

The Swanage School

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 9 October 2019, 5.30pm

Present: Isobel Tooley (Chair), Peter Collins, Alex Duke, Helen O'Connor, Al Stephens, Carl Styants, Nicky Taylor

In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Kay Lawton (Curriculum Area Leader), Jenny Maraspin (Deputy Headteacher), Vanessa Millman (Governor Observer)

Item		Action	Lead	By
	The Chair welcomed Helen O'Connor to the committee and Vanessa Millman as an observer.			
STU 1.1	Apologies for Absence There were no apologies for absence. It was noted that in the absence of the Headteacher, who was on medical leave, Kay Lawton (Curriculum Area Leader) had joined the meeting to represent the leadership team alongside Deputy Headteacher Jenny Maraspin.			
STU 1.2	Declarations of Interest There were no conflicts for the present meeting. Helen O'Connor advised the committee that her employer "Teach First" runs a careers leader programme with the school.			
STU 1.3	Minutes of the Last Meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed.			
STU 1.4	Matters Arising <u>STU 6.3 (2018/19) Policy updates</u> The Behaviour & Exclusions Policy and the Home Learning Policy had been republished following updates agreed at the last meeting. <u>STU 5.7 (2018/19) Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)</u> PC, link governor for SEND, reported that he had met earlier in the day with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and Deputy Headteacher, noting that the SENCo had been on medical leave for the first few weeks of term. Updating the information given in the Deputy Headteacher's written report to the committee, he noted that the review of the SEN Register for Year 7 had now been completed and that this			

	<p>was in hand for other year groups. The annual review of Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) had been completed, with the exception of two. A meeting with the Educational Psychologist was scheduled for w/c 14 October 2019 to review each EHCP and ensure provisions are being met. The SENCo was up to speed on the reorganisation of SEN support.</p> <p>The Chair asked for additional information on ASDAN courses, as the school had become a registered provider. JM informed the committee that ASDAN is a range of academic and vocational qualifications, equivalent to Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications depending on the number of modules taken. The school is currently registered to offer Level 1 and is training to be able to offer Level 2. The School's intention is to offer ASDAN as a form of alternative provision for a small number of students for whom they will be more suitable than GCSEs. A successful outcome would be, for example, a Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, providing the student with a purpose and focus for study and assisting transition from school to an apprenticeship or college course. Currently one student is on the programme for whom a Maths, English and careers pathway is being used. JM confirmed that ASDAN would only be offered to a small number of individual students for whom it is suitable as a practical alternative to GCSEs.</p> <p>In response to a question on timeliness of access arrangement testing, JM confirmed that this would be completed earlier in the year. She noted that, under the new SEN structure, the SENCo's areas of focus will be on statutory provision (EHCPs) and access arrangements, whilst interventions will predominantly be run by the Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) alongside the teaching & learning team.</p> <p>KL suggested that as the day-to-day support for students with SEND now rests with the teaching team, it would make sense in future for the link governor to meet with her and other key staff in addition to the SENCo.</p>			
STU 1.5	<p>Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>The committee reviewed it's terms of reference and AGREED to commend the existing terms to the full governing body.</p> <p>In response to a question, JM reported that Steph Humby (Philosophy & Religious Education teacher) is responsible for policy and provision in relation to Sex & Relationships Education.</p> <p>There was no need to co-opt further governors to the committee or invite associate members.</p>	FGB agenda	Clerk	Oct '19

