



OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

**Minutes of a meeting held virtually via Zoom on 4th
 October 2021**

<p>Present: Brenda Brown (Vice-chair, BB); Rowena Chalk (Chair, RC); Vicky Cobb (VC); James Horsman (JH); Carol MacTaggart (CM); Jon Parry (JP); Eddie Rodriguez (ERZ), Nicky Wastie (NW)</p> <p>In attendance: Emma Green (EG)</p> <p>Minutes: Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)</p>	
1	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Julie Burgess (JB); Richard Carter (CRC)</p>
2	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST None</p>
3	<p>SAFEGUARDING TRAINING SESSION</p> <p>EG presented a version of recent Safeguarding INSET training sessions delivered to all staff, including material on prevailing national safeguarding issues, and those that commonly arise at Oathall. She described the system of reporting issues via My Concern and in person/via immediate messages to designated safeguarding leads.</p> <p>RC asked about the 'first aid' mental health training that was planned for staff before the pandemic. EG said that Jo Godbolt and Faye Hatchard have taken this training, and that she will be arranging for further members of staff to do so. She added that RC can be included in the programme.</p> <p>JH mentioned the recent case of Sarah Everard, and asked if standards of respect between boys and girls are included in the curriculum. EG replied that this important aspect of safeguarding features both in the PSHE curriculum and in the new tutorial programme. As national media covers these issues, tutors will be including it in sessions. Governors can refer to the tables in the Relationships and Sex Education policy for specific content on healthy and respectful relationships. EG added that a presentation she gave to BB last week contains more detail on staff training in this area, and governors are welcome to request a copy. She said that many recent incidents recorded on My Concern have involved children using inappropriate language and making jokes, and she has expressed her gratitude to staff for the increased reporting in this area: the issue of disrespect is clearly being understood and tackled. EG spoke more about the way My Concern is used: repeat offenders and patterns of behaviour can be</p>

	<p>identified via the system. A student profile is built, and where necessary remedial actions can be escalated (e.g. inviting in parents). EG feels confident that a whole-school ethos is developing. JH agreed that the partnership with home is important.</p> <p>EG said that language used by students online can seep into face-to-face dialogue, and staff have to keep explaining the effect this has on a peer's feelings of safety. Alison McMillan is using resources from the PSHE Association to teach ideas of respect in a programme tailored to each year group.</p> <p>JH mentioned reports of aggressively sexualised language heard on buses from Ardingly to Oathall. EG said that she rarely hears complaints about behaviour on buses (more often, members of the public commend Oathall students for good behaviour). She urged governors to ask any governor to report incidents on the day they happen, so that action can be taken. She is ready to involve herself in any way, but needs the facts.</p> <p>JP asked how frequently concerns are logged on My Concern. EG replied that emails are generated to DSLs throughout the day and include a full range of issues, from small observations of behaviour change in a student, to substantive incidents.</p> <p>EG said that the main issues at Oathall are around the mental health and wellbeing of students. There are currently, for instance, nine children questioning their gender identity. Reasons for this increase are unknown. Domestic abuse also features: outside agencies send reports so that Oathall staff can check that the child concerned is coping at school.</p> <p>BB reminded governors of their shared responsibility for safeguarding. The GB, she said, must continually check that the school is heading in the right direction.</p> <p>The governors thanked EG and she left the meeting at 19:35hrs.</p> <p>It was agreed that all governors must read Part 1 of <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021</i> (the document is required reading for all school staff) and let the clerk know when they have done so. AC will email a request.</p>	AC
4	<p>APPROVAL OF THE GB SCHEME OF DELEGATION</p> <p>The scheme was approved and will remain in place until the next appointment of officers.</p>	
5	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 06.09.21</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 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>	
6	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</p> <p>None</p>	
7	<p>URGENT MATTERS</p> <p>None</p>	

