



RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 8 JULY 2019 6.00PM

PRESENT:

L Bourne	Co-opted Governor
A Bovis	Trustee
A Clark	Co-opted Governor
N Goodall	Co-opted Governor
S Griffiths (Chair)	Parent Governor
B Kemp	Co-opted Governor
J Mayes	Staff Governor
A Moore	Headteacher
S Roe	Co-opted Governor
T Scott Fox	Parent Governor
L Lanipekun	Parent Governor
C Wallis	Staff Governor

IN ATTENDANCE:

M Brighton	School Business Manager
C Collyer	Clerk

Item	Main discussions and agreed actions	Action by/when
1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Due notice had been given and the meeting was quorate. Apologies has been received and accepted from J Jonson (away) and C Weatherill (work). M Langridge was absent	
2	D Holeyman - Pupil Premium Presentation (copy filed with minutes)	
2.1	<p>DH updated governors on the pupil premium grant (PPG), how it was spent, monitored and its impact. To qualify for PPG a child had to have been eligible for free school meals (FSM) within the last six years. The grant was £935 per student per year (pspy). Pupil Premium Plus (PPP) was £2,300 pspy and applied to Looked After Children. There was also the Forces premium - £300 pspy for students whose families were in the armed forces or who received an army pension. This was to recognise the emotional disadvantage as opposed to the financial disadvantage. The school didn't differentiate between the above groups and the school could choose how they used the grant and monitor impact.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that the cost of uniform and P.E kits were barriers to learning and that the school used PPG to provide uniforms but were concerned that there may be a difference in the quality and the School Business Manager (SBM) explained they used the same school suppliers so there was no differentiation. Two students had utilised the Achievement voucher and both used it to purchase a desk for homework space. Governors asked whether the voucher covered the complete cost or did they have to contribute and were advised it covered the cost. Governors asked why laptops weren't purchased and whether the cost was a factor and the SBM advised that the school did have laptops which PPG students could borrow for study.</p> <p>Governors asked if DH was responsible for oversight and admin of the whole PPG and he confirmed he was but worked with the PP forum to look at areas for spend. He also worked closely with the Finance team so that all expenditure was tracked effectively. Governors enquired what</p>	

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	<p>percentage of the students received PPG and the HT confirmed it was around 10% which represented 3 students in every classroom. This was high when compared to national grammar school figures.</p> <p>Governors asked whether students were self-conscious using the PPG and were advised any application or funding allocated was done very discreetly and the Achievement voucher spend was a three way decision between the student, parents and school. Governors asked who was responsible for tracking the impact of the purchase and DH confirmed he was. Governors acknowledged that it was important that anonymity was preserved when reporting however they wished to understand how the school evidenced the impact of the grant. The HT explained that they utilised the wealth of national research which identified key barriers to learning and effective strategies to combat these.</p> <p>Governors asked how the school supported students with no internet access at home and were advised that they provided a homework club to address this. Governors acknowledged that the funding could only bridge some of the gap but asked how they could track if the homework club had improved their results and who monitored this. The SBM explained that the data team provided the gap analysis. Governors noted that there was little difference in achievement between PPG and non PPG students and this was a trend over the last 6 years which was very impressive. DH explained that on arrival in Yr7 the data showed there was a big gap between the two groups. However, this shrunk as the PPG students progressed through school. The HT explained that national research showed that the lack of cultural experience was THE biggest barrier for disadvantaged students. In response the school had launched a 'cultural passport' aimed at funding family memberships for cultural events and the school would encourage students to share their experiences. Governors queried the Easter revision sessions noted in the PP report on the website and asked if PPG students make a contribution. DH confirmed they didn't and so Governors asked for that to make explicit in the report. The Chair thanked DH for his informative presentation and he left the meeting at 18.40</p>	DH/ATM
	Procedural	
3	Declarations of interest	
	2.1 There were no new declarations of interest	
4	Minutes of the previous meeting on 11 Feb 19 and signing thereof	
	3.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and the Chair signed them	
5	Matters arising	
	5.1 The Chair requested that the Clerk get an update from J Johnson on whether she sent the link to University of Kent to S Rowden Knowles.	Clerk/JJ
	5.2 The Chair thanked governors for the increased number in link visits.	
	5.3 The HT confirmed his report now included comparative years and targets for attendance	

