



## OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

**Minutes of a meeting held virtually via Zoom on 6<sup>th</sup>  
 December 2021**

<p><b>Present:</b> Brenda Brown (Vice-chair, BB); Rowena Chalk (Chair, RC); Carol MacTaggart (CM); Jon Parry (JP); Eddie Rodriguez (ERZ); Nicky Wastie (NW); Richard Carter (CRC); James Horsman (JH); Vicky Cobb (VC)</p> <p><b>In attendance:</b> Zoe Froud (ZF)</p> <p><b>Minutes:</b> Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)</p>	
1	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>          Julie Burgess (JB)</p>
2	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>          None</p>
3	<p><b>CDP REPORT – PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT STRAND – CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>ZF reported to the governors on all aspects of this strand, under the headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• Enrichment</li> <li>• Student leadership</li> </ul> <p>Her Powerpoint presentation is stored with these minutes.          She reminded the governors of OFSTED’s interest in the wider development of students and the importance of preparation for later life, and gave a comprehensive and detailed review of recent work, and programmes in development at Oathall.</p> <p><u>Wellbeing</u></p> <p>ZF spoke about the government’s focus on student wellbeing, and funding made available (and guaranteed until 2024). A key development at Oathall is that the school will be part of the new Mid-Sussex ‘Thought-Full’ Mental Health Support Team for Schools – a joint initiative of WS and the NHS. A new Educational Mental Health Practitioner, Tracy-Ann Swaffer (employed by WSCC) will arrive at Oathall in January, and ZF is undertaking Senior Mental Health Lead training. Students with mild to moderate mental health needs will be identified via rigorous triage, and supported via a whole-school approach. ZF described a programme of CPD workshops offered by the team and updated termly, which is open to staff (and to parents in some cases). Tracy will provide 6-10 cognitive-therapy-based sessions to students identified as suitable.</p> <p><b>RC praised the initiative and described it as exciting. She asked for reassurance that this work will not replace any of the help currently secured for students as part of the One Door/YES (Youth Emotional Support) provision. She reminded the meeting of the significant difficulties that the DSL and her team have faced in arranging support for students, particularly educational psychologists, and the large body of work already done.</b></p>

ZF replied that the programme will run alongside the help already in place. Students will still be directed to YES if that is the appropriate route, and equally there may be students on the YES waiting list who can be brought into the new programme in school. **RC wanted to be sure that communication between the various bodies will be effective.** VC suggested that all the bodies involved will communicate using the CareNotes system employed by the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. ZF said that at recent all-stakeholder meetings, a clear focus has been good communication, and avoiding any instances of more than one provider working with a student. A key aspect of the new team's work will be assessment, and regular meetings to make sure that all referrals, to whichever body, are efficiently made. She added that it may be possible (depending on numbers) to offer support more quickly – seven days to a referral rather than the seven months now common for referral to outside support. The MHST programme is likely to help those students who might otherwise go 'under the radar' because they are not obvious candidates for support. RC agreed that this localised and targeted help can prevent future problems arising, and therefore outside referrals being needed.

**RC asked if Oathall is the only school in the locality included in the programme.** ZF replied that four secondary schools and seven to eight primaries are linked to the hub. Four Educational Mental Health Practitioners will be placed in schools during their training, and will serve the hub schools once trained. Tracy will manage a caseload in Oathall and in a primary school. ZF will share with governors the excellent case studies provided by the MHST. An important aspect of the work of the team will be in giving school staff advice and guidance to support students *before* they present with more serious problems, with the aim of keeping them in education.

**JP noted the focus on students with mild to moderate mental health needs. He asked if these students are currently missed, on occasion. Is this programme additional to what is currently in place?** ZF replied that it is additional: the students involved may not have come to the attention of safeguarding staff before. In team meetings, for instance, a tutor might report changes in behaviour or other concerning signs, and might give the name of the student who could benefit, to the head of year, who can then refer to the DSL. ZF, Jane Newnham and Emma Green can then arrange assessment. Jane is producing a form to allow this type of referral. ERZ confirmed that the new programme is complementary to what is already on offer. It is also limited by staff time (Tracy will work one day a week) and its methodology will only suit certain students - those most likely to respond - and will aim to equip them to deal with their issues. ZF added that a student's initial meeting with Tracy will be crucial.

