

BRINE LEAS SCHOOL

An Academy

Local Governing Board Meeting

Held on Wednesday 18th October 2017 at 6.00pm

MINUTES – PART 1

Present:	Ms K Batten	(KBN)	Appointed Governor
	Mrs A Beecher	(ABR)	Elected Staff Governor
	Mr A Cliffe	(ACE)	Headteacher Governor
	Mr T Court	(TC)	Appointed Governor
	Dr K Jones	(KJ)	Elected Parent Governor
	Mr T Marsden	(TM)	Appointed Governor
	Cllr A Moran	(AMo)	Appointed Governor
Mrs S Okell	(SO)	Appointed Governor	

In Attendance: Mr D Cole (Deputy Headteacher), Mr S Donald (Assistant Headteacher, Item 1 only) and Mrs E Fletcher (Clerk)

Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs M Hennessy Jones, Cllr A Martin and Mrs S Turner. It was agreed to accept all apologies. It was also agreed that the previous year's attendance would be considered in future when deciding whether to accept apologies.

Cllr A Moran offered his apologies for not notifying the Clerk of his non-attendance at the July meeting. This had been an oversight on his part.

Outcome: Governors accepted apologies from Mrs M Hennessy Jones, Cllr a Martin and Mrs S Turner.

Outcome: Previous attendance will be taken into account when considering future apologies.

Declaration of Interests

- Annual Declarations of Interest forms were completed by governors in attendance at the meeting. The Clerk will send forms to governors not present.
- No declarations of interest were raised in relation to the agenda for this meeting.

Outcome: The clerk to send Annual Declarations to governors not present at this meeting.

Results 2017

- A presentation given by Stuart Donald, Assistant Headteacher, and a copy will be uploaded onto Governorhub.
- Attainment 8 for BLS is 49.6 and Progress 8 is -0.08
- Governors queried re-remarks and whether more had been submitted than normal. SDD shared that a number of areas have highlighted queries with results and re-remarks have been submitted. A number of parents are unhappy with the exam boards.
- English – results were excellent
- Maths - The department is reviewing the GCSE exam tiers for students as a response to the disappointing number of grade 5's and above. The number of Grade 4's is significant and would have meant students had reached the grade C. In previous years the school would have been extremely pleased with this. Across Cheshire East, Maths results are lower than English and this seems to be around the grade 4/5 boundary. At A level results were excellent.
- Science - Governors were informed that this is last cohort of GCSE students doing Core Science. The Btec did not count in the results so as many as possible were moved into the Core programme which resulted in a number of C grades being achieved.
- Humanities - At GCSE, the cohort was good and expectations were higher than the actual results. Governors queried the short course RE and SDD confirmed that this is not included in the results headlines as it isn't a full GCSE. Governors queried geography numbers compared to History; SDD shared that these are higher numbers than we have had previously. History had lower numbers of A*/A results than previously and governors were informed that the department feel this is due to the cohort.
- Social Science – had healthy results compared to previous years.
- MFL – At GCSE, students are still struggling to attain high grades in languages. The results for this department are slightly below or significantly below national averages in all measures. The school is working very hard to address this. Governors highlighted that they have previously discussed whether to keep languages as a compulsory option and felt that this needs to be revisited. Governors asked how individual languages are doing and SDD confirmed that Spanish is stronger than ever it has been previously and their results overall are slightly improved compared to previous years. German results are lower than previous years. SDD confirmed that very few students take more than one language now. At A level, results were good, but they had low numbers.
- iCreate – at GCSE they had healthy numbers, especially in media studies. Governors queried whether the numbers were viable for some subjects. DCE shared that two music groups were dual taught to make it viable. DCE shared that the group of students are looked at each year individually to decide viability. Governors were informed that BTEC sport did have larger numbers at the start, but these changed throughout the year. It was highlighted that, although ceramics had low numbers, they had exceptional results which has benefited the school. At A level, numbers were low in some subjects and not all students completed their course.
- Technology – at GCSE, this department achieved amongst best results for some students. Governors were informed that the Textiles moderation brought some surprising results and the school is responding to this through staff training as requested by the Board. Governors queried if there was anything else the school can do about the textiles and DCE confirmed that the school had done all it could. At A Level, the textiles results were excellent with the same teacher, same practices and moderation techniques so this is an anomaly.

