

JFS SCHOOL

REDACTED MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE OF THE JFS GOVERNING BODY (GB) HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2014

Present:

Chairman: Mrs Joanne Coleman

Governors: Mrs Karen Benedyk
Rabbi Moshe Freedman

Clerk: Dr Alan Fox

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1. Mrs Benedyk said that she was concerned that it might be perceived that she had a conflict of interest because her son had also been sanctioned by JFS for attending with too short a haircut. The Chairman said that it was most unlikely that any party would doubt Mrs Benedyk's objectivity in this matter and that the meeting should continue.

2. The Chairman explained that the meeting had been convened to consider the representations by Mr & Mrs xxxxxxxx concerning a two-day exclusion imposed on their son xxxxxxxx in July for coming to school with an extremely short haircut to the sides of his head. The parents accepted that the haircut was too short but explained that no defiance was intended. They considered that the punishment was excessive and that one of the lesser steps open to the School would have been more appropriate. Since pupils could be seen on the JFS website with shorter haircuts, there appeared to be inconsistency in the way that the policy was administered.

3. The Committee noted that the GB was obliged to consider any such representations but did not have the power to overturn the Headteacher's decision.

4. In his written response, the Headteacher had expressed concern that the parents felt that there had been inconsistency of treatment. He had reflected further on the issues raised by the representations and took the view that it might be that in the future JFS would respond differently to further incidents of this kind.

5. The Committee considered that a fixed term exclusion for an incident of this type was inappropriate and was grateful for the Headteacher's acceptance that in future similar incidents would be managed differently. The issue of appropriate sanctions could be considered within the current review on the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

6. xxxxxxxx had also explained that the format of the exclusion letter and its formality were distressing. The Committee acknowledged that there were certain legal requirements for the content of such letters but it was concerned about the

distress that might be caused and requested the Headteacher to consider whether any modifications might be possible whilst meeting the legal requirements.

7. The Committee requested the Clerk to convey a summary of its views to the parents.

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Chairman

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Date



MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE OF THE JFS GOVERNING BODY (GB) HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27TH OCTOBER 2014

Present:

Chairman: Mrs Joanne Coleman

Governors: Mr Richard del Monte
Mr Michael Glass
Mr Steven Woolf

In Attendance: Mr Stuart Waldman (Governor)
Mr Jonathan Miller (Headteacher)
Ms Talia Thoret (Deputy Headteacher)
Mr Nick Calogirou (Behaviour Team)
Mr Phil Newman (Behaviour Team)

Clerk: Dr Alan Fox

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs Karen Benedyk and Rabbi Moshe Freedman.

2. Conflicts of Interest

No member declared a conflict of interest with any item on the Agenda.

3. Report of the Autumn Term Discipline Panel Meetings

The Chairman referred to the three cases considered by the Panel meeting on 19th September. In the first case the members had considered representations made by parents in respect of a two-day exclusion imposed for coming to school with too short a haircut. The parents accepted that the haircut was too short but explained that no defiance was intended. They considered that the punishment was excessive and that one of the lesser sanctions open to the School would have been more appropriate than a fixed term exclusion and the Headteacher. Moreover, since pupils could be seen on the JFS website with shorter haircuts, there appeared to be inconsistency in the way that the policy was administered.

In his written response, the Headteacher had expressed concern that the parents felt that there had been inconsistency of treatment. He had reflected further on the issues raised by the representations and took the view that it might be that in the

future JFS would respond differently to further incidents of this kind. This had subsequently been conveyed to the parents.

In the second case, the parents concerned had appealed to the Independent Review Panel (IRP) about a permanent exclusion. The Governing Body had been represented by Steven Woolf at a lengthy hearing. The IRP had made findings of illegality, irrationality and procedural impropriety and had quashed the permanent exclusion. It had directed the GB to reconsider its previous decision, ordering that unless the student was reinstated within 10 School days JFS should forfeit £4000. There was a third case with the same factual background and evidence as the second about to be considered by the IRP, which was more likely than not to treat it in exactly the same way.