STU 1.6	<p>GCSE Results Review</p> <p>JM reported that unvalidated data from the Department for Education had been received today, and showed the school as having a Progress 8 score of -0.02, down from the FFT early results estimate of +0.04. She and KL noted that they were disappointed by the score, particularly as it had slipped to a negative due to including a student who had not been taken off roll due to an administrative error. Governors recognised that it is not a significant difference from the anticipated score, does not change the analysis and remains a respectable outcome given the concerns over a number of students in the cohort.</p> <p><u>Gap between predicted and actual results</u></p> <p>The committee reviewed data providing a comparison of predicted grades given in the Spring Term with those achieved in the GCSEs, and accompanying written commentary. It was noted that the overall value added scores in all subjects had been overestimated in the Spring Term, with the exception of Design & Technology which had underestimated and PRE which was accurate. The gap in scores for English Literature, Geography and Maths were acceptable, and those for Drama, PE and English Language also within half a grade difference. Predictions for Sciences, French, History, Art and Computing were significantly out. It was recognised that overestimations are expected to some extent as teachers often enter aspirational grades to encourage students to achieve their potential, however the level of overestimation in a number of subjects was of concern, particularly in the sciences.</p> <p>JM's written analysis had reported on the leadership team's analysis of the gap between predicted and actual results and JM responded to questions from the committee. It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues with art teaching had been known and documented during the year, and leadership had put measures in place. The results had been poor, however, and a report from the moderator had highlighted a number of issues. The new art teacher would be trained to be a moderator as a learning opportunity. - The Computer Science course had attracted students who had not been able to access the hard academic content, and who with hindsight should have been persuaded to do another option. There had also been an issue (nationally) with non-examined assessment. Now students were advised against taking Computer Science as an option if it is considered beyond their academic ability. The 2019/20 Year 11 group had been advised in this way when selecting their options. - Science remains a significant area of concern, however progress is being made and ongoing work in relation to planning schemes of work and assessment is proving valuable. It is expected that a paradigm shift in the use of assessment and recall tasks will assist the team in more effectively 			
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	<p>addressing gaps in student knowledge. The mock exam had also been reviewed, and its format would be changed for next year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In History, Geography and French, analysis and observations had informed leaders and teachers as to the areas on which to focus to further develop teaching and learning. - In Maths there had been some good decisions in relation to whether individual students should sit foundation or higher papers which followed reflection on this after scrutiny of results the previous year. Some changes would be made to sets and teachers allocated as a result of an analysis broken down by set. - There had not been any Spring data for catering due to staffing issues experienced over the year. These had been discussed in previous meetings and the poor results had unfortunately reflected the difficulties experienced with the theory part of the course, despite the best efforts of the Curriculum Area Leader and other staff. <p><u>Performance of sub-groups</u></p> <p>Analysis of internal data showed that work over the last few years to challenge the most able students (those with Level 4 and 5 SATS) appeared to be working, with these sub-groups having performed well.</p> <p>The less academic students, with less than Level 4 at SATs, had performed poorly, whereas traditionally this sub-group have performed well. JM reported that this sub-group included the majority of student who were disengaged and that a number who joined in Year 10 had had a negative impact on the work ethic of this sub-group overall. The score had also been negatively skewed by one student who sat just one GCSE in a learning centre under dual registration with the school.</p> <p>Governors asked whether similar issues with disengaged students exist in other cohorts. JM and KL responded that there are a number of low achieving, high need girls in the current Year 11 who will need significant focus (already underway). The current Year 10 were polarised, with both a number of strongly academic pupils and a number of less academic pupils and pupils with SEN. The issues affecting the outgoing GCSE cohort were unlikely to be repeated; in this cohort there had been a sizeable enough group of disengaged students to create a culture shift that caused significant disruption. Students on managed moves joining the school in the upper years had been a contributing factor to this.</p> <p>Students with SEN had made progress broadly in line with expectations (according to the internal data estimate).</p>			
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<p><u>Actions arising</u></p> <p>The analysis had showed clear areas on which to focus the development of teaching and learning, and subject-specific issues that could be addressed. These were presented in the circulated paper.</p> <p>JM noted that there will be a focus on groups and setting by academic ability, and the impact on students who are less academically able, it being clarified after a question from the Chair, that this meant the school would use mixed-ability sets where it is best, for example in English. In Maths, GL testing in Year 7 would generate information on which to base early interventions and setting of students and allocating of teachers appropriately.</p> <p>A governor discussed with JM the resources and research being used to support teaching and learning, asking whether it might be helpful to review the basic principles of learning theory and to use alternative resources for some of the teachers who would benefit from support. JM and KL confirmed that their strategy is based on cognitive load theory, and that this has underpinned planning and continuing professional development throughout the year. This had involved working with staff to reshape schemes of work to embed recall activities throughout, rather than teaching sequentially, and to plan homework tasks to aid retrieval. Embedding and monitoring the use of the new mark-books would be the next step. Strategies for behaviour management and classroom techniques are shared with NQTs and observation of an experienced teacher delivering a lesson is put in place where helpful.</p> <p>Governors questioned the rationale of the senior leaders being so directly involved, asking whether instead they should be “training the trainers”, i.e. training the Curriculum Area Leaders (CALs) to identify and step in to remedy where teaching practice can be improved, asking whether the CALs feel responsible for shaping and developing their teams. JM and KL agreed that their role should be helping the CALs to take on these responsibilities, and to ensure there is a consistent understanding across the CALs of what good teaching is, recognising the development model will be more robust if spread across the wider leadership team. JM also noted that research based methodology is a focus of the new Ofsted framework which she wholeheartedly supported. CALs were not currently on middle leader training, but were reported to be keen. Helen O'Connor offered to see if Teach First have any training that the school might access.</p> <p><u>Pastoral factors and support</u></p> <p>Staff Governor AD noted that evidence suggests home life and pastoral issues can outweigh the effect of teaching and behaviour in the classroom in terms of educational performance, and therefore a key focus for the school should also be on influencing a pupil's wider appreciation of the value of coming to school and, where possible, on influencing their homelife by engaging both them and their parents. The importance of a</p>	Middle leader training	HO'C / JM	Jan '20
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	<p>teacher understanding how to respond in the classroom to factors in a pupil's home life was noted. AD believed the school had been very successful for individual students through a significant effort on pastoral care, and expressed that the action plan would benefit from a greater emphasis on pastoral and student-centred issues as well as teaching & learning related actions. There was some lively discussion on these points, but limited information about how such an aspiration might be implemented in practice.</p> <p>Questions were asked about the possibility of gathering qualitative data from pupils who thrive at the school but do not necessarily do well academically. JM noted that the PASS survey had measured qualitative data but had been too costly to continue. Some form of qualitative data collection should be possible however, and it was noted that data on "attitude to learning" is collected.</p> <p>The Chair complimented school leaders on their analysis and on identifying specific, focused actions as an outcome.</p>			
STU 1.7	<p>Pupil Premium</p> <p>NT, link governor for pupil premium, reported that she had not yet engaged with leaders regarding pupil premium for this academic year. She noted that she is planning to revisit the questions that she put to the Deputy Headteacher last year, and that she would also meet with the Business Manager for more information on pupil premium funding. It was noted that the Department for Education has recently issued updated guidance encouraging schools to move away from having an annual plan towards a broader plan that explains how funding will be targeted over a longer time-span. This guidance anticipates that Pupil Premium funding will be used in three ways: staff development to improve teaching; targeted academic support; wider strategies that support readiness to learn.</p> <p>JM explained that there are whole-school strategies for attendance, behaviour and readiness to learn, alongside targeted support for pupil premium students. She noted that further work is needed to ensure effective planning for PP funds. A ringfenced portion of the funds had been set aside to benefit individual students when they need it, for example in paying for trips and uniform etc.</p> <p>JM reported that this year PP funding has continued automatically from primary school, rather than families being retested.</p>			

