



## OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

**Minutes of a meeting held virtually via Zoom on 14<sup>th</sup>  
December 2020**

<p><b>Present:</b> Stewart Boyling (SB), Brenda Brown (Vice-chair, BB), Julie Burgess (JB); Penny Canepa-Anson (PCA); Richard Carter (CRC), Rowena Chalk (Chair, RC), James Horsman (JH); Eddie Rodriguez (ERZ), Nicky Wastie (NW)</p> <p><b>In attendance:</b> Emma Green (EG); Pete Robinson (PR), observing</p> <p><b>Minutes:</b> Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)</p>	
1	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> None</p>
2	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> None</p>
3	<p><b>CDP STRAND 3 COMMUNITY &amp; CULTURE</b></p> <p>EG thanked PCA for her report on the recent strand meeting and expanded on work in reducing challenging behaviour and exclusions. She explained that there is never a predictable number of students displaying poor behaviour and that individual students come to school from different backgrounds and with different circumstances. The school therefore aims for as few exclusions as possible, but does not work to targets. EG shared data from comparable school terms ('19-'20 and '20-'21), and some encouraging reductions in figures. A higher percentage of students with challenging behaviour have been found alternative provision this autumn term than last, including two students now attending a new SEN course at Crawley College with a tailored curriculum and one-to-one LSA support.</p> <p>A good number of EHCPs were agreed during lockdown.</p> <p><b>RC asked how this behaviour data impacts the college.</b> EG said that the impact is positive for all stakeholders: SLT spend less time managing poor behaviour, other learners benefit, and parents of challenged students tend to be pleased with the provision offered to their child. <b>JB asked what is taught in the Crawley College course.</b> EG replied that the core work is in engagement with education and building positive relationships. Students attend for only a few hours to begin with, increasing attendance over time.</p> <p>EG shared data on exclusions, again comparing school years. In the autumn term of 2019 there were 41 exclusions; this autumn term (to 14.12.20) there have been 26.</p>

### Year 7

A lack of transition work during Covid may have contributed to challenging behaviour in a small number of year 7s. There have been 4 FTEs this term. An EHCP – and alternative provision – is being sought for student with a specific condition and also anxiety. EG reminded the governors of the frustratingly long time it takes to arrange EHCPs; a placement is needed while the school waits. ERZ added that the challenges of the current year 7 are unusual. He said that even with an EHCP in place, the school must provide an education. He praised EG and her team for their creativity in finding solutions for these students. **RC asked if there is any evidence of students with challenging behaviour coming from particular schools.** EG said there does not seem to be, but she will check.

EG said that the APC team is involved already with these students, with a member of the team visiting the school to give support.

**RC asked if the pandemic has meant that pastoral care at primary schools has not been robust enough.** EG replied that the primary schools did go back in June/July, but there was a lack of transition work. Oathall provided two events for pupils with SEN needs or who were anxious, but there would have been more under normal circumstances.

EG outlined some of the support offered at Oathall, including the Nurture Group for the very low ability cohort. She added that the return of LSAs to the school site in September (after their lockdown absence) has been important and welcome.

### Year 11

There have been one-off incidents of challenging behaviour, mainly from repeat offenders.

EG emphasised that exclusions have been lower than usual during this academic year so far. ERZ added that concerns about the disruption at primary schools caused by Covid, and a lack of transition, have not produced as many problems at Oathall as anticipated, although other schools have had more issues. He praised the hard work of EG and her team. RC added her appreciation, noting good interaction with parents, many of whom now appear to understand the importance of attendance.

### Attendance

EG gave an update on attendance so far this year and shared a body of data including weekly tracking. The Persistent Absence (PA) figure (threshold 10% absences) is particularly positive. She stressed that comparisons across years are difficult because cohorts vary so much, and that her figures do not reflect any individual student. Heads of House monitor each student with attendance issues.

### Pupil Premium

In the week before the meeting, attendance among PP students stood at 95%, a pleasing figure. There is still a gap between these students (14% of our roll) and the rest of the student body, but she reminded the governors that one or two students in this small group can affect the whole PP group disproportionately.

### Year 7

Year 7 attendance figure is 98%, which is very encouraging.

Year 11 and mocks

During the mocks attendance was up on previous years, even among anxious students.

**JH asked if more than one student in a group of friends is sometimes excluded as a result of an incident i.e. is there challenging behaviour by a 'gang' or via 'joint enterprise'?** EG said not – e.g. the two permanent exclusions in the '19-'20 academic year involved two very different students and cases. She added that incidents are investigated in detail and at length, with use of CCTV and witness accounts.

