



Meeting Minutes

27 November 2019 at 4.00pm

Governors Present

Lorna Robinson (LR Acting Chair), Simon Bainbridge (SB Executive Headteacher), Adam Daw (AD Headteacher), Val Manning (VM), Laura Gibbons and Amanda Rigler (AR)

Others Present

Kerrie Jones (KJ Clerk)

	Item	Actions
1.	Welcome new governors	
	The Chair welcomed LG, new parent governor. MH has also been appointed as a new Trust Appointed Governor.	
2.	Acceptance of Apologies for Absence	
	Apologies were accepted from Michael Holt (MH).	
3.	Declaration of Interests with regard to items on this agenda	
	There were no declarations.	
4.	Agree the minutes of the last meeting and matters arising not on this agenda	
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record. Please refer to the table at the end of the minutes for actions update.	
5.	Business Manager Report	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance The accounts had been circulated. Funding is taking a while to settle and it is expected that a more consistent picture will be presented in January. Q <i>Governors asked if there are any major concerns?</i> A There are no significant issues aside from the ongoing funding issues which PE is pursuing vigorously • Premises The new build has been a challenge for the contractor but they are on track. Fixtures and fittings are currently being agreed and some areas can be moved into across the Christmas break. There has been some communications issues across the various parties which has led to some problems but these are being resolved. The plans for external works require some revision but this is LA responsibility. 	

	<p>There have already been requests to hire the new hydrotherapy pool when it opens which will bring in additional funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H&S- Handsam H&S is monitored by the online system Handsam which issues prompts for tasks to be completed. A view of the tasks dashboard was circulated for governors. KJa has completed a H&S review. Some issues were identified and actions put in place but there were no significant concerns. Governors thanked PE for her work on this, particularly whilst the site work is going on which makes things challenging. They were also extremely appreciative of all the work she has put into the new build which is very time consuming. A H & S link governor is needed. As an interim measure VM conduct a visit when she visits to look at the SCR in Dec <p><i>[4.30pm PE left]</i></p>	
6.	HT Report (AD)	
	<p>The HT's report had been circulated together with a report from YS at HLA.</p> <p>Key points to note:</p> <p>QA: There are no major concerns; the school is aware of staff strengths and weaknesses. AD attended a useful Ofsted event and feels that Highfield's process aligns well with the new approach.</p> <p>Q <i>Governors were concerned whether HLA would be prepared if an Ofsted inspection were to take place soon.</i></p> <p>A AD will go through the framework with SLT and middle leaders. There are some concerns over the detail needed for the yellow pathway – English and Maths have been prioritised - but other subjects need further work but this is in progress.</p> <p>In terms of governance the current HLA LGB would be responsible in the short term. Governors require understanding across the school – there is NGA training available.</p> <p>Safeguarding: There has been a change in the MASH approach to reporting safeguarding issues which has led to some problems. Highfield has agreed it will always find out as much as possible from a pupil being referred but stressed that it is not always appropriate to seek parental consent.</p> <p>Q <i>What is the impact on the relationship with parents if a reported incident involves them?</i></p> <p>A We stress with parents that our first duty is to the pupil.</p> <p>Behaviour: The Nurture Group is working very well though it is not appropriate for all. The school has received a very kind offer of weighted blankets. AD and DM attended Step On training which takes a therapeutic approach to behaviour issues.</p> <p>Q <i>Is this just for special schools?</i></p> <p>A No, it is being delivered in mainstream too. We Will deliver the training to staff in April.</p>	

	<p>LINC: The LA now seem to view LINC as an established provision rather than a pilot. There will be 13 or 14 on role in Sept 2020 based in Ely but looking to extend to Littleport. Local Social care provision is poor for PMLD so Highfield is working with these providers and with other special schools who are considering similar provision to LINC.</p> <p>Attendance: figures not presented but reported to be similar to last time. Bring next time</p>	Report attendance figures next meeting
7.	School Development Plan update	
	This can be viewed on the website.	
8.	Report on the Nurture Group to include case studies	
	The anonymised case study had been circulated. The student is question had made progress and whilst they are still challenging, improvements by being in nurture group can be seen.	
9.	Pupil Progress update to include discussion of case studies for pupils making below or above expected progress	
	The anonymised case study had been circulated. Huge progress has been made with this pupil which has also had an impact on the other pupils as his behaviour has improved. Over the period of a year he has been transformed.	
10.	Safeguarding: link governor update	
	VM has had a phone call with Natalie to get an update on previous issues including the issue with care homes that was discussed last meeting and which still seems to be an issue. A link visit has been arranged for December.	
11.	Governance	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on new structure including link roles Discussed ideal numbers and categories. Even though all governors are equal the link roles that staff governors can realistically take on was discussed eg H&S. The two link roles that must be covered are H&S & safeguarding. It was felt that an additional two governors would be the minimum needed for a joint LGB in order to allow further link roles and visits. This could be links to pathways or all focussing on the same pathway at one time. It was agreed that work would continue towards a joint LGB but with no commitment until till more governors have been recruited. • Skills audit Can use for assigning link roles and recruiting though it was recognised it may not be all that helpful • Recruitment A letter was sent to HLS re LGB but there was no response. Continue recruitment drive as discussed. 	<p>Next meeting – devise questions for this plan so can do visits.</p> <p>All to return their skills audit to KJ Look again at Inspiring Gov (KJ) SB will approach HLA parents again with LR</p> <p>SB to update KJa.</p>

