

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 1 July 2020, 5.30pm

Present (via remote access): Isobel Tooley (Chair), Peter Collins, Alex Duke, Jenny Maraspin (Headteacher), Helen O'Connor, Al Stephens, Carl Styants, Nicky Taylor

In attendance (via remote access): Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Steph Humby (Head of House and PSHE Co-ordinator, for item STU 6.3 and STU 6.4), Kay Lawton (Deputy Headteacher), Eleanor Morris (Head of House, for item STU 6.3), Sam Probert (Head of House, for item STU 6.3 and STU 6.4), Dan Ringrow (Head of House, for item STU 6.3)

Item		Action	Lead	By
	The meeting was held by remote access due to the social distancing measures in place as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.			
STU 6.1	Apologies for Absence None.			
STU 6.2	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest or conflict with any agenda item.			
STU 6.3	Head of House Presentations 1. <u>Pastoral care in the largely virtual environment</u> The Heads of House were in attendance to present to governors on themes arising from their weekly contact with families during the school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They summarised the themes that had emerged as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most families had appreciated the contact, particularly at first, although keeping in contact with all families has become more challenging for tutors as the lock-down has continued, with some parents reluctant to continue to take calls. For some, emails rather than calls had been preferred, allowing the parent to respond in their own time.• Some difficulties had been experienced at the start of lock-down in relation to remote access and the technological aspect of online learning.			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents had expressed concern over the amount of screen-time their child has been exposed to, given the need for work to be done online. • Initially there had been overlap between tutors and subject teachers in relation to asking about work that students had been set; clearer roles had since evolved with the weekly calls from tutors focusing on wellbeing and mental health, and subject teachers checking on work. • There had been a relatively low turnout of students to the virtual tutor groups that had been introduced for Friday afternoons. • For some students, lock-down had clearly been difficult and had led to isolation, which was having a detrimental impact on wellbeing. Several referrals had been made to the School Counsellor. • It had become clear that re-integrating students and “getting back to normal learning” will be a significant challenge, and that a unified, consistent approach from all staff will be required, for example in relation to managing behavioural issues. • The calls had, in some cases, strengthened the relationship between tutor and families. • The calls were primarily with parents, although some tutors had also spoken to students. <p>The Committee recorded thanks to the Heads of House and tutor team for their continued commitment to making regular calls home, it being recognised this has been a significant amount of work.</p> <p>In response to questions from governors, JM and the Heads of House reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps are being taken to engage with parents with whom there has not been much contact during the school closure. • There had been a few cases where situations at home had come to light as a result of the calls (for example where families are struggling). • Once school resumes, the relationships built with parents will continue with a termly call home (which had been implemented prior to the school closure). • Communication between the school and families will be a key part of the catch-up strategy. • Informal parents’ evenings have been considered in the past and will be revisited when it becomes possible to run events. 		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the general impression gained by tutors is that a return to normality will be welcomed by both students and parents. • Vertical tutor groups are unlikely to work within the guidelines for school re-opening, it being anticipated that there will be a need to keep different year groups in separate “bubbles”. The tutor group structure is therefore likely to change for the foreseeable future. <p>2. <u>Operation of the Student Council</u> Miss Morris, Head of House with responsibility for the Student Council, presented on the aims, roles and initiatives of the recently reformed Student Council, to which ten students had been appointed. She noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aims of the Council are to give a voice to students, to empower them to be involved in positive change and to build relationships between students and staff, with staff informed and focused on what students feel is important. She noted that research suggests that an active Student Council can increase academic standards and reduce absence rates. • Five main roles had been appointed (Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Press Officer), along with five supporting members. • The Press Officer had designed a logo, each element of which had meaning, and had produced the first newsletter. • Ideas generated by the Student Council included wet break activities, healthier snacks, improvements in tutor communication and improvements to the school library. They were also planning to produce a yearbook of memories from the lock-down period, create a book recommendation webpage and a book “swop & share”. Initiatives to start immediately included a pen-pal scheme, pairing students with elderly residents of the town who are suffering from loneliness, and an anti-litter campaign. • Student Council members were happy to help with promotion of the school and were recording voice-clips and display materials on what they love about school. • It was noted that continuing the momentum into 2020/21 and across the whole student body would be the next challenge. <p>Governors congratulated Miss Morris and welcomed the renewed energy being put into making the Student Council a success. They suggested that it might be a forum where current news topics</p>			
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	<p>such as the anti-racism “black lives matter” campaign or other local or national issues might be discussed, and related initiatives planned.</p> <p>[Eleanor Morris and Dan Ringrow left the meeting.]</p> <p>JM reported that Miss Probert, currently a Head of House, had been appointed the Curriculum Area Leader for English, Drama, Music and French. Expressions of interest from staff would now be sought for the Head of House role. Governors recorded their congratulations to Miss Probert.</p>			
STU 6.4	<p>Sex and Relationships Education</p> <p>A copy of the revised Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy had been circulated, reflecting changes to the RSE curriculum in line with government guidelines. Governors had commented on the first draft before the meeting, and an updated version had been circulated in time for the meeting (the change in nomenclature from Sex & Relationships Educations (SRE) being noted). Miss Humby, co-ordinator for Physical, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHE) answered questions from governors.</p> <p>APPROVED the updated policy, noting that references to “free school” will be replaced with “academy”.</p> <p>The Chair asked about consultation with parents and students. SH noted that consultation on the policy itself is not a requirement, but discussion of the content of the RSE curriculum is. Given the school closure, it had been decided to direct parents to an overview of plans on the website, with any questions or concerns about the curriculum to be addressed to SH. Once the School is fully re-open and it is safe to do so, consideration will be given to holding a parent consultation evening. Discussion of the curriculum with the Student Council would be deferred until this could be done in person.</p> <p>Governors recorded thanks to Miss Humby.</p> <p>[Steph Humby and Sam Probert left the meeting.]</p>	Republish	Clerk	Jul '20
STU 6.5	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2020 (an adjournment from the meeting of 13 May 2020) were confirmed as an accurate record. The minutes will be signed at a later date.</p>			

