

The Swanage School
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE
Held on Wednesday 20 March 2019, 5.30pm

Present: Isobel Tooley (Chair), Peter Collins, Jenny Maraspin (Acting Headteacher), Al Stephens, Carl Styants, Nicky Taylor (from 6.40pm)

In attendance: Sarah Everitt (Curriculum Area Leader, for item 4.3), Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Sam Kerwood (Curriculum Area Leader, for item 4.3), Kay Lawton (Acting Deputy Headteacher)

Item		Action	Lead	By
STU 4.1	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Nick Brady. Nicky Taylor would be late.			
STU 4.2	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest or conflict with any agenda item.			
STU 4.3	Curriculum Area Leader Presentations: Maths, DT, Catering, Computer Science, Science Sarah Everitt (CAL for mathematics, design & technology and catering) and Sam Kerwood (CAL for science) were in attendance to present on their curriculum areas, based on questions submitted to them by the Chair. <u>Leadership:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>New staff:</u> The CALs noted that there had been three inset days in September for team building, induction on school systems & procedures and curriculum area training. SE noted that support had been put in place for the new Catering Teacher in relation to project based learning in particular, which she did not have prior experience of. This staff member had subsequently resigned and catering had since been covered by two supply teachers and the CAL for science had taught classes relating to nutrition. SE described the current provision and support put in place for the Year 11 cohort. The new DT Teacher was experienced. One existing 			