Oathall hopes to gain a Wellbeing Award for Schools, by September 2022.

#### Enrichment

ZF presented the wide range of Oathall after-school clubs and activities. The online Evolve booking system, currently used for trips, has been extended to cover clubs, so that staff and parents can monitor attendance. ZF sends out a termly programme of clubs; parents or students book places. Staff take a register during the session, and this data is used to analyse which groups of students book and attend activities and clubs e.g. PP students, SEND students. A secondary benefit is that Evolve helps with effective safeguarding – parents and staff can check where a child is. ZF presented some of the data from recent enrichment activities and added that she aims both to increase the number of students attending an activity (currently 44%) and to improve attendance among vulnerable groups.

Trips and visits are a focus for enrichment, especially because the pandemic has meant that many students have had no opportunities for trips in their Oathall career to date.

#### Student leadership

	<p>ZF showed the governors the many and varied opportunities for students to take on leadership roles – a key element of education - throughout their time at school. About one in three students is currently in a leadership role, from mentoring to ambassador/representative roles to school captain.</p> <p><b>CRC asked about the percentage of PP students in a leadership position, which he noted fell as they rose up the school, while the percentage of all students in leadership roles increased as they approached year 11. He asked if this is because PP students have all acted in leadership roles already by the time they reach year 11, or if they feel that the leadership positions of later school years are ‘not for them’.</b> ZF replied that at their recent strand meeting she talked about this at length with CM and JP, and feels that this may be a potential question about student aspiration, which she will look into further with focus groups.</p> <p>ZF added that this work sits close to her heart, and that she has very much enjoyed what she has done so far. The governors thanked ZF for her presentation and she left the meeting at 19:50hrs.</p> <p>RC thanked JP and CM for the report of their meeting with ZF. JP said that the meeting also addressed how Personal Development relates to the CDP, and how changes to the tutor programme and house structure have impacted this aspect of school life. He reported that the changes have been positively received by students and staff. JP and CM will be following up on all these matters. They asked ZF in their recent meeting how the impact of the PD programme can be measured. JP reported that there will be a ‘deep dive’ into its effectiveness in the future. He said that the QA instigated for the tutor programme will also offer good opportunities for measurement. There is plenty still to be done, he said, especially in improving data among PP students. He added that ZF stepped in the last minute to cover for Emma Green, and had prepared thoroughly. He added that her passion for the work came across clearly.</p>	
4	<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 04.11.21</b></p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2021 were tabled to the meeting and approved as a true record. Part II minutes were tabled. The clerk asked the GB to approve a clarification provided by JB before the meeting and the GB then approved the Part IIs as a true record. They will be signed by the Chair after the meeting and sent to the clerk.</p> <p>Note: CRC gave his approval of the November minutes - via Zoom chat to the clerk - before having to leave the meeting at 20:00 to attend an emergency work meeting. He said that, having been seconded onto the finance committee, he is fully familiar with the three-year budget (see item 11, below) and notes its reception by the full GB. He had no comment on the policies (item 10, below) and said that the Off-site Education policy answers many of his previous queries.</p>	
6	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</b> None</p>	
7	<p><b>URGENT MATTERS</b> None</p>	
8	<p><b>DECISION ON WHETHER TO MEET FACE-TO-FACE IN JANUARY</b></p> <p>The governors made a unanimous decision to meet remotely in January because of the high rates of infection in the local area. They will make decisions month by month, according to the current Covid case situation.</p>	

