

The Swanage School
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE
 Wednesday 12 October, 5.30pm

Present: Isobel Tooley (Chair), Geoff Atkinson, Nick Brady, Tristram Hobson, John Lejeune, Al Stephens
 In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Jenny Maraspin (Deputy Headteacher)

Item	Action	Lead	Date
STU 1.1			
STU 1.2			
STU 1.3			
STU 1.4			
STU 1.5			

The committee congratulated the SLT and staff on an excellent set of results. It was noted that the overall Progress 8 score of 0.45 was above any other school in the Dorset local authority area. The chair noted that for every entry level (KS2 SATS results) the progress score was better than the Dorset average, meaning that the school had had a positive impact for all types of learner, whether low, average or high achievers at KS2. The English progress score was the best in Dorset, and the mathematics result was second best.

On the Attainment 8 figure, the average per pupil was 50.4 which was slightly below the Dorset average. Governors also noted that the percentage of students who were eligible for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), having entered GCSEs across a core of the five academic subjects of English, mathematics, science, history or geography and a language (French) was 58.8%, and the pass rate (securing grade C or above in these five subjects) was 21%, again below the Dorset average.

2. Gap between predicted and actual results

Both attainment and progress had been lower than predicted, despite progress being excellent compared with other schools. There was discussion of the accuracy of predictions and factors which may have influenced the outcomes. TH noted that, in general, explicitly high aspirations had been used to motivate and inspire pupils but this meant that, in some subjects, actual performance was less than predicted. The leadership team would be considering various approaches for predicting grades, recognising that forecasting based on aspirational predicted grades had implications for accuracy and therefore for identifying and addressing areas where improvements can be made during the year. Attendance had been identified as a key factor for some students performing less well than expected, including poor attendance at after school and holiday sessions as well as poor attendance at school. Anxiety impacting on ability to focus and revise had also been a factor for some students.

Individual subject areas were discussed (see also 3. below). For mathematics, JM outlined the difficulties associated with deciding whether to enter borderline students for the foundation or higher-level examination, noting the impact this had had in three particular cases. TH reported on technical difficulties which had been experienced in the French listening paper and the drama performance examination. TH also reported that some further analysis of the French results had been done and that if the grade for the listening test had been the same as the average grade for the other parts of the GCSE then the average French result would have been about half a grade better. However, it would still have been 0.7 of a grade below the average result for the other GCSE subjects taken.

	<p>3. <u>Evaluation and actions</u></p> <p>TH reported that Curriculum Area Leaders (CALs) had reviewed a student by student breakdown of results and completed an evaluation sheet for each subject. The wider leadership team had then reviewed any issues or concerns and identified good practice, as noted in the report that had been circulated to the committee. Governors discussed the findings of this review in detail with TH and JM and raised questions both in relation to the subjects that had performed well and those that not performed so well, probing the reasons for this. There was also discussion of how the learning points identified would be cascaded to staff. In particular, it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - those students who believed in themselves and their ability generally did well compared to others - small group and individual interventions, 1-to-1 support, reducing curriculum, additional after-school support and practise on past papers were all effective strategies - the re-working of controlled assessments (to the full extent it is permitted), if relentlessly driven by the teacher and impressed upon students, was effective, - less experienced teachers require more effective support and management to ensure they are confident, managing schedules well and employing the strategies which may have a positive impact on results, therefore some reorganisation of line management responsibilities has been made to create time for the CALs or other mentors to fully develop these relationships - effective use of external moderation is crucial for all subjects as it had been found that teachers of the best performing subjects had good links with other successful schools - greater “cross-fertilisation” of subject matter will be introduced where possible, for example the same text being studied in both English and drama. - lessons have been learnt from technical issues which had led to difficulties in French and drama assessments and changes will be made for this year <p>In response to questions relating to controlled assessments, TH confirmed that an overview of deadlines ensures that bottlenecks are not created by subjects having similar deadlines. Controlled assessment intervention sessions for re-drafting would be planned over the two-year GCSE programme and commence early to prevent the need to work on controlled assessment near the exam period. Parents are given guidance on controlled assessments, but TH noted that he will check the content to ensure it is as helpful as possible.</p>	Check guidance	TH	Nov '16
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STU 1.8	<p>2016 Results for Years 7 to 10 The committee had received a full set of data for all cohorts in Years 7-10 (2015/16), showing predicted results. It was noted that the predictions for (last year's) Year 10 had been carefully reviewed in the light of the gap between actual and predicted results for (last year's) Year 11s, and in some cases the predicted grades had been revised.</p> <p>The value added measures for the majority of subjects and for the majority of student groups is very good compared to the benchmark of "FFT top 20% of schools" and estimated Progress 8 measures are positive and high for all years and all sub-groups identified in the reports.</p> <p>The chair questioned TH and JM on patterns in the data which indicated that teachers are generally less comfortable with the new grade 8 and 9, as the students who enter at the highest level of KS2 SATS (level 5) are not being predicted these grades, with the "value added" scores for this sub-group often negative compared with "FFT top 20% of schools". By contrast, for those entering with KS2 level 4 or <4 the predicted "value added" scores are generally positive. TH and JM agreed that to challenge this group of students would be a whole-school objective which they would discuss with the CALs in the first instance.</p> <p>In response to questions on whether there is confidence that staff are able to identify and teach the skills required for each grade in the assessment framework, TH and JM noted that for a few years while GCSE and grading changes are fully embedded it would have to be considered a work in progress.</p>	Discuss with CALs. Report to next mtg.	TH/JM	Nov '16
STU 1.9	<p>Literacy and Numeracy As data was not available to measure effectiveness of interventions in literacy and numeracy, discussion of these areas would be picked up with the relevant Curriculum Area Leader in forthcoming meetings of the committee. TH circulated a summary paper showing how whole school literacy and literacy interventions are handled, including how individual support is linked to special educational needs where appropriate, and which initiatives are new for this year.</p>			
STU 1.10	<p>Pupil Premium The progress for disadvantaged students (pupil premium) in the GCSE results had been 0.02. This meant that the pupil premium students had progressed as well as a "national average" student, seen to be a particular achievement given that they had been at the school only three years and as this had been the only positive progress 8 score in the county on this measure.</p>			