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	5.4	The review of the Trust website had been referred back to the Trust	
6	Circle model of governance		
	6.1	<p>The Chair and HT asked governors for feedback on the information provided at the Leadership Away Day on the proposed circle model of governance. Governors expressed some concern about the limited time available in the LGB's to discuss and consider items properly. The Personnel and Development & Admissions meetings took two and quarter hours and didn't include finance, premises or catering. The Chair suggested the way forward would be timed agendas, keeping on point and not getting distracted by operational matters. It would be a work in progress and it would take time to get it right.</p> <p>Governors asked how the monitoring pairs would work in practice and the Chair explained it would work like the current link visits - a report would evidence when they met, what they challenged and any issues identified.</p> <p>Governors were slightly concerned that there would be broader questions asked at the LGB. The HT advised that a working party had been created across all three schools and had proposed there would an agenda for the monitoring meeting. The meetings would be focused - pre-set based on the year planners so governors didn't miss any statutory, or other deadlines/requirements. Some things discussed at committee could be done by 2 governors coming into school rather than by a whole committee and would be, overall, more time efficient. As a board, they needed to ensure there was enough time to discuss the strategic direction of the school and didn't want the new LGB to be so process driven that they lost the time for philosophical discussion and reflection.</p> <p>Governors asked whether they would still be linked with departments and the Chair advised that the link would be with a priority within the School Development Plan. The HT explained that governors needed to be focusing on the strategic elements (either statutory elements such as safeguarding or the new Ofsted framework - leadership, personal development, behaviour and attitudes, leadership and management). The aim was to use the existing expertise on the LGB to link into the leadership and management of the school. Governors asked who would be the school links and the HT advised it would either be members of the SLT or the School Business Manager.</p> <p>Governors asked how the pairs would be allocated and the Chair asked the Clerk to send out the draft monitoring areas and for governors to let her know which areas they were interested in.</p> <p>Governors asked if this proposed change had been initiated by the CEO and the HT explained that nationally it was recognised that the old committee model didn't fit with a MAT structure. There was also concern about the workload for senior members of staff. He clarified that it was the Trustees who had the legal responsibility, and that from a governance point of view, the LGB's were operating with delegated</p>	Clerk/ Governors

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	<p>powers from the Trust Board. (B Kemp left the meeting for a prior commitment at 18.48)</p> <p>Some governors expressed the view that they couldn't envisage how this would work in practice but were willing to give it a try. They still had reservations about timings and opportunities to reflect and think strategically. The Chair suggested that by delegating to monitoring pairs, they would be able to drill down in more detail, understand the school better and as a result would be more engaged with the governance process. If a monitoring pair required a longer slot on the LGB agenda, then it could be adjusted accordingly. The HT added that if a significant issue arose which needed dedicated resource, then a working party could be convened.</p> <p>The HT explained that the circle model working party had developed generic agendas across the schools. He saw no reduction in the contribution of governors with this new model and agreed it was a work in progress which would need to be adjusted and comments fed back to the Trust. (L Lanipekun arrived at 18.54)</p> <p>Governors asked what would happen if a monitoring pair didn't do their scheduled visits and the Chair agreed this would need to be monitored and managed accordingly. The meeting acknowledged it was a shift change from the link governor visits.</p> <p>Governors wondered if the proposed model would mean governors getting too involved in the operational side of the school. The senior staff were appointed to deliver the vision, educational achievements and financial management of the school, it wasn't the governors' role. Whilst willing to give the circle model a try, governors felt strongly that there should be a proper review period to assess the effectiveness of the model. The Chair and HT agreed and felt that the LGB had the correct skill set do the review after one full academic year</p>	
6.2	<p>The Chair explained that the current Vice Chair - H Aggarwal - was stepping down from the LGB as there was an overlap with his role as a Member of the Trust. She sought expressions of interest in the Vice Chair role which would be on the agenda in the autumn. If anyone would like to know more, please speak to the HT or Chair.</p>	Governors
6.3	<p>The Clerk advised that N Goodall and B Kemp's term of office were coming to an end Nov 19 and Oct 19 respectively. She asked if they could confirm in writing if they wished to stand again. The SEND governor M Langridge was standing down due to work. It was a statutory requirement for each LGB to have a named governor for SEND and the Chair asked if anyone was interested to speak to the Chair or Clerk. The role description can be found on the Trust resource page on Governorhub and accessed here</p>	NG/BK Governors
7	Review governor attendance (copy filed with minutes)	
7.1	The meeting reviewed attendance which was overall good.	
8	Clerk updates	