10	<p><b>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVIEW</b></p> <p><u>Model West Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy</u></p> <p>JP said that he found the document valuable and full of good guidance, and that it brought home to him the magnitude of the GB’s responsibility in this area. <b>He drew the governors’ attention to several serious errors in the table of contents, and technical error messages, which result in considerable confusion in the body of the text.</b> ERZ added that the policy (a model from WS, only recently provided to schools) also includes a disappointingly large number of typos and other mistakes. <b>JP asked if there is an opportunity to feed back to WS,</b> and ERZ replied that Emma Green may well already have done so in the course of her work with the policy and other members of staff. The GB agreed to approve the policy in principle, motivated by an urgent need to have a safeguarding policy in place. ERZ will ask for the errors to be corrected in-house, and will give feedback to WS on the accuracy problems.</p> <p><u>Inclusion policy and Outdoor Education and Off-site Educational Visits policy</u> These policies were approved without changes.</p>	ERZ
11	<p><b>BUSINESS REPORT</b></p> <p>RC reported that the Pay Committee and Finance Committee recently met. Governors in the committee on this occasion: RC, BB, CRC.</p> <p>The pay committee agreed the suggested pay awards presented by ERZ. The annual review of ERZ’s pay will be undertaken on 13/12/21 by RC and BB. The full GB will be able to receive the decision at the January FGB meeting.</p> <p>The three-year budget was signed off by the committee under delegated powers. The relevant documents had been shared with the GB by the clerk before the meeting.</p>	
12	<p><b>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES</b></p> <p>RC reported that she and ERZ had attended a productive and positive meeting of all four heads and four chairs of governors from the federation schools, on 10/11/21. ERZ said that the meeting reaffirmed the schools’ commitment to work together, particularly in their shared decision to be part of the GLF teaching hub for training Early Careers Teachers.</p>	
13	<p><b>CHAIR'S REPORT</b></p> <p>All matters were dealt with under previous items, or appear in confidential minutes</p>	
14	<p><b>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</b></p> <p><u>Covid</u></p> <p>ERZ had expressed a hope at the November FGB that following a post-half-term spike in cases, and resulting absences, there would be a decline as periods of isolation came to an end. But there was in fact a spike in the following week, mostly among year 8 students, and daily cases remained high over the next two weeks. A decision was made to reinstate the wearing of face masks in communal areas, and reaffirm the school-wide one-way system. Subsequently, WS and then central government advised the reintroduction of these same safety measures in all secondary schools. The students are largely supportive, although more work is having to be done this time around by staff to ensure compliance. Following advice from Paul Wagstaff at WS</p>	

to reconsider events usually held at the end of the autumn term, a decision was made to cancel Carols in the Barn, because of the nature of the event (group singing), and the challenge of accommodating a crowd in that space. The Christmas concert (Dec 7<sup>th</sup>) will go ahead, with two performances, limited numbers and good ventilation in the far larger space of the hall. Staff were conscious of the need to give students an opportunity, after such a long period, to perform to a live audience. CM added that students are excited about the upcoming concert. Amid concerns about insurance as well as safety, the trip to La Rochelle, and the German exchange programme, have been cancelled.

Covid absences fell over the two weeks preceding this meeting and continue to do so. On Thursday December 2<sup>nd</sup> there were 16 absences due to Covid, on Friday two, and on the Monday of the meeting, none. ERZ reminded the governors of the highest number recorded on a single day, 169 Covid absences. This academic year, circa 400 students have had Covid, mostly with mild symptoms.

#### Covid vaccinations

After concerns reported to the governors in November, the vaccination programme went smoothly on the 19<sup>th</sup>. About 100 students were disappointed not to be able to be vaccinated because they'd had Covid recently and therefore could not have the jab.

#### Attendance

Covid cases are removed from attendance statistics. Attendance on the day of the meeting stood at 94.9%, a fairly stable figure over recent months.

ERZ will share a SIMS report after this meeting and the clerk will send it to the governors.

#### Mock exams

Reports indicate that the students have responded well to exams, and are taking their studies seriously, despite all the uncertainties they face. The DfE says that exams *will* happen in summer 2022, although it has published a 'Plan B' (after schools struggled with last-minute information in 2021). All year 11 students are to be put through three sets of mock exams (in the autumn, spring and summer terms) with summer assessments only occurring if summer exams are cancelled due to Covid. The amount of time spent in these mocks should equal that spent in standard summer exams. The DfE expects that if a student misses a mock, they must be assessed later, and using different assessment materials (e.g. exam papers). This will mean a large extra workload for heads of faculty and exams staff. This term, for instance, 'mop-up' mocks will be run right up to the penultimate day of term. Tracy Andrews (exams officer) was absent after the first two weeks of the three-week mocks period. Jo Godbolt took over management of exams and Tracy's thorough organisation and high levels of efficiency allowed other members of staff to step in effectively. ERZ also expressed his thanks to the senior invigilators who stepped forward and helped run exams, and BB added thanks to Elaine Lazenby and the clerk, who took on exam admin roles. ERZ reminded the governors of the complexity of the exams process, especially in the area of special needs students and access arrangements.