- BITE – at GCSE, the 0% in A/A* is a concern. Governors queried whether students are going into the subject with full knowledge of expectations. SDD confirmed that the school is working on making sure that students are fully aware of expectations in this course. Computer Science results are improving which shows that the right students are starting to take this course. The EDCL was used to fill up pots for students that otherwise wouldn't have had enough subjects; this will not apply next year and the impact of this will remain to be seen. At A Level, results need to be addressed.
- BL6 extra-curricular – EPQ has had excellent results and hopefully will be viewed well by external bodies. It doesn't count as a full A level but supplements A level results. It shows independent learning. KJ shared that students with the EPQ are more likely to be successful in their first year of a degree course as they are much more used to working independently.
- The top achievers and highest progress were highlighted, and governors informed that the school also had some Oxbridge students this year.
- Governors were informed that the school has purchased ASSET which is a dashboard showing strengths and weaknesses of the results. This programme can be used throughout the year also. Ebac currently shows as a weakness because we enter so many.
- Governors queried the global headline? SDD confirmed that the Progress 8 shows GCSE results as being average but the school is in the top 4 in Cheshire East at A Level.

Appointment of Chair

One nomination was received prior to the meeting in respect of Mrs S Turner. As her apologies had already been registered for this meeting, the Clerk contacted Mrs Turner to confirm that she was willing to accept this nomination.

Other nominations were invited at the meeting, but none were put forward. Governors were therefore invited to consider the single nomination for Mrs S Turner. This nomination was seconded, and all governors present were in favour of the re-appointment for Mrs S Turner for a one-year period.

Outcome: Mrs S Turner was appointed to the role of Chair for a one-year period, subject to ratification by Trustees at their next meeting.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 12th July 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.

Outcome: Governors accepted the minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 12th July 2017 as a true and accurate record

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12th July 2017 that were not already covered with the agenda for this meeting.

Leadership Development Plans

- DCE shared that some are more detailed than others and highlighted that full DDPs have not yet been produced until the outcome of the visioning exercise from July was clear as this may have an impact.
- The recommendation to governors is that they confirm there are no elements from the visioning exercise that haven't been addressed within the DDPs and then to accept these as the basis for the committee reports throughout the year.
- BL6 – There is an issue over recruitment; it is felt that BLS are losing numbers from current Year 11's to other institutes instead of them moving onto BL6. The school is attracting students from other institutes. The school is keeping a careful eye on courses being offered and it hasn't yet started to tap into Year 10's; there are plans to start talking about it earlier. TM asked if ACE feels it is marketing itself effectively. ACE shared that there isn't the capacity to spend a lot of marketing. SO shared that she has experience of incorporating marketing through pastoral methods and KBN shared that they have started to mention pathways after GCSE already in assemblies at Year 10. A governor asked if the school has suffered from the new UTC and the vocational courses it offers, however, both ACE and DCE felt that this was not the case. The school has only had small numbers leaving after Year 9 to go to the UTC and this hasn't changed since it started.
- CPD – has a very focused set of priorities aimed at getting teaching better.
- Pastoral – Attendance is a focus and we remain focused on disadvantaged students. This area has a closer link with T&L/CPD than has previously been the case. We have a new member of leadership leading on this and there is a new momentum that naturally comes with this.
- T&L – This goes hand in hand with CPD. There are now 15 members of staff on the T&L group and staff across the school are questioning and reviewing practices.
- Whole school IT – The provision of external services is ongoing. It was highlighted that the school needs to be careful about the pricing for this. In addition, BLS is helping schools to withdraw from LA services which have been carefully packaged to make it difficult for them not to buy in. A bid has been submitted for boilers and this will include a cost to the school of around £1200 for a survey on the current boilers. With regards to data protection compliance, the school is well on the way to being compliant with this.
- Site/Finance – The plan is partly dependent on E3 Cube and funding via the LA. Student funding will go to £4600 rising to £4800 in 2019-20. This includes all grants that we will be eligible for so looks likely to set a deficit budget.
- Curriculum – Some decisions need to be made on curriculum issues in the near future. There is a focus on giving the House system a boost and get staff and students to get on board with events. ABR feels that part of the issue is to get students involved in Year 7 and get them enthused. Challenge and academic rigour for all is a focus of this DDP. Governors queried how this will be done and ACE shared he remains convinced that this links to expectations of staff – i.e. teaching to the set above, it's OK to fail so can try stretch activities.

