



Minutes of the meeting of the Howden School  
Local Governing Board  
Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 5.30pm



**GOVERNORS PRESENT**

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

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr M Brown (Executive Director of Education (MB), Mrs K Burton (DSL, KB), Mrs J Doyle (Deputy Headteacher, JD), Mr P Harris (Deputy Head, PH), Mrs S Issatt (Assistant Headteacher, SI), Mrs L Stephenson (SENCO, LS), Mrs G Stafford (Governance Professional, GS)

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

**32 WELCOME**

SW opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the third meeting of the academic year, including Mr Mark Brown, newly appointed Executive Director of Education. It was noted that Mrs Bassford had resigned, and thanks were passed on for her time and commitment to the Board.

**33 APOLOGIES**

J Pinkney

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

**34 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest made specific to this meeting.

**35 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (21 November 2023)**

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

**36 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**36.1 GS to circulate Senate group dates for governors to attend – see minute 42**

**36.2 LS to change the PP Strategy as suggested above and then governors to attend a Teams meeting to review and approve the Strategy - complete**

**36.3 JD to include peer conflict data in the next Safeguarding Report - complete**

**36.4 Link positions to be confirmed at the next meeting – see minute 37**

**36.5 AB and LOD to be invited to attend visits with Link Governors – see minute 37**

**36.6 D Bassford and J Pinkney to complete the safeguarding module on The National College ASAP (Annual Certificate in Safeguarding for Governors and Trustees (2023/24) - not complete**

**36.7 All Governors to complete the Annual Certificate in Data Protection and GDPR for Governors and Trustees (2023/24) before the next meeting – see minute 43**

### **37 LINK POSITIONS**

Following the resignation of the PP and SEND link governor, a discussion took place around reorganising the Link positions.

**Resolved:** It was agreed that these governors would hold the following Link positions until the end of this academic year:

Behaviour – Lucy and Michelle  
Community Lucy and Michelle  
Curriculum – Alexia and Sarah  
Pupil Premium and SEND – Jill  
Safeguarding – Sadie

There is now a vacancy on the Board. It was agreed that ideally two Trust Appointed Governors would be recruited to have additional capacity.

**ACTION: Clerk and Chair to recruit two Trust Appointed Governors**

### **38 HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

JN summarised the following:

- He had visited both Howden Junior School and Gilberdyke Primary to build relationships and discuss transition
- One visit to school this term of particular note was the Prison! Me! No way! visit which had been incredibly successful
- Year 11 presentation evening had taken place at Howden Minster
- Review by central improvement staff had focused on progress data, attendance and behaviour. During the review school staff were asked to report on 'closing the loop'; completing actions raised in external reviews, such as Ofsted and the B11 behaviour review.
- Staff training day on 8 January organised by SI focused on supporting reading in the weakest readers

JN explained that there would be a section within all future Headteacher reports showing the destination, year group and reason for any students leaving the school.

**ACTION: LOD and MM to capture student voice from some students that were involved in the Prison! Me! No Way! Day**

Q: (AB) Are the ART tests new and are they for all year groups?

SI: They were introduced two years ago and are completed by all students in Years 7, 8 and 9 across all Trust schools. The tests take place in October and March each year and from the results we select who needs further intervention. We also provide a reading+ computer programme that learners work on independently, in which they read passages and answer questions to test understanding.

Q: (SW) Do staff have support in lessons to understand which intervention strategies should be used?

SI: Yes, we use wave one interventions in the classroom and usually the weaker readers have a TA in the classroom for support.

Q: (SW) How do you support the readers that just managed to pass the test?

SI: Learners that achieve a score of 85 or less receive the Read Write Inc package. Learners that achieved between 85 and 100 get extra reading.

Q: (AB) Are there assessments in spelling?

LS: We conduct CAT tests in Year 7 and run interventions on Thursdays and Fridays for spelling and writing.

JN explained that the number of parents choosing to home educate their children is increasing nationally. Any parents that express a wish to electively home educate must write a formal letter to the school quoting the appropriate legislation. The parents are then invited to meet with key school staff to discuss the reasons for this choice. Once the decision has been made by the parents the local authority and the education welfare officer are informed. A 30 day 'cooling off' window is kept open to allow the students to return should they wish, without having to apply again through the local authority.

Q: (SW) Are there any areas that you are not making the progress that you hoped?

