

Championing human-scale, whole education that is tailored to meet the needs of individuals in the context of their communities

Full Governing Body
Thursday 6th October 2022 at 18.00pm
WS5 Ansford Academy
Minutes

Present: Darrell Chainey (DC) Andrea Maistrello (Ama)
Enita Andrews (EA) Rachel Purnell (RP) (Headteacher)
Michelle Harris (MH) Arthur Llewellyn (AL)
Ed Jones (EJ) Chris Culpin (CC)
Paul Spencer (PS) (to item 7)

Attendees: Mel Hillman (Temporary Clerk)
Jennie White (JW) (Prospective Trustee)
Fergus Stewart (FS) (School Improvement Advisor) (to item 3)
Karl Musson (KM) (Deputy Headteacher) (to item 3)

Apologies were received and accepted from:
Rachel Laurie (RL) Kate Caverio (KC)
Alison Bennett (AB) Lee Mosley (LM)
Jerry Holt (JH)

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome

001 DC welcomed everybody to the meeting especially Jennie White (Prospective Trustee), Fergus Stewart (SIA) and Karl Musson (Deputy Headteacher).

2. Overview of GCSE Results 2022

002 Before presenting his validation of the Academy's GCSE Results Analysis, FS outlined the background to his role and visits to the school over the past academic year. FS had found Ansford to be a welcoming school and he believed had huge potential. He had made 5 visits during the last school year and in that time had seen some amazing individual students and an open, honest and welcoming staff.

FS went on to describe the situation he had observed in his early visits to the school in the autumn term 2021 in the aftermath of Covid restrictions. It was a mixed picture. There was evidence of some really strong teaching and the school had an obvious 'heart' with a caring philosophy. The curriculum model had some excellent built-in features such as the capacity for 121 and group academic coaching but it was evident that some areas of the curriculum design were idealistic given the school's position following the disruption of the pandemic. There were aspects of student conduct and behaviour that needed addressing and some teachers had given the impression of being in 'survival mode'. It was evident increased monitoring and evaluation of key areas of school life was required.

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During the subsequent 5 visits during the year, FS had noted significant changes. The behaviour and atmosphere had improved. Leadership and management at senior and middle management levels had been strengthened. There had been a growing atmosphere of confidence. This was reflected in a growing sense of pride and there was clear evidence of improvements in key aspects, including the use of data.

One Governor asked for clarification about the comments in relation to curriculum design. FS commented that in one of his visits he had been asked to focus on aspects of KS3 Curriculum design, including the use of the workshops and the allocation of curriculum time to each subject area. One of the recommendations in his report of visit was for the Senior Leadership Team to reconsider the allocation of KS3 curriculum time to workshops as students were not yet able to use that time independently. A Governor asked about the balance between workshops and curriculum for KS3 this year. RP confirmed that workshops had been removed and the curriculum time re-allocated to other subject areas in line with school improvement priorities. The same Governor asked if coaching was still being provided. RP confirmed that it was and FS added that this did provide big benefits. FS outlined that, in a further visit, he had been asked to focus on 'College' provision and his report had outlined aspects of this that it would be beneficial for the Senior Leadership Team to review. RP confirmed that a number of changes to the provision had taken place following the review.

FS outlined his role in the Ofsted inspection in March 2021 where, as School Improvement Adviser, he was required to meet with the Lead Inspector to provide his impressions of the school and its capacity to make any necessary improvements. He was able to provide an honest evaluation with firm grounds shown of a significant improvement since he began working with the school. FS noted that the outcome of the inspection was very positive, given the nature of the developments that had taken place since he first visited. FS had noted school improvement in 'leaps and bounds' and was confident of great progress to come.

FS urged Trustees not to forget how tough the last few years had been for staff and to find ways of celebrating success to continue to maintain morale.

FS moved onto the 2022 GCSE results. A thorough and honest analysis had been prepared by KM and this had been presented by KM to the C & S Meeting on 22 September 2022. The strengths and weaknesses had been identified including by subject. The national data had not yet been published to compare. There had been a difficult two years for the students and mitigations in place for exams. Comparing the data to other Somerset Schools and Fischer Family Trust indicators (FFT), the progress of students overall had not been good enough with some significant areas of under achievement.

FS acknowledged the work of the Senior Leadership Team in producing a Raising Achievement Plan that addressed all of the key issues. The impact of poor attendance in this year group clearly had an impact on outcomes as shown in the analysis.- One Trustee asked what new systems were in place to address this. RP explained that new senior staff were in place and detailed some of the new systems that were now in place to improve attendance. Trustees were urged by FS to keep attendance high on their radar and to keep asking about it.

