

WILLIAM ELLIS SCHOOL



INQUORATE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY held at the school on Thursday 28 March 2019

NOTES

GOVERNORS		Present
Headteacher	Mr Sam White (HT)	✓
LA	Ms Georgia Gould (GGO)	x
Parent	Ms Sophie Jenkins (SJE)	✓
Staff	Mr Richard Whitenstall (RWH)	✓
Foundation	Mr Richard Ault (RAU)	x
	Ms Ronke Coote (RCO)	x
	Dame Karen Dunnell (KDU)	✓
	Dr Lee Elliot-Major (LEM)	x
	Prof Conor Gearty (CGE) Vice chair	x
	Mr Omar Harmon (OHA)	x
	Ms Fiona Millar (FMI) Chair	✓
	Prof Daniel Monk (DMO)	✓
	Ms Selina Skipwith (SSK)	✓
Co-opted	Mr Jonny Woolf (JWO)	x
	VACANCY	N/A
ASSOCIATE		
	Mr Abdi Ahmed (AAH)	x
ATTENDING		
	Ms Izzy Jones (IJO) Assistant head	
	Ms Imogen Sharp (ISH) Observer	
	Mr Mike Hutchinson (MHU) Clerk	

1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

FMI welcomed everyone to this inquorate meeting of William Ellis School Governing Body, which began at 5.04pm. Apologies were received from, and permission for absence granted to, RAU, RCO, LEM, CGE, GGO, OHA and JWO. ISH had apologised for a late arrival and an early departure. There were no apologies from AAH. There were no declarations of interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in respect of any items on this agenda. Unless otherwise indicated, all papers had been circulated in advance.

2. Chair's report, including membership

2.1 Governing Body membership FMI noted that she awaited a nomination for co-opted governors from the school's staff, as was customary at the school. ISH's term of office as a parent governor had recently come to an end; she was no longer eligible to stand for election as a parent governor, so FMI proposed appointing her as an associate of the Governing Body, for a year, at its next quorate meeting. MHU to schedule. She would retain her SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) responsibilities. Meanwhile, she would attend as an observer.

ACTION Item 2.1 *MHU to schedule appointment of ISH as associate of the Governing Body on agenda of next quorate FGB meeting.*

2.2 Farewell to Richard Whitenstall FMI noted that RWH, currently staff governor, would be leaving the school shortly for pastures new. She thanked him for his contribution to the Governing Body since his appointment and wished him well for the future. Governors echoed her thanks and good wishes.

2.3 Appoint SJE to Personnel and Resources Committee FMI noted with regret that, the meeting being inquorate, governors could not appoint SJE to the Personnel and Resources Committee; MHU to schedule appointment on agenda of next quorate FGB meeting. Meanwhile, SJE to attend the next P&R Committee as an observer.

ACTION Item 2.3 *MHU to schedule appointment of SJE to the Personnel and Resources Committee on agenda of next quorate FGB meeting, and invite her to the committee's next meeting as an observer.*

3. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

3.1 FMI noted that, as this meeting was inquorate, the minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2019 could not be agreed. MHU to schedule agreement on agenda of next quorate FGB meeting.

ACTION Item 3.1 *MHU to schedule agreement of minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2019 on agenda of next quorate FGB meeting.*

3.2 FMI noted that there were no matters arising from these minutes; there had been no actions.

4. Confidential minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

4.1 Turning to the confidential minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2019, FMI noted that the original aim had been – assuming that no discussion was anticipated or forthcoming – to agree them in this part of the meeting. Given that the current meeting was inquorate, this was not possible.

4.2 However, she proposed reviewing the actions, none of which appeared to her to concern confidential issues, as matters arising.

4.3 Item 4.5.25 HT apologised that he had not yet explored Camden funding for student employability pilots, but would do so.

ACTION Item 4.3 *HT to explore Camden funding for employability pilots.*

4.3.1 However, HT reported that, at a recent conference, he had met Lorraine Lawson, Camden's STEAM¹ brokerage manager for partnerships between education and business. He would stay in contact.

4.3.2 Oliver Wharton (OWH), the school's director of sixth form, was exploring links with one or more City of London livery companies through the Livery Schools Link organisation. An insurance link would be appropriate given William Ellis's business interests.