JN: I would like more progress in every area, but I am pleased that the students understand the HOWDEN lesson, school ACE values run deep, attendance is improving, behaviour is up and down but at least the dips are higher than they used to be and withdrawal has been remodelled. The big area for more push has to be the quality of education and curriculum as it is such a vast area.

SW: Thank you. Your development plan and closing the loop report is very clear and it is obvious that a considerable amount of work is ongoing. The progress in behaviour and attitudes is pleasing, but there is obviously still work to do in reading.

## 39 CURRICULUM QUALITY

### 39.1 Performance Data Report

	Attainment 8				Basics % 9-4				Basics % 9-5			
	All	PP	SEND EHCP	SEND SUPP	All	PP	SEND EHCP	SEND SUPP	All	PP	SEND EHCP	SEND SUPP
2024 Target	53	51			75	71			53	47		
2024 Mocks	35.8	28.5	21	29.7	42	30	14	20	21	9	14	10

- Mock data is worse than at this point last year
- Leaders have conducted exam analysis and quality assurance discussions. Take up and engagement at academic tutoring (originally called after school study) has increased
- A further round of mock exams will take place next month
- Year 11 students have been given revision books, plans and advice and parents have been invited to a support evening
- Attendance and behaviour in Year 11 are both a concern

Q: (LOD) A number of subjects on the autumn mock attainment table stand out such as business, history and maths. What are you doing to address these?

PH: A number of students that were studying Cambridge National business were absent and therefore missed a large chunk of coursework that needed to be assessed. They have therefore moved over to GCSE business as that is 100% exam assessment.

Q: (SW) Are all business study students in the same lessons together?

PH: Yes.

Q: (SW) For 9 out of 50 students to not have sufficient coursework is not a small percentage and I feel that we have let them down.

PH: We agree and will not happen again.

Q: (SW) What happened in history?

SI: There are two main issues in history. 8 of the 70 students very rarely attend so they got a U. Secondly, the exam was based solely on the first topic studied in Year 9 and the students did not adequately prepare, so the grades were much lower. Had we decided to test other topics the mock result would have been much better, but this has demonstrated that revision from all the topics covered in three years must take place.

Q: (SW) History is very fact based. Do you think that the options process has led to more students choosing history than there should be?

SI: Yes, it is clear that some are not suited for the course, and many would not choose history had they only had to choose three options rather than four.

C: (AB) To be good at history a student also needs to be good at English, so the students need to be guided more in that option choice.

Q: (MB) Have the poor results put many students off?

SI: No, only those that were disengaged anyway.

Q: (AB) As key stage 4 has been reduced to two years, how do you fit all the topics in two years that were covered in three years?

SI: We have a transition unit in Year 9 and history is now taught 3 hours per week in Year 10 and 11. We have also changed the order the topics are taught. Yes, the results in history are far off where we want them to be, but we fully understand the reasons why.

C: (SW) One of the core subjects, maths is a major concern with only half the students passing their mock and an average grade of three.

PH: Maths it's about mastering a range of skills and a student needs all of these, so typically maths attainment appears behind but then does catch up. The Maths department has to be certain of a student reaching a grade to award that grade. There is lots of focus on matching up English and maths to boost the Basic scores.

JN: The head of core English and maths are both very strong.

C: (MB) The mock papers in English and maths were centrally set, and were moderated so governors can be assured that the results are accurate, and you can also compare benchmarks against other schools. There is great rigour across the Trust in English and maths.

PH: We will run another round of Mocks next month. To draw comparisons to the year before last and this year, there are signs of encouragement as the mock grades to actual grades showed a marked improvement. There is high engagement in revision classes after school.

C: (SW) This is a repeating picture where we talk about Year 11 catching up, but we shouldn't be having these conversations. A curriculum overhaul is needed, and we need to address any shortfalls much lower down the school.

PH: You are right; we do need faster progress in all year groups.

JN: This is very much about crisis management in Year 11 but we are looking at key stage 3 now.

Q: (SW to MB) What is the central improvement team doing to help?

MB: We have recently appointed a Director of English and we are currently advertising for a Director of Maths. We have run some university events where teachers deliver core lessons in English and maths. To reach true school improvement there needs to be investment in the

curriculum. All Trust secondary schools now have a two-year key stage 4 with 3 options available to choose in Year 9.

Q: (AB) Who sets the targets?

PH: We export the key stage two data to Fischer Family Trust, and we work on FFT20 which is an aspirational target and if reached then the school would be in the top 20% of schools in the country.