8	<p>DECISION ON WHETHER TO MEET FACE-TO-FACE IN NOVEMBER AND/OR DECEMBER</p> <p>There was a discussion on the safety of face-to-face meetings, with some governors expressing a desire to meet in person and others concerned about current rates of infection. JP asked what facilities are available for distanced meetings, and ERZ said that the usual conference room, designed for a class of around 30, should be suitable. It was decided that November's FGB should be held remotely, and at the meeting the possibility of a face-to-face in December should be considered.</p>	
9	<p>SIMS REPORT</p> <p>ERZ said he would send AC a report, including current attendance figures, at the end of the meeting. The clerk will share this with governors.</p>	ERZ/AC
10	<p>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVIEW</p> <p>The following policies were approved without changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance policy • Work-related Learning policy • Community Wellbeing policy (new) • Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints <p>JP asked a question about the new unreasonable complaints policy: how will the imposition of a communication plan be triggered? And how will such a plan be implemented? ERZ explained that unreasonable complaints are rare at Oathall, but have tended to use up disproportionately large amounts of time, discussion and emotional input. This new policy has been introduced because the school has not had a structure in the past to help deal with such complaints. Letters to parents raising complaints can now be informed by the policy. ERZ explained that it is difficult to predict the progress of each case because they differ subtly from each other and must be dealt with on an individual basis. JP agreed that flexibility is important, and that the wording of the policy allows for this. RC confirmed the difficulties involved in the unreasonable complaints in which she has been involved, and the need for a demonstrable pathway. The policy will allow the school to ask for clarity from parents who (for instance) come forward with unclear complaints.</p> <p><u>Policies review</u> RC reported that she, BB and JP will meet again to progress this review, hopefully before Christmas.</p>	
	<p>VC joined the meeting at c.19:40.</p>	
11	<p>BUSINESS REPORT</p> <p>JP asked why two repayments mentioned in the business report do not appear in the budget report income items list, viz recovery premium funding and the school-led tutoring grant. ERZ explained that these items will appear in future reporting of income, but that the DfE frequently</p>	

	<p>announces in-year funding, often involving relatively modest amounts, that cannot be included because they come in too late for calculations.</p> <p>JP asked about the acute catering procurement issues described in the report. Is cost inflation becoming apparent, or is it too early to say? ERZ said that it is too early to say whether there will be a financial impact at year-end, but certainly the school has a range of unexpected and unpredictable supply problems. Sue Denyer is skilled at making late menu changes to cope with this, but there is continuing concern.</p>	
12	<p>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES</p> <p>RC reported that she and ERZ have been asked to attend a meeting of the soft federation on November 10th at Downlands. They will report back to governors.</p>	
13	<p>CHAIR'S REPORT</p> <p>RC and ERZ proposed that they address the GB at the next FGB about the soft federation – why it was formed, how it works, its aims, and outcomes so far. The intention will be to bring all governors (especially new members of the board) up to speed. In addition they will speak to the GB about academisation - why Oathall made an early decision not to choose that path, and why there is no current intention to change that.</p> <p>RC met a parent who was anxious about Covid vaccinations being offered in school. The parent asked why the matter has not yet been discussed by the GB, and RC replied that anyone can approach the governors to raise issues.</p> <p>RC attended a meeting of the West Sussex Governance Association on SEND and inclusion, and hopes to go to another. She will attend a WSGA meeting on Oct 5th at Millais School, and will report back on all these meetings.</p> <p>She now meets ERZ regularly every Monday afternoon, and said that if any governor would like to raise anything, they should contact her at least a day before that meeting.</p> <p>RC reported on the excellent open day which she and BB attended (September 23rd) and the amount of enthusiastic and positive feedback from families. She learned that staff would like, if possible, to see more of the governors. BB received a personal invitation from a member of staff. RC proposed that the GB spends a day in school to witness the way Oathall operates first-hand, and to meet students. It would in no way involve the governors scrutinising or expressing opinions on teaching and learning. She reminded the GB that OFSTED likes to see governors gaining this sort of understanding via 'hands-on' observation. ERZ has agreed that school captains and prefects could be involved in guiding the governors around school.</p> <p>There was a positive response to the idea from governors. VC felt that this would be very helpful for new governors; JH reported that he knows of other GBs which have made such visits and found them fantastic; BB felt that departments will be able to showcase the excellent work they are doing. Staff governor CM said that teachers feel very positive about governors visiting their classrooms. It is good, she said, to see interest from the governing body, and JP's recent visit</p>	