STU 6.6	<p>Matters Arising and Actions Where not elsewhere on the agenda.</p> <p><u>STU 5.6 Policies</u> The Children Looked After Policy had been republished.</p>			
STU 6.7	<p>SharePoint Demonstration JM demonstrated the new Microsoft SharePoint site, reporting that it was nearly ready to roll out. She noted that the school had recently purchased the facility to organise documents in the way demonstrated, and that SharePoint would be used with Teams, the two systems dovetailing together as part of the Microsoft Office suite of products. The new management information system (Arbor) would also integrate.</p> <p>In terms of roll-out and training, JM reported that several teachers had populated SharePoint with documents for their subjects, which was being used as a guide to other teaching staff to ensure consistency of site structure across all subjects. Training for key members of staff had taken place and would shortly follow for all.</p> <p>In highlighting the benefits to students that using SharePoint will bring, JM noted that each student will have access to all the resources that teachers use during classes (e.g. PowerPoint slides, videos, task sheets), for each lesson in each subject, including those for previous years (it would not be possible for a student to view documents relating to higher years). Whilst recognising the benefit for all students over the longer-term, governors also noted that this would prove particularly useful for students who must self-isolate due to the pandemic.</p> <p>JM noted that staff resources and office documents would also be moved over to SharePoint as part of the longer-term strategy for document storage.</p>			
STU 6.8	<p>Curriculum Model JM shared the curriculum model for 2020/21, noting the changes that had been made. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSHE being taught as a discrete lesson in Year 7 as well as other years and being allocated one hour per fortnight in Years 8 and 9. It would also continue to be a focus of tutor times and challenge days. 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hours for mathematics had increased in Year 7 for the catch-up that would be necessary after school closures. Sciences had been separated in KS3 and given 3 hours per fortnight for each, with the same teacher for each group. In KS4 there would be 4 hours per fortnight for each science. Option choices would be made later than in previous years, with option subjects being taught on rotation to all students for longer before decisions are made, enabling them to make more informed choices. Time allocated to French in KS3 has been increased to try and encourage take-up as an option. The popularity of design & technology as an option meant there would be five GCSE groups over Year 10 and 11. The Art Technician, who currently teaches some DT classes, would be taking subject specific training to enable her to teach more of the classes in lower years. <p>In response to a question, JM confirmed that PSHE had not been taught during the school closure.</p>			
STU 6.9	<p>Science</p> <p>KL reported that a review of science planning and delivery had been taking place in response to the poor results. The priority had been to ensure that schemes of work were re-planned to ensure effective curriculum mapping and interleaving of topics, which had been completed subject to a few revisions still be made for the Key Stage 3 schemes. Cumulative tests had been re-introduced to inform teachers where gaps exist and, coupled with space in the schemes of work, would enable teachers to respond with lessons designed to fill any gaps in knowledge.</p> <p>KL also reported that a programme of initiatives had been underway prior to the school closure to raise the profile of science within school and make it more relevant to students, for example through assemblies, speakers and visits. Team-work between staff had also been addressed, to consolidate work done individually and science had been given more time in the curriculum model to enable separation of the science subjects in Key Stage 3 as well as Key Stage 4, meaning all classes would be taught by the subject specialist. A tighter department structure, with department meetings focused on teachers and students rather than administration, and ongoing monitoring, should contribute to continued improvements.</p>			
STU 6.10	<p>Progress Review</p> <p>The Committee focused on likely plans for the full reopening of schools in September, with JM</p>			