### 39.2 Attendance and Behaviour Report

- Autumn term attendance for all is 91.8% (above national and local)
- Year 11 attendance is at 89.7%
- Female attendance is 92.2%, male 91.5%
- PP attendance is 87.6%, non-PP 92.9%
- SEN support attendance is 89.7%. EHCP 82%, and non- SEN 92.6%
- 24.5% are persistently absent, with Year 11 having the highest PA at 30.3%
- 4 permanent exclusions have taken place this academic year
- There have been 142 suspensions for 62 students

Q: (MM) There has been a high number of permanent exclusions recently, what is the reason for this?

JN: Two of the four were Year 7 students and all exclusions have been for one off disruptive behaviour. They all had SEND needs. We are seeing more high-level behaviour locally and even at primary schools.

SW: As Governors we needed to assure ourselves that the reasons for the exclusions were justified.

MB: If action had not taken place this would have led to more questions being asked, as the effect on the school would have been significant.

C: (SW) We have a new Behaviour Policy in place and this is working and it has led to more permanent exclusions. We have documented support of excluded learners with SEN needs.

JD: We are relentless in our push to improve school attendance. We use clear common language and give awards for full house attendance. Our strategies are fluid as we change and adjust if the strategies are not working and not making an impact.

C: (SW) It is clear that some cohorts are extremely hard to shift, so do you have new initiatives that you are looking at to address these?

JD: We have worked with Winifred Holtby Academy to address attendance and behaviour. We give daily and weekly awards for 100% attendance and give points to Year 11 for their prom passport. We have noticed a dip in Year 11 attendance on Thursdays and Fridays and so have doubled our points on those two days and are looking into the reasons why this drops off. I meet with the DSL every week to review our data and discuss what could be done further.

JN: Our attendance team does incredible work.

C: (SW) Thank you. This work is not often reflected in the data as results take time.

JD: We are having a review of our attendance by three attendance leads on the 5th of February to discuss what could be done further, which I'm looking forward to.

SW: Good attendance links to having an exciting curriculum; the children want to come into school.

Q: (SW to RG) As a teacher, do you feel the Behaviour Policy is working?

RG: Yes, certainly life is easier for teacher as removals are clear and swift with minimum disruption. Student voice has also found that students feel that they can get on with their lessons now that the disruptive students are removed.

Q: (MM) What is the impact on the learners where the removed learners are moved to?

RG: Usually as the students are removed to an environment where they do not want to be they calm down and get on with the work. Usually, they go to a different key stage so have no interest in trying to impress others and so just sit down.

C: (SW) This is not always what we hear. It has been said that sometimes the classroom where the child is removed is disrupted. Do they go to the nearest class or a class of the same year group?

JN: They have to go to the nearest classroom but if they then disrupt that classroom they are immediately removed.

JD: If they fail the remove they go to reflection or the bridge. I send restorative repair data to the curriculum leads so that they can address any trends – such as if a child is always removed in the same lesson. We have conducted a strengths and weaknesses analysis of the three behaviour provisions – withdrawal (students are removed from lessons after a warning), reflections (students attend the following day after removal) and the bridge (same as reflection but for SEN). We believe that we need to change the process of the withdrawal room. From 29 January students will still be withdrawn but they will only go to the withdrawal room in periods 5 and 6 and will be supervised by pastoral staff.

### 39.3 Quality of Education Report

- Work is ongoing to strengthen the curriculum with middle leaders further developing their curriculum framework and their department development plan
- SISRA Observe has been set up (online programme to track quality assurance)
- Department reviews took place in the autumn term
- Updated curriculum mapping is on display in classrooms and on the website
- Current focus is on the development of key knowledge and recall
- Expectations of a learner in a lesson called the HOWDEN lesson has been embedded (Hook, Objectives, Work ethic, Develop Understanding, Embed Retrieval and Next steps in Learning)
- Big push on improving reading
- JN is working with the improvement team on a Trust wide QA Policy

MB was thanked for his assistance with inputting SISRA Observe.

C: (SW) It is really important that as Curriculum Links we collect student and staff voice. Do all teachers teach Years 7 to 11 and so know the breadth of the curriculum?

SI: The vast majority do. In curriculum meetings mapping and delivering is discussed, so all staff are aware, and we are visiting primaries to build the understanding of why there is a dip typically between Years 6 and 7.

PH: Every year we have to tweak the curriculum in key stage 4 due to differing exam stipulations, so we keep needing to refresh the curriculum.