	<p>with ERZ was appreciated. RC and the clerk will begin the process of finding a date.</p>	RC/AC
14	<p>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</p> <p><u>Covid</u></p> <p>Testing in the first days of term was carried out at the Albermarle centre. It ran smoothly and was successful in causing as little disruption as possible to the start of teaching. ERZ thanked everyone involved in the testing effort.</p> <p>Press reports of high absences (as much as one child in twenty) and of resulting impact on schools, have not been reflected at Oathall. The sort of disruption seen in the summer term - caused by cases and having to send children home to isolate - is no longer seen.</p> <p>The overall attendance figure up to the day of the meeting was 95.2%. An analysis of reasons for absence includes only a small percentage related to Covid, from 0.4% in year 7 (overall attendance figure, as an example, 96.2%) to 0.6% in year 8, up to 1.0% in years 9 and 11. Two members of staff have had to take time off due to Covid - nine days of absence in total.</p> <p>Remote learning is still delivered to students at home, placing that extra burden on teachers. Nine students are currently learning at home.</p> <p>The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation and the chief medical officers have recently recommended that a vaccination be offered to the 12-15 age group. Schools will be asked to host the programme, which will be delivered by the local NHS trust (in line with the vaccination of all other age groups). There are no firm dates yet but the programme is likely to be delivered by the first or second week in November. ERZ has sent an interim letter to parents, giving notice of the programme while the school awaits information.</p> <p>Various pressure groups are making contact with Oathall, mostly challenging the decision to offer this age group vaccination in school. Some of these groups include Oathall parents. On the day of the meeting, ERZ had been informed of a 'cease and desist' order, claiming that he may be personally and criminally responsible for any harm that comes to a child as a result of vaccination. The school will not be involved with any clinical aspect of the vaccination process. Much public discourse centres around parental consent. ERZ reassured the governors that the NHS Trust will determine consent in all cases. If consent is given, a child will be offered the vaccine; if not, no vaccine will be offered. If consideration of the Gillick Competency is involved (the principle used to judge capacity in children to consent to medical treatment), decisions will not be made by Oathall staff; they will not even be made by NHS staff on site on the day of the programme. Healthcare professionals will take up the matter with families. Some parents are anxious that in some way their consent decision will be disregarded on the day and that their child will be vaccinated against their wishes. ERZ has given reassurance in all cases.</p> <p><u>Student matters</u></p> <p>Split lunch and break times have little negative impact on student experience, but consequences for staff and systems are emerging. There are some difficulties with staff physically moving between KS3 and KS4 for teaching; higher staffing costs are associated with split breaks; there</p>	

are some problems with links between older electronic/timetabling systems. The decision to split will be carefully reviewed over the coming few months, with input from Staff Voice.

Albemarle Centre

The alternative provision centre is operational, delivering a specific curriculum to a small number of students. EG will report on Oct 5th to SLT about the provision. Interior redecoration is complete, with work now due to start on the outside of the building.

GCSE assessment

OFQUAL has announced a decision to return, over the coming two years, to 'normal' grade allocations, after grade inflation during the pandemic. It is imagined that exams will happen next year, but some aspect of teacher assessment may also be considered. Students will receive notice of exam topics in some subjects, but not until February (at the earliest) to ensure that the full curriculum is taught for as long as possible. Some adaptations to subjects have been announced (e.g. in Science, formulae will be provided in exams so that students are not obliged to learn them).