4.3.3 FMI suggested linking with the Corporation of London, given that it was responsible for the management of Hampstead Heath, on the school's doorstep. She would explore the potential here.

ACTION Item 4.3.3 *FMI to explore potential school link with the Corporation of London.*

[ISH joined the meeting at 5.13pm.]

4.4 Item 4.6.8 HT reported that Camden's response to his suggestion that the school might raise its PAN (pupil admissions number) to 140 from September 2019 had not been encouraging, if only because the authority needed more notice. He proposed postponing any potential increase until September 2020.

4.4.1 What if the request were refused [KDU]? That was not a risk, because HT did not propose increasing staff numbers to accommodate increased student numbers.

4.4.2 Was there a risk of unfilled places [DMO]? Yes, especially as there was a surplus of secondary places in Camden. If not full, the school would be obliged to take in-year admissions, often the result of managed moves following behavioural issues.

4.4.3 FMI reported that Camden was cutting primary places in response to falling rolls.

4.5 Item 4.7.6 FMI noted that proposals to reorganise the leadership of the school – the subject of the fourth and final action in the confidential minutes of the previous meeting – would be addressed later in the current agenda.

5. Discuss Ofsted feedback and curriculum intent

5.1 Ofsted feedback HT summarised Ofsted inspectors' feedback following their recent informal inspection to pilot the organisation's proposed new framework.

5.1.1 Modern languages had been recognised as a strength, along with the school's rich and broad curriculum. Areas for improvement had included SEND, progress in English – as evidenced in the school's own commissioned review – and "curriculum cohesion".

5.1.2 Inspectors' criticisms on the latter were not entirely clear, but there was obviously work to be done, given Ofsted's renewed focus on curriculum.

¹ Science, technology, engineering, the arts and maths.

5.1.3 The headteachers of all four LaSWAP schools had agreed that, now that new qualifications were in place, this was the time to really develop curriculum, with more enrichment and external speakers, rather than focus only on exams.

5.1.4 Given Ofsted's fresh curriculum focus, were the arguments for retaining OCR as the exam board for English weaker [DMO]? Other schools preferred Edexcel and AQA. Change was still possible but not until current Y11 students had taken their exams. In practice, a number of the set texts would be the same books.

[IJO joined the meeting with apologies at 5.26pm.]

5.1.5 FMI thanked HT for his summary of Ofsted's feedback. The inspection had been useful, even though the school was aware of the challenges it had highlighted. She called for comments and questions, to which HT responded as follows.

5.1.6 KDU noted that a recent report on teacher workload had advised schools to cut down on record keeping. She had also attended training on leading change in schools, which had stressed Ofsted's renewed focus on staff wellbeing. It was governors' responsibility to ensure that staff wellbeing was a school priority.

5.1.7 With that in mind, could data be pruned [FMI]? Within the system, including within Ofsted, there was an obsession with data. HT had in the past been under pressure as a headteacher to double data drops from three to six per school year, but had retained three, and would ideally like to reduce them to just two.

5.1.8 In the sixth form there was certainly too much formal assessment. Some teachers wanted to run full assessments within every assessment cycle and that was not possible. The pressure was on teachers to demonstrate that they responding to data. That pressure was damaging.

5.1.9 What could the English department learn from the school's Modern Foreign Languages [MFL] department [ISH]? She highlighted the department's qualities, as listed by the Ofsted inspectors:

- richness of environment
- structured approach
- structure of language is explicit
- consistency of expectation
- how engaged and enthusiastic they [members of the department] were
- pride in work
- classroom routines
- productivity of marking
- specific teaching of vocabulary
- the department all singing from the same hymn sheet
- quality of relationships.

5.1.10 HT agreed that the English department could learn from MFL provision. He observed that the head of the MFL department was new and enthusiastic and there was a cohesive team. There were five strong teachers. Three of these were heads of year and had a unique standing in the school. The team was experienced. The English team was not to the same degree.

5.1.11 Was the ethos of English teaching at too high a level, rather than addressing the basics of the language, as was done in primary schools [FMI]? A whole-school approach to English would be a major element of the forthcoming School Development Plan, and a number of initiatives had been launched.