Governors accepted the DDP's as presented and agreed that they covered all aspects from Ofsted and the visioning exercise.

Outcome: The outlines presented were accepted as the basis of the Leadership team's DDP's

School Development Plan (SDP) and Self Evaluation Summary (SES)

- **SES**
 - This document picks up points from Ofsted.
 - The most significant change is on the outcomes section.
 - ACE is looking very carefully at Progress 8 and Attainment 8 as it is felt that this will lead to better outcomes.
 - Governors queried German results and whether the school is looking into why these are lower than they should be. ACE shared that the department feels they may have been some issues around which tier students were entered for. A subject leader from another school is coming into BLS to look at what we are doing. Examination technique has been a key issue in exams – not answering the question as the exam board want as opposed to linguistic skills.
 - The business studies strategy was queried and ACE informed governors that they followed a previously used revision programme, but this was the wrong route as the paper did not reflect what they had revised. Governors asked whether the programme had been successful previously and ACE confirmed that it had not been overly successful but highlighted that they have had a lot of course changes. Governors queried if it was possible to teach this subject at KS3 and DCE shared that this wouldn't be possible due to time needed for other subjects.
- **SDP**
 - This document was accepted without additional queries to those raised through the SES.
- ACE shared that the SDP and SES are dynamic, and should be both proactive and reactive.

Outcome: Governors accepted the SES and SDP

Headteacher's Report

- **Results**
 - ACE shared that the progress 8 measure for BLS will not change and highlighted that schools we have previously considered to be similar will move into the 'good' category.
 - ACE feels this is the year that got away – the hard work has been done to achieve the aim to get better results across the board for students, but we haven't seen the benefit of this with this cohort. The improvement should be seen in future years.
 - BLS needs to try deal with the children that don't attend and therefore get no grades at all. Overall, there wasn't a large group of students with attendance issues, but there was a small group that sat no exams. One student had a staff member attend a home address but was turned away each time. Governors queried whether these students should be entered for exams at all. DCE shared that they would still be counted in the headlines if they are on roll at the January census.
 - Boys is an issue and there is a correlation between the students that did badly on PE and the rest of their exams.
 - ACE shared that the ECDL may have improved other schools' results, but we are unsure whether many Cheshire East schools actually did this for full cohorts.
 - ACE shared that he is looking into whether all departments are pressing the children in the same way as English do and also whether parents and students choose to concentrate on core subjects at the expense of others.
 - It was accepted that there is a difference between what the school needs and what the student needs.
 - The first data drop for current Year 11 s due in two weeks and this may show that the work being put into improving results is starting to have an impact.

- **Curriculum**

- ACE shared that a decision on the EBac will be needed in November.
- There is no known university insisting on students having an EBac. At BLS, a lot of students are taking their own decision. ACE feels that if there is compulsory Humanities then other subjects will suffer.
- More information will be put together for November meeting but governors initial thoughts were sought.
- Governors felt that they had discussed this previous, however, it was highlighted that that now entry targets have been released for future cohorts, this needs to be revisited.
- ACE highlighted that takes two years to roll curriculum changes through so now is the time to be considering this.
- Governors asked about the expected reaction from parents and DCE shared that this isn't known; some parents are already insisting their children follow the EBac route and others don't factor it into decisions.
- ACE highlighted that affordability will need to be considered as changing the curriculum to compulsory EBac will result in larger classes. We already have mandatory languages for the majority of students, and this helps the school have a high EBac entry level. Not all schools do this.
- Governors suggested that it would be easier to offer an opinion if they were provided with information on potential success rates, i.e. if languages were made non-compulsory, what would we be looking in five years' time, would we be looking to increase language uptake in order to meet the entry criteria. It was suggested that consideration could be given to making one language or subject mandatory, as the provision may be better quality by doing this. Concern was raised that if we have particularly able linguists then to limit them to one language may have a negative effect. ACE shared that some language issues are already being resolved i.e. students are no longer studying three languages in Year 7 and some difficult staffing issues have been resolved.
- ACE and DCE will work on some scenarios and models including an assessment of impact on results.

