

BRINE LEAS SCHOOL

An Academy

Local Governing Board Meeting

Held on Wednesday 29th November 2017 at 6.30pm

MINUTES – PART 1

Present:

| | | |
|---------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Ms K Batten | (KBN) | Appointed Governor |
| Mrs A Beecher | (ABR) | Elected Staff Governor |
| Mr A Cliffe | (ACE) | Headteacher Governor |
| Dr K Jones | (KJ) | Elected Parent Governor |
| Mr T Marsden | (TM) | Appointed Governor |
| Mrs S Okell | (SO) | Appointed Governor |
| Mrs S Turner | (ST) | Parent Governor (Chair of Governors) |

In Attendance: Mr D Cole (Deputy Headteacher), Mrs J Furber (Chair of Trustees) and Mrs E Fletcher (Clerk)

Please note – orange/brown text shows governor challenge/questions.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr T Court, Mrs M Hennessy Jones, Cllr A Martin and Cllr A Moran. After careful consideration of the reasons for absence and previous absence records, all apologies were accepted.

Outcome: Governors accepted apologies from Mr T Court, Mrs M Hennessy Jones, Cllr a Martin and Cllr A Moran.

Declaration of Interests

- The two outstanding Annual Declarations of Interest forms should be completed and returned to the Clerk.
- No declarations of interest were raised in relation to the agenda for this meeting.

Action: Governors who have not submitted a completed annual Declarations of Interest form to do this prior to the next meeting.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 18th October 2017 were provided prior to the meeting and were put forward for approval as a true and accurate record of the meeting. All governors present approved the minutes.

Minutes Approved by Chair of Governors Date:

Outcome: Governors accepted the minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 18th October 2017 as a true and accurate record

Matters Arising

- The additional meeting around governance hasn't taken place as planned. This will be discussed under the governance agenda item.
- Impact will be reviewed as of next meeting.

Outcome: Impact of decisions will be considered from next meeting onwards.

Appointment of Vice-Chair

One nomination was received prior to the meeting in respect of Mr T Marsden. This nomination was accepted, and governors were invited to put forward any other nominations.

No other nominations were put forward and the nomination for Mr Marsden was seconded and all governors present were in favour of his re-appointment for a one-year period.

Outcome: Mr T Marsden was appointed to the role of Vice-Chair for a one-year period.

Sub-Committee Feedback – Students'

The sub-committee confirmed they had discussed the draft terms of reference and recommended to the LGB that these are approved.

Outcome: All governors present accepted the draft terms of reference for the Students' Sub-Committee.

Student Services

- The sub-committee confirmed they had discussed the student services report and accepted the reports around safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, exclusions and bullying.

BL6

- The sub-committee confirmed that the BL6 report had been discussed and highlighted to the LGB that attendance is a focus and Progress Tutors are involved in improving attendance.
- The sub-committee confirmed that they had considered the proposed Travel Fund Policy and shared that they would like to continue with this bursary. The policy was therefore approved subject to financial viability.

Outcome: The sub-committee approved the proposed Travel Fund Policy subject to this being financially viable.

Curriculum

- The sub-committee confirmed they discussed the curriculum report.
- The sub-committee highlighted that due to the changes in the way the school is being evaluated, consideration has been given to making a humanities subject compulsory for students not taking a language. The initial decision of the sub-committee was for the school to explore this option further including assessing the potential impact on results. They also wanted the school to explore compulsory language and requested that the potential impact on results and uptake was required. ACE felt that this required a more definite steer from governors and therefore sought further clarification on the sub-committee's views (see below).
 - Languages & humanities for students disappplied from languages – **the sub-committee acknowledged that the numbers disappplied from languages is fairly consistent year on year, however, felt that it isn't necessarily appropriate for these students to be studying humanities and that some may do better being entered for less exams.** Governors felt that they needed to trust the educational professionals to think for those individual students. It was confirmed that the sub-committee's view was to start with a baseline assumption that students will do languages or compulsory history/geography for those disappplied unless it isn't appropriate. Governors have shown commitment to offering a variety of subjects. The remainder of the LGB agreed with this view.

Outcome: Students will study a compulsory language, but those disappplied should do compulsory history/geography unless the school feels that this is not appropriate for an individual student.

- Triple science – the sub-committee agreed with the recommendation that students should do triple science, unless the school determines that it isn't appropriate. **Governors queried the difference between triple science and core science and whether students study all three sciences in the core science.** DCE confirmed that students do all three sciences but in core science this amounts to two qualifications. DCE also shared that he would expect around half the cohort to do It is do triple science and the remainder will do two individual sciences; these students will be guided and will choose which sciences they study. DCE shared his view that this option will give students more chance of success. **Governors queried whether the current staffing could support this proposal** and DCE confirmed that this would be the case. Governors agreed with this proposal.