**JH asked about attendance in the PP/non-PP groups: is there a group mentality whereby good (or poor) attendance among some students incentivises others, either negatively or positively?**

EG said that good attendance is encouraged and celebrated. On the whole it is good relationships with tutors that will often result in improved attendance, rather than peer behaviour. She reminded the governors that there is not necessarily a correlation between PP and attendance – some PP students are excellent at coming to school, although there are (among the PP group) a complex range of reasons why students don't attend. She added that while the school rewards excellent attendance (credits and awards) it is important not to make students who are genuinely unable to come to school (e.g. through illness) feel bad, or feel they are disadvantaging their house or tutor group. On occasion a name is removed from attendance counts in order to avoid this.

**JH asked if attendance is affected by high ability students getting bored in lessons.** EG said there is no evidence of this, and ERZ added that this group always take advantage of ways to stretch themselves (e.g. music; engineering projects). EH said that low attendance tends to have the most negative impact on middle-ability students: it is possible to enter a cycle of poor attendance, resulting anxiety about work, and inability to cope. Oathall works hard to monitor and address this early, and tackles the issue with parents.

**CRC asked if Covid, and a possible increase in staff absence, have meant that cover and supply teaching has led to any attendance problems.** ERZ reminded the governors that staff absence during the pandemic has been at a record low; on many days there have been no staff absences. Inconsistency of teaching does impact behaviour and attendance, he said, especially absences among SEN staff who have close relationships with particular students. This year has been especially positive in this respect. EG added that teachers have been in school more consistently because of a lack of external training courses. She wondered if the robust cleaning regime, mask use and social distancing have also been effective in keeping staff sickness very low.

Sex and Relationships

The recent strand meeting looked at this policy, a draft of which EG will share with governors via the clerk. The strand governors were satisfied with the policy so far. They will revisit the matter and the views of the GB will be gathered at the next FGB.

The governors thanked EG for her report and she left the meeting at 19:42hrs.

RC thanked PCA and BB for their strand report.

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4	<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16.11.20</b></p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 16th November 2020, and Part II minutes of the same date, were tabled to the meeting and approved as a true record with one correction of governor initials. They will be signed the Chair after the meeting and sent to the clerk.</p> <p><u>Mobile phones policy</u></p> <p>PCA asked about an item in the minutes which states that this policy will be shown to the GB before January implementation. ERZ explained that the policy will be shared with the governors in due course, but that SLT had decided (since the November FGB) that January implementation would be too rapid. The intention is to delay to the start of the summer term.</p>	
5	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</b></p> <p>None</p>	
6	<p><b>URGENT MATTERS</b></p> <p>None</p>	
7	<p><b>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b></p> <p><u>Sustainable Development policy</u></p> <p>This policy was approved by the governors. <b>PCA asked if the policy, 11 years after its creation, might be usefully reviewed, because sustainability has moved on so much. She asked if there are any measures of the success of the policy.</b> ERZ welcomed the question and said that he has no specific impact analysis and will look into that. He asked PCA if she has any specific suggestions. PCA wondered if the content would be so broad if the policy were to be written now, given the climate emergency. ERZ agreed that there had been a great deal of change, and that specific areas of work could be added e.g. around Sue Lindsley’s environmental programme. The governors agreed that the policy should be looked at afresh before the next review date. RC said that no specifics can be decided at this meeting, but she agreed that a full review is needed. <b>CRC said he could find no reference in the policy to sustainability issues being included in teaching, and suggested that this might be considered.</b></p> <p>RC reported to the governors the very recent news that Oathall has won the competition to name the first operational wind turbine in the array off the Sussex Coast. The Year 7 eco-club, EcoOathall, put forward the name Veranzio Turbine, which won a public vote.</p>	
8	<p><b>ATTENDANCE REVIEW</b></p> <p>ERZ described the DfE’s guidance for schools on when to end the autumn term, possibly motivated by a need to avoid track and trace issues (schools having to contact families on Christmas Eve if positive cases emerge into the weekend of the 19<sup>th</sup>). The DfE insists that pupils should attend every day until the end of term, but schools may begin to see parents keeping their children at home to avoid late infections and Christmas isolation. Oathall has seen no drop-off in attendance yet, but will monitor as the days pass.</p>	
9	<p><b>BUSINESS REPORT</b></p> <p>PCA will meet Jo Godbolt (JG) for an information session on school finance in the new year. RC said that the whole GB needs a finance refresher as budgets tighten, and to that end has begun</p>	