Quality Assurance

Normality is returning in QA, with 'deep dives' happening in English this week, followed by Maths and then Science. ERZ had observed excellent English lessons on the day of the meeting.

Staff matters

Three LSAs have been recruited, to replace staff who have left and also to serve increased need in KS3. Amy Perou will leave at the end of the summer to join the East Sussex education team, and discussions are underway about how to replace her post – both in teaching and with access arrangement testing.

Premises

WS planners have informed ERZ that cost estimates for the planned work (including the dining hall and school entrance) were higher than the allocated budget. Fresh approaches must now be made to WS for additional budget, which will come mainly from Section 106 money. There will therefore be a pause in this project, but ERZ reassured the governors that he will continue to push, and will report to the GB.

Open Evening

Attendance was very good. Three ticketed sessions in the hall were enhanced by wonderful music from students – ERZ thanked CM. The new school captains gave an impressive performance on stage. A group of year 8s spoke eloquently in front of c.250 people about their experience of Oathall, which was especially good to hear after the limitations of Covid placed on them. Visitors praised both students and staff. ERZ expressed his thanks (in this meeting) to school staff for maintaining energy and enthusiasm over such a long day. Families must now return application forms by October 31st.

The timetable for tours of the school is full – there were many calls asking for tours following the open day. ERZ thanked Helen Parry for her work on scheduling. ERZ said that it is important for

	<p>parents and children to see the school on a normal day, e.g. to witness the calm atmosphere achieved at lesson changeover.</p> <p><u>Post-16 Evening</u> Held on September 30th, this was a well-attended and successful event. The presentation by members of staff that is usually delivered on the night was provided in advance via Loom, allowing more space in the dining and main halls, and more contributors. ERZ thanked the staff involved for an excellent evening.</p> <p>RC asked ERZ to thank all the staff involved in these events for their hard work and dedication, especially in effective marketing of the school.</p>	
15	<p>SAFEGUARDING BB thanked EG for her presentation to the FGB. She has a meeting with EG and Sue Watkin on 08/11/21 to look at the Central Single Record System. She urged all governors to read part one of <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021</i>, reminding them of their shared responsibility for safeguarding alongside school staff.</p>	
16	<p>PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS No report. There will be a meeting soon between relevant governors and ERZ.</p>	
17	<p>ATTENDANCE No separate report.</p>	
18	<p>GOVERNORS' VISITS</p> <p>BB reported that she and JB recently had a very good meeting with Faye Hatchard and Zoe Froud as part of their strand/CDP work. She told the governors that Zoe is passionate in her role looking at homework within the school. A report of this meeting will be shared with governors. BB said that, this year, she and JB have decided to focus on a single set of questions, about discipline, to which they will return at each meeting with SLT. Their aim is to build on one topic and be able accurately to report progress in the summer term.</p> <p>BB said that she was delighted to see the thesauruses recently added to the English department, and would love to see them in other departments, for improving use of language.</p> <p>NW took a school tour at the open day. She said it was very interesting to talk to the two students who guided her (along with some prospective parents), about their school experience through the pandemic. She said it was a very good evening.</p>	
19	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AC reminded governors who have not yet returned their Pecuniary Interest forms and signed Codes of Conduct, to do so. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CM reported that she has completed WS Governor Effective Monitoring training. • RC hopes to discuss a social for the governors with CRC, before Christmas. 	
	<i>The meeting closed at 20:40 hrs</i>	
	DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS Autumn term: November 4 th ; December 6 th To be held virtually until otherwise decided.	

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

FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
24.05.21	Share report of Strand 2a	CRC	As time permits	
04.10.21	Read Part 1 of <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021</i> . Let the clerk know when you have done so.	All governors	asap	
04.10.21	Find a date for a GB day in school.	RC/AC	As time permits	
Actions completed				
06.09.21	Ask ZF for changes to Community Wellbeing policy.	AC	asap	yes
06.09.21	Consider asking Emma Green to deliver safeguarding training at the Oct FGB	ERZ	asap	yes