



# OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019

	<p><b>Present:</b> Martin Ashman (MA), Stewart Boyling (SB), Brenda Brown (Vice-chair, BB), Julie Burgess (JB), Richard Carter (CRC), Rowena Chalk (Chair, RC), Carl Day (CD), Eddie Rodriguez (ERZ), Nicky Wastie (NW)          Emma Green (EG)</p> <p><b>Minutes:</b> Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)</p>	
1	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>          James Horsman (JH), Pete Robinson (PR)</p>	
2	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>          None</p>	
3	<p><b>CDP STRAND 3 COMMUNITY &amp; CULTURE</b></p> <p>EG gave a presentation to the governors on attitudes to learning, praise and consequences, attendance and exclusion matters.</p> <p><u>Praise and consequences</u>          EG described how a new system works to tackle low-level disruption and encourage positive behaviour: staff award behaviour grades after every lesson in a consistent manner, and students and parents can more easily check progress via Insight. This regular grading is designed to be quick, to prompt restorative conversations between staff and students, and to provide prompt solutions.</p> <p><b>CD asked about the frequency of uniform transgressions that result poor behaviour grades. He wondered if uniform could be made a separate 'tier' in the system.</b> EG pointed out that uniform standards are a student's choice and that students need to take responsibility in this area as in other areas of behaviour. She suggested that parents concerned about these particular grades might act to raise expectations at home. EG added that there is a new idea for maintaining uniform standards in the pipeline, which will be reported to governors in due course.</p> <p><b>JB reported that she saw a student in a torn uniform receiving a progress award at the recent Celebration Evening, and asked how staff make decisions about rewards.</b> EG pointed out the difference between students who choose to dress badly and welfare issues with uniform. The school provides uniform to students in need.</p> <p><b>CRC asked for the distribution of grades A1 to A4 handed out. He wondered if a particularly well-behaved student cohort might result in the Head's time, for instance, being taken up by students</b></p>	

**with A1 grades visiting his office for praise.** EG said that she could bring this data back to the governors at a later date. She added that behaviour grades do not accumulate over a student's school career, but are refreshed at the start of each academic year, reducing the possibility of 'overload'.

**MA said that he feels the system provides useful real-time information for parents. He asked whether parents actually log on to check grades.** ERZ replied that this data is only available via Google Analytics (measuring hits) but that feedback at Parent Partnership sessions is good, and that more data will be collected at upcoming parents' evenings.

**SB asked how behaviour outside the classroom impacts on a student's behaviour grades.** ERZ and EG said that Laura Gynge is in the process of creating a separate system to this end. EG added that, in her experience, care must be taken to avoid the perception among students that interactions with adults around school are always going to be punitive. The majority of students are very well behaved, and it is important to avoid negativity while also dealing promptly with poor behaviour, and warning students who display repeating poor behaviour.

MA shared his experience of a recent visit to the school in which he observed a calm atmosphere and impressively good behaviour and engagement, including in lower sets. Staff were relaxed, even with visitors in their classroom, and open to observation. BB agreed – during her visit earlier in the year she saw similar.

#### Attendance

EG updated the governors on the results of the strategy introduced for the '18-'19 academic year. She acknowledged assistance from Janet Rowe, and reported that she has also carried out work on raising attendance with other local schools.

Oathall's persistent (90%+) absence rate for last year was a little better than the national average, even taking into account the serious bug in spring of 2019 which caused dramatically affected attendance for a number of weeks. PA among SEN students has improved, although both SEN and PP attendance levels are still an issue.

Jo Godbolt has already sent a letter to parents with Dept. of Health advice on flu vaccination and management of viruses.

EG reported that attendance so far this year shows figures close to target in all categories, with overall persistent absence at 8.54% (target: below 10%), a significant improvement on last year. PP figures (a sticking point for some years) are c.3% better, and SEND figures seem to be responding well to the introduction of the Carly Slade's SEND tutor group. **The governors asked how large this group is,** and EG replied that it officially numbers 30, but that all 30 students are never present for tutor sessions.

**CRC said it would be useful to see comparative attendance figures without data from last year's Year 11 cohort who were notably poor attenders. He asked how the figures would look with a comparison on Years 7 to 10 only, and queried the analysis of the data, pointing out individual falls in attendance for year groups between '18/'19 and '19-'20. He acknowledged the variable nature of the student body and the difficulty of comparison, but suggested that the overall attendance figure falls when the Year 11 data is removed.** EG asked if CRC would consider meeting her to discuss analysis methods, and he agreed to look for a suitable time.

