



**WYMONDHAM HIGH ACADEMY TRUST  
GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

Company Number: 07725111  
A Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in England

**Minutes of a Board Meeting  
held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

Present:	Mr N Collins (M)	Dr R Cross	Mr M Heard	Mrs P Lee	Mr P Wadlow
	Mr S Blease	Mr A Fehners	Mrs A Hunter (M)	Mr J Robson	Dr J Winpenny
	Mr R Boulton (M)	Mr J Gillett	Mr A Hurst	Mr M Scharff	
In Attendance:	Mrs L Fox	Mr J Rockey	Mr J Dickson	Rev'd A Slater	Mrs V Dinwoodie

**1. Notice of AOB**

Planning application – Julian/Neil  
Confirmation of completion of Principal's PM

**2. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Alex asked that her name be removed from the list of those present. With this amendment the minutes were agreed as a true record and were signed by the chair.

**3. Matters Arising - see distributed Action Points Summary**

Website – Neil asked for an update. Adrian advised that there were still some issues to resolve and content to add but the site was much improved.

Q. Neil asked when it would be completed.

A. Adrian advised that the curriculum and subject areas were still in development and would take some time.

Q. Neil asked whether the required statutory information was on the site.

A. Adrian replied that he was still working with Jeremy on the curriculum area.

Neil said that an urgent review would be required if the situation continued into the next term.

Review of work load of School Counsellor – Russell advised that she was overworked and had a stressful role taking on other peoples' issues. However, as some schools do not have their own counsellor, in one respect we are lucky to have her. We could easily use more counsellors. The Portal has been moved up to the Gateway to make cost savings and this has released some time for the Portal staff. Support for these students has been updated with the provision of teaching staff but this had come at a cost. Russell advised that we should be using external agencies more, however, capacity is not really there.

Russell said that he would bring a written report to the next meeting; to bring this service up to speed an investment of £30k would be required.

**Action: Russell**

Q. Julian asked for an update on the Friends.

A. Jeremy advised that he had attended the meetings that had taken place this term and Mike H had attended one of them to represent the GB. The meetings had been positive and the Friends had supported the school in a number of activities and events.

Revised Exam Results 2013-14 – Jonathan advised that in GCSE 51 re-marks had taken place. 3 English re-marks were successful as were 3 in Coms, 3 in RE and 3 in Physics. The RaiseonLine unvalidated data was received in school today. At first glance English moves to 63%; Coms goes up to 56%; no change to RE or Physics.

A level - 28 re-marks were all successful by at least one grade, however, overall this represents a negligible change.

Alex commented that it was worrying that so many re-marks were successful and gives a lack of confidence in the marking system. Neil agreed saying that it devalued what students were achieving.

Russell added that under the new progress 8 measures this was very important.

Victoria advised that one student had missed out on their place at university due to a low grade which was submitted for a re-grading and subsequently awarded the grade she needed but now has to wait a year to go to university.

Victoria commented that every English mark submitted for a re-mark had gone up and they have to be aware of this situation when meetings take place with subject staff to review the initial results.

Rodney asked for clarification on a comment made by Victoria about us not attracting students from the higher ability range. Victoria advised that we don't currently attract students from the very top ability range, we still have good ability students as our admissions' criteria is set high. To attract these top ability students we need to raise our exam results.

#### 4. Governance Matters

##### 4.1 Terms of Reference –

Mike H asked for clarification on the note in the revised ToR referring to the number of Members a trust should have. Neil advised that the DfE recommends that a trust have a minimum of 5 Members. After the resignation of Dave Bullard we are reduced to 3 Members. **He proposed that Steve Blease, as vice chair, be appointed as a Member, this was seconded by Alex and with all in agreement his appointment was confirmed.**

Neil said that, in light of the possible conversion to a MAT he would like to hold off appointing any more Members until the board makes a decision about whether to become a MAT. The same position applies to filling the vacant parent governor position on the GB. He advised that there was also new guidance from the DfE that a Member should not also be an employee. The Principal has always been a Member and Neil said that he would not want this to change and will be seeking guidance on this.

**Action: Neil**

The clerk advised that the changes to the main document had been taken from the new Accounts Direction from the DfE. The individual committees had all reviewed and amended their terms of reference during the autumn term.