Outcome: Students will study triple science unless the school deems that this will not be appropriate in which case these students will be guided to choose two science subjects.

- The sub-committee confirmed its decision not to make Level 3 maths compulsory for BL6 students.

Outcome: Level 3 maths will not be compulsory in BL6

- The sub-committee confirmed its decision not to enforce two/three facilitated courses in BL6

Outcome: The school will not insist on two/three facilitated courses in BL6

- The sub-committee confirmed its commitment to continue with EPQ's in BL6

Outcome: The school will continue to offer the EPQ qualification in BL6

- The sub-committee confirmed that they approved the Curriculum Policy presented to them.

Outcome: The updated Curriculum Policy was approved by the committee

T&L

- The sub-committee confirmed they had discussed the T&L report within the committee, but no governor action was required.

ARR

- The sub-committee confirmed they had discussed the ARR report within the committee, but no governor action was required.

Sub-Committee Feedback – Business

The sub-committee confirmed they had discussed the draft terms of reference and recommended to the LGB that these are approved.

Outcome: All governors present accepted the draft terms of reference for the Business Sub-Committee.

Site and Finance

- The sub-committee informed governors that progress with the site development plan progress is largely linked to funding.
- The sub-committee confirmed that it has looked over the annual accounts and were satisfied with the report prepared. This item will be discussed under a separate agenda item.
- The sub-committee shared that the budget monitoring report was received and discussed.
- Governors were informed that the sub-committee discussed the 2018-19 budget, however, this will not be discussed in detail until the Cheshire East funding model is known. It is expected that the LA model will be known in December.
- The sub-committee confirmed that it considered and approved the updated Medical Needs Policy.

Outcome: The updated Medical Needs Policy was approved by the sub-committee

- The sub-committee confirmed that it considered and approved the updated Investments and Reserves Policy, including the maximum reserve amount of £750k in one institute.

Outcome: The updated Investments and Reserves Policy was approved by the sub-committee

- The sub-committee confirmed that it considered and approved the updated Winter Weather Policy.

Outcome: The updated Winter Weather Policy was approved by the sub-committee

HR

- The sub-committee confirmed that all staffing changes contained within the HR report were accepted.

Outcome: The sub-committee accepted all staffing changes reported.

- The sub-committee confirmed that it considered and approved the updated LGPS Pensions Discretion policy.

Outcome: The updated LGPS Pensions Discretion Policy was approved by the sub-committee

- The sub-committee confirmed that it discussed the proposed new Performance Management Policy for support staff which was approved in principle prior to consultation with support staff.

Outcome: The sub-committee approved the new Performance Management Policy for support staff in principle, subject to staff consultation.

- The sub-committee confirmed that it considered and approved the new Organisational Flexibility Policy.

Outcome: The new Organisational Flexibility Policy was approved by the sub-committee

CPD

- The sub-committee confirmed that it accepted the report on CPD and informed governors that it was too early in the year to look at impact but shared that practice is changing around the school.

Whole School IT & Projects

- The sub-committee informed governors that the school is on track for GDPR (data protection).
- The extension of IT Provision to other schools is progressing.
- Governors were informed that the school is looking at moving from Citrix but this is a large-scale change so needs detailed consideration.
- The sub-committee confirmed that it considered and approved the updated E-safety policy subject to a review in due course in relation to GDPR.

Outcome: The updated E-Safety Policy was approved by the sub-committee

Headteacher's Report

- ACE reminded governors that newsletters are on the website and are a useful source to see what is happening in the school on a day-to-day basis.
- Governors were informed that the school no longer has annual events that external people are invited to; the school used to invite externals to the certificate evening for ex-Year 11's, but this is no longer held. ACE felt that there is an opportunity to do this through the Academy Awards or the Apollo Awards events. ACE shared that an invite has been sent to the Town Council for the Christmas Concert. **Governors felt that ACE giving the awards out at the academy awards was appropriate would not wish for this to change because external people had been invited.** It was agreed that it was appropriate to invite the Mayor etc. to significant events in future.

Outcome: Invitations to be extended to key external people for significant events

- ACE shared with governors that he has been invited to China to undertake the same review process that he was involved in last year. **Governors queried what negative impacts there would be in school?** ACE felt there was nothing significant; colleagues covered last year without issue. Governors were happy to support this trip. ACE also informed governors that this year, the school has been asked to take a group of Chinese exchange students. ACE shared that he would like to accept this and offer a task payment to organise this as it will require careful and detailed planning.