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	8.1	None noted	
9	HT report (copy filed with minutes)		
	9.1	The HT presented the new format report and advised there would be a full update on student progress in the autumn	
	9.2	Student attendance compared with national at 96.5% and put RMGS in the top 20% of schools nationally.	
	9.3	Student mobility was very low although he drew governors' attention to the increase in numbers getting through via appeals.	
	9.4	Complaints should be reviewed annually and the meeting agreed that anything Stage 2 and above would be reported. Governors asked if there had been any whistleblowing issues and the HT explained that any such issue would be brought to the Board	
	9.5	Governors noted that many of the subject leads had contributed to the HT's report but some hadn't. They enquired how the content was selected and the HT explained Heads of Department were invited to contribute but it wasn't compulsory. Governors asked why they hadn't seen replacements for the leaving Physics and German teachers and the HT explained that in some departments there was capacity to accommodate this. Governors asked about the assessment lead programme and the HT advised that AVT would be revisiting this and would feedback.	
10	Link governor reports (copies filed with minutes)		
	10.1	LB had attended the Careers network evening which was very good. Talks on work experience, apprenticeships and gap years were given and alumni manned tables on career choices. The alumni were very keen to get involved and had greater resonance with the students. Attendance was lower than expected with around 50 out of 180 students. The Chair noted the LGB would be interested in hearing more and they might be able to help with their links and experience around the table.	
	10.2	LB - had met with the PE department and discussed the department review and results which were the best in school. The HoD was very pleased. The new course would need to be reviewed post moderation. There were some issues which she had referred to SLT. Governors asked how diet and health are addressed by PE dept and the HT advised it was covered in PSHE and the curriculum.	
	10.3	PSHE, Careers - LB expressed concern about all the HoY's being male bar the Head of Yr7 and whether girls would feel comfortable about approaching them for any pastoral issue and the HT explained that one of the Deputy Headteachers was female and there was also a female school counsellor. The workload and stress levels for HoYs was also an issue	
	10.4	Data champions - LB and LC had looked at national and local data, overall trends across years and looked at pupil premium. Progress 8 was good and data was tracked three times a year very rigorously. When progress dipped, interviews were held with students and interventions put in place. The government wanted 90% of students doing EBACC but most schools were struggling to do this. The school were 12th in Kent and Medway for A-levels and 22nd for GCSE. They had looked at Yr 7 non-exam groups but capability wasn't clear as the admission criteria was	