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FS highlighted the 'basics' headline measure (Grade 4 or above in Maths and English) indicating the importance of this benchmark for students and the school. This was a key element of the school's Raising Achievement Plan and Trustees were also urged to keep asking about this element of the data. FS added that data is only really a servant, but the school (including Trustees) must ensure that the correct data was being collected at the correct time. There needed to be a better understanding of reliable benchmarked data to assist with predicted grades in the future.

In addition, FS drew attention to the section of the report with comparative data for other Somerset schools and addressed the provisional Progress 8 score. It was acknowledged that the Raising Achievement Plan outlined the significant work to be done to ensure improvement in this area. One Trustee asked how the Trustees could be sure of obtaining good data. There had been a turnover of Trustees in the year and there needed to be more training for all Trustees to understand what the figures mean. KM indicated that this training could be provided for Trustees. Another Trustee queried the impact of coursework in some subjects and how lack of attendance affected this. KM indicated that incomplete work portfolios had been an issue. A question about the impact of non-attendance was asked by another Trustee. FS replied that the report clearly showed the impact of absence on outcomes and that the key actions in the Raising Attainment Plan addressed this. FS remained optimistic for the future of the school. He added that the school should continue to give every child the best possible start to achieve academically as well as keeping that in balance with developing them as rounded young people.

FS and KM were thanked for their input and left the meeting.

3. Election of Chairman and other posts

003 Election of Chair. The Clerk assumed the Chair and asked for nominations for Chair. DC was nominated by AL and seconded by AM. He was elected unanimously and assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting. He explained that this was a temporary arrangement. One experienced person had come forward to take on the Chair but it had been felt they should become a Trustee for a while to gain some knowledge of the school before taking over later in the year.

004 Election of Vice-Chair. CC was nominated by DC and seconded by AL. CC was elected unanimously.

005 Safeguarding Trustee. It was noted the LM would be standing down as a Trustee at the end of the calendar year and had offered to work alongside someone with a view to that person taking over. It would be discussed further at the next meeting.

006 SEND Trustee – AM agreed to continue.

007 H & S Trustee – AL agreed to continue

008 Careers – EA agreed to continue. All three were nominated by DC and seconded by CC and elected.

4. Apologies for Absence and Membership of the Trustees

009 The apologies had been noted and accepted earlier.

DC commented that, as mentioned, LM would be standing down at the end of the year. JH would also be standing down shortly as well as AB at the end of the school year. Claire Watson had already resigned as a Parent Trustee. It was agreed that a parent election should be held after half-term.

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010 Appointment of New Co-opted Trustee. An application had been received from Jennie White, an experienced ex- Headteacher. Her appointment was approved subject to DBS clearance. This was in process.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

011 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 July 2022 were approved with one minor change. In section 830, 'Clerk' to be changed to 'Chair'.

012 DC thanked AM for organising the end of term strawberries for staff which RP commented had been well received. All other matters would be covered in the agenda.

6. Reports from Sub-Committees

013 **CCW 3 October 2022.** This meeting had been postponed from 14 September 2022. The draft minutes were still being produced. A brief verbal report was given by EA including information about the regular Behaviour, Attendance and Safeguarding Reports indicating that the impact on the rising costs of living had also been discussed. In addition, a number of policies had been presented for approval including the new Behaviour Management Policy which had been in development during the last academic year and was a key element of the school improvement agenda.

014 **FBAR 26 September 2022.** The draft minutes had been circulated prior to this meeting. The meeting had begun with a tour of the school site with the Premises Manager looking at items improved and also noting areas for attention – including damp in the Maths block. One Governor raised concern that due to changes in the CIF bids, the school now had to fund 30% of any bid for major repairs which would make it more difficult for a school with limited reserves to access this fund. DC noted that the near end of year accounts showed a breakeven year, ignoring some committed reserves for one-off items.

A 2% salary increase had been included in the first draft budget in line with recommendations at that time. However, this had to be updated following the more significant pay increases that have been proposed for both teaching and associate staff. It did not seem that any further funding would be forthcoming from the DfE so the committee had had to consider whether urgent action was needed or whether it could commit to the plans for this school year and think again about the following year. It had been agreed to leave the plans for the year unchanged.

015 **C & S 22 September 2022.** The draft minutes had been circulated prior to this meeting. In addition to a full and wide-ranging discussion about the GCSE Exam Results presented by KM, there had been a presentation by the new Head of Science, outlining his vision for developing Science provision, including the curriculum.

016 A comment was made that the membership of all three sub-committees needed review. Trustees were asked to make any preferences known to DC and CP. This was agreed. It was also confirmed that any Trustees could attend any of the three meetings.

