

The Swanage School
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE
Held on Wednesday 22 November 2017, 5.30pm

Present: Isobel Tooley (Chair), Nick Brady, Jules Daulby, Tristram Hobson (Headteacher), Amanda Rowley, Al Stephens, Carl Styants, Nicky Taylor

In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Sarah Everitt (Curriculum Area Leader) for item 3.3, Sam Kerwood (Curriculum Area Leader) for item 3.3, Jenny Maraspin (Deputy Headteacher)

Item		Action	Lead	By
STU 3.1	Apologies for Absence None.			
STU 3.2	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest or conflict with any agenda item.			
STU 3.3	<p>Curriculum Area Leader Presentations Sarah Everitt (SE) and Sam Kerwood (SK) gave presentations on their curriculum areas based on questions provided in advance by the Chair, and answered questions posed by governors. Topics covered are summarised below.</p> <p>I. Mathematics, Design & Technology (DT), Catering and Computer Science (Sarah Everitt)</p> <p><u>Actions arising from data scrutiny:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In maths, 2017 results indicated that the middle ability students (those entering with SATS L4) did not make as much progress as the lower and higher ability students. Maths data for the current Year 11 is generally positive. The Year 10 data contains a higher level of estimation and SE felt it potentially underestimates outcomes. Intervention groups include Pupil Premium students (who did not perform as well in the 2017 GCSEs), students predicted grade 3 or 4 and students not yet working at their target level, including those predicted high grades. Early identification of students or groups for whom extra support or challenge is needed means that interventions can start in Year 10. Interventions include maths mentors, positive discrimination in class, further maths club, maths specialism courses, more frequent use of exam questions in lessons/homework, and conversations with students and parents. 			

- In DT, long-term planning has been reworked with a greater focus on theory to prepare students for the exam, in which students performed less well than the practical in the 2017 GCSEs. More exam work is being set as homework. The current data indicates positive value-added scores for Pupil Premium students. Good work is being produced for controlled assessments and expectations are high for these. Although data indicates that boys are performing better than girls, this was skewed by one student in particular. Phone calls and meetings with parents are taking place for underperforming students.
- In catering and computer science, current data shows negative progress for the Year 11 group, with significant numbers of students working below target grades. Planning reviews, controlled assessment and homework are being focused on. The current catering GCSE was fairly scientific, which some students were struggling with, whereas from next year (the current Year 10) it would again be a more practical GCSE. Governors asked whether the high proportion of Pupil Premium students affected the group given the particular need to be organised for the practical elements of this subject, but SE reported that the students are supported by having a Pupil Premium funded storage cupboard where things can be organised/left.
- SE felt the computer science data may reflect the (new) teacher not yet being sufficiently confident of grade boundaries. Links with other schools have been made to facilitate discussion and hopefully sharing of exemplars. Students were generally finding the new computer science course difficult, it being noted that it is programming-based and some students may not have fully appreciated this.

Challenging the most-able students and incorporating exam techniques:

- Lesson observations and learning walks have focused on provision for the more-able students and to date have taken place in maths, catering and computer science.
- In maths, SE is confident that appropriate challenge is made and the students are also challenging each other and engaged with lessons. Teachers are working together through joint lesson study. Past papers are given to students every 2-3 weeks in Year 11, and exam questions are used for homework. Further Maths club is popular and enhances students' maths skills.
- In DT, the focus has particularly been on the exam and techniques.

- In catering, there had been an early identification of a possible pacing issue in theoretical lessons which more-able students in particular may have found frustrating, and plans were in place to address this. Pace and appropriate challenge had been seen in practical lessons, where outstanding work was more confidently recognised. Mock exams had been set and were being practised.

Engaging with parents:

- The Year 11 parents' evening had been very successful.
- Phone calls home to discuss progress had met with variable success, particularly in trying to reach disengaged parents.
- Past exam papers being set for homework had been successful, whereas SAM learning set as homework less successful, particularly compared to the lower year group.
- SE hoped to produce a guide for parents on tips to help parents and students prepare for GCSE maths.

Lesson studies:

- The Grid Algebra Collaboration is continuing, in conjunction with staff from Swanage Primary School and St Mark's Primary School. This had fostered productive working relationships with the Year 6 teachers from these schools.
- Lesson studies, which had focused on challenging the more able students, were described as a circular process of peer observation - lesson planning - re-observing - re-evaluating, each time refining the focus.