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		now distance rather than score. Yr 9 were a bit of a concern and key individuals were being supervised. PPG showed little gap between PPG and non PPG and this was a 6 year trend. The Chair congratulated the link governors for their report and said it was exactly what a monitoring pair visit should look like. LB and LC explained they had spoken before the visit to discuss which areas to focus on and sent the questions off before so the member of staff was prepared.	
	10.5	Safeguarding - The Chair asked the Clerk to add J Johnsons link visit feedback to next agenda.	Clerk
11	School targets		
	11.1	The following targets had been discussed and approved by the Development and Admissions committee: GCSE - Progress 8 +0.5 versus 0.66 recommended by FFT. A level - although no statutory targets recommended - 65 versus FFT 64.7 for 6 th form Governors approved the targets.	
	11.2	School dates - the HT requested governor approval to follow the Kent dates for 2020 academic year. It meant having a 3 day week at the start of term rather than a one day. Most Medway schools were also following these dates. Governors agreed the dates. (copy filed with minutes)	
12	Budget forecasts (copy filed with minutes)		
	12.1	The budget had been approved by the Finance committee. The SBM drew governors' attention to the small in year surplus but highlighted that funds were very tight. However RMGS were in a good position relative to most schools. Governors congratulated the SBM and her team for managing such a tight budget. She advised another Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) bid would be submitted in September and if governors agreed the same strategy of funding 50% of the build from reserves, then £350k would be set aside. If the bid was unsuccessful, then the school would have to invest in the project. She also advised that due to the political uncertainty, they had decided to put the hard surface play area on hold and manage the pinch points during wet weather with strategies like staggered lunch breaks. Governors approved the budget. The HT thanked the SBM and appreciated that with the funding uncertainty of teachers pay awards etc it had been very difficult.	
13	Update on school development plan (copy filed with minutes)		
	13.1	The HT explained this had been discussed at length at D&A and in summary, the SLT were very pleased with progress made over the year. Most targets had been achieved or made good progress, any red were mostly beyond their control. The alumni launch failed because the person who had volunteered to lead hadn't delivered. This would possibly be taken in-house next year. Finally he advised governors that the bid for the Computing Hub wasn't successful and they were waiting feedback as to why. Governors congratulated the HT on the new format which was much easier to read and understand priorities.	
13	Policies		
	13.1	The following policies had been reviewed at committee and there were no further changes. As a result they were adopted; Literacy, Special	

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		consideration, Exam disability, Non-exam assessment, Word processing, Provider access, curriculum and internal appeals procedure. Governors asked where these policies would be reviewed under the new circle model and the HT advised that the statutory policies would still be scrutinised by LGB and then recommended to the Trust Board. Non-statutory policies would be delegated to the HT.	
14	Risk register - governance		
	14.1	The HT advised governors that the risk had been increased as recruitment of staff was becoming increasingly difficult and this reflected the national trend. The second increased risk was the uncertainty around the funding nationally. Governors asked whether they used online recruitment and interviews and the HT confirmed they had an advanced recruitment and retention strategy. He had been in discussions with other Kent and Medway grammar HT's to work collaboratively to look at a recruitment event abroad. Governors requested a presentation on how the risk register worked and the Chair asked the Clerk to add it the agenda in the autumn.	Clerk
16	Confidentiality - none noted		
17	Any other business		
	17.1	N Goodall explained that the H&S review had found asbestos in the old artblocks M3 & M4 in the ceiling and under the floor. The SBM confirmed that they want to replace the ceiling in this area and would have to get it sealed before removal. This would add to the overall cost and cause delays to the programme. It had been added to the asbestos register.	
	17.2	The new signing in system was good and governors were reminded to sign in under the DBS checked category.	
	17.3	Governors congratulated the school on the opening of new art block which went well.	
	17.4	The HT advised governors that the Chair had always signed off school visits. He wanted to increase the signatories to include the Chair, Vice Chair and H&S governor. Governors approved the recommendation.	
18	There being no other business the meeting closed at 20.00		
	Date of next meeting: 30 September 19		

ACTIONS

Item	Action	Who/when
2.1	Make explicit in the PPG report that PPG students don't have to contribute to Easter revision sessions	DH/ATM
5.5	J Johnson to confirm she sent the link for University of Kent to SRK	JJ
6.1	Clerk to send out draft monitoring areas and governors to self-nominate to areas of interest	Clerk/all
6.2	Expressions of interest for Vice Chair role to be sent to Chair or HT	Governors
6.3	N Goodall and B Kemp to confirm in writing if they wish to stand again and expressions of interest in the SEND governor role were also sought	NG, BK Governors
10.5	Clerk to add safeguarding link governor report to agenda for next meeting	Clerk
14.1	Clerk to add Risk Register presentation to agenda for next meeting	Clerk

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