



OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting held virtually via Zoom on 21st June 2021

<p>Present: Brenda Brown (Vice-chair, BB), Julie Burgess (JB); Richard Carter (CRC), Rowena Chalk (Chair, RC), James Horsman (JH); Carol MacTaggart (CM); Jon Parry (JP); Pete Robinson (PR) Eddie Rodriguez (ERZ), Nicky Wastie (NW)</p> <p>In attendance: Toby Houghton (TDH)</p> <p>Minutes: Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)</p>	
1	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None</p>
2	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST None</p>
3	<p>REPORT ON YEAR 11 ASSESSMENTS</p> <p>TDH gave a presentation on the preparation of year 11 assessments, which were sent to the exam boards on June 18th. His presentation is stored with these minutes.</p> <p>The method of assessment asked for by the DfE was very different from 2020, when a prediction of each exam grade was required. This year, schools were expected to provide evidence of the standard that each student had reached to date, based on qualification specifications. Evidence could be drawn from any point in their study, and a broad range of sources could be used including tests and mocks, work in response to exam board materials, records of performance-based subjects, and records of progress. Notice given by the DfE was short. Exam boards undertook to provide new assessment material, but in the event only offered past papers that were already available.</p> <p>Heads of Faculty worked to create the most accurate method of assessment possible. Some topic testing was included, along with November/December mocks and early May assessments (conducted over a number of weeks, and largely treated by students as a normal exam season). Three levels of quality assurance were applied – at subject level, by heads of centre, and by external bodies (exam boards).</p> <p><u>Subject level QA</u></p> <p>Heads of Faculty formulated an evidence plan. All teachers studied the guidance to ensure fairness (because some students had to self-isolate). Sampling, standardisation and moderation</p>

was carried out, and scores/marks collated on a central record. This was a long and challenging process and staff felt a great sense of responsibility and a need to get the process right, with little assistance from exam boards, and a lack of exemplars.

Head of Centre QA

ERZ and TDH moderated, analysing the distribution of grades within each subject and across the school. Comparisons were made, as far as possible, with previous years. Adjustments were discussed with Heads of Faculty. A few apparent anomalies (results slightly higher or lower than might be expected) were investigated, but in all cases the methodology was found to be robust. TDH shared analysis from the Fischer Family Trust (FFT), which uses national data to provide schools with benchmarks. In many cases, grades achieved (particularly among able students) are slightly higher than benchmarks. It is apparent that students have taken the opportunities offered by this year's method of assessment (knowing in advance the ways in which they could display their ability) to demonstrate the standards they have reached.

External QA (exam boards)

The boards approved Oathall's assessment policy and methods. Their intention is not to second-guess the judgement of teachers but to check processes and evidence. In the week following this meeting they will sample the results of five students and examine all the evidence in those samples over a 48-hour period.

Results and appeals

Results will come out on August 12th. There are two stages of appeal.

1. Internal. A student appeals to the exam centre on the basis that an error has been made (procedural or administrative). The school requests a grade change if it agrees.
2. To the awarding body. A student requests an appeal if they do not agree with the school at stage 1. The school submits a review request to the exam board.

JP asked for clarification on the analysis graphs from the FFT. TDH explained that the Trust takes KS2 (end of primary) data and compares those with GCSE results, across all schools. From this, Oathall's expected grades can be predicted (e.g. what % of students will achieve a Grade 7). He pointed out that the most recent useful data comes from 2019 (due to Covid) and that other factors in the interim (e.g. school improvement) are not included in the analysis. **JP asked if the school expects to be challenged on these consistently slightly raised grades.** ERZ and TDH said that Oathall can be confident in its results: the focus has been on ensuring a robust assessment policy. They coordinated with the federation schools to this end. TDH reiterated the difficulties of assessment: the normal allocation of grades by exam boards, with 'slicing' by grade boundary across all candidates, is not possible. Exam board instructions also vary. It is not known if the exam boards will challenge.

JP said he felt that the process has been detailed and thorough.

