



OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

**Minutes of a meeting held virtually via Zoom on 7th
 February 2022**

<p>Present: 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);</p> <p>In attendance: Toby Houghton (TDH)</p> <p>Minutes: Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)</p>	
1	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Julie Burgess (JB); Vicky Cobb (VC). Their apologies were accepted by the governors.</p>
2	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST JP declared an interest: his wife Helen Parry prepared the Early Career Teacher Policy. He refrained from comment on the policy.</p>
3	<p>YEAR 11 REPORT</p> <p>TDH gave an overview of the return to exams this coming summer, including the guidance and subject-by-subject mitigations provided by the DfE following significant disruption to the current year 11's learning experience. He reminded the governors of the DfE's contingency plan, to be put in place should the exam season be cancelled, and the stringent requirements for assessment, should that occur. TDH noted that the full set of mocks taken in November at Oathall mean that, if exams <i>are</i> cancelled, the school is already fully compliant with the guidance at this stage. A further set of mocks in core subjects will be held in March, and teachers will be ready to prepare teacher assessed grades if exams are cancelled (as was done in May '21). This assures that the school will be fully compliant for the year. He showed the governors a graphic from OFQUAL's press release on the day of the meeting. Schools had been told in advance that there would be a narrower assessment focus for exams in English Literature, Geography and History (subjects that are heavy in content), with an element of choice for teachers and students. The February 7th announcement does not seem to allow very much narrowing of what should be taught, and questions may refer to other elements of the syllabus. It is therefore likely that students will have to revise the full specification, but TDH will gather further advice from heads of faculty. He will give the governors an update when possible.</p> <p>TDH explained how OFQUAL is aiming to return to the year 11 grade distributions typical in pre-pandemic years. Teacher assessed grades for GCSE in 2020 and 2021 came out higher than would normally have been seen with exams. OFQUAL's goal is to avoid disadvantaging the current year 11s as they approach standard exams, especially after the disruption they have suffered. 2022 will be a transition year. OFQUAL will aim for grade boundaries that sit</p>

	<p>somewhere between pre-pandemic levels and the levels seen in 2021. TDH showed the governors data for 2019 and 2021, in core subjects, and also EBacc scores, along with marks from the recent mocks. He reminded the governors of the lack of good data throughout the pandemic. This data gives some guidance on likely outcomes, and also guidance on where focus is needed. He described the measures now being taken to address any weaknesses e.g. teaching is being targeted on students’ reading and understanding of English exam questions, and there is interleaving of topics for year 10s (who have been particularly affected by the amount of remote learning). Intervention sessions for individual students are already underway (after school and sometimes during non-exam subject lessons). The national tutoring programme is being employed. Some teaching staff are delivering tutoring sessions, and a number of support staff are currently undertaking training delivered by the DfE to allow them to deliver subject-specific tutoring. The support staff programme will give extra flexibility in when one-to-one and small-group sessions can be delivered.</p> <p>JH asked about the shake-up of GCSEs talked about in the press over recent years, especially the balance of coursework and exams. Does TDH detect any changes on the way? TDH replied that there is no mention of such change at the moment – not even a review timescale; the national priority seems to be the return to pre-pandemic grade distributions.</p> <p>JP asked if the lower grades seen in mocks result is typical. TDH said that it is, especially in core subjects. The school uses the results to put interventions in place, and then monitors the impact.</p> <p>RC questioned how fair the return to exams is for this cohort of students. She reminded the meeting of the considerable mental health problems among schoolchildren following the pandemic. TDH felt that, whatever method of assessment were used, there would be an element of unfairness. Some schools have been very much harder hit by Covid cases, self-isolation and absences when close contacts were sent home. All students are now being put through the same process, and with no input from teachers in their assessment. TDH felt that we may find some teacher assessment being employed later, e.g. to support the appeals process - when families may point out how much education their child has missed. TDH agreed that the mental health of students must continue to be carefully monitored. RC added that of students assessed without exams during Covid may have ‘labels’ applied to them in the future, and TDH agreed, expressing the hope that colleges and other providers of further education will be mindful.</p> <p>The Chair thanked TDH for his report and he left the meeting at 19:30.</p> <p>ERZ reminded the governors of the thousands of children nationally who have not returned to school at all after the pandemic, have not accessed any education in year 11, and will not be helped by the measures announced by OFQUAL on the day of the meeting.</p> <p>RC asked how students who miss an exam because they have Covid will be assessed. ERZ said there has not yet been any new guidance.</p>	
4	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10.01.22</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2022 were tabled to the meeting and approved as a true record. Part II minutes were tabled and approved as a true record. They will be signed by the Chair after the meeting and sent to the clerk.</p>	