#### Inclusion room & exclusions

EG gave a picture of IR use. It suggests that students sent to the room for 'one-time' poor

	<p>behaviour are discouraged by the experience from allowing their behaviour to cause repeat visits. EG will be visiting Sackville to learn about features of their behaviour policy that have reduced fixed-term exclusions. She reported that at Oathall, staff are now using the range of available internal strategies, especially to safeguard other students.</p> <p><b>SB asked about the costs involved in sending our small number of very challenging students to other provision.</b> ERZ said that places on the Fresh Start programme cost £5000, while permanent exclusion deprives the school of that student’s funding. The school makes a decision on Fresh Start applications based on the needs of the child in all cases.</p> <p><b>JB asked whether very challenging students tend to have mental health issues.</b> EG confirmed this, reminding the governors that each of these children has a complex personal history, and arrives at school with a large body of supporting information. <b>JB asked if, in some cases, these students should be in the care of mental health services, and if they are in school because of a lack of provision.</b> ERZ confirmed this, and reminded the governors of long waiting lists for mental health services.</p> <p>The governors thanked EG for her report and she left the meeting.</p>	
4	<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b></p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2019 were tabled to the meeting and approved as a true record. Part Two minutes were tabled and the governors agreed them as a true record. They were duly signed by the Chair.</p>	
5	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</b></p> <p><u>Toshiba screen licensing</u>        CD and ERZ reported that this problem has been satisfactorily resolved.</p> <p><u>Staff welfare survey</u>        ERZ said that development of the survey is in hand</p> <p><u>Staff exit interviews</u>        ERZ will aim to have a conversation with staff as they leave post.</p>	
6	<p><b>URGENT MATTERS</b></p> <p>None</p>	
7	<p><b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES REVIEW</b></p> <p>The following policies were approved by the governors:</p> <p>Teaching &amp; Learning        Health &amp; Safety        Security        First Aid        Fire Safety        Freedom of Information        Data Protection</p>	

	<p><b>SB asked why the collective worship policy has been removed from the policy publication scheme.</b> ERZ replied that this was seen as sensible because as a non-denominational school Oathall has never had the need for such a separate a policy.</p> <p><b>MA asked how the school reassures itself that all staff have read and understood the long list of guidelines in the Data Protection policy.</b> He pointed out that any breach would come back to the school. CRC said that it is common practice in commercial organisations for staff to sign that they have read the DP policy. ERZ said this can be added to the body of documents which staff confirm that they have read on an annual basis.</p> <p>ERZ added that whenever a minor breach occurs Jo Godbolt speaks to staff concerned to discourage future problems.</p>	
8	<p><b>BUSINESS REPORT</b></p> <p><u>Gym project</u> The equipment has arrived and is being set up. Induction for staff who will use the facility will take place in November. An opening event is planned for 14/12/19 but the gym will be available for use before that date. ERZ encouraged governors to come in and see the new facility.</p> <p><u>Farm/asbestos removal</u> Complex problems – the presence of electrical cables and damaged roofing – have delayed removal from the milking parlour. ERZ is in communication with Jeremy Rigby, Head Of Estates and Facilities Management (WS), about the support required to make the necessary repairs.</p> <p><u>Three Year Budget Plan</u> <b>Governors questioned the need to complete this document, pointing out that they established its unreliability and potential waste of Business Manager time at this point last year.</b> ERZ said that the plan is requested by WS in order to identify schools with potential financial issues (Oathall is not in this group)</p> <p><u>Mental health first aid course</u> <b>MA asked about the nature of this course, which Jo Godbolt will be attending shortly.</b> ERZ said that the idea is to be more proactive in identifying staff health problems and support wellbeing. JG will report back any material that might be of use to governors. The clerk will ask her to do so.</p>	AC
9.	<p><b>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES</b></p> <p>ERZ and RC reported on a recent West Sussex Governors’ Association event at which they spoke on the topic of soft federations and good outcomes of Oathall’s decision to federate, following a resolution not to academise. The association sent a very positive feedback letter after the event, saying that ERZ/RC’s segment had had the most impact.</p> <p><b>MA asked if there are other soft federations in the county.</b> ERZ and RC said that there is a Diocese soft federation which has taken sharing further (e.g. in budgeting) and a soft federation of special needs school which is trying to share practice to try to its many challenges.</p> <p>What emerged from the evening’s discussion of federations, RC said, was the widespread lack of</p>	