The Chairman said that she had discussed the cases in detail with Stone King, the School's solicitors. It was quite clear that, should the GB reconsider but decline to reinstate, the parents would have a good case for Judicial Review, where the Court would take into account the IRP findings. The fact that the GB was acting on a policy that had not been recently reviewed would not help. Without making a judgement on the correctness of the permanent exclusion, the Panel had therefore taken the unanimous view that the damage caused to JFS from a possibly long drawn out Court case with its associated expense and publicity and limited prospects of success outweighed the benefits the School from reinstating from refusing to reinstate the student. It therefore decided that in the best interests of the School the two students should be reinstated.

Mrs Coleman wished to make it clear that she fully supported the policy of zero tolerance on drugs. But it was not a question of who was right and who was wrong. It was simply that on this occasion it would be best for JFS and for the students to let both students back quickly and without any further fuss.

Mr Calogirou said that he had read the IRP decision very carefully and found that it contained many errors of fact. He was disappointed that the GB decision not to stand firm removed the opportunity to demonstrate publicly the irrationality of the decision by deconstructing it and providing point by point refutations.

In particular, Mr Calogirou couldn't understand how the IRP could get to the point where it believed that a satisfactory investigation had not been carried out, whereas the Behaviour Team felt that it could not have been bettered. The adverse effects had already been seen at JFS with the returning students boasting that they had "won" and with two unrelated sets of Year 7 parents reporting that their children had observed drug sniffing in the toilets. The Behaviour Team had lost confidence in their current systems and were also worried about OFSTED's concerns surrounding exclusion figures.

The Chairman said that she would arrange for a separate meeting with Steven Woolf and the Behaviour Team to examine in more detail the investigation that had taken place and the evidence that had been provided first to the GB and then to the IRP to see what lessons might be learned.

ACTION CHAIRMAN

Mr Del Monte said that he wondered whether these cases demonstrated that the JFS process needed to be improved. Many professional bodies split the task of disciplinary investigation from later adjudication. Of course, the school context was

not exactly the same and investigations and presentation of evidence had to take place at very short notice by untrained individuals. Moreover, decision letters had to be dispatched very soon after adjudication and could not, therefore, always benefit from professional third-party review. The Committee agreed that the disciplinary process needed further careful consideration taking these points into account. These discussions would be held at later meetings.

ACTION CLERK

4. OFSTED and Behaviour

The Committee noted that the recent no-notice OFSTED report judged Behaviour and Safety of Pupils as Requiring Improvement. There were a number of major criticisms, including the inconsistent use of sanctions, failure of Information Systems for monitoring poor behaviour, exclusions and detentions and the inability of Governors to challenge and make judgments because of inadequate data.

The Chairman said that this assessment was inconsistent with the view of parents who regularly cited behaviour at JFS as one of the main reasons for choosing the school. And it was strange that, given the adverse assessment, the Inspectors did not seek any information from or discussion with the Behaviour Team. Nevertheless, there was always room for improvement, particularly in this case with record-keeping.

The general view of the GB was that behaviour standards at JFS remained high and it was important that the criticisms contained in the recent IRP decisions and the Ofsted report should not be allowed to create a situation in which the staff felt compelled to avoid the use of exclusion at all costs, even if such sanction was wholly appropriate. The Committee would continue to encourage and support the Headteacher in the exercise of his judgment consistently, where such action is supported by the evidence.

5. Revised Behaviour Policy

The Chairman said that, in the light of recent events, it was important to be able to demonstrate that the GB had taken account of the various criticisms and had acted on them with a degree of urgency. It had been agreed therefore that the Behaviour & Discipline Policy should be reviewed and any revisions required put to the GB in time for its meeting on 9th December. This was a very tight timetable, given the need for widespread consultation, for example with parents, staff and the Local Authority. For each main section of the Policy, parents should be requested to say whether it was clear, reasonable and appropriate.