CRC asked if Oathall is obliged to enter an appeal at stage 2, if a parent requests it. Does the school have discretion? TDH said that every requested appeal must be made to the awarding body. ERZ added that there is no fee attached to appeals, and so a number of appeals is anticipated.

CRC asked if there is clarity on whether appeals can result in any outcome – a lower, a higher or the same grade. TDH confirmed that all three are possible. ERZ added that exam boards are minded to have confidence in good procedures put in place by schools, and that they will have to be strongly persuaded to allow an appeal.

	<p>CRC noted the statistically significant ‘shift up’ at higher grades. He asked if other schools in the soft federation have had a similar experience. TDH said that comparison of results is not permitted between schools until results come out. The school’s figures are within tolerance (percentiles are provided by the FFT).</p> <p>CRC expressed concern about the current year 10s. Their education has inevitably, despite Oathall’s best efforts, been disrupted. They are likely to sit ‘normal’ exams, and if a sharp adjustment of grades downwards occurs, will there be a sense of grievance? TDH replied that he shares precisely this concern. The year group has been absent from school for parts of two crucial years. There is no guidance yet from the DfE on the matter, but discussions in school have already moved on to this, and will develop. ERZ added that it may be seen as unwise to compare results from the two ‘Covid exam years’ with results in future years. TDH reminded the governors of the implications for the current year 6 and 7s – there have been no KS2 tests for two years, and so no benchmarking to help schools with accountability.</p> <p>JH asked if the methodology this year eradicates ‘outlying’ results – the surprises of unexpectedly high or low grades for a particular student. TDH said that this is probably the case. Staff know each student’s potential, and assess throughout a student’s career; factors like exam day ‘wobbles’ are not in the picture.</p> <p>TDH said that he will ask ERZ to bring any further information on QA that emerges, to the governors at future meetings.</p> <p>RC asked TDH to pass the thanks of the governors to the staff for their work on assessments. TDH replied that it has been an agonising and often emotional task for staff who have to make individual decisions, and a huge team effort. RC asked if it has been a positive experience in some ways, and PR said that he would prefer not to do it again.</p> <p>TDH left the meeting at 19:40hrs.</p>	
4	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24.05.21</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2021 were tabled to the meeting and approved as a true record. They will be signed the Chair after the meeting and sent to the clerk.</p>	
5	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS None</p>	
6	<p>URGENT MATTERS None</p>	
7	<p>POLICES AND PROCEDURES</p> <p><u>Equality and Diversity</u> The new Equality and Diversity policy (students) will now be brought before the governors at the July FGB.</p> <p><u>Outdoor Education and Off-site Educational Visits</u> The governors decided to continue reviewing this policy at FGB. The clerk will provide them with a copy of the current policy, so that queries and comments can be raised at the July FGB. CRC will then view the proposed list of trips in September.</p>	AC