7. Complaints and Concerns Log

017 Following the circulation of the Complaints Log at the previous FGB, RP had circulated a log showing an analysis of the complaints and concerns raised during the previous year. It was noted that all had been resolved without reaching Level 3 and a governor noted that some of these had been complex and time consuming for the Headteacher. A question was asked about the procedure for complaints about staff. RP replied that it would be dependent on the nature of the complaint but that all complaints would be investigated and there are formal procedures in place should a complaint be upheld. Another Trustee asked

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if any particular category stood out in the complaints. RP replied that many of the autumn term complaints were related to aspects of the legacy of disruption from COVID and key areas that had been identified for school improvement and these were subsequently built into the school improvement plan. RP commented that, whilst time consuming, dealing with complaints was an important element of the Headteacher's work as it enables review of the way that the organisation works. RP reminded governors that it would be a regular item for the Complaints log to be brought to FGB at the end of each term. A question was asked about how this lined to 'My Concern'. RP replied that this My Concern is an online safeguarding recording, reporting and referral system for staff and it is not linked to Complaints in any way. The data for this is reviewed at CCW.

7. Headteacher's Report

018 The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and RP drew attention to some key elements. There had been a positive start to the term. Whilst the positive feedback has been largely verbal, RP has plans to survey staff, students and parents during Term 2 to gather more formal feedback and compare this to previous surveys. Participation in recent open events had been positive.

019 Other points raised included:

A governor asked about the student leavers in Year 9. RP confirmed that the detail of leavers was presented on a termly basis at CCW and there were a variety of reasons for these leavers, including moves to Independent schools and parents electing to home educate.

020 An update was given on the position of the SLA with the Mendip School Partnership. It had been agreed to provide funding at the level agreed in the summer term for one year only. The Mendip School are planning to arrange a meeting with the Local Authority to see if any funding can be secured to support the arrangement past that point.

(PS left the meeting at this point)

021 Somerset Partnership. CC explained that this was a group of schools working together (but not as a MAT) to improve opportunities for students. RP outlined that this was a really positive development for Ansford and detailed some of the planned activities included around subject leadership, effective learning behaviours, evidence-informed senior leadership, improving secondary science and developing literacy in primary schools.

8. Safeguarding Compliance

022 Governors had been sent two videos to watch and confirm by emails that they had done so. Unfortunately none had been able to access them. RP agreed to follow up on access rights.

9. Governor Training

023 DC confirmed that Trustees now had access to 'The Key' and 'Governor Hub' for access to training resources and information. They just needed to Google 'The Key' or Governor Hub and self-register with Ansford. Somerset Governance Services (SGS) also provided a range of courses which are included in our subscription package.

024 The vital part of undertaking training would be to feedback and then demonstrate the impact it had on the school and Board. The SGS website did store courses attended. However, it was felt that a central record should be maintained of all training undertaken.

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025 The Clerk mentioned that he had not been notified of the recent SGS Clerks' Briefing due to email issues. He had now received the notes of the meeting and had circulated to all Governors. The notes included a list of training courses available.

10. AOB

026 AL raised an issue (in his H & S role) about unknown Asbestos in the buildings. It was agreed to refer this to FBAR for further discussions.

027 Admissions Arrangements. The arrangements document had been reviewed and updated by SLT. This included the over-subscription criteria which had been re-ordered based on analysis of other local schools. The reworded document was approved.

028 In-year Admission Applications. RP reported that there had been two recent in-year applications:

a) Year 11 – There had already been three in-year applications for Year 11 this term with one more pending. The confidential circumstances were noted for this application. It was refused as detrimental to the year group. It was noted that this application may go to an appeal panel for review.

b) Year 9 – There were spaces in this year but RP had been unable to make contact with the current school to find out more about individual circumstances. As the application was well within the 10 days since receipt, it was agreed to hold an admissions committee meeting next week once that information had been gathered.

11. Date of Next Meeting

029 The next meeting would be held from 18.00 on Thursday 1 December 2022.

030 The meeting closed at 20.00 hours.

ACTIONS

Minute	Issue	Action	By
005	Safeguarding Trustee	Trustee to be appointed to work alongside LM for the year to be able to takeover.	ALL
009	New Parent Governor	Election to be held after half-term	Clerk
016	Sub-Committee Membership	New lists to be drawn up and circulated	DC/CC
022	Access to Safeguarding Videos	Access rights to be investigated	RP
024	Central Training Record	To be set up	Clerk
026	Asbestos in school buildings	Referred to FBAR for consideration	AL

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