5.1.12 How had the English team viewed Ofsted observations such as “strong practice we have seen elsewhere isn't seen here [i.e. in the English dept] [KDU]? HT had relayed the gist of Ofsted's analysis in so many words. The earlier English review had prepared them for constructive criticism.

5.1.13 Were they a coherent team [ISH]? Yes, but they were under pressure, and a team under pressure may not perform well. IJO thought they lacked confidence.

5.1.14 FMI reminded governors that a forthcoming governor focus group would have the English department as its subject.

5.2 Curriculum intent FMI called for questions and comments on HT's report on curriculum intent, to which HT responded as follows.

5.2.1 Who was the audience for this document [DMO]? Originally Ofsted, but for staff and governors it provided a useful overview.

5.2.2 Would it be useful for governors to gain an understanding about how the school's curriculum intent is put into practice in the classroom [FMI]? HT thought it would be most useful for governors to receive presentations from heads of department about this, which would also provide a useful professional development opportunity for heads of department. Maths and history would be good starting points. HT would invite the leaders in these subjects to explain their curriculum and how they saw it fitting in with the school's curriculum intent.

ACTION	Item 5.2.2	<i>HT to invite maths and history subject leaders to explain their curriculum to governors and how they see it fitting in with the school's curriculum intent.</i>
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5.3 Response to Ofsted consultation FMI and HT to draft response to Ofsted consultation on its proposed new framework, including comment on the school's experience of the recent pilot inspection.

6. Discuss senior leadership team roles and responsibilities

6.1 HT tabled and summarised a series of charts of line management structures.

6.2 Oliver Wharton HT thanked OWH, who would shortly be taking up a post elsewhere, for remaining at the school until the May half term break: he would also be returning temporarily to the school for A level results and LaSWAP enrolment in August 2019. No decision had yet been made on replacing him.

6.3 Deputy head Interviews for this critical appointment would be taking place during the following week. The aim was for the individual appointed to take a strategic role, in particular building external partnerships and developing a wider curriculum, with a focus on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme initiative.

6.3.1 Where was the deputy head on the tabled line management charts [SJE]? Replacing one of the current assistant heads. Responsibilities could be rejigged.

6.3.2 Would the new deputy head manage his or her former assistant head colleagues [ISH]? Possibly. HT would discuss this with whoever was appointed.

6.4 Director of LaSWAP HT reminded governors that, on 5 February 2019, the school had learned that Georgina Atkinson, who had served for six years as director of LaSWAP, was leaving to join a large Multi-Academy Trust.

6.4.1 Members of the consortium had reviewed its leadership requirements and advertised, internally within the four LaSWAP schools, a fixed-term contract for a replacement LaSWAP director, to start this month and to run to August 2020.

6.4.2 Ella Schlesinger, Parliament Hill's current director of sixth form, and Mayo Ogunlabi, head of faculty for computing, media and social sciences at Acland Burghley, had been jointly appointed as a 50-50 job share.

6.4.3 This created possibilities for flexibility and further savings. They would share accountability but each would lead on different areas. All their hours would overlap.

6.4.4 **Would the four schools each retain a director of sixth form [ISH]?** Possibly not; this would be kept under review, especially considering that William Ellis and Parliament Hill Schools shared a joint sixth form building.

6.4.5 FMI noted that both of the individuals appointed were very able people who would bring new energy to the post.

7. Discuss partnership possibilities and proposals

Sensitive issues were discussed at this point in the meeting which are confidentially minuted elsewhere as item 13.

8. Discuss Duke of Edinburgh's Award initiative

8.1 IJO reported that the school was working to develop its provision of outdoor education, the better to allow students to access the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

8.2 A £50k bid to the Camden Youth Safety Taskforce would allow the school to work for two years with Camden Learning, and possibly WAC Arts College, a Hampstead-based organisation which provides alternative education for 14-19 year olds through a creative arts and media curriculum. The grant would be spent three ways.

8.3 First, it would help grow William Ellis's outdoor education programme, with a focus on outdoor curriculum design to promote character and resilience, particularly in boys at risk. Through its outward bound centre in the Surrey Hills, The Mill, William Ellis staff had significant skills and expertise here, which would be useful in developing an activity pack for the use of primary schools staying at the venue.