<p>STU 1.11</p>	<p>English Baccalaureate</p> <p>The chair noted that the outcome of the government consultation on whether the EBacc would be made compulsory had not yet been published. However, as the current year 9 students would shortly be choosing their options, the committee needed to decide whether to recommend the school continues with or drops the requirement for all students to follow a combination of GCSEs in Years 10 and 11 that will earn an EBacc if they achieve a grade C (grade 5 under the new framework) or above in each subject. In addition to English, mathematics and science, a foreign language is compulsory (currently French at The Swanage School) and either history or geography, as these five subjects are the requirements for the EBacc. It was noted that the EBacc is a performance measure for schools and not an award in itself (i.e. is not awarded to students). In respect of compulsory GCSEs, the school also enters all students for a GCSE in philosophy, religion and ethics (PRE) since it is compulsory to teach this in Key Stage 4.</p> <p>In a paper from the chair, three alternative proposals were set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proposal 1 (EBacc system, the status quo): where French and PRE are compulsory and students choose four other subjects, one of which must be geography or history, - proposal 2A (Attainment 8 system including PRE): where PRE remains a compulsory subject; French, geography and history do not. This would allow students to choose five optional subjects, of which at least two would be from the EBacc list of geography, history, French, computer science and further additional science, - proposal 2B (Attainment 8 system): where neither PRE, geography, history nor French are compulsory. Students would choose six optional subjects with at least two being from the EBacc list of geography, history, French, computer science and further additional science. <p>There was an informed discussion about the merits and risks of changing the system, with a significant focus on the key difference of French potentially no longer being a compulsory subject. The benefit to students of having a freer choice of other subjects in place of French was seen to be a key argument in favour of moving away from the EBacc system. Data supported this argument, with French results having been poor, begging the question of whether students may have performed better in another subject more in line with their interests and talents. It was also considered likely that some students who had not wished to study French or geography or history could have a detrimental effect on other students in those classes. It was further noted that none of the disadvantaged (pupil premium) students achieved the EBacc.</p> <p>It was noted that there would be some implications for staffing, though the changes would affect only Years 10 and 11 as the curriculum for Years 7, 8 and 9 would continue to include French, geography and history.</p>			
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<p>The government consultation proposal for 90% of students from the current Year 7 to be entered for EBacc GCSEs was discussed. This target does not apply to the current Year 8 or 9. TH reported that at a recent meeting of Dorset school heads the consensus had been that Ofsted may use this as a requirement for awarding a grade of “outstanding” (although felt there would probably be flexibility on the 90%), and therefore the school may place itself at risk of being unable to achieve this grading if it moved away from an EBacc system. He also noted that if the government decided to make the EBacc compulsory any decision made to change the current curriculum would have to be reversed. However, other governors argued that the EBacc system is not currently compulsory, nor is it a published criteria of Ofsted inspections. Moreover, they felt that if the decision could be shown to have been made for sound reasons in keeping with the school’s vision of doing what is best for individual students, then it would be grounds for appeal against any potential downgrading in an Ofsted inspection that occurred because of it. It was also noted that the alternative proposals would not prevent a student from gaining the EBacc and individual students could be advised to take a qualifying combination of subjects where this was appropriate. Governors also noted that attaining 90% of students entering the EBacc would be highly unlikely in any year and that already in Year 9 fewer than 90% are studying French.</p> <p>The consensus was that there was a strong argument for making a change, taking into account the cohort of students at the school and a desire to act in the best interest of students. If the outcome of the government consultation were to make the EBacc compulsory such a decision would have to be revisited.</p> <p>With the exception of the headteacher, who abstained, governors voted unanimously in favour of recommending to the full governing body that the curriculum for Years 10 & 11 move to that outlined in proposal 2A, thereby changing the current EBacc system.</p> <p>TH will discuss this with the Curriculum Area Leads, but he thought that they would be likely to be in favour of the proposed change.</p> <p>A governor suggested that a grounding in languages, combining both French and Spanish, be the foreign language offer in Years 7-9. TH noted that interviews for a new languages teacher were taking place on Friday 14 October and French and/or Spanish had been the advertised languages required. Decisions on how to structure language teaching would therefore have to be made once a new teacher was appointed.</p>	<p>FGB agenda</p>	<p>Clerk</p>	<p>Oct '16</p>
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STU 1.12	<p>Proposed Measurements for 2016/17</p> <p>TH informed governors that the SLT had been considering the measurements used to benchmark attainment, noting that currently the Family Fischer Trust (FFT) measurement is used as an aspirational benchmark to estimate what students should attain to be in the top 20% nationally. However, as the school is not measured against the FFT, it begged the question of why this method was used. The SLT has concluded that the school should benchmark against Progress 8 since this is what it is measured on. To do this, the SLT proposed that the new benchmark figure be based on Progress 8 by calculating what an average grade should be for each subject and measuring attainment against this.</p> <p>TH noted that he had not yet discussed this with staff, however the chair felt that, as teachers should be judging against assessment criteria, it could be argued that the benchmark should not form part of the remit of teachers.</p> <p>AGREED the proposal to use a Progress 8 benchmark in place of FFT.</p>			
STU 1.13	<p>Tricky Areas for 2016/17</p> <p>A number of challenges for the coming year had been covered whilst discussing the data under items 1.7 and 1.8 above. These primarily related to embedding the new GCSEs and assessment framework which presented uncertainties for all staff, and ensuring well organised and high quality controlled assessments for GCSE.</p>			
STU 1.14	<p>Policies</p> <p>Committee members had received a redrafted E-safety Policy from the business manager. Some paragraphs had been cut and some elements of the ICT Policy had been incorporated, with a view to no longer having this as a separate policy. Prior to the meeting, the chair had circulated a number of questions relating to the detail of the changes proposed, which included a few concerns relating to sections that had been cut.</p> <p>AGREED this would be taken forward outside of the meeting, with the e-safety governor (NB) also recommending the changes be discussed with the safeguarding & Welfare officer.</p>	Finalise policy changes	Chair / NB / KK	Nov '16
STU 1.15	<p>Reports</p> <p>1. <u>Special Educational Needs (SEN)</u></p> <p>AS reported that she had met with Dave Dawson, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. A list of all students with SEN was available to all staff and class context sheets are provided. It was noted there was a significant amount of work for the number of teaching assistants available. The transition for the new Year</p>			