Maths content in other subjects

- Enhancing the teaching of the maths elements of science lessons had been the most successful cross-curricular work to date. One of the science teachers was meeting fortnightly with members of the maths department to discuss maths in science and pick up teaching tips, with a focus on standardising teaching across the subjects through consistency in language and methods etc. From there, information is cascaded to other science teachers. The reverse has also been productive, with a greater use of scientific equations as examples in maths lesson. A similar process has started for DT and will be fostered in Geography to develop numerical and statistical skills. Further exploiting subject links in both directions (e.g. using equations/problems from other subjects as examples in maths classes) would be ongoing. Whilst maths teachers would consider stepping in to teach maths elements in other subjects in the context of a lesson

study, the aim is to facilitate the subject teachers themselves having greater confidence and consistency in teaching the maths elements.

Governors thanked Sarah Everitt for her work and presentation.

[SE left the meeting]

2. Science (Sam Kerwood)

- Government funding had been received to increase the uptake of triple science; numbers had risen from 8 in Year 11 to 20 in Year 10.
- The Science Department had introduced regular cumulative testing of all knowledge to date (as opposed to end-of-topic tests), shown in research to increase student retention over the long term and therefore better prepare them for GCSE exams (half-termly for Year 10 and 11, termly for Year 9).
- Results from the first half term cumulative tests for both Year 10 and Year 11 were extremely poor, with very few students meeting or exceeding their target level. Lack of revision had been identified as one issue. SK planned to write to all parents after cumulative tests and will assign SAM learning tasks as revision for homework, which can be tracked. Tutors would support students with revision technique and the long-term teaching schedule will be amended to include revision lessons. Class sets will be re-arranged where needed, e.g. into smaller groups, to improve attitude to learning, already shown to have had a positive effect in Year 10. A governor suggested using higher ability students as mentors for the lower ability students, to embed their learning whilst supporting peers, and noted that revision technique may be a whole-school issue.
- Analysis of the first progress data also indicated underperformance for some groups, e.g. Year 11 chemistry, Year 11 EAL students (although progress data for these students is estimated due to having no SATs results), Year 10 physics, Pupil Premium, students eligible for free school meals (FSM) and Year 7 boys. This early identification meant that interventions could be put in place in good time. These included chemistry catch-up and intervention sessions, voluntary revision sessions, crib sheets and weekly tests to help with recall of physics equations.
- Progress is being monitored more frequently and with a view to improving the quality of progress assessment by the science team. SK is tracking progress for physics and chemistry as well as biology [SK's

subject] to gain an overview for all three science subjects and had benefitted from 1-to-1 support in relation to using data analysis to inform CAL planning.

- A progress checklist is completed by students at the start and end of new lessons, which teachers can see in books and use to inform their planning. Frequent use is being made of quick quizzes and exam questions to develop exam techniques whilst measuring progress, and there is greater use of exemplar work for student self-assessment. The assessment framework is still in use, particularly linked to open response questions set for homework.
- The Key Stage 3 (KS) curriculum had been rewritten to focus on development of core scientific skills and inspire students through the use of topics relevant to the “real world”, each of which contains biology, physics and chemistry and develops the skills needed to access the harder knowledge content of the KS4 curriculum. As a result, KS3 students appear more engaged.
- Contextual seating plans produced by SK for her classes had been useful and will roll out to other science teachers. These summarise relevant information about each pupil at a glance, including target grades/level, medical needs, SEN and practical support needed (e.g. large print, coloured paper), enabling the tutor to be aware daily of individual student needs.
- SK hopes to initiate CREST Awards [British Science Association’s programme for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) project work to inspire 5-19 year olds], linking with local primary schools.
- In terms of CAL responsibility for performance management of the science team, SK outlined her plans for learning walks, lesson observations, 1:1 meetings, book scrutiny and book dissection.
- Contact with parents will be improved, with SK planning to write to parents after each cumulative test and there will be calls home for underperforming students after each data drop. Responses from the parent survey will be checked for any relevant information and there are plans to hold a twilight session, jointly with the maths department, to help parents understand the assessment framework. Parents who work in relevant industries will be invited to support the contextual KS3 lessons.
- SK planned to work with other subject such as maths, catering and project based learning to identify overlaps and incorporate that into planning.

The committee thanked SK, recognising her hard work in driving the department forward.