The Committee considered in general terms the separate revised draft policies circulated by Ms Thoret and in discussion the following points were made:

- The policy document should set out clearly the framework for behaviour as opposed to the inclusion of too much detail. Accordingly, when drafting, consideration should be given to the format adopted by Dixons Trinity Academy, which avoided detailed rules and concentrated more on positive behaviour for learning habits.
- The policy must be written in clear terms fully accessible to students, parents and staff.

- Further consideration should be given to the grading of sanctions against the seriousness of offences, bearing in mind that the perceptions of students might not always coincide with those of staff and parents.
- There was doubt whether it was necessary to have a freestanding Exclusion Policy that would inevitably largely replicate the Statutory Guidance already freely available.
- It might be desirable in the longer term for non-prescription drugs to be covered by a self-standing policy. This should be put on the agenda for a later meeting of the Committee.

ACTION HEADTEACHER AND CLERK

The Chairman referred to the proposed timetable (copy attached) for approval of the Revised Behaviour Policy. The Committee agreed that a final draft, to be submitted to the GB for approval in December, could be agreed by the Chairman and the Headteacher, after other members had been consulted by email.

ACTION CHAIRMAN AND HEADTEACHER

6. Discipline Consistency

Mr Calogirou said that the Behaviour Team already held much of the information that would enable a full statistical analysis of the way in which disciplinary sanctions were applied, both by subject and by individual members of staff. When the sanction included referral to Room 17, it was the Team's normal practice to apply its much broader experience to moderate action, thus improving consistency. By reporting back to supervisory staff on perceived discrepancies, it should be possible to improve consistency earlier in the disciplinary process.

The Behaviour Team was asked to produce a flowchart for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting.

ACTION MR CALOGIROU

7. Training

The meeting considered the Committee's training needs. The Chairman said that she felt that the Committee would benefit from refresher training in discipline process and b) evidence collection in school/a). Mr Woolf agreed to arrange for a member of his Chambers specialising in education law to conduct a training session for the Committee and the Behaviour Team.

ACTION MR WOOLF

8. Future Business

It was agreed that, in future, the Committee should hold at least one regular meeting each term, in addition to any ad hoc meetings required to deal with specific exclusions.

Future agendas should include more specific coverage of:

- Lower attainment pupils and the discipline system
- The whole exclusion process
- Attendance
- Difficult Cases
- The SIP.

ACTION CLERK

Chairman

Date



MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE OF THE JFS GOVERNING BODY (GB) HELD ON MONDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2015

Present:

Chairman: Mrs Joanne Coleman

Governors: Mrs Karen Benedyk Mr Richard Del Monte
Mrs Geraldine Fainer Rabbi Moshe Freedman
Mr Michael Glass Mr Steven Woolf

In Attendance: Mr Jonathan Miller (Headteacher)
Ms Talia Thoret (Deputy Headteacher)
Mr Nick Calogirou
Ms Jo Green (Behaviour Team)
Ms Jenkinson Year Manager Year 9)
Mr Phil Newman (Behaviour Team)

Clerk: Dr Alan Fox

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Stuart Waldman.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 27th October 2014 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Item 3 – Chairman’s Meeting with Behaviour Team - The Chairman said that she had not yet arranged a meeting but would do so soon.

ACTION CHAIRMAN

3.2 Item 5 – Self Standing Drugs Policy – Miss Thoret said that she did not consider that any value would be added by removing the issue of non-prescription drugs from the Behaviour Policy to a freestanding Drugs Policy. The Committee agreed to return to this issue at its September meeting.

ACTION CLERK AND MISS THORET

3.3 Item 6 – Discipline Flowchart – Mr Calogirou confirmed that the Behaviour Team had produced a flowchart as requested.

