



Minutes of the meeting of the Howden School
Local Governing Board
Thursday 19 September 2024 at 5.30pm



GOVERNORS PRESENT

Mrs S Warnes (Chair, SW), Mr E Allison (EA), Mrs A Bahadur (AB), Mr R Gardiner (RG), Mrs M Millar (MM), Mr J Nixon (Headteacher, JN), Mrs L Oates – Dibnah (LOD), Mrs J Pinkney (JP), Mrs S Symington (SS)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs K Burton (DSL, KB present for minutes 1-4), Mrs J Doyle (Deputy Headteacher, JD), Mrs S Issatt (Assistant Headteacher, SI), Mrs G Stafford (Governance Professional, GS), Ms L Tester (Deputy Headteacher, LT), Mr D Waterson (Executive Direction of Education, DW)

Throughout these minutes a question is indicated by Q followed by the initials of the questioner and a comment is marked by C.

01 WELCOME

SW opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the first meeting of the academic year. Introductions were made as this was EA's first meeting.

02 APOLOGIES

Mrs J Pinkney

Resolved: Consent was given to the absence of the above governor.

03 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made specific to this meeting. Annual declarations and personal detail forms had been collected.

04 SAFEGUARDING REPORT

- There are currently 2 children under child protection, 11 children in need and 6 children looked after (CLA)
- 2307 safeguarding cause for concerns logged last academic year (930 in Year 7)
- All professional and agency meetings were attended
- 61 Smoothwall alerts over the year
- There were 10 referrals to Early Help and 12 to the Safeguarding and Partnership Hub

Q: (EA) The 930 logs for causes for concern in Year 7 – how many learners does that involve?

KB: I would need to look into this. The number of logs is typically high in Year 7 as there are lots of conflicting behaviours but it does decrease over the year.

JD: The students are also new to us so there is a lot of over recording as we do not have the back story of them.

Q: (AB) Is this high number of concerns in Year 7 a trend across all schools?

JN: Yes, but this school records more concerns and more detail than I have ever seen before.

Q: (MM) Is that a positive?

JN: Yes, absolutely it is very re-assuring.

C: (DW) Conflicting behaviours logged are high at this school; the staff know how to record concerns.

Q: (SW) What is the local context for safeguarding?

KB: Mental health. This is a big focus of safeguarding week with lots of internal support; we have had assemblies informing where support can be found and a parents' evening with the mental health and well-being team. The number of referrals outside school is actually low as there is a high level of internal support. JD and I are Mental Health Lead Practitioners.

JD: On the first day of term KB and I had a meeting, and it became clear that mental health was a key priority area. We have addressed this in ACE periods and assemblies.

KB: We have also identified at risk learners in wave 1 and 2 and shared the information with staff by pinning the information on Arbor. We will also include mental health support information on the back of staff lanyards.

Q: (SW) Have all staff had training to the KCSiE updates?

KB: Yes, this was incorporated into the training day in September and I meet with the harder to reach groups of staff such as catering, cleaning and the site team to discuss updates.

ACTION: DSL to record the number of learners per year group with logs of concern in future safeguarding reports

KB left the meeting at 5.50pm

05 LGB MEMBERSHIP

Invitations for nominations for the positions of Chair, Vice Chair and Link governor positions were sent out a week before the meeting.

S Warnes was content to stand as Chair for a further year.

E Allison was prepared to be Vice- Chair.

Resolved: Governors unanimously approved the appointment of Chair and Vice- Chair

Link Governor positions were agreed to be:

Attendance and Behaviour – M Millar

Careers – A Bahadur

Community – L Oates- Dibnah

Curriculum – E Allison and S Warnes

Safeguarding – S Symington

SEND – S Warnes

The LGB is currently one member short.

Governors were informed that GS had created new Governor Link visit forms with specific questions to ask per term. These forms can be found on GovernorHub.

ACTION: SI to share key calendar dates with GS to input in governors' calendars

06 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (9 July 2024)

Resolved: The minutes from the last meeting were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, SW

07 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 07.1 LOD to speak with the Trust Marketing Manager to discuss findings during the Community Link visit** – meeting arranged for 26.9.24
- 07.2 GS to try to re-arrange the September meeting date** - meeting was brought forward a week to accommodate availability

08 HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- Positive start to the new academic year. The ACE values and expectations were discussed in an assemblies on the first day of term
- Site improvements carried out include toilet refurbishments, painted lines in the car park, decorated classrooms and changing rooms and a new canteen layout
- Year 11 support evening was held on 12 September
- SLT surgeries are now held every Wednesday for 2 hours after school
- Compliance checks and learner walks are ongoing. Executive Director of Education visits every fortnight and drops into lessons for quality assurance
- Revised Development Plan will be presented at the next meeting, but priorities will be
 1. Attendance and Behaviour
 2. Stretch and Challenge, Recall, Pedagogy, Curriculum Development and Outcomes
 3. SEND
 4. Reading

Q: (AB) How many parents have attended the SLT surgeries this term?