	<p>SEND and mental health provision. There was a general discussion among the governors on the issue. <b>JB reminded the GB that mental health provision across the county is very poor. Several governors pointed out the need to build student resilience and to avoid merely 'labelling' all anxiety and common mental health problems. CD asked if the GB can do more,</b> and offered to look into possible talks/mentoring following the visit from Baz Gray earlier in 2019. <b>JB suggested that a representative from mental health services could address soft federation GBs with the aim of suggesting further actions.</b> SB mentioned Chalk Hill (the hospital for children with serious mental health problems and eating disorders). It was decided that enquiries should be made via the school nursing service as a first step, asking who might provide support and information. The governors agreed that they must take care, aware that their role is not to solve problems but to establish partnerships.</p>	<p>CD  JB/RC/ CD</p>
<p>10</p>	<p><b>CHAIR'S REPORT</b></p> <p><u>Parent governor election</u>        Papers have gone out to parents (early November). Nominations close on 29.11.19 and the election will take place on 20.12.19, if more than one parent has applied. RC is to have a meeting with a parent who was unsuccessful in the last election. There was a discussion about new governor recruitment advice - to gather references from applicants. BB shared experience from recent safeguarding training about the need for safe recruitment. References will be sought after the 29<sup>th</sup> November deadline and reviewed by the GB in time for the election.</p> <p><u>One-to-ones</u>        RC is abroad until early December and will arrange a meeting with each governor in January.</p> <p><u>Retirement of Janet Hook, Bursar</u>        Janet retires at the end of January after forty years of service. RC asked the GB to share any comments on or memories of their dealings with Janet. ERZ described plans to make changes to the post to reflect growing financial complexity and to relieve the issue of a 'single point of failure' (e.g. if either Business Manager or Bursar are off sick, or the Business Manager leaves post). The two posts are currently rather exclusive – each post holder unable to cover much of the work of the other.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p><b>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</b></p> <p><u>Student Matters</u>        The Year 7 'settling in' evening in October went well. This year tutors attended, and parents were able to book appointments with their child's tutor to talk about engagement and settling in. There were workshops (e.g. homework support) in addition. PP families were contacted first and given priority booking and uptake was good.</p> <p><u>The Big Sing</u>        This event took place in October. Prospective parents on school tours were able to enjoy some of the performances. ERZ expressed thanks to Carole McTaggart and Martijn Van Galen for organising a very successful event.</p>	

#### Exams

Year 11 mock exams begin in the week of November 18<sup>th</sup>. This year they extend over three weeks; last year it was felt that the exam timetable was too condensed, with students anxious about taking several papers in one day.

#### Exclusion and managed moves

There was a permanent exclusion during the week of November 4<sup>th</sup>.

A managed move of one student to another school failed quickly, and that student has returned to Oathall, bringing complex challenges. **SB asked if the school arranges further managed moves (to other schools) in these cases.** ERZ said that this will only be considered if it is felt that there is likely to be a good outcome. The school to which the child in question was sent was carefully selected as the best possible destination.

#### Remembrance

The School Captains attended a service at St Wilfred's Church on November 8<sup>th</sup> and gave short readings. On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> students at the remembrance event in school grounds behaved impeccably, showing appropriate respect.

#### Safeguarding

Bikes have been stolen from school racks. Unfortunately the CCTV was not functioning on the day of the thefts, and is being repaired. The location of racks is not ideal and is possibly perceived by the public as being outside main school grounds. Relocation of bike racks is under discussion.

A safeguarding audit based on the NSPCC model will be done before the Christmas holiday, in conjunction with Imberhorne. BB will attend.

At their request Faye Hatchard and Laura Gyngell will shortly be trained as DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads). The school will then have four DSLs.

#### Drugs in schools

An agreed letter on drugs in schools was sent to all parents by local head teachers. A parent from one school contacted Sir Nicholas Soames on the issue. Shane Baker, District Commander, Sussex Police has said the police would like to do more, and the matter will be discussed at the next Heads' meeting. **MA asked if the police have a view on school expulsions for drugs.** ERZ said that police are keen not to criminalise children and tend to refer incidents back to schools to impose sanctions.

#### Staffing

- NQT Gemma Blyth (providing maternity cover) is making a good start.
- Phased return to work: it is hoped that one member of staff will return to full-time work in January. WS are supporting the process.