- 3.4 Item 6 – Behaviour Policy – Mr Calogirou said that the Behaviour Team had been thinking about the problems with the Room 17 sanction. The Room was not staffed on a full-time basis and, in contrast to the staff of the Learning Support Unit, those temporarily in charge did not always have the appropriate training to help with the work set in core subjects. A number of other schools had proportionately much larger LSU's thus making it economic for them to have dedicated staff able to assist those students whose difficulty with the classroom environment had lead to behavioural problems.

In discussion it was agreed that Year Managers could identify a number of students in each year who would probably benefit from but were not currently supported by the LSU. Further research should be undertaken into the experiences of other schools that had followed this route. The Headteacher was requested to consider further the desirability of a closer association between Room 17 and the LSU or the creation of a combined Behavioural Support Unit as the 2015/16 funding position clarified over the next few weeks.

ACTION HEADTEACHER

4. Update on the Post Ofsted Action Plans (Behaviour & Safety)

The Committee received oral reports on various aspects of the Action Plan, as follows:

4.1 - Low level Disruption - it was noticeable that there had been an increase in detentions imposed for low level classroom disruption. Senior staff needed to ensure that classroom teachers were doing everything they could to deal with this problem prior to the imposition of detentions. A close eye would be kept on the figures to determine whether more detentions resulted in decreased disruption. The data would also help to focus further action in areas where there was higher than average disruption.

About half of disciplinary incidents took place outside the classroom. It was being impressed on staff that they must deal with any disruption they came across in the corridors as well as in their classrooms, In addition, in future, students would be permitted to enter classrooms if they wished to sit quietly prior to lesson times and during the lunch break. This should help to reduce the disruption and low-level bullying in the corridors and would be monitored by student officers.

The possibility of allowing football on the Astroturf pitches during the lunch break was being investigated; it would need PE staff supervision.

4.2 – SIMS - Much reliance was being placed on the data to be derived from SIMS to establish better what was going on and appropriate staff training had started. Teachers could not be expected to input information and then to repeat it in Progress Reports and parents should be warned about this in the first email sent after the half-term holiday.

Behaviour had not previously been recorded in the management information system but it should now be possible to analyse breaches of the Behaviour Policy and the sanctions imposed. Summary data derived would be provided for the Committee at its next meeting when it would be possible to consider further the form of presentations would assist the Committee in its monitoring role.

4.3 - Attendance - recording of attendance had now improved and should help to focus attention on problem areas. The use of SIMS for this purpose had just gone live. Actual attendance figures had improved, assisted by the new longer registration window. More attention was also being given to checking unauthorised absences.

5. Behaviour & Safety Policy

The new Policy had been disseminated by teachers to all students and all classrooms now had a visual aid showing the Ladder of Consequences. Staff discussions had taken place with the aims of increasing familiarity with the Policy and of improving consistency. Formerly the Behaviour Team had the practice of applying its much broader experience to moderate action following Room 17 referral for minor offences. Now, it was now referring back to individual teachers Red Slips considered inappropriate. This information went also to Year Managers and Subject Leaders so that they could conduct face-to-face counseling meetings with members of staff who were having difficulties in controlling classes.

The Committee requested that staff feedback on the impact of the new Policy and on any additional training needed should be collected and a report made at the Summer Term meeting.

ACTION MISS THORET

6. Fixed Term Exclusions

The Committee reviewed summary tables of exclusions in the Autumn Term and the Spring Term to date. It was noted that the number of exclusions had dropped after the Summer Holidays and this was judged to be a knee jerk reaction to the OFSTED Report. However, the number was picking up again, which was regarded as resulting from the new policy document which clarified which offenses merited a detention and which an exclusion. There were still internal debates about the length of exclusions but experience and recalibration now in progress should gradually improve proportionality and consistency.

7. Tom Bennett's report

The Committee noted the report to Governors on Behaviour at JFS by Mr Tom Bennett, School Teaching Fellow at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, following his invited independent review of discipline at JFS. The Chairman said that his report and suggestions made for interesting reading.