JN: None but 90% parents attended the Year 11 event.

Q: (SW) Why do you think there was such a high turnout?

LT: We went out early and over communicated the event. It was also discussed a lot in school. 22 parents did not attend of which 8 sent apologies. We have sent the resources home to those that could not attend. As a year group they are really engaged. We carried out parent voice at the event and got 90 responses. 10 stated that they would not recommend coming to this school so we are following this up as I think some have misunderstood the question as their other responses from those specific parents were very positive.

JN: We will hold a similar event for Year 7 parents.

Q: (SW) What impact have the refurbished toilets had on behaviour?

RG: Year 7 and 8 students are now confident to use the toilets as it is a completely changed environment and they feel safe. Learners just go in and out without loitering. It has also reduced the number of students leaving lessons to go to the toilets.

JN: It has also improved the punctuality to lessons, especially for girls. Staff well – being has improved as there is no conflict and students are very positive. I would invite governors to come and look round as it has made a huge difference. I have thanked the site team as this change has had a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Q: (SW) Is the Uniform Policy being adhered to?

JD: Yes, a Trust wide Uniform Policy will be useful when it is introduced in 2025. Skirts is the only issue; 36 learners were removed from circulation for uniform on day 1 and zero on day 2. Year 7 and 8 know nothing else and a tipping point in culture has taken place.

C: (AB) As a parent zero tolerance is really good to hear.

JD: The morning line ups to check uniform helps and any non-conformances are quickly rectified.

Q: (LOD) How are you promoting the parents' evening on 3 October?

LT: We are pushing this and launching it as a new look event with themes around our core values. We have individually targeted invitations going to primaries and want to push this on Facebook. We will run competitions during the event and will also run a meet the tutor event in October.

Q: (AB) Do you feel as an SLT you have the resources to post on social media?

LT: We are pushing plans of what goes out and when to parents. These have to be timely. It is a huge area of development for us. I am meeting the Marketing and Communications Manager next week to discuss the strategy.

C: (MM) The website also needs much work. It is very challenging to find information, particularly if you are a new parent.

JN: I agree – it is huge amount of work but just a time issue.

ACTION: LOD to be invited to the communications meeting with the Marketing Manager, 26 September

09 PERFORMANCE DATA REPORT

SCHOOL	KS2 Prior Attainment	Cohort	Attainment 8	Basics		Ebacc		
				% 9 - 4	% 9 - 5	% Entered	% 9 - 4	% 9 - 5
HS 2024	105	130	41.2	56	35	42	20	14
HS 2023	105	145	46.2	72	43	49	19	9

- Strong and Standard Basics have dropped from last year
- Outcomes in bucket 3 are much lower than last year
- Girls outperformed boys
- Disadvantaged gap has widened in terms of attainment
- Significant underperformance for those with EHCPs
- Stronger individual subjects were PE, textiles and separate sciences
- English outperformed maths, but match up between the two poor

C: (JN) The outcomes were poor, as we predicted, although interventions led to an increase of 10% achieving more grade 4 passes. Progress 8 was -0.5. There has been an upbeat start to the term. This school will not get results like that again, the outcomes were not acceptable.

LT: We are very aware that outcomes were not good enough. We have held outcome meetings with all leaders; some have lack of expertise; some were lacking in strategy, but these meetings formed a picture of what needs to be worked upon. A major concern is that our high prior attainers are not supported to achieve high grades across all subjects.

Q: (AB) PE seems to be very strong with an 86% pass rate and average points per entry of 5.7. What can we learn from the leadership in that department?

LT: The teacher is an examiner and knows the specification very well and has a good strategy. There is also a very good relationship between PE staff and the learners. The learners are also very well prepared for the theory questions. We will use this knowledge to share with others.

LT: We have some concerns with the open bucket (vocational subjects) and a member of the central improvement team is reviewing this. The open bucket usually lifts a school's performance, but students have underperformed in this area.

Q: (AB) Changes to the curriculum will benefit Year 10, but how can you help Year 11?

LT: We have a raising attainment plan in place for Year 11 and do forecast an increase in Basics to 4+ 61% and 5+ 37%. I am concerned about accuracy of forecasting as quality assurance last year was minimal. Teachers need to have more knowledge in increasing the grades. For example, the English and maths crossover meetings need to look at interventions for each child. We can definitely increase the outcomes this year.

JN: We also have support from the Directors of Maths and English and line management from SI; we know what is needed.

Q: (EA) Do other subjects also have Trust led meetings of subject leaders?