	<p>planning a session to be delivered by WS Governance and Finance teams, tailored to a secondary school, in the spring term. <b>SB asked if the federation schools might be included</b>, and RC replied that, because of finance being very much specific to a school, a more likely route is to ask for delivery to the Oathall GB to begin with, before considering the federation.</p> <p>The governors agreed the three-year budget plan. The Chair will sign a copy and send it to JG. JB said that she found the Three-Year Budget Plan easy to understand, and congratulated JG on its production. She added that her WS finance training (pre-lockdown) was very good.</p>	
	<p>At 19:59 JH left the meeting to attend to other commitments. He had warned the GB in advance.</p>	
10	<p><b>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES</b></p> <p>No separate report.</p>	
11	<p><b>CHAIR'S REPORT</b></p> <p><u>Panels</u> RC was a panel member at a recent WS grievance appeal (30.11.20), and feels the experience will be useful for the future.</p> <p>Along with ERZ and Faye Hatchard, RC was on a recent panel with Claire Lansley (Governance Advisor) and Paul Smith (Director of School Effectiveness) on driving wellbeing CPL in schools. She reported that Faye's performance was excellent. WS is likely to use Oathall's model and materials in its work.</p> <p><u>Additions to the governing body</u> PR's term as staff governor is at an end. He hopes to encourage a particular member of staff to stand to take his place.</p> <p>RC will interview a potential new co-opted governor in the week of December 21<sup>st</sup>, and hopes to introduce that candidate at the January FGB.</p> <p>There have been internet access issues at school that have had an impact on recent governor visits/meetings. ERZ said that access is provided by an external supplier who has assured the school that the problems are now solved.</p>	
12	<p><b>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</b></p> <p><u>Positive Covid cases</u> There have been three cases this term requiring intervention, and two where no action was required. There is no evidence that transmission of the virus has occurred in school. It can be said that the school environment is, at least, not bringing about infection.</p> <p>Oathall has been fortunate in its cases: no student with complex contacts (e.g. buses to school, multiple contacts in shared school areas) has tested positive.</p> <p>One staff member has had to isolate. One member of staff has had to stay at home to be with children sent home to isolate from another school.</p>	

DfE Covid helpline

This helpline has improved. A new script for call handlers tests a school's decision-making process when it sends home groups of students.

End of term guidance

The DfE and Public Health England have said that for the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive, having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school should identify close contacts and advise self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.

Attendance

Attendance stood at 94% on the day of the meeting.

Staff wellbeing

The autumn term is always tiring, and this term has been more difficult, particularly with none of the usual events (Christmas concert, carols in the barn, staff lunch). ERZ recorded his gratitude for the amazing work of his staff.

Wellbeing CPL session, December 9<sup>th</sup>

This Zoom session, attended by large numbers of staff, produced some useful insights.

Staffing matters

Oathall's German teacher leaves at the end of the summer term for a post abroad.

Mock exams

The exams are now over. Attendance was high, indicating an attitude among students that mocks are a serious matter, particularly in the pandemic when (despite DfE stating that GCSEs will happen in summer 2021) there is a mood of uncertainty. The exams team was impressed by the students during the mocks. Toby Houghton and ERZ will bring a results analysis to the next FGB.

Building works; premises

There is no news from WS on the proposed work to improve the site ready for increased student numbers.

At the time of the meeting, PTA-funded work on the hall is being done, with a new monitor screen and curtains, both of which are already improving the space. New chairs will follow.

INSET, Friday December 18<sup>th</sup>

Several WS schools are closing a day early for Christmas to avoid some infection and isolation risk. Fortunately, Oathall had already named this day as in INSET day.

Christmas lunch (students)

Sue Denyer did a remarkable job in giving students a Christmas lunch experience within the limits of Covid. ERZ recorded his thanks to the catering team.

End of term assemblies

Virtual assemblies will be held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup>. Carol McTaggart has produced performance videos for tutor groups which will improve their end of term experience greatly.