	<p>member of staff had transferred from teaching science to teaching maths in addition. In science, SK reported on the challenges of working with a team of newly qualified teacher (NQTs). To help support their induction and development, she had prepared a Science Handbook and spent time during inset days on training. Scheduled 1-to-1 meetings with each teacher take place each fortnight, in addition to a weekly departmental meeting. Half-termly lesson observations and learning walks have been conducted, with follow up tasks for continuing professional learning (CPL). These have met with variable results in terms of achievement. In addition to subject support, the NQTs receive support from the NQT Induction Mentor who has provided advice and arranged observations of experienced staff. JM has led behaviour management sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Mathematical methods</u>: SE reported that Exeter Maths School have provided maths training and bar model training. There are team taught physics lessons, with mathematician input, to develop cross curricular links and to promote consistency in the teaching of mathematical methods across subjects. A lesson study project with the science teachers is planned. In DT, the maths specification level is not particularly high but the DT Teacher has been briefed on the maths methodology for the content. - <u>Contextual seating plans</u>: SE reported that her team had reverted to using context sheets rather than contextual seating plans, as they had found the seating plans worked less well in catering, DT and maths where seating changes are used for different aspects of the curriculum and to differentiate levels within classes. There are plans to move to using Progresso data to create context sheets, given how time-consuming updating the sheets is. SK reported that, in science, seating plans are still used and are thought to be valuable. <p>Both CALs noted that the process of creating the context sheets/seating plans is important for staff as it ensures they review the provision maps for students with special educational or other needs and distil the information in a way meaningful to the individual teacher. This enables teachers to get to know their students and to use the information within classes to provide</p>			
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	<p>practical help to support individual needs. The plans were also thought to be helpful for supply / cover teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Quality assurance</u>: Both CALs reported on lesson observations and learning walks to date. In addition there are regular visits to classes. CPL activities stem from lesson observations and learning walks and have a developmental focus. More performance management meetings have been held with staff this year and this has been effective. In science a departmental risk assessment had been initiated at the start of the year. - <u>Concerns</u>: SE shared with governors her concerns in relation to non-examined assessment and long term planning for catering. In maths, the choice of higher or foundation tier for students is a worry as students are not allowed to do both and so the choice needs to be appropriate for each student. Currently 43 students are entered for the higher tier paper and 12 for the foundation tier. The level and attitude of the foundation students is of concern, as is disaffection among a number of students in the Year 11 cohort generally. In science, concerns centre around the inexperienced teaching team. This has been flagged early and addressed through support and training (e.g. through funded training courses, learning from experienced teachers, team teaching and close monitoring of lessons and progress data). Science technician time is down and SK reported this is a concern given the support teachers need to set up experiments and health & safety implications in the use of some chemicals. <p><u>Assessment and Assessment Frameworks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Year 11</u>: SE reported that scrutiny of progress data for maths indicated that the third set were underperforming and interventions have been put in place. She noted that the new data sets are proving helpful and there is an action plan for each department. The DT Teacher and Computing Teacher have created websites, including videos, which have been well received by students. In computing, a number of students are struggling with the need for good maths and an excellent working memory. As a result of this, the School has been stricter in relation to which students may sign up for the computing GCSE. 			
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	<p>SK displayed the Year 11 data for each science subject, noting that recent test results in biology indicated an improved trajectory, and that this data, although indicating negative value added in chemistry and physics, is improved from the previous data drop (December). The triple scientists appeared to be doing worse than those taking combined science, and although the content is no harder there is more of it. Focused tutor interventions are in place for each science subject, including after school interventions and, if the School opts for offering Easter and May half term revision sessions, these will run in science.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Assessment Frameworks for Years 7-9 (preparedness for GCSE)</u>: SE noted that staff are still finding it difficult to fully determine what the assessment framework looks like in Years 7 & 8 and different approaches are being tried for presenting the information to students. They are developing use of the assessment framework to evidence skills, to address "so what" questions and show a student's development, moving towards assessment books that show identified gaps in knowledge for individual students. In science, the review of assessment frameworks for Year 10 is ongoing, including being reviewed against past exam papers to determine what frameworks prepared students well for the exams. A new Key Stage 3 assessment tracker for Years 7-9 is being developed; this has the GCSE assessment objectives embedded so that key skills are taught and assessed throughout KS3. - <u>Theme-based approaches for Key Stage 3 (science)</u>: A new theme-based scheme of work was written for 2018-19, however SK reported that she had reverted to traditional planning and teaching methods as this better suited the new staff. She anticipated that joint planning within the team will develop the theme based ideas for the 2019-20 curriculum. She explained that tracking sheets are in use for KS3 groups to measure skills development rather than content acquisition, the former being fundamental at KS3. These give a visual indication of student progress and inform planning. Parents and students can also clearly see their development of skills. 			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Cumulative testing (science)</u>: Based on teacher feedback cumulative testing was reduced from half-termly to termly, plus end-of-topic tests. SK reported that students appear familiar with the tests and she believes they are helping recollection of earlier topics. - <u>Support for Year 7 with low ability (maths)</u>: The Hub has been developed into an intervention classroom. Lexia software (for maths online learning) has been put in place and a trial run of Doodle Maths is underway. Student leader maths ambassadors will be tasked with helping the Year 7's. <p><u>Home Learning:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SE reported that homework in her subject areas has moved towards being short pieces of work set regularly, designed to help retention. This has improved the amount of homework submitted, particularly for those students who have traditionally not done much. Trials of the "flipped classroom" methodology have worked well, with homework to research a topic (guided, e.g. watching a video) before tackling the task in class. Lesson time focuses on supporting those who need help and challenging those who understood well from their homework research. - SK reported that she has reviewed the homework set by the team and a CPL objective has been set to improve consistency. Due to the content-heavy nature of science, home learning includes revision for end-of-topic and cumulative tests (Seneca has become a popular tool for students). A generic, scientific skills home learning booklet has been developed (e.g. graph skills, calculations, evaluation & analysis skills) with the aim of homework tasks being more engaging for students and able to be supported more easily by parents. <p><u>Disengaged students:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both CALs reported on the number of disengaged students by year group and subject. Actions, such as reorganising class groups, have been taken as a result of identification of trends. 			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion of support for students causing concern is a regular item at departmental meetings. Improvements have been seen since the last data drop and the engagement of a number of students has improved as a result of practical solutions (e.g. giving responsibilities, using different books, moving up a set to challenge and motivate). <p><u>Disadvantaged students:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data on disadvantaged students was displayed and the CALs explained how disadvantage is addressed through high quality differentiated teaching, 1-to-1 support, praise, set changes, revision guides given to all pupil premium students, and provision of lab books. Context sheets or contextualised seating plans mean teachers know who the pupil premium students are and will take this into account when setting groups, using positive discrimination where appropriate to counter underachievement due to outside factors. New levels of data analysis have proved useful for easily identifying students at need of intervention. <p><u>Financial Management:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good resources in classrooms, including maths books, GL testing, Year 7/8 catch up (e.g. Doodle maths) and Year 11 copying (past papers etc) were the main areas of expense for maths. - In Science, resources for experiments are costly, as are lab books. Online Pearson Edexcel KS4 resources and online Exploring Science KS3 resources are proving valuable. <p>Governors recognised the hard work going into these subject areas, in particular the support being provided to the Year 11 cohort and to new staff, and thanks were given to SE and SK.</p> <p>[SE and SK left the meeting]</p> <p>[NT joined the meeting]</p>			
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STU 4.4	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed.</p>			
STU 4.5	<p>Matters Arising & Actions</p> <p><u>STU 2.5 Policy updates</u> The Clerk reported being up to date with policy updates.</p> <p><u>STU 3.6 Pupil premium statement</u> JM had drafted the pupil premium statement for 2017-18 and it had been published on the website.</p> <p><u>STU 3.12 Risk Register Review</u> The Clerk was keeping a copy of the Risk Register updated with the changes coming from committees.</p> <p><u>STU 3.13 Predictive grades</u> JM reported that a field has been added to data collection for a predictive grade to give to sixth form colleges. These will be available after the next data drop on 29 March 2019.</p>			
STU 4.6	<p>Curriculum & Assessment Review</p> <p>Further to discussion on option choices at the last meeting, JM presented a paper to discuss making triple science a core subject rather than an option. In learning the sciences this way, all students will cover the curriculum of combined science, and could sit the combined science GCSE paper if it is decided this is more appropriate for them than triple science. Either way the "EBacc Bucket" for Progress 8 will be filled. The decision on which science papers to sit could be made at Christmas in Year 11 (after term 4 of GCSEs). JM reported that other schools have successfully piloted this model, allocating between 10-12 per timetable cycle to science subjects. Teaching could start in the last term of Year 9.</p>			

