

Board of Governors meeting

7 July 2014

16.00 -18.00

AGENDA 07



ATTENDEES

Chair: William Braid (WB);

Stephen Cox (SC); Nick Deacon (ND); David Donaldson (DD); Stephen Holland (SH); Carol Kirk(CK); Lyn Rushbrooke (LR); Sylvie Sklan (SS); Denise Stevens (DS); Jill Tate (JT); Mike Whitfield (MW)

Apologies: Stuart Askew (SA); Tiph Fedor (TF); Justine Lee (JL); Harry Rouse (HR);

Clerk: Niki Nakamura (NN) + Sarah Doyle (observing)

Also attending: Wendy Cotton (Bursar)

AGENDA

1. WB welcomed Sarah Doyle who will be the Clerk next year.
2. Minutes of last BGM
3. **Actions from previous meeting(s)**

	Action	By whom	By when
1.	Principal's report to show SEN comparisons excluding eurythmy therapy, & staff absences in context	SC	Each meeting
2.	Discussion on appropriate level of annual contribution to SWSF	ALT	Next meeting
3.	Strategic Intentions – review Item 7 & wording of Item 2	Subgroup	Complete
4.	Amend Communications Policy to include “All press enquiries should be directed through the Principal in the first instance.”	AC	By next meeting
5.	Proposal on Parent & Child provision - look at after half term	LR	By next meeting
6.	Liaison with other funded Steiner Schools	WB/SC	Next meeting
7.	Keep board informed of training opportunities	Clerk	As & when
8.	SEN Governor required	T&L	Next meeting
9.	Discuss raise in staff salaries	ALL	Visioning day

Re: Action 1 – our SEN figures include eurythmy therapy. If excluded, around 25% have SEN. Regional picture is 22.5%. Statements 1.8% SAH, 1.5% in Hereford. Nationally is 18%. 105 of which 41 are eurythmy therapy.

Re: Action 4 – Although Communications Committee felt this did not fit well into the policy, & should be in Staff Handbook & Govs. Code of Conduct, it accepted BOG recommendation to put into the Policy.

Re: Action 5 – first meeting was to set the terms of reference. Next meeting on September 17th. Report will follow

Re: Action 8 –David Donaldson & Denise Stevens both willing - to be discussed.

4. Correspondence - None

5. Legal – There were no changes to the Declarations of Interest. Sarah Doyle has completed her form.

6. Principal's Report

- i) Re: Priority Objectives – traffic light system used; these will form the basis of the priority objectives for next year.
- ii) Staffing: [REDACTED] appointed for SEN tutor ([REDACTED]); Gardening Tutor 2 candidates being interviewed tomorrow; Maths/Science Teacher applicant has dropped out – we will consider whether we can deploy existing staff better. Possible lack of right skill-sets. [REDACTED] is leaving. Spanish Teacher – 3 applicants are to be interviewed on Thursday; U/S Maths TA – 2 applicants; SENCO lead 3 applicants. ALT suggest WAC to be replaced like for like. Ad to be drafted this week.
- iii) Formal Complaint – has been investigated; recommendation of 4 counts of gross misconduct. The hearing run by Hoople will be held on Friday afternoon. ND, LR, JL on panel (with HR as the Personnel Governor)
- iv) Appraisal process – being refined every year. SH appraised [REDACTED] who then carried out appraisals of teaching staff. The appraisal consists of a review of targets, observe lessons, look at performance & identify CPD needs; (e.g. [REDACTED] to attend Steiner [REDACTED] course next year). Teachers are being encouraged to visit different areas of school. New Vice-Principal (RY) to undertake some form of Steiner training. Probationary teachers, [REDACTED] are being observed as part of process. Fellowship advisers visited KG. External assessment of SEN provision.
- v) Attendance – little variation between classes. We have taken a less punitive approach with parents, stressing the importance of attendance as part of the learning rhythm. Best attendance of previous 5 years (estimate about 1.5% below national attendance figures for 2014). KG & Class 9 figures are significantly different. Work to do on policy & on figures.
- vi) GCSEs – relatively calm atmosphere. Message about the reason for any drop in perceived performance needs to be ready for January when league tables come out.
- vii) A governor asked whether the very positive lunch-time clubs could be extended to Classes 7, 8, 9, 10. SH replied that we are trialling slightly extended lunch hours to enable this.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. COMMUNICATIONS Committee –

- i) Revised Terms of Reference – should this committee be more active in terms of communication from Governors? It was suggested this committee maintain oversight & quality assurance of PR. There is a question of capacity within the Admin team to manage the website, etc. Do we need a Communications Working Group? AC

- ii) **ACTION:** Proposal to approve current terms of reference.
AC proposed, WB seconded. **10 IN FAVOUR, 1 AGAINST.**
- iii) Policy on Use of Electronic Media – this policy has been adapted from the one used by Herefordshire LA. We have removed a section dealing with staff/parent/pupil relationships for the time being, and will formulate our own policy on this after discussion.
ACTION: Approve the Policy on the Use of Electronic Media.
AC proposed; DS seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.**

2. FINANCE Committee

- i. Approval of 2014-2015 Budget (including pay-rise)
PROPOSED by Nick Deacon; SECONDED by AC.
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED
- ii. Board noted requirements regarding fraud & irregularity (Annex D) & Connected Parties (Annex D).
- iii. SWSF contributions must stand up to scrutiny. We have agreed to [REDACTED], and have asked for breakdown/justification of other fees. A governor asked whether school could give a donation from fund-raised money? This could only be done if designated as such to donors. The contribution structure to SWSF was **APPROVED** in principle.
- iv. Thanks were extended to Wendy Cotton who will be leaving in October, for her hard work this year.

3. PERSONNEL Committee

- i. **ACTION:** Proposal that we approach [REDACTED] to become a member of the Personnel Committee.
SC Proposed, DS Seconded - **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**
- ii. Richard Temple and Niki Nakamura were thanked for their invaluable work on the committee.
ACTION: BOG to write letters of thanks

4. PREMISES Committee

- i. A governor asked about the management of Japanese Knotweed. It is being cut back on a regular basis.
- ii. A governor asked about the current situation with the ROSS bus. The Ross area group are looking for volunteer drivers. If these cannot be found, the service may need to be wound down.

7. Future relationship with other Steiner Academies

The aim is to try to work closer together as Academies. WB & SS to investigate Umbrella Trust further. A questionnaire has been sent to all Academies, to look at teacher training. WB will meet with legal firm to explore legal implications. Meet again in September to find more formal working together as academies. The government would prefer to deal with one board (as in a MAT) than with a multiplicity of boards, while collaboration with other academies helps us act as a single voice. Conflicts

may arise if new schools want to open. No decisions being made at the moment.

8. Follow up from last meeting on the future growth of SAH – Group = LR, CK, MW, SS, SH. Suggestion: increase class sizes by 1 (or 2) by moving storage out of classrooms. Move woodwork to bike shed. Move Class 8 to WW room. One governor felt that class sizes should not increase. Holme Lacy Primary may become available next year, but we would need to show evidence of demand for school places. Double-stream Primary option was rejected because of funding implications.

9. Dates of next year's meetings were circulated (cf MAP document)

10. AOB -

- a. Stuart Askew (Finance) finds it difficult to attend meetings, & ND has served 4 years.
- b. AC – WB has done 4 years as parent governor. Does not want to stand again. WB co-opted for 1 year. Parent Governor needs to be elected.
- c. Thanks to SC for taking up the role of Principal.
- d. Thanks to NN for acting as Clerk to the Governors.