His principal findings were:

- Overall, behaviour varied from acceptable to concerning.
- In classrooms visited most students were working and were polite and co-operative. They were generally positive about behaviour but reported concerns about low level bullying and teachers' inconsistencies
- Room 17 and its staff was commended. It worked very well should continue but not be overused by less skilled teachers.

- The School appeared to have abdicated control of public spaces, particularly the corridors. These must be reclaimed by staff who should challenge students out of their classrooms without a note. It would be helpful if staff and students eat together at lunchtime.
- Teachers were equally positive overall but in some cases exhibited relative ignorance of the School's policies and of practice in departments other than their own.

The Committee noted that a number of Mr Bennett's suggestions were already being put into practice but that some were simply impractical within the resources available at JFS. Miss Thoret was invited to seek staff volunteers to eat in the main dining room and report on the outcome at the next meeting.

ACTION MISS THORET

8. Rewards System

The Committee thanked Miss Thoret for her comprehensive report and because of the lateness of the hour requested that it should be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting.

ACTION CLERK

9. Training on Exclusions

The Chairman said she would arrange a separate meeting soon with staff on the nature of evidence and its presentation.

ACTION CHAIRMAN

10. Future Business

There was a possibility that a meeting might be required to consider a set of parental representations and it was agreed that this should be handled ad hoc by a panel of three members.

11. Any Other Business

There was none.

Chairman

Date



MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE OF THE JFS GOVERNING BODY (GB) HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10TH JUNE 2015

Present:

Chairman: Mrs Joanne Coleman

Governors: Mr Richard Del Monte Mrs Geraldine Fainer
Rabbi Moshe Freedman Mr Stuart Waldman
Mr Steven Woolf

In Attendance: Mr Jonathan Miller (Headteacher)
Ms Talia Thoret (Deputy Headteacher)

Clerk: Dr Alan Fox

1. Apologies for Absence

Mrs Karen Benedyk did not attend.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2015 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Item 3.1 – Chairman's Meeting with Behaviour Team - The Chairman said that she had still not arranged a meeting but would do so soon.

ACTION CHAIRMAN

3.2 Item 3.4 – Role of Room17 and an enhanced LSU – The Headteacher said that a new SENCO had been appointed and he hoped to take her views on the value of easing Room 17 pupils back to class through the LSU before reporting further to the Committee in the Autumn Term.

ACTION HEADTEACHER

3.3 Item 7 – Staff Volunteers to Eat in the Main Dining Room – Miss Thoret said that at lunchtime the Community Support Officers were responsible for behaviour supervision. The School could not direct what teaching staff did during this period. Obviously, teachers would assist if they were in an area where a problem arose but they could not be regarded as on duty.

In fact, the opening of classrooms at lunchtime and on other occasions had been much improved behaviour in the corridors. There was far less low-level disruption and students appreciated the freedom and the opportunity to sit down if they wished.

It should be noted, however, that this change had not been universally welcomed by staff, some of whom were very territorial about their classrooms and preferred them to be kept free so that they could work quietly should they wish. There were also suggestions that unsupervised use of classrooms gave rise to untidiness and to breakages, although there was little evidence of this.

Miss Thoret wanted classroom opening to continue for a while, possibly using Student Officers in a supervisory role, and then to take stock of experience at the end of term and to settle on permanent rules to be applied on 1st September, noting the Committee's view that it might be counterproductive now to close the classrooms again which had been welcomed by the student body.

4. Update on the Post Ofsted Action Plans (Behaviour & Safety)

Miss Thoret introduced the Action Plan updated to end April 2015. In discussion the following points were made:

