

The Swanage School

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT COMMITTEE**

Held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 5.30pm

Present: Isobel Tooley (Chair), Tanya Hamilton Fletcher, Adam Hines, Jenny Maraspin (Headteacher), Kay Lawton (Deputy Head), Jessica Starmer (taking notes)

Item		Action	Lead	By
STU 5.1	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Peter Collins, Hannah Etherington, Alex Duke			
STU 5.2	<b>Declarations of interest</b> JS and TH-F declared an interest in items relating to this year's GCSE preparations as they have family members at the school about to start GCSE exams.			
STU 5.3	<b>Minutes of last meeting</b> All in agreement that the minutes from the last meeting were an accurate record.			
STU 5.4	<b>Matters arising and actions</b> The new data format has been used for the years 9, 10, 11 progress data.  Reading and the literary policy is on the agenda.  External communication of student achievements is an ongoing work; they are showcased internally on a board in the school. Governors noted that communication of former students' achievements would be useful to demonstrate the diverse range of onward paths (subject to data privacy considerations).	Continue work on how to communicate outcomes externally	JM, Sue Fletcher (SF)	July '22

STU 5.5	<p><b>Children Looked After</b> Confidential minute.</p>			
STU 5.6	<p><b>Teaching and Learning</b> The Committee received a presentation from KL (see attached slides).</p> <p><u>Reading and Literacy Policy</u> Regular reading is closely correlated with academic success but it is not easy to engage students, especially given the compelling/distracting nature of mobile devices and the internet. An audit to hone in on the specific reading skills required in different subjects has been completed and Curriculum Area Leaders challenged to find ways of integrating reading into their subjects. Parental engagement and the overlap with safeguarding re critical understanding of internet data were discussed. KL asked for more time to update the Literacy Policy as this is a complex and challenging area that will require an integrated approach to be successful. The governors agreed, noting that the work done so far was purposeful and practical – for example including a focus on how initiatives are implemented and how students are engaged with the approaches used.</p> <p><u>Curriculum Support Activities (CSA)</u> The new approach is becoming embedded; good engagement/acceptance from both students and staff.</p> <p><u>Observations</u> There is now a structured and regular system in place for peer observations within Teaching and Learning Communities (TLCs), based on priorities identified through the Embedding Formative Assessment initiative. There are 3 TLCs in the school, each comprised of about 8 teaching staff. They meet as a whole group and also as partnerships within the group; it was reported that this has been an effective way of sharing best practices and experimenting with new ideas, and that this is feeding into staff development. They have also had a positive impact on wellbeing due to reduction in isolation and increase in peer-to-peer support. A governor asked how teachers are trained in observing, and it was confirmed that the initial observations are accompanied by an experienced observer for that purpose.</p> <p>A governor asked whether the overall quality of teaching and learning has improved over the course of the year. KL confirmed that in her opinion it has.</p>	Provide further information on reading initiative once plans firmed up	KL	July '22

STU 5.7	<p><b>Progress Review: Y7-11</b> See separate Headteacher report and data summary, and individual progress reports for each year group.</p> <p>JM noted that due to the disruption to teaching caused by covid over the last 2 years it is difficult to assess how our data relates to the picture nationally. Science has been an area of focus and this appears to have paid off in improved progress. The gender gap was pointed out and discussed; this reverses the previous trend of girls doing better. A governor made a comparison with national data which suggested that the pandemic has perhaps on average hit girls harder. Within the school the averages are strongly influenced by 4 high prior attainment girls who have very low attendance, for differing challenges in their individual circumstances.</p> <p>The school had received the centrally issued guidance on this year's GCSE exams, and had carefully taken this into account in planning the GCSE preparation in each subject.</p> <p>Data for Year 10 and 9 was encouraging.</p> <p>Data for Year 7 highlights the challenges for this year group caused by their final two years of primary education being significantly disrupted by covid. The two key challenges are reading ability (being addressed – see SEND presentation to the last meeting of the Full Governing Body and item 5.6 above) and getting the students to work effectively in a school environment.</p> <p>Attendance is not where the Senior Leadership Team would like it to be, but it has been impacted by recent covid waves, and is in line with national averages. It will be a focus in the School Development Plan (SDP) next year.</p> <p>A governor asked what measures were in place for attendance for GCSE exams. JM and KL confirmed that breakfast would be provided to the GCSE students on exam days, and that personal visits to students not in school would be made as appropriate.</p>			
STU 5.8	<p><b>SDP &amp; Risk Review</b> - <u>Outstanding KS3 Project Based Learning (PBL) Curriculum</u> The chair noted that the paper presented provided a factual overview of what has been done but that there was no assessment of how effective the revised PBL approach has been in relation to the objectives stated in the SDP for this initiative. Agreed to defer this assessment to the next meeting.</p>	Report on the effectiveness of PBL changes vs SDP objective	JM / DD	Jul '22

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Improving Curriculum Support Activities</u> This was covered by the paper and discussion in 5.6 above.</li> </ul>			
STU 5.9	<p><b>Link governor reports</b></p> <p><u>Mental health</u> JS has met with Safeguarding &amp; Welfare Officer Mandy Sands to discuss the outcome of the survey conducted with MIND, and ensuing actions. There are clear mental health challenges within all groups surveyed (students, staff and parents). Social issues (loneliness, friendship problems) and anxiety/stress around schoolwork featured highly for students, while for staff workload was a key issue. In terms of support provided by the school, students in general felt able to access a range of resources and to talk openly about mental health issues; there were some requests from parents for more support from the school. In discussion governors noted that mental health underlies all academic and other outcomes and should remain a focus. JM reported that staff having issues with stress/workload have been given time off where appropriate.</p> <p><i>Governor suggestion: the impact on staff workload should be one of the factors taken into account in the setting of strategies and actions, including deciding how many GCSE options can be accommodated within affordable staffing levels.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Special Educational Needs (SEN)</u> PC will not be re-standing as a governor when his term comes to an end and therefore a new link governor will be needed for SEN.</li> <li>- <u>Pupil Premium</u> Hannah Etherington will not be able to take on the link governor role and therefore a new link governor for PP will be needed.</li> </ul>	Elect new SEN and Pupil Premium Link Governors	FGB	July '22
STU 5.10	<p><b>Parent Pledge</b> See separate paper, provided for info only to the committee.</p>			

STU 5.11	<b>Any Other Business</b> None			
STU 5.12	<b>Confidentiality</b> Item 5.5 (Children Looked After) will be a confidential minute.			