



OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting held on 11th July 2022

<p>Present: Brenda Brown (Vice-chair, BB); Richard Carter (CRC); Rowena Chalk (RC); Carol MacTaggart (CM); Jon Parry (JP); Eddie Rodriguez (ERZ); Nicky Wastie (NW); Sarah Wild (SW)</p> <p>In attendance: Faye Hatchard (FHD)</p> <p>Minutes: Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)</p>	
1	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE James Horsman (JH) ; Vicky Cobb (VC)</p>
	<p>RC asked SW to introduce herself as the new parent governor, and all present introduced themselves in return.</p> <p>RC announced that she has received BB's resignation. Brenda will leave the governing body at the end of the autumn term. VC will take over the challenging and busy job of safeguarding governor.</p>
2	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST none</p>
3	<p>SLT REPORT from FHD - THE COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FHD presented CDP priorities for the next academic year. Considerable time has been spent in reviewing the '21-'22 CDP to inform the new plan, and for the first time since the pandemic, rich data is available. Staff have been able to use robust research during the planning process. FHD reminded the GB of the four key areas of focus in the CDP, and the fact that within these, any strategic objective might be at 'investigation', 'implementation' or 'embedding stage'. She explained the strategic objectives in each area (8 objectives in all) and highlighted the two members of SLT attached to each. Where previous CDPs have tended to involve a single SLT member working alone, the new plan encourages in-depth discussion, and more than one viewpoint.</p> <p>FHD gave examples of work underway under the following headings within each area of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Education • Behaviour and Attitudes • Personal Development. <p>She presented new shared documents that will support work across the school. She reminded the governors that any project may, through ongoing review, be found to be less useful than others and set aside; the day-to-day content of the plan is flexible.</p> <p>Under the final area of focus, Leadership and Management, ERZ reported that work will be done to explore what the many features of BromCom (the new school information management</p>

system) can offer. Referring to a second strategic objective under the same area of focus ('effective and holistic senior leadership responsibilities') he reported that he and RC would be working on how to best utilise the senior team, especially so that the governors can hold the school to account. RC said that with SLT governance of the CDP being far more collaborative, governors will not be limited to a single area of school life, and will not risk staleness or reluctance to change. Governors can have access to any member of the SLT in their monitoring work.

With reference to the final objective, on effective management of resources in the light of increasing student numbers, ERZ reminded the GB of the benefits of a CDP that includes consideration of the longer term, and of the wider context. He also reminded the governors of the much larger and more detailed document that lies behind the CDP presented to them at the meeting.

FHD presented a concise document called 'Oathall's Important Goals'. This list of six aspirational goals are informed by - and feed into - all projects and all aspects of the CDP (e.g. the goal 'A vibrant school, where staff enjoy their work and can fulfil career ambitions' will inform the staff appraisal system). Keywords and elements of this document will be displayed around school. Many governors agreed that a short set of clear goals, encompassing all aspects of school, life is preferable to a single 'strapline'. They felt that this list will be very helpful when placed on the school website, to make clear Oathall's vision.

BB asked where safeguarding will appear in the CDP; she felt that such a major issue (and a major responsibility of the governors) should feature. FHD replied that the clear and comprehensive page lying behind each objective in the 'front page' CPD has safeguarding imperatives woven into it. ERZ added that the CDP is not a panacea; it does not include every detail of the school's ongoing work, and safeguarding lies behind nearly everything delivered. The CDP is meant as a plan for moving the school forward, as distinct from consideration of the day to day (e.g. the decision to make entrances safer was driven by safeguarding concerns, but the project would not appear in a CPD). ERZ asked how BB might like to see safeguarding exemplified in the plan. **BB suggested that an objective could appear under the fourth area of focus, Leadership and Management.** ERZ asked for a specific objective, and **BB mentioned the training of DSLs.** ERZ replied that the new team, and a new DSL in post next year, should answer any questions about delivery of safeguarding. FHD added that BB might like to read the SEF to see measurement of Oathall's high performance in safeguarding, and that this might go some way to explaining why there is no specific safeguarding objective in this year's CDP. ERZ added that OFSTED will want to see our outstanding SEF when judging the school's ability to keep children safe. **CM suggested that a safeguarding item could be explicitly added under objective 1 or 4.**

CRC asked about the goals document. He pointed out that success in achieving a CDP objective will bring with it a set of student and staff behaviours and attitudes. He suggested that an exercise should be undertaken to ask what the school would expect these to be, if objectives are achieved. In this way staff could more clearly connect back to the goals when measuring success (via whatever means are available). He said that care should be taken to ensure that the consequent behaviours and attitudes are not in conflict with the goals e.g. high aspiration might be found to be in conflict with compassion. There are two separate and specific activities going on, he said: (1) a set of institutional implementations to achieve the school's goals and (2) a focus on attitudes and behaviours. Not to link them explicitly seems eccentric.