- An increasing number of actions had been completed or were well in hand and would all be finished by the end of the year.
- Data permitting analysis of the outcomes of the actions would derive from the developing use of SIMS and would be studied in September together with the results from the current Parental Survey and discussions with the Student Council.
- Mr Tom Bennett, the consultant who carried out the behaviour study earlier in the academic year, would be returning on 2nd July for a day to carry out a further inspection and to assess progress made. His report, together with the SIMS data would be used to inform the production of the 2015/16 Action Plan, aimed at embedding new behaviour patterns and methods. A copy would be passed to the Committee before the end of term.
- The early SIMS analyses showed clearly that staff skill levels differed significantly and that some teachers were not yet sufficiently familiar with the changes in practice that were being introduced. Mr Bennett's opinion would, therefore, also be sought on the extent of further training required. In addition to any one day INSET that might be arranged, it would be important that senior staff continue to observe and provide guidance on a regular basis.
- There was a difficult balance to be achieved between centralisation of discipline via the Behaviour Team, which tended to deskill staff, and over-delegation that led to inconsistencies.
- It was clear that a large number of detentions were being awarded for missing homework. SIMS permitted more detailed information on the patterns and incidence to guide targeted intervention with departments and individual pupils and their parents.

The Action Plan was a living document and the Committee requested that regular updating should continue.

5. Attendance

The Committee noted the detailed attendance report prepared by Mr Appleman and was concerned by the deterioration against the School target of 95% in all year groups.

In discussion the following points were made:

- Total reliance could not be placed on the figure. The recording system had changed in February. In addition, there had been Attendance Staff absences, which could be responsible for some of the instances of misrecording that had been detected. Only a few errors could change the picture significantly.
- Staff absences also meant that for a period there had been less dedicated effort available for direct intervention with parents.
- Subject of these caveats, however, Year 7 attendance was the best and remained over 96%, although it had dropped since last September. Year 8 had fallen below target and Years 12 and 13 were the worst.
- Historically, JFS attendance was better than the average throughout the country. It had also improved since 2013, which was a particularly bad year.
- It was noteworthy that the Year 10 attendance had been lowest the day before the start of the examinations. It was clear there was a conflict between the views of the School and pupils on the relative value of pre-examination revision in school and at home, although the figures showed that there was a positive correlation between attendance and grade achievement.
- Year 12 and 13 attendance started to drop two weeks before official study leave and there was doubt about the correct recording of attendance during study leave itself.
- Pupils in receipt of free school meals as a group attended less than others, but the figures could be misleading because of the FSM definition used at JFS until recently and a more accurate picture would emerge as reclassification continued.
- Both Year Managers and the attendance staff followed up individual sickness reports where there were indications that they could be in doubt, for example just before holidays. Year Managers were responsible where there could be a pastoral issue and the Attendance Staff dealt with the more routine cases.
- The kind of detailed information now available had not been available during the OFSTED inspection. However, at the next inspection OFSTED would not only wish to examine it but would also expect the School to understand the underlying causes.

6. Behaviour & Safety Policy

The Committee briefly reviewed experience to date with new policy and considered the amendments proposed by Miss Thoret, mainly of an editorial nature. Lack of appropriate PE kit had been added to the offences listed in the Ladder of Consequences. The only comments received from parents had been favourable and they would, of course, have a further opportunity to make their views known as part of the current Parental Survey.

It was agreed that the School's Drugs Policy should remain an inherent part of the Behaviour Policy and not produced as a standalone document. The Policy been made consistent with the individual student's Progress Report, which now also included illustrations of correct and incorrect uniform. Tutors would be making further presentations to students.

The Committee agreed that the Policy, as amended should be recommended to the GB for approval at its next meeting..

7. SIMS

Mr Appleman introduced and made a presentation on the Behaviour and Achievement SIMS Report Catalogue, which provided, with examples, the range of data reports becoming available and which were updated automatically in real time.

Mr Appleman explained the different ways in which the data could be presented and analysed, for example by teacher, by class and by subject; authorised staff could drill right down to data for individual students. Because the analyses were nearly all new to JFS, they did not yet show trends and should be regarded as creating next year's comparator.

This was simply the first step and decisions were now needed on the selection of the tables required by different categories of user. All staff use SIMS every day for entering the electronic attendance register and are becoming very familiar with the system quickly. The information available is also an important everyday tool of Tutors and Year Managers, whilst the SLT would probably wish to look at particular issues thrown up on a school wide scale and examine trends month by month. Mr Bennett would be asked to assist in recommending the most useful kind of reports for governors.