Action: ACE and DCE to prepare some curriculum models to include impact on results.

- **Site**

ACE informed governors that there have been no outcomes from the LA regarding the extended D Block funding E3 Cube have been appointed to look at this as well as the boiler bid.

- **Student Services**

Attendance figures were not available due to staff absence, but they will be reported in November.

- **Budget**

ACE shared that the c/f won't be as good as initially hoped; a lot of this is due to high supply costs as outlined in the report.

- **Teachers' Pay Award**

ACE shared that consultation has been carried out with unions and staff. Two out of three schools locally are going with the proposal of 2% across the board for M1-M6 and 1% across the Leadership range. The recommendation for TLR's is 1% to the minima and maxima. All governors present agreed with the recommendation and will put this to Trustees for approval.

- **Recruitment into Year 7**

- ACE shared that the number of first choice application is extremely close to the number at the same time last year which is positive.
- ACE shared that trying to explain the admissions process to parents is still an issue; it is still not clear to them how the application process works.

- **Information Evenings**

Governors were informed that this is a new concept, and these see to have been welcomed by families attending so far.

Policy Approval

- PM Policy – subject to an improved scan on page 15 (Teachers Standards), the LGB approved this policy.
- Pay Policy – the pay progression element was discussed under the Headteacher’s report agenda item. The LGB supported this policy and recommended its approval by Trustees at their next meeting subject to an updated staffing chart on page 40 of the policy
- Governors confirmed that they had considered all other policies put forward and agreed with the recommendation that they are approved.

Outcome: The LGB recommends the updated Pay Policy policy for approval by Trustees, subject to the staffing chart on page 4 being replaced with an updated version. This includes the recommendation with regard to the teachers’ pay award.

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Performance Management Policy subject to the amendment as outlined above.

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Administration of Medication Policy

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Lettings Policy

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Positive Schooling Handbook

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Uniform and Appearance Policy

Governance

- SO gave an update on the recent SEN link visit. Governors were informed that the SENCO is going for additional training to become more knowledgeable on changes with regard to paperwork and reporting on SEN students. Governors queried whether the paperwork issue is stopping children getting what support they need? SO feels this is not the case. ACE shared that he is not convinced that children in Year 7 are coming with the right support that they should be and this is an area of focus.
- A draft link governor document shared prior to the meeting:-
 - TC outlined the proposed changes to the current structure. It was highlighted that, currently, link governors don’t have specific responsibilities to look into areas of DDPs. The aim is for link governors to be more focused and do this in groups or pairs; perhaps looking at two or three issues per year.
 - There was felt that some areas which currently have link governors will not need support or link work at all or regularly.
 - Some of the link subjects/areas may not be needed and some may need to be added.
 - There are currently some areas of work within the school that are not being reported on.

- Improving the link roles should mean that there is more governor input into development plans.
- ACE to suggest some areas of focus for link governors in each area.
- Governors to email the Clerk with areas of focus for consideration.
- Early link visit to BITE and MFL are needed due to the results. The current links for BITE and MFL to start on this.
- A plan will be presented to governors in November. The group will meet again – TC to organise this.

Action: Current link governors for BITE and MFL to organise link visits to HOCAs.

Action: TC to organise another meeting of the link governor working group.

- There have been no membership changes since the last meeting.

Dates of Future Meetings

Wednesday 29th November 2017 – Committees at 5.30 pm and Full LGB at 6.45 pm

Wednesday 23rd May 2017 – Committees at 5.30 pm and Full LGB at 6.45 pm

Wednesday 12th July 2017 – Full LGB only at 3.45 pm

End of Meeting