	<p>RC mentioned an action point from the January meeting – arranging of an update of the Complaints Policy according to changes made to the WS model. ERZ said that this update is almost completed and will be brought to the governors shortly.</p> <p>RC and ERZ reported that the school policy on medical conditions is also being prepared. The governors will be asked to decide whether this policy will be stand-alone, or will be integrated into the Medicines in Schools policy according to the WS model. RC suggested that JB be asked to take a thorough look at the new material, given her medical expertise.</p>	
	CRC joined the meeting at 19:32 following travel delays.	
5	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS None</p>	
6	<p>URGENT MATTERS None</p>	
7	<p>DECISION ON WHETHER TO MEET FACE-TO-FACE IN MARCH The governors gave their individual views on whether to meet virtually or in person. Many governors had no strong feelings, and RC suggested that the meeting should be planned as a face-to-face event, but could be cancelled if a significant spike in Covid cases occurs, up to the day of the meeting. She reported that the four Federation heads will attend the April FGB as part of a full round of meetings with all their governing bodies, and it would be preferable to hold that FGB face-to-face.</p>	
8	<p>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVIEW</p> <p><u>Teacher’s Pay Policy</u> JP suggested that the mention on p.16 of the Pay Committee holding delegated powers might helpfully be moved to a higher position in the document. ERZ reminded the GB that the policy is a WS model, and the order of items is not determined by the school. The clerk asked a question on behalf of JB (absent for this meeting): what does ‘a period of safeguarding’ mean in Section 3 of the policy, referencing pay determination? ERZ explained the meaning of ‘safeguarding’ in this context: it is the protection of pay for three years when a post is altered, or is no longer required by the school. The policy was approved without change.</p> <p><u>Early Career Teacher Policy</u> This is a new policy based on the Early Careers Framework which came into force in September. JP declared a declaration of interest (see item 2 of the agenda, above). The policy was approved without change.</p>	
9	<p>BUSINESS REPORT</p> <p>RC reported on news of possible extra funds for the school: (1) government funding to counteract the increase in NI contributions. (2) money to offset the rise in fuel bills. ERZ agreed that in April, when contributions go up, there will be funding coming in. This is not new money, but offsets additional salary expenditure.</p>	

	<p><u>Chairs</u> BB and RC reported that the new chairs purchased for the hall (with partial funding from the PTA) are a great improvement on the old ones, and ERZ was pleased that the chairs are in place in time for the upcoming production of Matilda (Feb 16, 17 & 18). Several governors took up CM's offer of tickets for the production. Its licence has had to be extended because of demand for tickets.</p>	
10	<p>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES RC said she had been obliged to send apologies to a recent meeting of the Federation schools at Imberhorne. ERZ reported that work is underway on the memorandum of understanding that will allow the federation to move forward and affirm its ways of working. He added that the Federation headteachers hope to attend an FGB at each school (see above, item 7) over the next few months, in order to talk to governors about what the Federation is about.</p>	
11	<p>CHAIR'S REPORT No separate report.</p>	
12	<p>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</p> <p><u>Covid</u> ERZ reminded the governors that Covid restrictions ended on January 26th after three weeks of term, preceded a week before by the end of the requirement to wear face coverings in classrooms. He observes a welcome air of normality around the school, although the one-way system is still in place (it is useful for non-Covid reasons). The school still has to send a daily attendance return to the DfE. Today, 63 students were absent with Covid, and there was a similar number last Friday. Numbers rose through last week. Currently year 9 is seeing more cases; previously it was year 7.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u> Attendance on the day of the meeting (not including Covid cases) stood at 94.6%. The hard work of the pastoral team contributes to this high figure.</p> <p><u>Vaccinations</u> The second round of vaccinations will be held in school on Friday February 11th. No protests are anticipated. On the first day, about 100 students could not be offered a vaccination because of a recent Covid diagnosis, and they will be offered their first jab. The remainder of students will be offered their second.</p> <p><u>Year 9 Parent Consultation Evening & Year 9 Options Evening</u> These were held virtually on Thursday February 3rd.</p> <p><u>Staff matters</u> Absence due to Covid remains low, providing continuity for students.</p> <p>Maths: At a round of interviews on the day of the meeting it was not possible to recruit a teacher to replace a colleague who left in December, and there will be another attempt to recruit</p>	

