response, all possibly affected students were triaged and this list shared with external agencies with a risk assessment. Continued contact is in place with those agencies and daily check-ins for some students at the school. SLT meetings review this weekly. Supervision is in place for all pastoral team members and SLT.

Staffing, interviews for vacancies in science (2 candidates) and English (3) will be held on Thursday 8th.

Question, governors noted the resignation of the head of MFL, how will that position be covered?

R, the resignation is from the end of the academic year and a full recruitment process would be planned.

Chaplaincy review and Staff wellbeing notes

Question, being more confidently Christian was noted as an improvement point from SIAMS, with the aim of being an inclusive school and a local comprehensive, a governor wished to be assured that the school was retaining a balance of religious and secular traditions?

R, it was noted that very few students apply to St Laurence, specifically stating a Christian preference. The Chaplaincy development was planned before the SIAMS inspection. It is one day a week and it is an opportunity for both staff and students to engage. There is no shift in emphasis between the school's two foundations.

Further funding will be applied for to extend the Chaplaincy role for a further year.

Question, there are mentions of behaviour in the wellbeing notes, is this reflective of other concerns?

R, last week, staff absence was substituted with supply staff and two year groups were educated at home for a day. This was largely because many classes would have had a poor response to having multiple supply lessons. There was an issue of high-profile poor behaviour, a small cohort of students were being suspended on more occasions.

Absence is due to Covid and flu'. None are signed off with work-related stress.

Question, is the impact of the year 11 disruptive students containable?

R, there is significant work with these students, however two have now left to home education. Two have EHCPs with bespoke timetables involving almost 1-2-1 tutoring. Lesson avoidance by a small group involves significant time spent to locate them, for safety.

Communication about the closure days had one email in response.

The behaviour hub initiative has had an impact with years 7-9, there being a more consistent and clearly understood approach for both staff and students.

29/23 Strategy

Each committee has now considered this.

C&E comments, PL summarised the tone and range of the committee's discussion. Governors were supportive of the school's approach with a focus on care, inspire, succeed. Having this structure of values set the school apart from other local schools. Initiatives on behaviour, mental health, wellbeing were proactive. The SEND & safeguarding arrangements were robust. Governors could consider a more strategic use of PAN, the number admitted to each year-group.

Standards comments, SC summarised the committee's discussion which had focused on the curriculum. Governors asked that the school consider more specific measurable targets for a 3–5-year strategy, noting that external variables may change the dynamic of each year-group in reaching any such targets. There was no desire to set the school up to fail. It was noted that curriculum debates have taken place on MFL, RE and KS5.

Conclusion from the Chair, each committee of governors had had the chance to contribute from their specific viewpoint. It was suggested that a finalising, strategy planning day should be held in term 4, possibly with an external facilitator. The Chair will circulate a summarising paper and there will be a poll of dates for governor attendance.

30/23 Committee minutes & update from Chairs

Standards (SC), the presentation on literacy was commended to governors. The level of challenge was noted by governors, suggesting that half of the year 7 cohort has a literacy need. TF commented that these students were in year 3 during the Covid pandemic, many PP students were further behind. A financial commitment to resources & interventions will be made. There will be a reversion to the previous English curriculum for year 7, with a 7th English lesson per fortnight being a specific literacy lesson.

Question, will this be a model for further years?

R, work with the transition from primary schools is ongoing, in fact behaviour support might be a bigger need due to lack of early socialisation. There is a national strategy for reading. On the staff complement, there is a primary trained teacher who is supporting those in year 7 who are not secondary-ready.

Year 11 mock results, P8 was calculated at 0.24 and a than expected better PP score. Governors should monitor the GCSE results for the number achieving English but not maths at grade 4. It was encouraging that 17/22 subjects had a better performance than in term 10.

IDSR report, this was a disappointing report in terms of content, 'close to' is a new catch-all description in the report. MFL student voice, the governor report will be added to the MFL review by SLT.

Comment, 'high prior attainment' for St Laurence students is now not so clear. It was something to add to the Strategy discussion.

FFE (DR), governors discussed the Risk Register and it was recommended that other committees have sight of this for comment in their specific areas of responsibility. This would be on the agenda in term 6 and then return to FGB.

The meeting's other business was summarised.

At the next meeting, the 3-year budget horizon will be discussed.

A further meeting will review the campus plan, 27 February.

C&E (PL), the presentation on SEND was commended to the governors.

Comments on the minutes, the number of EHCPs is not above national average. The number of K coded students was detailed by TF to give governors' further context. A review of the presentation of the universal offer was being conducted.

The school had graduated from the behaviour hub initiative but the work is ongoing with a staff member appointed to plan the development of the work further across the year.

(note that Strategy minutes are also in the folder)

Safeguarding, verbal update to FGB (L Ash), a range of staff training had concluded, myConcern had highlighted unkind behaviour and changes in behaviour as trends.

Both the silver Healthy Schools Award and the Young Carer-friendly Awards had been achieved by the school.

Careers, verbal update to FGB (L Wicks), all Gatsby benchmarks are now met and a meeting between the staff and link governor will be held in term 4.

31/23 Skills audit

The audit to date has been completed and is in the folder.

AC and MP would move from C&E to Standards committee to rebalance committee memberships.

It was proposed that governors change the number of committees. **Action**, ADP offered to make some recommendations.

32/23 AOB

SC declared that he would be leaving at the end of this term. Whilst his departure would be marked at another occasion, he was warmly thanked for his contribution to the governors and the school over a number of years.

LW was nominated to position of Chair of Standards.

The meeting closed at 1830.