Governors queried whether the purpose of this was to form a formal link with the school in China and ACE felt that this may be the case. It was suggested to ACE that he tries to identify which government officials were supporting this project as this may determine the potential for the future. Governors were happy to support the exchange visit.

Outcome: Governors agreed for ACE to have a return visit to China to be part of a review team at Wellington College.

Outcome: Governors agreed for BLS to host a group of Chinese exchange students

- ACE informed governors that there was no substantial update regarding the MAT, however, he shared that he may be forced to resign from his governor role by the DfE. ACE shared that the person originally dealing with the process has left the DfE and therefore there may be an update with regards to this advice.
- ACE informed governors that he has undertaken some benchmarking with another school which showed that they are not doing things much differently to BLS despite their results being better. Governors were informed that the first data drop shows optimism for the future and this will be explored further at the February meeting.
- A copy of the updated Complaints Policy was provided to governors prior to the meeting and ACE shared that updates have been made to make improvements around vexatious complaints. Comments were invited. Governors felt that the changes were improvements and no comments or queries raised.

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Complaints Policy

- A copy of the updated Parental Separation Protocols was provided to governors prior to the meeting and ACE shared that these updates have been to strengthen the policy.

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Parental Separation Protocols

- Governors were asked to consider the new timing of the school day. ACE shared that some concerns have been raised about leaving at the same time as primary children. **Governors suggested that, although there may be this concern, congestion is for a much shorter period of time and is therefore an improvement.** ACE shared that sports clubs have suffered due to the shorter lunch, however, behaviour has improved at lunch time. ACE also highlighted that the longer break appears to be going down well. Governors felt that this should be discussed at May with some hard data and felt that staff views should be sought.

Action: ACE to gather data and staff views on the timings of the school day in preparation for discussion in May.

- ACE informed governors that no update on the Pay Panel outcomes was available, as the deadline for lodging appeals against decisions has not yet passed. Governors will receive a summary at the next meeting.
- ACE informed governors that attendance at parental consultation evenings has been good, however, the school continues to look at different routes of reaching parents that don't attend but teachers could benefit from seeing. Governors were informed that BLS' attendance levels are excellent.
- Governors were informed that a change has been made to the critical incidents plan; the intruder alert will now be called the lock down procedure as this could be used for a variety of reasons.

Pupil Premium / Narrowing the Gap

- ACE drew governors' attention to the report provided prior to the meeting and highlighted that the gap had closed quite considerably this year.
- **Governors shared that they accepted that the gap was narrowing, but felt that this area should remain a focus for the school and governors.**
- ACE shared that the headlines look encouraging and show the amount of work that has been put into this area.
- Governors were informed that House participation for disadvantaged students is encouraging; the data is not completely accurate yet whilst a new reporting process is embedded, but participation looks good to date.
- ACE informed governors that at the recent Year 11 Parents' Evening, 20 out of 29 sets of parents of disadvantaged students came to the evening and Ms Batten offered to meet with parents individually if they preferred. Governors were informed that Ms Batten has ensured all 29 parents have received information in a way that suits them individually.
- Ms Batten is meeting students individually to see what support can be put into place and liaising with staff regarding concerns.
- It was agreed to keep this item on the main agenda for future meetings.

Outcome: PP/Narrowing the Gap to continue to be a regular agenda item for LGB meetings

Director's Report

A copy of the Director's Report was provided to governors in advance of the meeting.

It was agreed that there were no items requiring particular attention that hasn't been discussed at the meeting.

Governance

• LINK GOVERNOR VISITS

Reports were uploaded onto governor hub in advance of the meeting.

- MFL - ST provided additional feedback on her recent visit. The department has a visit from a specialist subject lead and the HOCA is looking at what happens in other schools to aid the debate on whether to keep languages compulsory. Changes to the carousel programme is still embedding so impact cannot be fully assessed. The department has put an action plan in place already to address issues raised by the subject specialist; the two focusses are to improve engagement and improve progress. Some practices in terms of exam preparation has been naive and the department has made changes to this for mocks exams. They need time to see the impact of this. ST highlighted that the HOCA has made significant strides.
- Technology – KJ shared that changes in syllabus and courses was highlighted as an issue for results, although it was acknowledged that there wasn't a lot we could do with this. Results were good, and data is looking good for the future.