8. Fixed Term Exclusions

The Committee reviewed detailed tables of exclusions in the Autumn and Spring Terms and the Summer Term to date. It noted that the numbers in the Autumn had decreased but had increased again in the Spring. The three recent permanent exclusions shown against the Summer Term to date had not come into effect because of prior withdrawal of the students from the Roll.

Governors continued to be concerned about consistency of treatment and the lack of a published tariff. The Committee fully accepted that, in making his final decisions, the Headteacher was guided by internal debates about the length of exclusions based on the long experience and overview of the Behaviour Team. In addition, in exercising his discretion he had to take into account the individual circumstances of the offence and the student. Nevertheless, it was suggested that an exclusion for a particular type of offence should fall within a recognised range, that could be made generally available.

It was agreed that in future the proforma details provided to Panels of the Committee dealing with parental representations should be expanded to include the considerations leading to a particular length of exclusion. At its next meeting the GB should be advised that, in future, it would receive statistical information only leaving the Discipline Committee, on its behalf, to examine more detailed exclusion information.

9. Rewards System

The Committee thanked Miss Thoret for her comprehensive report.

10. Any Other Business

There was none.

Chairman

Date



MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE OF THE JFS GOVERNING BODY (GB) HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19TH OCTOBER 2015

Present:

Chairman: Mrs Joanne Coleman

Governors: Mr Richard Del Monte Mrs Geraldine Fainer
Mr Stuart Waldman Mr Steven Woolf

In Attendance: Mr Jonathan Miller (Headteacher)
Mr Simon Appleman (Deputy Headteacher)
Ms Talia Thoret (Deputy Headteacher)

Clerk: Dr Alan Fox

1. Resignation

It was noted that Rabbi Moshe Freedman had resigned as a Governor and was, therefore, no longer a member of the Committee.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2015 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Item 3.1 – Chairman’s Meeting with Behaviour Team - The Chairman said that she had not yet arranged a meeting and would consider whether one was still necessary.

ACTION CHAIRMAN

3.2 Item 3.4 – Role of Room17 and an enhanced LSU – The Headteacher said that he was considering with the new SENDCO the value of easing students referred to Room 17 back to class through the LSU. There were a number of issues to resolve, including the appropriate working relationship between the LSU, SEN and the Behaviour Team and that, at the moment, the LSU was not staffed throughout the day. It had to be recognised that behavioural difficulties did not necessarily equate to learning difficulties.

The Committee requested a written report for its next meeting on the need for an enhanced LSU and how this would be delivered.

ACTION MISS THORET

4. Attendance

Introducing the Attendance Overview & Trends Report, Mr Appleman said that broadly speaking the year had started well. Years 7 - 11 attendance was currently running at above 97%. There was growing confidence in the accuracy of data, except in the case of students in receipt pupil premium (because Local Authority approval had not yet been provided for those in Year 7).

The new procedures for following up absences, tabulated in the Report, were bedding in well. All teaching staff were receiving a weekly SIMS Report and tutors and year managers were identifying and following up students with attendance less than 90%. A monthly report would be provided to the Chairman and Mrs Fainer. After some piloting of the system, it was intended that parents would be given Gateway access to their own child's data on the SIMS database.

It was hoped that these new mechanisms would lead to a significant improvement in the attendance figures. The Committee thanked Mr Appleman for the progress that had been made. The Committee would now be able to demonstrate that all appropriate avenues had been explored in addressing issues of attendance.

5. Attendance Targets

The Committee examined rigorously the rationale for and endorsed the attendance targets recommended by the School and which would be recommended to the GB for approval at its meeting in December. It agreed that in future this process should be conducted in the Summer Term before the academic year to which the target would apply.

