



St Laurence Governors FGB

Minutes of the meeting held on **Wednesday 19 July 2023**, 1700, at the school

Governors present:

K Kilgallen (chair), S Cooper, M Horan, A Ensom, P Lambert, M Dooley, L Wicks, P Robertson, J Abecassis, A Craddock, M Smith, L Ash, M Peters, T Chatfield, D Roberts

Apologies:

M Lee, A Dixon Patterson

Declarations of interest:

There were no further declarations

Matthew Horan was welcomed to his first meeting.

37/22 [Minutes](#) of previous meeting 24 05 23, actions and matters arising.

These were approved for accuracy.

Actions – LL, what does the RPA (Risk Protection Arrangement) cover on cyber-attack and the amount of compensation – cover document is in Minutes folder, p108-110, cover is £250k (excess £2k)

TF and PR, link up over provision for a student Christian Union. This is a voluntary group for students to develop themselves. A separate chaplaincy approach is being developed by TF which is an inclusive, faith-based group.

38/22 Head's [report](#)

Since the report, amendments are:

Staffing, it remains a concern but a deputy SENCO has been appointed today. An assistant SENCO will be returning from ill health leave and along with the new SENCO appointment, the team is now complete (except for a support role).

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (full-time, non-teaching) to be appointed, there is one internal candidate.

Library assistant, a person with valuable experience had been appointed.

The media technician has resigned for a new position.

For teacher training, Bath Spa had vacancies across a number of subjects and UWE has lost its accreditation.

For clarity, the year 7 English classes are covered by 2 existing MFL staff and a new dance teacher.

GCSE Sociology is also a new year 10 option.

Question, A level Business Studies, what is the class size?

R – 28 per class. There will be 28 or 29 in Criminology.

Question, has PE been preferred to Dance in the year 9 choice?

R – this has been informed by student voice and whilst team sports are preferred, Dance is retained as an important performing arts pathway for students.

Question, what is the time-frame for resignation / appointment of staff?

R – the end of terms 1,3,5 are the resignation deadlines. For Dance, there has been recruitment throughout the year, for various reasons.

Question, teacher training places, has there been a lowering of quality?

R – of the 55% places filled at the providers, some will not pass.

Student leadership, a student-led group reports to SLT meetings.

Question, should they come to an FGB?

R – perhaps the term 1 meeting in October for the Head Students. They will come to the 'meet the staff' tea on 6th September.

Wellbeing survey, there had been a 90% return from this benchmarked survey. The report offers a range of options for responses depending on the depth of feeling on specific points. There were significantly mixed feelings on some questions but also strengths revealed. The demand of the job and the ability to manage change were pointers to increased pressures. The Covid period and media reporting on education is likely to increase anxiety amongst staff.. The final report would be published and an action plan devised for September. Responding to student behaviour was a theme, the school's response was developing via the DfE funded behaviour hub initiative. The reporting cycle and number of parents' evenings have been reviewed and reduced.

This is the first time that TF has done such a survey. The previous one was about 6 years ago, focusing on the change from faculty to department organisation. In that survey, middle leaders and SLT were mentioned as requiring reassessments.

Action, the report and action plan would be discussed at Strategy.

Significant incident update, there had been a strong, immediate, team response and settling & support for students. Most recently, the staff member is described as having periods of wakefulness and being off the ventilator. Governors sent their good wishes.

The Year 11 Prom' went ahead after the strike day with volunteer staff.
There will be face-2-face results days for the first time since 2019.
First-rush exam results data would be sent to governors.

Question, what is the funding of the teaching staff pay deal?

R – above 3.5% is funded by the school. Most unions are voting in favour. This year, the school could afford the increase.

Question, what is the split of staff amongst unions?

R – 100 members of staff (teaching and support) are in NEU, ASCL (Association of School and College Leaders) is the next largest (school leaders) and a small number of staff in (mainly) support staff unions.

39/22 School development plan

This was in [draft](#) until the publication of summer exam results.

The next steps will be the addition of a raising achievement plan in case of subjects in need. Strands will be appropriate for all committees, with a range of senior team members taking the lead.

Question, were the mission and values missing?

R – to be added back

Question, could there be a cross reference to the Pupil Premium strategy on page 7/8, point 3a for disadvantaged students.

R - yes

Question, could there be cross reference to the Even Better Ifs from Challenge Partners, Ofsted and SIAMS?

R – these will be in the updated School Evaluation Framework as a separate page.

Question, what is the timeline for committee discussion of the SDP and feedback?

R – the SDP is in draft form and the main changes will be after exam results. Committees can take appropriate strands in their business.

Question, for staff and student wellbeing, could there be structured opportunities for staff voice and student voice?

R – there could be other mechanisms for staff voice, beyond the recent survey, on a more regular basis.

Question, should *sustaining year 12 numbers*, have year 7 numbers added too?

R – this would be clarified. Governors should note the further recruitment plans for term 1 & 2 to encourage applications for Sept '24. There are fewer students in current year 5 compared to current year 6, in the school's traditional catchment area.

40/23 Committee minutes & update from Chairs

[Standards](#) (SC)

There was a presentation on DT, with a very dynamic and inspiring exhibition of student work before this and the news of the incident with a department member, after. There was clear ambition for the subject and enthusiasm for the next steps. In a previous subject presentation, the time allocation for the subject and equipment issues had been mentioned and these were echoed in this presentation. There was a need to encourage the department to pursue positive changes where possible.