**Neil proposed adopting the revised ToR, this was seconded by Peter and with all in agreement the ToR were adopted.**

##### 4.2 Delegation of Functions

The clerk advised that there had been no changes to the document. Neil reminded governors that this document had been reviewed at length last year. **Neil proposed adoption of the document, this was seconded by Peter, all were in agreement and the Delegation of Functions was adopted.**

#### 5. SLT's Report

Russell advised that we had been assessed for the CPD Mark today and approved. This is 3 year award and validation of the CPD focus. We have also been given the Microsoft showcase school award, one of only six schools. Considering working on gaining IT Mark now. The group of schools are looking at setting a quality mark with Microsoft backing, looking at systems and criteria that schools could meet and audit themselves to get their students ready for the workplace and this leadership group could put in place a set of standards. The educational support from Microsoft is free. The group already has a university involved.

Neil advised that it was not just the students and staff who could benefit from free Microsoft software, the GB were also entitled to install Microsoft Office on up to five computers at home. The clerk will send out details of how to access this.

**Action: Clerk**

Julian advised caution and the need to ensure that the Microsoft expertise is shared in IT and not only centred on Kevin Sait.

Russell replied that this was in place and that we were also running an internship with a student at the moment which will be extended.

Q. John W asked whether both awards would be published in the next issue of the school newsletter.

A. Russell replied that it would. Neil added that he would write a piece for the magazine on CPD.

**Action: Russell/Neil**

Russell concluded his report by saying that it was a very busy time of the year for all staff.

## **Jonathan**

The focus for CPD was on teaching and learning this first term. The programme for next term was distributed. A number of work scrutinies have taken place. Currently reviewing how these are run and how they impact on practice. Peer assessments will take place next term. Feedback has been very positive from staff. Learning briefings have also been very successful and are led by teachers. Quality of teaching – 84% of lessons are good or better with no unsatisfactory judgements and it is expected that we will exceed our target of 90% by the end of term.

Next year's CPD Conference will take place on 24<sup>th</sup> June and governors were invited to attend. The theme will be making the ordinary extraordinary.

CPD for support - a number of staff are working through the Microsoft programmes. Our first learning support conference will take place at Hethel in January.

The CPD Mark accreditation today was an excellent achievement and Jonathan commended both Lyn Ottaway and Jackie Everett for their work in gaining this award. Jonathan said that gaining the CPD Mark gave some justification to creating the Tuesday afternoon CPD sessions.

25 members of staff are on specific programmes.

Neil commented that during this term the committees had monitored all aspects of the introduction of the Tuesday CPD sessions, including the extra-curricular activities provision. He said that attaining their target of 90% teaching at good or outstanding would be a real measure of success.

## **Jeremy**

The focus this term has been on changes to our curriculum provision. The table in his report details the measures taken to address budgetary concerns and the impact of these measures. To maintain a contingency sum of £500k we needed to reduce teaching staff by 5.5 f.t.e., other measures undertaken include increasing teaching commitment to 44 periods per fortnight (an extra period per fortnight). This is the norm in most high schools and staff have been advised that this likely to increase to 45 next year. Other measures likely to be introduced next year will include a reduction in management time, reduced teaching in Y12 and a return to a 2 year KS4.

Another major saving will be in Y13, where small sets will be disbanded reducing teaching sets by 10.

Neil complemented Jeremy on his work in this area. He commented on the timing of his report as it was the first time governors had been informed of some of these measures. He advised that this should have gone to the Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Committee for approval. He asked that the Clerk note this as an agenda item for next year.

### **Action: Clerk**

Q. Neil asked how staff had reacted to these measures.

A. At the SLG meeting, when this was shared with staff, the reaction was resigned acceptance.

Change to the admission criteria for sixth form re MFL – Jeremy confirmed that this had been communicated to students.

Q. Mike H asked whether other schools had been informed so that they could share the information with their students.

A. Jeremy confirmed that this had taken place.

Q. Mark asked if this decision would have an impact on the take up of MFL.

A. Jeremy advised that as students would still have to choose an MFL next year there should be no impact.

## **Andrew**

Russell presented Andrew's report. He advised that Andrew was aiming to get safeguarding up to outstanding. There will be a programme of focused CPD based on the answers to the staff questionnaire.

RE department – successful appointment made this week.

Q. Steve B asked if there were a significant number of students self-harming.

A. Mike H advised that from his safeguarding meetings and discussions with Andrew the number of students involved does fluctuate. This behaviour is also something that 'trends' through groups of students and social media. Jonathan added that the HoH were very aware of this as an issue.

## **Victoria**

The first section of her report detailed sixth form exam results and the progress and impact of re-marks. Of particular note was the improvement at AS level with the ALPs progress score increasing from a 5 to a 3.

The focus has been on attitude to learning, teaching and learning and recruitment this term. Students are aware of their targets and what they need to do to achieve them. Those students with low attitude to learning scores will have supervised study sessions whilst those with excellent scores, along with high attendance and progress will be entitled to home study periods.