7 students had generally been smooth although speedier receipt of information from some feeder schools would have been beneficial.

2. Safeguarding

AS reported that she had met with JM, the designated safeguarding lead, and Mandy Sands, the safeguarding & welfare officer, to discuss recent updates to government guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (KCSIE). She had asked questions on required actions and these were either completed or were in hand.

These included:

- job descriptions for the deputy headteacher and safeguarding & welfare officer to specifically include the designated safeguarding lead/deputy role
- staff to be briefed on KCSIE and to sign to say it has been read and understood
- staff to receive new guidance on grooming and be informed that reporting of female genital mutilation is now mandatory
- all staff to have either attended WRAP/PREVENT training or completed the online course
- that the Staff Code of Conduct be updated in line with safer working practice October 2015
- that the safeguarding & welfare officer is to undertake the CEOP (Child Exploitation & Online Protection) online training to higher level, which will enable training of other staff
- ensuring that the revised ICT/E-safety Policy includes mobile technology
- additional barring checks on governors, senior leadership team and heads of department as per paragraph 99 and 112 of KCSIE, logged on the single central record

It was noted that “Chelsea’s Choice”, a drama production on the theme of grooming, was booked for Years 7 and 8 in March 2017.

3. Mental Health

Emily WYer was not in attendance to give a report.

4. E-safety

It was noted that the Safer Schools Team have delivered a briefing session to Year 7 and 8 pupils on texting and an e-safety briefing for parents. Unfortunately, the latter had not been well attended, but the

	school would again incorporate an e-safety session during parents evening/s. See also item STU 1.14 above.			
STU 1.16	<p>Research Projects / Bournemouth University JM briefly reported that each curriculum area is undertaking a project to look at how existing research could be applied to curriculum areas or projects. Bournemouth University are supervising the projects, and there will be a presentation of the outcomes at the end of 2016/17 which governors will be welcome to attend. These are:</p> <p>Maths, DT and Computer Science: Improving progress in low achievers using problem solving Science: Exploring the use of competition in improving engagement English, Drama, MFL and Music: Ways to engage disaffected boys in English' Humanities: Challenge for higher achievers using SOLO taxonomy (Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes).</p>			
STU 1.17	<p>Confidentiality It was agreed that there was no need for any item to be confidentially minuted.</p>			
STU 1.18	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><u>Celebration of learning</u> A governor noted that at the “celebration of learning” evening there had been a lot of recognition and praise for sporting achievements and activities, but less for other areas, particularly those that do not traditionally lend themselves to trophies and awards. TH agreed and will consider how to redress the balance for the next event.</p>	Consider awards	TH	Mar '16
	The meeting closed at 8.20pm			