8	<p>SIMS REPORT</p> <p>There was a discussion about how often the governors would like to see a report. It was decided that a report should be generated every two FGB meetings. The clerk will remind RC to include that in the governors' Year Planner '21-'22.</p>	AC
9	<p>BUSINESS AND BUDGET REPORTS</p> <p><u>Phone lines</u> RC asked if the upgrade from ISDN phone lines to SIP trunks will improve the look of the front of the building. ERZ said unfortunately not.</p> <p><u>Support staff Support staff pay rise</u> JP asked if the funds for this will be provided by the LA, or if the school will have to find the money. ERZ said that pay rises come from the school's budget. WSCC provides budget guidance, and advised setting aside funds for a 1% increase for teachers. But central government decides national pay increases for teachers and is unlikely to apply the 1%. So in this case the 1% in the school's budget may provide the necessary funds for a support staff pay rise. JP said he was pleased that such a buffer existed.</p>	
10.	<p>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES</p> <p>RC reported on a meeting of the federation schools on June 10th. Plans for the future of the federation were discussed by four headteachers and four chairs of governors. News on a more formal structure for the federation, and a name, is likely in September. RC said that the meeting was powerful, the participants worked well together and were alike in their thinking. The good relationships between deputy and assistant heads at all the schools appeared to be well-established. ERZ said that the meeting was an opportunity to reaffirm the purpose of the federation during a period of change. A more formal arrangement will allow joint undertakings such as the employing of a shared welfare officer or a counsellor. The federation will also be able to develop a new relationship with the teaching school hubs. RC added that the federation will need some kind of new governance structure to offer stability to the federation, possibly a governor from each GB to serve the new structure.</p> <p>Several governors asked for information on the reasoning behind the creation of the federation, and the its resistance to academisation. New governors, and also those in post when the federation was formed and decisions made to keep maintained status, agreed that the GB would benefit from a renewal of its thinking. CRC asked how much the federation's work is 'pushed' by squeezes on LA funding driven by government policy, and how much is it 'pulled together' by the potential for mutual benefit. He suggested that a better conversation (better than one about academisation) is about what the school wants from its relationship with other schools (unless there is a very pressing need for collaboration as the LA withdraws support). NW agreed that a discussion about academisation should not become a distraction, but that she understands the needs of governors to have a full picture.</p> <p>ERZ agreed that this is a major issue, and that the 'pull' and 'push' question is a helpful one. He pointed out that with government wanting academisation, the landscape for maintained schools</p>	

	<p>could become more difficult. Choices might be made on basis of absence of service rather than benefits of academisation. The federation’s stance has been about collaborative working, including professional development, and there has been valuable collaboration between headteachers during the pandemic. The ability to respond to national changes (e.g. the advance of the teaching school hubs) is also valuable. The federation has the potential to reduce fragility in the future, and allows speedy responses to change. He agreed that the GB - and the school - should understand what it wants, and what it does not want. He offered to bring a paper to the governors in October. The governors decided that this would replace a strand report at that meeting.</p> <p>ERZ gave a brief history of academisation. Neither the financial benefits promised, he said, nor potential increases in autonomy, had proved to be of worth.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>CHAIR’S REPORT</p> <p>RC reported on a chair’s action completed: to approve a flexible retirement package for one member of staff. There is no cost implication, so the full GB did not need to approve.</p> <p>She attended a meeting of the West Sussex Governors Association at which there was a lot of discussion about primaries, particularly rural schools.</p> <p><u>Changes to the governing body</u></p> <p>Penny Canepa-Anson resigned from the governing body at the end of May, citing work commitments and time pressure. A parent governor election will be held in the autumn term, giving time for new parents to become familiar with the school.</p> <p>PR leaves the governing body at the end of the academic year. He and CM feel that he has completed his task of introducing her to the work of the governing body. The governors thanked Pete for the quantity and quality of experience that he has brought to the table, and his ability to ask pertinent and important questions. Pete expressed his appreciation for the amount of hard work he was seen being done by the GB, of which others are not always aware.</p>	
	<p>JH left the meeting at 20:25, called away to another meeting.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>HEADTEACHER’S REPORT</p> <p><u>Students</u></p> <p>Year 11 had a successful and special send-off in school on May 26th. ERZ noted that some schools made a decision to keep a leavers’ prom in their schedule, and have now been forced to cancel following the delay to the easing of lockdown.</p> <p><u>Covid</u></p> <p>After hopes (at the time of the last FGB) for further easing as cases declined, and positive communications from West Sussex Public Health, there have been a significant number of positive tests among students, mostly in year 7. The school took advice from WS on actions to take. Face coverings have been reintroduced in communal areas (not in classrooms). This may refocus students’ minds on the presence of the virus, and remind them of the measures they should take, though students have been largely compliant.</p>	

Positive LFT test results were followed up with PCR testing, and the appropriate procedures used to identify close contacts and send students home for 10 days of self-isolation. In total, 186 students have been affected in some way. They are not all absent concurrently, and where PCR tests on close contacts prove negative, students return to school. But this is a substantial number. Four members of staff have been identified as close contacts (ERZ writes to all staff when positives are reported, giving the criteria). A fifth member of staff has tested positive (PCR) but has no obvious contacts at school.