Aspirational targets have been set based on the highest grades suggested by ALPs. Those underperforming at AS level are supported and mentored, regular targets have been set. Victoria has set up new data systems to monitor groups of students and target areas in need of improvement. This information has been distributed to all staff.

Recruitment strategies are in place. Applications are slightly down on last year at approximately 230, but this is probably due to the closure of the Help You Choose website where online application could be made. A Leading Light group of high achieving Y11 students has been set up and extension opportunities will be offered. Sixth form open evening was as successful as ever. A pilot mentoring scheme has been set up at Framingham Earl to enhance our recruitment strategy.

Q. Steve B asked for clarification on the Accountability Cycle mentioned in F3.

A. Russell advised that this process takes place within a half term period and follows a structure and timetable involving all departments.

Neil added that HoD should be able to give good information to link governors on what they get from this data.

## **Finance**

Mike H referred to item E4 and the purchase of filtering software, he advised that his understanding from the Finance meeting was that a third quote would be sought and then shared with the committee before a decision on purchase was made. Russell stated that he would look into this and report back.

**Action: Russell**

## **6. Committee Reports**

### **6.1 Audit – Mark**

The audit was completed and Julie and her team were commended for a very successful performance.

One issue raised by Frank Shipham was the DfE focus on future conflicts of interest where family members have business interests and ensuring this was documented.

RO reports – the tendering process was reviewed and approved.

Risk register – no red areas for action. Access to the school grounds remains a concern, however, control measures are in place, as far as is practicable, and the situation is monitored.

### **6.2 Chairs – Neil**

Plan out work of half term. Annual plan for governors. Based on AIP and how we measure success. Chairs work with link governors with SLT.

### **6.3 Finance – Mike H**

The Finance meeting covered the following:

- Discussion of Governor Annual Report & Management Letter (previously covered)
- Value for Money Statements was reviewed and agreed to re-review in the summer term
- Outturn 2013-14 budget of actual vs projected was discussed, recognising that the re-structuring costs had likely tipped the actual costs to be higher than projected
- Decisions by committees impacting budget – there had been none
- Continuous service awards were approved and signed off
- Internet Filtering software/licences was discussed

The finance committee then had quite a lengthy discussion with respect to the proposals; what the impacts of the proposals were and whether there were any need for this. The fundamental aspect is whether the school wishes to move towards an infrastructure to support the BYOD – this was agreed, but the proposals only detailed two quotes which governors felt ought to be supported by a

third. Whilst this decision was within the remit of the SLT, it was agreed to seek a third quote before the SLT then took that decision.

There was a side issue in that progressing this way does mean that the specification of devices (ie. mobile 'phones) held by students (from Y7 upwards ) would need to support these demands. Russell advised that the devices under consideration started at £60.

- Long term planning - with two proposals, one that greater control be introduced to prevent department budget incurring overspend was agreed (thus preventing budget overspend); the second being introducing a fund for department to bid on for further projects – Russell to embellish further and return to finance with more details.
- Awareness of bad debts written off and any redundant equipment.
- Finance manual was approved.

Neil commented that the finances were in very safe hands and were a considerable strength of the Academy.

#### **6.4 Learning, Teaching & Curriculum – Jeff**

Jeff reported that they had dealt with a packed agenda with presentations from:

- Charlotte Sillers, SENDCo, detailing the new regulations.
- Evette Sharpe, IAG Officer, on careers.
- Lyn Ottaway on CPD
- J Everett on T & L.
- Victoria on sixth form priorities.
- Jonathan on performance measures.

Several policy reviews were undertaken including the Admission policies which prompted a lively discussion on the sixth form MFL admission criteria.

Neil commented that the CPD sessions were being effectively monitored by this committee. Jonathan added an encouragement to governors to attend for a day looking at work scrutinies.

Q. John W asked why there had been a change to the MFL criteria for sixth form admission.

A. Neil replied that there had been a lengthy debate in committee. The original MFL requirement had been driven by Victoria Musgrave when the school had been massively oversubscribed at sixth form. However, with fewer applications, this criteria was reviewed to determine whether it was acting as a deterrent. This was not an easy decision as a number of students have already made their option choices; in fact, a similar discussion took place last year but the decision at the time was not to change the MFL requirement. The decision was taken not to drop it completely but to state that a C grade or above in an MFL would be strongly preferred. Neil added that the MFL criterion was not always adhered to. Russell stated that this was not a decision that the SLT had wanted.

#### **6.5 Personnel – Paula**

Paula advised that CPD was monitored with regular reports from Rodney, as link governor.