Science:

Rose Lord has been appointed as a Science teacher. Rose is currently completing her ECT programme and will start at Oathall in September, replacing a teacher who will move to a new position in Worthing.

ERZ thanked JH for his support in the interview process for these posts.

New Assistant Headteacher

Shortlisting is complete. There was a large field of applicants, and strong candidates. The interview process will take place on February 11th and 14th. ERZ thanked RC in advance for her involvement.

A staff disciplinary hearing

ERZ thanked BB for her support in this matter last week. He is unable to comment further because the window for appeal is still open.

Attendance Officer

Tracey MacDiarmid has joined the school as attendance officer, replacing a member of staff who was recently appointed as a deputy head of year.

Laura Gyngell returns from maternity leave next week, and staff are very much looking forward to seeing her.

DT support role

The school was asked to provide support for a DT teacher at another WS school, and Pete Robinson has agreed to take on that work.

Headteacher mentoring

ERZ has been asked to mentor for a new WS headteacher.

The farm

The school provided the Schools Forum with the information it required to allow an application for an increase in the 'exceptional circumstances' annual grant for the farm. This funding will now be forthcoming, in this financial year. Oathall must now submit a report - by September - on the operation of the farm.

Matilda

ERZ said that the show is a significant and exciting opportunity to bring the whole school together following difficult times in Covid.

Public Speaking

This competition has restarted, and Oathall had great success in the first round held at Downlands over the weekend of February 6th. Both our teams (led by Carly Perou) won, and now go through to the next round. Of 8 available individual awards, 7 went to Oathall students.

RC asked about parents who don't like engaging with the school remotely (e.g. Parent Consultations). What facilities are offered to them? ERZ replied that parents are always welcome to visit school, but the vast majority are in favour of online consultations. They are often able to see more teachers than was possible in the past. The length of each appointment is automatically set by the system, and past disappointments - being unable to talk to a teacher

	because of an over-run – has been eliminated. CM agreed that these events tend to run more smoothly, and that parents are positive about the online method.	
13	SAFEGUARDING BB will be seeing Emma Green and Sue Watkin for her regular checks and discussion, in the second half of this term.	
14	PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS RC attended a PP deep dive last Monday. One set of students she observed was engaged, the other less so. Questioning of the second group revealed that they tended to forget from day to day what problems had arisen, and so they struggled in conversations with their mentors. RC and Laura Griffiths (in charge of the deep dive) made suggestions about how they might keep a record, and students will speak to their mentors. Students also said that they did not like being pulled out of tutor time to see mentors, because they might miss out on activities. There will be a discussion on the best times to hold mentor sessions. RC felt that these students were keen to make progress, but in need of ways to do so. ERZ suggested that Laura might address the governors on the results of this deep dive, and RC agreed.	
15	ATTENDANCE No separate report.	
16	GOVERNORS' VISITS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JH visited school for recruitments panels - maths and science staff. • BB attended a staff disciplinary hearing. She has completed Schools Exclusions Appeals training, which qualifies her for the next two years. 	
19	ANY OTHER BUSINESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NW reported that the new summer WS governor training programme will be issued after half term. • CRC thanked CM and her team for their hard work on Matilda, which he is confident will be a magnificent production. 	
	<i>The meeting closed at 20:00 hrs</i>	
	DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS Spring term: Mar 7 th ; Apr 4 th . Room CR1 for the March meeting.	

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

FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
10.01.21	Arrange updating of the Complaints Policy according to changes made to the WS model, and bring it before the GB.	ERZ	For Mar FGB if possible	
Actions completed				
10.01.21	Research school policy on length of data storage, and share with governors.	AC	asap	yes