	<p>noting that all plans being discussed by staff were subject to government guidance and would remain adaptable throughout the summer and the Autumn Term.</p> <p>JM noted that the curriculum model discussed under item STU 6.8 would be run if school resumes largely as normal, and that adjustments to the model will be made if it becomes clear that it will not be possible to run a full programme of teaching. She reported on plans to consider using project-based learning to help Year 7 students catch-up in English and mathematics and to put in place an individual plan for each Year 11 student. She noted that the Higher-Level Teaching Assistants would support individual students, and that any additional funding might be used for extra tutoring hours.</p> <p>JM observed that radical proposals from the government might include narrowing the GCSE curriculum for some students.</p> <p>The Chair asked if missed practical GCSE elements would need to be caught up on from the term missed, for current Year 10 students. AD reported that this was not the case in design & technology, where the non-examined assessment elements are not yet behind schedule. It was thought that assessed work in art may have been particularly affected. JM noted that each subject will create an individual response to catch-up and that individual GCSEs may be adapted.</p> <p>The Chair asked whether front-loading practical lessons might attract students back to school and help in the circumstance of any further school closures (noting that in principle lessons other than practicals can be completed at home). JM and KL would give this consideration.</p>			
STU 6.11	<p>Pupil Premium JM reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Education Endowment Foundation</u>: Suggestions from the EEF for the most effective use of new funding were in line with initiatives that would have been considered in any event, for example to engage parents or offer one-to-one tutoring. • <u>Government funded computers for Year 10</u>: Eight computers had been funded, along with some dongles and data. All students had been able to participate in remote learning. • <u>Free school meals</u>: The School would move to the government scheme for the summer holidays, having been providing Co-op vouchers to facilitate local shopping. More supermarkets had been added to the government scheme. 			

STU 6.12	<p>Other Policies</p> <p><u>Behaviour & Exclusions Policy</u> APPROVED the Behaviour & Exclusions Policy, noting that the only update at present was to include reference to following government guidelines in relation to the timeframe for governor review of exclusions (the timeframe having been relaxed at present due to the pandemic).</p> <p>JM noted that the policy may be further revised in the Autumn Term as a result of improved reporting from Arbor, which may lead to refinements in the practical application of some behaviour management principles. The principles themselves were unlikely to change.</p>	Republish	Clerk	Jul '20
STU 6.13	<p>Link Governor Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Special Educational Needs</u> PC reported that there was nothing to update on at present. He will liaise with the SENCo about updates to the school website to help parents / carers understand how to request a new EHCP or changes to existing EHCPs. 2. <u>Mental Health</u> AS reported that a bid for funding for continuation of the “Walk & Talk” project had been submitted. 3. <u>E-safety</u> TM (not in attendance) had sent advance notice that he had nothing to report at present. It was noted that he had been involved in the response to a recent data breach. 4. <u>Pupil Premium</u> NT had nothing to report in addition to what had been discussed under item STU 6.11 above. She will keep an eye open for updates to funding for Pupil Premium students and will ensure that the Senior Leadership Team are aware. 			

STU 6.14	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><u>Succession Planning & Committee Evaluation</u></p> <p>The Chair reported that the Chair of the Finance & Premises Committee had indicated a wish to step down from chairing that committee as was best practice after a number of years, and that one solution might be for her to take on the chairing of the Finance & Premises Committee if a successor for the chairing of the Student Committee could be agreed. HOC noted that she would be happy to consider chairing from Christmas onwards if no-one else wished to. The Clerk noted that committee chairing would be on the agenda for the next meeting of the full board of governors and that changing the chairing arrangements at this point (rather than at the start of the academic year as usual) could be discussed.</p> <p>In terms of evaluating the Committee's effectiveness, governors made suggestions for areas they felt the Committee might consider over the coming year as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding horizons, as per the original vision and ethos (through visits and other activities to the extent that covid-19 measures permit). • Teaching/enlightening students about diversity and equality issues, ensuring the curriculum reflects current narratives about these issues and celebrates the successes and cultural richness, rather than oppression, of ethnic and minority cultures. • Continuing to build resilience and self-efficacy, particularly given the possibility of future self-isolation. • Consideration of exclusions "as a whole" (not individual cases), perhaps monitoring termly behaviour data alongside progress data, enabling the identification of any trends. 	Add to committee plan	Clerk	Autumn Term
STU 6.15	<p>Confidentiality</p> <p>No item would require confidential minutes.</p>			
	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Autumn Term.</p>			
	<p>The meeting closed at 7.30pm</p>			