

The Swanage School  
**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE**  
Held on Wednesday 16 October 2017, 5pm

Present: Isobel Tooley (Chair), Nick Brady, Tristram Hobson (Headteacher), Al Stephens, Carl Styants, Nicky Taylor  
In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Jenny Maraspin (Deputy Headteacher)

Item	Action	Lead	By
STU 2.1 <b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received from Jules Daulby.			
STU 2.2 <b>Declarations of Interest</b> There were no declarations of interest in relation to any agenda item.			
STU 2.3 <b>2017 Results for Year 11</b>  i) <u>To consider data</u>  Data provided had summarising the 2017 GCSE results for each subject, for the cohort overall and a range of sub-groups (e.g. by gender, pupil premium, SATs entry level, free school meals, Special Educational Needs). “Value added” data had also been provided, plotted against target levels, 2016 results, residual (grade in each subject compared to the average for all subjects) and against mock exam results, expected grades and potential grades collected earlier in the year.  TH opened the discussed with a summary “headline” for each subject, with each subject later discussed in more detail. Subjects which had performed broadly in line with expectations were mathematics, core science, history, computing and English (literature performing better than language). Design & technology (DT) and art had performed better than expected grades. French, catering, music and computing had been disappointing against predictions (although computing results showed good value added compared to 2016 and against overall targets). Drama, physical education (PE), further additional science and geography had also been disappointing, but with no prior indication of any issues or concerns and therefore surprising so. Although philosophy & religious education (PRE) had improved on mock and expected grades, the results and value added for this subject were poor and as it is taken by the whole cohort had a greater negative impact on results overall.			

Overall the Progress 8 score was -0.1, lower than 2016 (0.44). This placed the school 11<sup>th</sup> out of 24 on the Dorset League Table for progress.

ii) To discuss gap between predicted and actual results

The committee focused this discussion on the subjects where the results had been surprising (i.e. for which there had been no indicators).

[Confidential minutes]

Governors raised questions regarding the cohort overall, it being recognised that this cohort joined the school in Year 8, having had an unproductive year at a closing Middle School prior to this. TH reported that staff had worked exceptionally hard with the cohort but did feel that their needs, e.g. in terms of literacy skills, had not been properly met in Years 8 and 9, compounding that a number of students and parents in this cohort were disengaged. Without a comparison with other cohorts affected by middle school closures it would be hard to determine if this was significant. The contrast between the 2016 cohort, this cohort and the next 2018 GCSE cohort were discussed, it being noted that each cohort has its own dynamic.

The non-core optional subjects (i.e. “open bucket” subjects for the progress 8 score) had, on the whole, underperformed and it was questioned whether the balance is right in terms of focus on core and non-core subjects. TH responded that generally option subjects perform really well given that they are self-chosen and small groups.

iii) To discuss actions as a consequence of review of results

[Confidential minutes]

TH and JM noted that CALs had been at capacity during 2016-17, teaching over their hours and running interventions. This had been addressed by reducing loads for 2017-18 and early indications were that this was giving some “breathing space” for management of other subjects in their area, as well as teaching of their own.

Generally, the change in specifications for all subjects except DT going to the new 1-9 grading scale would present a challenge during 2017-18.

	<p>TH noted that the use of the European Computer Driving Licence by schools had led to an increase in attainment scores nationally, but that a change in policy is being implemented so that it will no longer count as a GCSE. In addition, TH had heard that some schools had chosen to enter all students in the English GCSE designed for students with English as a second language, which would also have increased attainment.</p> <p>TH also noted that some schools are lengthening the teaching of the GCSE curriculum by starting options at the end of Year 8.</p> <p>The committee concluded that the leadership team had investigated the results, focusing on identifying reasons where results were not as expected, and on positive actions for moving forward. CALS and teaching staff would need to be prepared for another tough year, with changing grading systems and specifications across the majority of subjects.</p>			
STU 2.4	<p><b>Pupil Premium</b> It was noted that Progress 8 was lower for the pupil premium students (-0.32) and TH noted that most students on less than -1 for progress were pupil premium. On eBacc subjects the pupil premium students had done relatively well compared to other schools however.</p> <p>JM outlined a new approach to intervention for pupil premium students, recognising that these students are often in detention for practical things such as not having the right books or equipment or being late, which in effect punishes them for things that stem from their disadvantage and a lack of support at home. A balance needs to be found between the desire not to overly punish such things and having rules for all students. This would involve increasing teacher understanding and targeting parental engagement. It was hoped to be able to engage parents to accept support from the school in relation to managing the everyday things (e.g. equipment, punctuality, homework) that really help a child's education. JM felt that getting the support right for these pupils is now more openly discussed, backed up by the data showing that they underperform as a group and a recognition that over time the outcome for poor behaviour/organisation has become increasingly punitive rather than restorative. JM feels there is a need to revisit the restorative approach, for example by considering the introduction of study support rather than detention.</p> <p>It was noted that there was also a significant gender difference with girls achieving an overall Progress 8 score of 0.03 and boys -0.32, similar to the overall score for the pupil premium students.</p>			
STU 2.5	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> There was none.</p>			

STU 2.6	<p><b>Confidentiality</b>  Following the meeting, the Chair recommended that some of the minutes be considered confidential, because given the small size of the school and the openness of the feedback shared with the governors it would be possible for readers of the full minutes to draw inferences about individuals (even though no names were mentioned during the meeting).</p>			
STU 2.7	<p><b>Next Meeting</b>  The next meeting will be held on 22 November 2017.</p>			
	<p>The meeting closed at 6.50pm.</p>			