6. Behaviour & Achievement

Miss Thoret introduced the overview and trends report completed to the end of September, which indicated clearly the areas of greatest behavioural problems. In discussion the following points were made:

- The Behaviour reporting system would model that already trialed for Attendance, but was not yet as well advanced because of the additional factors to be considered and further work by the SLT was required.
- The data on which the returns were based could be improved further and more staff training was required to ensure better reliability.
- In future, Room 17 referrals would be added to the returns and included in the report that would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee, together with an analysis of the outcomes of the referrals, which did not necessarily lead to sanctions.
- Some negative trends were already clear, for example that a large number of detentions and bad notes were being awarded for late homework and lack of equipment. As a result, teachers were being requested to check on these items every morning in the tutor base.

- There was an emerging correlation between the volume of offences and the stage of the normal working day.
- For the immediate future the SLT would specifically target classes with higher incidence of poor behaviour during their walkabouts.
- It was now possible to analyse both Good Notes and Bad Notes awarded by subject and by individual teacher and subject leaders were being requested to examine the reasons behind any significant deviation from the norm.
- There was a growing improvement in the detail of the School's records of bullying whether or not the reaction had been punishment or restorative justice.
- There was still more analysis that needed to be arranged now that the data was available

It was agreed that a monthly report would be provided to the Chairman providing, insofar as possible, answers to the following five key questions:

What are the key patterns?

What are the key trends?

How vulnerable groups performing?

What has been done in response to what the data indicates?

What has been the impact?

7. Fixed Term Exclusions

The Committee noted the summary of exclusions during the Summer 2015 Term and that the reasoning behind the lengths of exclusions was now being provided. The associated analysis of offence and exclusion length during the year 2014/15 provided a first step towards the establishment of tariff of sanctions which would be helpful in ensuring future consistency. It was recognised that when more than one student participated in an offence there was a difficult balance to achieve between consistency of penalty and individual circumstances and previous disciplinary records.

The Committee also noted, with pleasure, that during the Summer Term only two sets of parents had made representations to the Committee (one of which and thanked the Committee fulsomely for its time) and that no exclusions had been imposed during the Autumn Term to date.

8. Behaviour Consultancy

The Committee considered the report by Mr Tom Bennett on his return visit to the School on 2nd July to assess progress made. It noted his observation that the recent OFSTED behaviour judgment seemed quite at variance with both of his observed days and that he was therefore unable to support the inspectors' conclusions. His view was that there was nothing wrong with the behavioural culture of JFS that could not be fixed.

Mr Bennett had made 14 recommendations, many of which had already been introduced, for example, to increase SLT involvement and speed of reaction, whole

staff training to improve consistency, more staff SIMS training and greater targeted support. Miss Thoret was requested to report further at the next meeting.

ACTION MISS THORET

9. Parents, Pupils and Staff Survey

It was noted that surveys provided a vital window into the thinking of the School's stakeholders and it was important therefore that their responses should be based on up-to-date information, positive as well as negative, and not unduly influenced by history and stereotypes. The School was requested to ensure that its communications with parents particularly via the weekly email/newsletter took account of this objective. It was also asked to consider how it should communicate about these issues with the student body to ensure that its comments and feedback helped to improve the School's reputation.

ACTION HEADTEACHER

10. Behaviour & Welfare Self Assessment

The Committee noted that, following discussion at the recent meeting of the Strategy Committee, the structure and content of this and other Self Assessments was under review to ensure that they demonstrated the reaction to the Ofsted Report at the same time as providing a better strategic overview for the GB. The updated Behaviour & Welfare assessment should be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

ACTION HEADTEACHER AND CLERK

11. SEN Students

The Committee noted that the new SENDCO was actively considering the extent to which the behaviour policy and systems were working for SEN students and requested a report at its next meeting.

ACTION HEADTEACHER

12. Annual Work Plan

The Committee noted that the Strategy Committee had requested the production of Work Plans by all other Committees and that this was now under consideration.

ACTION CHAIRMAN

13. Any Other Business

There was none.

Chairman

Date