	<p>A governor asked whether Pupil Premium Funding is intended to be allocated for use in respect of individual students. JM responded that whilst that was a requirement for some types of funding (for example for looked-after children), it was not a requirement for Pupil Premium funding in general.</p>			
STU 1.8	<p>School Development Plan Objectives</p> <p>The Chair referred back to a point made earlier in the meeting regarding the importance of pastoral issues in student achievement, asking whether the pastoral objectives in the School Development Plan (SDP) are strong enough. The ability to measure some of the objectives, for example attitude to learning or level of engagement, was discussed, as was the definition of disengaged. It was noted that a score is given to attitude to learning once a term and so improvement in scores can be measured. Levels of engagement could potentially be measured by an evaluation of how often and for how long students are on task, which might be facilitated with the use of IRIS software.</p> <p>It was agreed that “attitude” to learning might alternatively be described as “capacity” for learning, given that home life is so significant in this and that capacity to learn will sometimes depend on circumstances outside the control of the student.</p> <p>JM reported that an action plan to go alongside the objectives is being developed with middle leaders.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that the School Development Plan should more closely reflect the objectives identified by the GCSE review and that others, e.g. literacy, if still required should be made more specific and sharply focused. Other governors agreed that defining a smaller list of key priorities would make the SDP more focused and achievable.</p> <p>JM agreed that she would refine the SDP and bring revised objectives to the full governing body for approval.</p> <p>In response to a question on staff wellbeing, JM confirmed that the School now has a service level agreement for online counselling and on-site if needed. It was suggested further work is needed to signpost this and to make its use a usual thing for staff to do, in promotion of wellbeing and positive mental health.</p> <p><u>Curriculum and assessment development</u></p> <p>JM briefed the committee in more detail on plans for development of the curriculum and assessment. New electronic mark-books had been designed for the recording and analysis of marking regular assessments against half termly core objectives, which come from the curriculum. The focus has changed from grades to</p>	<p>Review SDP</p> <p>Promote staff wellbeing and SLA</p>	<p>JM</p> <p>JM</p>	<p>Oct '19</p> <p>Nov '19</p>