	<p>Links would make the process of assessment more straightforward. FHD replied that both documents will be under review and subject to change, and that the larger document can reference this.</p> <p>FHD reported on the June 20th shared federation schools INSET. 49 science teachers came to Oathall, while the other three schools hosted other subjects. Faculties looked jointly at their curriculum maps/plans, and learned a great deal about different ways of working, with several subjects altering faculty development plans as a result of the day. In addition to very useful collaborative work in taught subjects, the SENDCos reported how positive it was to share experiences, and they will be creating a shared plan.</p> <p>Staff evaluation forms showed very high levels of appreciation for the INSET. Staff networked widely and created subject WhatsApp groups.</p> <p>CM agreed that it was a very good day, in which music teachers had an unusual opportunity to work in a larger team, and learned a lot about each other's work e.g. Sackville focusses on sound production and use of computers, where Oathall leans towards performance. Staff at all the schools are likely to consider taking on some elements of what is done elsewhere.</p> <p>FHD reported that next year's INSET is being planned, and is likely to be at Oathall. The aim is to engage a speaker e.g. Geoff Barton, literacy expert.</p> <p>The momentum in collaborative working will be maintained via subject network meetings.</p> <p>FHD added that subject teachers are now more likely to make direct contact with colleagues across the federation, as SLT members have done for some time. There will be a new Joint Coaching Model across the four schools to support wellbeing, especially at senior level, and joint 'Get Into Teaching' events will be continued.</p> <p>ERZ added that this INSET has brought an understanding of the benefits of the federation to the whole staff body, where before it has been chiefly senior leaders and ECTs who have seen a positive impact.</p> <p>The governors thanked FHD and she left the meeting at 19:45.</p>	
4	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13.06.22</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 13TH June 2022 were tabled to the meeting. They were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair. Part II minutes of the same meeting were tabled and approved as a true record. They were signed by the vice-chair.</p>	
5	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</p> <p>RC reminded the GB that the Celebration Evening is July 12th, the day after this meeting.</p>	
6.	<p>REVIEW OF 'PREPARATION FOR OFSTED' TRAINING</p> <p>Governors reported on their experience of the evening. There was a wide discussion about how the governors might best prepare for a visit from OFSTED. Many saw a need for a consistent message, and for evidence in support of that message. JP felt that while the GB has many enthusiastic and thorough discussions about the direction of the college, there is a need to evidence that monitoring and questioning.</p> <p>RC said that training should be a focus, and CM and RC agreed that a session led by NW (training governor) could set a training programme for the GB. CM added that, once the SLT responsibilities and governor roles are in place, the GB will be able to plan its training more effectively. RC and NW will visit this in September.</p> <p>CRC said that the GB should make sure that the bodies work brought before them by SLT members can be succinctly summed up in discussions with OFSTED. Governors need to be certain of their 'top-down' understanding of college goals, and how those goals are</p>	RC/NW

	<p>disseminated into day-to-day work, so that they reason independently when answering questions. 'Learning lines' will not show how much the GB does its monitoring, and how much governors know the school. JP agreed: he feels he is able to extract key points from strand meetings and share them with the GB, especially because they form part of his own experience. RC reminded the governors that they have a very short time with inspectors, often only 15 minutes. BB stressed that governors should be able to show how well they know the school, and its groups of students, and how these groups (e.g. PP) are being served. She said that in some previous inspections it has not been possible to report to inspectors on the particular achievements of the school and the variety of student experience. ERZ said that this is partly a reflection of the latest OFSTED framework - time is short and inspectors prepare in advance so as to spot inconsistency when they question. There is limited capacity for looking beyond certain themes, and varied OFSTED reports on the rich experiences of students are rare. BB said that OFSTED will also look at the school website; it has to be current and well-populated. CM added that inspectors will view social media feeds. CM said that the training evening helped her understand what the GB might face at an inspection. She said that it was an informative meeting in which she learned about other governors' understanding and approach. RC reported VC's surprise at the grave responsibility that governors are under, at an inspection and overall. RC felt that the trainer had not prepared enough and so was unaware of how the Oathall GB operate, but CM valued her experience and suggestions.</p>	
7	<p>URGENT MATTERS None</p>	
8	<p>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVIEW</p> <p>The following policies were approved by the governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR policy • Initial Teacher Training policy • Behaviour policy • Sex & Relationships Education policy <p>The Governors' Code of Conduct was also approved (annual review).</p> <p>JP asked how often the 2019-20 consultation (with parents, students and staff) mentioned in the Sex & Relationships Education policy, will be repeated. ERZ replied that while there is no requirement to consult regularly, the policy will inevitably change with each review, as national policy and social norms change. BB agreed.</p>	
9	<p>BUSINESS REPORT</p> <p>ERZ referred the governors to the Savoy Trust grant of £40k for the new food room. He praised Karen Crockford (Assistant Business Manager) for her thorough, skilled and successful grant application.</p> <p>RC asked when the farm fencing will be put in place. ERZ replied that a delay has been caused by a new specification demanded for the gates, but that he hopes the work will be completed soon.</p> <p>RC asked about tree surgery work, identified as high priority in a WSCC 5-yearly inspection. She expressed concern that the work should be done before the next major storm. ERZ replied that the need for funds for this work is an annual frustration: tree costs are the result of Oathall's particular site. Other schools (e.g. a new build) usually have no such additional costs, but despite this discrepancy extra funds are not provided.</p>	