SI: Yes, history and geography have full day meetings termly.

DW: Outcomes were not good, so we need to go out and see good practice at other schools.

Q: (MM) How can you monitor that learners are progressing?

LT: We have quality assurance in lessons and experts moderate.

SI: We have done compliance drop ins with each member of staff to ensure that the Howden lesson presentation rules and the Behaviour Policy is being followed. The Head of department is informed if a subject teacher is not complying and then I perform a re-visit. We know where the weaknesses are. There has been a big leap forward in work ethic and self-motivation. The quality assurance is planned through the year.

Q: (DW) You talk about deficit teacher subject knowledge. What will I see different in a classroom when this is rectified?

SI: You will see more challenge. You will see a drive for independence in students. We were seeing too much teacher talk previously. You will see more retrieval practice and knowledge interleaved. End of year exams are planned for every year group as they were ad hoc previously. We are providing CPDL for middle leaders as they need more professional challenge of their staff. Most need to upskill on data analysis.

JN: You will see more engagement, more stretch and more questions in classrooms. There will be more quality in the work, more complex answers. We can already see the changes; it is exciting.

Q: (LOD) What do you mean by mobile students and outliers?

LT: Those students that joined after Year 7.

Q: (DW) How does the performance data compare between students at Howden from Year 7 to 11 and those that joined the school later?

JN: We are analysing this. We are held accountable for all students in Year 11.

Q: (SW) Moving forwards we would like to see data around how other year groups are performing, will that be available? We don't just want to see Year 11 data.

LT: Yes, an update of Year 10 and Year 11 will be given at meetings. We are looking at key stage 3 as part of the development plan review and we are looking at possibly moving to a 2 assessment window, so we will look at how this can be reported to you.

Q: (SW) Do curriculum leaders have access to all data for each year group?

LT: Yes, PowerBI will be rolled out to all leads in October.

Q: (AB) We can see that governance and the SLT have been strengthened but what can the Trust do to avoid such poor outcomes again?

DW: We have appointed a second Director of Education who will be at the school every 2 weeks and a Director of English and a Director of Maths. The Director of Improvement and Standards will be in each week. The CEO conducts school review meetings every half term and we have peer quality assurance from the Headteacher of another Trust school.

Q: (SW to RG) How have the changes impacted you and learning?

RG: This has been the best start to a year group that I have seen in ten years. There is more order and manners. We have fantastic people here and it is time for them to excel. Everybody is accountable. The Headteacher and the SLT can lead this school to be brilliant.

JD: Pupil voice showed 100% of Year 7 would recommend this school to others.

SW: I feel that staff feel valued and are pleased to see governors on visits and are proud of the school.

LT: There is some really great practice going on – we need to celebrate it.

Q: (SW) Do staff have the time to watch others' good practice?

LT: We have to find this time as it is essential.

Q: (SW) The development plan has a priority focusing on SEN learners – how will the teaching to SEN look differently this year in lessons?

LT: We will upskill teachers to adapt their practices for needs. SEN learners can achieve – we need to scaffold down, not teach down.

JN: We also need a step change to teach up much higher to the potential high achievers.

Q: (EA) Why are there such high numbers of students accepted from other schools?

JD: I have been on the Fair Access panel and yes, we have high in year transfers, but we have good links with the Local Authority.

DW: We have met the LA and raised this issue of how many are coming mid – year.

JN: We have 27 places in Year 7 which leaves us open to in year transfers.

LT: This is why we need to push the school to parents of primary school children so that we are full.

SW: There is an awful lot going on, these are exciting times for this school.

10 GOVERNOR TRAINING

GS explained that all governors have been sent a link to the GovernorHub – this will be the resource centre for governors to access papers, visit forms, training and any other resources.

ACTION: Governors to complete two modules on GovernorHub this term: Induction for academy governors and Safeguarding for Governance

11 POLICIES

JD spoke around two minor changes to the Attendance Policy – both were approved by Governors.

Resolved: Governor approved the Attendance Policy

12 NEXT MEETING DATE

Thursday 21 November at 5.30pm (pre-meet 4.45pm)

13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

Part A closed at 7.25pm

14 AGREED ACTION POINTS

14.1 ACTION: DSL to record the number of learners per year group with logs of concern in future safeguarding reports (minute 4)

14.2 ACTION: SI to share key calendar dates with GS to input in governors' calendars (minute 5)

14.3 ACTION: LOD to be invited to the communications meeting with the Marketing Manager, 26 September (minute 8)

14.4 ACTION: Governors to complete two modules on GovernorHub this term: Induction for academy governors and Safeguarding for Governance (minute 10)

DW stated that he had enjoyed the meeting and had found the pre-meet to be very effective. SW thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 7.20pm