12. Personnel Update	
<p>There has been a high level of staff sickness absence though that is not unusual for this time of year. AD and YS are both undertaking NPQH training and SB is doing the NPQEL.</p> <p>Q <i>Are there any CPD gaps?</i> A No, we are managing to cover all that we need. The only issue is being able to release staff for training at times because numbers are so tight. The Trust expect attendance from schools at their events but sometimes it is just not possible.</p> <p>Q <i>Does ALT ever provide funding for cover when this happens?</i> A No, but the impact is more than just funding</p> <p>The bid has been submitted for the new school in Norfolk. If Highfield get an interview we will need to consider growth and capacity for a January start.</p>	
13. AOB	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SB had circulated a link to a Schools Week report on issues arising from the lack of trained nurses working in special schools https://schoolsweek.co.uk/investigation-pupils-at-risk-as-special-school-staff-left-to-fill-gaps-providing-complex-medical-care/?mc_cid=b6ecd31238&mc_eid=921569b1bc <p>Q <i>Governors asked if leaders believe Highfield is safe?</i> A Yes, we have a medical coordinator in place and are confident we are operating safely. However, the expectations placed upon level 1 TAs is very high and some responsibilities that fall to them are not part of their job description.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AR will send a link to SB for the new EYFS framework consultation which the Arts Council are participating in. School Christmas events include dinner on 1 Dec, Santa visit on 18 Dec and Christingle at Ely Cathedral. 	SB to complete of feedback to AR
14. Date of Next Meeting	
<p>Scheduled for Tue 28 Jan at 4pm</p> <p>Date to be changed to 29 or 30 Jan and time to be confirmed</p> <p>Meeting ended at 6pm</p>	KJ to confirm times MH available and conduct Doodle Poll for date.

Items for Future Meetings	
Meeting	Item
Jan 2020	<p>Report back from HLA visits – AR/LG/LR</p> <p>Danny Mills to present at next meeting</p> <p>Report attendance figures next meeting</p> <p>Plan for link visits and questions</p>

New Actions			
ITEM	ACTION	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBILITY
11	Return skills audit	asap	all
11	Approach HLA parents again with LR		SB
11	Update KJa on Highfield governance		SB
11	Inspiring Governance – new governor search	asap	KJ/LR
13	EYFS framework consultation		AR/SB

Actions rolling log			
Action	Deadline	Responsibility	Update
Send role description to LR/SB	asap	KJa	Completed
Forward Arts Council info around being a governor LR/SB	asap	AR	tbc
Contact YS to arrange a visit to HLA	Autumn term	AR	AR/LG to visit 28/11 28/11/19, LR visit in Dec
Look at structure, roles and recruitment with input from Governors	Before next meeting	KJa/SB	onpoing
Send advert template LR/SB	asap	KJa	Completed
Follow up potential parent governor	asap	AD	Completed
Invite Danny to next meeting	asap	KJ/AD	January
Ensure holding incidents logged on pupil files	Ongoing	AD	Now being done
Upload SDP to website	asap	SB	Completed
Follow up on cash depositing		SB	Amounts deposited are minimal & not made at a regular time; PE parks close to bank
Obtain an e copy of Trust update to circulate	send with mins	KJ	Completed
Amend Assessment Policy	asap	AD	Completed
Amend Physical Intervention, Smoke Free, Anti bullying policies	asap	SB	Completed
Put school in contact with Festival Bridge		AR	Completed
Organise safeguarding visit with Natalie. Report in autumn term.	End of Summer term	VM	To be completed before next meeting. VM to also attend DP meeting
Liaise with Lisa Gledson re Masons funding bid	End of Summer term	SB/AD	tbc
Theresa for wifi access for meetings	Oct meeting	KJ	Issue with access, KHJ to follow up