	[SK left the meeting]			
STU 3.4	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 11 and 16 October 2017 were confirmed.</p>			
STU 3.5	<p>Matters Arising & Actions Where not elsewhere on the agenda.</p> <p><u>STU 1.4 Scheme of Delegation – Disability Report</u> JD confirmed that a separate report on disability would not be required but that something should be included in the annual report from the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo).</p> <p><u>STU 1.4 Scheme of Delegation – Surveys</u> The Chair confirmed that she had passed to the Community & Engagement Committee the questions identified during the last meeting for inclusion in the parent survey.</p> <p>In relation to a student survey, TH said that he would like to discuss this with the Student Council, with a view to moving towards a student led survey. The target timeframe was mid-January.</p> <p><u>STU 1.12 Policies</u> The Clerk confirmed that policies approved during the meeting on 11 October 2017 had been updated and re-published on the website, and that she had informed all staff of the updates.</p> <p><u>STU 2.3 GCSE results</u> TH reported that the drama remarking remains with the exam board, with a decision expected soon. The exam board had asked to see performances from previous years which was taken as an indicator that the matter is being investigated thoroughly.</p>			
STU 3.6	<p>Progress Data TH outlined the new style data spreadsheet which had been updated to include additional contextual information to better enable staff to use data as an effective tool to identify students, or groups of students, who require additional challenge or intervention, and to gain a picture of the impact of various elements of student life, including whether or not the student has a school leader role (in addition to existing contextual groups (e.g. Pupil Premium, FSM, gender, SEN etc). These included a current grade and residual score (to compare one subject to</p>			

	<p>others) and data for homework, attitude to learning and attendance. Cohort level data now included a breakdown of the number of students not predicted to achieve a positive Progress 8, those predicted 0-1 and the number >1. TH reported that CALs are increasingly using data in managing the work of their teaching teams and ensuring that action is taken where messages can be interpreted from the data. Teaching staff have access to the underlying spreadsheet, enabling them to review students' progress in their subject compared to others.</p> <p>As there were some data glitches present in the new spreadsheet, the committee discussed expectations for Year 10 and Year 11 in general terms. The Year 11 data was looking very positive and the Chair questioned whether over-optimism might be a risk factor. TH felt this was a possibility in some subjects, although was reasonably confident that the predicted outcomes for mathematics and English are sound. Factors affecting predictions in other subjects remained as previously reported, primarily that the change in grading scale and in curriculums meant that teachers are less confident regarding grade boundaries and identification of top level work. However, generally staff are expecting the current Year 11 cohort to perform well. TH reported that the Year 10 cohort was harder to gauge at present.</p> <p>It was suggested by a governor that the school consider implementing a reward scheme in relation to attendance, attitude to learning and homework, inspiring students to do well through natural competitiveness.</p> <p>It was noted that the "Contextual Value Added" (CVA) Progress 8 score from the 2017 GCSEs provided by FFT Aspire gave a more positive outcome than the headline GCSE figures. This CVA model takes into account FSM eligibility, ethnic groups, SEN status, English as an additional language (EAL) status and mobility, in addition to the factors used for the standard measure (prior attainment, gender, month of birth). Under the CVA model, Progress 8 was +0.64, significantly above national average.</p>			
STU 3.7	<p>Compliance with Exams Policies APPROVED the Non-Examination Assessment Policy 2017/18. An internal appeals procedure for non-exams would also be required.</p>	House-style cover sheet & publish	Clerk	Nov '17
STU 3.8	<p>Reports</p> <p>I. <u>Special Educational Needs (SEND)</u> JD reported she and AS had met with Dave Dawson, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). The assessment of special exam arrangements for Year 11 students with SEN had been completed by an external assessor. She noted that the SENCo is considering undertaking a course to train as an assessor, but that this would require an allocation of time to be made to him.</p>			

	<p>The SENCo had expressed some concerns about the high number of Year 7 students with SEN, particularly given the funding constraints. Whilst the small size of the school may be particularly attractive for parents and students with SEN, it was not known at this stage if the perception is borne out by comparison to the national average. Governors were informed about the “nurture group” which had been established for some Year 7 students, taking them out of mainstream lessons. Governors expressed some concerns over the potential perceptions of this group, but JM reported that so far it has proved to be a nurturing, positive group. She noted that the group is intended to be flexible, with students reviewed for entering/leaving the group as appropriate, and it was hoped to reintegrate the students into mainstream lessons by Year 8.</p> <p>AS noted that she would be happy to assess SEN students using the Boxall profile (an assessment tool for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties), and that this might be useful when considering whether students were ready to move from the nurture group into the mainstream classes.</p> <p>2. <u>E- Safety</u> NB had no updates to report.</p> <p>[Confidential minute]</p> <p>3. <u>Mental Health</u> AS reported that she had met with Catherine Starmer-Howes (governor) and spoken to Mandy Sands (Safeguarding & Welfare Officer) in relation to the drafting of a new Mental Health Policy. A draft was currently with MS for review and would be brought to the next meeting of the committee for approval.</p>			
STU 3.9	<p>Any Other Business None.</p>			
STU 3.10	<p>Confidentiality A report by TH under STU 3.8.2 was confidential.</p>			
	<p>Next Meeting The next meeting will be held on 31 January 2018</p>			
	<p>The meeting closed at 7.50pm</p>			