	<p><u>School Link Advisor</u> Claire Conley-Harper visited virtually recently. The meeting went well and Claire will send a draft report, mainly on Covid response, which SLT will consider and then bring before the governors. Claire will be leaving soon for a new post in Hampshire. The Chair of governors met Claire subsequently to put the governors' viewpoint.</p>	
13	<p><b>SAFEGUARDING</b> BB will be arranging to meet EG in the new year to complete the usual NSPCC safeguarding audit, recommended by WS. The audit looks in detail at policies and practice, and involves a significant body of work.</p>	
14	<p><b>PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS</b> (note: all meetings and review day were virtual) ERZ attended a review day with the Durrington Research School's PP project. Oathall had submitted information to Marc Rowland (of the project), who spent a morning at Oathall meeting school staff who deal with PP. Marc will be sending his report, and has already made some recommendations. RC and BB met Marc after his meeting with SLT and shared with him what the GB sees is being done and what it hopes will be addressed in the future. BB expressed to Marc concerns about how PP money is spent, and how its use is monitored. There are too many 'strands' across the school and a central way of talking about PP is needed. She added that the gap between PP and other students is too wide; all students should be offered full access. RC reported that a champion (member of staff) is actively being sought who would bring together PP across the school. <b>RC said that at the meeting she asked for a picture of a PP student</b>, and SLT explained that there is no typical student. She reminded the governors of the work on data that she and BB were doing with CRC before Covid intervened, and asked if CRC would be willing to continue. He agreed, as long as relevant SLT members have the capacity. RC said that the governors need evidence in this area. ERZ reported on Marc Rowland's initial comments. Marc noted strong pastoral care and strong academic interventions. He said that a focus is now needed on literacy across the curriculum – lack of literacy is the major barrier to these students. <b>PR asked if Marc had seen evidence for this in other schools.</b> ERZ said that this is the case – literacy is the most useful way to move PP students forward. PR said that teachers might welcome this focus - a single 'magic bullet' can be helpful. ERZ summed up the Durrington project at Oathall: Marc's report will be followed by implementation of this new focus, along with other elements. Faye Hatchard will attend training sessions (fully funded) across the year. RC reminded the governors of OFSTED's demand to see PP movement at Oathall.</p>	
15	<p><b>ATTENDANCE</b> No separate report.</p>	
16	<p><b>GOVERNORS' VISITS AND INDIVIDUAL REPORTS</b> RC congratulated the governors on recent strand reports produced for the GB's files. She reminded governors to arrange all visits (currently mostly virtual) with Helen Parry, and to let</p>	AC

	<p>the clerk know. The clerk will ask Helen for a calendar record of past virtual visits, for the files.</p> <p>JB will shortly attend two virtual training sessions – Affective Questioning and Inclusion &amp; SEND.</p>	
17	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>ERZ raised the matter of the CDP. The standard three-year plan was being worked on when Covid arrived. A one-year plan is now in draft stage. The school will return to a three-year plan in 2021. ERZ will share the draft with the GB via the clerk.</p> <p>RC thanked PR for his work as a governor and added that he would be much missed. She told the governors that PR hopes to mentor/accompany a possible new staff governor during two or three FGBs in 2021. RC suggested that PR become an associate governor for this purpose.</p> <p>RC said that strands will change in 2021 in line with the OFSTED framework. Strand 2 (too large an area for one strand) will be divided in two. She reminded the governors of the need, therefore, to fill vacant posts on the GB. She asked governors to let her know in January if they have an interest in a particular strand.</p>	ERZ/AC
	<p><i>The meeting closed at 20:43 hrs</i></p>	
	<p><b>DATE &amp; VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS</b></p> <p>Spring term: January 11<sup>th</sup>; February 8<sup>th</sup>; March 15<sup>th</sup> Meetings virtual until further notice.</p>	

Distribution: Governing Body, Leadership Team, Head's PA, WSCC



FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
16.11.20	Formal thanks to CD	RC	asap	
14.12.20	Distribute draft Sex & Relationships policy to GB for their consideration before Jan FGB	AC	By Jan 4 <sup>th</sup> deadline	
14.12.20	Ask Helen Parry for record of virtual GB visits during pandemic	AC	By Jan FGB	
14.12.20	Share draft one-year CDP via clerk	ERZ/AC	asap	
<b>Actions completed</b>				
16.11.20	Medicines policy: clerk to check for typos and make one correction in paragraph structure, p.8	AMC	asap	17.11.20
16.11.20	Inclusion policy: clerk to check all abbreviations for explanation and consistency.	AMC	asap	17.11.20
16.11.20	Mobile phones amended policy introduction. Progress report at February FGB	ERZ	For Feb '21 FGB	Decision made to delay implementation.
16.11.20	Distribution of Nov SIMS report	AMC	asap	17.11.20