8.4 Second, the school hoped to use part of the grant to work with Camden Learning to improve boys' educational provision generally, perhaps also leading a professional development hub on the subject of emotional literacy.

8.5 Third, the school, with Camden Learning, hoped to commission research on data surrounding pupil vulnerability, perhaps involving a primary school.

[ISH left the meeting with apologies at 6.30pm.]

8.6 HT reported that he would be meeting a representative of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme shortly.

8.7 He added that most larger employers ran, or had ambitions to run, a CSR (corporate social responsibility) programme, from which the school could benefit. A single large employer offering its numerous young employees the opportunity to support the school's growing suite of outward bound initiatives would be ideal.

8.8 FMI volunteered to ask GGO for a list of Camden organisations which were willing to work with young people as part of a CSR programme.

ACTION Item 8.8

FMI to ask GGO for list of Camden organisations which are willing to work with young people as part of a CSR programme.

9. Review budget 2019-20

9.1 FMI reminded governors that the budget for 2019-20 and forecasts for the two following years (2020-21 and 2021-22) were work in progress: members of the Personnel and Resources Committee had rigorously interrogated the figures a week earlier, and would do so again before a final version was approved.

9.2 She asked for comments and questions, to which HT responded as follows.

9.3 Would it be correct to say that 2019-20's projected deficit of £83k was equivalent to ten per cent of the school's spending on non-teaching staff, and a cut of that nature would eliminate the deficit [KDU]? It would, but such a cut would be damaging. The school had already cut the staffing budget by £50k and could not sustain more.

9.4 How was the £412k spent on bought-in professional services [KDU]? That could be IT provision: there were plans to share these costs with other schools.

9.5 Why were indirect staff costs projected to increase from £69k in 2019-20 to £100k in 2021-22 [KDU]? The increase was probably due to rising pension costs.

9.6 Income from facilities and services was not projected to rise at all – could the school not be more ambitious [KDU]? Hopefully more income would be forthcoming than had been budgeted, given the school's new facilities.

9.7 FMI thanked all concerned for their hard work on the budget, and HT for answering questions.

10. Approve SFVS

Given that the Schools Financial Value Standard – the school's annual financial self-assessment – had been thoroughly reviewed and approved by the Personnel and Resources Committee, FMI to take chair's action to sign it for forwarding to Camden.

11. Any other business

11.1 Green wall In response to a question from KDU, HT explained that a leak in the fabric of the new LaSWAP sixth form centre had meant that the green wall's water supply had had to be shut off. The plants had died and would have to be replaced.

11.2 Bottled water In response to a suggestion by FMI, HT agreed to provide jugs of tap water for governors' meetings in future, rather than mineral water in plastic bottles. The school no longer sold bottled water to pupils; instead water fountains had been installed and students were encouraged to fill their own reusable bottles.

11.3 School therapy dog In response to a suggestion by DMO that a school therapy dog could reduce student stress and improve attendance, HT noted that the school's volunteer librarian, Sarah Carrier, regularly attended with her dog, Bella.

There was no other business.

Next scheduled meeting: Thursday 23 May 2019

There being no further business and no further confidential items, FMI thanked all present for attending and closed the meeting at 6.51pm.

Signed.....

23 May 2019

Fiona Millar
Chair of the Governing Body, William Ellis School

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE NOTES

ACTION	Item 2.1	<i>MHU to schedule appointment of ISH as associate of the Governing Body on agenda of next quorate FGB meeting.</i>
ACTION	Item 2.3	<i>MHU to schedule appointment of SJE to the Personnel and Resources Committee on agenda of next quorate FGB meeting, and invite her to the committee's next meeting as an observer.</i>
ACTION	Item 3.1	<i>MHU to schedule agreement of minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2019 on agenda of next quorate FGB meeting.</i>
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ACTION	Item 5.2.2	<i>HT to invite maths and history subject leaders to explain their curriculum to governors and how they see it fitting in with the school's curriculum intent.</i>
ACTION	Item 8.8	<i>FMI to ask GGO for list of Camden organisations which are willing to work with young people as part of a CSR programme.</i>