#### Admissions

The admissions authority has issued indicative first choice numbers (firmer numbers arrive in March). This number only includes children in the locality, and is up an encouraging 15%.

#### Staff matters

Staff absence among staff due to Covid has been relatively light, particularly when compared with other schools. On the day of the meeting one teacher was absent, and five members of support staff.

- Pauline Gaston leaves the Maths department at the end of this term to take up a position in the WS Alternative Provision college.
- Amy Perou leaves after fourteen years at Oathall to take up a position in the East Sussex education team.

The change in the management of our seven trainee teachers, due to the early careers framework, has brought a significant extra workload.

#### Pay

Discussions are ongoing with the NJC about non-teacher pay scales. ERZ will keep the GB posted.

Premises:

#### Phone lines

All ISDN lines have been replaced with internet lines, by the school's ISP.

#### Art Kiln

The elderly kiln is beyond repair and will be replaced at a cost of £2.9k. Funds will come from in-year savings.

#### 'Top eight' classrooms (above the offices corridor)

This 1970s building needs roof repairs. A large proportion of each quote (c.£17k) is for scaffolding. Jo Godbolt is talking to the WS about making savings by doing other necessary work at the same time e.g. guttering, downpipes.

#### Fencing

Fencing along the edge of the nature reserve/back of all-weather pitch has been replaced. This should discourage intruders, a problem for some time at this spot.

#### Electronic sign-in

A new system is due to be introduced, with a tablet on the reception desk to allow visitors and staff to sign in and out. This will aid security and fire safety, giving clearer information about who is in school at any given moment.

#### Hall developments

The school and PTA are planning the replacement of the old hall chairs.

#### CO<sup>2</sup> monitors

The DfE provided these monitors and they are now situated at strategic points around school. ERZ said he was unsure how much information they provide. They indicate when a window should be opened, but lower measurements are not always the result. Extraction systems are needed in these circumstances. Devices are being provided by the DfE to special schools and SEN schools only. The DfE is due to introduce a marketplace for schools to buy devices, hopefully before Xmas (though there is no word yet).

	<p><u>Drinking water</u>          Two units for the filling of water bottles have been installed in outside areas (fountains being no longer suitable in the pandemic). They consist of three taps in a single unit. This should ease pressure on the canteen, where students have been refilling their bottles.</p>	
15	<p><b>SAFEGUARDING</b>          BB met Emma Green in November, and is confident that safeguarding issues are being handled well. She reminded the governors of the recent shocking death of a child in Solihull, and said that primary school staff in that case had reported their concerns to the local authority. The incident highlights the primary importance of safeguarding in the monitoring work of every GB. BB thanked Sue Watkin for her patience in demonstrating the Single Records System. BB pointed to her safeguarding report, shared before the meeting.</p>	
16	<p><b>PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS</b>          No separate report.</p>	
17	<p><b>ATTENDANCE</b>          No separate report.</p>	
18	<p><b>GOVERNORS' VISITS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NW acted as invigilator for three exams. She reported that behaviour was good and the students took the exams seriously.</li> <li>• BB spent two days Chichester City College, sitting on an appeals panel that investigated challenges to the exclusions of more than one student. The cases were complex and the process sometimes distressing. BB said that she learned a lot about how a GB should look at exclusions, at school policies, and at how far a school must go to try to keep a child in school. She added that Oathall must ensure it gets the process right.</li> </ul>	
19	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>RC thanked the governors for their work over this term, especially attending meetings remotely.</p>	
	<p><i>The meeting closed at 20:50 hrs</i></p>	
	<p><b>DATE &amp; VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS</b>          Spring term: Jan 10th; Feb 7th; Mar 7th; Apr 4<sup>th</sup>.</p>	

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

FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
06.12.21	Safeguarding policy: arrange for WS errors to be corrected; give feedback to WS on accuracy problems.	ERZ	asap	Policy now corrected and on website (late Dec '21)
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	1 response still awaited 06.12.21
<b>Actions completed</b>				
04.11.21	Send reminder to governors who have still to return a signed Code of Conduct.	AC	asap	yes