10	<p>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES</p> <p>RC reported on the positive and productive final meeting of the Mid-Sussex Federation on 28th June.</p>	
11	<p>CHAIR'S REPORT</p> <p>RC reported the resignation of the clerk, and a timetable for recruitment.</p> <p>RC will host the Celebration Evening on July 12th, and will present a new award for community spirit in honour of Stewart Boyling, long-serving and esteemed member of the governing body who died in 2021.</p> <p>RC thanked CM for her hospitality at the recent governors' social, and the governors agreed that it was an excellent evening.</p>	
12	<p>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</p> <p><u>Farm</u></p> <p>ERZ gave a presentation on the farm – its history and purpose. The Schools Forum has added the farm to its September agenda, partly in response to DfE funding requirements, and ERZ will address the Forum then - not to justify the farm's existence but to raise awareness. He asked the GB to reaffirm the place the farm should have at the school. It is chiefly an educational resource, a fact that should not be lost in commercial considerations. The presentation highlighted the benefits of the farm under four headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (including courses, vocational provision) • Inclusion (link with Albemarle; inclusion; pastoral support; challenged students; provision 'swaps' with Federation schools - possibly without charge; help in reducing exclusion, especially permanent) • Enrichment (Young Farmers – 100+ student members, many intensely involved; curriculum resource for Maths, Science, Business etc) • Community (local school visits; open days; farm shop; long-standing volunteer staff supported by the LA) <p>ERZ's address will be underpinned by three words: 'diversity, sustainability, ecology' – current drivers of modern farming.</p> <p>There is every intention to maintain the farm's capacity, and its important place at Oathall and in its community.</p> <p>CM suggested that ERZ should underline leadership opportunities provided by the farm in his address, and also considerable mental health benefits. She asked that Music be added to the list of enrichment items – Carols in the Barn being an important event with cultural capital.</p> <p><u>Exams</u></p> <p>Year 11 exams are over. Tracy Andrews (Exams Officer) said that they were calm and uneventful.</p>	

The students returned recently for their final assembly and brunch, which went very well. The prom at Plumpton Racecourse was highly successful, with good student behaviour.

Year 6 induction

The hall was full for this event - a very positive day with a buzzing atmosphere. Tutors attended to meet their new groups. The new parents day will be held on Thursday July 14th.

Celebration Evening

This will be held on July 12th. The special guest (who will speak to students and distribute prizes) is five-times world muay thai champion and Oathall alumna Ruth Ashdown.

Inaugural Community Day

On Friday July 15th students will raise funds for their chosen charity, with an element of competition. Laura Griffiths is leading.

Summer Concert

ERZ congratulated CM on the very successful and short-notice recent concert. The hall's increased space proved its value.

Staff matters

- The school is fully staffed across the board for September in teaching.
- A new assistant head of year, and a deputy SENCO, will be recruited next term.

OFSTED preparation

FHD, Toby Houghton and ERZ have had meetings with every faculty head to prepare them for questions about curriculum intent and how that is being implemented. ERZ found it very positive to hear individual views.

Karen Furse, LA Link Advisor, recently conducted challenging online discussions with the heads of MFL, Maths and Science, asking likely OFSTED questions. Karen was impressed with staff performance.

Senior team roles and responsibilities

ERZ tabled a paper laying out senior team roles and responsibilities for September. Notably Laura Gyngell will take on the DSL and inclusion elements of Emma Green's current role, with the more general pastoral leadership elements now separated, and in Zoe Froud's brief. This reflects the reality of pastoral work in the school - the fact that Heads of Year spend the majority of their time focussing on their whole year group, while Emma has always dedicated large amounts of time to small number of high-needs students. All senior leaders will be trained as DSLs, to build a depth of experience in the team.

There will be more detail on this new structure in September, with an abridged version for all staff.