	<p>It was noted that the School originally taught triple science to all students but moved it to be optional as teaching was thought to be too rushed for all students to access, however it received less timetable time than now planned. JM noted that the timetable models work better, based on current option choices, when timetabling triple science as core. It was also noted this would move students back to 10 GCSEs, with the additional revision and exams this entailed, however dropping from triple science to combined science would lessen the load for those students for whom 9 GCSEs is more appropriate.</p> <p>Governors stated that, as a matter of principle, students at The Swanage School should have the option to study a modern foreign language to GCSE therefore the option blocks should include French, even though number choosing it this year were low. JM had also surveyed Year 9 and the majority want to continue with philosophy & religious education to GCSE, and so Governors agreed that this will continue as a core GCSE for all students.</p> <p>AGREED that triple science be taken out of the options and made core. The finer details and implementation for the current Year 9 cohort would be left to the School.</p> <p>JM raised with governors the desire to develop further and promote performing arts provision and water-sports within the School, particularly for Years 7 & 8, and to develop a programme for primary schools (primarily for Years 4 & 5) based on these. A recruitment and retention funding grant had been successfully obtained (with funds released when milestones are evidenced). The grant would help the School provide mentoring to, and fund projects led by, teachers who were within two years of having gained NQT status. At present, the Drama Teacher and PE Teacher fell into this bracket and therefore could be given some time to manage projects to develop these subject areas, potentially supported by volunteers.</p> <p>Governors strongly supported development of both performing arts and the PE curriculum as unique selling points for the School. JM reported that the introduction of regular water-sports could potentially be aided by an application for funds from Sports England to purchase equipment (e.g. kayaks, paddle-boards) and training, although the committee suggested that the use of external companies also be explored, to reduce the risks associated with owning equipment and kit and being</p>	Follow up	JM	Apr '19
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	<p>reliant on specially trained staff, given that equipment would sit idle in poor weather or if trained staff were to leave. It was noted that links with the Sailing Club, Swanage Rowing Club and Diving Club could also be initiated or further developed, for provision of timetabled activities. JM confirmed that the curriculum model could facilitate students going down to the beach for double periods in half-groups. Other sports such as orienteering were also suggested as a means of diversifying the PE curriculum.</p>			
STU 4.7	<p>Attendance Review</p> <p>JM reported that whole school attendance has generally improved over the 12 week capture periods since the start of the academic year, and that persistent absence has generally decreased. She noted, however, that Year 7 attendance has declined, which is of concern, and that there are a number of persistent absentees in Year 11. Whole school attendance for academic year to date is 94.21%, and within the last 12 week period had been 94.43%. JM reported that attendance data analysis is much improved and rolling two year averages will be introduced.</p>			
STU 4.8	<p>E-safety</p> <p>The E-safety self-audit report had been positive, with generally good scores, and no particular or urgent actions identified. Training a group of students as digital leaders was a proposed outcome, however it was felt that to do this well there needed to be a member of staff leading and developing it and that, at present, there was unlikely to be the capacity to do this well. It was confirmed that "Safer Schools" provide training and advice for students on a regular basis, and that curriculum units relating to e-safety are taught in personal, social, health & economic education (PSHE) and computing.</p> <p>Thanks were recorded to Nick Brady and Mandy Sands.</p>			
STU 4.9	<p>Policies</p> <p>1. <u>Numeracy Policy</u> RE-APPROVED the Numeracy Policy, to which there were no changes.</p>	Republish	Clerk	Mar '19

	<p>2. <u>Careers Information, Advice & Guidance Policy</u> RE-APPROVED the Careers, Information, Advice & Guidance Policy to which there had been a number of changes to reflect the new requirements on schools and the introduction of the Gatsby Benchmarks. The Chair noted that the policy recognises resource constraints and reflects what the School can achieve at present in relation to the Gatsby Benchmarks. The appendix, summarising careers activity in the School, had been separated and would be published as a stand-alone document.</p>	Republish. Liaise with SP on appendix	Clerk	Mar '19
STU 4.10	<p>Any Other Business None.</p>			
STU 4.11	<p>Confidentiality No item would require confidential minutes.</p>			
	<p>Next Meeting Wednesday 15 May 2019</p>			
	The meeting closed at 8.10pm			