Year 12 data, the summer exam grade was C+, with an indicator grade of B+, this was the same as current year 13. Sustaining a B grade is the aspiration. There would be no allowances in the exams for the Covid period interruptions, as in previous years.

Year 7 and 9 data, for both Pupil Premium was the focus. Year 7 assessment suggested that PP students were making more progress than their peers and for year 9, there was only a small gap in achievement. Overall, the PP update was that for those attending school, interventions were working. The three challenges were attendance, attitude to learning and parental engagement, all of which whilst hard for school to control, were being tackled.

FFE (DR)

Governors noted the DFO update [report](#) July 2023

Budget proposal

The focus of the meeting had been the budget. The expected, slight, year-end surplus had been swallowed up by the additional costs of inflationary increases, utility prices and recruitment costs. The proposal for governors to approve centred on assumptions around the numbers on intake in year 7 and 12 and the extent of the school's contribution to this and future pay settlements. For the next three years, the deficit grows and the reserve is reduced. Years 4 and 5 are increasingly difficult.

On capital projects, toilets and fencing were the immediate priorities and TF and LL had done significant, additional work on this due to the lack of clarity from the managing agents. A limit on spending was agreed at Strategy and ratified at FFE. The decision was to pause development of the Multi-Use Games Area project whilst awaiting more certainty over budget and funds.

Tendering for catering is due.

Question, is this a new provision, as this would also come under the C&E remit?

R – there has been 3+2-year extension contract. LL attends the school council when *food* is on the agenda. There have been staff challenges and a new head chef for the last three weeks. This is an opportunity for change. There is enough space for the catering.

Student numbers recruitment, there has been new work via social media.

ADP had offered to develop some responses to school finance, via benchmarking from his professional experience.

Cyber security, more testing has been asked for. This is on the SDP.

PR is the H&S link governor.

DR proposed that the budget proposal was accepted. KK seconded this. Governors approved the budget.

Governors noted a confidential, business sensitive matter in the budget.

C&E (PL)

There had been a presentation on Learning Outside the Classroom, this had seen a significant revival since the return from the Covid period. The encouragement to participate for wellbeing and for inclusivity was commendable. This has also been launched with the Sixth Form using staff volunteers.

Governors appreciated the significant commitment of staff to run the activities.

Question, is there a fund for disadvantaged students to pay for any participation costs?

R, the role of LOTC is mapping the extra-curricular experience and monitoring participation. There is funding for PP students for year 7 and 8 trips, year 9 Black Rock, year 10 / 12 DofE. If there are any additional costs for clubs, PP students are supported. Curriculum trips are also supported.

Enrichment trips might have some support.

There is a bursary for Sixth Form students, these are past PP students and they can use the bursary fund for activities.

There was discussion of a recent trip and the experience of staff and students.

Policies were approved, Supporting Students with medical needs, Young Carers, Mental Health strategy.

Behaviour hub, a DfE programme partnering with other schools, resulting in a new code of conduct and more consistent expectations, full implementation from term 1.

Mental Health & Wellbeing (student focus) governor, AE.

Question, are there many young carers?

R, leading this initiative is Laura Barber and a past-student, now a TA who is a significant asset. As to the number, some young carers are hidden in the family or unrecognised, so it is a developing area of recognition. The Young Carer award is being applied for. These are vulnerable students.

(note that [Strategy](#) minutes are also in the folder)

At this meeting, governors had decided to convene an urgent meeting to discuss withdrawal from the TBEP MAT proposal.

Safeguarding, verbal update to FGB

The DDSL had been appointed.

Low mood, poor mental health and self-injury are highlighted points in the myConcern log.

Student voice groups include the *feminista* group and they had an article published in the NEU magazine.

Committee minutes were approved at the FGB.

40/22 Policy

Sickness [procedure](#) for teaching and support staff

This is an LA policy with St Laurence additions. There are statutory requirements. Governors approved this policy.

Learning outside the classroom [policy](#) and guidance

This is an internal, school policy to include legal guidance, risk assessments, trip codes of conduct, links to other policies and the school vision. Governors approved this policy.

Whilst there will be no consultation on this policy, it will be disseminated to staff.

Comment, there should be a link to the Data Protection policy, page 14 and the correct referencing is to UK GDPR.

Other policies approved this term:

Young Carers,

Mental Health Strategy,

Supporting students with health needs who cannot attend school

41/22 Governing Body matters

Chair and vice chair for '23-24, KK would be willing to continue to chair the FGB for the coming year, AC was willing to be the vice-chair and other nomination were welcome for the September meeting.

The number of governors needed to be revised, we have 18 in position and 17 are in the Articles of Association for the Trust. A governor could step down, SC indicated his desire to leave the FGB in March '24, having completed two terms. There could be a new chair of Standards from September.

Question, could the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) be contacted to change the Articles of Association?

R, to be investigated. **Action** - clerk

Instrument of governance and [scheme of delegations](#), review requested for approval in September, for term 1. **Action** - all

Training offer [guidance](#)

Documents for completion, for September. These can be submitted digitally and are found in this [folder](#)

[Calendar](#) for meetings, consideration of a Strategy Day. 6th or 13th with the SDP and exam results review as elements.

42/22 AOB,

Bugsy Malone, an excellent production. Tremendous thanks to all the staff for the performance, 800 attendees with 250 year 5 primary pupils, the production had included fully student-led technology, it was a school-community-led event.

The meeting closed at 1840