#### Premises

There are currently three compounds *in situ* around the school.

The one serving the gas mains work will be removed soon. Disruption has been minimal during gas main work and student entrances can shortly be returned to normal. Students adapted well to the changes.

Work on windows is longer-term and this compound is likely to be in place until February half term. The third compound is for repair of flat roofs, and that work is in progress.

	<p><u>PTA</u>          ERZ encouraged governors to attend the Craft Fair on Saturday November 16<sup>th</sup></p> <p><u>Local Authority Link Advisor</u>          Claire Conley-Harper visited just before October half term. She looked at performance data with a focus on literacy. She spoke to the Literacy Lead and the SENCO, and conducted a learning walk. RC was also present at the meeting. ERZ is awaiting the feedback from her visit, which he will share with the GB.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u>          Attendance on the day of this meeting stood at 95.9%</p>	
12	<p><b>OUTSIDE EDUCATIONAL VISITS</b>          MA reported that the demise of Thomas Cook caused significant issues for the Gambia trip, but these have been resolved.</p>	
13	<p><b>SAFEGUARDING</b>          BB reported on her meeting on 21/10/19. A few minor areas of concern have been addressed, and BB thanked EG and Sue Watkin for their help and information. She reported that she did not have time during this visit to speak to staff and students about how safe they felt in school, and whether they are aware of how to report concerns. ERZ stressed the importance of asking these more subtle questions, and BB will arrange another visit to this end. BB encouraged all governors to ask these questions during any visit they make. <b>MA asked if WS has recently prompted schools to watch out for extremism and radicalisation.</b> ERZ replied that there have been no particular communications on this. BB pointed out an item from her recent safeguarding training, urging schools to check the credentials and intentions of visiting speakers. She added that during the training she was able to note how much Oathall already gets right in safeguarding.</p>	
14	<p><b>PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS</b>          RC and BB will attend a meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup> with ERZ and FHD. They will look at PP matters across the whole school, not just with reference to welfare issues. They would like to widen their questions to underachievement in non-PP students, bearing in mind that some PP students perform well. How does the GB assure itself that these students get what they need? <b>MA reminded the GB not to lose its focus on PP children,</b> especially because schools are judged on their work in this area.</p>	
15	<p><b>ATTENDANCE</b>          No separate report.</p>	

16	<p><b>GOVERNORS' VISITS &amp; INDIVIDUAL REPORTS</b></p> <p>RC reminded the GB to inform ERZ and Helen Parry when they intend to visit the school, and to copy in Chair and Clerk. She complimented MA on the excellent findings of his recent visit and tour with EG.</p> <p>JB will attend governor finance training on November 20<sup>th</sup>. RC suggested that she take school budget documents to the training. The clerk will supply these to JB.</p>	AC
17	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>CRC asked if the figure of £1300 mentioned in the October business report represents crowdfunding money not spent yet. ERZ confirmed this.</p>	
	<p><i>The meeting closed at 21:15 hrs</i></p>	
	<p><b>DATE &amp; VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS</b></p> <p>Autumn term: Dec 9<sup>th</sup>. Spring term: Feb 10<sup>th</sup>; Mar 9<sup>th</sup>. CR1 at 19:00hrs</p>	

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



FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
11.11.19	Ask Jo Godbolt to feed back on her First Aid Mental Health training.	AC	asap	yes
11.11.19	Look into possible further talks/mentoring to tackle student mental health & resilience.	CD	spring 2020	
11.11.19	Contact school nursing service to ask who might provide support and information on student mental health.	JB/RC/CD	Spring 2020	
11.11.19	Supply JB with school budget documents for her finance training	AC	asap	yes
09.09.19	Staff Welfare Survey to be implemented (in hand 11.11.19)	RC/ERZ	asap	
<b>Longer term:</b>				
11.02.19	CDP progress report to the whole GB (strand meetings to monitor during its development)	ERZ	Dec '19	
08.07.19	Research recommendations on governor terms and succession.	AC	By July FGB 2020	
09.09.19	Add a report on the current provision for careers advice and work experience to the S1 presentation for her next FGB (Feb '20)	FHD	Feb FGB	
<b>Completed actions</b>				
07.10.19	Approach Toshiba about screen software licencing.	CD	asap	Before FGB 11.11.19
11.02.19	Consider exit interviews, six months after departure of employee.	ERZ	July '19	ERZ to conduct interviews. Reported FGB 11.11.19