	<p>meeting specific learning objectives, through a process of marking not with a grade, but with whether the student can meet the specific objective (“emerging”, “established” or “excelling”). The mark-book also tracks recall activities to reinforce the objectives and calculates cumulative averages. This ties in with new assessment framework which has been developed over the last couple of years, whereby the curriculum delivery should build on prior knowledge with built in recall and space for assessment, followed by space for addressing any gaps that assessment identifies. JM observed that the idea is to focus on what objectives are being taught, whether pupils are understanding what is being taught and, if not, what is the teacher doing about it.</p> <p>This new tracking process enables teachers and leaders to review each student more specifically and to be able to see progress of a whole class on each objective. The moderation process has also changed, with the moderator now asking the teacher to show the work that demonstrates a student can meet the objective.</p> <p>Department meetings have been refocused away from administrative notices to solely teaching and learning.</p> <p>The mark-book is versatile and recording of pastoral matters could be added.</p>			
STU 1.9	<p>Link Governor Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>SEND</u> PC had reported earlier in the meeting. See STU 1.4 above. 2. <u>Mental Health</u> AS reported that the “walk and talk” project is ongoing and that the beach hut is now available until April, with efforts taking place to find a new funding stream to continue the project. Around 6 students from The Swanage School are using it. 3. <u>E-safety</u> The Chair reported that the E-safety link governor (who is not a member of the committee) will conduct an annual review and report in the Spring Term. 4. <u>Pupil Premium</u> NT had reported earlier in the meeting. See STU 1.7 above. 			

STU 1.10	Policies JM reported that there were no proposed changes to the following policies: Academically More Able Policy and Uniform Policy. The existing policies would be circulated and would be approved by Chair's action following a two-week window for any comments to be received.	Policies: circulate Reapprove by Chair's action	Clerk Chair	Oct '19 Oct '19
STU 1.11	Any Other Business <u>Dyslexia</u> JM reported that she had discussed dyslexia with the Educational Psychologist. The EdPsych had recommended 1-to-1 support for some students and training for teachers, and some tests had been recommended. A governor commented that up to 20% of the population have some degree of dyslexia. JM confirmed that Dyslexia is sometimes reassessed as part of access arrangements for GCSEs.			
STU 1.12	Confidentiality Comments about individual teachers, or where individual teachers might be identified would be confidential.			
	The meeting closed at 7.20pm			