A key issue is measuring staff morale, which is difficult. PM for teaching staff were undertaken and reviews completed by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> October. To enable the committee to assess the integrity of this process Russell is bringing anonymous samples of targets set to the next meeting.

Review of Policy statements – Adrian is working on the schedule and will meet with a subcommittee to rationalise those that require ratification through committees and those that can be given to the SLT for review as procedures.

A probationary period has added to the terms of employment for all new teaching staff appointments (excluding NQTs). This will reduce the notice period require; an important consideration should a poor appointment be made. It will also ensure parity with support staff contracts of employment.

#### **6.6 Premises & Community**

Mike H presented this item. Costing were considered for expanding the finger print recognition system for registration, but it was decided that it would be too expensive. A presentation was given by Emily Davison-Cripps, Librarian, detailing the extra-curricular provision for a Tuesday afternoon.

Premises development plan – the conditions data is unreliable and out of date. It was agreed to have a new survey and the results will feed into the new plan.

A health and safety report was received and considered from Citation.

The Food Kite Mark is progressing slowly.

Discussions took place about the Rugby club planning application.

Neil added that a large overspend had been identified in the premises budget, the shortfall was covered from other budgets, but governors discussed how this situation had occurred and recommended to Finance a change to the system of how budget holders could authorise purchases from their budgets. This was agreed and a new financial system has been set up which will flag up any likely overspend on individual budgets.

## **6.7 Standards – John W**

John advised that he had spent a whole day in school last week visiting science and sixth form and looking at work scrutinies. He said that he had found the experience very valuable and he saw how much work staff put into this. It provided real evidence of the CPD focus from this term. The student feedback supports the value of this.

Neil echoed John's comments and encouraged governors to visit their departments as good practice and a key part of their monitoring role.

John advised that the committee had met for a second time this term on 1<sup>st</sup> December, but the minutes were not yet available. A key part of the committee's remit is to monitor attendance, which currently stands at 95.7% against a target of 96%. Another key role is to monitor data flows and looking at how they are used and managed.

Q. Mark asked what the main reasons were for absence.

A. John advised that the Y10 and 11 girls were a focus. Neil added that taking holidays in term time was still an issue. John advised that they received regular reports from Sharon Dagleish, Attendance Officer, and a recent addition to reasons for absence was parents booking medical appointments on a Tuesday afternoon, with many parents seeing this as a half day. Sharon is addressing this through usual processes; all persistent absences are actively pursued.

Attendance is monitored through Go4Schools as is data monitoring. There has been an issue this term with some gaps in processing data with the Data Manager on long term sick. The school is addressing this through training for the Data Assistant and the HoHs and RACs.

Presentations were received at both meetings from the core subjects Heads. Results were looked at in depth. Maths and science have made significant progress. All HoD have very robust intervention strategies.

Q. Rodney asked whether targets would be addressed at the next meeting and he found knowing what the subject targets were useful as a reference point.

Neil agreed with this but emphasised that the progress charts are also an excellent measure.

Jonathan advised that he would send out this information.

### **Action: Jonathan**

Neil commended Victoria on the sixth form presentation that she gave to governors saying that the core data had been interpreted, key issues identified and strategies put in place to address them.

John added that a lot of this data work was created by Victoria to enable her identify where students are. Students he spoke to were very aware of where they are and that they are tracked.

## **7. Any Other Business / Items Deemed Confidential /Date of the Next Meeting**

Paula confirmed that Russell's PM had taken place.

Neil advised that a number of discussions had taken place about the Wymondham Area Action Plan and a developer who wanted to develop the Wymondham Rugby Club. South Norfolk Council have stated that the development would take us over our limit on student numbers.

The Rugby Club application has been stalled. Neil and Russell will attend a hearing tomorrow re the Wymondham Area Action Plan and educational provision for the town. Wymondham High is limited to **250 new students per year** and this links in with the limit on development to **2000** houses.

Neil advised that he had no indication as to which way the decision would go. He met with Chris Hey, NCC, last week and he was also unsure, however, 18000 houses have to be built in South Norfolk.  
Julian added that the developer's document made reference to Wymondham College taking additional students.

John W said that students who lived in Wymondham should have an entitlement to attend the school in the town they lived in.

Mark commented on the size of our catchment area with many students already being bussed in. Peter added that he had suggested changing our catchment area, however, this would have a knock on affect other schools. Neil agreed that we could not make that decision in isolation.

Q. Alex asked whether the suggestion to open a separate sixth form would be raised again.

A. Neil replied that it would, but they would reiterate that we need to keep the sixth form and as an Academy we can and we have the backing of the LA and South Norfolk.

No items were deemed confidential.

The date of the next meeting is 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.