SI: The HOWDEN Lesson has helped us all as we have had to refresh our approach.

Q: (SW) Have teachers been supported in this?

JN: The HOWDEN lesson was developed in gained time when Year 11 had left, and staff had free periods.

### 40 SAFEGUARDING REPORT

- There is currently 1 child under child protection and 9 children in need
- 8 children looked after (CLA)
- 15 children on the safeguarding monitoring list
- 349 safeguarding cause for concerns logged last half term (compared to 361 HT1) – most concerns are Year 7

- All professional and agency meetings were attended
- 15 Smoothwall alerts – 8 were for Year 10 students
- There have been 7 referrals; 1 to early help and 6 to the safeguarding and partnership hub
- A monthly safeguarding newsletter is now sent to parents, after a request at the S/G Senate meeting
- A deep dive of CPOMs entries takes place every 3 weeks with JN

*KB: I am really proud of the safeguarding arrangements at Howden. We have between 50 and 70 CPOM entries per day. We give the correct support at the right time and the low number of referrals reflects this.*

*Q: (SW) Do you feel well supported in your role and do you have the support of the local authority?*

*KB: Yes, we have lots of internal support and support from external agencies too. We are lucky in that we get support within 24 hours because of being part of the Trust.*

*C: (SS) As safeguarding link I would like to say that Kelly has settled in really well, has a clear understanding of the systems and got new ideas to move things forward.*

*C: (SW) I was in school yesterday and attended a safeguarding Senate. I would like to thank you for all you do.*

#### **41 CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

- A new Complaints Policy was launched in June 2023. From that date concerns and complaints have been closely monitored
- In the six weeks of the summer term there were 14 concerns regarding Howden – most were for uniform, lunch times and food quality. In the full autumn term (15 weeks) there were 37 concerns – most around the setting of children and uniform
- Trust schools have received 163 formal complaints since June. Of these, 13% of complaints are from Howden parents/community
- 22 formal complaints received since June; six around the reduction in the lunch time, five staff conduct and four uniform issues

*Q: (AB) What were the complaints around staff conduct?*

*GS: They were complaints of how their child received a sanction or made to feel, not necessarily the conduct of the member of staff. The category will be re-named more appropriately.*

#### **42 GOVERNOR LINK VISITS**

There have not been any governor link visits since the last meeting. SW requested that all links conduct a visit and complete the report form before Easter. She requested that staff and student voice were both captured. Governors to inform GS of the planned visit day, and if enough notice is given, a Senate meeting will be held on the same day when possible.

**ACTION: All governors to complete a link visit before Easter. Links to inform GS of their planned visit date so that a Senate meeting could be arranged and attended by the Link(s)**

#### **43 GOVERNOR TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

**ACTION J Pinkney to complete the safeguarding module on The National College ASAP (Annual Certificate in Safeguarding for Governors and Trustees (2023/24))**

**ACTION: J Pinkney and L Oates- Dibnah to complete the Annual Certificate in Data Protection and GDPR for Governors and Trustees 2023/24) ASAP**

**ACTION: M Millar, J Pinkney and L Oates- Dibnah to complete the Cyber Security module**

**44 2023/24 MEETING DATES (all 5.30pm start)**

Tuesday 16 April

Tuesday 9 July

There will be a pre meet the same evening as the meetings, starting 4:45pm.

**45 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**45.1 Options Meeting**

An additional meeting is required to discuss Year 9 option subjects. GS to arrange the meeting for either 31 January or 6 February.

Part A closed at 7.20pm

**46 AGREED ACTION POINTS**

**46.1 ACTION: Clerk and Chair to recruit two Trust Appointed Governors (minute 37)**

**46.2 ACTION: LOD and MM to capture student voice from some students that were involved in the Prison! Me! No Way! Day (minute 38)**

**46.3 ACTION: All governors to complete a link visit before Easter. Links to inform GS of their planned visit date so that a Senate meeting could be arranged and attended by the Link(s) (minute 42)**

**46.4 ACTION J Pinkney to complete the safeguarding module on The National College ASAP (Annual Certificate in Safeguarding for Governors and Trustees (2023/24) (minute 43)**

**46.5 ACTION: J Pinkney and L Oates- Dibnah to complete the Annual Certificate in Data Protection and GDPR for Governors and Trustees 2023/24) ASAP (minute 37)**

**46.6 ACTION: M Millar, J Pinkney and L Oates- Dibnah to complete the Cyber Security module (minute 37)**