Public Health becomes involved as soon as more than one case is reported. They reviewed all the school's Covid procedures when cases emerged, and found them to be good. They recommended that all students in years 7, 8 & 9 should be offered a PCR test - 'surge testing'. It is anticipated that some more positives will appear among asymptomatic students.

Cases have added considerably to the workload of a small team of staff, including Helen Parry, Jo Godbolt and assistant heads of house, who trace and isolate students.

JB asked about levels of vaccination among staff. ERZ said he did not have figures to hand, but the age profile of the staff would suggest that most have had one jab, and many two.

CRC asked what additional support is being offered to students self-isolating, particularly if a small cohort within a teaching group is at home. ERZ replied that, following timetable changes in Covid, it is often the case that students move from lesson to lesson with the same group of peers, and so students in isolation tend to match these teaching groups. He added that Google Classroom is still up and running. Faye Hatchard, along with Faculty Heads, ensures that material on Google Classroom is up-to-date. She logs in to check, subject by subject, as well as contacting parents to help with whatever they need. Conversations with parents provide reminders for teachers e.g. to award credits to students not in the classroom.

JP thanked ERZ for keeping the governors in the picture on the Covid situation in a timely manner.

Site developments

With the departure of year 11, improvements to the Humanities suite have begun, so that work can be completed by the start of the autumn term.

Pastoral changes

Interviews for the new Head of Year post did not identify an ideal candidate, and recruitment will begin again in the autumn term. Annie Murray has stepped in as an interim post holder, and will be supported appropriately.

Other staffing

- Michael Schofield has been appointed as a part-time DT teacher to replace Vicky Slater
- Karen Williams, a ceramicist, joins Art on a .4FTE contract in September.
- Carla Avery has been recruited as the new Deputy Head of Year 7.
- On June 22nd there will be interviews for a part-time music teacher to replace Martijn Van Galen, who leaves at the end of the year to take up a post at Oriel School as head of music.

13.	SAFEGUARDING BB is arranging to meet Emma Green for the annual NSPCC safeguarding audit, the parameters of which have changed. BB has also booked a safeguarding course.	
14.	PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS No report.	
15.	ATTENDANCE Attendance stood at 96% on the day of the meeting. Students in self-isolation are not included in the figure.	
16.	GOVERNORS' VISITS AND INDIVIDUAL REPORTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new and straightforward form will be available in school reception from September, which governors should fill in and return to the clerk on each visit to school. • BB was in school to sit on the interview panel for the Art and DT posts. • NW completed two days of invigilating (year 10 core subject exams) and observed good behaviour. She noted that Ms Griffiths prompted students to come forward with any problems, and asked for feedback on the exams process. • JP reported on his recent school tour and conversations, as a new governor, with ERZ. He said that the visit was superb – he saw a range of classroom activity and school building renovation. He thanked ERZ. 	
17	ANY OTHER BUSINESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RC reminded the governors of the WS governor services newsletters, which include everything about training. She suggested that all governors take a look with a view to refreshing their training, and offered her help and the clerk's, with access. • JB, NW and BB expressed their thanks to CRC for his hospitality at the recent and very enjoyable GB barbecue, and agreed with other governors that it should be an annual event. 	
	<i>The meeting closed at 20:40 hrs</i>	
	DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS TBA (autumn term)	

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

FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
21.06.21	Reminder to RC to include	AC	asap	yes

	SIMS report in Year Planner – every two FGB meetings.			
21.06.21	Provide GB with copy of the current Off-site visits policy	AC	asap	yes
24.05.21	Talk to exams officer about clarity in exams policies	ERZ	As time permits	
24.05.21	Share report of Strand 2a	CRC	As time permits	
Actions completed				
24.05.21	Email staff involved in policy creation & editing, about flagging up changes	AC	asap	yes
24.05.21	Make correction to Working From Home policy	AC	Asap, before storage	yes