- Maths – KJ shared that results good and the HOCA has some new approaches such as a parents' newsletter and a catch-up session for students that miss a lesson for whatever reason. **Maths staffing turnover was queried by governors** and it was confirmed that this will not be an issue.
- Safeguarding – KJ provided a verbal report for this recent visit; a formal written report will be presented at the next meeting. Governors were informed that the new merit prizes are going down well. CAF levels need to be watched as they are high. KJ informed governors that getting external agencies to engage in situations is becoming more difficult due to lack of funding. Procedures at BL6 are being reviewed with regards to external students and sharing information. The Emotionally Healthy Schools Award is being considered; there is a possible opportunity to be a pilot school for this programme. Mental health is an ongoing concern.

- **LINK GOVERNOR ROLES**

- A draft new link governor grid was shared at last meeting and ST informed governors that this has now been merged into the existing table. A copy was provided to governors prior to the meeting.
- ST shared that the plan is for governors (except staff governors) to have a whole school link and subject link.
- The whole school special focus is something that may not need regular input but may be topical.
- **Governors queried whether the proposal covers all areas needed. Governors queried whole school IT link which is not included in the new model.** It was felt that this is not needed as a link as this area is now covered within committee meetings via a report. It was agreed that any specific areas could be a focus for the most appropriate link governor. **Health and Safety link was raised, and governors queried if this was still an area of need.** KB felt that it was necessary as did ACE, so it was therefore agreed
- ST shared that the idea is that subject links are critical friends and the whole school ones more strategic.
- The Clerk will email to ask for expressions of interest in link roles.
- ACE shared that he felt a focus on transition and challenge (is there challenge and are children comfortable with this) for the KS link governors was appropriate this academic year.
- Some criteria will be drawn up for each link role when governors have been appointed to the roles. ACE to make an initial start on this with ST.

Action: The Clerk to email all governors regarding preference for link roles.

Action: ACE and ST to start work on criteria for each link role.

- **GOVERNOR VACANCIES**

- Two vacancies remain currently.
- Governors were invited to pass on recommendations for potential candidates via the Clerk.

Action: Governors to consider potential candidates and make recommendations via the Clerk.

• GOVERNOR TRAINING (undertaken since the previous meeting)

- ABR has done safeguarding in governance and SEN training.
- ST has undertaken basic safeguarding refresher training.
- KJ has done piracy training, slavery training, suicide prevention, bribery and corruption, and CMA training.

Dates of Future Meetings

Wednesday 28th February 2018 – Committees at 5.30 pm and Full LGB at 6.45pm
 Wednesday 23rd May 2018 – Committees at 5.30 pm and Full LGB at 6.45 pm
 Wednesday 11th July 2018 – Full LGB only at 3.45 pm

End of Meeting

Decision /Action Log

| Date of Decision | Action or Outcome | Decision Made / Action Required | Review/Action | |
|------------------|-------------------|---|---------------|------------------------|
| | | | When | By Who |
| 29/11/2017 | Action | Governor Annual Declarations to be submitted to the Clerk | Feb-18 | AMa, MHJ |
| 29/11/2017 | Action | Link Governor Grid to be updated with governors' preferred link roles | Feb-18 | Clerk |
| 29/11/2017 | Action | Governors to consider potential candidates for the current appointed governor vacancies | Feb-18 | LGB |
| 29/11/2017 | Action | ST and ACE to work on producing criteria for Link Governor roles | Feb-18 | ST, ACE |
| 29/11/2017 | Outcome | Approval for ACE to return to China to be part of the review team for Wellington College | May-18 | LGB |
| 29/11/2017 | Outcome | Approval for BLS to host a Chinese Exchange in Spring 2018 | May-18 | LGB |
| 29/11/2017 | Action | Governors to review the timings of the school day | May-18 | LGB |
| 29/11/2017 | Outcome | KS4 to study a compulsory language, but those disappled should do compulsory history/geography instead, unless unsuitable | May-19 | Students Sub-Committee |
| 29/11/2017 | Outcome | KS4 will study triple science unless the school deems it not appropriate | May-19 | Students Sub-Committee |
| 29/11/2017 | Outcome | Level 3 maths will not be compulsory in BL6 | May-19 | Students Sub-Committee |
| 29/11/2017 | Outcome | BL6 will not insist students take two/three facilitated courses | May-19 | Students Sub-Committee |
| 29/11/2017 | Outcome | BL6 to continue to offer the EPQ | May-19 | Students Sub-Committee |
| 29/11/2017 | Outcome | Key external people to be invited to significant school events | May-19 | LGB |