Heads of Year remain attached to their year group as those students move up the school. ERZ has now attached a member of the SLT to Year 7, Year 8 etc. That SLT member will remain with that numbered year, *not* transferring with the students as they move up. This will build expertise

	<p>in the particular features and needs of a particular stage. BB gave an example: FHD will be able to use her expertise in transition with each incoming Year 7.</p> <p><u>Premises</u> Work on fire systems and LED lighting continues, mostly during evenings. It is hoped that the suspended ceiling in those areas will be in place by September, improving the appearance considerably and containing the current visible pipework. In the English corridor, the large visible pipe will ultimately be removed. Work had begun on the food room. The £40k Savoy Trust grant is very welcome, especially because the school will now have to fund asbestos removal and some electrical work in this space. Jo Godbolt has some concerns about supply delays, and has created a 'plan B' for September for the food room and IT room, in case.</p> <p><u>Enrichment Days</u> The two days (June 30th, July 1st) went extremely well. ERZ expressed how he impressed he was with the work done by Zoe Froud and the enrichment team, giving the students a really good experience.</p> <p><u>Games Day</u> Games Day is on Tuesday July 19th (Wednesday July 20th if wet).</p> <p><u>School information management system</u> BromCom training will be delivered on Wednesday July 13th. The system goes live at the end of July. Core training will be delivered in September to ensure that staff have fresh knowledge and practice.</p>	
12	<p>SAFEGUARDING BB visited Emma Green and Jane Newnham in June to assist with the annual NSPCC safeguarding audit. The document changes each year (e.g. this year, unaccompanied refugee children and 'county lines' drugs issues are a focus). The audit is long and demands considerable work. It prompts staff to check all aspects of provision and to make sure that they are ready for specific challenges. BB expressed her admiration for Jane's attitude - responding occasionally with 'I need to check that' or 'I am not sure on this point', wanting to be sure that she feels fully confident. BB said that the audit may be helpful at an OFSTED inspection in evidencing the school's outstanding safeguarding performance. BB reported on her safeguarding work over this academic year, during which she has raised a small number of queries and issues, all of which have been sorted out (e.g. training of all exam invigilators, now in place). BB reminded the GB of Emma Green's excellent knowledge of safeguarding. ERZ echoed this, and added that Emma has been tenacious in her support of students with safeguarding needs, and has fought their corner consistently with a range of agencies. It was agreed that Emma will be very much missed.</p>	
13	<p>PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS RC said that, despite many discussions in this area, and an understanding of the good work being done, there is still a lack of evidence at the governors' fingertips. She asked ERZ for a meeting to address this. BB reminded the governors that the PP issue crosses all areas of the school, and suggested that all underprivileged students should be considered in this work, not just PP. ERZ agreed the PP is a very specific subset. The school identifies under-attaining students, and some these are also PP. A focus on one group will impact the other, but we need to ensure that none falls through the net. CM reminded the governors the PP category is important because of the funding it attracts.</p>	

	<p>RC repeated that the governors need evidence that PP funding is having the required impact. ERZ said that having a single SLT member, Laura Griffiths, as the 'go to' for PP (though many other colleagues will be involved) should help.</p> <p>BB added that all schools struggle with this issue.</p> <p>CRC said that there are two separate considerations: (1) PP, which is measured, investigated by OFSTED, and attracts specific money and (2) lower-prior-attainment students, non-PP underprivileged and all others potentially at a disadvantage. These two overlap but are distinct. The GB will be called to account specifically on PP performance, and he suggested that it should be kept as a separate matter. He reported that Laura Gyngell is reviewing interventions and looking at their impact. He recommended that whichever governors are attached to Laura and PP should undertake to report back on this specific issue termly. The governors agreed. It was agreed that a conversation with Laura should be arranged early in the autumn term.</p>	ERZ
14	<p>ATTENDANCE</p> <p>No separate report.</p>	
15	<p>GOVERNORS' VISITS</p> <p>BB: safeguarding audit visit (June 15th). A report of the meeting is stored with these minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP & CM: strand 3 meeting to produce annual report (June 23rd). A report of this meeting is stored with these minutes. JP gave a review of the year's achievements in this area, and work completed. A plan for governors to observe tutor time is in hand. JP will be visiting Emma Green to express thanks for her years of important work, and to thank other members of her team who attend governor meetings. • NW, BB, CM. Practice concert for student preparing for a national music competition. 	
16	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clerk asked the governors to co-opt CRC, who is moving from a parent governor post, and this was unanimously agreed. • RC will share dates of future meetings with the clerk, who will create the usual Year Planner and send that to the GB. 	
	<i>The meeting closed at 21:15 hrs</i>	
	<p>DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS</p> <p>TBA</p>	

FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
11.07.22	Run a session to set a training programme for the GB that reflects specific duties.	NW/RC	September, once new GB 'strands' are set.	
11.07.22	Arrange a conversation between Governors and Laura Griffith on PP evidence.	ERZ	Early in autumn term.	
09.05.22	Arrange a 'governor day' visit - tutor time observation & student voice session.	ERZ/RC	When possible	

Actions completed				